



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Atrocity Prevention

In its mission to advance resilient, democratic societies around the world, USAID is confronted with working in countries where communities have been affected by mass violence. By integrating atrocity preventing policies, programming and learning in our development practice, USAID is at the forefront of reducing the risk and supporting the recovery from such violence.

"USAID Missions are the eyes, ears and conscience of the US Government."

-Former Deputy Administrator Steinberg

Background: In August 2011, President Obama issued Presidential Study Directive 10, establishing the Atrocities Prevention Board (APB) to enable the United States to more effectively prevent and respond to mass atrocities. USAID supports the work of the White House-led APB by identifying priority countries, monitoring emerging situations and assisting offices to utilize prevention or response capabilities. To actualize this effort, USAID is developing new guidance, tools, and resources that support atrocity prevention efforts as part of regular USAID engagement with at-risk countries.

USAID Highlights 2014-2015

- **Established Peacebuilding Partnership to respond to crisis in Central African Republic.**
- **With the State Department, mobilized additional resources for "upstream" conflict prevention programming in Burundi.**
- **Published Field Guide on Helping Prevent Mass Atrocities.**
- **Developed first-ever online training for development officers serving in high-threat posts.**

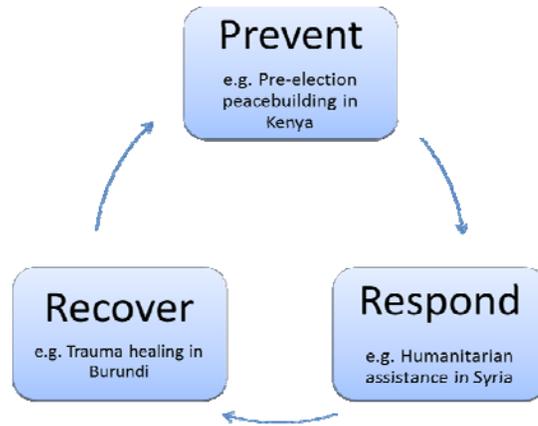
The Link between Atrocity Prevention and Development:

Preventing widespread, deliberate violence against civilians requires a concerted global and integrated U.S. government effort, employing a full range of policy and program options. Timely and effective use of foreign assistance can be an important part of an atrocity prevention or response strategy. USAID's strengths lie in our on-the-ground presence, relationships with local partners, long-term investments, staff's technical expertise, and flexible funding to respond to increased risk of violence, crises and acute atrocity risks.

The Role for Assistance: Prevent, Respond, and Recover

- USAID **helps prevent** mass atrocities by mitigating risks and bolstering resilience to shocks that could lead to mass atrocities. Atrocity prevention is a goal to which numerous types of programs can contribute, not a discrete sector of development programs. Program examples include support for early warning-early response systems, independent media, and promoting the rule of law and access to justice.
- USAID **responds** to escalating atrocity situations with life-saving humanitarian assistance as well as programs to help halt spiraling violence. Even when deliberate attacks on civilians are occurring or escalating, USAID programs can help halt the violence and minimize harm among victims. Program examples include enhancing the communications capabilities of at-risk groups, peace messaging, and supporting displaced populations with food, shelter or protection needs.

- USAID **supports recovery** from mass violence through programs focused on promoting justice and accountability, rebuilding social cohesion, supporting political transition and economic recovery. In the aftermath of mass atrocities, USAID programs should aim both to reduce the risk of recurrence and to improve overall development prospects by addressing the challenges unique to these contexts.



Focus Areas of USAID's Work

Field Support: DCHA has provided a number of country-specific engagements related to atrocity prevention, and stands ready to help Missions with both analysis and program support. In 2013-2015, the atrocity prevention team was instrumental in securing \$19M in contingency accounts (Complex Crises Funds and Human Rights Grants Program) for prevention and response programming.

Training: DCHA has produced an online training to help USAID staff better understand concepts related to atrocity prevention, identify risk factors and early warning signs, and become familiar with U.S. policy and relevant tools. DCHA has also released a *Field Guide* designed to provide field staff with practical guidance on a range of issues related to preventing and responding to mass atrocities, including highlights of programming options for prevention, response and recovery.

Technical Leadership: USAID continues to improve our tools by learning from current and past atrocity prevention and response efforts. Efforts to capture knowledge include an inter-agency lessons learned summit on Kenya, "listening sessions" to capture the experiences of USAID field personnel related to atrocity prevention and response, and After Action Reviews on USAID atrocity prevention engagements. The Agency also sourced innovative ideas through a *Tech Challenge for Atrocity Prevention* and provided follow-on grants to help pilot and scale selected innovations.

Outreach: Increasing the impact of USAID's atrocity prevention work requires expanding cooperation with numerous actors within and beyond the U.S. government. USAID engages regularly with other U.S. government agencies, partner governments, NGOs, and the UN.

For more information, contact:

Nicole Widdersheim, Human Rights Division
DRG Center
Washington, DC 20523
Tel: (202) 712-5325
nwiddersheim@usaid.gov