

Action Sheet

Call on Congress to Craft a Global Response to the Global COVID-19 Pandemic

The United States must urgently respond to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 and protect hard-fought gains in global health and education in low-income countries. Communities already facing poverty face the greatest risks, as we are seeing every day. And it's not just the spread of COVID-19 that is putting lives at risk in low-resource settings; it's the disruption of other vital health services, vaccinations, and medicine supplies resulting from governments diverting scarce healthcare services to deal with COVID-19. Here are some projections of what could happen without further global support from the U.S. and other nations:

- The World Bank estimates that the COVID-19 pandemic could drive 100 million people into extreme poverty.
- The current generation of students is at risk of losing \$10 trillion in earnings over time due to pandemic-related school closures.
- According to the Stop TB Partnership, disruptions to health services could cause an additional 6.3 million cases of tuberculosis and an additional 1.4 million TB deaths between 2020 and 2025. For example, in India, notification of new TB cases plummeted by 80 percent when national lockdown measures went into effect.
- Sixty-eight countries are experiencing disruptions in vaccine delivery in the face of COVID-19. That puts 80 million children under age one at risk of missing their routine immunizations. For example, in Pakistan, electronic immunization records have enabled providers in the Sindh province to document a 65 percent decrease in childhood immunization visits.
- Without urgent action, the number of people facing hunger is expected to double to 265 million by the end of 2020, according to the World Food Program. Wasting, a form of severe malnutrition, is the single biggest driver of increased child deaths in projections of the impact of COVID-19.

Congress is Hearing Us

Congress still has not passed a COVID-19 supplemental spending bill to address the crises in global health, hunger, and nutrition. But your voices are being heard. The House HEROES Act included no money for international development back in May, but after hearing from you, House leadership included an additional \$10 billion for COVID-19 in the FY21 State and Foreign Operations Appropriations spending bill. And though foreign aid has not been a priority for

them, the Senate included \$4.4 billion for international development (mostly for Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance) in their HEALS Act bill.

We must pressure Congress and the Administration to come back to the negotiating table in September to pass a COVID-19 bill that includes a global response to the pandemic. Work with your group to submit letters to the editor calling on your members of Congress to do their job and break the logjam in DC. Ask them to push for the immediate passage of an emergency response package that includes no less than \$20 billion to help fight coronavirus and protect access to healthcare in low-income countries.

Take Action: Call on Congress to Include a Global Response

Use the EPIC message below to write a letter to the editor and put others in your community into action.

Engage: I'm calling on my senator/representative to protect U.S. investments in global health and U.S. leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Problem: The World Bank estimates that the COVID-19 pandemic could drive over 70 million people into extreme poverty. There could be a spike in tuberculosis cases and deaths, and global hunger and malnutrition could double. Global organizations like the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB, and Malaria and Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance are out of emergency funds, and the stakes are high.

Inform: Congress has shown some signs that it wants to do the right thing and help mitigate these possible outcomes. What we need now is the resolve to make this happen. It is imperative that we increase U.S. support to existing global health programs. Congress must come through.

Call to Action: I am asking my senator/representative to speak to Senate/House leadership and ask that at least \$20 billion for international development be included in a COVID-19 supplemental bill, including:

- \$4 billion for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB, and Malaria over 2 years,
- \$4 billion for Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance,
- \$2 billion for anti-hunger efforts, with at least \$500 million for nutrition

Virtual Letter Writing Workshop Agenda

If you want assistance arranging technology for a virtual meeting, contact us at grassroots@results.org. In preparing for your meeting, distribute materials – including the September Action Sheet and [our leave behind document](#) - electronically or do a screen-share in your online platform. Let people know that they will be writing letters so they can be ready with whatever equipment (pen/paper, laptop, tablet) they need. Also, consider delegating pieces of the agenda to members of your group in advance so many can be heard during the meeting.

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.

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 this time, 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. Now we can 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 and poverty. 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 be writing letters to the editor.*
- *And, finally, see who is interested in continuing to make a difference with RESULTS.”*

10 min: Center the group and do introductions.

“Let’s see who has gathered 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. “ You can also [read our Values Statement](#).

1. Share an example of success: *"We protected development assistance for FY20 after the President proposed cutting it by 30%. We worked with Republicans and Democrats to help secure the highest number ever of congressional supporters ever 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."*
2. Share a local example of our role in creating change (perhaps a way in which you moved a legislator to take action).
3. 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 and Action Component - 30 Minutes

1. Introduce the issue with a story or video about a request area (not an exhaustive list). This can be done through screen-sharing or just read a story aloud.
 - a. *Global Fund:* <https://tinyurl.com/AIDS2020GF>
 - b. *Gavi:* <https://tinyurl.com/VidforGavi>
2. Read the September Action Sheet together, taking turns paragraph by paragraph - including the EPIC message. Discuss why EPIC is such a great tool for communicating.
3. Using the sample message as a guide, encourage each participant to write a personalized letter.
4. Ask a volunteer to read their letter aloud for positive feedback and encouragement.

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 continue by following up on the meeting(s) we must decide on next steps to take. Who is interested in joining us again to take our next action?"

Say thank you, capture contact information: name, phone, email, address. Add them to your Action Network list and stay in touch with them. Send contact info to Ken Patterson or Lisa Marchal for the RESULTS national database as part of your group's Action Network. Your new people will receive actions on a regular basis. They can also sign up [here](#).



Action Network Message

Please take action to ensure Congress crafts a global response to the COVID-19 global pandemic. [Write to your local media and call for action.](#)