

competition in all the three zonal leagues thereby promoting the standards of the sport. Kachale noted that unlike in the

Some teams were just playing for the sake of honouring fixtures because they felt that they had nothing to lose," he

Top three teams from Sozobal and Cezobal zonal leagues will earn qualification to the national finals while Nozobal will send two sides.

learns used to take games without seriousness

# Chemusa Stars: extracting trinkets from slums

BY JOY NDOVI

AT the mention of the name Chemusa the picture evoked in the mind is that of a shanty township with dilapidated shacks, noisy streets laden with beer drinking joints, commercial sex workers and school drop outs loitering around without any idea of what the next day will bring.

The township north of the Blantyre CBD area has not been spared problems related to urbanisation with the majority of the people residing in the area living below the poverty line.

Despite being a jogging distance from the city centre, the township has a hopeless road network, disheartening health facilities and nauseating filthiness due to poor sanitation.

It is behind such a background

that a Swiss named Martin Schear decided to form Chemusa Stars; a non-government organization aimed at uplifting the lives of boys and girls under the age of 14 through football.

Upon visiting the township in 2005, Schear embarked on a mission aimed at keeping the township's youth out of trouble by keeping them busy with football.

In partnership with Sulom and Fam, Chemusa Stars has managed to uplift lives of some youth in the township.

The project initially registered 150 children aged between seven and 14 years who underwent football training under the tutelage of Swiss Under-23 coach Bernard Challandus, Swiss league player Martin Berger and other local volunteers.

"Apart from learning basics of the sport like how to control the ball, field movement, physical fitness, passing and supporting

and team spirit the children were also encouraged to attend school," Community organiser Henry Dzinkambani says.

At the end of the exercise, the results were encouraging as the number of school drop-outs decreased drastically.

The children then formed eight teams that participated in a tournament with winners getting T-shirts and balls. The Swiss team also paid school fees for under-privileged children who participated in the program.

Following the success of the first year it was no wonder that Schear and the Swiss delegation decided to make the event annual.

Chemusa Stars' which was launched three years ago last Saturday staged this year's tournament at Namatele ground in Chirimba which Sulom President Henry Chibowa witnessed.

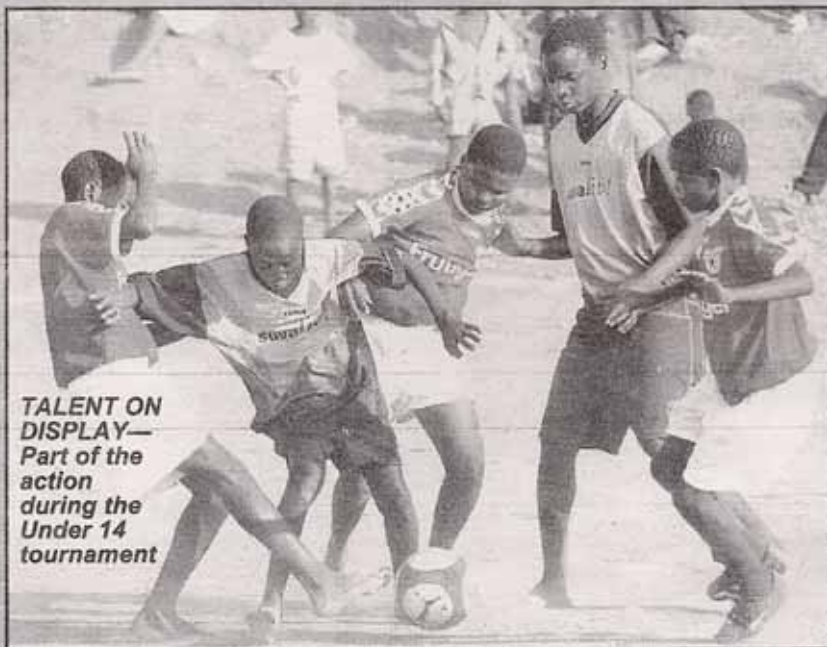
"If we consider the year Chemusa Stars has been around, the fruits of the project are just superfluous. More children have been rescued from becoming delinquents," Dzinkambani adds.

"More are still coming forward to join us which has necessitated the acquisition of a new ground for the activities since Dolby, the ground we were using is not enough."

The project won an award after it was shown in France and Italy in 2006 which prompted more people to volunteer and help the youth of Chemussa Magasa area.

However, the fight is still on as the HIV/AIDS scourge still continues to claim lives of breadwinners leaving behind orphans who are vulnerable to exploitation.

The non-governmental organisation still has a mammoth task at hand to make sure that the graduates of the junior league do not fall back to old ways due to lack of continuity.



**TALENT ON DISPLAY—** Part of the action during the Under 14 tournament

**MASSIVE TALENT—** Phillemon (nicknamed Joseph Kamwendo) was voted player of the tournament