

Making a Mother's Day Promise to Every Child

Every day new moms around the globe make a promise to their newborns — they vow to protect and nurture them so they can live healthy, fulfilling lives. Mother's Day is a celebration of the dedication and determination of moms everywhere to deliver on this promise.

Unfortunately, earlier this spring, the White House released a budget proposal that would pull the rug out from millions of mothers around the world by slashing our contribution to the fight against global poverty.

For decades, the U.S. government's investment in the fight against poverty has supported millions of moms around the world to provide a brighter future for their children. Increasing investment and political leadership has helped drive staggering progress. Needless deaths of young children have been reduced by more than half since 1990, from 35,000 daily to 16,000 today, even as population has increased. There are 40 million fewer children missing out on primary school. And scientists believe an AIDS-free generation, once unimaginable, is now actually within reach.

The White House budget blueprint released in March would slash U.S. funding for these kinds of programs — from maternal health to girls education — by 30% or more. But these federal budget decisions are ultimately up to Congress, and it's up to us to make clear that cuts to effective poverty-reducing programs are unacceptable.

A Moral Document

They say that the federal budget is a moral document, and cutting these kinds of programs is just wrong. Gutting anti-poverty programs could mean more women die in childbirth. It could mean more young girls never see the inside of a classroom. And it could mean more children go without medical care that could save their lives.

For decades, the United States has made the fight against global poverty a bipartisan priority. U.S. investment has helped support lower-income countries to save millions of lives, increase access to education, and put a dent in poverty. If the proposed cuts aren't stopped, it would not just stall progress, but reverse it. It's up to leaders in Congress now to reject threats to these programs, and instead look to how we can advance this fight.

This Mother's Day, use the media to ask your members of Congress to do their part in supporting moms and their children all around the world.

What the Congress Can Do

President Trump’s fiscal year 2018 (FY18) budget, released in March, proposes cutting the State Department budget by 30%. And recent news reports indicate that development assistance programs, including things like education for girls – could be targeted for even steeper cuts.

Congress now has a chance to show real leadership by protecting these vital investments in the FY18 budget. By getting media published on funding the fight against poverty, you can play an essential role in stopping threats to these transformational programs.

Write a Letter to the Editor or Oped

1. For a letter to the editor, reference a **recent article in the paper, budget cuts, or Mother’s Day (May 14)**. Write in a way that will appeal to your community.
2. Use the example below as guidance, but personalize it with your own perspective or reflection on the role of your mother, or moms in general.
3. Tell readers **about the opportunity to secure** a healthy, bright future for every child.
4. Ask your **members of Congress** to protect development assistance.
5. Use the “EPIC” format, like the sample below. Remember to keep it short (100-200 words).
6. If your letter gets published, amplify its impact by sending it to your members of Congress, explaining why this issue matters, and asking them to take action. Share it on social media, and be sure to share your letter with RESULTS staff.

E ngage	When we were born our moms made a promise to protect and nurture us so we could reach our full potential. Mother’s Day is when we celebrate the efforts of moms everywhere to deliver on this promise.
P roblem	Meanwhile this spring the White House released a budget proposal for FY18 that would jeopardize the health and wellbeing of millions of moms and their children all around the world. The budget blueprint would slash our support for things like maternal health and education for young girls by 30% or more.
I nform about the solution	Not only is cutting funding a bad idea, we should be stepping up our investment in these transformational programs. Fortunately, decisions about our country’s budget ultimately lie with Congress, who have the power of the purse.
C all to action!	I’m calling on Senators <your senator> and <your senator>, and Representative <your Representative> to protect and expand funding for development assistance programs. What better gift to ask for this Mother’s Day?

Leading with Action: Advocacy 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 get inspired. The agenda below would require a meeting of 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 an action that will make a difference on that issue. We'll write a letter about appropriations.
- 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 question, “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 the video if you have time: We Have a Vision: http://www.results.org/blog/we_have_a_vision/

1. An example of our success is the Reach Act of 2015. The bill puts the U.S. on track to lead the effort in ending needless child and maternal deaths in poor countries. In 2016, we helped gather 218 cosponsors in the House (over half), and 35 in the Senate (more than one-third), and media in all 50 states. This has set us up to reintroduce and pass the bill this year. Questions?
2. A local example of our role in creating change is: We moved Rep. _____ to cosponsor the bill as part of this—he met with us in _____ (month) of 2016, which was key in getting his/her support.

A few more details if you have time:

- RESULTS partners meet twice per month to plan and take action.
- During one of those meetings, we hook into a national conference call with hundreds of other volunteers around the country to learn more about an issue, learn to speak powerfully, and take action to communicate with our elected officials by sending them letters.
- We also develop plans for influencing our decision makers through face-to-face meetings, the media, and community action.

III. Issues & Action Component – 30 Minutes

1. Introduce the issue of appropriations with a story or video from below:
 - *Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB, and Malaria*: http://www.theglobalfund.org/en/blog/2016-12-01_SALESFORCE_RED_Great_Strides_Toward_an_AIDS-Free_Generation/
 - *Maternal and Child Health & Early Childhood Development*: <http://tokeepapromise.org>
 - *First 1000 Days*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OvS6ijzqfgM&feature=youtu.be>
 - *TB*: http://www.theglobalfund.org/en/blog/2016-10-25_Meet_the_Generation_Mykola_Story/
 - *Global Fund Generation*: http://www.theglobalfund.org/en/blog/2016-08-16_Meet_the_generation_to_End_It_For_Good/
 - *Basic Education and Global Partnership for Education (GPE) in Chad*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r--C6L-8LcE&feature=youtu.be>
 - *GPE accomplishments of 2016*: <http://www.globalpartnership.org/multimedia/video/2016-gpe-year-review>
 - *Why the military supports development assistance*: <https://veterans.usglc.org/#!>
2. Read the February Action Sheet together, including sample letter.
3. If people don't know their members of Congress, show them how to find their legislators and relevant contact information online.
4. Everyone writes letters. Encourage them to personalize. Remember to tell people to add date, name, address, email, phone.
5. Have one or two people volunteer to read their letter out loud for feedback and encouragement.
6. Let people know how/when you'll deliver their letters and that you'll report back.
7. Debrief on the action-taking.

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

“Lastly, we are planning to have future meetings like this one about RESULTS and taking people through the process of taking action by writing letters like the ones you wrote tonight.

- Who is up for doing this again?
- Who knows other people or groups who might be interested?
- We are also looking for people who want to take the next step in using their voice to work with the media and Congress with our group. Who is curious about what our chapter does and wants to learn more?
- Who is interested in learning more about supporting RESULTS financially?”

Share thank yous, and be sure to capture contact information.