

Write to Congress: Support the Global Fund

Just twenty years ago, HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria were wreaking havoc on populations across the globe, killing millions. But the world came together. Pooling its resources, countries created the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. Almost two decades later, that international partnership has helped save *27 million lives*.

In his 2019 State of the Union, the President pledged that “together we will defeat AIDS in America and beyond.” But then weeks later, the White House proposed slashing funding for the Global Fund – one of the most powerful tools we have against the diseases. As world leaders gather in October to make new commitments to the Global Fund, retreat is not an option.

U.S. support for the Global Fund has always been bipartisan, crossing party lines when often not much else could. Though the control of Congress and the White House has shifted between parties over the last 17 years, U.S. support for the Global Fund has remained constant.

The House Appropriations Committee has stepped up, putting \$1.56 billion in the 2020 spending bill for the Global Fund. We need the Senate to do the same. And as advocates, we must encourage the entire Congress to step up and let the world know that the U.S. will continue to lead on the Global Fund. There is no other way progress will continue.

What's at risk

The progress in the fight against AIDS, TB, and malaria has been nothing short of remarkable, but threats remain:

- Progress against malaria is stalling, with the number of global cases now rising. Meanwhile, resistance to drugs and insecticides is a growing threat in regions hardest hit by the disease. More on malaria: <https://www.theglobalfund.org/en/malaria/>
- Tuberculosis remains the world's leading infectious killer, despite being preventable, treatable, and curable. Public health systems fail to reach a full third of all people who fall sick with TB each year. More on TB: <https://www.theglobalfund.org/en/tuberculosis/>
- The world is off-track in the fight against HIV/AIDS. A failure to tackle stigma and discrimination associated with the disease has halted progress among marginalized groups, including adolescent girls and young women, who are infected at the rate of 1000 per day. More on HIV/AIDS: <https://www.theglobalfund.org/en/hivaids/>
- For every dollar the U.S. contributes to the Global Fund, two dollars come from other sources. If the U.S. steps back, other nations will as well.
- If we do not step up the effort on these diseases progress will cease, and the diseases will resurge—plain and simple. We need to redouble our efforts to continue progress.

Will we step up or slip back?

The Global Fund now has a plan to support countries to save 16 million lives in the next three years (2020-22). A \$14 billion investment is the minimum needed to get back on track toward ending the epidemics. And there is no simple “maintenance” option; without this new investment, these diseases will claim more lives.

Despite these setbacks, the science shows we can still *end* these epidemics by 2030. The Global Fund is the catalyst to make it happen. With a commitment of \$14 billion from donor governments over the next three years, the Global Fund will support countries to:

- Save 16 million lives and cut the death toll in half
- Stop 234 million infections or cases of HIV, TB, and malaria
- Unlock an additional \$46 billion in funding from lower-income countries

Write a letter to Your Rep. and/or Senators

Tips

- Personalize your letter with why you care about the Global Fund.
- Share a story to give our issues a human face.
- Work with your local RESULTS group to deliver your letter to local and DC offices.

Sample Letter in EPIC Format

Dear Representative/Senator xxxx

Engage: I'm amazed at the progress we've made on AIDS, TB, and Malaria. The Global Fund has been a huge part of that progress, helping save 27 million lives since 2002.

Problem: But I fear that we will take our eye off the big prize—ending these diseases as a public health threat. Science shows it possible, but only if we step up efforts.

Inform: The Global Fund has a plan to save an additional 16 million lives from 2020-22 and move us toward ending AIDS, TB, and malaria. We will only do this with U.S. leadership.

Call to Action: I ask that you do everything possible to ensure that Congress is unwavering and loud on the U.S. commitment to fund the Global Fund plan—talk to leadership, speak to the Administration, make statements on the floor, write an oped, speak to world leaders—do whatever you feel will have the greatest impact. Please let me know what your plans are and let me know about your actions. This is a battle we can win with your leadership.

Action Network Managers Action

Include the tips and sample letter above in your communication to Action Network members and ask them to write letters to their representative and senators that you can hand-carry to Washington for the RESULTS International Conference. You can also ask them if to bring together small groups of people to write letters—you can meet with their groups or guide them in using the Action Sheet to generate letters.

Writing to Congress Workshop Agenda

Below is a sample agenda and script that you can use to put people in your community into action. We know that when people take action they are inspired. The agenda below will require roughly 60 minutes. Adapt the elements to fit your style and timeframe.

I. Setting the Stage – 15 Minutes

2 min: Welcome and acknowledge people for being there.

“Thanks to all of you for coming. There are a lot of ways you could be spending the day, and I want to thank all of you for coming out and learning more about how YOU can play a role in the movement to end poverty. Can the RESULTS volunteers briefly say their name and how many years you’ve been involved? Also, can you all be sure to sign our sign in sheet?”

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 and poverty. In the next few minutes, we’ll . . .

- *Learn a bit about RESULTS, the group organizing this.*
- *We will learn about an issue of poverty.*
- *We will take powerful action on the issue: we’ll write letters to our members of Congress on replenishing the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB, and Malaria.*
- *Finally, we’ll 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 in the room tonight 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.” Other possible questions, *“What are you committed to in life?”* or *“Who do you want to be in the world?”*

Afterward, *“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...

“So, what is RESULTS? 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. “

Show one of the videos: Raise Your Voice: <https://results.org/> or We Have a Vision: http://www.results.org/blog/we_have_a_vision/

1. Share an example of success: *“We protected development assistance for FY2019 after the President proposed cutting it by 30%. We worked with Republicans and Democrats to help secure the highest number ever of congressional supporters for AIDS, TB, and malaria; global education; and maternal & child health, sending a message to the President that these programs should be protected and strengthened. So far we are doing the same for FY2020.”*

2. A local example of our role in creating change is: *"We moved Rep or Senator _____ to sign on to xxx letter as part of this. He/She met with us in _____ (month) of 2019, which was key in getting his/her support. We have a great relationship with the aide."*

A few more details if you have time:

- *"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 & Action Component – 30 Minutes

1. Introduce the issue of the Global Fund with a story or video:
 - Global Fund TB story: <https://tinyurl.com/y9o4a99m>
 - Global Fund HER Project: <https://youtu.be/2YhQcYUHHOk>
 - Global Fund: Keeping Girls in School: <https://youtu.be/L3lue3VYGdA>
2. Read the June Action Sheet together, including sample letter.
3. Show people how to find the contact information for their members of Congress online.
4. Everyone writes their letters to Congress. You can have them choose who to write to, instruct them who to write to. Or create a template with the names and addresses of your representative and senators and have them write to all three (make copies to give to all three offices).
5. Ask writers to read their letter out loud for encouragement and feedback.
6. Debrief on the action-taking – *"How did it feel to write this letter to Congress?"*

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 visiting our representatives and senators.

- *Who is interested in joining us again to take action?*
- *Who is interested in joining us for a meeting with our representative or senators?*
- *Who knows other people or groups who might be interested?*
- *Who is interested in learning more about supporting RESULTS financially?"*

Say thank you, capture contact information: name, phone, email, address. Add them to your Action Network list and stay in touch with them.

Sign them up for a RESULTS orientation here: <https://results.org/volunteer> or put them into our national database here: <https://tinyurl.com/Vollntake> so they can receive Weekly Updates or Monthly Actions. Contact Ken Patterson or Lisa Marchal if you have questions about how to best support new people.