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Mary's Meals Statement on World Hunger Day

*Global School-feeding Charity Founder Says Famines
Have No Place in the 21st Century*

Bloomfield, N.J. – May 22, 2024 – Ahead of World Hunger Day on May 28, the CEO and Founder of global school-feeding charity Mary's Meals, [Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow](#), urges that action be taken to address increasing levels of hunger worldwide and to prevent famine in Ethiopia. Mary's Meals and its expert partners work alongside local communities in 17 countries to provide meals at school for more than 2.4 million children, who often bear the impact of extreme hunger because of poverty, conflict, and climate shocks.

"Famines don't happen overnight, ever. They're always months – more often years – in the making. The human family always has ample opportunity to intervene. That's why famines should, long ago, have been a thing of the past. Never mind our broader battle to try to achieve Zero Hunger. Famine should have no place in the 21st century. I can't think of a more profound collective failing of humanity than to let famine occur," stated Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow.

The 2024 Global [Report](#) on Food Crises shows that more than 281 million people in 59 countries and territories face high levels of acute food insecurity—nearly 24 million more than the previous year, and 36.4 million children are acutely malnourished. Impacted by conflict, climate change, displacement, and economic downturns, millions are suffering from hunger, with the risk of famine imminent in some areas. In the Tigray region of Ethiopia (which is one of 16 countries noted in the report where Mary's Meals provides school feeding), many people fear an impending famine that could be on par with or worse than the famine of the mid-1980s.

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About Mary's Meals

Now in its 22nd year, [Mary's Meals](#) is a global movement that sets up school-feeding programs in some of the world's most vulnerable communities, where conflict, poverty and hunger often prevent children from gaining an education. Mary's Meals works with in-country volunteers to provide one daily nutritious meal in a place of learning to attract children into the classroom to receive an education. This simple solution to help end world hunger also enables children to lift themselves from the cycle of hunger and poverty.

Mary's Meals began by feeding 200 children in Malawi in 2002. Today, the organization feeds 2,429,182 hungry children every school day in more than 5,000 schools in the following countries: Benin, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Haiti, India, Kenya, Lebanon, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Niger, South Sudan, Syria, Yemen, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. Mary's Meals is part of the School Meals Coalition, an emerging initiative of governments and partners to drive actions that can urgently re-establish, improve, and scale up food and education systems. For more information about Mary's Meals, visit marysmealsusa.org.