

MARY'S MEALS

2025/26

# MAGAZINE

## 60 SECONDS WITH WILF SCOLDING

Star Wars actor on his  
love for Mary's Meals

## LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS

Our work in Haiti

## 3 MILLION SMILES

Reaching even  
more hungry  
children

mary's  
meals

a simple solution  
to world hunger

[WWW.MARYSMEALS.ORG.UK](http://WWW.MARYSMEALS.ORG.UK)

# WHAT DOES MARY'S MEALS DO?

A simple solution  
to world hunger

Mary's Meals works alongside local communities to serve nutritious school meals to more than three million children every day. Around the world, many children are missing out on their education because of hunger.

Our meals bring children to the classroom and then give them energy to learn. This means they can make the most of their education, which can help communities to break the generational cycle of poverty.

## SCHOOL + FOOD = HOPE



£19.15

is all it costs Mary's Meals to feed a child every school day for a whole year

1  
YEAR

3 million  
children



16 countries

10p per meal



800 UK  
volunteers



\*Numbers correct at time of printing

To find out more about our work  
visit: [marysmeals.org.uk](http://marysmeals.org.uk)

## HAITI: PROVIDING A LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS

As gangs wreak havoc across Haiti, Mary's Meals continues to feed the children who need us.

Mary's Meals has been serving meals to hungry children in Haiti since 2006. The poorest country in the Americas, Haiti has been plagued by extreme violence and insecurity since 2018. Daily shootings and killings dominate life, with entire areas under gang rule.

Alarmingly, recent figures suggest children make up half of gang members. Many children can't afford to go to school, so they hang around the streets, attracting the attention of the gangs. Rob Padberg, founder of one of our partners in Haiti, Bureau de Nutrition et Développement (BND), says: "They try to get the children who have nothing to do and they pay them to be their 'soldiers'. It's very difficult to get those children out."

However, Mary's Meals is providing a light in the darkness in Haiti. Every school day, more than 180,000 children in over 580 schools are attracted off the streets and into the classroom with the promise of a good meal.

Rob's colleague, Emmline Toussaint, says: "Food is the biggest incentive. To stop [children] being in a gang, we need to focus on the poverty that is killing them."



Walker

Chantrelle Paul is a volunteer cook at a school in Haiti's capital, Port au Prince, where her son, Walker, 11, eats Mary Meals. The promise of a daily school meal brings her great relief after she lost her business in the gang violence.

She says: "If I don't have any money, I don't have to think about what's going to happen because I know he is going to eat a good meal at school."

**"The meals are one of the best things that Mary's Meals could have ever done for me and my family."**

Despite the chaos in Haiti, working together with our incredible partners, we have been able to keep serving Mary's Meals in the vast majority of schools where we work. This remarkable tenacity to keep operating is testament to the hope Chantrelle holds on to. She says: "I believe that one day things will be restored, and we'll have a better Haiti."



Chantrelle



It costs just 10p a day to feed a child with Mary's Meals. Donate today to feed more children like Walker.

# THREE MILLION SMILES

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**From 200 children in Malawi, to more than three million children today – for more than 20 years Mary's Meals has attracted children into the classroom with the promise of a school meal.**

Mary's Meals is a simple idea that works. By providing a daily meal at school, hungry children are encouraged into the classroom where they can gain an education that can provide an escape route from poverty.

Dija



Today, thanks to our incredible supporters and volunteers, more than three million children in 16 countries around the world will go to school knowing they can rely on Mary's Meals to fuel their learning and their dreams.

In schools where our daily meals are served, hunger is reduced, enrolment increases, attendance improves, drop-out rates fall, absences dwindle, concentration in lessons is heightened, and participation levels increase.

Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow, Founder of Mary's Meals, says: "When we first began serving Mary's Meals in one small primary school in Malawi back in 2003, we could never have imagined that this would grow into a global movement now serving three million children every school day.

**"This work has grown the way it has because, all over the world, people of goodwill are sharing a little of what they have, so that children can eat and go to school."**

## A special approach

What's special about Mary's Meals is that the programme is owned and run by local communities in the countries where we work, with food sourced locally wherever possible, to support the economy.

Our work wouldn't be possible without our incredible global movement of supporters – from the volunteers who rise with the sun to cook Mary's Meals for their children, to every penny, prayer and minute given from here in the UK. Each and every little act of love is changing the world, one school meal at a time.

Magnus continues: "We see that each time local volunteers begin to serve our school meals, using locally sourced food, hope enters in. Children begin attending school for the first time, because of the promise of a meal. And those who were previously too hungry to concentrate in class are now able to learn."



## The next child waiting

Our low cost approach means that, with Mary's Meals, a hungry child can learn on a full stomach for just 10p a meal. And £19.15 can feed a child with a meal for a whole school year. Yet too many children around the world remain hungry and out of school.

Magnus says: "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. This very day, in a world in which we produce more than enough food for us all, thousands of children will die of hunger-related causes.

**"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 realised. When we see how this simple, inexpensive intervention is helping to transform some of the world's poorest communities we have an urgent desire for it to grow faster – and a belief that it can."**

## Ismayila's story

Extreme weather and financial insecurity are making life in rural Malawi, where Ismayila and his family live, unbearable. Successive failed harvests mean they have little food to put on the table. Then floods washed away their home leaving them with nothing except hunger.



Ismayila

Ismayila's mother, Alesi, says: "Hunger will not leave [us]. I fear that my children will not have a good education or a good future."

But this family and their small, isolated community have been given a lifeline. As part of a recent expansion of our school feeding programme in Malawi, Mary's Meals arrived at the local school and now its pupils, including Ismayila and his siblings, enjoy a daily school meal while they learn.



Alesi

Alesi says: "I'm so happy because the school feeding programme will help our children to eat and go to class. Education is important because if, by the grace of God, they finish their education, they will get good jobs."

**You can make a lasting difference to the lives of hungry children like Ismayila. Find out about fundraising for Mary's Meals**



# BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS TO GIRLS' EDUCATION



**At Mary's Meals, we truly believe education is for everyone. Our school feeding programmes encourage all children to attend school and we are proud that girls make up 50% of the children who eat our school meals.**

In many of the countries where we work, girls are less likely to be encouraged to go to school than their male counterparts. Poverty can force parents to choose between their children, and girls are often kept out of school to help around the house, or go to work or even be married at a young age.

By offering a daily school meal, Mary's Meals provides an incentive for parents to send their daughters to school, which can ultimately lead them out of poverty.

Mantasha, from India, is one of the girls who benefits from Mary's Meals. Life hasn't been easy for the 12-year-old, who lost her mother when she was just six years old. When her father became unable to work due to ill health, the family was forced to move to Delhi to live with Mantasha's aunt. Mantasha's two older sisters work in garment factories to support the family, while her two younger sisters remain at home.

Mantasha says: "If my sisters are not working, there is no food at home."

**Sadly, the story of girls working instead of learning is all too familiar: 119 million girls are out of school worldwide, according to the UN.**

But Mary's Meals is changing the story for Mantasha. At her school in Bhalswa Dairy, the slum area where the family now lives, she eats a nutritious, hot meal every school day, giving her the energy to learn.

Mantasha says: "Only after I came here did I start to feel hope that I could be educated. I want to be a teacher and give the same hope to other children. My dream is to build a school and teach there."

With your support, girls like Mantasha who receive Mary's Meals today can one day grow up, well-nourished and well-educated, to become the women who will lift their communities out of poverty.

**Looking for an extra special gift?**



Help make a real difference to children like Mantasha with one of our beautiful gift cards.

# HOW MARY'S MEALS WORKS



**Regular gifts allow us to keep our promise to the children we serve and plan for the future.**



A regular donation of just £4 will feed 40 hungry children, every month! **Find out about setting up a regular gift.**

# LIVES CHANGED

**The impact of Mary's Meals goes far beyond the children sitting in classrooms today, it changes the future for generations to come.**

Our school meals enable children to make the most of their education so that they can unlock their potential and break free from the devastating cycle of poverty they and their families might otherwise remain trapped in.

After more than twenty years of running our school feeding programme, we are so excited to see this generational change happening, as children who ate Mary's Meals at school have had the chance to study further and build successful careers. Our school meals really are life-changing: these children are now becoming the men and women helping their families and supporting their communities to build a better future for their children too.



**Bernadette's story**

**Bernadette is a Primary School Teacher at the same school in Malawi where she once ate Mary's Meals**

"I was one of the children from a disadvantaged background, often going to school on an empty stomach. With the arrival of Mary's Meals, things changed for the better. We no longer had to worry about hunger, and our minds were free to concentrate on our studies.

"Every time I was in the top three positions in my class, it was because of Mary's Meals. This programme provided us with the sustenance we needed to thrive in school. I owe a great deal of my success to them. Without them, I would have been at home, battling hunger. But now, I am a teacher, right here at the same school where I was once a beneficiary of the school feeding programme.

"The concept of Mary's Meals is such a good idea. It's a helping hand that lifts us up. If it wasn't for Mary's Meals I would not be here now in my job and talking to you. I believe I am one of the girls who has truly emerged from poverty."

**We can deliver talks about Mary's Meals for local clubs and groups. Request a talk.**

## LITTLE ACTS OF LOVE

**Meet the volunteers around the globe who are the beating heart of our work**



**Hellena**

**Hellena is a volunteer cook at Comboni Primary School in South Sudan, where her children eat Mary's Meals. She volunteers to give back and to serve her community.**

She says: "I do a lot in the kitchen: cleaning, washing dishes and setting the fire every day. I also serve the food to the children. I have learnt that if we work jointly, we can achieve greater heights, and our children will continue to learn peacefully and will help us in future."

Our volunteers are people from all walks of life, who generously share their time and skills to help us reach the next hungry child.  
**Feeling inspired to join us? Find out more about volunteering.**



**Husband and wife Colin and Jackie, from Midlothian, Scotland, have raised an incredible £37,500 for hungry children by knitting and selling thousands of scarves, baby blankets, and chocolate 'hats'. Granddaughter Lucy helps too, selling crochet animals!**

Colin says: "I would encourage anyone who is considering volunteering with Mary's Meals to go for it. We've made so many new friends along the way, have learned some new skills and have had so much fun. Volunteering for Mary's Meals has enriched our lives in so many ways!"

**Catriona and Bernie are active members of the Coalisland and District Mary's Meals Group in Northern Ireland.**



From bi-monthly coffee mornings and an annual canal walk, to supermarket bucket collections, they are always finding creative ways to raise funds and awareness of Mary's Meals. They also share the Mary's Meals story by delivering talks to churches.

Catriona says: "Being a volunteer for Mary's Meals fills us both with a great sense of hope. We are always astounded at the generosity of the people who donate!"

# 60 SECONDS WITH WILF SCOLDING



From a galaxy far, far away to a shed in Dalmally, we chat to actor Wilf, star of *Andor: A Star Wars Story*, *Fantastic Beasts: The Secrets of Dumbledore* and *The Archers*, all about his love for Mary's Meals.

## Q How did you first come across Mary's Meals?

**A** I first came across Mary's Meals when my Mum gave me the book, 'The Shed That Fed A Million Children.' I would've been around 15 years old and remember feeling incredibly inspired at what a single person [Mary's Meals Founder, Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow] can achieve, and also how good and brave people can be in the face of horrific suffering.

## Q Why are you such a keen supporter of Mary's Meals?

**A** I think Mary's Meals is wonderful – it is a sustainable practice, integrating local resources and communities, and providing nourishing food to children in their place of education. Genius!



## Q You ran the Edinburgh Marathon for Mary's Meals, how did you find that?

**A** Oh boy, Edinburgh Marathon was tough! I found a new respect for anyone who runs marathons! It was a beautiful race to run though, through one of my favourite cities. I felt very proud I'd done it, and thrilled I'd been able to support Mary's Meals.

## Q What would you say to encourage others to support Mary's Meals?

**A** I would hugely recommend supporting Mary's Meals in any way you can. From a one-off donation, to organising a cake sale or a raffle, to reading Magnus' book – your money goes to people who really need it all round the world, and you'd be doing a good deed!

Join Wilf and find out more about the incredible Mary's Meals story – request a free copy of the *Shed That Fed A Million Children* by emailing [info@marysmeals.org](mailto:info@marysmeals.org).

mary's  
meals

Please fill in this form in **BLOCK CAPITALS** using a ballpoint pen and send to: Freepost, MARY'S MEALS

MAG25A

To donate by phone: call 0800 698 1212. To donate by cheque: please make payable to Mary's Meals and send to Freepost, MARY'S MEALS

Please fill in sections **1, 2** or **5** plus the Gift Aid Instruction, and Keep in touch details.

## 1. Your details

Full name:

Tel no:

Home address:

Postcode:

Email address:

## 2. Make a single donation

☐ I would like to donate £19.15 and feed a hungry children for a whole school year.

Or ☐ I would like to make a single donation of £

Please debit my MasterCard / Visa / Maestro / CAF charity card (Delete as appropriate)

Card number:

Start date:

Expiry date:

Issue no:

CVV:

(if appropriate)

(last 3 digits on back of card)

Name as appears on card:

## 3. Gift Aid

Boost your donation by 25p of Gift Aid for every £1 you donate.

☐ Yes, I would like Mary's Meals to add Gift Aid to this donation and any donations I make in the future or have made in the past four years. ☐ No thanks.

Gift Aid is reclaimed by the charity from the tax you pay for the current tax year. Your address is needed to identify you as a current UK taxpayer. I confirm I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income and/or Capital Gains Tax in the current tax year than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

*giftaid it*

## 4. Keep in touch

We are so grateful for your donation, which will help to change the lives of hungry children. We'd love to share updates on our work and let you know about opportunities to donate, volunteer and fundraise with Mary's Meals. This will include occasionally sending you post, including special letters from our founder Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow. If you'd rather we didn't, or you want to change your preferences you can contact us on [info@marysmeals.org](mailto:info@marysmeals.org) or 0800 698 1212. You can change your mind at any time and your details are safe with us.

How may we contact you? By email ☐ Yes ☐ No (please tick one)

**Your privacy:** By completing this form, you are agreeing to comply with our Privacy Policy, which governs how we store and process your data. Please visit [marysmeals.org.uk](http://marysmeals.org.uk) for more information. Your details will only be used by Mary's Meals UK and Mary's Meals International (and suppliers working on our behalf) to provide the service you have requested.

## 5. Make a regular donation

It costs £19.15 to provide a child with daily meals for a whole school year.

☐ I would like to make a regular monthly donation of £5 / £10 / £19.15 (please circle)

Or I would like to make a regular donation of £  ☐ Monthly ☐ Annually



### INSTRUCTION TO YOUR BANK OR BUILDING SOCIETY TO PAY BY DIRECT DEBIT

Please fill in the whole form in BLOCK CAPITALS using a ballpoint pen and send to:  
Freepost, MARY'S MEALS



Name and full postal address of your bank/building society

To: The Manager Bank/Building Society

Address:

Postcode:

Name(s) of account holder(s)

Service user number

6 7 4 6 9 3

Reference

Bank/building society account number:

Branch sort code:

**Instruction to your Bank or Building Society:** Please pay Mary's Meals Direct Debits from the account detailed in this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with Mary's Meals and, if so, details will be passed electronically to my Bank/Building Society.

Signature:

Date:

Banks and building societies may not accept Direct Debit Instructions for some types of account.



## PROMiSE PLEDGERS

Good news! Set up a new regular gift in 2025 and your first two payments will be doubled, up to a value of £250,000!

[marysmeals.org.uk/regular-giving](https://marysmeals.org.uk/regular-giving)

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