



HUMAN
RIGHTS
CAMPAIGN®

Discrimination in USAID-Funded Programs

Each year the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) provides nearly \$16 billion in funding to private contractors and nonprofit organizations to implement its expansive network of programs overseas. USAID is the lead U.S. Government agency that works to end extreme global poverty and to support democratic societies. USAID funds health clinics, schools, and other critical centers in local communities across the globe.

Currently there are no federal regulations or statutory requirements prohibiting discrimination against LGBTQ people served by USAID programs. This means that an organization contracting with USAID or receiving federal grant dollars can deny access to any prospective beneficiary simply because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. USAID-funded health clinics can refuse to provide healthcare for LGBTQ people or a USAID-funded school can expel a student if they are LGBTQ. This discrimination is wrong. It compromises the critical mission of the USAID to reach the world's poorest and most marginalized people and it allows U.S. taxpayer dollars to support global discrimination.

Policy Revisions from USAID

A new policy published by USAID will prohibit their contractors from engaging in this kind of harmful discrimination. Under the revised policy, any organization contracting with the agency will be required to adhere to a nondiscrimination policy protecting LGBTQ people. This policy change is a critical step towards ensuring equal access to essential programs and services funded by USAID.

The new policy will be included in every contract going forward, and USAID could discontinue funding if it determines that discrimination is occurring. Subcontractors will be covered by this new policy as well.

Next Steps

HRC will work with USAID and the U.S. government to ensure that this policy is implemented as robustly as possible, including by reducing or ending U.S. funding to organizations that have discriminated against LGBTQ people.

Additionally, the policy does not yet cover grantees, so USAID needs to publish a nondiscrimination rule to cover them as well. The rule for contractors (and eventually for grantees) also needs to be broadened to include non-discrimination protections for employees of organizations overseas that receive grants or contracts from the U.S. government.

HRC will also continue to advocate for similar protections for LGBTQ people served by other U.S. foreign agencies including the Department of State in order to ensure that American dollars are never used to enable discrimination.