

USAID In Peril:

Deservedly so due to entrenched inefficiency, liberal bias and corruption

**Alexander Paine
(Commentator based in Austin Texas, USA)**

**Copyright: @ 2025 Research Institute for European and American Studies (www.rieas.gr)
Publication date: 16 February 2025**

Note: The article reflects the opinion of the author and not necessarily the views of the Research Institute for European and American Studies

The world has become aware that the Trump Administration's Department of Government Efficiency, led by Elon Musk and a handful of brilliant young techies, has shut down USAID programs and put the entire agency on the chopping block forcing a complete shut-down. Trump, Musk, Rubio and their lieutenants are adamant that this agency must go or be drastically reformed. In my view they are right on target and for many good reasons.

I have spent a good part of my adult life (25 years) working in humanitarian relief and development both as a hands-on active volunteer and board member of a major faith based US NGO and as Director and CEO of my own small but nimble NGO mostly operating in high risk regions of Americas, Africa, the Middle East,

Balkans and Near East. The larger NGO I was part off relied heavily on USAID and other USG funding and my own NGO -while not pursuing USG funding—had plenty of interactions with partners who did s well as with the agency itself and with the UN. Based on this first-hand experience I have long held the belief that USAID is beyond repair and that the only other major organization that rivals it in dysfunction as a less efficient and wasteful entity is the UN and its myriad of agencies and departments.

Both the UN and USAID have one thing in common—They have been unaccountable for their actions to their primary donors (the US taxpayer) and our elected representatives and as a result follow their own often wasteful, sometimes corrupt and almost always radically “woke” and liberal agenda.

USAID has increasingly become a tool for liberal left causes and self-serving politicians on both sides. It started with Clinton during the Balkan wars, prospered with the Clinton foundation later and various NGOs during the second Clinton term. Those on the inside started companies or NGOs and got funded big dollars while maintaining huge overheads and providing spotty limited aid. You had to be inside to get the big money and that meant you also had to pay back political contributions and other favors. It went on under Cheney and Bush as Iraq and Afghanistan actions took off. Obama perfected the art of using AID for political and liberal ideological gain. Trump turned clock back a bit but then Biden's masters took it to new lows. Its past time for a reckoning and DOGE is Trump's agent for that.

Are there legit programs and good organizations doing good work and helping folks? Of course there are. But the rot is also strong. Even if it's a 50- 50 split of good to rotten it's imperative we fix it. In my personal opinion the mix is more like 10-15% good vs 85-90% terrible. I think the DOGE audit will prove me right. And even the good programs come with strings attached pushing leftist ideology or a covert agendas. Thats why some NGOs (like SP) had cut back on USG funding- I suspect they did not like the strings attached on many of their faith-based programs. More charities should follow that model.

USAID had become like an independent entity-an NGO - defying POTUS and Sec State policy and promoting liberal causes including open borders and mass migration into US and Europe—and who knows what- in Ukraine.

The only way to fix it at this point is to tear it down and start over. Review each and every recipient and program. Keep the ones that focus on emergency help and development meeting US government high standards and low OH structures for implementation and trash all the rest. And that seems to be exactly what Rubio, Musk and co. are doing.

US humanitarian and developmental aid can be handled under the DOS as a division of DOS under the Sec State-conforming to stated policy of an elected US Administration.

Under such a structure legitimate and efficient organizations will actually benefit and get more of the aid pie -not less. Block grants can also be made to indigenous organizations for direct implementation—thus limiting high overhead by cutting out the middleman- and not having to pass aid from USG to US NGOs or companies with even higher overhead- to local entities. The beneficiaries will benefit - receiving more of the aid dollars without woke pre-conditions and huge overhead limiting their effectiveness. The American taxpayer will benefit most of all as billions of dollars will be saved.

USAID was badly managed, too top heavy, in many cases likely corrupt or at least grossly inefficient and biased towards politically connected corporations and organizations. Let DOGE vet their Ukraine projects—(tens of billions went there) –and let’s see where all that money went. We need to fully understand the degree of waste and abuse with such programs and Ukraine would be a great example to start.

The only aid organization out there, more wasteful and unaccountable, is the UN and many of its relief entities. And USAID and the USG actually fund most of those UN agencies which can burn money like no other. UN agencies like WFP , UNDP, UNRWA, WHO, OCHA and dozens of other unaccountable—even unrecognizable by 99% of humanity -agencies waste money with no accountability or ethos other than promoting a globalist, statist, anti US agenda funded on the backs of US taxpayers. Let DOGE look into that funding next We will all be appalled with the findings.