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ANNUAL REPORT – 2007

In 2007, MFDI's main activities have been working on the STRADCOM project which involves producing a radio serial drama in Tanzania and other activities affiliated with this (see below); continuing the Kellogg-funded project to provide support to JM Productions to produce a script for a feature film on Samora Machel and a documentary video on that process; and on-going provision of consulting services to Rock Point 256, the Johns Hopkins-supported radio serial drama in Uganda; and the continued development of the office in Dar es Salaam, MFDI/Tanzania.

On the video distribution side, MFDI continued with sales and donations of African social message DVDs and videos. MFDI supports FilmAid International and is seeking out and donating appropriate videos for use in African refugee camps. MFDI also continued working on the production of DVDs of the main titles.

MFDI had a total income of \$836,998 in 2007. Of this amount \$680,000 came from the STRADCOM Project; \$126,500 from Kellogg, and \$29,248 came from JHU/YEAH Project. \$750 was also received from the Kellogg Foundation Action Lab for institutional development. MFDI made a gross profit of \$1,791 from video/DVD sales.

In 2007, MFDI has worked on a number of projects:

1. STRADCOM has been the main focus of MFDI/Tanzania efforts during 2007 and has allowed it to establish a strong infrastructure and platform from which it will grow. The project afforded a move into a large, newly renovated building, which is shared with Johns Hopkins Center for Communications Programs (JHU/CCP), who are the prime contractor on the STRADCOM project.

MFDI's responsibilities within the STRADCOM project include the design and production of dramatic radio programming for the project. During 2007 MFDI designed, built and equipped multi-functional sound studios, produced 26 half-hour episodes of a long running Kiswahili radio serial drama entitled WAHAPAHAPA (which commenced broadcast on Radio Free Africa from December 1, 2007), produced twenty-four 30 to 60 second radio spots (public service announcements), produced a record album consisting of eight songs, designed and printed 500 full color copies of its Kiswahili film catalogue, distributed approximately one thousand (VHS and DVD) copies of Kiswahili programs within Tanzania, and launched the website: www.mfditanzania.com.

2. Samora Machel feature film – This project for \$362,000 was signed in July 2006 to develop a film on the good leadership model of Samora Machel's struggle for an independent southern Africa. Mosco Kamwendo and Jesesi Mungoshi (who acted as Neria in 1991) are the principals of JM Productions and arranged the grant. Kellogg wanted MFDI to be involved to oversee finances; the script development; and the "making-of" documentary

production process. The project is now almost done; Mosco and Jesesi visited the Ribers in Tanzania in November and we expect all to be completed by June 30, 2008.

3. MFDI / Tanzania branch – The office in Dar es Salaam is well established now. MFDI occupies the entire second floor of the building which includes offices (for its 9 professional staff), a sophisticated sound recording studio, a video editing and DVD authoring suite and a large open space ideal for auditions, rehearsals, meetings, training and conferences.

Apart from the STRADCOM Project, MFDI/Tz is working with the Academy for Education Development (AED), developing scripts for a family planning radio serial drama scheduled to commence broadcasting for a year from March 2008.

MFDI/Tz is also developing a feature film project on the impact of HIV on elderly people in Tanzania and has completed a 30-minute documentary film about the script development process.

MFDI/Tz's Kiswahili dubbing facilities are becoming well known. During 2007 about four hours of television programming was dubbed to Kiswahili.

4. YEAH Project – Johns Hopkins is supporting a radio serial drama development and broadcasting project in Kampala, Uganda, and MFDI is providing technical support – i.e., mostly MFDI/Tz staff as consultants as well as a couple other individuals that have worked with MFD/Zim in the past. This project has continued for several years already and MFDI is about to sign another 2-3 year contract to provide technical assistance to this project.

5. MFDI's web site at www.mfdi.org is continuing with the services of Outdare in Rotterdam, Netherlands. It is updated regularly from the Colorado office.

6. FilmAid International Project – During 2007 MFDI procured a few new titles, and also supplied DVD copies of the videos that MFDI distributes to FAI (in addition to the VHSs already donated). Total direct costs were roughly \$1,000 and MFDI supplied 185 DVDs and 13 music CDs. (Four copies of each title are supplied for FAI's four centers). MFDI also provided some minor institutional development technical assistance to FAI as it underwent a total re-staffing in 2007.

7. NESsT Project – Steve and Sally Smith attended the board meeting and visited projects around the Czech Republic and Slovakia in June; and the meeting in Florida in December 2007. This is Steve's second year as Chairman of the NESsT Board of Directors, after serving two years as the Secretary.

8. Video distribution and sales continues to be the main domestic activity for MFDI. It holds a dwindling inventory of almost 1,000 VHS videos, but it makes DVDs as needed. During 2007, MFDI grossed \$4,437 in income from video sales received, and had \$2,645 in cost of goods sold and direct marketing costs. MFDI sold 30 DVDs and 45 VHSs and gifted 244 DVDs (mostly to FilmAid), and paid \$611 (in early 2008) in royalties to African filmmakers for 2007 sales. MFDI is now totally re-working the long term sub-distribution relationships with Film Resource Unit in Johannesburg and Learning Resources in Cape Town as both agencies underwent major institutional changes, giving each of them more titles, DVDs, and getting revised agreements in place.

Conversion of MFDI's titles to DVD format – Customers have been asking for DVDs instead of VHSs and the lack of DVD availability has decreased sales. Additionally DVDs are being sold at much lower prices than VHSs, which lowers profitability. The huge start up man-hours required for each DVD title is a hurdle, but MFDI's main focus is viewership not financial profit, and DVDs clearly get the titles to larger audiences. MFDI is procuring digitalized versions of the titles distributed and now has over 70 DVD masters. MFDI has

also distributed duplicate verified master DVDs to its sub-distributors (MFDI/Tanzania, MFD/Zimbabwe, ACI/Senegal, FRU/South Africa, and Learning Resources/South Africa). MFDI and MFDI/Tz are working on digitalizing and authoring a few more of its collection into DVD PAL and NTSC formats. Over half of MFDI's total collection of titles probably will never be converted to DVD, although all the good selling titles are or will be converted.

A plan has been developed to **re-release *Yellow Card*** as suggested in Debra Buenting's doctoral dissertation which showed its powerful impact with Nigerian audiences. Despite widespread knowledge of the film with older teenagers, it also showed that young teenagers knew little of the film. It is anticipated that African viewership could be doubled for 10% of the original budget. Pathfinder has been approached, but it is unclear if they will support the re-release. Two different DVDs of the title have been authored, but neither is optimal, and currently MFDI is working on a 2-disk package: one with the feature film and all the languages, and a second with the support video and extras. A large amount of copies and a major marketing campaign is needed to get it distributed all over Africa.

9. Vipassana Hawaii Project – Steve, who served as Secretary/Treasurer and acting Executive Director, and Sally Smith, who served as bookkeeper, attended a Board meeting in Hawaii in September and over a dozen conference-call meetings in 2007. MFDI coordinated the long-awaited VH purchase of 200+ acres of land on the Big Island in May. MFDI continues to help to get the agency properly organized and prepared for building a retreat center to train in insight meditation. MFDI coordinated the hiring of an Executive Director for the agency who started in December. He will significantly lighten Steve's load soon. MFDI was paid \$2,317 for Sally's bookkeeping services the last two months of 2007 (the 18 months before then was provided free).

10. Ubuntu Project – MFDI is the fiduciary for the Ubuntu project. The project is intended to conduct research on exemplars of Ubuntu, to produce a book and accompanying DVD. Barbara Nussbaum attended a conference in the Magaliesburg, South Africa in Feb 2007, and interviewed exemplars Mano Moodley, Ben Mogodi, and Ben Mphahlele. Barbara produced a paper "Ubuntu's Intelligence - Why Ubuntu Appeals to Thought Leaders in the West." Some of these research findings will form the narrative for the DVD.

11. Other than the above costs, MFDI spent \$8,604 on phone, postage, copying, office supplies, licenses, banking, credit card, and miscellaneous costs. This was MFDI's seventh year of payroll for its four previously volunteer staff (John and Louise Riber, Steve and Sally Smith). A new much less expensive payroll service was engaged in November. MFDI is still paying the Smith's salaries in arrears and is underpaying the Riber's due to shortage of funds. Office space continues to be in the Colorado home of the Smiths.

In 2008 - MFDI's main focus will be the STRADCOM project and producing a Tanzanian radio serial drama with HIV/AIDS themes and the many add-on's of the project. DVD production will be the American office's main focus besides the normal support of MFDI/Tz.

Financially the agency is stable, but short-paying wages will continue in 2008. MFDI's work in African social message media started 22 years ago and \$6,498,641 dollars has been received over the last 18 years as MFDI, a non-profit film production and distribution agency; plus a few hundred thousand dollars that was spent as DSR in the 1980s for the first few films.