

## First Steps: Gifts of Kindness



**Soybeans** are shipped from Canada to North Korea to make soymilk. One cup of soymilk costs just 3 cents, including shipping.

Donate \$ \_\_\_\_\_ towards soybeans.



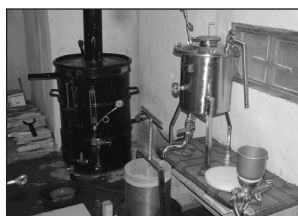
A \$50 donation to the **micronutrient Sprinkles** program provides 18 months of sachets for a baby (6 to 24 months) and 9 months of sachets for a pregnant and nursing mother. A lack of nutrients in the diet impacts growth and brain development. Sprinkles prevents rickets and lowers the rates of diarrhea and pneumonia, the leading causes of death in children under 2 years of age.

Donate \$ \_\_\_\_\_ towards micronutrient 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 nutrient-rich soymilk and provides about 1,500 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 the VitaCow is \$7000.

Donate \$ \_\_\_\_\_ towards a VitaCow.

name \_\_\_\_\_  
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Please make cheques payable to First Steps Health Society and forward to: 3260 West 5th Ave. Vancouver, B.C. V6K 1V4 Canada  
 BIN: 821724036 RR0001. Gifts are acknowledged with an official receipt for income tax purposes.  
 For further information contact us at 604.732.0195 or visit our website at [www.firststepscanada.org](http://www.firststepscanada.org)

Please Recycle or Pass Along. Contact us at [info@firststepscanada.org](mailto:info@firststepscanada.org) to receive First Steps Newsletter by email.



2017 New Years Edition



Pale morning sunshine streams through the frosted windows of an unheated kindergarten in Tongchon as hungry children huddle close together in their warmest jackets, eagerly sipping cups

This year, we look forward to maintaining our existing programs and to further establishing our new ones in Kangwon and Ryanggang provinces. We strive to improve the health of young children and pregnant or breastfeeding mothers who face chronic malnutrition due to poor dietary diversity. We are continuing to make arrangements for shipments into these new areas. However, due to recent restructuring in the central government in Pyongyang, we anticipate we'll be slowing the pace of our work while our new partner gains an understanding of how First Steps carries out its work. We are thankful for what God is accomplishing through this ministry and wait prayerfully on the Lord for His continued guidance.

### Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift.

2 Corinthians 9:15

of hot soymilk. Meanwhile, in a nearby apartment, a new mother adds the finishing touch to her toddler's bowl of gruel, a sachet of micronutrient Sprinkles full of vitamins and minerals to help her child grow strong and healthy. It's scenes like these—and each day tens of thousands of similar scenes—that have become a reality in daycares, kindergartens, orphanages and homes of new mothers in North Korea thanks to your heartfelt prayers and generosity.

Blessings to you in 2017 on behalf of First Steps and all those you are helping. Together, for more than 15 years, it has been our mission to deliver vital nutrition to the undernourished and vulnerable, focusing on daily reaching more than 100,000 young children with our soymilk program and on reaching thousands of pregnant women and their newborns with our micronutrient Sprinkles program.

Thank you again for partnering with First Steps. We recognize prayers and gifts are from the heart and made through sacrifice. Your support is making a world of difference in North Korea, touching lives and improving the health of mothers and young children. May you be greatly encouraged. Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift, our Lord Jesus Christ.

Susan Ritchie  
Executive Director,



# Highlights of the Past Year

As 2017 dawns, let's review some of what we accomplished in 2016



**1** We made four visits to monitor the delivery of various shipments and to check in with our partners and beneficiaries at the many locations where we serve. We give special thanks to our partners for their unflagging cooperation and support.

**2** We delivered 7.2 million sachets of Sprinkles, 200 tonnes of soybeans, 32 tonnes of food items (dried soup mix, dried apple chips, etc.), three new VitaGoat soymilk machines and water-bottling equipment, as well as the relief items listed in highlight number four.

**3** We started a Sprinkles program and a soymilk program in Ryanggang province (Hyesan city and Samjiyon county), a remote and difficult to access part of the country's mountainous north-central region. It's an area previously unserved by any non-government organizations and has the greatest nutritional needs in the county.

**4** We responded to an emergency appeal for help in North Hamgyong province after more than 100,000 people lost their homes to flooding in the wake of Typhoon Lionrock at the end of the summer. It was North Korea's greatest environmental disaster since the end of the Korean War. To date First Steps has delivered 25 tonnes of nutritious food items (soybean oil, fortified corn flour, soybean paste and bean meat) and 17,060 square-metres of steel roofing material to help rebuild daycares, kindergartens and clinics in Yonsa, one of the flood-devastated areas.

## Stories from different perspectives of our North Korea visits in 2016

### Spring Visit Reflection by Phil Schafran

The spring visit was my first to the DPRK since 2014. It was good to meet beneficiaries of the expanded Sprinkles program in Munchon, a city about a half-hour north of Wonsan. Our team visited two poli-clinics that have just begun receiving micronutrient Sprinkles. We met Cho Kum-Hya and her 13-month-old twins as well as Kim Won-Suk and her eight-month-old son Song Jong-Hyon. They were all happy to be receiving Sprinkles. I look forward to seeing the impact Sprinkles will have on this community.

### Summer Visit Reflection by Trevor Carter

This trip to North Korea brought to light for me the extent of malnutrition in the country. The first real evidence I saw of the effects of malnutrition was in Samjiyon where First Steps recently began partnering to provide micronutrient Sprinkles and soymilk. After meeting with doctors at the Eup clinic, we met some of the mothers, babies and pregnant women who are receiving Sprinkles. One mother, toting her toddler, was accompanied by her older daughter, who we discovered was actually 10 years old but looked so much younger. It was clear that she had suffered the stunting effects of malnutrition. We trust that with the help and prayers of First Steps, her newest sibling will not suffer a similar fate.

### Fall Visit

During the fall, the First Steps team visited Yonsa and Musan, two counties in North Hamgyong Province that had been devastated by Typhoon Lionrock. The road we travelled on was washed out in places. Locals cheerfully came out to help extricate our vehicle on several occasions when we got stuck in the rubble left by the flooding. Most houses in villages we passed had been inundated by debris or completely washed away. Later we learned that more than 35,000 homes in the flood zone had been damaged or destroyed. First Steps was able to deliver Sprinkles, nutritious food items and some medicines. Following the visit, First Steps helped supply corrugated steel roofing for daycares, kindergartens and clinics to ensure children and pregnant

women could be sheltered from the cold and quickly receive care. This was made possible through the incredible outpouring of support that followed the appeal (*First Steps' first emergency appeal since 2011*).

### Winter Visit

In December, the First Steps team met our new counterparts for the first time. Due to winter weather conditions, a visit to the flood-affected regions was postponed. However, the team received positive communications on the supplies that had arrived. We were told that the roofing that had been delivered was being placed on kindergartens, schools and clinics. First Steps looks forward to visiting once the roads are less treacherous to see first-hand the impact of the amazing response to this disaster.



**5** We also launched a Sprinkles program in Munchon city, Kangwon province, on the east coast.