

Global Poverty Policy Request

Global Response Vital to Fight Pandemic

RESULTS calls all members of Congress to urge Leadership to include no less than \$20 billion in foreign aid for health, humanitarian efforts, and development in any emergency response legislation.

As a leader in global health and development, the United States must urgently respond to contain and mitigate the impact of COVID-19 and protect hard-fought gains in global health in low-income countries. Although the virus has caused near universal disruption, it is the communities facing poverty, already pushed to the margins, which face the greatest risks. The \$4 billion Congress appropriated for Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, in the December relief bill is crucially important, but just one part of the comprehensive response needed. COVID-19 vaccines are an important part of the solution, but they will not be available in most lower-income countries for many months and possibly not widely available *for years*. Currently, the new virus variants put even more stress on health systems, particularly in Africa, and the extreme economic crises caused by this pandemic is not slowing down. A new World Bank estimate suggests that COVID-19 will drive over [150 million](#) people into extreme poverty by 2021. **Congress must respond to the global pandemic and mitigate the secondary impacts and economic shocks that deepen extreme poverty.**

Stepping Up the Fight Against Infectious Diseases

Decades of progress enabled by U.S. leadership are in jeopardy as COVID-19 presents an urgent threat to the fight against HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria. The U.S. government annually provides funding for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria alongside the U.S. bilateral global health programs, which include the global tuberculosis program at the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). Those long-term global health investments are now at risk. It is clear those who are immunocompromised – such as with HIV/AIDS, are more susceptible to COVID-19, and lives are at stake if we do not act now.

- Half to two thirds of AIDS, TB, and malaria programs report [service disruptions](#). If we do not mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on these programs, the world could lose years of progress on AIDS, TB, and malaria. There is also a troubling decline in new TB cases being reported during country lock downs. That means more people are living with [undetected TB](#) and facing massive delays in treatment.
- Estimates of the potential impact of COVID-19 on TB deaths are shocking. With a three-month lockdown and a ten-month restoration of services the world could see

an additional 6.3 million cases of TB and an additional [1.4 million TB deaths](#) between 2020 and 2025.

Maintaining U.S. leadership and providing supplemental resources for partner countries to address the COVID-19 pandemic will be critical for fighting these leading killers, averting the disruption of health services, and mitigating secondary impacts. **The Global Fund was one of the first and fastest organizations to get financial resources to partner governments to address COVID-19 and has awarded [\\$1 billion](#) to 106 countries.** But the Global Fund has fully deployed all funding for this purpose and more funds are needed urgently now to continue lifesaving COVID-19 response programs in partner countries.

Congress should appropriate an additional \$4 billion for the Global Fund efforts to urgently supply low- income countries with critically needed COVID-19 tests, personal protective equipment (PPE), treatments, laboratory and health systems improvements, and to prevent further backsliding on other global health goals.

Fighting Famine and Malnutrition

Childhood malnutrition goes hand-in-hand with poverty globally: it is both a consequence and a key driver of poverty. The consequences of [chronic malnutrition](#), such as stunting, are devastating and permanent, but they are also entirely preventable by providing women and children with the right vitamins, micronutrients, and calories in the 1,000 day window from pregnancy to a child's second birthday.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, nearly one in four children was [stunted](#) due to lack of adequate nutrition. Now, the pre-existing crises of hunger and malnutrition are on the rise with upwards of [265 million people](#) estimated to be experiencing hunger. Before COVID, malnutrition already contributed to nearly half of the deaths of children under five. Without urgent action, by 2022 COVID-19 could result in an additional [9.3 million wasted and 2.6 million stunted children, and 168,000 additional child-deaths](#). In projections of the impact of COVID disruption to health and nutrition services from early 2020, [wasting](#), a form of severe malnutrition, *is the single biggest driver of increased child deaths*. An urgent humanitarian response to improve food security and malnutrition is needed to fight child deaths and stunting globally.

Congress must appropriate at least \$2 billion toward global anti-hunger and malnutrition efforts in any emergency response legislation. We urge that all of these programs focus on the quality of nutrition in their humanitarian aid, especially as they address hunger for women and young children. We ask that within anti-hunger efforts **at least \$500 million of the \$2 billion goes to fight malnutrition.**