

ACTION SHEET

Media Action: Call on Congress for U.S. Leadership on Global Vaccine Access

We know that effective vaccines can end the COVID-19 pandemic, but they're not being produced fast enough to reach everyone who needs them, and there has been little leadership around increasing manufacturing capacity. Across the continent of Africa, less than 4 percent of the population is fully vaccinated because they lack access to vaccines. The development of safe, effective vaccines against a deadly pandemic disease less than a year after it emerged is an extraordinary achievement, made possible by public investment in science and technology, but it's of little help if those vaccines don't reach across the globe.

Many low-income countries hoped to receive COVID-19 vaccine doses through COVAX, a global collaboration between rich and poor countries to accelerate the development, production, and equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines. However, many rich countries jumped the queue by creating separate deals with vaccine manufacturers and paying a higher price per immunization dose than COVAX. Now, rich countries are flush with vaccine supply—or about to be.

The U.S. and other wealthy countries could continue their vaccination programs, including boosters, and still have a 1.2 billion dose surplus at the end of the year. Meanwhile, the under-resourced COVAX had to slash its already moderate goals, reducing its 2021 vaccine supply forecast by 25 percent. It is unconscionable for rich countries to hoard the resources and vaccine manufacturing knowhow that could end the misery of COVID-19.

Recently President Biden held a summit on COVID-19 vaccines and called for bold leadership. Congress must follow suit. Right now, Congress is making decisions about how to include resources in the next recovery/infrastructure package that would help to address this need and support a massive increase to global manufacturing capacity. The House passed a bill out of the Energy and Commerce committee that includes \$2 billion for this end, which is a good first step. We now need the Senate to meet or increase these resources.

Look for local stories about the pandemic to use as a hook for a letter to the editor. Then write and submit your letter to the editor. Consider personalizing your letter with your experience of things opening up due to vaccine access and urge Congress to quickly boost global vaccine manufacturing and ensure vaccines are accessible to all. Once published, [leverage your media](#) by forwarding it to your members of Congress.

Sample Letter to the Editor: Congress Must Lead on Global Vaccines for COVID-19

For tips on writing and submitting letters to the editor, see our [Media Basics](#). Also, consider making your letter-writing a group activity by inviting RESULTS group members and people in your action network to join together online to discuss why a global response to the pandemic matters to each of you and to write and share your letters with each other.

Access to COVID-19 vaccines has allowed our community to reopen and is reducing the severity of COVID-19. Meanwhile, many low-income countries are imposing new lockdowns because they lack access to COVID-19 vaccines.

Vaccination is our pathway out of this pandemic, but there are not enough vaccines being produced quickly enough so that everyone has access. The unchecked spread of COVID-19 is devastating low-income countries and will generate additional dangerous variants, which is bad for all of us.

We need leadership from Congress to urgently boost global manufacturing of vaccines. We have the authority, know-how, and resources to ramp up manufacturing and distribution so that everyone will have access quickly and be able to resume their lives.

Congress must include at least \$2 billion specifically to expand vaccine production capacity in the recovery package. Will Congress take the action needed to help us move out of this pandemic?

Letter-writing Workshop Agenda

Below is a sample agenda and script for putting people in your community into action. When people take action, they get inspired. Adapt the 60-minute agenda below. If you need assistance with an online platform, like Zoom, for your meetings, contact Lisa Marchal at lmarchal@results.org.

I. Setting the Stage - 15 Minutes

2 min: Welcome and acknowledge people for being there.

"There are a lot of ways you could be spending your time, and I want to thank all of you for joining us and learning more about how YOU can play a role in the movement to end poverty. Let's share a bit about why we're here."

3 min: State the purpose of the meeting.

"Our purpose today is to inspire you all about the difference you can make, working with others, to create the political will to end hunger, poverty, and inequity. In the next few minutes, we'll . . ."

- Learn a bit about RESULTS, the group organizing this.
- Learn about an issue of poverty.
- Take powerful action on the issue: we'll write letters to Congress
- And, finally, see who is interested in continuing to make a difference with RESULTS."

10 min: Center the room and do introductions.

"Let's see who's here and get in touch with why we are here. Please give us your name and tell us briefly why acting on issue of poverty is important to you."

"Thank you all for sharing what is important to you. We have a lot in common."

II. The Basics of RESULTS – 10 Minutes

RESULTS is movement of passionate, committed, everyday people. Together we use our voices to influence political decisions that will bring an end to poverty. As volunteers, we receive training, support, and inspiration to become skilled advocates. In time, we learn to effectively advise policy makers, guiding them toward decisions that will improve access to health, education, and economic opportunity. Together we realize the incredible power we possess to use our voices to change the world. "

1. Share the *Raise Your Voice* video: <https://results.org/> via the share-screen function on Zoom.
2. Share an example of success: *"Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, we protected development assistance for FY2020 after the President proposed cutting it by 30%. During the pandemic, we helped secure \$11 billion in international development funding in the March 2021 COVID relief package, which included \$3.5 billion for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. We also helped secure \$4 billion for Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance in late 2020.*
3. Share a local example of our role in creating change (perhaps a way in which you moved a legislator to take action).
4. A few more details if you have time. Tailor these to reflect what your group does:
 - *"RESULTS partners meet twice per month to plan and take action."*
 - *"During one of our meetings, we connect to a national webinar to learn about an issue, learn to speak powerfully, and take action to influence Congress."* Give an example.
 - *"We also develop plans for influencing our decision makers through face-to-face meetings, the media, and other community actions."*

III. Issues and Action Component - 30 Minutes

1. Introduce the issue of global COVID-19 vaccines with a story or video. You can share your screen on Zoom.

Video about the global health impact of COVID-19: <https://www.who.int/news-room/spotlight/the-impact-of-covid-19-on-global-health-goals>

2. Read the October Action Sheet together, including the sample letter.
3. Show people how to find the email address of the foreign policy aide for your legislators by using our Legislator Lookup tool: <https://results.org/volunteers/legislator-lookup/>
4. Write, and then ask writers to read their letter out loud for feedback and encouragement.
5. Make a plan for sending in the letters and debrief.

IV. Invitation to Attend the Next Meeting & Closing – 5 Minutes

“Lastly, we are planning to have future meetings like this one to guide people in becoming powerful advocates. We’ll also be meeting with our members of Congress and generating media. Who is interested in joining us again to take action?”

Say thank you, capture contact information: name, phone, email, address. Add them to your Action Network list in your Group Roadmap and stay in touch with them. Contact Sarah Leone at sleone@results.org for tips on how to best engage your Action Network, as she can advise on getting Action Network members into the national database and/or starting to receive regular actions from your group on a regular basis.

Action Network Managers Action

Here’s a sample message you can send to your Action Network:

Dear (Name):

Access to COVID-19 vaccines has allowed our community to reopen and is reducing the severity of COVID-19. Meanwhile, many low-income countries are imposing new lockdowns because they lack access to COVID-19 vaccines.

Vaccination is our pathway out of this pandemic, but there are not enough vaccines being produced quickly enough so that everyone has access. The unchecked spread of COVID-19 is devastating low-income countries and will generate additional dangerous variants, which is bad for all of us.

Use our [online action alert](#) to write a letter to the editor and raise your voice on this issue. [Report to RESULTS](#) when you get published, and then [share your published media with your members of Congress](#).