

Malawi News June 16-22, 2007

Kafoteka 'adopts' Mulanje orphan

BY JUSTICE MPONDA

MALAWI national team right back Elvis Kafoteka has added into his family a new member Sellina Photiwa from Friends of Mulanje Orphans (FOMO) whom he has promised w Foster and support until she becomes independent.

The 12-year-old Sellina hails from Nkhonya Village Traditional Authority Chikumbu in Mulanje district and she is a standard 4 pupil at Mulanje LEA School.

Kafoteka who also plays for Escom United Football Club, showed interest to engage the girl into his family and provide her with all basic needs a fortnight ago when the national team cheered and donated several items to the orphanage.

The deal w as finalized last week Friday.

When the national team dated ex-England Football star Viv Anderson at Chitakale Football ground in Mulanje after wide consultation with the villagers and the guardians of the child FOMO 's director Mary Woodworth commended the 26-year Kafoteka and asked other well wishes to follow suit.

"Bah parents of Sellina died five years ago, so she stays with her grandmother who is aged, without any source of income. So when Kafoteka asked us to choose a child to foster for his own home, we opted for Sellina because of the miserable way of living she has been going through following the sudden death of her parents.

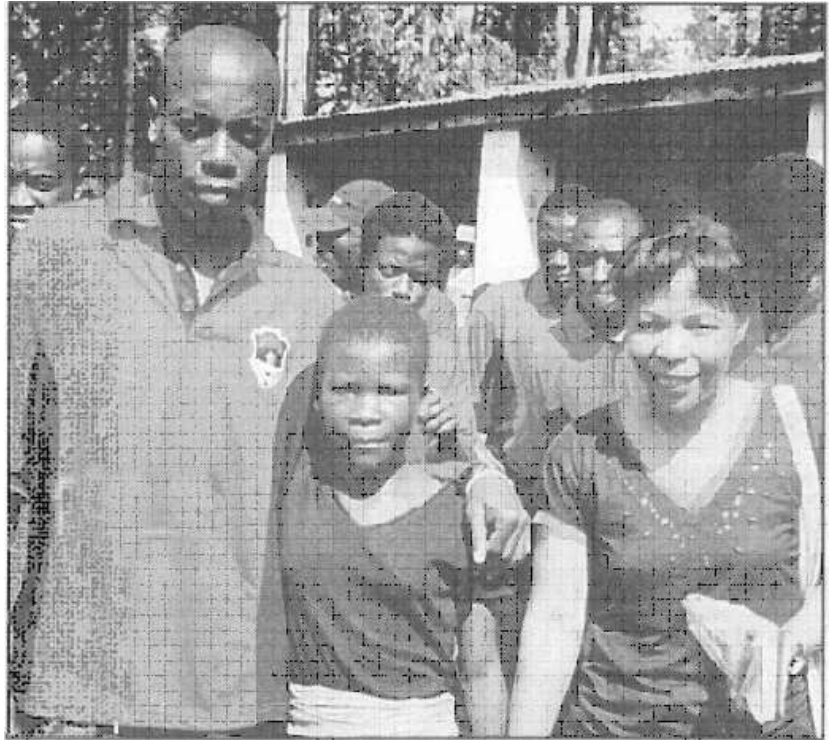
"Mind you, Sellina is a very bright girl and on top of that she always takes a leading seat in her class. So, we are hopeful that with such a good environment, she will automatically make it big one day;" said Mary adding that Fomo alone cannot help all the vulnerable children in the district.

Kafoteka who is married with a baby girl said he decided to assist Sellina throughout her life as a way of thanking God for everything he had done for his life apart from taking a role in elevating the welfare of orphans m the country.

"I t had been my dream to play in the national team and this is just a dream come true. Thai's why I thought it wise to thank God for turning my dream into reality, It doesn't mean that I have a lot of money, but I just want to be responsible ;" said the Ndirande based national team star whose original home is Kasiya Village in Lilongwe.

FOMO was established in 2000 by Mary, whose original home is Kumwamba Village in Mulanje and her UK based husband Keith Woodworth with financial and material support from well-wishes in England.

It currently supports 4,000 orphans in its 10 centres. Over 200 of them are in secondary schools and colleges and Fomo is responsible for their school fees and basic needs,



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Viv Anderson & Bolton Wanderers coach visit Mulanje Orphans

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THE first England black player Viv Anderson and Bolton Wanderers Assistant Coach Abdul Basil silently flew 5,000 miles from the United Kingdom to Chitakale in Mulanje within the past two weeks with one purpose in mind: To train, cheer and document a film on the plight of Mulanje orphans to fundraise for their cause.

The two soccer personalities jetted into the country alongside Brett Harris, who is a trainer of coaches in Lancashire and Independent Television (ITV) sports producer Tim Hill and his cameraman, courtesy of the English Football Association.

While Abdul and Brett have been in the country for the past two weeks, Anderson arrived Thursday last week and went straight to Friends of Mulanje Orphans (FOMO), where he drilled upcoming players in soccer skills. They all flew back on Saturday after meeting Flames players and Coach Steven Constantine in the district. *Photo above:* Viv Anderson MBE



Anderson, who received his Member of the British Empire (MBE) medal in 2000, an honorary award given by Queen Elizabeth

to great achievers in UK, and played a tally of over 600 games for Manchester United, Arsenal, Nottingham Forest and Sheffield Wednesday has 30 international caps to his credit. He retired from active football in 1992 from 1978. He received the most prestigious award in England for the great role he played in motivating and encouraging black players to work hard in FA Premiership football.

"We are also here to impart skills to these kids at grass root level so that they might play in the national team and English Premiership one day. Mind you whatever we have done here will be aired on TV England.

"I'm happy to be here in Malawi and will try to clinch some football deals for Malawian players in England. I have also learnt from Steve Constantine that these players have the potential but they just lack resources," said the England ex-defender who is now 50 years.

FOMO's Director Mary Woodworth, a Malawian based in the UK sounded optimistic that the documentary would be a success following the involvement of Anderson and Abdul in the project saying English and world viewers would lend financial and material support after recognizing the faces of the three soccer celebrities.

"We asked the FA and ITV to find for us a star or celebrity to help us advertise the programme, so that when the programme goes out, people should recognize his face and name. So they gave us Anderson who is respected and famous in England," she said.

A senior member of FOMO in England, who accompanied the ex-soccer heroes, Dave Armstrong said there will be a charity auction in England before the film comes out "It's true that this TV programme is a big fundraising venture for FOMO, we have invited over 150 guests and celebrities for the charity auction apart from the ordinary people to take place in either Manchester or Lancashire," said Woodworth, adding that the film will also put Malawi on the map.

Sports Producer Tim Hill said the film is expected to be beamed first on July 10. "Mind you, ITV is a rival to the BBC, so we are hopeful that millions of people will buy and view the film, that's why we believe that FOMO's intended purpose will be achieved."

Speaking after meeting Anderson in Mulanje, national team coach Steve Constantino described Anderson as a great black player ever to have come from England.

"His visit has even motivated my boys to work hard to emulate his achievements apart from tipping us on Morocco."



Photo Above: Abdul Basil of Bolton Wanderers