

Fondation Eagle

Report Form

Fondation Eagle reference: FF 00554 - 037

Name of charity: Mary's Meals

Name of project: Mary's Meals Malawi school feeding programme

Date grant accepted: 30/09/2020

Amount: CHF 71,929

Period of project: 12 months

Introduction:

Fondation Eagle has financed the total of CHF 71,929 for the feeding programme for one year for the pupils of three primary schools in the Balaka District, Southern Malawi, namely Rivirivi Primary School, Nsaluzawana Primary School and Chidalala Primary School.

Details of the project:

Throughout this year, the support of Fondation Eagle has provided nutritional support to thousands of vulnerable children in Malawi enrolled at Rivirivi, Nsaluzawana and Chidalala primary schools during a time of increased hardships and challenges for many communities. This vital daily meal has played a crucial role in incentivizing children to enroll in and attend school, which in turn has empowered them to gain a life-changing education.

More than a year on, the Covid-19 pandemic continues to have a huge impact on schools and communities across Malawi. The country is continuing to report Covid-19 cases and restrictions on movement and gatherings are still largely in place, resulting in reduced income-earning for many poor households. We are delighted to report that after 18 months of community distributions, the government very recently announced that in-school feeding could once again resume and that we are already back feeding children in schools across Malawi. Thanks to our hard work and extensive engagement with the government, we have been able to quickly transition from community distributions back to in-school feeding to ensure that we keep our promise to the children enrolled in our program.

Mary's Meals understands the importance of school feeding programmes in reversing the potentially disastrous effects of Covid-19 on some of the world's most vulnerable children. The power of school feeding in promoting recovery from Covid-19 has become increasingly recognised throughout the international development sphere, and there is already widespread evidence of its role in ensuring that issues that have been exacerbated by Covid-19, including dropping out of school, hunger, malnutrition, and poverty, are mitigated. With this, we are overjoyed that we are able to reinstate our in-school feeding programme, encouraging children back into the classroom each day and providing a social safety net to struggling families.

Current context in Malawi

Malawi continues to face extreme food insecurity and widespread poverty. Currently in Malawi, 2.7 million people have insufficient food consumption, with 39% of children under five suffering from

chronic malnutrition.¹ This is particularly prominent in the southern region of Malawi where your three sponsored schools are located, as 29% of the population in this region are using crisis or above crisis food based coping methods.² The Covid-19 pandemic, combined with ongoing issues caused by climate change and poverty, has only worsened the situation for many vulnerable families and communities, with children often being worst affected. In challenging circumstances like this, education is often not seen as a priority and children might be expected to go out and earn money for food rather than go to school. This is reflected in poor educational outcomes we see in districts like Balaka, where 23% of the population aged fifteen and over are illiterate, as well as 13% never having attended school.³ The daily meal provided by Mary's Meals helps to incentivise children to enrol in school and consistently attend and engage in their education. This support is also effective because it provides a social safety net for families as they are safe in the knowledge that their children will get something to eat at school. This lifeline has been more important than ever during the Covid-19 pandemic, as families have lost livelihoods and income earning opportunities due to Covid-19 restrictions. Fondation Eagle's unwavering support has ensured that we have kept our promise to the children enrolled at your three sponsored schools during a particularly challenging year – enabling children to gain an education which could be their ladder out of poverty.

Over the past year, Malawi has experienced a vast number of Covid-19 cases being reported, and in line with a trend seen across southern Africa, experienced a third wave of infections earlier this year. Nonetheless, Mary's Meals' commitment to the children enrolled in our school feeding programme in Malawi has not wavered, and we have supported children and communities through the provision of take-home rations. These distributions have been vital for making sure that children have something to eat in order to aid with their education. Following the announcement on 29 September 2021, that in-school feeding could once again resume, Mary's Meals was able to quickly and efficiently transition back to our in-school feeding model once again. A testament of the strong partnerships we have with schools and communities, we are delighted to report that schools across Malawi are back feeding children in school each morning, including your three sponsored schools. The impact of a daily meal on children's learning cannot be underestimated and can have wide reaching benefits beyond the classroom by improving a child's physical and mental wellbeing. Thanks to Fondation Eagle's commitment to our life-changing work, we have kept our promise of a daily meal to over 4,000 children in Malawi during this time of increased hardships and challenges.

Impact of our work

In our many years of working in partnership with communities to deliver school feeding programs, Mary's Meals has seen first-hand the immediate impact of providing a daily meal in a place of learning for some of the world's most vulnerable children. In 2014, we undertook an important initiative to evaluate the impact of our school feeding program more deeply and robustly through a five-year Impact Assessment. From 2014 to 2019, we systematically collected data from schools in two of our largest program countries, Malawi and Zambia, and in 2017 added a third country – Liberia – to supplement our findings and expand our understanding in a very different country context.

¹ World Food Program, *Hunger Map*, Malawi, 2021. (<https://hungermap.wfp.org/>)

² World Food Program, *Hunger Map*, Malawi, 2021. (<https://hungermap.wfp.org/>)

³ Government of Malawi, *Fifth Integrated Household Survey 2020 Report*, November 2020.

(file:///C:/Users/HelenBlack/Downloads/malawi_fifth%20integrated_household_survey_2019_2020_socioeconomic_report.pdf)

The findings from this quasi-experimental research, which have been externally verified, shows that our school feeding program significantly impacts child hunger, energy and wellbeing, increases school enrolment and improves attendance, as well as contributing to positive educational outcomes for children. Just some of these amazing findings are highlighted below:



This Impact Assessment has informed our work over the last five years and provides robust evidence of the wonderful impact of our school feeding programme to vulnerable and marginalised children. At Mary's Meals, we are committed to continually learning and improving, and will use these findings to inform our future strategy to ensure we deliver the most effective and efficient programme possible. You can read our full impact assessment [here](#).

Case studies

One of the most devastating effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, has been its impact on girls' education. Millions of girls across the globe have paid the highest price of the Covid-19 school closures; dropping out because they may be caring for others, forced into child marriage, subjected to female genital mutilation at higher rates, or exposed to increased gender-based violence.⁴ Over the course of the past year, Covid-19 has threatened to turn back decades of progress in girls' education and empowerment. The provision of a daily meal in a place of education encourages parents to send their girls to school with the assurance that the child will get a something to eat. Mary's Meals gender inclusive response to school feeding, thanks to your support, is helping encourage girls back into school where they can gain a life-changing education. This is demonstrated through the fact the 51% of the children who are enrolled at your three sponsored schools are girls. By getting more girls into school, we can help to tackle harmful social practices and limit the long-term impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Due to ongoing Covid-19 restrictions, we have been unable to travel to your sponsored schools to collect case studies. However, we spoke to 14-year old Hajirah, pictured right, who attends Ndirande Hill Primary School in Malawi. She tells us of the increasing challenges for girls to gain an education, but thanks to the generosity of supporters such as Fondation Eagle, girls are able to go to school because of the daily meal provided by Mary's Meals. She said: "The Covid-19 pandemic affected most girls because schools were closed for a long time. As the schools were closed, we did not even have the opportunity to learn online. A lot of girls got pregnant and dropped out of school during this time. As a girl, I will advocate for equal opportunities for myself and



⁴ FCDO, *Declaration on girls' education: recovering from Covid-19 and unlocking agenda 2030*, May 2021. (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/g7-foreign-and-development-ministers-meeting-may-2021-communicue/declaration-on-girls-education-recovering-from-covid-19-and-unlocking-agenda-2030>)

other girls by reaching out to people who can help us like our teachers, parents and community leaders.” Thanks to Mary’s Meals, Hajirah goes to school every day thanks to the promise of a daily meal, and is in turn empowering her to make a change not only in her life, but the lives of her whole community.



We also spoke to Emmaculate, pictured left, who is a teacher at Makalanga Primary School in Malawi. She tells of the impact of a daily meal is having on the lives of the girls who attend her school and how this is supporting them in their learning and helping them to better their futures. She told us: “Most young girls in our communities continue to face challenges. Girls are forced to abscond classes to take care of household responsibilities, girls face

abuse and sometimes they lack basic necessities to support their learning. As a teacher, I help in addressing challenges faced by girls at school by creating a platform whereby girls can share their problems. Mary’s Meals helps to keep girls in school. The girls are encouraged to come to school because they eat porridge at school.”

With your support, children - especially girls - like Hajirah who attend your sponsored schools are benefitting from the daily meal that you have so generously provided. Now that we have resumed in-school once again, we can build on the success of our community distributions in order to keep our promise to the children enrolled in our Malawi school feeding programme.

The Covid-19 pandemic has created extreme challenges for millions of people already struggling with the impact of climate change, inequality and a broken food system that has impoverished millions of children worldwide. This has resulted in a deepening hunger crisis in the world’s poorest communities, including Malawi, that is expected to undo years of development work and last well into the future. The meals provided by Fondation Eagle are a lifeline for children who otherwise might not eat anything else that day. This in turn creates an incentive for children to go to school where they can gain an education which has the potential to better the future for themselves and their families in a country facing high food insecurity.

Project beneficiaries:

School name	Enrollment (Oct 2021)		
	Girls	Boys	Total
Rivirivi Primary School	569	553	1,122
Nsaluzawana Primary School	563	577	1,140
Chidalala Primary School	973	926	1,899
	2,105	2,056	4,161

Expenditure summary:

School Name	District	Zone	Cost per school (CHF)	Cost per school (MWK)*
Rivirivi Primary School	Balaka	Kankao	21,868	18,329,583.17
Nsaluzawana Primary School	Balaka	Kankao	21,420	17,954,073.14
Chidalala Primary School	Balaka	Kankao	28,641	24,006,657.75
			71,929	60,290,314.06
*Exchange rate: GBP:CHF 1.213976 GBP:MWK 1017.545				

Results:

Your generosity has provided nutritious meals to the children at Rivirivi, Nsaluzawana and Chidalala primary schools in Malawi. Our latest data shows us that there are **4,161 children** enrolled at your sponsored schools. The number of children that are benefitting from a consistent daily meal provided by Fondation Eagle is outlined below compared to your last report:

School name	Enrolment beginning of grant	Enrolment end of grant	% increase
Rivirivi Primary School	1,072	1,122	5%
Nsaluzawana Primary School	1,050	1,140	9%
Chidalala Primary School	1,404	1,899	35%
	3,526	4,161	18%

The total number of children enrolled across your three sponsored schools has grown significantly over the last year, increasing by 18% in total for all three schools. Thanks to the promise of a daily meal, we have enabled over 635 additional children to enrol in school, demonstrating the great success of this project. Your incredible support during this time of heightened food insecurity across Malawi, has ensured that children do not have to miss out on an education because of hunger. The daily meal provided by Mary's Meals thanks to your generosity, remains a strong incentive for children to enrol in education and consistently attend school which is essential in supporting the long-term recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic.

Conclusion:

Over the last year we have achieved the objectives outlined in the File Form as we have ensured that the thousands of children enrolled at your sponsored schools received meals through community distributions and now in-school feeding, providing crucial support at a time of great need. This meal has proved vital in ensuring that the children you are supporting can concentrate and participate in

class, worries less about hunger and improve both physical and mental wellbeing. Importantly, they are given hope for a better future, to become individuals that can lift their families and whole communities out of poverty. As we are once again back feeding in-schools in Malawi, Mary's Meals is extremely thankful for your ongoing support during this time which the need for school feeding is higher than ever. On behalf of all the children you are supporting, thank you.

Signature and date:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeanne Goba", written over a horizontal line.

22 October 2021