

12th February 2025

Communique:

Kenyan communities and Civil Society response to the funding freeze and the stop work order issued by the U.S. administration.

On Monday, 10th February 2025, a section of community representatives and civil society members convened to discuss a collective response to the ongoing crisis. The meeting outlined immediate, medium, and long-term actions that communities and CSOs must take to address the situation. Key discussions focused on holding both the U.S. and Kenyan governments accountable for their roles in health leadership and strengthening partnerships and global solidarity to mitigate the impact of funding disruptions.

While drug supply is expected to last until April 2025 due to the limited waiver, other essential services, such as viral load testing and community-led monitoring programs, have been severely disrupted. The shutdown of USAID offices has led to uncertainty. Key populations and people living with HIV are being redirected to general government clinics, raising concerns over access to targeted care and exposure to stigma and discrimination. The abrupt halt of USAID-funded TB and HIV programs has further compounded the crisis, as diagnostic services and sample networking infrastructure have come to a standstill. There are growing fears of an increase in new HIV and TB infections in the coming months.

The meeting emphasized the urgent need to fast-track the National Health Transition and Sustainability plans and roll-out of the same with the active and meaningful engagement of communities and civil society.

The humanitarian impact of the funding freeze is also severe. Many organizations are struggling to stay afloat, with some already facing closure and mass layoffs. There are rising concerns about mental health on healthcare workers, civil society members, and affected communities. Discordant couples, in particular, face heightened risks due to the lack of access to PrEP and other prevention services.

The meeting concluded with a strong call for global solidarity and a commitment to take immediate action to mitigate the impact of the crisis. There was a consensus that while not all challenges can be addressed at once, it is crucial to remain strategic and focused in advocacy efforts. The coming days will be critical in ensuring that the voices of communities and civil society are amplified, and that both the Kenyan and U.S. governments are held accountable for their roles in this unfolding crisis.

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On behalf of the Kenya communities and civil society leadership group