



  
**FIRST STEPS**  
preventing child malnutrition

# 2020 Annual Report

**“Rejoice always,  
pray continually,  
give thanks in all  
circumstances; for  
this is God’s will for  
you in Christ Jesus.”**

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18



## **A Note from Our Executive Director**

None of us could have foreseen that in March 2020, the world would be gripped by a global pandemic which would affect us all, but affect us unevenly and in some cases, unjustly. Although travel restrictions precluded visits by First Steps teams to North Korea in 2020, God has preserved the work of First Steps, making it possible for thousands of children, mothers and babies, to receive nutritional support necessary for growth and good health.

We are profoundly grateful for the continued generosity and prayers of our supporters throughout the pandemic, which have helped to make this possible.

We are thankful we have been able to maintain contact with our partners in the DPRK in the absence of in-person visits, and for our continued communication. We look forward to seeing them again in person in God’s perfect timing.

In early 2020, our North Korean partners undertook the distribution of the remaining 100 tonnes of soybeans which had been kept in storage from the November 2019 shipment. In May 2020, 40 metric tonnes of soybeans were shipped and in July 2020, 7.2 million sachets of micronutrient Sprinkles were shipped. These two shipments, have, however, been held up in Dalian, China due to the closed border. We have been assured that when that upon the reopening of the border, our shipment will be given priority in terms of passage.

We have also purchased an additional 200 tonnes of soybeans, which are to be shipped at a future date.

We miss our quarterly visits to North Korea, which give us the opportunity to see firsthand what is happening at the local level, and to ensure that production and

distribution operations are running smoothly. Generally, the North Korean grown supply of soybeans would last from around the end of November until April, after which, First Steps soybeans would be their mainstay.

First Steps staff and volunteers have been hard at work throughout 2020, creating a new database in the Office. This is an extensive undertaking, which will likely continue well into 2021 and whilst the task itself is a vast one, we are excited at the prospect of increased efficiency and greater potential, which the new database will make possible

As we reflect on the experiences of 2020, we are reminded that even when the storm of the pandemic may be raging around the world, God is still sovereign and only He can calm the waters.



## 2021 Outlook

Our office in Vancouver is a place where staff, volunteers, and supporters, come together to work, pray and plan.

Our work has certainly looked different this year. We have grown accustomed to wearing masks in the office and several volunteers are working remotely. Despite the changes, we remain resolute in our mission, inspired by the compassion of our supporters.

Our current focus is on:

Acquiring the relevant permits to ship soybeans, Sprinkles, food processing systems, and relief goods.

Affirming our North Korean friends of our continued support and discuss plans for our next visit once the borders reopen.

Despite global uncertainty, we do not lose heart, rather, we affirm our faith in His perfect timing.



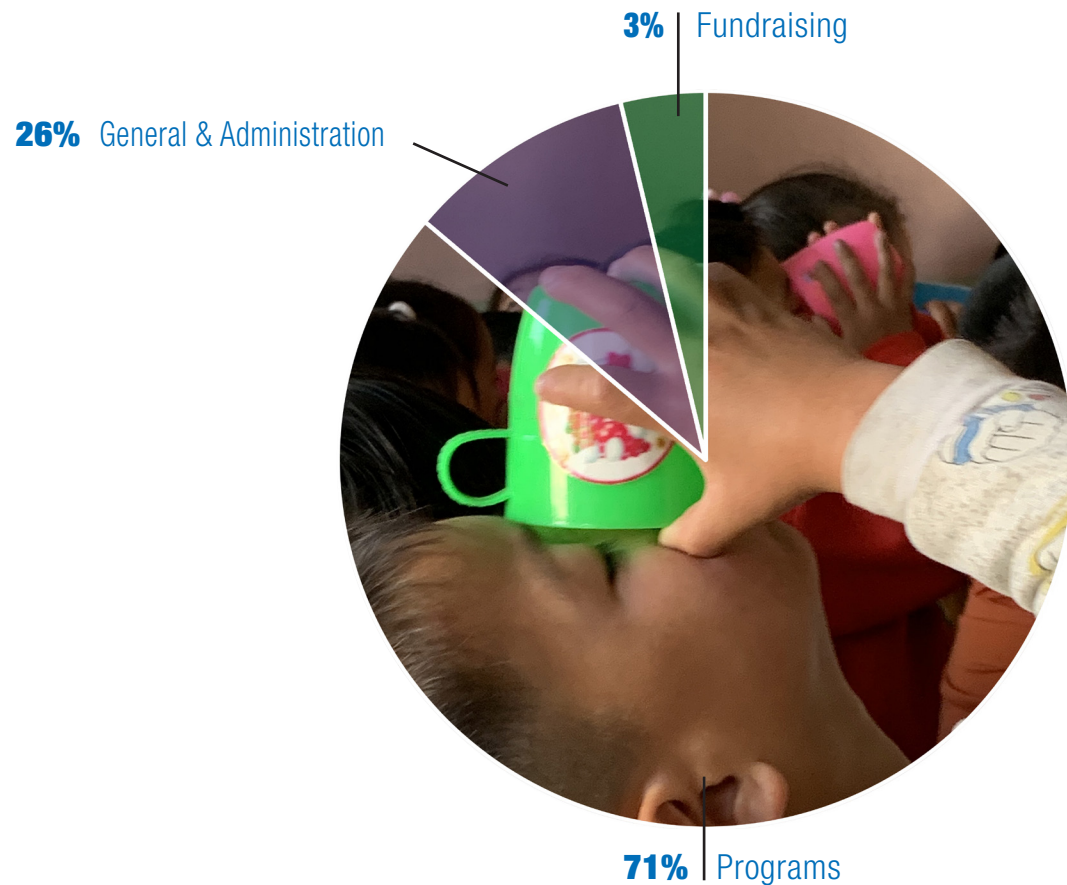
**“A friend loveth at all times, and  
a brother is born for adversity.”**

Proverbs 17:17

## 2020 Finances

As border closures have hindered First Steps' program operations this year, the program expenses for 2020 were lower than anticipated. Consequently, administration and fundraising expenses assumed an atypically high percentage of total spending, whilst consistent in real terms in regard to typical spending patterns. The regular margin for First Steps' general administration is 17%.

First Steps 2020 Revenue **\$881,716.14**







## First Steps Board of Directors

Valorie Day

Madeline Harden

Jackie (Chun-Ran) Lim

Mary Wong-Moon

Milee Kim

## First Steps Staff

### Full-time

Susan Ritchie — Founder, Executive Director

### Part-time

Mary Amendt — Regional Coordinator, Alberta

Betsy Abraham — Communications Coordinator

Jennifer Hong — Korean Communication Coordinator

Joanne Cho — Financial Coordinator

### Interns

Arlene Yang

Caleb Ritchie

Emma Jeffery

## First Steps Volunteers

(Active in 2020)

Dean Yoo

Eun Chu Baik

Eunjin Huh

Eunseong Huh

Jenna Chae

Joseph Park

Joseph Yoon

Ki Young Sung

Kristen Joo

Mary Wong-Moon

Maxwell Pedret

Milee Kim

Nancy Zhang

Phil Goertzen

Reina Cho

Reina Yoo

Shijin Kim

Stephanie Hai

Titus Kim

Yong Ki Min

On behalf of First Steps, thank you for partnering with us to impact precious lives.





3260 West 5th Ave. Vancouver, B.C

[www.firststepscanada.org](http://www.firststepscanada.org)

[info@firststepscanada.org](mailto:info@firststepscanada.org)



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