



# Mary's Meals International

Q4 Quarterly Update to Mary's Meals Canada  
January-December 2025 Project  
Ethiopia

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to world hunger



## Quarterly Update to Mary's Meals Canada: January 2026

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### 1. Company information

**MARY'S MEALS INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION (MMI)**  
(Incorporated in Scotland, No. SC488380) Charity No. SC045223

#### **Address of Registered Office**

Craig Lodge, Dalmally, Argyll PA33 1AR  
Tel. 01838 200605

#### **Directors:**

Bishop John Keenan  
Jacob Allen  
John Darley (Chair)  
Željka Markić  
Sebastian Bailey  
Graham Paterson

Karel Necesal  
Marie Da Silva  
Anthony Colella  
Ana Diez De Rivera-Laffont  
Michael George

#### **Officers:**

Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow (Chief Executive Officer)  
Rhian Williams-Cooke (Company Secretary)

Mary's Meals International Organisation is the central organisation that co-ordinates, supports and leads the global Mary's Meals movement, under the direction of the Chief Executive Officer and through the work of our global directorates.

#### **Daughters of Charity**

Ethiopian Catholic Church, Social and Development Commission, Adigrat Branch, Daughters of Charity, Tigray Coordinating Office. Registration Number: 756

#### **Address of Registered Office**

Daughters of Charity, P.O. Box 69 - Mekelle - Tigray - Ethiopia

Daughters of Charity is the organization that implements the Mary's Meals school feeding program in Ethiopia



## 2. Introduction

To: Mary's Meals Canada Board of Directors

Date: 23 January 2026

Project: The charitable and educational purpose of this project is to provide one daily meal in a place of education for children in India.

Overview: Mary's Meals Canada and Mary's Meals International Organisation (MMI) entered into a contract on 20 January 2025 under which MMI is to support Mary's Meals Canada's school feeding program in Ethiopia. The number of children to be fed is based on the funds received which will be recorded as restricted funds for the work of Mary's Meals Canada in Ethiopia. The grant recipient will be Mary's Meals International Organisation (MMI), who will deliver the project on behalf of Mary's Meals Canada directly through Daughters of Charity.

Total grant: The total value of the grant proposal is CAD 100,000 and will be applied as follows.

<b>Breakdown of restricted funds</b>			
	<b>Cost Per Child</b>	<b>Number of children*</b>	<b>Restricted Funds</b>
School feeding program Ethiopia	CAD 31.70	3,154*	CAD 100,000.00
		<b>TOTAL</b>	CAD 100,000.00

*\*Please note number of children is based on global cost per child and is indicative only.*

## 3. Quarterly Update

This is the final report to the Mary's Meals Canada Board of Directors for January 2026 as required under the Project Designation dated 20 January 2025, under which Mary's Meals Canada instructed Mary's Meals International to provide one meal on each school day in schools in Tigray, Ethiopia.

MMI gratefully acknowledges receipt of the fourth instalments of the grant payments by January 2026 to the value of \$58,601.00. In the period since the project began, we have utilized the grant instalments, successfully providing the services detailed in the Project Designation and providing school meals to children on behalf of Mary's Meals Canada in Ethiopia.

### [An update on your project in Ethiopia](#)

In northern Ethiopia, ongoing displacement, fragile livelihoods, and disrupted food systems continue to place intense pressure on families, particularly in regions affected by conflict and climatic stress. Many children arrive at school without having eaten, making it difficult to concentrate or attend consistently. Mary's Meals Canada's school feeding program in these communities, is providing a dependable daily meal, helping children remain in education and offering stability amid prolonged uncertainty.

Letebrhan is 15 and attends Beati Akor Primary School in Tigray, Ethiopia, a school that once stood as a centre of excellence before being severely damaged by conflict. Bullet holes, shattered windows, and broken gates still mark the buildings, but since the return of Mary's Meals Canada's school feeding program, the classrooms are once again full of children.

Years of disruption caused by Covid 19, war, and chronic hunger have delayed Letebrhan's education, leaving her still in primary school despite her strong academic ability. At home, life is extremely difficult. Her eldest sibling disappeared during the conflict, her father is seriously ill and unable to work, and her



mother struggles to find occasional labour. Hunger affects not only her family but the entire community, where food shortages, looting, and displacement have left families barely surviving.

Before the school feeding program resumed, many children, including Letebrhan, pictured right, stopped attending school because there was simply not enough food at home. **“If there is not enough food, it is very difficult to concentrate in class,”** she explains. Families often reduce their meals, leaving children exhausted and unable to learn.



The return of daily school meals has brought hope. Enrolment at Beati Akor Primary School has risen dramatically, increasing from just 261 pupils during the conflict to more than 1,100 today. Letebrhan now attends school regularly, knowing she will receive a nutritious meal each day. **“Because of the feeding, a lot of children like me are coming here,”** she says.

For Letebrhan and her classmates, the promise of a school meal means more than food. It allows children to prioritise education again and gives families hope that their community can begin to recover and rebuild after years of crisis.

### **Thank you**

As a result of your school feeding program, children in Ethiopia are receiving nutritious meals in school. This has had a significant impact on the lives of these children who are experiencing poverty, helping them during a particularly challenging time through the promise of a daily meal. On behalf of the children supported in your program in Ethiopia, thank you.



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India

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### **1. Company information**

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##### **Address of Registered Office**

Craig Lodge, Dalmally, Argyll PA33 1AR  
Tel. 01838 200605

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##### **Officers:**

Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow (Chief Executive Officer)  
Rhian Williams-Cooke (Company Secretary)

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#### **BOARD FOR RESEARCH EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT (BREAD) Registration reference: 435/3055**

##### **Address of Registered Office**

Board for Research Education and Development (BREAD), A – 262, Sector 19, Noida - 201301,  
Gautam Buddha Nagar, Uttar Pradesh, India

##### **Trustees**

Fr. Josen John Tharakan  
Eravimangalam Saviour Siby  
Mary Cherian  
George Poonely Opatras  
Akhilesh Antony (Shanty PK)

Board for Research Education and Development (BREAD) is the organisation that implements the Mary's Meals school feeding program in India.



## 2. Introduction

To: Mary's Meals Canada Board of Directors

Date: 23 January 2026

Project: The charitable and educational purpose of this project is to provide one daily meal in a place of education for children in India.

Overview: Mary's Meals Canada and Mary's Meals International Organisation (MMI) entered into a contract on 20 January 2025 under which MMI is to support Mary's Meals Canada's school feeding program in India. The number of children to be fed is based on the funds received which will be recorded as restricted funds for the work of Mary's Meals Canada in India. The grant recipient will be Mary's Meals International Organisation (MMI), who will deliver the project on behalf of Mary's Meals Canada directly through Board for Research Education and Development (BREAD).

Total grant: The total value of the grant proposal is CAD 400,000.00 and will be applied as follows.

<b>Breakdown of restricted funds</b>			
	<b>Cost Per Child</b>	<b>Number of children*</b>	<b>Restricted Funds</b>
School feeding program India	CAD 31.70	12,618*	CAD 400,000.00
		<b>TOTAL</b>	CAD 400,000.00

*\*Please note number of children is based on global cost per child and is indicative only.*

## 3. Quarterly Update

This is the final quarterly report to the Mary's Meals Canada Board of Directors for January 2026 as required under the Project Designation dated 20 January 2025, under which Mary's Meals Canada instructed Mary's Meals International to provide one meal on each school day in informal education centres in India.

MMI gratefully acknowledges receipt of the fourth quarter instalments of the grant payments by January 2026 to the value of \$234,285.00 CAD. In the period since the project began, we have utilized the grant instalments, successfully providing the services detailed in the Project Designation and providing school meals to children on behalf of Mary's Meals Canada in India.

### [An update on your project in India](#)

Across parts of India, deep inequalities mean that children from low-income and marginalized communities often lack access to nutritious, varied diets at home. Hunger and poor diet quality undermine children's ability to learn, even when schools are accessible. Mary's Meals Canada's program helps address this challenge by providing meals in schools, ensuring children receive reliable nourishment that enables them to participate fully in their education.

Jaymani, aged 12, lives at a shelter for girls in Ranchi, eastern India, which provides a safe home for children who have lost parents or escaped abusive situations. The shelter is linked to a school, where Jaymani and the other girls attend classes and receive a warm, nutritious meal from Mary's Meals every school day.

Jaymani has lived at the shelter since 2017. After her mother died, her father became disabled and was unable to work. To survive, he went to the market in his wheelchair to beg, with Jaymani following behind him. This was the family's only source of food, and Jaymani had to give up school. Eventually, her father brought her to the shelter, knowing he could no longer meet her needs.



When Jaymani arrived, she was suffering from scabies and was very small for her age due to malnutrition. With medical care, regular meals, and the support of other girls at the shelter, her health and confidence have improved. **“The nurses helped me when I was sick and now I want to be a nurse,”** she says.

Although Jaymani still sees her father twice a year, she knows her life has changed for the better. **“Now I can study and I have food,”** she explains. **“Access to education is the biggest thing that can make a change for me.”**



### **Thank you**

In the face of the many challenges children encounter in India, Mary’s Meals Canada’s school feeding program serves as a vital lifeline. By providing daily meals, the program is making a transformative impact, offering children a powerful incentive to attend school while also addressing their immediate hunger, helping to create the conditions they need to learn and thrive. On behalf of the children your program in India is supporting, **thank you.**



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Kenya

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Ana Diez De Rivera-Laffont  
Michael George

##### **Officers:**

Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow (Chief Executive Officer)  
Rhian Williams-Cooke (Company Secretary)

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#### **MARY'S MEALS KENYA (MMK)**

##### **Address of Registered Office**

Mary's Meals Kenya  
PO Box 397-30500  
Lodwar  
Nawoitrong Road  
Nawoi Court  
Turkana  
Kenya

##### **Board Members**

Brian Haworth  
Bishop Dominic Kimengich  
Graeme Little  
Rhian Cooke  
Masitsa Otunga  
Serah Muthoni Kamau

Mary's Meals Kenya is the organization that implements the Mary's Meals school feeding program in Kenya.



## 2. Introduction

To: Mary's Meals Canada Board of Directors

Date: 23 January 2026

Project: The charitable and educational purpose of this project is to provide one daily meal in a place of education for children in Kenya.

Overview: Mary's Meals Canada and Mary's Meals International Organisation (MMI) entered into a contract on 20 January 2025 under which MMI is to support Mary's Meals Canada's school feeding program in Kenya. The number of children to be fed is based on the funds received, which is recorded as restricted funds for the work of Mary's Meals Canada in Kenya. MMI is delivering the project directly through Mary's Meals Kenya (MMK).

Total grant: The total value of the grant proposal is CAD 250,000.00 and has been applied as follows.

Breakdown of restricted funds			
	Cost Per Child	Number of children*	Restricted Funds
School feeding program Turkana, Kenya	CAD 31.70	7,886*	CAD 250,000.00
		<b>TOTAL</b>	CAD 250,000.00

*\*Please note number of children is based on global cost per child and is indicative only.*

## 3. Quarterly Update

This is the final quarterly report to the Mary's Meals Canada Board of Directors for January 2026 as required under the Project Designation dated 20 January 2025, under which Mary's Meals Canada instructed MMI to provide one meal on each school day for children in pre-schools in Turkana County, Kenya.

MMI gratefully acknowledge receipt of the fourth quarter instalments of the grant payment by January 2026 to the value of \$146,385.00 CAD. In the period since the project began, we have utilized the grant instalments, successfully providing the services detailed in the Project Designation and providing school meals to children on behalf of Mary's Meals Canada in Turkana County, Kenya.

### [An update on your project in Kenya](#)

In Kenya's arid and semi-arid regions, repeated droughts and failed rains have steadily eroded household livelihoods, leaving families unable to rely on either harvests or local markets. During lean seasons, children are often pulled out of school as families cope with food shortages and rising prices. Mary's Meals Canada helps counter this disruption by providing a reliable daily meal at school, giving children a reason to attend class and some protection against the instability caused by climate shocks.

Epur, aged 12, attends Kakore ECDE in Turkana, northern Kenya, where children learn under a tree using a rock face as a makeshift chalkboard. She is older than many of her classmates because repeated



hardships have interrupted her education. Despite this, she sings, plays, and learns alongside the younger children with confidence and joy.

Her father, Ezekiel, is a respected elder in the community. He once owned livestock, but their lives changed after cattle raiders attacked their home, killing his son and stealing their animals. The family was forced to flee, and Epur was left to care for the remaining animals while her older sisters married. Eventually, worsening drought and hunger made survival impossible.



Turkana is experiencing the worst drought in Kenya in 40 years. Livestock are dying, water is scarce, and families face daily hunger. Kakore ECDE opened in 2021, and with the introduction of daily school meals from Mary's Meals, Epur's family was able to return and send her back to school. Her parents say the program is their only source of support.

Today, Epur has learned to read and enjoys playing with her friends. Her father dreams that she might become a doctor or politician, but Epur has her own ambition. **"I want to be a teacher,"** she says. **"I want to work in a school like this and help children like me to learn."**

For Epur and her family, daily meals at school offer hope, stability, and a pathway out of poverty, giving her the chance to learn, grow, and imagine a better future.

### **Thank you**

Mary's Meals Canada's school feeding program in Turkana, Kenya has continued to make a meaningful and lasting difference in the lives of the children. The daily nutritious meals you are providing are drawing children into the classroom and enabling them to stay in school and pursue their education. This work has been especially critical over the past year, as communities in Turkana remain heavily affected by the ongoing challenges of climate change and deep-rooted social, gender, and economic inequalities. On behalf of all the children supported in your program in Turkana, Kenya, **thank you.**



# Mary's Meals International

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Madagascar

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### **1. Company information**

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##### **Address of Registered Office**

Craig Lodge, Dalmally, Argyll PA33 1AR  
Tel. 01838 200605

##### **Directors:**

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##### **Officers:**

Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow (Chief Executive Officer)  
Rhian Williams-Cooke (Company Secretary)

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##### **Feedback Madagascar (The Feedback Trust)**

Reg no: SC023568

##### **Address of Registered Office**

Nevis Accountancy Services, Office 6, An Drochaid, Claggan Road, Claggan, Fort William, Inverness-shire, PH33 6PH

##### **Board Members**

Hermione Spencer, Chair  
Adam Boys OBE, Treasurer  
Hugh Spencer DL, Secretary  
Rory Day, Administrator  
Zoë Cameron, Administrator  
Dr. Patricia David, Administrator  
Henrietta Miers, Administrator  
Will Self, Administrator

Feedback Madagascar is one of the organizations that implements the Mary's Meals school feeding program in Madagascar.



## 2. Introduction

To: Mary's Meals Canada Board of Directors

Date: 23 January 2026

Project: The charitable and educational purpose of this project is to provide one daily meal in a place of education for children in Madagascar.

Overview: Mary's Meals Canada and Mary's Meals International Organisation (MMI) entered into a contract on 20 January 2025 under which MMI is to support Mary's Meals Canada's school feeding program in Madagascar. The number of children to be fed is based on the funds received which will be recorded as restricted funds for the work of Mary's Meals Canada in India. The grant recipient will be Mary's Meals International Organisation (MMI), who will deliver the project on behalf of Mary's Meals Canada directly through Feedback Madagascar.

Total grant: The total value of the grant proposal is CAD 100,000.00 and has been applied as follows.

Breakdown of restricted funds			
	Cost Per Child	Number of children*	Restricted Funds
School feeding program Madagascar	CAD 31.70	3,154*	CAD 100,000.00
		<b>TOTAL</b>	CAD 100,000.00

*\*Please note number of children is based on global cost per child and is indicative only.*

## 3. Quarterly Update

This is the final quarterly report to the Mary's Meals Canada Board of Directors for January 2026 as required under the Project Designation dated 20 January 2025, under which Mary's Meals Canada instructed MMI to provide one meal on each school day in schools in Madagascar.

MMI gratefully acknowledges receipt of the fourth quarter instalments of grant payments by January 2026 to the total value of \$58,601.00 CAD. In the period since the project began, we have utilized the grant instalments, successfully providing the services detailed in the Project Designation and providing school meals to children on behalf of Mary's Meals Canada in Madagascar.

### [Updates from Madagascar](#)

In Madagascar, recurrent droughts, cyclones, and unreliable rainfall continue to disrupt food production and local markets, particularly in the south of the country. Families are frequently forced to reduce both the quantity and quality of meals, with children most affected. Mary's Meals Canada provides daily school meals that help children stay nourished and learning, even as households face repeated climate-related shocks.

Eliane, pictured below, lives in the village of Ambohimiarina in Madagascar and is the mother of five-year-old Sandratra, who attends Ambohimiarina Primary School. Eliane recently began volunteering in the



school's newly built Mary's Meals canteen, joining a team of parents who help prepare daily lunches for all pupils, with support from local partner Feedback Madagascar.

Before the introduction of the school feeding program, Eliane could only work for a few hours each day, earning around \$1 per day. She had to return home at lunchtime to feed her daughter, which limited her income and made it difficult to provide enough nutritious food for her family. **“This vicious circle seemed impossible to escape,”** she explains.



Everything changed once her daughter began receiving a daily meal at school. **“Now I can go to work every day,”** Eliane says. **“Since my child has meals here at school, I no longer have to go home at midday for lunch. So I can increase my work hours and earn more money.”** As a result, Eliane has doubled her income and is now able to prepare proper meals for her family in the evening.

With her improved income, Eliane has chosen to give back by volunteering one day each month in the school canteen. She says, **“I love participating in the school canteen. It is a delight to prepare meals for the children. Not only is it helpful for the children, but for us parents too.”**

The impact of the school feeding program has extended beyond individual families. Ambohimiarina Primary is the only school in the village, and since the introduction of Mary's Meals, enrolment has increased by 25%, demonstrating how access to food can strengthen both education and the wider community.

### **Thank you**

Mary's Meals Canada's work is fundamental in providing a lifeline to the children you serve and your project in Madagascar has enabled Feedback Madagascar to keep the promise of a daily school meal to the children you serve in the country. On behalf of all the children Mary's Meals Canada's school feeding program is supporting, **thank you.**



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Malawi

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##### **Address of Registered Office**

Craig Lodge, Dalmally, Argyll PA33 1AR  
Tel. 01838 200605

##### **Directors:**

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Michael George

##### **Officers:**

Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow (Chief Executive Officer)  
Rhian Williams-Cooke (Company Secretary)

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#### **SCOTTISH INTERNATIONAL RELIEF MALAWI (also known as Mary's Meals Malawi)**

Registration reference: NGO/R/07/18

##### **Address of Registered Office**

Mary's Meals Malawi, PO Box E368, Post Dot Net, Blantyre  
Telephone: +265 (0)1875450

##### **Trustees**

Marie Da Silva  
Luc Deschamps  
Graeme Little  
Anita Mankhambo

Scottish International Relief Malawi (Mary's Meals Malawi) is the organisation that implements the Mary's Meals school feeding program in Malawi.



## 2. Introduction

To: Mary's Meals Canada Board of Directors

Date: 23 January 2026

Project: The charitable and educational purpose of this project is to provide one daily meal in a place of education for children in Malawi.

Overview: Mary's Meals Canada and Mary's Meals International Organisation (MMI) entered into a contract on 20 January 2025 under which MMI is to support Mary's Meals Canada's school feeding program in Malawi. The number of children to be fed is based on the funds received, which is recorded as restricted funds for the work of Mary's Meals Canada in Malawi. Mary's Meals International Organisation (MMI) is delivering the project directly through Scottish International Relief Malawi (known as Mary's Meals Malawi).

Total grant: As instructed by Mary's Meals Canada, the Malawi school feeding project has been increased to reach 32,429 children\* throughout 2025. An additional CAD \$1,648 has been put towards this project in line with Mary's Meals program strategy. The total value of the grant proposal is now CAD \$1,028,000.00 and will be applied as follows.

Breakdown of restricted funds			
	Cost Per Child	Number of children*	Restricted Funds
School feeding program Malawi	CAD 31.70	32,429*	CAD 1,028,000.00
		<b>TOTAL</b>	CAD 1,028,000.00

*\*Please note number of children is based on global cost per child and is indicative only.*

## 3. Quarterly Update

This is the final quarterly report to the Mary's Meals Canada Board of Directors for January 2026 as required under the Project Designation dated 20 January 2025, under which Mary's Meals Canada instructed MMI to provide one meal on each school day in schools in Malawi.

MMI gratefully acknowledges receipt of the fourth quarter instalments of grant payments by January 2026 to the total value of \$520,459.00 CAD. In the period since the project began, we have utilized the grant instalments, successfully providing the services detailed in the Project Designation and providing school meals to children on behalf of Mary's Meals Canada in Malawi.

### [An update from Malawi](#)

Malawi experiences repeated cycles of food shortage driven by climate extremes, economic vulnerability, and seasonal lean periods. When food becomes scarce, children's nutrition and school attendance are often the first to be compromised. Mary's Meals Canada's school feeding program offers a consistent daily meal, helping protect children's health and keep them engaged in education throughout the year.



Loney, 32, lives on the outskirts of Zomba City and is a single mother raising four children on her own. Each morning, her main concern is ensuring her children get to school, where they receive not only an education but also their only reliable meal of the day through the Mary's Meals school feeding program at Matiti Primary School.

Loney survives on irregular piecework, earning very little and sometimes nothing at all. On days when there is no work, her children go to school hungry and return home to no food, relying entirely on the porridge they receive at school. **"It gives me peace knowing my children will at least eat when they go to school,"** she says. Beyond food, Loney also struggles to afford basic school supplies, although support from the school has helped her keep her children enrolled.



Her eldest daughter, Esmart, 16, is in her final year of primary school and has received school meals since she was in Grade 1. Despite helping her mother with chores and occasional piecework, Esmart remains committed to her education. **"If there was no porridge at school, I would have dropped out a long time ago,"** she says. **"It gives me strength and helps me concentrate."**

Esmart dreams of becoming a teacher, inspired by her own teacher, who describes her as bright, focused, and resilient despite the hardships she faces at home. For families like Loney's, the school feeding program is a lifeline. During school holidays, when meals stop, the strain is immediate and severe.

For Loney and her children, the daily porridge served at school is more than food. It keeps children in class, supports learning, and offers hope that education can lead to a better future.

### **Thank you**

At a time of increased climate-related vulnerability and growing food insecurity, Mary's Meals Canada's dedication and commitment to the children you serve have continued to make a difference to the lives of children across Malawi. The daily meals Mary's Meals Canada has provided have not only provided children with nutrition and stability but have also encouraged class attendance and promoted the importance of education as a lifeline out of poverty and hunger. On behalf of all the children you serve, **thank you.**



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Michael George

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Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow (Chief Executive Officer)  
Rhian Williams-Cooke (Company Secretary)

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#### **MARY'S MEALS ZAMBIA LIMITED (MMZ)**

**Registration reference: 122443**

##### **Address of Registered Office**

Mary's Meals Zambia Limited, PO Box 32587, Lusaka, Zambia

##### **Board Members**

Dr. Cornelius Chipoma  
Mwape Bwalya  
Ambassador Arnos Musonda  
Graeme Little

Mary's Meals Zambia Limited is the organization that implements the Mary's Meals school feeding program in Zambia.



## 2. Introduction

To: Mary's Meals Canada Board of Directors

Date: 23 January 2026

Project: The charitable and educational purpose of this project is to provide one daily meal in a place of education for children in Zambia.

Overview: Mary's Meals Canada and Mary's Meals International Organisation (MMI) entered into a contract on 20 January 2025 under which MMI is to support Mary's Meals Canada's school feeding program in Zambia. The number of children to be fed is based on the funds received, which is recorded as restricted funds for the work of Mary's Meals Canada in Zambia. MMI is delivering the project directly through Mary's Meals Zambia (MMZ).

Total grant: The total value of the grant proposal is CAD 900,000.00 and has been applied as follows.

Breakdown of restricted funds			
	Cost Per Child	Number of children*	Restricted Funds
School feeding program Zambia	CAD 31.70	28,391*	CAD 900,000.00
		<b>TOTAL</b>	CAD 900,000.00

*\*Please note number of children is based on global cost per child and is indicative only.*

## 3. Quarterly Update

This is the final quarterly report to the Mary's Meals Canada Board of Directors for January 2026 as required under the Project Designation dated 20 January 2025, under which Mary's Meals Canada instructed MMI to provide one meal on each school day in schools in Zambia.

MMI gratefully acknowledges receipt of the fourth quarter instalments of grant payments by January 2026 to the total value of \$444,669.00 CAD. In the period since the project began, we have utilized the grant instalments, successfully providing the services detailed in the Project Designation and providing school meals to children on behalf of Mary's Meals Canada in Zambia.

### Updates from Zambia

Malawi experiences repeated cycles of food shortage driven by climate extremes, economic vulnerability, and seasonal lean periods. When food becomes scarce, children's nutrition and school attendance are often the first to be compromised. Mary's Meals Canada's school feeding program offers a consistent daily meal, helping protect children's health and keep them engaged in education throughout the year.

Joseph is 13 years old and in Grade 5 at Kaikumbe Primary School in Zambia. He dreams of becoming a teacher one day, inspired by his own learning experience. Since joining the school in Grade 1, Joseph has received daily porridge through the Mary's Meals Canada's school feeding program, something he says gives him the strength and energy to read, write, and concentrate in class. Without it, he struggles to learn.



Joseph lives close to the school with his parents and siblings, but food at home is limited. He often leaves for school early without breakfast, relying on the porridge he receives at breaktime as his first meal of the day. **“I don’t even come to school with food,”** he explains, **“I know I will eat at school.”**

His mother, Rhoda, is a peasant farmer and the mother of seven children. She explains that knowing her children will receive food at school has made a significant difference for the family. The school meals allow her to save money that would otherwise be spent on food and redirect it towards other essential household needs. She says the program has made it possible to keep all her children in school and encourages other parents to support it, stressing that children cannot learn properly on an empty stomach.



Joseph’s teacher describes him as committed, focused, and determined, noting that many pupils at the school depend heavily on the daily porridge. For families like Joseph’s, the school feeding program is a vital source of nourishment, supporting attendance, concentration, and hope for a better future through education.

### **Thank you**

Mary’s Meals Canada’s program is vital in providing a lifeline to the children. Your project in Zambia has enabled Mary’s Meals Zambia to keep the promise of a daily school meal to children we serve in the country, incentivizing children to come to school and maintain their attendance. On behalf of all the children Mary’s Meals Canada’s school feeding program is supporting, **thank you.**