

## MARY'S MEALS LAUNCHES NEW SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAM IN YEMEN

*Charity brings hope to 4,000 children amid ongoing humanitarian crisis*

Bloomfield, N.J. – January 13, 2022 – [Mary's Meals](#), the global school feeding charity, has started a new program in Yemen. The organization currently feeds more than two million children every school day in some of the world's poorest communities, offering children not only the sustenance of a nutritious meal, but also the chance of an education and hope for a brighter future.

Working in partnership with established international nongovernmental operation (NGO), Yemen Aid, Mary's Meals now provides four schools in the Al Mansoor district of Aden with daily meals for more than 4,000 children. This district is particularly vulnerable as it is home to a large number of internally displaced people (IDPs) and other marginalized populations who all experience high levels of hunger.

Building on Yemen Aid's existing relationships with these communities and their leaders, Mary's Meals successfully implemented a daily meal of a filled pita bread sandwich with fruit or vegetables for every child in school. In Yemen, poverty and conflict often keep children out of education and coercion into child labor can become a real threat. The serving of a nutritious lunch encourages children and attracts them back into the security of the classroom.

[Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow](#), Founder and CEO of Mary's Meals, said, "Mary's Meals always has a desire to support those in the greatest need. Given that Yemen can be described as the biggest humanitarian crisis in the world, and so many children are suffering, we are delighted to begin serving our daily school meals there – meeting the immediate need of the hungry child and, crucially, at the same time, enabling their education. We thank all those supporting our work in ways that make it possible for us to keep moving forward towards the next child waiting."

Yemen Aid was founded in 2016 by CEO Summar Nasser and a group of fellow Yemeni Americans in response to the protracted humanitarian crisis in Yemen. After reading about the organization's crucial work, Mary's Meals contacted Yemen Aid to see how a school feeding program might benefit the children in Yemen.

Kathryn Gemmell, Program Partner Manager at Mary's Meals International, said, "Yemen Aid has been doing invaluable work in the country for several years now and they have developed strong links with local communities. We are grateful to be able to learn from their experience and to work in close partnership with them to serve the children of Yemen."

Summer Nasser, CEO of Yemen Aid, said, "As we embark on this new relationship with Mary's Meals, our hope is to increase support to children by tackling hunger through strategic, sustainable approaches in the education sector. The school feeding program will broaden the horizon for these students who have been losing interest in school and provide more security for parents."

Currently, Yemen Aid provides thousands of food baskets to displaced people and communities and supports thousands of malnourished children. They also provide support and advice with hygiene, health and welfare issues. Additionally, they run a number of women's programs, supporting female farmers, supplying resources to female businesses and offering skill development and psychosocial support.

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### **Background Information on the Crisis in Yemen**

UNICEF references Yemen as the largest humanitarian crisis in the world, with around 21 million people in need of humanitarian assistance, including more than 11 million children. The escalating conflict and economic decline mean nearly 2.3 million children under five years of age are projected to suffer from acute malnutrition this year, says a February 2021 report by four UN agencies. 400,000 of these fledgling children are expected to die if they do not receive urgent treatment.

### **About Mary's Meals**

Mary's Meals is a global movement that sets up school feeding programs in some of the world's poorest communities, where poverty and hunger prevent children from gaining an education. Mary's Meals works with in-country volunteers to provide one daily meal in a place of learning to attract chronically poor children into the classroom, where they receive an education that can be their ladder out of poverty. Mary's Meals began by feeding just 200 children in Malawi in 2002. Today, the organization feeds 2,058,099 hungry children every school day across five continents in the following countries: Benin, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Haiti, India, Kenya, Lebanon, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Myanmar, Niger, South Sudan, Syria, Thailand, Uganda, Yemen, Zambia and Zimbabwe. For more information about Mary's Meals, visit [marysmeals.org](http://marysmeals.org). Follow Mary's Meals on [Facebook](#) or [Instagram](#).

### **Interviews**

Interviews with Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow, Founder and CEO of Mary's Meals, are available. Additional images are available upon request. Contact Paul McMahan at (781) 910-0904 or [paul.mcmahan@marysmeals.org](mailto:paul.mcmahan@marysmeals.org).