

First Steps: Gifts of Kindness

Thank you to our donors!



Soybeans are shipped from Canada to North Korea to make soymilk. A cup of soymilk costs 2.7 cents per cup including shipping.

Donate \$ _____ towards soybeans.



Micro-nutrient Sprinkles cost 2.7 cents per sachet. They prevent malnutrition starting in the womb. Sprinkles are given to pregnant and nursing mothers, as well as babies from 6-24 months.

Donate \$ _____ towards micro-nutrient Sprinkles.



20-litre stainless-steel milk cans are vital for storing and transporting soymilk from production centres to the children we serve. They cost \$100 each.

Donate \$ _____ towards milk cans.



The VitaGoat is powered by combustible fuel (wood, coal, etc.). It processes soybeans directly into soymilk and provides about 1500 cups of soymilk per day to hungry children. The main difference from the VitaCow is that the VitaGoat runs without electricity. The cost of a VitaGoat is \$4000.

Donate \$ _____ towards a VitaGoat.



VitaCows process soybeans directly into soymilk providing children with a warm and protein-rich drink. The VitaCow is powered by electricity and can produce 2000 cups of soymilk per day to feed hungry children. The cost of a VitaCow is \$7000.

Donate \$ _____ towards a VitaCow.

name _____
 address _____
 city _____ prov. _____ postal code _____
 phone _____ email _____

Please make cheques payable to First Steps and forward to: 3260 West 5th Ave. Vancouver, B.C. V6K 1V4 Canada
 BIN: 878227511 RR0001. Gifts are acknowledged with an official receipt for income tax purposes.
 For further information contact us at: 604.732.0195 or www.firststepscanada.org

FIRST STEPS | news

SPRING 2013

Green Light to Help Hard-Hit Children

May the God of Peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever and ever. Amen. – Hebrews: 20-21

Amen is right! What a wonderful promise to embrace as a First Steps team (Pastor Steve and Mary Kosberg and Susan Ritchie) has recently returned from a DPR Korea (North Korea) shipment-confirmation visit (March 2 - 7) and as we seek to respond to a powerful and compelling invitation.

Certainly there was plenty of tension during our visit surrounding the current situation on the Korean peninsula, as well as excitement following DPRK's 'successful' nuclear test. But life goes on for ordinary North Koreans and in parts of the country the needs are as great as ever.

Doekchon, a North Korean coal-mining city of 250,000, is enduring what Charles Dickens would have called 'the worst of times.' Following a September 2012 visit by a First Steps team, our fall newsletter described the disaster that struck Doekchon on July 31, 2012 as "... a torrential



In Doekchon, kindergarten children are presently not receiving any soymilk ration. During our March visit, First Steps was invited to begin working here.

downpour and mudslide that claimed 46 lives and left more than 8,000 people homeless."

On March 6, a First Steps team revisited the still deeply affected city to confirm the arrival of what First Steps' had originally stipulated would be a one-time shipment of food aid. The faces and voices of the daycare and kindergarten directors were glowing with

excitement and gratitude for the nutritious dried soup mix from Gleaners and canned food items that sustained their children through a cold winter of severe food shortages.

The flash floods of last summer wiped out the local soybean crop, removing the sole source of protein for the city's young and vulnerable children - 16,247 daycare children (age 4 and under) and 6,753 kindergarten children (ages 5 & 6). At the daycare centres, children age 4 and under were receiving half the daily ration of soymilk and kindergarten children were not receiving any ration at all. It showed in the children's inability to laugh or smile and the way the children stood motionless in the playground without energy to run around and play.

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Local officials and school directors repeatedly expressed their thanks and reiterated their plea for more help for the children. Over the course of our day there, it became apparent that we had been given a green light to start a First Steps' soymilk program in Doekchon – to take up the challenge of helping the hard-hit children in a city where the UN or any other aid organizations are not working.

So how will First Steps feed an extra 23,000 mouths? A nutrition survey conducted (by the government along with UNICEF, WHO and WFP)



Doekchon kindergarten.

from Sept. 17 – October 17 of 2012, shows that the rate of malnutrition (20%) in Nampo (the first city where First Steps began working in over 10 years ago), has continued to drop and now has DPRK's lowest rate of

malnutrition along with Pyongyang. We have reassured our partners in Nampo that we will continue to work alongside them but will now only focus on young and vulnerable children who most need our help, like those in Doekchon.

On another note, we also had a chance to visit our soymilk programs in Wonsan, where the **number of beneficiaries is increasing** so that overall First Steps' wonderful donors are daily feeding more than 90,000 children. Again, Amen! And bless you for your faithful support.
– Susan Ritchie



Nearly 30 children sleep silently in this daycare room in Doekchon. Our new partnership there will improve their chances at a healthy future.



Snack time is happy time at Wonsan Baby Home (orphanage).



We were able to bring many knitted items on our March visit. The weather was still extremely cold and these gifts were timely.



Children with enough energy to play is something to be celebrated!



Mary Kosberg and Susan Ritchie confirm the shipment of seeds to Doekchon. There is so much hope for a bountiful harvest this year!



The donation of soup mix from Gleaners was almost gone when we arrived in Doekchon. As anticipated, last winter left many children relying solely on the soup mix for daily meals.

Can you see it? Steve Kosberg

Look at the faces in the picture to the right. Can you see it? Can you see the hope and anticipation in the longing eyes? Just one cup! Just one cup of soymilk a day for these children who get very little else each day! Just one cup that provides for them the nutrients that will enable them to look forward to a future of better health and welfare! In that one cup of soymilk each day is contained not just the nutrients needed, but the care and concern, the efforts and resources, the commitment and provision of the people who have supported this much-needed First Steps ministry in a country where the demand outlasts the supply. It isn't just soymilk pouring into that child's cup, it is the command of Jesus to feed the hungry and quench

the thirsty; it is the promise of service always connected to the promise of life! Actually, there is no other way to live! It was Mary's and my great privilege to accompany Susan Ritchie on her recent trip to North Korea. It was in an orphanage like this that I came to realize more fully the awesome ministry of First Steps; the amazing way in which people from all over the world entered that orphanage room that day; the much-needed continuation of this very important ministry in the DPRK. It is indeed a grassroots-grounded ministry! In awe of God, Steve Kosberg



Pastor Steve Kosberg with boys at the Wonsan Primary Boarding School (orphanage).

“For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat; I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink...”

Matthew 25:35

It Looks Like a Monster! Mary Kosberg

It looks like a monster! A stainless steel robot packaging nutritional Sprinkles for pregnant moms and newborns. We visited the Institute of Child Nutrition on March 5th, and met some very determined and

knowledgeable men who assembled this monster and now coax it to package the bulk Sprinkles into precious little pink packs of power. There is progress! Pink Power. Praise God. – Mary Kosberg



New machine for packaging micronutrient Sprinkles.

Sprinkles now being packaged in North Korea

First Steps first began working with North Korea's Institute of Child Nutrition to introduce micro-nutrient Sprinkles in 2004 to prevent **nutritional deficiencies. Micronutrient deficiencies are a form of malnutrition** that puts infants, young children and

pregnant women at increased risk of early mortality, disease and disability. In the communities where First Steps distributes Sprinkles, health-care professionals attest that Sprinkles are preventing death from pneumonia and diarrhea, preventing rickets and

promoting healthy development in young children. First Steps recently imported a Sprinkles packaging machine to allow Sprinkles to be packaged in North Korea.