

**Scottish Government International Development Programme
End-Year Report**

1. General project information		
1.1	Project reference Number	MAL/18/07 - MM
1.2	Name of organisation	Mary's Meals UK
1.3	Lead partner(s) organisation	Mary's Meals International
1.4	Project title	Mary's Meals' pre-school and primary school feeding programme
1.5	Reporting period	From: 01/04/2020 To: 31/03/2021
1.6	Reporting year	3
1.7	Project start date	01/10/2018
1.8	Project end date	31/03/2023
1.9	Total project budget*	£1,401,988
1.10	Total funding from Scottish Government*	£1,080,000
1.11	Provide a brief description of the project's aims, highlighting which of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) your project is working towards? (200 words)	Provide school feeding to vulnerable children in primary schools and ECD centres across Zomba, southern Malawi. Reducing classroom hunger and promoting access, participation and progression through primary and pre-school education. Contributing to the SDGs of no hunger and quality education.
2. Project progress and results		
<i>Please use this section to give an update on the progress the project has made during this reporting period.</i>		

2.1	<p>Provide an update on the progress your project has made over the past 12 months. Use this space to update us on what has gone well and any challenges you have experienced, detailing how you have overcome these. (Max 500 words)</p> <p>Despite Covid-19 presenting significant challenges, Mary's Meals (MM) has continued to make outstanding progress in ensuring that we provide a daily meal to all children supported in this project. Schools re-opened in October 2020 on a rotational basis to mitigate the spread of Covid-19. To ensure consistent delivery of the project we have continued to provide community distributions for the entire Yr3 and we are working closely with the Government of Malawi (GoM) to recommence in-school feeding when it is safe to do so. Nationwide teacher strikes over recent months have also impacted the project, with schools having to close. Schools are currently open in Malawi, but MM continues to monitor the situation very closely.</p>
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We are now reaching 30,732 learners, 28,141 in primary school and 2,591 in pre-school. An additional 165 children have enrolled at pre-schools, representing an increase of 7%, exceeding our Yr3 milestone. There has been a decrease of 4% in children enrolled in primary schools as a result of prolonged disruption due to Covid-19 and teacher strikes. However, we expect to see an increase in enrolment once schools fully reopen and the normal schedule resumes, as our distribution survey showed that the vast majority of parents stated that the meals provided by MM encouraged them to send children back to school after closures. Community distributions are continuing to go well. The distribution carried out in October 2020 reached 99% of beneficiaries, demonstrating strong community engagement, and the continued need for distributions.

This project has continued to strengthen progression in education in Yr3. There are 4.8% more children enrolled in Standard 2 than at baseline and 7.6% more children in Standard 5. There was a decrease of 9.2% in the children enrolled in the last grade of primary school - a reflection of children dropping out due to the impact of Covid-19 and the disruption caused by strikes. According to latest data, an average attendance rate of 92% was achieved for both boys and girls in primary school, exceeding our end of Yr3 milestone. Attendance of children at ECDs was on average 63%, below our milestone for end of Yr3. During Yr3, 1,006 learners graduated from ECDs - under our planned target due to delays in graduations caused by Covid-19, but still a great achievement given the challenges faced.

In Yr3, MM has continued to engage with both GoM and communities to build capacity for school feeding. Over the reporting period, a total of 60 community level trainings took place, with particular focus on hygiene, food preparation and our Covid-19 response. At government level, we facilitated 11 meetings with government representatives – 8 at zonal/cluster level and 3 at district level. The number of meetings we have been able to conduct this year has been impacted significantly by the Covid-19 restrictions in place.

We have continued our work towards the environmental sustainability of the project this reporting period. This year, around 7,000 tree seedlings were planted, and we achieved a 91.5% survival rate, significantly exceeding our planned target.

2.2 Has the focus or plans for delivery changed significantly during the last year? Please highlight what issues or challenges prompted this change and how you anticipate any changes in focus will impact on the previously agreed outcomes (Max 500 words)

Over this reporting period, project delivery has not changed significantly but has continued to be affected by prolonged school closures put in place to mitigate the spread of Covid-19 and extensive teacher strikes at the start of 2021. This has resulted in the provision of dry take home rations to beneficiaries for the entire reporting period. A total of five distributions were carried out over this reporting period, ensuring that the beneficiaries in this project continued to receive meals, whether learning at home or in-school, enabling children to continue with their education. Due to continuing community distributions, MM has been unable to collect data for Output Indicator 1.1 over the reporting period as we have not been feeding directly in schools. We have also not been able to conduct an annual survey this year due to Covid-19 restrictions, therefore we have not been able to collect data for Outcome Indicators 1.4, 2.1 and 2.3.

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We have continued to see low ECD attendance rates this reporting period, due ongoing issues surrounding registration at pre-schools, as outlined in previous reports. We will continue to address and monitor this issue as schools fully reopen and in-school feeding resumes.

Throughout this year, we have worked in collaboration with GoM and local communities, to ensure that we are continuing to feed all beneficiaries. Some of the actions we have taken to make sure our vital work does not stop include:

- 60 community training sessions were conducted to ensure capacity to deliver our community distribution model, whilst following government guidelines.
- The distribution of soap alongside CSB community distributions to promote good hygiene practices.
- Continued engagement with government officials to emphasise the importance of our project, and the need for strict hygiene protocols.
- The repositioning of CSB distributions at some rural schools to ensure that even despite difficult road conditions, distributions were not missed. More information can be found in section 2.3.
- Hosting the annual workshop with collaborating partners online, to ensure the safety of all parties and enabling constructive conversation. More information can be found in section 3.1.

The implementation of our planned activities in the coming year will continue to be affected by the necessary measures taken by GoM to stop the spread of Covid-19. MM has continued to work alongside GoM on the possibility of resuming in-school feeding as schools reopen. MM is committed to efficiently and effectively transitioning back to in-school feeding, but only when it is safe to do so and with GoM support. Until then, we will continue with community distributions for all the project's beneficiaries.

As schools have not reopened in full during the reporting period, we have not been able to track in-school indicators. However, we have tracked beneficiary data to ensure we are measuring the impact of our ongoing Covid-19 response. We will continue to build capacity at both the community and government level and will further engage with our coordinating partners throughout the coming year.

2.3 Taking into consideration what you have achieved during the last 12 months, along with any challenges you have experienced, please highlight to us what lessons you have learned, and how these will be applied in the project in the future. (Max 500 words)

Throughout the reporting period, we have faced considerable challenges in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic, including the closure of project schools due to government restrictions. However, through continuous engagement with the Ministry of Education (MoE), we have been able to make timely decisions to quickly adjust our in-school feeding model to a community distribution approach. Through this effective and safe approach, we have managed to ensure that the children enrolled in our project have continued to be supported by community distributions during this time of great need. We have also made great achievements regarding woodlots and the environmental sustainability of this project over the last year, shown through the increased number of trees planted this year and the extremely high survival rate.

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We have continuously adapted our community distribution approach to ensure that we are meeting the needs of our beneficiaries most effectively and efficiently. For example, at project schools that are hard to reach due to difficult weather conditions, such as Mpungulira Primary School, we stored supplies of CSB at nearby schools, to ensure all schools have access to CSB and community distributions could take place regardless of challenging road conditions which can arise from the rainy season. This learning has ensured all beneficiaries can be continuously supported and will be sustained to ensure project efficiency.

Over this reporting period, we have further strengthened the capacity of school feeding committees. Training sessions have covered topics on commodity management and woodlot management, which has helped to maintain our high project standards with minimal supervision given the increased capacity of the local communities to deliver the project. The learning from these training is demonstrated through the extremely high tree seedling survival rates we have seen across the project this reporting period.

Further mentoring of School Health and Nutrition (SHN) Committees to take the lead on our community distributions has helped to further encourage community ownership of the project and has also enhanced efficiency during distributions. This was shown in our quick and efficient transition to community distributions following school closures and the high rates of community engagement we have experienced.

3. Partnerships and collaboration

This section allows you to discuss how partnership working is progressing on the project, as well as wider collaboration and sharing of learning.

3.1 Provide an update on how partnership working has gone in the past 12 months. Let us know about any highlights, challenges or changes to roles and responsibilities. (Max 350 words)

MM has continued to engage and collaborate with our partners to ensure efficient project delivery. The key challenges have resulted from Covid-19 restrictions in place for the duration of the reporting period. However, we have managed to overcome these challenges by enforcing social distancing measures at meetings or by hosting and attending events, such as the annual workshop, online to ensure we are following government guidelines.

We have continued to strengthen our partnerships with district educational authorities and implementing partners to help ensure effective project delivery. We carried out two joint supervisory visits to project schools to assess and ensure effective delivery. During one of these visits, MM staff met with the District's Chief Education Officer and the SHN Coordinator to understand the impact of the project and discuss any achievements or challenges.

Following the delay of the annual workshop from Yr 2, MM carried out two annual workshops both of which took place virtually in September 2020 and March 2021, with all key stakeholders – WaterAid, Amref Health Africa, YODEP, National Initiative for Civil Education (NICE) and a representative from the

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	<p>Malawi Scotland Partnership. The annual workshop which took place on 31 March 2021 covered key achievements and successes over the last year, sharing challenges and lessons learned - with particular focus on Covid-19 response in project areas, identifying further areas of collaboration, and anticipating the key events of next year. This workshop was very successful and raised useful points regarding best practice and effectiveness responses to the challenges caused by Covid-19. Action points taken from this workshop include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improve capacity building plans in place for schools on data collection. - Greater information sharing regarding hygiene standards. - NICE to conduct further sensitization of communities in regards to Covid-19 vaccines and mark wearing. <p>We were able to build capacity at school level by hosting 60 community trainings. These meetings included training on cooking, data management, woodlot management, our Covid-19 response and hygiene practices. These trainings help to build support for the project within the local communities and encourage involvement in the school feeding committees.</p>	
3.2	<p>Have any Scotland-based staff visited the project in the past 12 months? Give details including key activities and outputs of these visits.</p> <p>No visits due to Covid-19 restrictions.</p>	
Date of visit	Key achievements / outputs of visit	Follow-up actions
N/A	N/A	N/A
N/A	N/A	N/A
N/A	N/A	N/A
3.3	<p>Please tell us about any dissemination and learning throughout this reporting period. How have you promoted effective learning across the project? Please explain what processes you have used both internally and externally to share learning from the project so far, and how this learning is being used. (Max 500 words)</p>	
	<p>This year, coordination meetings with implementing partners have continued to be part of MM's learning process and have helped to overcome challenges we have faced in the light of the Covid-19 pandemic.</p> <p>Joint monitoring visits by MM staff and implementing partners have helped to promote continuous learning throughout the project. During these joint monitoring visits, it was discovered that during school closures, some hygiene standards had diminished in some project schools. We addressed these issues at the zonal and cluster meetings to raise awareness of the importance of hygiene with the communities. This topic of Covid-19 and hygiene was included</p>	

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	<p>in meeting agendas and relevant participants were tasked to further sensitize communities on the importance of hygiene. This will be followed with further monitoring of hygiene standards to ensure that they are always of the highest standard. This highlights the continuous learning throughout the project and how we use this to strengthen the project as a whole.</p> <p>Internally we have also introduced a successful Learn and Response project, to further strengthen the capacity of MM staff in problem identification and resolution. For example, SFOs meet and present challenges they have encountered during field visits to schools, and as a group they work together to establish an action plan to resolve the issues. The action plan will then be reviewed and approved by their SFM. This internal collaborative learning process helps to disseminate learning across the project and improve processes around problem resolution to make it more effective and efficient.</p> <p>Externally, meetings with both local communities and the government at a district and national level, enable us to continue to promote the importance of the school feeding programme and share best practice. We have extensively engaged with the government this reporting period, to make sure we are up to date with all current restrictions and guidelines, to ensure the safety of all staff, children and volunteers involved in the project. This reporting period we have conducted 8 zonal and cluster meetings, which have resulted in 31 community 'follow-up' meetings to further disseminate learnings at a local level. We also conducted 3 district level meetings with government officials, all of which have helped to share our learnings and build capacity at a national and district level.</p>
3.4	<p>If the project has been able to complete a mid-term project evaluation in the past 12 months, please provide detail of the outcome of the evaluation. (Max 500 words).</p>
	<p>The project planned for a mid-term evaluation however this was unable to happen due to ongoing Covid-19 restrictions and school closures. However, MM carried out a survey in February 2021 to evaluate the effectiveness of our community distribution approach. As part of the survey, 125 parents of 423 children who have received take home rations in eight project schools in Zomba were sampled – Chikupira, Domasi CCAP, Koloti, Mpungulira, Naming'azi, Ntanganala, Ntangawe and Songani.</p> <p>Survey findings have been reviewed and we have seen extremely positive results regarding our community distribution model. This has shown overall that take-home rations are assisting in reducing hunger at household level and have ensured that children have access to a meal before attending classes in school and whilst they have continued their learning at home. The results also told us that the vast majority of parents stated that the meals provided by MM were extremely important in their decision to send their children back to school after prolonged closures.</p> <p>Some of the results of the survey are outlined below:</p> <p>Impact on Hunger</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 94% of respondents reported that distributions reduced hunger in their household. - 0% of respondents reported that distributions had no impact on their household hunger. - Before distributions took place, 56% of parents reported that they were very worried about hunger in their household. - After the first distribution, 65% of parents surveyed reported that household hunger was 'not worrying', with 0% describing household hunger as 'very worrying'. <p>Impact on Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 70% of the parents surveyed reported that their children continued their learning at home whilst schools were closed. - Only 1% of respondents who stated that their children had not been continuing their learning at home, stated it was because their child was too hungry. - 93% of parents surveyed reported that the daily school meals were very important in their decision to send their children back to school. <p>These extremely positive results demonstrate the impact our adapted approach has had on the project beneficiaries this reporting period. The positive feedback we have received from parents has confirmed that our take-home rations are reducing hunger at home for children and enabling their children to continue their learning either at home or in the classroom. The results also highlight how during school closures, MM helped to overcome the potential barrier and risk of hunger resulting in lack of learning at home, by providing community distributions. We hope to be able to conduct another annual survey across project schools once in-school feeding has resumed, to further gauge the impact of our work.</p>
3.5	<p>Please highlight how you are maintaining an awareness of others working in this region, giving details of collaboration, joint working or partnerships with others. (Max 500 words)</p>
	<p>MM presence at cluster and zonal meetings in the Zomba district, allow us to remain aware of other organisations working in the region, and how these other interventions coincide with our school feeding programme.</p> <p>MM has been part of the Early Childhood Development Committee (ECDC) over this reporting period. The committee is made up of organisations who are working in ECDs in Malawi and enables cooperation through the sharing of progress reports and challenges faced, in order to better support children enrolled in ECDs. By participating in the ECDC, MM is maintaining awareness of other organisations working in ECDs in Malawi. This in turn helps to improve the project and emphasize the importance of early education.</p> <p>MM is also part of the District Nutrition Committee (DNC), which is a body of nutrition experts at district level and is led by the District Nutrition Office. This year, MM presented to the DNC, outlining our activities, and the achievements and challenges we have faced. This has helped to raise awareness of MM's</p>

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	<p>work in Malawi whilst also demonstrating the importance of school nutritional programmes, especially during this time of pandemic. This committee provides us the platform to collaborate and work with other nutrition organisations in order to benefit our work.</p> <p>This year, MM also presented the work and achievements of this project to the District Executive Committee (DEC). Our presentation outlined the activities we have achieved this year despite the challenges and how we adapted quickly to overcome these challenges. MM explained our effectiveness and efficient transition to a community distribution approach, while also advocating the importance of returning to in-school feeding as quickly as possible, when it is safe to do so. All of these various platforms and committees help us to maintain our awareness of organisations working in both Zomba and nationwide.</p>
<p>4. Safeguarding and fraud</p> <p><i>Please ensure you complete questions 4.1 and 4.2 even if you have no incidents to report.</i></p>	
4.1	<p>Have there been any safeguarding incidents, either relating to staff/volunteers or beneficiaries of the Grant or the Project, in the last 12 months?</p> <p>No</p>
4.2	<p>Have these incidents reported at 4.1 been reported to relevant authorities, and if so, to whom?</p> <p>N/A</p>
4.3	<p>Describe what action has been taken, and highlight any lessons learned.</p> <p>N/A</p>
4.4	<p>Have there been any incidents in the last 12 months of financial mismanagement, theft, fraud etc, either relating to the Grant or the Project or which affects the organisation?</p> <p>No</p>
4.5	<p>Have these incidents reported at 4.1 been reported to relevant authorities, and if so, to whom?</p> <p>N/A</p>
4.6	<p>Describe what action has been taken, and highlight any lessons learned.</p>

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	N/A		
5. Risk assessment			
5.1	<p>Have any issues materialised during this reporting period? If so, how were they addressed?</p> <p><i>Please refer to risk assessment provided at application stage.</i></p>		
Assumption	Risk	Action taken	Was this included in the Risk Assessment Table in your application?
Standard weather patterns	Non-standard weather patterns	Stored CSB for hard-to-reach areas at distribution sites. This ensured continuity of distribution during rainy season when roads were impassable.	Yes
School closures due to a pandemic	There is a risk schools close due to a pandemic, which means no school feeding can take place.	Continuous engagement between MM and GoM helped facilitate a change of delivery model from in-school feeding to community distributions.	Yes
Unable to resume in-school feeding quickly	There is a risk we are unable to resume normal programme delivery quickly when schools reopen, due to the impact of Covid-19 on our operations and delivery model.	MM developed a plan to quickly transition back to in-school feeding when authorized. Refresher trainings to MM staff have been conducted to ensure high standards. MM will continue with community distributions until authorized to reinstate in-school feeding when it is safe to do so.	Yes
Unable to access data due to schools being closed due to recurring teacher strikes.	There is a risk of a failure to access key information such as enrolment and attendance rates due to	MM has liaised with the Primary Education Advisor and DEM's Offices to ensure that in the case of a strike, they should be able to bridge the gap to allow access to data in a timely manner as to not affect decision making.	No- risk register has been updated.

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	recurring teacher strikes. Teachers could provide incomplete data which could affect food orders etc.		
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6. Inclusion & accountability

Thinking specifically about the past 12 months, please use this section to tell us how you are mainstreaming through your project, ensuring that you are aware of and actively working to reach vulnerable and marginalised groups.

6.1 Is the project still relevant for the beneficiaries you are working with? Please highlight how you ensure accountability on the project, ensuring beneficiaries have the opportunity to feedback on the project and influence its development? (max 350 words)

This project remains relevant for the beneficiaries we are working with, as it continues to work towards our long-term goals of reduced classroom hunger, leading in turn to increased enrolment and retention at school level. It also remains crucial in supporting children’s education, both in school and at home. There is widespread evidence school health and nutrition programmes are critical to addressing the current learning catastrophe brought by Covid-19. This was highlighted by the United Nations (2020) who stated: “The UN recognises school feeding programmes as integral in strengthening the resilience of education systems and contributing to an equitable recovery from Covid-19.” This highlights the continued importance of this project in supporting children’s education. In the Zomba region, it is still evident that poverty and hunger remain prevalent. The Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET) reported in September 2020 that across the entire 2020/2021 consumption year, very poor households risk facing survival deficits equivalent to around 19% of their annual food and income needs. This has resulted in households engaging in negative coping strategies which have been exacerbated further by the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic. In the long-term, marginalised low-income families will bear the cost of any economic downturn, increasing child poverty and in turn resulting in long-lasting impacts on children’s health and learning outcomes.

To further enhance project accountability at community level, MM has established School Health and Nutrition Committees at each project school. Each committee consists of 10 to 15 members, of which at least 60% are women. The committees are trained in different aspects of the project, including porridge preparation, nutrition, WASH, safeguarding and woodlot management. The committees are also the first point of contact for the community to feedback on the project and raise any concerns they may have. This helps to ensure accountability of the project and encourages feedback from the community, ensuring relevance.

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	<p>The distribution survey which took place in February 2021, also allowed us to gain feedback on the project and helped ensure the project is reaching, and supporting, the needs of the project beneficiaries, as evidenced in section 3.4.</p>
6.2	<p>Do you have an awareness of particularly vulnerable or marginalised groups within the community in which your project is working? Please give details on how you are disaggregating data to recognise these groups across the project. (Max 350 words)</p>
	<p>MM's inclusive approach to school feeding, promotes a non-discriminatory project ensuring that all the children enrolled at the project schools, are provided with a daily school meal whether in school or through community distributions.</p> <p>As a result of our extensive needs assessments that occurs in all schools that we operate in, all beneficiaries supported as part of this grant are considered marginalised. This has been reflected in the high uptake we have seen during community distributions. We monitor each distribution to ensure that children are still receiving the much-needed food assistance in order to support their education. This is especially important to make we are continuing to support communities in Zomba, who are extremely vulnerable to the impacts of Covid-19.</p> <p>In each project school, data is regularly collected to ensure that MM can track beneficiaries and make sure all children enrolled are supported with a daily meal. The data collected on school information sheets and through our ongoing data collection, allow us to better understand the beneficiaries supported in this project and track the impacts of this grant. By collecting baseline data for indicators tracked in the attached logframe, we can monitor progress of this grant and ensure that our work is targeting, and improving the lives, of the marginalised children supported in this project.</p> <p>This project also specifically targets children enrolled at ECDs in the Zomba district of Malawi, who are more prone to suffering from malnutrition. By providing nutritional support to the children enrolled in these pre-schools, we are ensuring that from a young age, beneficiaries are encouraged to go to school and receive nutritional support to aid with their learning. We also disaggregate data by gender to ensure that we are promoting equal access to education for both boys and girls.</p>
6.3	<p>How is your project working to actively meet the needs of these vulnerable and marginalised groups, ensuring they are benefiting from the project? Please outline any mechanisms you are using. (Max 350 words)</p>
	<p>MM staff and volunteers work continuously to meet the needs of the children supported in this project. All children enrolled at the project schools are entitled to a school meal, whether in-school or through the provision of take-home rations. This inclusive approach allows children to benefit from the project and in turn helps them to participate and progress through education.</p> <p>As outlined in this report, we have safely conducted community trainings on a large-scale, at which we have emphasized the importance of education for all children while highlighting all relevant safety procedures which must be in place to ensure children's protection. Before distributions took place, SFOs carried out sessions on Safeguarding and Child Protection with the SHN committees, to raise awareness and ensure that all procedures were in place to protect the</p>

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	<p>beneficiaries. At the zonal/cluster meetings we conducted this reporting period, a wide range of stakeholders, including school management teams, PTAs and child protection groups were present, helping to engage all key stakeholders on the importance of the school feeding programme and ensuring that we are promoting the rights of children through the project.</p> <p>During distributions, children are discouraged from being present at distribution points to help reduce the risk of the spread of Covid-19. Parents are required to collect the dry rations on behalf of their children, helping to keep children safe. This also helped to encourage children to be at home and concentrate on their learning while schools were closed. By taking these protective measures, we are ensuring that vulnerable children are safe, whilst allowing them to focus on their studies.</p>
<p>6.4</p>	<p>Taking into consideration some of the challenges of mainstreaming, please describe any challenges you have faced in reaching vulnerable and marginalised groups, how you have overcome these or plans you have developed to support inclusion on the project. (Max 350 words)</p>
	<p>All the children in this project are marginalised, and therefore need our support. One of the challenges we faced this reporting period was ensuring that we continued to support these children whilst they continued their learning at home. However, we successfully overcame this through our efficient transition to our effective community distribution approach, highlighted by the incredibly positive results we received from the distribution survey carried out this reporting period. This enabled us to continue to reach the children enrolled in this project and make sure they received a daily school meal during this extremely challenging time, helping to support their learning both at home and in school.</p> <p>One of the main challenges we have faced this reporting period in reaching vulnerable and marginalised children is the unwillingness of parents to disclose information surrounding disability in relation to their children. This makes it extremely hard to put in place particular measures to support these children and their families. MM staff continue to emphasize the importance of this information and continues to encourage parents to disclose this information so they can ensure that they receive the support they need. Some schools have also been unable to ensure that infrastructure is accessible for children with disabilities, sometimes resulting in disabled children leaving school. Although it is beyond the scope of this project to undertake construction works in order to make sure school facilities are accessible for children with disabilities, we continue to use our strong community and government links, to promote this issue and advocate for inclusivity within education.</p>
<p>7. Financial information</p> <p><i>This section will be reviewed alongside your budget report, which should be included alongside your narrative and logframe. Please ensure this spreadsheet is completed with both a detailed breakdown of expenditure for this financial year, along with your projected spend for the next financial year.</i></p> <p><i>Please note carry-over of funds to the next financial year should have been agreed with the Scottish Government by January 31st of the current financial year.</i></p>	

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7.1	<p>With reference to your budget spreadsheet, please give a detailed explanation of any variances between planned and actual expenditure, including reasons for the variances and whether these are as a result of COVID-19, timing issues, price achieved, quantity etc. If these are temporary variances, please outline plans for expenditure. (Max 500 words)</p> <p>Total expenditure in year 3 is £244,869. We have reported an overspend in food costs of £19,592 due to higher food costs and enrolment than budgeted, as well as a greater number of feeding days due to the food purchasing cycle. There is also an overspend of £1,846 on soap costs due to the distribution of handwashing soap to ensure robust hygiene practices during the distribution of take-home rations in 2020. This is offset by an underspend in Output 2 of £10,342, a result of the decrease in the number of meetings held during the year, largely due to the cancellation or reduction of meetings due to Covid-19. There was also an underspend of £6,488 in travel and subsistence due to lower fuel costs, efficiency gains made on servicing vehicles and there were no international trips to Malawi due to COVID restrictions. Furthermore, there was a small underspend in running costs amounting to £1,170 largely due to staff working from home due to Covid-19 restrictions. Overall underspends in staff costs, in-country running, travel and subsistence and Output 2 and MEL have been utilised to cover the overspend in Output 1.</p>
7.2	<p>Please give details of any capital expenditure in this reporting period. (Max 350 words)</p> <p>There was no capital expenditure during this reporting period.</p>
7.3	<p>Please explain how you have worked to ensure cost effectiveness on the project in the past 12 months, whilst maintaining the quality of delivery. (Max 350 words)</p> <p>We always strive to ensure cost effectiveness by implementing measures, such as an annual tender exercise for the procurement of food to ensure that we are actively engaging with suppliers to seek value for money in both quality and cost. During this procurement exercise the global team work together to ensure a thorough evaluation of all suppliers' submissions, using strict evaluation criteria, with the aim of gaining cost efficiencies, quality, value for money and alignment with the values of Mary's Meals, as well as ensuring that the food is delivered to schools as efficiently and effectively as possible by the implementation of robust contract performance tools. Additionally, we have sought to streamline some of the meetings that were planned during the year and, if possible, combined them with the aim of making them and their outputs more efficient. Where activities were no longer possible due to Covid-19 restrictions, such as providing chitenje to some local volunteers, those funds were used to carry out and expand other existing programme activities such as providing handwashing soap.</p>
<p>8. Any other information</p> <p>Use this section to tell us any other relevant information regarding your project, including any information relevant to COVID-19 and how that has impacted project activities and/or budget. (Max 500 words)</p>	

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Information regarding the logframe is as follows:

- Progress data only covers March 2021 and does not reflect the averages of the full reporting period due to school closures. Indicators affected are marked with an * in the updated logframe attached.
- There has been no further update to the external data source for Impact Indicator 2 - decreased number of primary school-aged children in Zomba out of school – therefore we cannot report against this indicator at this stage.