

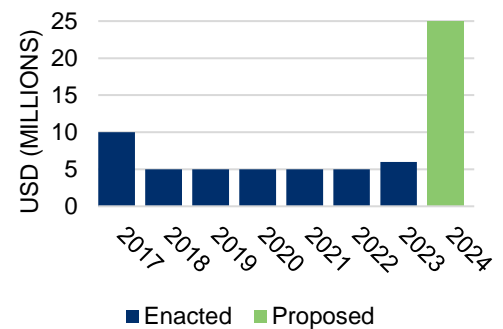
# Increase Investment in Atrocities Prevention

*Atrocities Prevention* funding allows the Department of State to support programs aimed at the prevention of genocide and mass atrocities. It supports the Department of State in acting on the recommendations of the Atrocity Prevention Task Force and in supporting the implementation of the Elie Wiesel Genocide and Atrocities Prevention Act (P.L. 115-441) and the 2022 United States Strategy to Anticipate, Prevent, and Respond to Atrocities.

## BACKGROUND

Dedicated funding for Atrocities Prevention (AP) was first allocated by the 115<sup>th</sup> Congress in 2017 to allow the administration to respond to the early warning signs of mass atrocities. After an initial appropriation of \$10 million in FY17, funding decreased to \$5 million in FY18. For the first time in five years, funding increased by 20% to \$6 million in FY23. The State Department's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL) manages a portion of the funds and provides small grants to local and international peacebuilding organizations in around half a dozen countries. **This is the only funding dedicated entirely to responding to the early warning signs of genocide and mass atrocities, in order to prevent violence and save lives.**

AP Funding Levels



## ATROCITIES PREVENTION IN ACTION

**Central African Republic:** Beginning in FY19, AP funding has supported efforts to equip remote communities with high-frequency radios, allowing neighboring communities to form a network and share critical information on security threats from non-state armed groups, such as the Lord's Resistance Army, and to coordinate responses. Additionally, the program trains communities on conflict resolution techniques, enabling them to address long-standing tensions that often drive local violence.

**Guinea:** With combined resources from AP and transitional justice initiatives, which promote accountability for genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes, a consortium of NGOs worked with survivors, educators, and local civil society to address trauma from past atrocities and to identify early warning signs of future atrocities or communal violence. Using an arts-based healing method, survivors drew images of their experiences and trauma onto 'body maps.' These body maps are then shown in public exhibitions and accompanied by educational programs about past atrocities and how to prevent future violence.

## INCREASE INVESTMENT IN ATROCITIES PREVENTION

The United States has been a [leader in AP policy](#). It was the first nation to [establish an interagency body dedicated to atrocity prevention](#), the first to [pass a national law](#) mandating reporting on government-led atrocity prevention efforts, and most recently, the first to publish a [strategy for atrocity prevention](#). However, despite this leadership, the Atrocities Prevention's annual appropriation has been insufficient to meet global needs, supporting programs in around half a dozen countries. Academic [forecasts](#) and [models](#) agree that 20-30 countries are at substantial risk of future mass atrocities. Additionally, the [2022 U.S. Strategy to Anticipate, Prevent, and Respond to Atrocities](#) calls for the Atrocity Prevention Task Force to identify up to 30 priority countries most at risk for atrocities, and "develop targeted response plans for priority countries." To meet these challenges and support the implementation of the Strategy, we urge no less than \$25 million be appropriated to Atrocities Prevention in FY24.

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## Examples of Atrocities Prevention Programs

Country	Start Year	Amount	Purpose
<b>Zimbabwe</b>	2017	\$3,000,000	This program educated a coalition of Zimbabwean faith-leaders and communities on how to document and report atrocity early warning signs. The ensuing reports helped inform locally-led responses and were shared by the implementing NGO with the State Department – providing vital local intelligence on events that could lead to rising violence. Reporting focused on both predictable events leading to instability (e.g. electoral violence, transitions of power) and unpredictable events (crop failure).
<b>Central African Republic</b>	2019	\$1,090,000	This program empowers local communities in the eastern region of CAR to form local peace committees that devise solutions to local and regional challenges. These committees not only coordinate between neighboring communities on peace and security concerns but also have grown to address shared economic and development matters. This program supports the Crisis Tracker online mapping platform, which monitors instances of conflict, abduction, murder, or other violent events and has informed U.S. officials and policy in the region.
<b>Guinea</b>	2019	\$500,000	This program allows victims of past violence to tell their stories in art exhibitions, through which community members learn of past atrocities that are not publicly spoken of or are inaccurately taught in schools. As a result of misinformation on past atrocities, tensions between groups continue and there is an increased risk of future violence. The program also hosted town hall meetings with influential community and religious leaders across ethnic divides to discuss ways to prevent violence stemming from a controversial constitutional referendum.
<b>Central African Republic</b>	2020	\$900,000	This program aims to break cycles of violence through education of ‘peace mentors’ in Bangui and Bambari. It is implemented in partnership with two locally-led, Bangui-based organizations and the National Youth Council of the Central African Republic (CNJCA). The CNJCA promotes civic education and literacy among young people and supports reconciliation activities of the Peace Mentors Network and the Platform of Religious Denominations.