

mary's
meals

SCHOOL + FOOD = HOPE



MARY'S MEALS REPORT TO ST. WILLIGIS SCHOOL, GERMANY
SPONSORED SCHOOL: KAPHIRIKWETE, BALAKA, 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 774,668 children across 20 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	774,668
Number of schools	1	9	24	190	270	408	516	545	600

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



A BOY FROM KAPHIRIKWETE PRIMARY SHOWS OFF HIS MUG

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 6,555 orphans and vulnerable children across 45 centres, focusing on early childhood health, development and education as well as nutritional status.

The programme continues to be supported every day by thousands of volunteers, who give up their time to ensure that all children receive their meal. Our monitors visit the schools twice a week to offer ongoing mentoring and support to communities and schools, and 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 takes 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.



VOLUNTEERS AT KAPHIRIKWETE STIR THE LIKUNI PHALA

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.

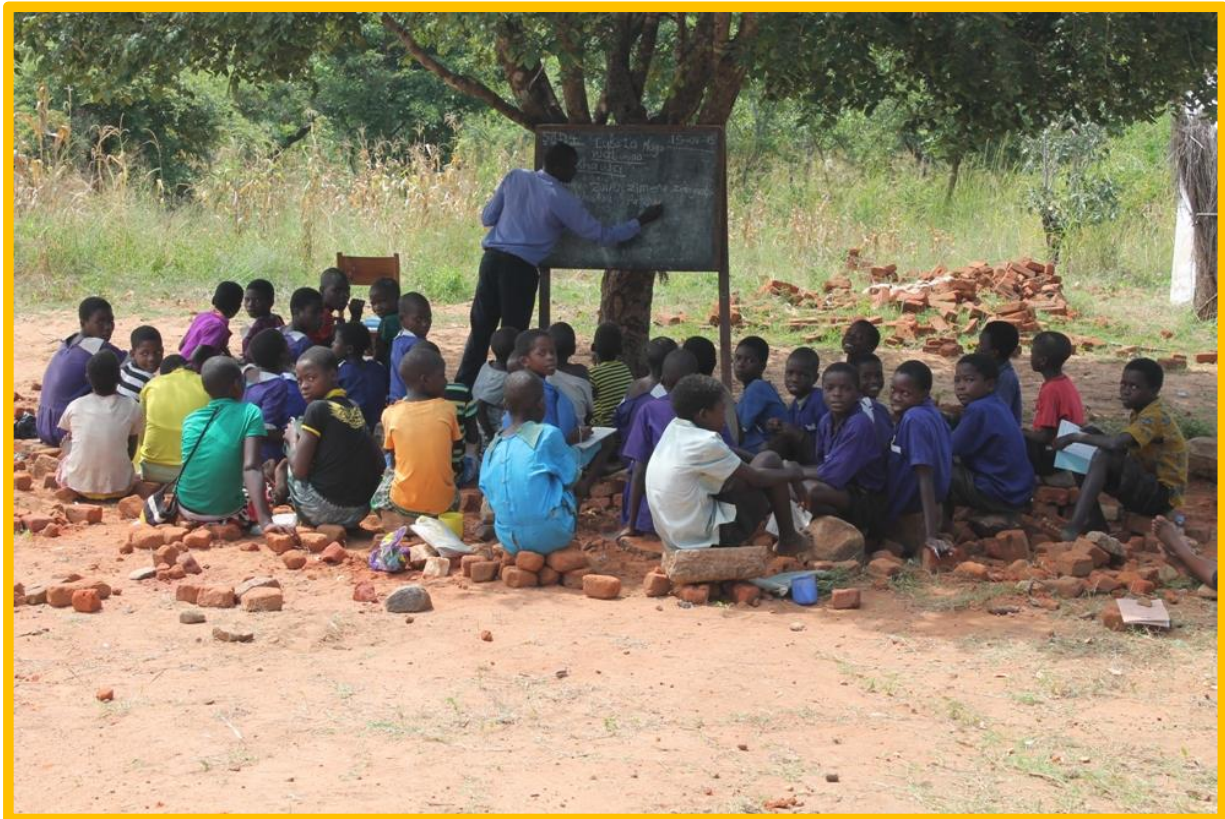
Elections in May 2014 saw Joyce Banda defeated and the inauguration of a new President of Malawi, Peter Mutharika. The feeding programme was disrupted for a number of days; in particular in areas experiencing high levels of protests and political rallies, however overall the programme was largely unaffected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



PUPILS OF KAPHIRIKWETE DURING LESSON TIME

MARY'S MEALS AT KAPHIRIKWETE:

Your school, Kaphirikwete Primary, is located in the southern district of Balaka, Malawi. Balaka is an expanding commercial district, mainly due to the fact that it's capital township, Balaka, lies on the road from Zomba to Lilongwe as well as being a stop on the rail route between Blantyre and the township of Salima. Balaka's economy relies heavily on paper production and the dyeing of textiles for clothes. The main office of Montfort Media (publisher of political magazine "The Lamp" and the youth magazine "Together"), a prominent Malawian media company, is to be found in Balaka.

Your school now has 437 pupils enrolled of whom there are 224 boys and 213 girls. The children at Kaphirikwete range from Standards 1 to 8. There are 4 permanent classrooms at the school and the pupils are taught by a total of 12 teachers. The school day begins at 7:30 am and ends at 13:40 pm.

The school feeding committee is now made up of 12 women and 2 men who are all parents of the children at the school and there are now 133 trained and regular volunteers who cook for the children. The phala is served up between 8 am and 10 am every day.

The school's water source is a borehole in the school grounds which is very close to the kitchen and there are 12 pit latrine toilets on site which are shared between the boys and girls.

Mary's Meals began feeding at Kaphirikwete in December 2012. Head teacher Mr. Fredy Samson, describes the biggest benefit that Mary's Meals has had on the school:

"Reduced numbers of absenteeism of learners as well as improving diet."

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



A VOLUNTEER WORKING HARD TO GET THE LIKUNI PHALA PREPARED FOR MEAL-TIME

"I like school because I want to be educated in order to become a Doctor. My favourite subjects are Mathematics and English."

Mary Adam, a volunteer at Kaphirikwete explains why she cooks for Mary's Meals:

"I cook the phala in order for our children to have the strength to learn."



CHILDREN AT KAPHIRIKWETE WITH THEIR MUGS

ENROLMENT RATES AT KAPIRIKWETE:

Since Mary's Meals began feeding the children here in 2012 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
2012	-	-	362
2013	220	202	422
2014	242	217	459
June 2015	224	213	437

It is fantastic news that since the arrival of Mary's Meals at Kaphirikwete, more children have been able to attend school. This has only been made possible because of your support. The Mary's Meals feeding programme 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 Kaphirikwete, we would like to extend our very warmest thanks for sponsoring the feeding programme at your school.

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



THANK YOU FROM THE CHILDREN, STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS AT KAPHIRIKWETE, AND FROM ALL OF US HERE AT MARY'S MEALS!