



**MEDIA FOR DEVELOPMENT INTERNATIONAL, INC**

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## **Annual Report 1992**

This was Media for Development International's first year of activity and this is its first annual report. The report will tell of MFDI's founding and history before this year; summarize the projects MFDI initiated in 1991 and their progress; tell of MFDI's finances, administrative structure; and MFDI's plans for the future.

### **The History of MFDI -**

MFDI was established in November, 1989. We engaged Jerry Carr to be our lawyer to incorporate MFDI and apply to the Internal Revenue Service for non-profit 501(c)3 status. Incorporation was achieved quickly, but non-profit status took another 16 months. The IRS came to us twice with lengthy lists of questions, requiring lengthy responses. They sent us many notices saying that we'd hear soon, and that they were back logged in work, etc. Finally, March 28th, 1991, we received notice of our 501(c)3 status. We have been given the normal "advance ruling period" that ends December 31, 1993. Within 90 days of the end of that period, we need to file more papers with IRS to maintain our status.

Finances of MFDI up to 1991 were limited to expenditures for lawyer fees (\$3,848.90) and banking fees (\$128.36). No income at all was received before the beginning of 1991. MFDI received an interest free loan from Development through Self-Reliance, Inc. (DSR) to cover all expenses. Interest was mistakenly paid in late-1990 and then refunded in early-1991 as we didn't know that we should not charge interest.

The original board members of MFDI were Steve Smith, Sally Smith, and John Riber. Louise Riber was elected to be a fourth member in 1990. In 1991, once non-profit status was established, we expanded the board membership to its present level of nine board members (see attached board list).

### **MFDI Projects in 1991 --**

MFDI undertook seven projects in 1991 with grant funding from several sources and its interest free line of credit from DSR available as required. A financial and programmatic record keeping system was established. Each project has a key project file (plus extra files as required) with a MFDI Project Processing Sheet and MFDI Project Summary Sheet to keep track of project activities. We developed a numbering system for MFDI projects. Projects 1-01, 1-02, 1-03, etc are all Africa-related. Project 2-01 is for work in Asia, and Project 3-01 is for work in the USA.

#### **Project 1-01 -- Support of Media for Development Trust (MFD) in Zimbabwe.**

No expenses were made in this project in 1991 as no income was received. We are still trying to find funding to provide core support for MFD. We will develop this project

in 1992, supplying MFD with videos to distribute and with other small expense items that they critically need, that must be purchased in the USA and have no other source of funding available. We are also hoping to be able to support MFD's Resource Centre establishment proposal (about \$50,000). We will investigate funding sources in 1992 as soon as the project proposal is finalized.

**Project 1-02 -- Development of a social message film/video distribution model for Africa**

MFDI received support of \$5,500 from Rockefeller's National Video Resources to cover this project. The project consisted of carrying out promotional and marketing activities for the film *It's Not Easy*, and then preparing a document on African social message video distribution for mass distribution. We funded mini-premieres of *It's Not Easy* in Zimbabwe, Kenya, and Botswana; shipped small inventories of videos to Kenya and Zimbabwe; entered the film into eight festivals; and, engaged Steve Smith as a consultant to draft a document to NVR on African social message video distribution. The final document was submitted to NVR on August 16 1991, NVR edited the document and then we agreed to a final version in November 1991. In December, we provided NVR with a set of approximately 3,000 mailing labels for them to include with their normal distribution of the report. We expect the mailing to happen soon.

**Project 1-03 -- Film and video training needs assessments in southern Africa**

MFDI received support from UNESCO of \$14,935 to carry out this activity. John Riber visited the ten countries of the SADCC region of southern Africa (Tanzania, Malawi, Mozambique, Angola, Zambia, Swaziland, Lesotho, Namibia, Botswana and Zimbabwe) and prepared an assessment report of film and video training needs in each country, and his overall recommendation for unified training based in Harare. His draft report was reviewed by Steve Smith in September 1991 and the final report was submitted to UNESCO. We anticipate that this report will be of great use to UNESCO as it develops a regional training plan. Also, we hope to be able to share it with several other agencies (VITA, Video Tres Monde, Television Trust for the Environment, and others) that are involved with training for film/video makers in the region. By informing other training agencies of the "big picture" of the situation and what is planned in the region, we might be able to diminish overlapping and duplicating activities, and to encourage others to join in with the plan we've recommended to UNESCO to make Harare a regional center for film and video training which would be more effective and efficient.

**Project 1-04 -- Society for Cinema Studies Conference Presentation**

Steve Smith traveled to Los Angeles May 26-28, 1991 to present a report on "African Social Message Film Distribution -- A Means to an End." He attended the conference and his paper was well received. He made many contacts and gathered more information on African film and video distribution. Mr Smith donated his airfare and \$400 in cash to cover his travel costs.

**Project 1-05 -- Visit of Steve Smith to Zimbabwe to provide a management review of Media for Development Trust**

This project was planned, then not carried out under MFDI. Mr Smith visited MFD, but did so with financial support from other sources.

**Project 1-06 -- Blow up of Neria to 35mm**

This project is to support the production of a blow up of Neria to 35mm so that it can be distributed to African cinema halls. We received \$15,843 from The Canadian International Development Agency and in 1992, \$15,345 from the Swedish International Development Authority. Unfortunately, the cost of doing the work was budgeted at \$53,686. We have decided to go ahead with the project, supplementing the funds received with (0% interest) loan funds from DSR. All over-budget expenses from the project will be reimbursed by DSR from distribution profits as soon as the film is released in 1992.

The project was started in 1991 and completed in early-1992. The blow up of Neria is now complete and the film premiered in Harare, Zimbabwe on March 12, 1992, International Womens Day.

MFDI is the copyright holder of Neria, and we have agreed that all distribution outside Zimbabwe (MFD will have exclusive rights to distribution in Zimbabwe) will be done through DSR. Profits earned by DSR will first re-pay over-budget expenses on MFDI's project and DSR's project of the production of the film. Thereafter 10% of gross profits will be paid to the director, Godwin Maruwu and 20% to MFD, the production agency. The remaining 70% will stay with DSR to cover its expenses in promotion and distribution and to begin the repayment of the start up costs incurred by DSR of MFD/MFDI. Detailed contracts between Mr Maruwu, MFD and DSR have been finalized covering all this. This distribution of profits is as was agreed from the beginning of the project.

#### **Project 1-07 -- Dubbing of It's Not Easy to French and Swahili languages**

MFDI received support for this in the form of two fixed price subcontracts from Johns Hopkins University, JHU/CCP Project Numbers AIDSCOM-01 and AIDSCOM-02. The funding was \$21,600 for the French dub and \$15,000 for the Swahili dub. The French dub was completed in time to get a 16mm print to the AIDS conference in Dakar, Senegal in December 1991. Then we completed the French video masters and submitted them to the donor in February 1992, finishing the French part of this project.

The Swahili dub production has been held up. John Riber again visited the Tanzanian agency that would do the work in March, 1992, and has scheduled the work to be done by April, 1992.

#### **Project 2-01 -- Seed grant to Bangladesh**

In May of 1991, MFDI sent a letter to about 242 people asking for financial support for a project in Bangladesh. Sixty-two people responded and sent in \$2,625, an average donation of \$42/person. We engaged Mr Shafiqul Islam as a consultant to find and work with an agency in Bangladesh to become a video distribution point and clearinghouse. We investigated working with Service Civil International (SCI), Worldview International and Voluntary Health Service Society (VHSS), and finally selected VHSS. We worked out a project document with them, and then sent them 54 VHS videos (six each of nine titles) and then transferred \$2,350 to cover project costs. The balance of the funds was spent on shipping and the consultant.

The project objectives include establishing a video library with membership system and catalogue and lending system, informing VHSS membership of the library, arranging public showings and establishing a video viewing booth at VHSS. We anticipate a report from them of project activities in mid-1992.

We later sent them several Consequences evaluation books, and have included their address in several mass mailings as a source of these videos. As we get distribution rights to new films we hope to be able to provide copies to VHSS and expand their

distribution capabilities.

### **Project 3-01 -- Benefit Showing of It's Not Easy**

MFDI held a showing of It's Not Easy on December 1 1991, World AIDS Day to educate Americans about AIDS in Africa. We rented the Howard Community College theater and carried out a mass mailing of 1,040 pieces, posted notices, and had an article written in the local newspaper as promotional activities to inform the community of the show. Printing costs were donated by Colorsystems Printers and DSR donated about 5 person-days of labor. Steve Smith and a representative from the Ugandan Embassy and the Voice of America spoke and we showed It's Not Easy. We accepted \$5 donations from the audience. Costs totaled \$685.80 and income only \$180, so the project earned less than its costs and was unable to support itself as expected. But it was useful as a means of reaching Americans with our message about African film/video and AIDS, and as an assessment of the local community's interest in African media support (or rather lack thereof).

### **MFDI finances and administration**

During 1991, MFDI has organized its administration and financial systems. It hired two part time staff based in Africa, John and Louise Riber, who are each paid \$8,000 per year. They are provided no medical or other benefits except a family home leave trip every two years. Their first such trip was in 1991. MFDI has done all the numerous government filings required of it by State and Federal regulations. It purchased a file cabinet, office supplies, and a computer for the Ribers to use. It organized a relationship with the DSR landlord and is paying \$249 per month rent. It got a telephone line and two phones. It has begun to set up credit account relationships with many of the film, video and other vendors it purchases supplies from.

MFDI hired Orndorff Enterprises to establish and maintain its accounts and set up a chart of accounts with revenues (project specific and non-designated) and expenses (direct, indirect and other expenses).

MFDI has engaged Cheryl Trof, a Certified Public Account, to audit its 1991 accounts in March 1992. Her audit found that MFDI's books accurately represent its finances and that MFDI was in compliance with all regulations.

Most of MFDI's activities in the USA were done by Sally and Steve Smith on a volunteer basis. DSR has provided a credit facility to MFDI of an interest free loan to be drawn upon by MFDI as required. During 1991, that loan increased from \$5,000 at the beginning of the year to \$49,300 at year end. It is hoped that eventually MFDI will be able to repay most of this loan and that eventually DSR will write off some of it.

During the year, MFDI expanded its Board of Directors to the present nine members. We are scheduled to hold the 1992 Annual General Meeting in September and expect to hold it by mail, fax and phone. We do not have the funds to bring the Board together.

### **The Future for MFDI**

In 1992, all of MFDI's 1991 projects will be completed. Project 2-01, support to

VHSS, may be renewed, but all the others are finished. MFDI is anticipating several new projects to be initiated:

Project 1-01, Media for Development Trust support. We have already provided a few videos to MFD for them to distribute. We hope to also be able to secure funding for them to establish a regional resource center with space and staff, basic equipment including desktop publishing capability, a newsletter, video and other media lending library, etc. A project proposal will be finalized by mid-1992.

Project 1-08, the distribution of Faces of AIDS with support from Family Health International's AIDSCAP project is expected to be funded soon. MFDI would receive \$68,450 to produce video and film copies of Faces of AIDS. Then we would prepare a mass mailing of a flyer; get the video into festivals, conferences and workshops; hold mini premieres of it around Africa; get it reviewed in newsletters; and, get it distributed to all of Africa's television broadcasters via URTNA. This project includes a 33% overhead rate and will be done strictly under USAID guidelines.

Project 1-09, production of a Swahili dub of Consequences. We have approached Ford Foundation for support to make this dub in Tanzania and produce and distribute an initial number of 16mm and video copies. We sent them several proposals during 1991, and Steve Smith visited in January 1992, then submitted a re-worked summary proposal. Ford has now asked for a full-blown proposal. We hope to have this project funded and begun by mid-1992.

Project 1-10, the production and distribution of childhood developmental materials. This two-year project would be based in Zimbabwe and implemented by MFD. We will approach NORAD for about a million dollars of funding. It would produce educational kits on child growth and mental development, (including 24 wall charts, three manuals, six children's books, three demonstration videos), and effectively distribute them at subsidized prices to eastern and southern Africa. It would also carry out a couple demonstration workshops and includes training. The project document is being finalized now by MFDI staff in Zimbabwe.

Project 3-02, the distribution of URTNA's television programming in the USA. This project would involve MFDI getting exclusive distribution rights to URTNA's seven hundred programs and marketing them to the US market. It is expected to get some donor support to cover initial costs. URTNA approached Steve Smith when he was attending the OAU Cultural Industries conference in Nairobi in January, 1992, and asked MFDI to take on this project. The goals of the project are: One, to promote the development of Africa's film and video industry through creation of more demand for its programming; Two, to provide hard currency earnings to URTNA and its membership; and, Three, to provide a wider variety of programming to American audiences to better acquaint them with Africa.

In 1992, MFDI will apply for registration with USAID as a Private Voluntary Organization (PVO). MFDI has begun to produce the many documents required and hopes to be registered by mid-1992. Once we are registered, we can approach USAID for project funding.

We hope to be able to fund a staff person in 1992. We will engage a person to carry out the activities called for under the projects to distribute Faces of AIDS, the Swahili

dub of Consequences, and the distribution of URTNA's programming, as well as follow through on MFDI's other activities. Steve and Sally Smith will still volunteer about one to two days per week of their time.

### **In Summary...**

MFDI is now established and has had a solid beginning in 1991.

MFDI's administrative structure is lean, but volunteer staff have slowly been able to develop the agency. MFDI's financial base is limited, but we have been able to secure donor support from UNESCO, Johns Hopkins, CIDA, SIDA, NVR/Rockefeller, and 63 private individuals. The interest free loan facility from DSR has been invaluable in getting MFDI started.

MFDI has been able to establish a broad-based Board of Directors of nine key individuals from around the world that are knowledgeable and reputable in the field of using media to advance development. This Board is an important asset for MFDI and is a strong basis for MFDI's organizational development.

The MFDI projects all are performing well and accomplishing their objectives and goals. We have several new and exciting projects that will begin in 1992. These projects will expand MFDI's resource base as well as its reputation. USAID registration, too, will open doors for MFDI to some of the billion dollars AID gives to registered PVOs each year.