

ENHANCING AND EXTENDING THE HISTORICAL NARRATIVE OF POST- TELECOMMUNICATION AT MTENGATENGA POSTAL HUT MUSEUM IN CHIRADZULO

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Abstract

This paper discusses the attempts that were made to preserve the history of post-telecommunication in Malawi through a museum called Mtengatenga Postal Hut Museum. Through the different objects and instruments for telecommunication the museum constructs, displays and educates the history of telecommunication in Malawi. The paper further presents a current proposal that was submitted to the Malawi Communications Regulatory Authority (MACRA) to enhance and expand the historical narrative of telecommunication at this Postal-Hut Museum in order to document and reflect the radical changes that have occurred in the telecommunication sector especially in the late twentieth to early twenty-first century. In 2018 Malawi Communications Regulatory Authority (MACRA) chose Mtengatenga Postal-Hut Museum as a site of memory to commemorate the establishment of Post-offices in Malawi. The museum was summoned to play a commemorative role for the remembrance of post-telecommunication services in Malawi. Data for this paper was collected using archival and interview methods. The article is informed by the concept of heritage and sustainable development. We argue that Mtengatenga Postal- Hut Museum is an important research unit for history of telecommunications in Malawi. We further argue that the expanding of the narrative at the museum through documentation and display of new telecommunication materials as indicated in the proposal will enhance the status of the museum as an important historical research center of telecommunications in Malawi. Finally we contend that if the proposal is funded the museum will have the potential to contribute towards sustainable economic development of the youths and the community surrounding it apart from conserving , presenting and interpreting the history of telecommunications in Malawi.

Key words: Heritage, Malawi, Museum, Sustainable development, Telecommunications.

