

## Module Two- RESULTS 101: How it Works

### **RESULTS 101: How it Works**

First off let me say that RESULTS and its structure isn't for everybody. If you are looking for a postcard to sign or an email to send, you may want to look for another group. But if you are passionate about making a difference, if you are committed to ensuring the poor have dignified pathways out of poverty, if you're willing to go out on a limb, to stand up for what you believe in, then RESULTS is the place for you.

RESULTS' mission statement, our mantra, is that we are empowering citizens across the country and around the world to generate the political will to end hunger and the worst aspects of poverty. Before you can do that you have to identify what stands in the way of achieving that goal and then how best to serve the communities that are at the greatest risk. When we talk about generating political will, what we have to do first is dispel the myth that the poor are directly responsible for their plight. We have to dispel the myth that the underlying causes of poverty are laziness, apathy and ignorance. Our job is to replace that myth with the truth, which is that the underlying causes of poverty are social, economic and political. Taking people out of the box of laziness and ignorance and seeing them as productive members of their society held back by social, economic or political problems not only allows us to take action, it demands that we take action.

So your next question might be how do we do that and how do we identify the programs that will address these issues?

What RESULTS' Legislative Staff does really well is team up with the heavy hitters in hunger and poverty circles and we learn from each other, and from the people working and living in impoverished communities about what is working and what's not. We look for sustainable solutions with a history of success. Organizations like the World Health Organization, the Grameen Bank, the Children's Defense Fund, UNICEF, The Earth Institute and The Kaiser Family Foundation have all lent their expertise in guiding us to develop long term sustainable solutions to the end of hunger and poverty. But what RESULTS doesn't do is fund any of these organizations directly. We ask Congress to do that. In this way, we are able to leverage millions of dollars from the federal budget for programs directed at global health and infectious disease, child survival, microcredit programs, access to Head Start and accessible health care for all Americans.

Armed with this knowledge the legislative staff of RESULTS identifies the most effective programs with the most significant history of results in reaching the poorest of the poor, and then through a series of calls and meetings disperses this information to a grassroots network of about 500 volunteers across the country. From there, our volunteers start chipping away at the myths that hold us back from doing all that

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we could to end hunger and poverty. They write letters to the editor, they generate editorials, they write, they call and meet with their Members of Congress, they hold press conferences, outreach meetings, and host fundraising events, essentially creating a movement by winning the hearts and minds of our political leaders. RESULTS Volunteers educate our members of Congress, the media and members of our community stressing that ending hunger and poverty is not only the right thing to do, but that it is in our own social, economic and political best interest to do so.

Our **volunteers** are the meat and potatoes of the organization. RESULTS has an extraordinarily small number of paid staffers, but an unbelievably strong and loyal cadre of grassroots volunteers. Each global or domestic RESULTS group (four or more committed volunteers) is responsible for building and maintaining a relationship with their members of Congress and the media. Each group has a designated **Group Leader** that agrees to be in direct communication with a RESULTS staff member or a RESULTS **Regional Coordinator** once a week to receive legislative updates on our issues and strategize how to move our issues forward in Congress, the media and our communities. The Group Leader then takes this information back to their group of volunteers where they strategize on the most effective way to influence their member of Congress.

Global and Domestic RESULTS volunteers also meet once a month for a **national conference call** with staff and volunteers across the country for one gigantic strategy meeting with an average of 200 people on the calls. Volunteers also make their way to Washington, D.C., in June for our **International Conference** to hear critically acclaimed speakers, get training and hone their lobbying skills and then lobby their members of Congress on Capitol Hill. Given all of that it is no wonder that RESULTS works.

So it is truly our volunteers that are the heart and soul of this organization. They are the ones responsible for breaking through the myths that hold our leaders back from making hunger and poverty a political priority. They are the ones who stand up in a crowd to speak out on behalf of those with no voice, even though every fiber of their body says “sit down,” “don’t stand out.” They are the ones constantly pushing, constantly questioning, constantly demanding better from a country and government that could do so much, with so little, for so many. RESULTS is not for everyone, but if you have been searching for a way to make a real difference in the lives of million of people around the world, I think you’ve found it.