

mary's
meals

SCHOOL + FOOD = HOPE



MARY'S MEALS REPORT TO DUNBLANE CATHEDRAL MARY'S MEALS GROUP
SPONSORED SCHOOL: NANSATO PRIMARY SCHOOL
MULANJE, SOUTHERN MALAWI

MARY'S MEALS MALAWI

Mary's Meals has been working in Malawi since 2002. Our programme has grown rapidly over the past 12 months and now feeds 740,700 children across 19 districts of Malawi.

	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012	2013	2014	2015
Number of children	200	6,600	100,000	307,987	386,878	569,986	686,451	698,455	740,700
Number of schools	1	9	24	190	270	408	516	545	570

Mary's Meals works in collaboration with the Malawian Government on the Universal School Meals Programme (USMP) task force towards the goal of full implementation and ownership of the USMP by the Malawian Government and as such it has taken some elements of the Mary's Meals model in Malawi as an example of best practice.

Our school feeding programme in Malawi works on a highly efficient and cost effective basis. This is achieved by focusing on a model of partnership between the school, the community and Mary's Meals. This strong partnership at community level spreads responsibility and ownership of the programme which in turn promotes community awareness of education as well as the long term sustainability of our programme.



To source the food, we work with a well established Malawian company called RABS Processors. RABS procure maize and soya from smallholder farmers across Malawi and produce Corn Soya Blend (CSB), a porridge flour which is served to children daily. The CSB specification follows international standards and certification and the bags of flour are branded with Mary's Meals

markings, including 'not for sale' signs. RABS' procurement from a network of small producers brings additional benefits to the economy and wider society in Malawi, in terms of local incomes. The CSB consists of corn, soya and sugar, with added vitamins and minerals which are used to enrich the porridge. RABS' own transport fleet, supplemented by independent transport contractors, deliver the Likuni Phala flour directly to schools where it is prepared and cooked by over 65,000 volunteers across the country who come to school each day to ensure the children receive their hot meal.

As well as our primary school feeding programme, Mary's Meals also runs an Under Six programme of early childhood education. We are currently working with 6,435 orphans and vulnerable children across 45 centres, focusing on early childhood health, development and education as well as nutritional status.



The programme experienced significant growth in 2014, with the first expansion in the South focusing on schools in Blantyre and reaching 12,287 children in 23 schools. In April, we grew the programme in the north, reaching 6,666 children across 14 schools in the towns of Karonga and Mzuzu. This expansion also included a specialist school for deaf children which are rare in Malawi. The school, which is located in Karonga, is home to 60 children with varying levels of hearing impairments. By ensuring this vulnerable group of children receive a daily meal, we are helping them to receive the most out of their education and the specialised resources available to them in this setting.

In September we began feeding in 18 schools in the central district of Dowa, and finally in October our biggest expansion was for 37 schools across the 3 districts of Blantyre, Chikwawa, and Karonga. Around this time the programme was also rolled out to schools on the border of Zambia in a small district called Chipata.

The programme continues to be supported every day by thousands of volunteers, who give up their time every day to ensure that all children receive their meal on time. Our monitors visit the schools

twice a week to offer ongoing mentoring and support to communities and schools, they make good use of the summer holiday period to offer further training and refresher courses on health and hygiene. In the lead up to expansions which focus on new communities not yet receiving Mary's Meals, training will take place for all new volunteers covering issues of health, hygiene, cooking and serving of meals as well as how to ensure the porridge is prepared correctly. This preparation ensures that all new schools in the programme work to the same efficient, low cost model as all other projects ensuring that as the programme grows, the quality and design remains the same.

Through the generosity of Mary's Meals supporters we are now reaching some of Malawi's most vulnerable children.

MALAWI

Malawi is a land locked country in south east Africa. It neighbours Zambia, Tanzania and Mozambique and has a land area of 36,324 square miles with a population of 16.5million people. Three quarters of the east of the country is on the edge of Lake Malawi which is the second deepest lake in Africa. It has more fish species than any other lake on Earth. Lake Malawi is known as the Calendar Lake because it is 365 miles long and 52 miles wide. It is the third largest fresh water lake in Africa and the eighth in the world.



Malawi remains one of the poorest countries in the world and faces huge challenges in education and child malnutrition. Many children drop out of school or don't attend due to hunger. Most households are considered to be vulnerable, mainly due to HIV/AIDS, drought related crop failures and unaffordable food prices. The economy in Malawi remains unstable, with rising food prices and a fluctuating exchange rate. Food insecurity for families throughout the country remains an issue,

particularly in the northern and central regions, although it is widespread throughout the entire country.

The main body of work in Malawi is agriculture. The most popular crop is tobacco followed by tea, coffee and sugar. Due to the decline of the tobacco trade in recent years, Malawian officials have been encouraging more profitable crops such as spices. Crops can be sporadic due to the differing conditions and droughts.

The weather in Malawi is predominantly hot in the low lying areas, but variable in the northern highlands. The country has a rainy season from November to April, with the peak of the rain being in late March. From May to September the country rarely sees rainfall and is incredibly dry. Average temperatures are 27-29°C.

Malawi is led by President Peter Mutharika who won the election in May 2014, defeating Joyce Banda.

Elections in May 2014 saw Joyce Banda defeated and the inauguration of a new President of Malawi, Peter Mutharika. The feeding programme was disrupted for a number of days; in particular in areas experiencing high levels of protests and political rallies, however overall the programme was largely unaffected outside of the election days.

PRIMARY EDUCATION IN MALAWI

All children in Malawi are entitled to free primary education. Children are allowed to start Primary School at the age of six. There are eight years of Primary School – referred to as Standard 1-8. To get into the next class level, children must pass end of year exams. This means there can often be a wide age range in each standard. Entry requirements for secondary school are based on children's results in their final Standard 8 exams. For many schools, the introduction of Mary's Meals has seen senior pupils gaining a place at secondary school for the first time ever and more and more children are winning scholarships to pay their secondary school fees. For those who don't go on to secondary school, the level of education pupils get at primary school provides them with good employment prospects by equipping them with basic levels of literacy and numeracy as well as life and agricultural skills. The daily meals provided by Mary's Meals allow children to attend school every day, rather than work or scavenge for food, meaning that pupils can provide prospective employers with evidence of good attendance, greatly increasing their chance of finding a job and a bright future.

Grade	Age
Standard 1	6-7
Std 2	7-8
Std 3	8-9
Std 4	9-10
Std 5	10-11
Std 6	11-12
Std 7	12-13
Std 8	13-14

The two national languages in Malawi are Chichewa and English. Children in Standard 1-4 are taught in Chichewa while also learning English. In years 5-8 they switch to lessons in English, with the addition of classes in Chichewa. The curriculum includes English, Chichewa, Maths, Life Skills and Agriculture.

MARY'S MEALS AT NANSATO PRIMARY SCHOOL

Your school, Nansato Primary School, is located in the south eastern district of Mulanje, Malawi. Mulanje is the centre of Malawi's tea growing industry and the surrounding fields and slopes are covered in luscious green tea leaves. The most famous part of this area though is undoubtedly 'Mulanje Massif' or Mount Mulanje. Affectionately known as "The Island in the Sky" the 3000m high granite peak is so named because on misty days the mountain is shrouded in fluffy clouds with just the highest peaks towering above to the heavens. A truly spectacular sight and understandably it is creating a blossoming tourist interest in the area.

Your school now has 1725 pupils enrolled of whom there are 768 boys and 957 girls. The children at Nansato range from Standards 1 – 8. There are 12 permanent classrooms at the school and the pupils are taught by a total of 15 qualified teachers. The school day begins at 7.30am and ends at 1.40pm.

The school feeding committee is made up of 10 women who are all parents of the children at the school and there are 40 regular volunteers who cook for the children. The phala is served up between 8am and 10am every day.



The school's water source is a tap in the school grounds which is very close to the kitchen and there are 8 pit latrine toilets on site which are shared between the boys and girls.

Mary's Meals began feeding at Nansato in February 2007. Deputy head teacher Mr Phiri describes the biggest benefit that Mary's Meals has had on the school;

"The children are flourishing in the school with high enrolment and attendance across the board. The health and wellbeing of our students is very good which in turn makes it easier for them to learn"

Its not just the teachers who are pleased to have Mary's Meals in their school. One of the children, Mwaiwawo in Standard 5 said:

"School is good; I enjoy playing with my friends. My favourite lesson is Chichewa and when I grow up I hope to be a doctor so I can help people and support my family"

Mrs Musapato, a volunteer at Nansato, explains why she cooks for Mary's Meals:

"Cooking for the children is my way of helping them to learn. They need the strength that the phala gives them. I enjoy being here at the school and seeing the joy that the children share"

ENROLMENT RATES AT NANSATO:

Since Mary's Meals began feeding the children here in 2007 the school has seen an increase in enrolment. The table below shows the difference made since the feeding project has begun:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
2011	759	726	1485
2012	826	766	1592
2013	820	784	1604
2014	768	957	1725



It is fantastic news that Mary's Meals at Nansato Primary has allowed more children to go to school. This could not happen without the fantastic support of donors such as yourselves!

Your kitchen and feeding sponsorship means that some of the world's most vulnerable children need not go hungry and through education now have the opportunity to have a bright future.

ZIKOMO KWAMBIRI – THANK YOU!

On behalf of everyone at Mary's Meals, and especially from all the children at Nansato, we would like to extend our very warmest thanks for sponsoring the kitchen and feeding programme at your school.

What you are doing for these children is truly life changing – thank you!

