



**FICE**  
**AFRICA**

# **FICE Africa Update**

## **Report**



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# FICE Africa update

- The first FICE Africa meeting is scheduled for the 26 February. A report will be available after the meeting.
- The major shake up for the members has been the USAID Stop Work Order.
- Many countries in Africa were affected by the order, and some who solely relied on the USAID funding had to shut down.
- While this has been communicated to be a 90 day suspension, it may be too late by the time the suspension is lifted.
- There are also widespread reports of beneficiaries especially of HIV/AIDS and TB who have lost lives due to this order.
- The stop work order has affected both NGOs and government especially the Departments dealing with health and social welfare.



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# STOP Work Order impact - Kenya

- The January 24th Trump Administration Executive Order freezing all foreign assistance funds for 90 days included funds disbursed under the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR).
- Make Me Smile - Kenya has been receiving Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) and Adolescent Girls and Young Women (AGYW), Determined, Resilient, Empowered, AIDS-free, Mentored, and Safe (DREAMS) grants to support community prevention and response to new HIV infections and Gender-Based Violence (GBV).



# Notable effects of the stop work order

The sudden cessation of this funding has affected Make Me Smile – Kenya's critical community work in prevention and response

- Halting of services to 14,906 OVC aged 0 – 17 years including
- 1,407 living with elderly caregivers,
- 764 total orphans,
- 3,168 partial orphans
- 345 children and adolescents undergoing violence



# Programme interruptions

- Interruption of services to 2,243 Children and Adolescents living with HIV (CALHIV) and 145 HIV Exposed Infants (HEI). The services to CALHIV include
- Monthly monitoring of adherence to antiretroviral therapy (ART) through community structures
- Follow-up and access to viral load testing
- Age-appropriate counselling and disclosure support.
- Suspending engagement of 384 Community Health Promoters (CHP) who connect community to health care services through monitoring CALHIV and HEI adherence to ART.
- Halting return to school for 320 CALHIV and adolescent girls engaged in risky behaviors to pay education levies including school fees and scholastic materials support
- Halting community awareness sessions for 3,400 parents and caregivers on positive parenting through family matters program.



# Programme interruptions

- Interruption of services to 14,500 AGYW on prevention of new HIV infections, teenage pregnancies, and violence.
- Closure of 20 safe spaces that serve 14,500 AGYW. The safe spaces provide unlimited access to information on prevention, access to biomedical services and building their economic empowerment through skills training which include ICT, Tailoring, beauty and hairdressing. These interventions help build the girls resilience not to engage in risky behaviors that predispose them to HIV, GBV, and violence.
- Halting the monthly follow up of over 320 risky AGYW who had been initiated on PrEP to protect them against new HIV infection.
- Community follow-up of 340 AGYW who have experienced different forms of violence and linking them to post-violence services including access to medication and follow-up with the justice system.
- 2,801 AGYW assessed to be supported through school fees at risk of dropping out of school.
- Halting the engagement of 245 AGYW community mentors and 10 paralegals responsible for follow up AGYW and supporting families of 80 survivors of violence access justice.
- Halting community awareness sessions on violence prevention through the Start Awareness Support Action (SASA!) for 6,000 community members in Kisumu County.
- Halting economic support to 741 AGYW who are young mothers through business start ups, business boosts and vocational training.



## Staff impact

- 83% of Make Me Smile – Kenya full-time staff sent on compulsory unpaid leave
- The organization has 86 full time staff out of which 71 staff fully support the OVC and DREAMS project funded by PEPFAR through USAID. The 71 staff have been sent on unpaid leave



## South Africa

- Many organisation delivering services to children who are beneficiaries of USAID/PEPFAR were affected and staff had to take compulsory leave.
- The affected organisations include Health, Education and Social Development. As a result government had to do some budget shifting which has affected other departments and NGOs that were not direct beneficiaries.



# Impact on FICE South Africa - NACCW

- About one third of the NACCW affected:
  - ✓ There were 47 staff linked to solely to this programme in total (38 CYCWs, 6 mentors, 2 supervisor and 1 manager).
  - ✓ Other staff members affected are 5 M&E staff (1 M&E Officer, 1 M&E Administrator, 1 Data Quality Officer and 2 Data Capturers).
  - ✓ There were 22 other staff affected who were contributing to the programme on a level of effort basis.



# USAID/PEPFAR IMPACT

- All the staff linked to the programme were informed of the Work Stop Order and they were laid off with a provision that should USAID proceed with the programme before or after three months they will be prioritised. All staff who contributed on a level of effort were also informed of the order.
- In addition to staff and program costs, the project was contributing proportionally to NACCW overheads costs. This has impacted on the viability of the entire organisation, since the decision was so abrupt and unanticipated. No other plans were in place to buffer the effects of this loss.



# USAID/PEPFAR impact

- The impact of the unexpected stop work order was impactful for NACCW that it led to management and the executive committee making some drastic adjustments.
- 45 staff were immediately let go as they were on a month-to-month contract.
- Two staff have been put on temporary three months lay off as they are permanent NACCW employees. NACCW is now in a situation of liability towards these staff – again an unanticipated situation given the perceived stability of the project.
- The NACCW has had to close its Durban office.
- Efforts have been put into finding an alternative office space for the remaining staff to work from.
- Salaries of all other non-project-specific NACCW staff have been reduced, and further reductions and staff cuts may be necessary.



# Staff support and impact to children

- Laid off staff were supported to apply for UIF from the Department of Labour.
- Several meetings were held with staff to support them emotionally during this difficult times.
- Fortunately, NACCW was in a process of appointing CYCW interns for a programme in partnership with HWSETA. 16 CYCWs met the criteria but only 13 accepted the offers at a reduced salary. Two mentors met the criteria but only one accepted.
- The full impact of the USAID Stop Work Order remains to be felt at NACCW and has created significant instability for the organisation.
- Most of all the affected workers were working with 15 817 children living and affected by HIV/AIDS who were left without proper support and services. The result of this order may lead to some children defaulting on their medication, staying away from school and some losing their lives.

