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**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

*Dr Ayo Ajayi*, Population Council, Ghana; *Paul Myers*, Mennonite Central Committee Ten Thousand Villages, USA  
*John & Louise Riber*, Media for Development International, Tanzania; *Steve & Sally Smith*, Media for Development International, USA  
*Mechai Viravaidya*, Population & Community Development Association, Thailand; *Batilloi Warritay*, UNICEF, Sao Tome

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## **ANNUAL REPORT – 2005**

In 2005, MFDI's main activity was supporting the new branch office in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, MFDI/T. The YEAH project, providing consulting support to a radio serial drama in Uganda, supported by Johns Hopkins Center for Communications Programs provided financial support and put MFDI/T staff and a couple external consultants to work during the year. The Ribers have been there and the office established for about a year now.

On the video distribution side, MFDI was busy with sales and donations of videos. MFDI continued to support FilmAid International and sought out and provided them additional videos on land mines and reconciliation. During this effort MFDI was able to sign up a number of new titles, and looks forward to a launch of a set of rare African reconciliation videos in early 2006. MFDI also started working on the production of DVDs of the main titles. Customers have been asking about DVDs for a while now, but converting analog video masters to digital DVD isn't simple or inexpensive, unless doing so at unacceptably low quality standards. MFDI started experimenting and worked out a DVD'ization process working with MFD/Zimbabwe which has knowledgeable staff and good equipment. A draft proposal to make about 75 titles into DVD will go out in early 2006.

MFDI had a total income of \$255,529 in 2005. Of this amount \$140,888 came from JHU/YEAH Project; \$55,534 from a donation from Steve and Sally Smith, and \$33,064 from MFD/Zimbabwe covering MFDI/T establishment. Additionally MFDI grossed \$23,268 from distribution sales.

In 2005, MFDI has worked on a number of projects:

- 1. MFDI / Tanzania branch** – As mentioned above this is MFDI's main effort. The YEAH project provided a lot of support to this office, but also the (account payable) monies left at MFDI/USA that belonged to MFD/Zimbabwe were critical to getting the MFDI/T office running this year, and the during the last few months of 2004. Additionally, MFDI had two smaller projects – the EDC project and Steps to the Future Swahili project that helped support MFDI/T. MFDI/USA also supported the purchase of a vehicle for MFDI/T office use. The office in Dar es Salaam is doing very well, and rapidly becoming established. MFDI/USA has agreed to support the renovation and 5-year rental of a building nearby that could become the MFDI/T office, with additional space to rent out, if it works out.
- 2. YEAH Project** – Johns Hopkins is supporting a radio drama series development and broadcasting project in Kampala, Uganda, and MFDI is supplying technical support – i.e., mostly MFDI/T staff as consultants as well as a couple other individuals that have worked with MFD/Zim in the past.

**3. Homeboyz television series project** – MFDI/T has put out a proposal to “Tanzania-ize” the script with a week’s workshop and documenting the process on video. It is also possible that this project will evolve into a radio drama serial.

**4. MFDI’s web site at [www.mfdi.org](http://www.mfdi.org)**, is continuing with the services of Outdare in Rotterdam, Netherlands. It is updated regularly from the Colorado office.

**5. FilmAid International Project** – During 2005 MFDI supplied over 250 videos and DVDs to FAI at a total direct cost of \$2,001. In May 2005, Steve and Sally Smith spent a two days at Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) offices in Akron, PA to review about 50 videos. Their library has a great collection of reconciliation videos that FAI needs, as well as many other social message videos. From that review, MFDI purchased 31 videos from MCC, and about 50 other videos/DVDs from about a dozen other sources. MFDI has now completed actively researching and has procured most of the appropriate videos in the critical subject areas currently available. MFDI has also provided four copies of all the videos MFDI distributes. A few purchases are still pending, and will be completed in 2006. MFDI continues to get good feedback on the utilization of these videos in Africa.

**6. NESsT Project** – MFDI hosted the semi-annual board meeting in Colorado in July. Also Steve and Sally Smith will attend the board meeting and visit projects in Santiago, Chile in January 2006.

**7. Video distribution and sales** continues to be the main domestic activity for MFDI. It holds inventory of about 1,000 VHS at any time, valued between \$5-6,000. During the year 2005, MFDI grossed \$23,268 in income from video sales, and broadcast and theatrical royalties received, and had \$9,397 in cost of goods sold and direct marketing costs. MFDI sold 251 videos and gifted 367 videos (mostly to FilmAid), and paid \$3,597 (in early 2006) in royalties to African filmmakers for 2005 sales.

Conversion of MFDI’s titles to DVD format – MFDI’s video lab reported that VHS distribution was down 50% in 2005, and to expect a rapidly declining trend henceforth. Also customers have been asking for DVDs instead of VHSs more and more frequently. In conjunction with MFDI/T and MFD/Zim, MFDI has decided on a process to get MFDI’s master videos (which are now all stored at MFDI Colorado offices) encoded somehow in the USA, and then that data “authored” at MFD/Zim to produce PAL and NTSC DVD masters. MFDI would be able to easily duplicate the final DVDs for sale on an as-needed basis once MFDI procures some additional computer equipment. A lot of time would be needed to develop the graphics for printing on the disk and for the disk box and about \$20-25,000 for the authoring of about 75 titles. Copies of “master” DVDs would be given to each video’s producers and MFDI’s four main sub-distributors: MFD/Zim, MFDI/T, ACI in Dakar, Senegal, and FRU in Johannesburg.

**8. Other** than the above costs, MFDI spent \$5,173 on phone, postage, copying, office supplies, licenses, banking, credit card and miscellaneous costs. This was MFDI’s fifth year of a payroll for its four previously volunteer staff (John and Louise Riber, Steve and Sally Smith), although MFDI had to pay the Smith’s salaries irregularly and lower the Riber’s due to shortage of funds. Office space continues to be in the Colorado home of the Smiths.

**In 2006...** MFDI’s main work will be the further development of MFDI/T in Dar es Salaam, and taking next steps on the production of the *Homeboyz* TV series.

Financially the agency is stable, but short-paying wages will continue in 2006. MFDI’s work in African social message media started 20 years ago and \$5,327,679 has been spent over the last 16 years as MFDI, a non-profit film production and distribution agency; plus what was spent as DSR in the 1980s for the first few films.