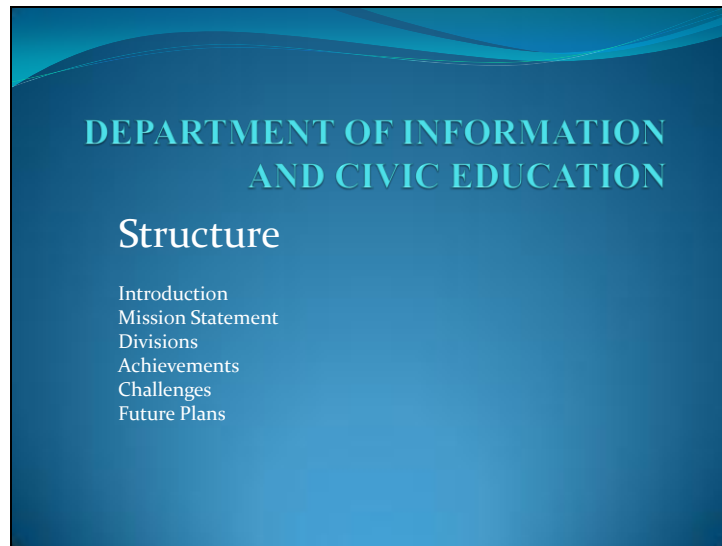


ANNEX 9: PRESENTATION BY DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION

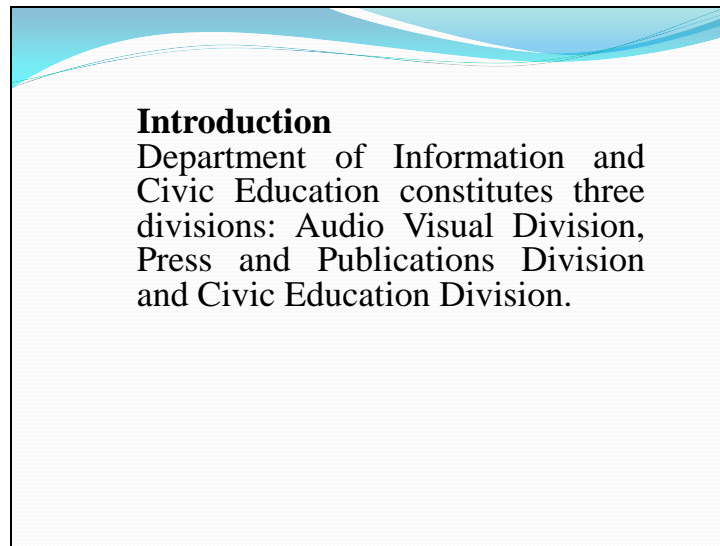
Slide 1



Slide 2

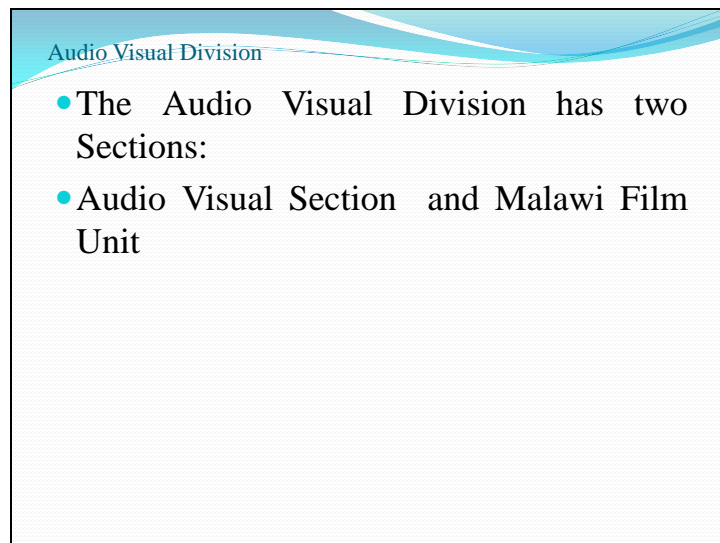


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Introduction
Department of Information and Civic Education constitutes three divisions: Audio Visual Division, Press and Publications Division and Civic Education Division.


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Audio Visual Division

- The Audio Visual Division has two Sections:
- Audio Visual Section and Malawi Film Unit


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Audio Visual Section

- **Audio Visual Section**
- The section is tasked to facilitate dissemination of public information through the provision of audio-visual services to stimulate interest for popular participation in national development

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Audio Visual Section

- **Functions of the Section are:**
 - Screening film to inform, educate and entertain members of the general public.
 - Provision of audio-visual services to government ministries and departments, parastatals, non-governmental organisations, private companies and the general public.
 - Carrying out maintenance services of audio-visual equipment and electrical appliances
 - Provision of archival services of public events through film screening and other audio services.
 - Provision of studio services to small developing rural artist to enhance talent development.


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Malawi Film Unit

- **Malawi Film Unit** – The Section produces documentaries for the Department and other Organisations


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Press and Publications

- **Press and Publications Division**
- Press and publications has two main sections:
- **Malawi News Agency** - The Malawi News Agency is the news gathering and dissemination organ of the Department. It collects and disseminates information in the form of news and photographs. It is mandated to provide accurate, balanced and timely news and photographs.
- It is headquartered in Lilongwe and has three Information Offices in Blantyre, Lilongwe and Mzuzu and District Information Offices in all the 28 districts of the country.


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Press – Malawi News Agency

- **Functions of MANA are:**
 - Gathers and disseminates hard news, news analyses and feature articles
 - Provides photographic news services in still and digital format
 - Provides news coverage to the Head of State during local and foreign trips
 - Coordinates press conferences and public debates
 - Coordinates media coverage of national and international events
 - Coordinates the Central Office of Information
 - Provides archival services of public events through Photographs and other print products
 - Mount photo display boards at State Residences and local Airports


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Publications

- **Publications Section** – The Section is mandated to come up with publications that carry out Government development initiatives, policy formulation and development strategies. Some of the publications produced by the Section are *Malawi Mail*, *Boma Lathu*, *Malawi Lero* and *This Is Malawi* magazine.


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Publications


- **Boma Lathu:** This is monthly Chichewa newspaper that is distributed freely to all people in Malawi; and specially targets the rural masses
- **Malawi Lero:** is a pictorial publication which intends to depict development projects in pictures
- **Malawi Mail:** This is an English newspaper that comes out fortnightly.
- **This Is Malawi:** An English magazine produced quarterly and sold a modest cover cost.

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Government Press Unit

- The other Section which has not yet been formalised as a fully fledged Section is the Government Press Unit.
- The section analyses media content both print and electronic and advises the government on what action to take. It is also supposed to draft responses on the same.
- It plays the media advisory role for all Government Ministries and Departments. The Unit is expected to analyse all media content, electronic and print, local and international and come up with positions on how Government can react to the developments.
- This is vital so that Government is always proactive and anticipates trends in the media so that it is not always busy refuting media reports or reacting to them.
- It advocates for the Government position, explaining the merits of the Government's actions
- It presents the Government's position in a manner that helps advance its agenda while at the same time helping the press learn and understand what the Government is doing.



Civic Education Division


- The Division has two Sections: Research and Planning Unit and Civic Education
- **Research and Planning Unit**-The Section institutionalises communication for research, planning and strategy for development communication activities. The unit identifies or conduct research on an issue or problem and plan how that problem concerning public can be addressed. The unit therefore work hand in hand with Civic Education Unit



Civic Education Division

Civic Education Section

- The section is mandated to educate the citizenry on various socio-economic issues with the aim of imparting knowledge and influencing positive behaviour change; and creating an informed and proactive nation.



Functions of the Section are:


- To identify topical issues requiring civic education interventions
- To carry out research to establish causes of socio economic problems
- To develop effective information, education and communication messages and materials
- To produce audio visual materials, radio programmes, jingles and newspaper articles for civic education purposes



Functions Continued...

- To plan and design civic education campaigns and education fairs
- To write project proposals for civic education programmes
- To present project proposals to potential donors and government development partners
- To identify and maintain a data base of partners in the civic education sector
- To monitor and evaluate civic education programmes and activities
- To formulate budgets for civic education activities


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Successes of the Department


- Despite the challenges the section has recorded several successes
- Structures in all the districts of the country. The Department has offices at each district with a District Information officer, an Audio Visual Technician and other support staff at the office. The offices have a well link with the region and the Department.

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Successes of the Department

- Coverage of VVIP functions. The Department has covered local and international function of the president with great skill
- Collection of Revenue. The Department has collected revenue for the Government through adverts in the Malawi Mail, hiring out of public address system equipment, accreditation of foreign journalists and production of documentaries.
- Dissemination of news stories and photographs
- Audio Visual equipment in all districts.



Challenges

- The department has challenges in many areas
- **Lack of computers in districts.** With inadequate number of computers in all the districts, there is a challenge in transmitting news stories. This makes some districts still to use the old system of dictating the story through phones which has been seen as very expensive. Some districts are using dongles which has proved to be very efficient. The Department, through MANA, is working hard to empower all DIOs with this technology.



Challenges Continued...

- **Distribution of Department's publications:**
- Distribution of the Department's productions such as *Boma Lathu* and *Malawi Mail* has been a problem since the Department moved to Lilongwe in 2005. In the past Malawi Postal Corporation used to deliver *Boma Lathu* freely but this stopped when the Department moved to Lilongwe


Training.

- The Department has looked at two areas of training:
- **Management skills:**
Officers need to be trained in management and even financial accounting skills to enhance proper management of resources
- **Profession skills:**
To develop skills and capacity of staff at all levels to ensure effective and efficient delivery of services.

Challenges cont'd


- **High Debt Level:** The Departments owes printers of *Boma Lathu*, *This Is Malawi* magazine and *Malawi Mail* in excess of K55 million versus an annual budget of K100 million.
- **Lack or Inadequate Modern Equipment:** Technology has gone high, but some of the equipment that is being used in audio visual section are of the old modern time. For example as we do rural film show, we have to wait for the evening instead of using the current LED screens.

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- **High Vacancy Rate:** The Department has run for more than 14 years with a vacancy rate of over 50 per cent. Although efforts have been made to fill vacancies through recruitment and promotions, the problem still persists. The most hard hit is MANA as most Districts have had no DIOs for a long time.
- At Management level, there is supposed to be a Director, and three Deputy Directors. But over the years experience has been that we would have either a Director without Deputies or no Director or just one Deputy. Currently, there is no Director, (since January 2011), no Deputy Director responsible for Press and Publications (since May 2007) and no Deputy Director responsible Civic Education (since September 2010).

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Future Plans

- Increase number of publications for circulation
- Filling of all vacant posts
- Acquire modern equipment for all Sections

