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Strictly embargoed until  
00.01 Monday 3 December 2018

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## Mary's Meals to Double The Love with UK government funding boost

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Please note the strict embargo until 00.01 Monday, 3 December 2018.

Mary's Meals today launches a new campaign, Double The Love, that will see the UK government match public donations to Mary's Meals until 1 March 2019.

The UK government funding means public donations to Double The Love will be doubled by the UK government, up to £2 million. This will enable Mary's Meals to reach thousands more chronically hungry children in Zambia with a life-changing meal every school day.

The Double The Love campaign was officially announced in Dalmally, Argyll, where the global work of Mary's Meals first began.

And there was a double treat in store for the charity's founder and global chief executive Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow when he visited the village primary school to celebrate the news.

Two sets of identical twins, four-year-olds Grace and Flora MacDougall, and eight-year-olds Ed and Ollie Cowdry, welcomed him to Dalmally Primary.

Commenting on today's launch, Magnus said: "We had a wonderful welcome at Dalmally Primary School, where the children are always so enthusiastic about the work of Mary's Meals.

"Our wonderful supporters of all ages never cease to amaze us with their love and kindness. With match funding from the UK government, we have a wonderful opportunity to create an even bigger impact and transform the lives of many, many more hungry children with the gift of food and education."

Zambia suffers from high rates of malnutrition, poverty and food insecurity. Children can often be found working in fields, begging on street corners or scavenging for food just to survive. More than 360,000 primary school-age children are out of school, and those who do attend are often so hungry they don't have the energy to concentrate and learn in class.

But, by providing one good meal every day in school, Mary's Meals attracts impoverished children to the classroom where they can gain an all-important education.

Mary's Meals has been working with communities in Zambia since 2014 and is now feeding more than 92,000 children there every school day.

International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt said: "Every time the British public reach into their pockets and donate to a UK Aid Match charity their generosity directly changes the lives of some of the world's most vulnerable people.

"In Zambia many children do not attend school. Instead they work in the fields, beg on street corners and scavenge for food. The UK government is committed to ensuring that every child across the world receives 12 years of quality education.

"That is why we are so proud to support Mary's Meals through UK Aid Match. The 'Double the Love' campaign will ensure that Zambian children are given a nutritious school-meal every day. Their vital work not only gets children back into school, but it also means that those children do not go hungry."

Around the world, Mary's Meals is reaching 1,361,586 impoverished children in 17 countries, giving them the energy and opportunity to gain an education that can one day be their ladder out of poverty.

With the charity's low cost approach, a donation of just £13.90 will feed a child for a whole school year. During Double The Love, that same donation, when matched by the UK government, will feed two hungry children for an entire school year.

For further information on the Double The Love appeal, and to find out how to get involved, please visit [www.marysmeals.org.uk](http://www.marysmeals.org.uk)

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## Notes to Editors

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- Photo captions:
  - Image 1 & 2: Grace and Flora MacDougall, and Ed and Ollie Cowdry, welcome Mary's Meals founder and global chief executive Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow to Dalmally Primary to launch UK Aid Match campaign.
  - Image 3: school children being fed Mary's Meals in Zambia. More than 360,000 primary school-age children are out of school in Zambia, and those who do attend are often so hungry they don't have the energy to concentrate and learn in class.
- Mary's Meals is a simple idea that works. The charity provides one daily meal in a place of learning in order to attract chronically poor children into the classroom, where they receive an education that can, in the future, be their ladder out of poverty.
- Mary's Meals feeds 1,361,586 children every school day, across five continents, in 17 countries: Malawi, Liberia, Zambia, Haiti, Kenya, India, South Sudan, Uganda, Ethiopia, Benin, Lebanon, Syria, Myanmar, Thailand, Ecuador, Madagascar and Romania.
- The average global cost to feed a child with Mary's Meals for a whole school year is just £13.90.
- Independently verified research from Malawi, Liberia and Zambia shows that in schools where children receive Mary's Meals, hunger is reduced, enrolment increases, attendance improves, drop-out rates fall, absences dwindle, concentration in lessons is heightened, attainment levels increase, parents are less anxious, and children are happier.
- The Mary's Meals campaign was born in 2002 when Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow visited Malawi during a famine and met a mother dying from AIDS. When Magnus asked her eldest son, Edward, what his dreams were in life, he replied simply: "I want to have enough food to eat and to go to school one day."
- Public donations to Double The Love, with the support of the UK government, will reach more hungry children in Zambia with life-changing meals in school. Money raised above the £2 million match funding threshold will not be matched and will go to general funds, enabling children in impoverished communities across 17 countries to receive Mary's Meals.
- Mary's Meals is committed to spending at least 93% of donations directly on its charitable activities. This is only possible because much of the charity's work is done by an army of dedicated volunteers – including more than 80,000 in Malawi alone.
- Please visit [www.marysmeals.org.uk](http://www.marysmeals.org.uk) to find out more about the work of Mary's Meals.

### UK Aid Match

- UK Aid Match brings charities, the British public and the UK government together to collectively change the lives of some of the world's poorest and most vulnerable people.
- It is designed to provide opportunities for the UK public to engage with international development issues and have a say in how UK aid is spent, whilst boosting the impact of the very best civil society projects to reach the poorest people in developing countries.

- For every £1 donated to a UK Aid Match campaign the government will also contribute £1 of UK aid, to help these projects go further in changing and saving lives. UK Aid Match is funded from the international development budget, for donations made by individuals living in the UK.

## Media contacts

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