



WOMEN'S  
REFUGEE  
COMMISSION

FINDINGS FROM

## A Year of Harms:

The Impact of US Foreign Aid Cuts on  
Women and Girls in Humanitarian Crises



On January 20, 2025, President Trump issued an executive order instituting a 90-day pause on United States foreign aid, ultimately cutting over more than \$10 billion in humanitarian assistance. The Women's Refugee Commission report *A Year of Harms: The Impact of US*

*Foreign Aid Cuts on Women and Girls in Humanitarian Crises* is the most comprehensive synthesis of evidence to date on the gendered impacts of recent US foreign aid cuts. This brief presents an overview of one of five key findings in the report.

Read the full report here: [womensrefugeecommission.org/research-resources/year-of-harms/](https://womensrefugeecommission.org/research-resources/year-of-harms/)

# Women and girls have lost educational and livelihoods opportunities

The review documents **widespread loss of opportunities for women and girls in humanitarian crises** as a result of US foreign aid cuts.

## Education

- Approximately **98% of US foreign aid for primary education and 100% for tertiary funding** was cut, totaling **\$463.4 million**.
- Nearly **80% of US humanitarian funding to the education sector was cut**, totaling **\$116.4 million**.

The review found evidence on the impact of education funding cuts on women and girls in Afghanistan, Egypt, Iraq, Kenya, Lebanon, South Sudan, and Uganda.

- In Afghanistan, **online and underground education programs for hundreds of girls** were disrupted and a **major midwifery program closed**, ending the only higher education option for women and girls in the country.
- In Kakuma Refugee Camp in Kenya, **period pads are no longer provided** to girls attending school, leading many to stay home while menstruating.

- In a Congolese refugee settlement in southwestern Uganda, 88 teachers were laid off, which led to **thousands of students—primarily girls—dropping out**.

## Employment and livelihoods

The widespread closure, downsizing, and suspension of activities as a result of US foreign aid cuts have had a significant impact on women's livelihoods in humanitarian crises.

- In Afghanistan, the closure of family health houses and mobile health clinics resulted in the **suspension of over 200 staff**, many of whom were female health workers.
- In Iraq, US foreign aid cuts led to the **closure or severe reduction of integrated support centers** that both employed women and provided economic empowerment programs for survivors of violence.