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Mary's Meals Now Feeding 3 Million Children Every School Day Across 16 Countries

Amid growing need and declining aid, Mary's Meals expands school feeding to reach 462,000 more children.

Bloomfield, N.J. – Wednesday, September 3, 2025 – On September 8, Mary's Meals will announce a major milestone: the expansion of its school feeding program from 2.6 million to 3 million children each day. These meals are served in over 5,800 schools across 16 countries. This achievement comes at a critical time, as reductions in international aid make community-led solutions like Mary's Meals more essential than ever.

[Mary's Meals](#) delivers daily school meals through local partnerships and community-run programs—at a cost of just \$25.20 per child per school year. By feeding children where they learn, Mary's Meals meets their immediate need for food while supporting access to education—a proven path out of poverty.

This expansion includes a major scale-up in eight countries—Ethiopia, Haiti, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, South Sudan, Zambia, and Zimbabwe—reaching an additional 462,000 children affected by hunger and disrupted education due to conflict, climate extremes, and political or economic instability. In addition, last year, Mary's Meals began operating in Mozambique to reach 5,000 children with a daily school meal.

Mary's Meals [2024 Impact Report](#) highlights the wide-ranging benefits of school meals, linking consistent nutrition in educational settings to improvements in children's health, growth, and learning outcomes. It also emphasizes the broader community impact—reducing hunger, increasing school attendance, and strengthening local collaboration. Notably, 100% of teachers reported that the program had a positive influence on the quality of education this year, citing improvements in attendance, participation, focus, lesson retention, pass rates, and a reduction in sickness and absenteeism.

To mark this major milestone in the fight against child hunger, Mary's Meals is calling for urgent global support to expand its life-changing school feeding programs in the world's most vulnerable and hard-to-reach communities. With more than 181 million children under the age of five experiencing severe food poverty globally, the need for consistent school feeding has never been more urgent.

Mary's Meals Founder and CEO, [Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow](#) said, "This landmark is less a celebration than it is a call to action. We invite every person of goodwill to join the Mary's Meals movement so that our vision — that every child in this world receives one daily meal in their place of education — might be realized. Whilst it is an amazing thing that this work has grown to reach three million children, the sad reality is that tens of millions of children remain hungry and out of school."

He added, "Today, in a world in which we produce more than enough food for us all, thousands of children will die of hunger-related causes. And yet it costs Mary's Meals around .13 cents to serve one meal, and just \$25.20 to feed a child for a whole school year."

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About Mary's Meals

Now in its 23rd 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 and trusted partners to provide one daily nutritious meal in a place of learning to bring 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 more than 3 million children every school day in more than 5,800 schools in the following countries: Benin, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Haiti, India, Kenya, Lebanon, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, South Sudan, Syria, Yemen, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. Mary's Meals is part of the global School Meals Coalition, an emerging initiative of governments and partners to drive actions that can urgently reestablish, improve, and scale up food and education systems. For more information about Mary's Meals, visit marysmealsusa.org.

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