

With prayer and support from our donors, First Steps was again able to make a very positive difference in the health and lives of thousands of North Korean children in 2009. Even though there is still so much more to do in North Korea, we were able to witness God's faithfulness and endless provision for his children.

Fortunately, North Korea did not suffer from any serious weather disasters in 2009. However, a mediocre-at-best fall harvest and an especially chilly international political climate further aggravated the food-shortage problem in DPRK.

Still, First Steps' programs are expanding steadily. Our soymilk program is now benefiting more than 80,000 children daily. In 2009, an additional 10,000 children were added to those already receiving soymilk from this program.

Overall, we were able to send:

- 300 metric tonnes of soybeans, which was processed into more than 10 million cups of soymilk;
- 20 new VitaCow and VitaGoat soymilk-making machines;
- 1.5 million sachets of the micronutrient Sprinkles;
- In-kind gifts of medicines, blankets and food, including essential medicines and baby formula for infants in orphanages.

Furthermore, FS has now established a total of 22 soymilk production sites, including 6 new ones in 2009.

Sprinkles

DPRK's Institute of Child Nutrition has repeatedly thanked First Steps for introducing our Sprinkles micronutrient program, which is contributing enormously to the health of women and babies. As of summer 2009, 35,000 children aged 6 to 24 months, and 37,000 pregnant women and nursing mothers were receiving Sprinkles.

During our summer site visit, we had a meeting with ICN to discuss the final results of a 2-year-Sprinkles efficacy study. The study showed that anemia in children dropped from 56 percent to 32 percent; that anemia in pregnant women fell from 52 percent to 32 percent; and that

anemia in nursing mothers went from 46 percent to 27 percent. ICN now wants to introduce Sprinkles on a national basis.

Site Visits

On our spring site visit, FS executive director Susan Ritchie was accompanied by MCC Asia Director Rod Suderman, Malnutrition Matters President Frank Daller and FS donor Earl Ritchie.

- Rod Suderman: to confirm the distribution of in-kind gifts
- Frank Daller: on his second technical visit to DPRK to inspect the soymilk-making machines and solve operational problems

On our summer site visit, Susan Ritchie travelled with FS supporters Phil and Linda Schafran, ShelterBox representative Mark Pearson and Susan's son Sam Ross.

- Visited Nampo, Hyongjesan, and Wonsan
- Confirmed the arrival of 5 new VitaGoats

On our winter site visit, Susan Ritchie was joined by FS director Andrea Rose and Sam Ross.

- Confirmed the delivery and distribution of 100 metric tonnes of soybeans and the installation of 5 new VitaCow and 5 new VitaGoat machines;
- Delivered replacement parts for some of the older machines;
- Hand-delivered in-kind gifts including essential medicines and baby formula for infants and orphanages.

Charity Events

- William Kim and Friends Clarinet Benefit Concert
- Grace Jongeun Lee Benefit Kayagum Concert
- Youth Orchestra of Grace Hanin Community Church
- Vancouver Women's Choir
- Korean Writers Association Poetry Reading Event
- Coven Art Gallery

Gift Matching Challenge

- FS sponsored its third annual First Steps gift matching challenge
- The gift was matched up to a total of \$50,000 by early Jan. 2010
- Received \$35,000 by end of December, 2009

First Steps 2009 Expenditures

- General & Administration 6%: \$41,001.48
- Fundraising 4%: \$26,878.42
- Programs 90%: \$617,608.88

First Steps 2009 Revenue

- \$459,734.30

First Steps Board of Directors

- Eunice (Yusoon) Oh
- Susan Ritchie
- Andrea Rose

First Steps Office

- Elinor Han - Office Administrator