

Youth programme: teacher / youth leader guide



**LITTLE ACTS,
BIG DIFFERENCE**



Thank you so much for choosing to go on this journey with your young people. I hope that, through learning about Mary's Meals, you will all come to understand a little more about what life can be like for children in some of the world's poorest communities. I hope that you will also be moved and inspired by the certainty that even small acts of love and kindness can have a huge impact on the lives of others.

We first began this work in response to the words of a child – Edward, whose dream in life was “to have enough food to eat and to be able to go to school one day.” From this came our vision: that every child receives one daily meal in their place of education and that all those who have more than they need, share with those who lack even the most basic things.

Our desire to work together with like-minded people to realise this vision burns ever brighter and, with 67 million children still out of school because of poverty, our work is just beginning.

Learning more about our world and the needs of the people in it is so important – and at Mary's Meals we're learning all the time, often from the most unexpected places! Thank you for helping to bring more hearts and minds to this important mission to provide daily meals in a place of education for the world's poorest children.

Whether this is the first time you've heard of Mary's Meals or you've been a dedicated supporter for a long time, I am so glad that you are part of this global family and part of this amazing story.

Thank you,
Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow
Founder of Mary's Meals



Programme overview

During this programme, through stories and short films, you will be transported to different countries and see different ways of life. You will hear from children who lead very difficult lives, but you will also see how their lives are being improved through community action, that is resulting in the provision of a daily meal served in their place of education.

Learning goals and objectives of the programme

- To understand what Mary's Meals is, and the work it does with communities to serve children living in some of the world's poorest places.
- To understand some of the reasons why these children could not attend school if it wasn't for the provision of a meal, and the impact Mary's Meals has on school attendance.
- To see how Mary's Meals encourages and enables girls in some of the world's poorest communities to overcome and remove obstacles that might prevent them from coming to school and receiving an education.
- To understand how Mary's Meals tries to support the local economies in the areas where it works and takes steps to help rural farmers in these regions.
- To highlight how the work of Mary's Meals is increasing community involvement in schools and helping to reinforce parents' belief in the power of education.
- To inspire action that will help to alleviate suffering among children and families in some of the world's poorest communities and help them to work towards a brighter future.



Child 31: The Story of Mary's Meals



Tip: Check you have what you need to stream the film from our website during the lesson. It might be a good idea to try it out in advance! If you're having trouble accessing any of the films, please get in touch: Ireland@marysmeals.org

[CLICK TO VIEW](#)



Overview

Students will watch and discuss the half-hour film [Child 31 – The Story of Mary's Meals](#). In this video they will meet Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow, CEO and founder of Mary's Meals, and hear how the charity started.

The work of Mary's Meals is closely linked to some of the topics covered in the curriculum here in Ireland. [Child 31](#) gives examples of how to be an active citizen, how to make a difference as a member of the community, and how to contribute and give back to society.



Suggested discussion questions

- What are some of the reasons that children in countries where Mary's Meals works can become homeless or fall into poverty and how can we help to address this?
- How is education helping to create a brighter future for children who receive Mary's Meals?
- How can we, as a school / community, help Mary's Meals to grow and to support more children? (It's a good idea to keep a note of their answers as they will be asked again in week six.)

The Shed That Fed A Million Children (part one)



If you haven't already done so, download [The Shed That Fed A Million Children](#) resource

Overview

The accompanying resource contains short excerpts from the bestselling book **The Shed That Fed A Million Children**, written by Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow (founder of Mary's Meals). The stories will help you learn a little more about Malawi and some of the people who inspired the work of Mary's Meals.

This resource can help to improve literacy skills across all areas including speaking, listening, reading, writing and comprehension. Read the passage to gain an understanding of international issues and the amazing story of Mary's Meals.

Read Where to begin? [page 3]

Perhaps your students could read the passage aloud and work through the questions in groups.



Suggested discussion questions

- What is the link between food and learning?
- Do you remember a time when you didn't feel able to do something because you were hungry?
- Think about the reasons why so many poor children remain out of school or unable to learn.
- Look up the word highlighted in blue in the book resource and discuss or write down the definition.

Group activity

Print out sheets with words like education, clothing, clean water, happiness and food and cut them out. Divide the class into groups, giving each group an envelope containing a full set of the words. Ask them to lay out the words in order of importance (most important at the top).

When they finish, they could walk around and see how other groups ranked the words then have a discussion about it all together. This will give you a chance to talk about the fact that if we don't have food and clean water, then it's more difficult to access education and other important things.

Generation Hope

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Tip: Check you have what you need to stream the film from our website during the lesson. It might be a good idea to try it out in advance! If you're having trouble accessing any of the films, please get in touch: Ireland@marysmeals.org



Optional extra:
Veronica's story (two-minute film)



Overview

Filmed on location in Malawi, Haiti, and India, this uplifting film introduces us to members of what we call ‘**Generation Hope**’ – children and young people whose prospects are brighter because of support from Mary’s Meals. You will not only meet children who are currently receiving daily meals while they learn, but also young people who, having received Mary’s Meals at school, have gone on to further education or paid employment because the school feeding programme has helped them to realise their potential.

These films will demonstrate to students the global nature of the Mary’s Meals movement and, crucially, the difference that small actions make on a global scale.

Suggested discussion questions

- Do you take for granted the fact you will eat every day?
- Do you consider your access to education to be a privilege?
- Do you believe all children have a right to eat every day and have access to education?

Curriculum links
Politics and
Society CSPE

The Shed That Fed A Million Children (part two)



If you haven't already done so, download
The Shed That Fed A Million Children [resource](#)

Overview

Through another short excerpt from Magnus' bestselling book, [The Shed That Fed A Million Children](#), your students will get some insight into the humble beginnings of the Mary's Meals school feeding programme.

In this passage, Magnus recalls the first school feeding undertaken by Mary's Meals in two schools in Malawi.

[Read Likuni phala \[page 4\]](#)

Perhaps your students could read the passage aloud and work through the questions in groups.



Suggested discussion questions

- Why do you think it is important that the Mary's Meals programme is 'owned' by the local community?
- What are the benefits of purchasing locally produced ingredients for the meals?
- What could you do to help hungry children go to school?

Love Reaches Everywhere



Tip: Check you have what you need to stream the film from our website during the lesson. It might be a good idea to try it out in advance!
If you're having trouble accessing any of the films, please get in touch:
Ireland@marysmeals.org

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Overview

After presenting Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow with a CNN Heroes award, actor Gerard Butler began to support Mary's Meals. He travelled to Liberia and Haiti to see first-hand how Mary's Meals is fighting poverty and helping to transform entire communities by engaging volunteers to provide children with daily meals in their place of education.



Suggested discussion questions

- What moment in the film was most inspiring to you?
- What evidence was there in the film that religion and faith play a part in guiding and motivating people and how do you think this helps them as they face difficult situations?
- Why are fundraisers so important for Mary's Meals and how could you – as an individual or as part of a group – help the charity?

Curriculum links
Politics and
Society CSPE

The difference a meal makes



CLICK TO VIEW



Watch: Lette's story of hope
(eight-minute film)



Tip: Check you have what you need to stream the film from our website during the lesson. It might be a good idea to try it out in advance! If you're having trouble accessing any of the films, please get in touch: Ireland@marysmeals.org

You ~~can't~~ have the power to change someone's life.

Optional extra:

Food changes the story
This short clip cleverly introduces how anyone can make a difference through Mary's Meals. Why not share it on social media?

Overview

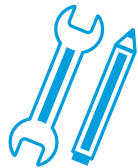
As the programme draws to a close, we hope the young people feel inspired by the simple truth that **food changes the story** for the world's poorest communities and the knowledge that their actions can have a big impact. Participants could now brainstorm ideas of how they, their school or their local community can help support the work of Mary's Meals and make a difference to childrens lives.

Students now have the option to become **Mary's Meals Ambassadors** for their school.

Youth Ambassadors would spread awareness for Mary's Meals among their school community and host at least one annual fundraiser (with the principal's permission).



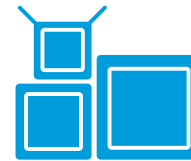
Time



Skills



Money



Goods



Prayer

Over to you!

Here are a few fundraising ideas that might help to get you started, but please feel free to get creative and dream up your own unique ways to support our mission!



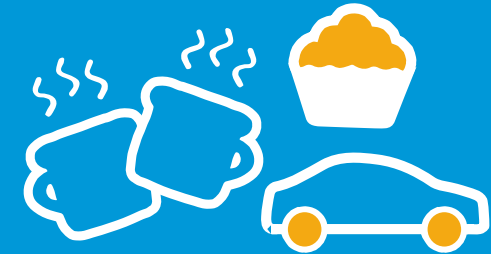
A day in the life

During the programme, the students met some amazing children who face challenges every day in pursuit of an education. You could encourage them to design a 'day in the life' fundraising challenge and ask neighbours and friends to sponsor them.

Perhaps they could start their day by walking 5km around their school grounds or local area, in solidarity with children who walk several kilometres to school. Another idea might be to remove the desks and chairs from the base and swap their lunch for one bowl of porridge.

Little acts add up!

Work out how much you would need to save each week to feed a child with Mary's Meals by the end of the school year. Consider giving up something you like and putting the money aside for Mary's Meals each week – giving up something small yourself will make a big difference to one of the world's poorest children.



Putting the FUN in fundraising

If it is possible and appropriate to plan a fundraising event, this can be a great way to raise awareness of our work while also helping to feed the next child waiting for Mary's Meals.

There are so many different types of events you could put on. Coffee mornings, bake sales, no uniform days, car washes, school dances or concerts – it's amazing what you can achieve when you work together!



LITTLE ACTS, BIG DIFFERENCE

Don't forget to issue certificates to the young people who complete the programme.



Find us on social media – we'd love to see pictures from your events!

marysmeals.ie

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