

CONTACT:

Helena Finnegan
Mary's Meals USA Communications Manager
helena.finnegan@marysmeals.org
239-290-7788

Mary's Meals Statement on World Hunger Day

Global School-feeding Charity Founder Says Child Hunger Not Inevitable or Unsolvable.



Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow speaks at a conference about school feeding and child hunger.

Bloomfield, N.J. – May 23, 2023 – Ahead of World Hunger Day on May 28, global school-feeding charity Mary's Meals CEO and Founder, [Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow](#) says child hunger is not inevitable or unsolvable. However, to achieve UN Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2: [Zero Hunger](#) by 2030, individuals and organizations must act immediately and cohesively with innovative strategies and partnerships.

"My intention is only to challenge a commonly held myth that child hunger is inevitable – that the scale of the problem is too enormous to solve. It very clearly isn't," said MacFarlane-Barrow.

SDG 2: Zero Hunger is the second of 17 goals adopted by all UN Member States in 2015 as part of the [2030 Agenda](#) for Sustainable Development. The SDGs are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and improve the lives and prospects of everyone, everywhere.

"Mary's Meals is a movement playing a crucial part in working towards ending child hunger. Along with others, we want every child in this world to have the opportunity to eat a daily meal in a place of education. How can any part of the human family make progress if its children are without adequate food and access to at least a basic education? Based on what it is costing Mary's Meals today to provide 2.4+ million of the world's poorest children in 18 countries with a daily meal in their place of education – 13 cents per meal or \$25.20 per child for an entire school year - we can roughly work out the total amount required to serve all of the children in the world who are in most acute need of school meals. It's estimated that there are 140 million children who find themselves in this position and nearly half are not even enrolled in school," MacFarlane-Barrow stated.

Mary's Meals provides meals to children in Ethiopia, Haiti, Kenya, Niger, South Sudan, Syria and Yemen, which according to the World Food Programme are seven of the current [hunger hotspots](#).

"We envision a future that sees children and communities, equipped with an education, set free from poverty and dependence on aid. But this isn't just a dream for the future. The life-changing reality of daily meals in school is already transforming some of the poorest, most vulnerable communities on earth. It would require the world's governments and international bodies to devote

only a tiny fraction of the resources at their disposal to make this happen and thereby transform the future of the world's poorest nations. And it would require all of us to share only a tiny fraction of our own resources in order to make it happen too," he said.

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About Mary's Meals

Now in its 21st year, [Mary's Meals](#) is a global movement that sets up school-feeding programs in some of the world's most vulnerable communities, where conflict, poverty and hunger often prevent children from gaining an education. Mary's Meals works with in-country volunteers to provide one daily nutritious meal in a place of learning to attract children into the classroom to receive an education. This simple solution to help end world hunger also enables children to lift themselves from the cycle of hunger and poverty.

Mary's Meals began by feeding 200 children in Malawi in 2002. Today, the organization feeds 2,429,182 hungry children every school day in 5,084 schools across five continents in the following countries: Benin, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Haiti, India, Kenya, Lebanon, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Myanmar, Niger, South Sudan, Syria, Thailand, Yemen, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. Mary's Meals collaborates with the U.N. World Food Program, partners with USAID in Liberia and is part of the School Meals Coalition, an emerging initiative of governments and partners to drive actions that can urgently re-establish, improve, and scale up food and education systems. For more information about Mary's Meals, visit marysmealsusa.org.

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Facts

- More than 345 million people are affected by hunger and 66 million children are out of school.
- Rising feeding costs, fuel and transportation are impacting the ability to feed hungry people globally.
- Despite a 20% rise in feeding costs, for just \$25.20, Mary Meals can feed a child at school for an entire year.
- Of the current [Hunger Hot Spots](#) listed by the World Food Programme, Mary's Meals provides meals to children in places of learning in seven of those countries including Ethiopia, Haiti, Kenya, Niger, South Sudan, Syria and Yemen.
- Thanks to a partnership with USAID in Liberia, Mary's Meals feeds 151,968 children every school day.
- Mary's Meals serves in Niger in the [Sahel](#) region and in 7 [East African](#) countries.
- As part of its emergency relief efforts, Mary's Meals collaborated with its in-country partners to continue feeding thousands of children impacted by the devastating earthquakes in Syria and powerful Cyclone Freddy in Malawi.
- Since 2002, Mary's Meals has served more than 2.8 billion meals worldwide.