

MEDIA FOR DEVELOPMENT



INTERNATIONAL

MEDIA FOR DEVELOPMENT INTERNATIONAL, INC

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ANNUAL REPORT – 2008

In 2008, MFDI's main activities have again been working on the STRADCOM project producing a radio serial drama in Tanzania and other activities affiliated with this; winding up 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.

MFDI continued with sales and donations of African social message DVDs. MFDI also continued working on the production of DVDs of all of the titles distributed and now has a total of 94 master DVDs mostly in PAL and English. Many are also available in NTSC and other African languages.

MFDI had a total income of \$980,128 in 2008. Of this amount \$781,619 was from the STRADCOM Project; and \$23,103 from the JHU/YEAH Project. \$12,100 was also received from the Kellogg Foundation Action Lab to cover most of the \$15,428 cost of the consultant that helped MFDI re-work its Chart of Accounts and bookkeeping process so that its indirect cost rate (overhead rate) can be easily determined. MFDI's overhead rate for 2006 was 34.20%, 2007 was 30.64% and 2008 was 34.53%, although backing out two one-time costs from 2008 gives a 21.07% overhead rate, which is about what it is expected to remain in coming years now that the Tanzania office is established and the new bookkeeping established.

In 2008, MFDI has worked on a number of projects:

1. STRADCOM has been the main focus of MFDI/Tanzania efforts during 2008 working with the Johns Hopkins Center for Communications Programs (JHU/CCP), who are the prime contractor on the USAID-funded project. In 2008 the second year agreement was signed adding \$1,047,128 for year two, i.e. a grand total of \$1,809,188.

MFDI's second year sub-award under JHU/CCP for the STRADCOM Project was from April 1, 2008 through March 31, 2009. MFDI-Tanzania deliverables during this contract period included producing a full year (52 weekly episodes) of the Wahapahapa Radio Serial Drama (RSD), producing a series of eight 3-5 minute video "infomercials" for screening in hospital and clinic waiting rooms, producing a series of eight music videos based on songs we commissioned from a selection of Tanzania's leading contemporary musicians, producing 35 public service announcements for various partner organizations, preparing four compilation albums as part of the Wahapahapa RSD, preparing Swahili dubbing of five hours of new material for our catalogue, printing of a new 08/09 video catalogue and preparing compilation DVDs of health programs for distribution through hospital and clinic waiting rooms.

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. A first draft was reviewed by many reviewers and a totally re-written script then produced. The project was completed in early 2009.

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 nine 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 continues to work with the Academy for Education Development (AED), developing scripts for a family planning radio serial drama, Mama Ushauri, which commenced broadcast during April 2008 and will continue for a year through April 2009.

MFDI/Tz is also producing a video for the World Bank Institute documenting a training process they have developed which uses rapid results approaches to strengthen governance of HIV/AIDS programs in Tanzania.

Because of the heavy workload, MFDI/Tz has put the feature film project on the impact of HIV on elderly people in Tanzania on hold. While MFDI/Tz continues to look for funding sources it is not anticipated that this program will be produced until the STRADCOM project is over (expected December 2009).

MFDI/Tz's Kiswahili dubbing facilities continue to be busy. During 2008 another six 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 consultant assistance. This project has continued for several years already and MFDI signed the fourth modification this year which will continue for another two years.

5. Conference on Development and the East African Music Industry was held in Dar es Salaam on September 1 and 2. A total of \$41,995 plus Euro 10,000 was raised from Ford Foundation, the Danish Center for Culture and Development, and Africalia/Belgium. The purpose was to provide a forum for East African music industry stakeholders to speak to one another, learn from each other, and strategize on how to strengthen the existing business model. A successful conference was held at MFDI/Tz offices for a total of 28 musicians and industry professionals from Tanzania, and four other African nations, Jamaica, and the USA. Discussions were focused on the role the internet will play in the future, developing a transparent distribution model, and hearing about industry successes in Ghana and Jamaica.

6. FilmAid International Project – During 2008 MFDI donated 128 DVD copies of African videos to FAI. Four copies of each title are supplied for FAI's four centers.

7. NESsT Project – Steve and Sally Smith attended the NESsT board meetings in Chicago in June and in Baltimore in December. Steve has begun a second term as Secretary of the NESsT Board of Directors, after serving two years as the Secretary before as well as two years as Chairman.

8. Video distribution and sales continues to be the main domestic programmatic activity for MFDI. DVDs are produced in-house on an as-needed basis. MFDI is continuing to convert titles from analog to digital and make DVDs of them as required.

During 2008, MFDI grossed \$3,524 in income from sales, and had \$2,998 in cost of goods sold and direct marketing costs and MFDI wrote off the remaining \$4,810 value of the inventory of almost 1,000 VHS tapes for which demand is essentially gone. Most of these tapes have been around for many years. MFDI sold 77 DVDs and 46 VHSs and gifted 197 DVDs (mostly to FilmAid International) and 79 VHS tapes (which was all the remaining French language VHS tapes sent to our sub-distributor, ACI in Senegal for only the cost of the shipping). MFDI paid \$584.31 (in early 2009) in royalties to African filmmakers for 2008 sales.

Long term sub-distributor Film Resource Unit in Johannesburg went bankrupt owing MFDI several thousand dollars, but MFDI increased its relationship with Learning Resources in Cape Town giving them more titles.

A plan to re-release *Yellow Card* in Africa is still pending.

9. Vipassana Hawaii Project – Steve, who serves as Treasurer of the Board, and Sally attended a Board meeting in Hawaii in June as well as about a dozen conference-call meetings in 2008. MFDI continues to help to get the agency administratively organized and in building a meditation retreat center.

10. Agreed Upon Procedures Audit – At the request of Johns Hopkins, MFDI engaged outside consultants who spent most of the year reviewing the 2006 to date accounts and reworking the Chart of Accounts so that an indirect cost rate could be stated. They provided an official letter showing that the overhead rate for MFDI in 2006 was 34.20% in 2006 and 22.98% (later corrected to 30.64%) in 2007. This justifies MFDI charging a 20% overhead on projects. Also now the books are established so that the on-going overhead rate is easily calculated. This will allow MFDI to be a prime contractor on bigger projects. This work was mostly funded by the Kellogg Action Lab.

11. Other – This was MFDI's eighth year of payroll for its four original staff (John and Louise Riber, Steve and Sally Smith). Jordan Riber was added to the payroll in 2008 as well as he's taken on significant responsibilities in the Tanzanian office. Debora Coelho has been engaged as a long term intern in Tanzania. MFDI/USA office space continues to be in the Colorado home of the Smiths.

In 2009 - MFDI's main focus will continue to be the STRADCOM project producing a Tanzanian radio serial drama with HIV/AIDS themes and the many add-on's of the project. Possibly a premiere of the music videos made in the STRADCOM work will be sponsored by Johns Hopkins in Baltimore in July 2009. The American MFDI office's main focus is the support of the Tanzania office as well as DVD distribution.

Financially the agency is stable, and the office in Tanzania is growing. MFDI's work in African social message media started 23 years ago and \$7,478,769 has been received over the last 19 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.