



In Solidarity: Faith-Based Organisations Express Deep Concern Over U.S. Aid Freeze

The combined impact of the U.S. Administration's January 20th executive order mandating a 90-day review and the January 24th 'stop work order' have severe and immediate consequences for crisis-affected people. They also disrupt faith-based organisations' long-standing partnerships with local faith and secular actors, undermining efforts to build resilient communities.

We urge the EU and its Member States to take collective action to mitigate the impact and uphold an aid policy that prioritises human dignity.

This decision has global consequences, affecting both organisations and, more importantly, the people they serve. The following are just a few examples of the widespread humanitarian impact, with countless other individuals and communities facing similar crises worldwide.

- 53,000 people fleeing conflict in Sudan will no longer be able to access basic services in neighbouring Chad.
- 57,000 displaced individuals in Colombia will lose access to mental health care and gender-based violence prevention services.
- Grain seeds in the war-affected Tigray region of Ethiopia will rot in storage sheds just as the sowing season begins. This disruption threatens an entire harvest in a region already suffering from severe food shortages due to conflict and destruction.
- Vulnerable migrants from Venezuela and the region will no longer receive lifesaving multisectoral vouchers that help them safely migrate within Colombia, allowing them to avoid the dangers of the Darién Gap. Without this support, their protection is significantly weakened, preventing access to transportation, basic medicines, food, and other essential supplies.

The impact is not just at a systemic level, individual lives are being directly affected.

- In Athens, legal aid for two Afghan refugees—both victims of extreme police brutality—has been abruptly cut. Having arrived as unaccompanied minors, they remain extremely vulnerable despite having legal status. With the termination of funding, their case remains incomplete, leaving them at extreme risk of reprisals for seeking accountability. The uncertainty has severely impacted their mental health, leaving them feeling abandoned and at risk.
- A 33-year-old Iranian woman who fled severe domestic violence has also lost vital support. Recently evicted from her home in Athens, she and her young child are now without mental health and financial assistance, including employability training designed to help her regain independence. This sudden loss of aid has left them in a desperate situation—economically, socially, and emotionally.

Many European NGOs access U.S. assistance directly through USAID and indirectly through the UN system. Many also work with local partners that receive direct U.S. funding, which makes this suspension a critical disruption to established financial pipelines.

Further, it undermines progress toward localisation and weakens the contributions of local actors in building a democratic civil society. These disruptions have far-reaching

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consequences in communities where trust and infrastructure have taken years to develop. As a result, local NGOs and civil society organisations will bear an even greater burden.

The scale of disruption extends beyond U.S. financing and demands urgent action from European donors. EU funding mechanisms typically require co-financing from public, private, or self-financed sources. Without increased flexibility and emergency derogations, further catastrophic losses are inevitable.

Faith-based organisations have long been at the heart of humanitarian response—sustaining social cohesion, delivering development cooperation, and serving as trusted partners embedded in local communities. Through churches, mosques, synagogues, and faith-based initiatives, we remain steadfast in our commitment to providing support where it is needed most.

We call on global leaders, humanitarian partners, and faith communities to stand in solidarity and take decisive action to ensure that those in greatest need are not abandoned.