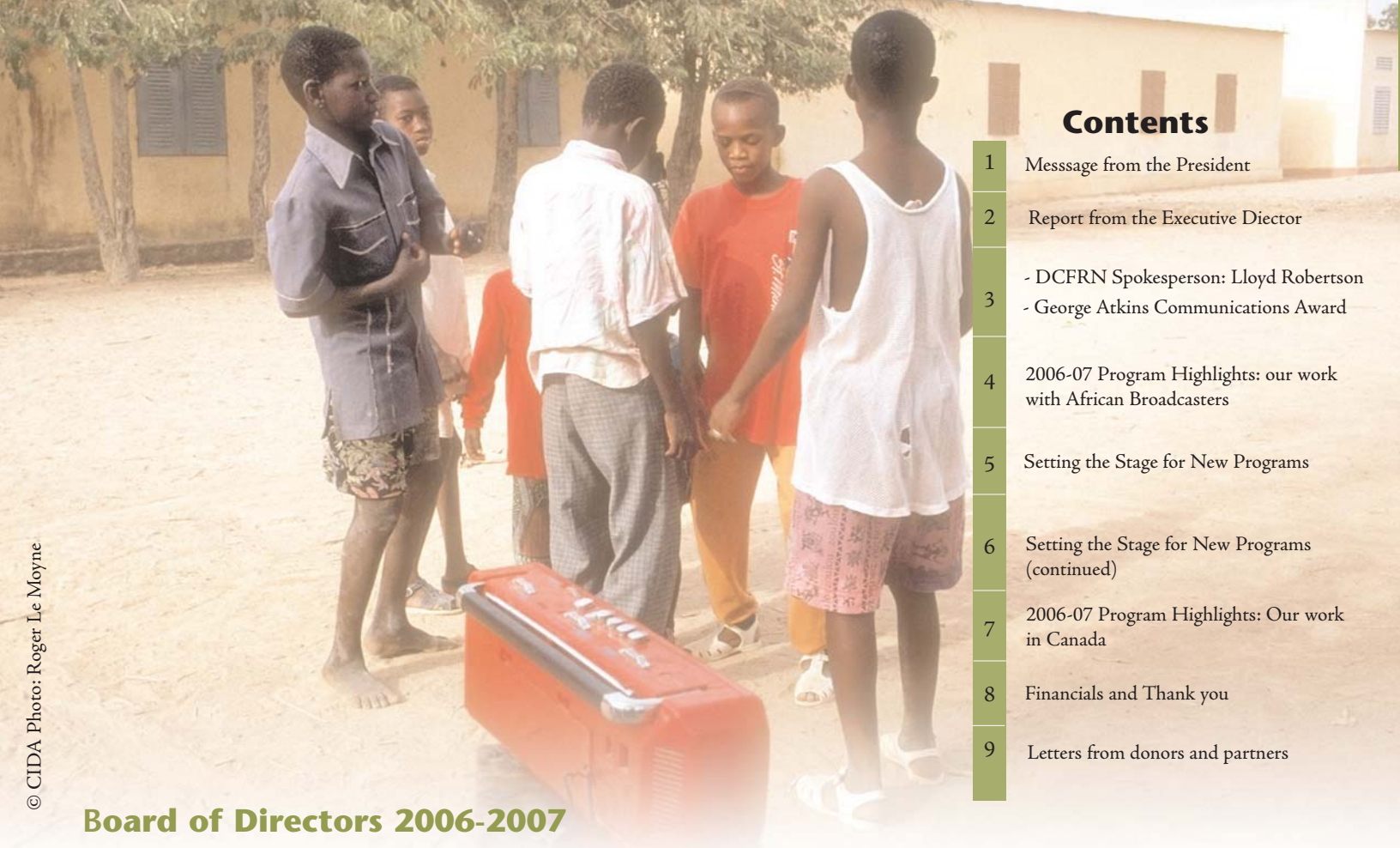




Developing Countries Farm Radio Network

*Supporting broadcasters to strengthen
small-scale farming and rural communities*

ANNUAL REPORT 2006–2007



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Message from the president



What a year! We ushered in new people, developed new programs, and set some new directions, all while keeping our commitment to the mission, values, and core program of DCFRN - and a balanced budget!

The Board of Directors began the year providing an orientation to our new Executive Director. Kevin Perkins proved to be a quick study and we were soon able to re-deploy ourselves to our more regular tasks, especially working on the board's two main committees: program and fundraising. The Program Committee devoted much of its time refining the various iterations of our proposal to the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, to ensure that the project reflects our core values and provides essential building blocks for our future work. We are delighted with the results. I speak for the whole Board when I say how proud we are that the Foundation decided to support the project we proposed - the African Farm Radio Research Initiative.

During the year the Board launched three studies that reflect the sharpening of our focus, all three of which will report in the next fiscal year. The first is looking at our name (a mouthful at the best of times) and will provide us with options to ensure that we will have a name that resonates with our broadcasting partners and our Canadian public well into the future. The second study picks up on the growing need for boards of non-governmental organizations to put risk management systems in place. We don't want to become a risk-averse organization. In fact, as we experiment with better ways to serve our partners, we will need to go beyond our tried and tested activities and experiment with new models of service. But we must have a risk management system in place to ensure that we take the best care possible of the resources that our donors provide in a changing world. The third study is a review of our core values. As our analysis has deepened of the situation in rural Africa, we see the need to align ourselves more closely with the needs and interests of smallholder farmers. We will be talking with donors, broadcasting partners and others to ensure that we are well-positioned to help our broadcasting partners serve the voices and wisdom of smallholder farmers at a time when too many well-intentioned organizations think they know the solutions to rural Africa's needs and are only too willing to impose them.

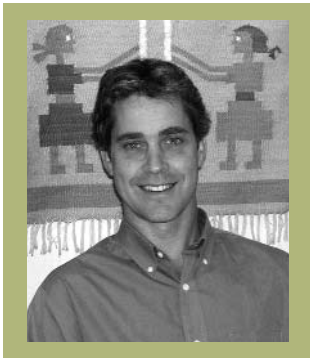
Louise Atkins and Matthew Mendelsohn retired from our board this past year. We are grateful to each of them for their special contributions. Fortunately, new board members Sarah Andrewes, Anthony Anyia, Magdalena Burgess and Bill Stunt have stepped up, and are already in harness and pulling at the traces.

In addition to Executive Director Kevin Perkins, we are well served by Managing Editor Vijay Cuddeford, Development Communication Coordinator Blythe McKay, Public Engagement Officer Chantal Bégin and her replacement during her leave, Brenda Jackson, and Administrative Officer Anne Girard. A final word of thanks goes to Paul Davidson and Ravi Gupta of WUSC, and the entire WUSC support and program staff. They have provided a new, higher platform from which we now test our wings and fly in exciting new directions. Our recent success with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation would not have been possible without our fruitful and productive relationship with WUSC.



Doug Ward
President and Chair, DCFRN Board of Directors

Report from the Executive Director



May 29, 2006 was an exciting day for me, as I took up my duties as Executive Director of DCFRN. The excitement continued over the next 10 months as I learned much about this dynamic NGO, and participated in developing new initiatives to build on DCFRN's remarkable past.

When I arrived, DCFRN was still buzzing from its release, in March 2006, of the 13-part radio soap opera called The Long Dry Season – a Tale of Greed and Resourcefulness, the story of a village in Nigeria threatened by desertification. Produced in partnership with the African Radio Drama Association (ARDA), this tale weaves helpful and practical information about soil and water conservation and the revitalization of crop lands into the classic soap opera themes of moral conflict, romance, and humour. On the strength of this production, DCFRN member Data Phido, the Program Director of ARDA, received the George Atkins Communications Award during DCFRN's Annual General Meeting.

Based on our positive experience with this project, DCFRN and ARDA jointly applied to participate in a new initiative of the International Development Research Centre called the Climate Change Adaptation in Africa program. We proposed a 26-part radio drama on the topic of climate change and how smallholder farmers can adapt. I'm happy to report our application was successful, and a 2-year initiative begins May 2007.

Another exciting opportunity that greeted me was an invitation from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to submit a proposal for an action research initiative that would discover how best to use radio-based communications to help smallholder farmers. After a rigorous review, the Foundation agreed in March 2007 to fund the \$4 million, 42-month "African Farm Radio Research Initiative." The grant was provided to our partner, World University Service of Canada, and will be used by DCFRN to implement a research and capacity-building strategy in five African countries.

A third new strategy planned in 2006-07 was a weekly news and information service called Farm Radio Weekly. This service was designed to provide radio producers with a steady supply of timely agriculture-related material for their farm radio broadcasts.

As these important new services were being researched and developed, DCFRN managed to "stick to its knitting" – which is, first and foremost, the research, production and distribution of radio scripts with and for partner stations in sub-Saharan Africa. We created 29 new scripts and distributed them in English and French to 294 DCFRN partners. Over 70% of these scripts were researched and drafted by African members of the Network, on contract with DCFRN. Through concerted efforts to grow DCFRN, 25 new partners joined the network, bringing the total 16% higher than it was in 2005. We also produced three new issues of *Voices*, DCFRN's publication for broadcasters.

It was also a year of deepening relationships with our partner radio stations in Africa. In July 2006, DCFRN's Managing Editor visited 34 partners in 4 countries of southern Africa to assess needs, develop script ideas, and generate new strategies for script development. Then in February 2007, Blythe McKay, DCFRN's Development Communication Coordinator, traveled to West Africa to meet 30 partners in Nigeria, Togo, and Ghana. During her stay, she reconnected with stations that we had lost contact with, and sought feedback and input from broadcasters and their audiences.

DCFRN was also busy in Canada. Our public engagement activities reached some 40,000 people through newsletters, workshops, media interviews, conference presentations, special letters from the desk of Lloyd Robertson, and newspaper inserts.

I close by expressing profound thanks to the Board, staff, volunteers, donors, CIDA, and partners of DCFRN. Without their ongoing dedication and support, none of this work would have happened.



DCFRN Spokesperson: Lloyd Robertson



A major proponent of DCFRN, Lloyd Robertson, Chief News Anchor and Senior News Editor of CTV News, has been the official spokesperson for our organization since 1989. Lloyd's understanding of the importance of sharing information via the medium of radio is rooted in his own accomplished broadcasting career that began in 1952 when he joined CJCS Radio in his home town of Stratford, Ontario. In recent years, Lloyd has increased his support for DCFRN by writing letters to our donor community, keeping our valued members informed about our organization's work and asking for their renewed support. Lloyd is truly a person of philanthropic heart and spirit, who, generous in his commitment to DCFRN, makes us proud and honoured to call him our spokesperson.

George Atkins Communications Award Winner

The George Atkins Communications Award was created in 1991 to recognize rural radio broadcasters for their outstanding commitment and contribution to food security and poverty reduction in low-income countries. The Award is named after Dr. George S. Atkins, the Founding Director of Developing Countries Farm Radio Network.

This year's winner is Kwabena Agyei, Producer at Ghana's Classic FM, a DCFRN partner since 2001. The station is located in Techiman, a large farming area in Brong Ahafo, Ghana. Kwabena Agyei participated in DCFRN's Linking Agricultural Research and Rural Radio in Africa (LARRRA) project, and he has written two scripts for us: one on community reforestation - which was a winner of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) scriptwriting competition; the other on the production of snails as a niche product. He has been with Classic FM since it began broadcasting in 1999 and now trains new staff how to develop programs that meet the needs of listeners. He has produced many innovative programs, including one encouraging tomato farmers to stagger production in order to stabilize prices. He has also produced programs on health and sanitation, which have inspired communities to clean up the sewers and streets.



Kwabena Agyei

2006-07 Program Highlights:

OUR WORK WITH AFRICAN BROADCASTERS

Radio Scripts

From the very beginning, researching, writing, and distributing radio scripts has been the core business of Developing Countries Farm Radio Network. Recognizing the need for farm radio content that is relevant and practical for small scale, resource-poor farming women and men, we have worked with network partners to produce a total of 813 radio scripts since we began DCFRN 27 years ago.

This continued to be our “bread and butter” in 2006-07. Twenty-nine new scripts were researched, written, and distributed in English and French to DCFRN partners in sub-Saharan Africa. Scripts were grouped into three themes, with each theme featuring 9 or 10 scripts. The first theme was the Millennium Development Goals, which was addressed through a unique scriptwriting competition. The second was "improving post-harvest success" and included scripts on important topics such as using solar dryers to preserve fish and methods of protecting cowpeas from insect infestation. The third was on niche products such as bamboo, snails (yes, snails!), and jatropha trees. We also produced scripts on preventing avian flu, using animal carts to take products to and from market, and local action to prevent bush fires.

Voices: Our Newsletter for African Radio Broadcasters

Voices, DCFRN's special newsletter for African radio broadcasters, is designed to provide radio practitioners across the continent with information about how to improve their farm radio broadcasts, topics of interest to African farmers, broadcaster training and networking opportunities, and profiles of DCFRN partners.

In 2006-07, DCFRN produced and distributed 3 issues of *Voices*, and distributed them in English or French to 294 DCFRN partners. Feature articles included:

- Scriptwriting tips provided by our Managing Editor, Vijay Cuddeford;
- Profiles of the winners of our MDG Scriptwriting Competition;
- The opportunities and challenges presented by niche crops and livestock;
- The story of how a new Network of radio organizations in Nigeria was formed; and
- A list and summary of Websites of interest to African radio stations.

Growing the Network

New radio organizations - especially community radio stations - are constantly being formed in Africa. DCFRN reached out to as many of these as possible to grow the network and increase the number of farmers benefiting from our radio scripts. In 2006-07, 25 new partners joined the network, bringing the total to 294. With the addition of these partners, the Network was 16.2% larger than it was in 2005.

New initiatives

1. A Forum of Radio Organizations in Nigeria leads to a new Regional Network

In March 2007, Blythe McKay, DCFRN's Development Communication Coordinator, traveled to west Africa to visit partners and facilitate greater involvement in the Network. While in Nigeria, Blythe worked with the African Radio Drama Association to convene a forum in Northern Nigeria for radio stations, NGOs and farmer organizations. Before the forum ended, the participating Nigerian organizations created a new network to enable Nigerian stations to communicate with each other and share experiences in order to more effectively produce programs for smallholder farmers.



2. Working With Intermediaries to Extend the Reach of DCFRN

As new community radio stations emerge throughout many countries of Africa, DCFRN has started to look for new ways to extend our services to them through local intermediary organizations. In 2006-07, to test this approach, DCFRN engaged one of its Nigerian partners, RDD le micro vert, as an intermediary to work directly with a total of 10 community radio stations in the country that are not presently partners of DCFRN. RDD le micro vert worked to ensure that they: a) received the scripts; b) were supported in using the script effectively, and c) provided feedback to DCFRN by completing our broadcaster survey. This approach is a cost-effective way of significantly extending the reach of our radio scripts. The results may lead to DCFRN identifying intermediaries in other countries, and working with them to support hard-to-reach broadcasters

Setting the Stage for New Programs

The African Farm Radio Research Initiative (AFRRI)

In 2006, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation approached DCFRN to explore the possibility of implementing a multi-year action research project to study the effectiveness of farm radio in Africa. We jumped at the chance, because for years we have wanted to know more about the most effective way of using radio to help smallholder farmers. From March 2006 to February 2007, we worked with the Gates Foundation to develop a detailed proposal for a 3.5-year action research project in 5 countries of sub-Saharan Africa: Mali, Ghana, Malawi, Uganda and Tanzania. In March, the proposal was approved for a grant of \$4 million U.S. The grant was issued to our partner, World University Service of Canada. DCFRN, in partnership with WUSC, will implement AFRRI over a 42-month period.

AFRRI will gather, implement, evaluate and share best practices for using radio-based communication strategies to enhance food security in rural Africa. It will also offer capacity-building and training services for radio broadcasters so that they can improve their programming for rural listeners.

AFRRI is a major new development for DCFRN, involving direct program activity with partners in 5 African countries. We are looking forward to the results of this research initiative so that we can improve our future programming and strengthen radio-for-development worldwide.

The Climate Change Adaptation Project

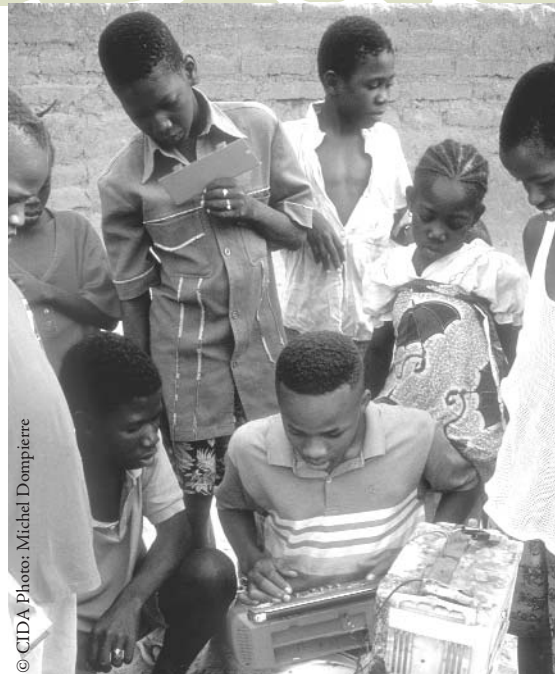
For smallholder farmers in Nigeria, climate change is not some distant threat – it is having an impact right now. While Nigerian farmers are developing some coping strategies independently, there is a need for information that helps them adapt their farming methods to lessen the impact of climate change. A major challenge facing governments, research institutions, civil society organizations and donors is to find an affordable way of providing such information to large numbers of people, many with limited literacy. Radio may be the answer.

DCFRN, in collaboration with its Nigerian Partner ARDA, therefore submitted a proposal to the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) to study and improve the usefulness of radio drama as a tool for helping Nigerian farmers cope with climate change. In March, we received word that IDRC accepted our proposal, and approved a 2-year contribution of \$380,000. Through this initiative, which began in April 2007, ARDA, DCFRN, and other partners will collaborate to produce a 26-episode radio drama on climate change adaptation. Broadcast by five radio stations, it will be heard by at least 200,000 listeners in northern Nigeria. The project will measure the impact of the radio drama on Nigerian farmers' capacity to adapt to and lessen the impact of climate change.

Farm Radio Weekly: A News & Information Service for Broadcasters

Radio producers are constantly looking for new, interesting, relevant agriculture-related information to broadcast to their listeners. While there are numerous Internet portals with detailed information about sustainable agriculture and rural development, there are no regular news and information services available specifically for rural radio broadcasters in Africa. Our script packages play an important role in providing agricultural material to broadcasters – but they are sent out three times annually at intervals of 4 months. As a result, helpful as they are, they can not provide current and emerging news stories for radio station's daily news broadcasts to their rural audiences.

With this in mind, DCFRN developed a plan to pilot test an electronic news and information service called Farm Radio Weekly. This new service was identified as a way to meet radio stations' need to broadcast up to 365 days a year, by providing new, interesting, relevant material every week. In April-May 2006, Farm Radio Weekly was pilot-tested with a group of 26 broadcasters in nine countries of sub-Saharan Africa. The pilot issues of Farm Radio Weekly included a synopsis of relevant agricultural and rural news stories collected from African and international sources, as well as tips for broadcasters about using the stories, information about training opportunities, events of interest to broadcasters, and links to useful websites. Early results of this pilot project were very encouraging, with many participants reporting that Farm Radio Weekly provided a very important service not otherwise available to African broadcasters.



International Scan of Effective Rural Radio Programs

There have been many educational radio programs developed worldwide, addressing needs as diverse as HIV/AIDS education, women's health, and primary education for children. In order to learn more about these programs, and to gather lessons about what works and in what circumstances, the Frangipani Foundation asked DCFRN to conduct a global scan and analysis of radio programs designed to serve rural communities in Africa, Asia and Latin America. In particular, the Foundation was interested in programs about HIV/AIDS, women's sexual and reproductive health, and primary education for children. Vijay Cuddeford, DCFRN's Managing Editor, took on the task of identifying and categorizing over 300 different programs around the world, and began a detailed analysis of 10 particularly effective ones. Once the study is complete, DCFRN and the Frangipani Foundation will have a good sense of how best to replicate successes from one part of the world in another. The final report will be released in mid-2007.



2006-07: PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS: OUR WORK IN CANADA

DCFRN Partner Data Phido in Canada



Data Phido receiving her award at the WUSC and DCFRN award ceremony.

Data Phido, the Program Director of the Nigerian African Radio Drama Association (ARDA) and the 2006 George Atkins Communications Award winner has been involved in several DCFRN activities over the past four years. Most notably she produced a special 13-episode drama for DCFRN's March 2006 package on the issue of desertification entitled "The Long Dry Season: A Tale of Greed and Resourcefulness".

DCFRN had the pleasure of hosting Data during her recent visit to Canada in November 2006. Through a series of radio and newspaper interviews, Data eloquently and effectively spread the word about DCFRN and the positive impact our organization is having on farmers in Africa. She did a presentation on the impact of radio drama to attendants at the World University Service of Canada's Annual General Assembly and to the Carleton University School of Journalism and Communications in Ottawa. She

also had the opportunity to meet a number of DCFRN supporters and volunteers in Ottawa, Toronto and Guelph on a more personal level, to talk about her work with ARDA and her collaboration with DCFRN.

Data's visit to Canada allowed DCFRN and ARDA to plan a new collaborative project that resulted in the Climate Change Adaptation Project with IDRC, ARDA and DCFRN that will be taking place in 2007-2008 (see story on page 5).

Curling for Dollars

For five years Mark Elliott, DCFRN donor and volunteer, has been holding a family-orientated curling bonspiel on behalf of DCFRN. Each year this event grows in number, with over 120 participants and spectators taking part. This year's event was a huge success with all participants having a fun day while helping to raise \$3,000 for DCFRN.

Staying in Touch: Network News

DCFRN values the support of over 5000 donors across Canada. To keep them informed about our work and the issues we address, we produce a newsletter called *Network News*. In 2006-07, DCFRN released 3 issues of *Network News* - in the summer, fall and winter. These newsletters informed our supporters and the public on the role of radio and how it is helping farmers through our radio scripts and publications.



Financials

Statement of revenues and expenditures for the year ended March 31, 2007

	2007	2006
Revenues		
Donations		
Individuals and groups	225,975	237,032
Foundations	35,500	43,000
Canadian International Development Agency	199,820	200,00
Project grants	41,142	30,945
Miscellaneous	5	1,201
	502,442	512,178
Expenditures		
International program (scripts and broadcaster support)	296,153	282,668
Administrative expenses	149,606	157,702
Fundraising	48,130	42,516
	493,889	482,886
Net Revenue	8,553	29,292

Statement of Net Assets

	2007	2006
Assets		
Current Assets		
Cash	110,976	131,499
Receivables	12,267	18,761
Prepaid and deposits	287	324
	123,530	150,584
Capital Assets	7,968	6,549
Other Assets-deferred gift	10,540	10,540
	142,038	167,673
Liabilities		
Current liabilities		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	35,832	70,020
	106,206	97,653
Net assets	106,206	97,653
Net assets consist of:		
Invested in capital assets	7,968	6,549
Unrestricted	98,238	91,104
	106,206	97,653

If you require a full copy of the Financial Statement, for 2006-2007, as audited by PriceWaterhouseCoopers, CA, please call or e-mail us.

For over 25 years, small-scale farmers and their families have benefited from the generosity of DCFRN's friends and supporters. We greatly acknowledge the financial contribution of the many individuals, groups, corporations and foundations that gave to DCFRN this year. Because of their commitment and support, we were able to fund the activities outlined in this report. We would like to make a special mention of the following donors:

- Morrison Foundation
- The Peterborough K.M. Hunter Charitable Foundation
- Les soeurs de la congrégation de Notre-Dame
- N.A. Taylor Foundation
- The Frangipani Foundation
- Oscroft Inc.
- S. M. Blair Family Foundation

We very much appreciate the continuing support of the Government of Canada provided through the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

Letters from our donors and partners



Kevin Perkins, Exec. Dir.
DCFRN
Ottawa

Dear Kevin,

I have enjoyed the January/07 mailing from DCFRN.

Your overall approach to your unique outreach to Africa rings true to me. You share technology and knowledge without condition and place it in hands that will shape it to fit and work to fill local needs.

To me, DCFRN is villages talking to each other—talented people emerging on to a pathway that leads to creative change. It's an approach that builds on local tradition and protects from glossy importations that destroy nature's adaptive resource diversity.

Here's to voices all over Africa speaking through the darkness like talking drums, sharing practical capabilities enabling their implementation and clearing away the clouds of inappropriate interventions with that wonderful African smile.

Blessings on your way, Barbara Kingscote-Godkin

Dear People,

Your Farm Radio Network is evidently very effective, according to the interesting reports you send. You reach a very large number of people for less out-lay than many other charitable efforts.

May your efforts bear fruits (and vegetables) and your shadows never grow less.

Best wishes from
Dulce B. Fry

DCFRN has become a valued source of our radio program material. We share your scripts with about one million listeners - the majority of them farmers. They are relevant, simple and easy to adapt to local languages and settings. Text messages from listeners indicate overwhelming support.

—Mr. Umar Baba Kumo Gombe Media Corporation, Farm Radio Network Partner, Nigeria



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