

## Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow



Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow, Order of the British Empire, is founder and CEO of Mary's Meals, a global hunger charity whose community run school feeding programs are reaching more than 3 million of the world's poorest children with daily meals in their place of education. Magnus is passionate about working with communities to serve much-needed meals in school as an effective way to address the urgent issue of hunger while promoting access to education as a catalyst for generational change. Well-fed, well-educated children will play a vital role in their communities as they work towards a future free from poverty.

In 2010, Magnus was praised as a CNN hero for his role in founding and leading Mary's Meals and, in April 2015, he was named one of Time magazine's 100 most influential people in the world. Magnus' first book, *The*

*Shed That Fed a Million Children*, reached the UK's prestigious Sunday Times bestseller list immediately after its release and is now available in 11 languages. His second book, *GIVE: Charity and the Art of Living Generously*, is also published by HarperCollins and currently available in paperback and audiobook formats. In response to the growth of the Mary's Meals program, Magnus' first book has been fully updated and republished as *The Shed That Fed 2 Million Children* (HarperCollins, 2021).

Magnus has given countless public talks to audiences large and small, including delivering the keynote address at the World Food Prize in 2013. He has also spoken at youth festivals, Christian conferences and global events for a range of audiences including entrepreneurs, food industry experts and educators.

He started his career as a fish farmer in Argyll, in the Highlands of Scotland. In 1992, during the war in Bosnia, Magnus and his brother Fergus were so moved by the scenes on television that they took a week's leave from their jobs, loaded a jeep with aid and joined a convoy travelling to Medjugorje, in Bosnia-Herzegovina, to distribute it. On their return, donations continued to flood in resulting in Magnus eventually driving from Scotland to Bosnia a total of 23 times to deliver vital supplies. He never returned to his old job and instead set up a registered charity, named Scottish International Relief (SIR).

Soon after, Magnus met Julie, a nurse, who volunteered to help him deliver emergency aid. Julie became committed to the charity, and its founder too. They married and had seven children together, and they recently welcomed their first grandchild.

During a trip to Malawi in 2002, Magnus met with a family whose predicament was to spark a change in not only his own life, but in the lives of thousands of others. In a small hut he was introduced to a mother named Emma, who was dying of AIDS. Her six children were gathered around her, and Magnus asked the eldest, Edward, what it was that he hoped for from life. "To have enough to eat and to be able to go to school one day," was his answer.

Edward's words inspired a mission to bring children experiencing poverty and hunger to school by providing Mary's Meals. Working with like-minded people and in partnership with some of the world's poorest communities, Magnus leads a mission that helps children be children by giving them the chance to attend school and learn without worrying about finding food.

From starting out with a small program feeding 200 children in southern Malawi in 2002, the charity now works in 16 countries to provide meals for more than 3 million children every school day – cooked and served by local volunteers.

Mary's Meals is a simple idea that works. A daily meal in school has a positive impact on enrolment, attendance and performance in class, and could even hold the key to eradicating child hunger altogether. The global average cost of feeding a child for a whole school year with Mary's Meals is just \$31.70 CAD.

Support for Mary's Meals is global, with affiliate organizations operating in Canada, Australia, Austria, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Poland, Slovakia, Spain, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States, as well as international fundraising groups in Belgium, Hong Kong, Hungary, the Netherlands, Portugal, and Slovenia. We also have an office and Visitor Centre in Medjugorje, Bosnia-Herzegovina.

