

## ACTION SHEET

# Ask the Senate to support the Global Malnutrition Prevention and Treatment Act of 2021

All children deserve a strong start in life, regardless of where they are born. As a leader in global health and development, the U.S. has been instrumental in reducing the number of countries with very high prevalence of child malnutrition by half over the past 20 years—from 67 to 33. But progress is not happening quickly enough.

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, malnutrition underpinned nearly half of all deaths of children under 5 years old. In 2020, nearly 150 million children under 5 were stunted (too short for their age) and over 45 million were affected by wasting (too thin for their height). Both stunting and wasting are forms of severe malnutrition and indicate that a child has not received adequate calories, nutrients, or both, to grow and develop to their full potential. Experts predict that pandemic-related disruptions to food and health systems could cause up to a 50 percent rise in global malnutrition—and wasting is expected to be the single biggest driver of increased child deaths. However, we may not see the full toll of COVID-19 on malnutrition for several years. Each day counts for the world's children and their families—failure to act now will have devastating long-term consequences that affect poverty and malnutrition levels for years.

Child malnutrition and poverty go hand in hand. With COVID-19 reversing progress on global poverty for the first time in decades, bold U.S. leadership on nutrition is needed—especially for young children who face the gravest impacts of severe malnutrition. The Global Malnutrition Prevention and Treatment Act ([S.2956](#)) prioritizes vulnerable populations with high-impact interventions that are country-led, coordinated, and accountable. This legislation could change the game for millions.

**Take Action:** Now that the House has passed the companion bill (H.R.4693), write to your senator, calling on them to co-sponsor life-saving legislation, the Global Malnutrition Prevention and Treatment Act ([S.2956](#)). The world is not on track to meet global goals on nutrition—but U.S. leadership can help change that. The policies in this legislation will make U.S. nutrition assistance more effective and help make sure that every child in the world has a chance to not only survive but thrive. Write and submit your letter today.

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## Sample Letter in EPIC Format

Consider organizing a group outreach activity by inviting RESULTS group members, Action Network members, and others who care about these issues to write letters as well. [Find a sample meeting agenda online.](#)

Subject: The Senate must support the Global Malnutrition Prevention and Treatment Act of 2021

**Engage:** In 2020, nearly 150 million children under 5 were stunted (too short for their age) and over 45 million were affected by wasting (too thin for their height). Both stunting and wasting are forms of severe malnutrition and indicate that a child has not received adequate calories, nutrients, or both, to grow and develop to their full potential.

**State Problem:** We know what works to fight malnutrition, but the global community has failed to prioritize nutrition in funding and policy priorities. Less than 1 percent of total global official development assistance goes toward nutrition, and the COVID-19 pandemic has only made the state of global nutrition more perilous.

**Inform:** The bipartisan Global Malnutrition Prevention and Treatment Act of 2021 (S.2956) better positions USAID, our country's main international development agency, to support countries to save more lives. The legislation focuses on increasing coverage for high impact, proven and affordable interventions, including providing prenatal vitamins, breastfeeding support, vitamin A supplementation for young kids, and emergency therapeutic foods to treat life-threatening severe malnutrition. This legislation requires strong monitoring and evaluation of programs and aims to hold USAID accountable for providing reliable benchmarks to track progress against malnutrition.

**Call to Action:** Will you co-sponsor the Global Malnutrition Prevent and Treatment Act of 2021? I would be happy to provide any follow-up materials you request.

**Additional resources,** if your group would like to explore the impact their advocacy has on global health. You can share your screen on Zoom.

- *Brief overview of the Global Malnutrition Prevention and Treatment Act of 2021:*  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1hzysy\\_U7IA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1hzysy_U7IA)
- *Powerful video on malnutrition's impact on lives and futures:*  
<https://ccga.ccgclients.com/hagirso/>