

# mary's meals

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Funding to help  
'Feed The Future'**

September 2015

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Scottish charity Mary's Meals is to receive match funding by the UK Government for a special three-month project.

During the charity's 'Feed Our Future' appeal, which will run until 28 December 2015, the UK Government will double all personal donations made by UK residents, up to £5 million.

Mary's Meals 'Feed Our Future' campaign aims to extend the charity's successful feeding programmes to more hungry children across Malawi and Zambia, and underlines Mary's Meals' commitment to improving the future for significantly more hungry children.

This is a fantastic boost for the charity, which has had a remarkable year and has attracted the attention of bus tycoon, Sir Brian Souter who has also come onboard with his company Stagecoach.

Mary's Meals provides impoverished children with a daily meal in school, attracting children into education when they would otherwise rely on handouts or scavenge for food. In May this year, the charity announced that it had reached the momentous milestone of feeding one million children every school day!

Also in May, Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow, the Founder and CEO of Mary's Meals – a former fish farmer from Argyll – also released a book telling the fascinating story of Mary's Meals to date, 'The Shed That Fed a Million Children', with the title quickly making it onto the Sunday Times and Times best sellers' lists.

The charity has been praised for its low cost approach, which sees 93p of every £1 spent directly on charitable activities and the cost to feed a child for a whole school year set at just £12.20 since 2014. Now, this UK Aid match-funding grant from the UK Government means that that a single donation of £12.20 made between 28 September and 28 December, 2015, will significantly feed not one, but two children for a whole school year.

This will prove a massive benefit to the charity which aims to extend its school feeding operations in both Malawi and Zambia where 108,818 chronically hungry children have already been identified in great need of help. With the double-funding boost from the government, it is hoped the 'Feed Our Future' appeal can raise enough to reach all of those children.

The Mary's Meals 'Feed Our Future' appeal has also received significant support from transport operator Stagecoach Group. The company will help advertise the 'Feed Our Future – Double Your Donations' campaign across the UK.

Buses on more than 150 routes across Scotland, North West England, and Southern England will carry a special 'text to donate' code, as well as Mary's Meals posters and stickers, urging the public to donate while gifts are being doubled, to help feed more hungry children with a nutritious meal in school. Stagecoach will match-fund customer and employee donations up to £100,000.

The transport group and its advertising partner, Exterior Media, have also joined forces to provide a double-decker bus specially wrapped in Mary's Meals 'Feed Our Future' livery, which will publicise the appeal on the move.

Magnus McFarlane Barrow, CEO and Founder of Mary's Meal, said: "For us to be able to receive match funding from the UK Government is just brilliant news. This means that every individual donation received in the name of our 'Feed Our Future' appeal for the next three months will actually be doubled!

“As a charity we very much rely on grassroots donations from individuals and groups doing what they can, so to have all these generous gifts from across the UK doubled for the next three months is just amazing!

“Our vision is that every child should be able to receive one good meal every day in a place of education. Working together with people who share our ideals, we believe that our vision can be achieved in this world of plenty, where there is enough food for everyone.

“Mary’s Meals is reaching more than one million children with feeding programmes across four continents, but with 59 million children still out of school and chronically hungry, we believe our work has just begun.

“We intend to use this funding to extend our school feeding programmes to feed 108,818 children in Malawi and Zambia. This will provide new feeding programmes for 34 schools in Zambia and 117 schools in Malawi.

“Our work to develop school feeding programmes in partnership with communities and local Government in Malawi and Zambia will also go some way to creating a long-term skills bank and capacity locally in the delivery of sustainable community-based feeding programmes.

“The extra support from our partners, Sir Brian Souter and Stagecoach and Exterion is also fantastic and comes at a time when we are able to double our funds and for that we are truly grateful.”

International Development Secretary, Justine Greening said: “Thousands of desperately hungry children across Malawi and Zambia face life-threatening malnutrition. This has a devastating impact on their health and ability to get an education, making it impossible for them to fulfil their potential.

“UK Aid Match will double public donations to Mary’s Meals’ ‘Feed Our Future’ appeal, which will give over 100,000 children the vital nutrition they need and the chance to stay in school. Investment in children is an investment in the future of Africa.”

Sir Brian Souter, Stagecoach Group Chairman and Co-founder, added: “Providing a child with one meal every school day can make a huge difference - improving their health, encouraging them in their education and helping lift them out of poverty later in life. The amazing thing is that it costs just six pence to provide a life-changing meal.

“We are delighted to support the great work Mary’s Meals is doing around the world. I hope our match funding pledge will also encourage our employees and customers to get onboard with Mary’s Meals. “Whether they live in Kirkcaldy or Kenya, Motherwell or Malawi, children everywhere are our future. We can all play our part in giving them a better chance in life.”

## **Ends**

## **Notes to Editors**

## **Mary’s Meals**

Mary’s Meals began in Malawi in 2002 when its founder Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow met a young woman called Emma who was dying from AIDS. She was sitting on the mud floor of her hut surrounded by her children. When Magnus asked her 14-year-old son what his dreams were in life, his stark reply was: “To have enough food to eat and to go to school one day”. This was a key part of the inspiration that led to the Mary’s Meals campaign.

**For more information, please contact:**

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