

Kenya risks losing cash from global fund

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Nairobi - Kenya risks losing \$100-million (about R631-million) if it fails to account for money given by the Global Fund To Fight Aids, Tuberculosis and Malaria to fight the three killer diseases, officials said on Tuesday.

The Fund voted to give the government \$134-million, but of the \$34-million it has already disbursed, Nairobi has failed to account for \$10-million.

The Fund is expected to meet in the next two weeks to make a decision on whether it could release another instalment, its deputy director Hellen Evans said.

"The Fund's board will make a decision in two weeks' time," Evans told reporters after holding talks with Health Minister Charity Ngilu.

Currently, more than a million Kenyans are living with HIV, the virus that causes Aids. About 44 000 of the more than 200 000 who urgently need antiretroviral therapy receive the drugs.

Of those on treatment, only 1 200 are children, according to the Kenyan health ministry.

"If the funds suspends (grants) Aids patients could be at risk," said Ignatius Kibe, an official with Kenya's United Civil Society Coalition on Aids, TB and Malaria.

The East African nation, home to 32-million people, is currently grappling with two major corruption cases, with international donors threatening to cut or withhold funding.

The state-run National Aids Control Council has been embattled by allegations of graft in the recent years with some of its officials being sacked and charged with corruption. - Sapa-AFP

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