

UNZIPPED



Football Players' Pregnancy and Parental Management Policy

Mind the Gap

Building members' second careers

There's Life after Football

Kanyotu, who plays for Gaspo Women in the Kenya Women Premier League (KWPL)

Road to Recovery

Injuries can bring a football players' career to a screeching halt.

The KEFWA awards

Aimed at awarding the most outstanding Kenya Women Premier League (KWPL)

Play my Part

The role of giving back to the community from time to time.



2021 Women Premier League champions Thika Queens celebrating during a past Play-off encounter.

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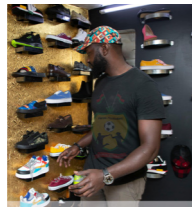
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Pg. 18 My passion for playing football started way back when I was young. Growing up in Mathare, I used to play football with boys, barefoot. My first team



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Pg. 30 Nairuka, who has also previously turned out for the military outfit Ulinzi Stars, is grateful that he has not supported support

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PARTNERSHIPS



ROAD TO RECOVERY



PLAY MY PART



EDUCATION



MIND THE GAP



RED BUTTON



EDITORIAL

EDITOR'S NOTE

The first edition of the KEFWA magazine is finally here. It offers informative pieces on our members. You also get to hear from our heads of departments and what they do. We have partnered with several organizations and institutions, with whom we have symbiotic synergies. Among them is Zetech University, where 15 of our members have enrolled to pursue various courses. This is part of our members' literacy program, steered by our belief in the fact that Education is a lifetime investment

Under the Life after football segment, we will see the remarkable journey of Gaspo Ladies forward Winnie Kan-yotu. Playing actively in the league and graduating with a Certificate in Tourism and Hospitality Management, shows that striking an equilibrium between football and education is achievable.

When the Covid-19 pandemic brought all sport to a screeching halt, we started a program dubbed "Mind The Gap." This was aimed at empowering our members to embrace second careers. We share with you inspiring stories from this segment, with players getting creative and realizing their potential off the pitch. Tusker FC midfield sensation stars here, with his Agribusiness project. His story will inspire you.

Match-fixing is continuing to wag its ugly tail in Kenyan football. Our members are the worst hit, serving bans, to teams being expunged from the league. Our ambassador against match-fixing Festo Omukoto, tells us how he has been involved in the campaigns against the vice, as well as educating players on how to use the anonymous reporting tool known as the Red-button.



We all agree that your health is your wealth. As such, we will tell you about our Road to Recovery program. Its objective is to aid the recovery process of our members, ranging from those with injuries as well as other ailments that could be a hindrance to their performance and general wellbeing.

The KEFWA awards saw players vote for their fellow players who put up spectacular performances every month. This will culminate into an end-of-season gala awards and we all just cannot wait!

We trust that you will enjoy it. We value your feedback for the next editions.

Terry Ouko

We are Proud of the Progress We've Made to Support Player's Welfare



Mr. James Situma - President

S

Greetings and welcome to the first edition of the KEFWA magazine. This is without doubt a great step in our efforts to see the progress of our player's welfare.

We are proud of the numerous projects we have had that have gone a step further in promoting our members, including Mind The Gap, Road to Recovery, Education partnership, Financial Literacy among many more.

We are also proud of our involvement in the Kenya Women's Premier League where we have been awarding the KEFWA Players for Players Monthly Awards. Congratulations! To all who managed to become winners.

I also send my appreciation to all the partners and stakeholders who sacrificed their time and efforts to make this edition a success.

Enjoy your reading.

J

activities.

Since 2015, KEFWA has made lots of strides in matters structure and professionalism in how it conducts its day-to-day

Initially, KEFWA did not have a secretariat in charge of running the day-to-day activities of the organization with expertise.

We invested in a structure that will ensure proper and effective delivery of services to our members.

We formed departments that are on time with our services and objectives and that will enable professionals to spearhead them.

We strive to have a vibrant, effective, trustworthy, and impact-oriented organization in the future that will deliver to its members and be a reliable outfit to the young, current, and retired footballers. I am personally impressed and motivated by the progress and the strides that KEFWA has made in restructuring and the future seems bright.

We shall keep on doing our best and remain committed to improving the organization's service delivery to our members. The legal department is crucial since it forms an integral part of our core business. Whenever contractual obligations take center stage, there are bound to be disputed.



Mr. Jerry Santo - Secretary General

Here, the legal expertise required is offered whenever such disputes arise. It has been a norm for Kenyan players' contracts to be terminated unlawfully.

When such arise, we try to solve the situation amicably and if it doesn't materialize, we move further to send demand letters to the club. This is followed by filing a claim to the players' status committee.

We rely on FKF to determine the dispute since the National Dispute and Resolution Chamber (NDRC) has not been established in Kenya.

I am personally impressed and motivated by the progress and the strides that KEFWA has made in restructuring and the future seems bright.

F

Our legal department handles claims for wrongful termination of contracts and advises players on transfers and contract negotiation. In the same breath, we do take players

through draft contracts proposed to them by prospective clubs and agents whilst recommending what clauses to delete to incorporate and generally keeps the players in check by updating them on any amendments to the football laws which could affect their welfare and status from time to time.

Where necessary, it also advises the Board on what laws ought to be amended or enacted for the promotion and protection of player's welfare domestically and internationally. It also holds workshops on anti-doping rule violations, match-fixing and is on hand to offer expert legal advice to players on any burning issues or concerns affecting their day-to-day professional life.



Mr. Felix Majani - KEFWA Legal Counsel

R

This is the face of the KEFWA head offices located at Total Membley Business Point. From this desk, we ensure that all the departments are working in harmony by providing a conducive working environment.

We are always at the forefront of ensuring the office is in a good state by cleaning and organizing things in the office. With our high end reception desk, we also cater for the needs of our visitors.

Do not mind paying us a visit.



Mrs. Rukia Yusuf - KEFWA Admin

M

The Education Department was formed with an aim of empowering our members with more knowledge and skills for development of careers or after exit in active football.

One of our biggest success stories is our partnership with Zetech University, where some of our members have enrolled to pursue their courses.

We have also partnered with different institutions that have helped our members get hands-on tailor made short courses enabling them to gain skills through training such as baking, coaching, driving etc.

In partnership with the financial institutions like the UAP Insurance Company of Kenya, we have been able to educate members on financial literacy.

Further, we have been able to provide mentorship and counselling programs e.g Saada App partnership and also provide education on branding, design and thinking in project management.



Mr. Dan Makori - Education Officer

A

Greetings! Welcome to the Recruitment and Player's Welfare Department. Here, we establish the recruiting requirements by studying organizational plans and objectives and meeting with organization managers to discuss needs.

We have been able to attract more members to KEFWA, by coordinating with the teams to create awareness on the benefits of being a member thus improving the organization's attractiveness by recommending new policies and practices.

As a department, we conduct orientations, scheduling rotations and assignments, monitoring intern job contributions, coaching interns, advising managers on training and coaching.

We also help players avoid legal challenges by understanding current legislation, enforcing regulations with team managers, recommending new procedures, and conducting training.

We have managed to maintain the FIFPRO database by periodically updating and keeping records of the members and organizing the World Eleven voting process and ensuring every player votes.

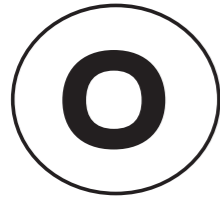


Mr. Ashinga Victor - Recruitment Officer

Since KEFWA came in to sponsor the Kenya Women Premier League (KWPL) Monthly Awards, we have been burning the midnight oil to ensure the players award is well conducted and the results are updated and the winners awarded.

Any inquiry from our members is received, forwarded and updated in regards to the player's claim/matters and share it with the concerned department by updating the KEFWA systems; KEFWA database and bulk SMS system.

We Have Made Great Progress in Telling Our Stories:



In one of his famous sayings, renowned French Jesuit and scholar Michel de Certeau SJ once said and I quote “The media transforms the great silence of things into its opposite. Formerly constituting a secret, the real now talks constantly. News reports, information, statistics, and surveys are everywhere.”

In recent years, we have seen great progress in the KEFWA Communications Department, where we have been able to tell quite a number of stories from our members.

This is evident through the presence of brand online including the website (www.kefwa.com) and our social media pages on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn.

All this, coupled up with our YouTube channel (Kefwa TV) have gone a long way in helping us tell the stories of our members to the world. This has helped us make great progress.

We are also privileged as a department for having coming up with different ways of telling our stories. I thank the management for enabling us have a conducive working environment since the task is not a walk in the park.

We have had at times to face tumultuous moments where reaching out to our members in different parts of the country has been a challenge, but we have been sailing through the storms to reach this far.



Mr. Paul Ombati - Media Officer

For the Magazine to be a success means a lot to us. This is our first-ever issue and I am proud of everyone who has burnt the midnight oil to ensure that it is published.

My further appreciation to the Communications department which has been the backbone of producing this magazine. We hope to grow better with our subsequent editions.

The great Communications department team consists of the following:

- Terry Ouko:** Communications Manager
- Paul Ombati:** Media Officer
- Lenny Towett:** Graphic Designer and Photographer
- Noah Okeyo:** Cinematographer, Video Editor.
- Ian Munuve:** Cinematographer, Video Editor

Partnerships

For sustainability, synergistic partners have come on board to boost the program that has registered several innovative and creative members.

The members' startups and existing businesses have therefore been boosted, and others offered support on how to use a design thinking approach, as well as digital platforms for strategic marketing purposes.

“We have initiated several partnerships with the likes of Zetech University, Mount Kenya Hub, and Ace Creatives just to mention a few. This has ensured players pursue courses and even gain knowledge on how to run their businesses profes-



KTN's Ahmed Bahaj on set with KEFWA President James Situma at the Ruiru Sports Academy Centre.

sionally through the Financial Literacy and Business Canvas training offered by our partners,” he says.

The players' union has also been working on raising funds to boost the small enterprises, as well as get seed funds for brilliant business plans and ideas to encourage as many players as possible to venture into second

careers for sustainability. Several mentorship programs have been offered to players in a deliberate effort to ensure that they balance football with studies or businesses that will secure their life after football.



Hummingbird FC players happily taking part in the Footie Quiz during a past players' workshop in Nyeri.

Zetech University

THROUGH OUR PARTNERSHIP WITH ZETECH UNIVERSITY, OUR MEMBERS GET EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIPS TO PURSUE SOLID COURSES.

Education is a life-time investment. As such, the players' union is keen on contributing to its members' literacy. Through our partnership with Zetech University, our members get education scholarships to pursue solid courses.

This is part of KEFWA's objective to ensure its members plan for life after football while still actively involved in their football careers.

The process has



been made easier by the fact that most players are registered in a blended mode of learning. This is whereby they interact with the lecturers online as the sessions are recorded. Should a player miss a class while attending football practice or matches, they can play

back the class later and still be at par with the rest. How cool is that!

Here are some of the members who are registered in the program.:

This is part of KEFWA's objective to ensure its members plan for life after football while still actively involved in their football careers.



"After playing to the highest level, I am still convinced that I need an education. My career choice to become a Counseling Psychologist stem from the fact that I am passionate about problem-solving. As a captain, I encounter this already with my fellow player being a leader in my own space and that is my motivation to pursue it professionally."

Samantha Okeya
Makolanders FC
Diploma in Counseling Psychology



"It has been my dream to get an education so that I have a backup plan, and a smooth transition from football. When I had about the partnership between KEFWA and Zetech, I knew I would like to study a degree course. I am glad I chose to join the program, and I would urge players to plan for life after football while they are still active."

Clifton Miheso
Gor Mahia
Bachelor of International Relations and Diplomacy

Johana Omolo Foundation/ Angaza Sport for Development

Positive masculinity at its best? This is depicted through our engagement with Johanna Omolo in our Menstrual Health Hygiene Management program.



Born and bred in Dandora slums, the 2019 FIFPRO merit award winner is passionate about giving back to the community since, through his mentors, his lucrative career was shaped.

He has been pro-

viding safe menstrual products that have been distributed to the Women Division One (WD1) and Women Premier League (WPL)

teams throughout the season.



Soccer Sisters players receiving dignity packs during a Menstrual Health Hygiene event in partnership with Johanna Omolo Foundation in Kikuyu.

Mt. Kenya Hub

Mt Kenya Hub is determined to make sure that members although not limited to those who undergo the mind the gap and facelift programs have a good structure to build their business by coming up with a good business model through accelerating them and carrying out various



sessions like Design Thinking, Business Canvas, Cash Flow, Branding and Digital skills



UAP Old Mutual

Money matters may seem easy to handle, which is not the case. It requires discipline and to avoid the mistakes that might arise later on, we have partnered with UAP Old Mutual - an investment, retirement, and insurance group.

For a while now, they have been our partners on matters of financial literacy. The training has been done jointly in three regions namely; the Coast



region, Nyanza, and the Western region.

This aims to inculcate a saving culture in our members and ensure that our members plan their income effectively with an

eye for better retirement or transition from an active football career.

Saada App

Mental ill-health has been on the rise in recent times. Our partnership with Saada App provides a platform for our members to connect with professional counselors virtually and anonymously. This offers a conducive and enabling environment, for support and professional assistance. As such, we have been championing



our members' mental well-being and engaging them in our "Are you ready to talk" program

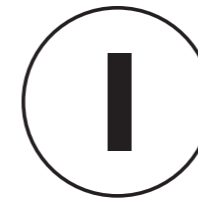
for those willing to share their experiences.



Division One League side MTG United attending a Financial Literacy Training in Mombasa



Red button



In the recent past, match-fixing has been the order of the day in the country and some of our members are suffering the consequences.

But just what is match-fixing?

This is when the outcome of a match is manipulated not just in football, but in any organized sport. One of our members turned ambassador Festo Omukoto narrates how a four-year ban has had adverse effects on him.

“After engaging in match-fixing three years ago, it has been tough and I regret having fallen prey,” he says.

KEFWA on the road, while sensitizing teams on how to use the Red Button tool, realized that teams appreciated the exercise.

Kakamega Homeboyz Team Manager Boniface Imbenzi said that players should uphold their integrity while in the football profession.

Normally, players are the common victims. Imbenzi emphasizes that the members of the technical bench are also widely practicing the vice. They as a result influence the outcome of the matches in various ways.

“We were the first club to blow the whistle on the kind of vice that was killing the game. Members of my playing unit and technical bench were being lured into the vice by their colleagues. For instance, a coach is approached to field an under-strength team which ends up diluting its credibility.”

Imbenzi also said that the influx of foreign players in

not only the top tier leagues but also the lower leagues is a major contributor to the vice. While he is not against having professional players in the league, he feels that regulatory measures and integrity checks should be put in place to curb the act.

“There are scenarios that involve coaches pocketing millions before the match. When you entice players, who go for months without pay with say up to Ksh. 200,000 per match, yet some join the profession to make money and fend for their families the temptation is hard to resist.”

This is backed by the fact that among those serving a FIFA ban after being found guilty of match-fixing include Ugandan nationals coach Paul Nkata and midfielder George Mandela - who is serving a life ban.

While a couple of other players including Moses Chikati, Festus Okiring, and even former Harambee stars defender George Owino are serving a ban; Imbenzi feels that they are going through hardship as a result.

“I would like to appeal to the Football Association and FIFA to scale down the penalty since most of the players have realized the seriousness of match-fixing. Some of them are relatively young and have been going through tough times,” he concludes.

The former Kakamega Homeboyz and Western Stima player has been forced to stop what he loves the most – football.

However, all is not lost, since he now advocates against the vice. Besides training players on how to use the Red button tool anonymously, he shares his experience with the hope that they can learn from it.

“I had set goals and targets that went down the drain the minutes I was banned from all football related activities. I wish I knew then, what I know now. The Red button tool is timely, and will save many players from being victims,” he explains.

Can he set new goals after his ban elapses in a year?

“I was set to go abroad to play professional football. I keep fit from time to time, with the hope that I can pick from where I left once I am given the green light.”



Former Kakamega Homeboyz midfielder Festo Omukoto sharing his experience with match fixing during a capacity building session on how to report cases using the Red Button tool.



Part of the Nairobi City Stars team and KEFWA officials posing for a photo, after a changing room visit at their Ligi Ndogo trainingbase.

'There is life after football'

"My passion for playing football started way back when I was young. Growing up in Mathare, I used to play football with boys, barefoot. My first team was Ottobenecker, which I started playing for around 2008.



It is without any reasonable doubt that football in Kenya has for long been a struggling industry, with very few notable success stories that citizens and netizens can relate to whilst for players, it has turned out to be more of passion than a career.

Growing up in the slums of Mathare, Winnie Mugechi Kanyotu has no very different script from the dramatic sports industry, save for the fact that destiny shapes the future for her following the commendable education program partnership between the Kenya Footballers Welfare Association (KEFWA) and Zetech University.

Kanyotu, who plays for Gaspo Women in the Kenya Women Premier League (KWPL), recently completed a Certificate in Hospitality and Tourism Management course at Zetech University, becoming the first to do so since the deal was penned down in 2019.

In her recent visit to KEFWA offices following her coursework completion, Kanyotu shares her footballing and education journey, and what she plans to do after completion of her course.

"My passion for playing football started way back when I was young. Growing up in Mathare, I used to play football with boys, barefoot. My first team was Ottobenecker, which I started playing for around 2008.

"While still in primary school, Gaspo Women saw my talent and I joined them in Division one and later moved to Old is Gold Fc and Mathare Women, before coming back to Gaspo Women where I am currently attached," Kanyotu reveals.

After finishing her primary school exams, Kanyotu joined St. Theresa's Girls Eastleigh High School where she completed her secondary school studies. She dates her biggest footballing moment to 2009, where she first played with boots during the Norway tournament in Mathare.

"This was my first time wearing boots. It was my biggest moment because then I used to play football barefooted, and that tournament in MYSA was very special to me," she says.

Kanyotu also adds that in 2016, she got an opportunity to travel to Germany for three months for an exchange program. After her form four exams in 2014, she did not have the funds to pursue further studies, and she, therefore, decided to move on with day-to-day hustles while playing football.

However, in 2019, her doors were opened wide when she got a chance to study courtesy of the signed partnership between the Kenya Footballers Welfare Association (KEFWA), Zetech University, and Brighter Monday.

According to Dan Makori, a former player who is in charge of Education at KEFWA, the program came up as part of the empowerment programs for players who are their members, since they need to be well equipped to manage life after football.



Winnie Kanyotu celebrating after netting a goal during a past KWPL Play-off match at the Nakuru Show Ground.

“You will realize that the footballing life is shorter than other careers. That is why we came up with this program to try and empower players who wish to further their education and build opportunities outside of playing football” Makori reveals.

According to him, KEFWA has been at the forefront to support players by ensuring they are well equipped with skills and knowledge that will better their after-football lives. This is in line with what FIFPro, the worldwide representative organization for professional footballers, encourages and gives support.

Kanyotu took a Certificate in Hospitality and Tourism Management course, which she has currently finished and awaiting graduation. To her, getting the opportunity to further her studies was like winning a jackpot, even for her family.

“I always wished to go to university but there were no funds. So when this opportunity with KEFWA came, it was like a dream come true. Even my father was in disbelief when I broke the news to him that I will be joining Zetech University” she says, adding that it was a proud moment for her family.

“I had stayed at home for five years and I remember when I told my dad the news, he never believed at first insisting that Zetech University was too big for me. But I explained everything and the rest of my family, they were very happy and proud.

According to Kanyotu, any player who wants to further their studies should not have excuses that they are busy with their clubs because the program is well suited for them as they can decide on classes.

“If you have made up your mind that you want to study, you can balance since you know what you want. For instance, you are allowed to decide at what time your classes will be and thus you can square with your team’s training schedule. Players should be able to balance football and education” she says.

Kanyotu now hopes of getting another opportunity to further her studies, by pursuing a Diploma which she believes will better her chances of getting a good opportunity in the industrial sector, as she will not keep

on spending her time playing yet “there is life after football”.

“There is life after football, and I am looking at a point where I won’t be playing football again or just playing for passion. Therefore, I need to equip my skills and knowledge with education which will enable me to get bigger opportunities” she asserts.

The Gaspo Women attacker also shares some wise words for players, not only in football but the entire sports industry.

“I urge every player that gets an opportunity to study to grab it with both hands since life will move after football or you could get a career-ending injury. Let’s end this notion that players don’t like education since as far as I know, players have some of the brightest minds.”

“Let them come and register with KEFWA. It is a fact that not every player will get an opportunity to play abroad whilst that may be the wish for many of us. Let them embrace education, it will help them in the future” Kanyotu reiterates.

According to Makori, their education partnership with Zetech factored in the player’s needs and welfare, and that is why the programs support players all over the country since they can enroll in e-learning, with only physical attendance needed in exams.

“I am an ex-footballer and I have gone through the same life. So when we were negotiating for this partnership, there are some things we put into consideration. For instance, KEFWA has members countrywide, and you cannot expect a player from Homeboyz in Kakamega or Bandari in Mombasa to attend physical classes. “

“That is why we factored in e-learning since, a player can schedule his classes at their convenient time, and what they will only need is internet connectivity,” he adds.

Players who have enrolled in the program can pursue Certificate, Diploma, or Degree depending on their performance at high school. Makori also had some congratulatory messages to Kanyotu, who is the first player to complete a course under the program.



“I am very proud because finally, we can see success at this program. Kanyotu was very determined and strongly adhered to all that was needed at school until completion. I know whatever she has learned will go a long way in shaping her future” says a jovial Makori

“I am very proud because finally, we can see success at this program. Kanyotu was very determined and strongly adhered to all that was needed at school until completion. I know whatever she has learned will go a long way in shaping her future” says a jovial Makori.

KEFWA is also looking forward to partner with other institutions, to see that their members have a wide range of options to pick what they want to pursue. This includes short-term tailor-made courses like sports management, physiotherapy, coaching, baking, driving school, among many others.



Road to Recovery

I hope to play for the National Team

M

Injuries can bring a football players' career to a screeching halt. This is why it is paramount that proper Medicare is offered to football players when they are faced with unforeseen circumstances such as illnesses and injuries on and off the pitch.

While insurance covers are ideal in this case, most players are still grappling with the lack of it. KEFWA through its Road to Recovery program has not only been able to assist its members to get proper medication, but also ensure that they bounce back to playing competitively both at the club level and at the national team.

Kenya Women Premier League (KWPL) side Makolanders FC left-back Lilian Akinyi is popularly known as Milegi is also a beneficiary after suffering a knee injury that required surgery. In the aftermath of the operation, she is hopeful that she will be back to full form as she undergoes her physiotherapy eyes as a chance to play for the national team, Harambee Starlets soon.

After getting injured while undertaking a club assignment during a Kenya Women Premier League (KWPL) match, the pain persisted, forcing her to go for surgery. As much as it was a huge gamble, Milegi says that she was left with no choice and had to give it a try.

As we settle for an interview at her home in Satellite, she goes on and on about how her daughter loves playing football. Staying at home with minimal movement was limiting and depressing even though all she could do is wait.



"I used to experience pain on my knee which would come and go. The leg got swollen and I went for a checkup where they did an MRI scan at German Medical Center and found out that there was a problem forcing surgery at St Peter's Uthiru," Akinyi narrates.

It hasn't been an easy journey for Akinyi, who is grateful of the Kenya Footballers Welfare Association (KEFWA) for coming through to give him support in medical bills and therapy sessions.

Injury can drive one through a lonely path. The fact that you cannot go out and play with your peers, means you are alone with your thoughts.

The misery according to Milegi was eased by the fact that her mother and brother have been giving her

hope and assuring her that she will get better.

Therapy sessions left her requiring a financial

boost and she had KEFWA -which she is a registered member- to thank after they came to her aid.

"KEFWA have helped me so much in paying my medical bills and therapy sessions. It has not been an easy journey bearing in mind the financial constraints that come with medical bills, buying drugs, and therapy sessions" she says.

Akinyi is now hopeful of recovering and getting back to the field with a dream of playing in the upcoming season.

As she awaits full recovery, she currently coaches Red Planets in Riruta Satellite and she is also part of the technical bench for Wanderers Youth Soccer Academy (WYSA) based in Kangemi.

Just what is her motivation? Urge to make extra coins or give back to the community?

"This injury has taught me the importance of preparing for life after football. I have undergone basic coaching courses and it is time to put my knowledge into practice. This way, I not only get to put food on the table but also contribute to the development of upcoming talented players in the community."

Some of the players who have benefited from the program include; Gor Mahia's and Harambee Star defender Philemon Otieno, Posta Rangers midfielder Cavin Odongo, Oserian, and Harambee Starlets defender Irene Ogutu, former AFC Leopards striker Wanjala, former Posta Rangers, and Harambee Stars defender Jockins Atudo, Daniel Ochieng formerly of SoNy Sugar, Hassan Mohammed - Talanta FC and, Jeremiah Wanjala formerly of Nzoia Sugar, former AFC Leopards midfielder Martin Imbalambala and Gussi United's John Nduati



Physiotherapy is key for any injured player. Do not train when you are being limited to what you are doing. It is very important to seek medical assistance and only resume activity once you are cleared by a professional physiotherapist or doctor.

Noel Mandi - Wazito
~~~~~

I underwent surgery twice, after picking a knee injury four years ago. When I heard about the Road to Recovery program I reached out and worked with Mandi, who led the rehab sessions. Right now, my leg muscles are stronger and I can play. I am however taking it one step at a time; I do not want to rush it until I am sure that I can now play in the league.

Irene Ogutu – Oserian  
~~~~~




I underwent surgery and physiotherapy after KEFWA facilitated the process. Right now, I am back playing for my club and the national team, which is amazing since at some point I lost hope. My advice to other players is to take rehab seriously because recovery and gaining full fitness do not end with surgery.

Philemon Otieno – Gor Mahia



KEFWA President James Situma and Secretary General Jerry Santo visit players in the Road to Recovery program as they undertake their rehabilitation sessions.

I picked a knee injury to the Middle Cruciate Ligament (MCL), and stayed out for four months hoping that it will recover on its own. I did not see change and so I opted for surgery. Physiotherapy has quickened my recovery process, thanks to the KEFWA Road to Recovery program. I am delighted to be back playing actively.

Cavin Odongo – Posta Rangers



JOHN NAIRUKA FOUNDATION



John Nairuka alongside Posta Rangers defender Suleiman Ngotho during at the Nairuka Foundation launch in Thika.

Besides KEFWA supporting my initiative by donating sports equipment, I have friends who walked with me every step of the way.

Most of our members play an important role of giving back to the community from time to time. This is evident by the fact that Johanna Omolo won the FIFPRO Merit Award in 2019.

This was following his exemplary work in Dandora slums, empowering the youth through football. Omolo has since partnered with KEFWA in the Menstrual Health Hygiene program, which has greatly benefited our members who play in the Women Division One league.

In this segment, we focus on former Posta Rangers FC attacking midfielder John Nairuka, whose Foundation has been home to hundreds of footballs in Thika, Makongeni area.

But just what inspired the Nairuka Foundation initiative?

"I aim to mentor the youth in my neighborhood. This is because as an upcoming player, I also got guidance and this enabled me to play to the highest level.

Having started the project while still playing for Murang'a Seal in the National Super League (NSL), this has always been his plan for when he starts life after football. "I chose to start transition-

ing into coaching early while I still active. This will enable the young players to learn from me and relate when the time comes for them to embrace second careers."

Nairuka, who has also previously turned out for the military outfit Ulinzi Stars, is grateful that he has not supported support systems.

"Besides KEFWA supporting my initiative by donating sports equipment, I have friends who walked with me every step of the way."

Bringing stars closer home? "Whenever active players in the top flight league that my players idolize interact and play with them, it gives them joy. It is an experience they cherish and learnings they hold on to forever."

As he concludes, Jonte as he is fondly known by his peers emphasizes the need of his players to be conversant with modern coaching styles.

"We try as much as we can to train them using the modern methods so that they are technically and tactically sound at a young age."

I aim to mentor the youth in my neighborhood. This is because as an upcoming player, I also got guidance and this enabled me to play to the highest level.

KEFWA MONTHLY AWARDS

The KEFWA monthly awards are part of the “Raising Our game” program, which is aimed at awarding the most outstanding Kenya Women Premier League (KWPL) players, as voted by the players themselves.

This has been ongoing since December 2020, when the women’s league commenced, albeit with numerous interruptions due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Among the ten players that have been awarded this season, we caught up with Thika Queens forward Mwanahalima “Dogo” Adam, who won the award in May and this is what she had to say.

“I thank God for this award. Without my teammates, I would not have won it since this is a team sport,” Dogo remarked. Being her first season in the top-flight league, the Harambee Starlets forward expressed that this was no mean fete. She also urged her fellow players to work hard, citing that it always pays off.

“I did not expect to receive the award since there are so many good players in the country. Women football has grown tremendously, and the fact that it is a player for players’ award, one can never be too sure,”

Other players who won the award included; Neddy Atieno (Ulinzi), Marceline Wayodi (Kisumu All Starlets) - December, Leila Agunda (Oserian), Cynthia Atieno (Kibera Soccer Ladies) - January, Sheril Angachi (Gaspo), Ruth Chebungei (Wadadia) - February, Christine Ngoizi (Kayole Starlets), Terry Engesha (Vihiga Queens) - March and Violet Nanjala (Trans Nzoia Falcons), and Mwanalima “Dogo” Adam - May

All the players bagged a personalized trophy and shopping voucher worth Ksh. 10,000 from Naivas Supermarket.



Sheril Angachi (Gaspo)



Mwanalima Adam - THIKA QUEENS



Christine Ngoizi (Kayole Starlets)



Terry Engesha (Vihiga Queens)



Ruth Chebungei (Wadadia)



Violet Nanjala (Trans Nzoia Falcons)



Neddy Atieno (Ulinzi),



Leila Agunda (Oserian)



Cynthia Atieno (Kibera Ladies)



Marceline Wayodi (Kisumu All Starlets)

Mind the gap

Building members' second careers

Since 2019, the Kenya Footballers Welfare Association (Kefwa) has been running an initiative that showcases players' businesses and activities, in a bid to find out how they are coping during the Covid-19 pandemic period. The initiative dubbed "Mind the Gap" which has featured several current and former footballers is aimed at encouraging players to have second careers, to secure their life after football.

In most cases, players in the paid ranks have always been reluctant when it comes to properly invest in other businesses. However, when their careers are cut short either due to injury or any other unforeseen circumstances like being axed from their teams, or a team being disbanded; they are forced to grapple with the idea that they have to start building a second source of income from scratch.

With the current financial status of Kenyan football where both men and women have been struggling with a lack of leagues spon-

sors, while most of the teams are also undergoing tough economic times.

KEFWA, through its programming, decided to look for ways to ensure its members' startups are supported and professionalized according to the organization's Secretary-General Jerry Santo.

"We have been running the "Mind the Gap" series to identify the gaps in our members' businesses so that we can forge a way forward on how to assist each one of them because they have unique needs.



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The Covid-19 pandemic enlightened me to venture into farming as a side hustle

When you start counting on the best performing attacking midfielders in the FKFPL, Kenya's top-tier league, you don't miss

on Tusker FC midfield maestro Jackson Macharia.



The former Thika United

FC prodigy prowess on the pitch can be compared to that of former Arsenal FC, FC Barcelona, Chelsea FC and Spain man Cesc Fabregas. Gifted with strength, agility, composure and ability to give assists from his killer penetration passes. The dreadlocked midfielder can come off the bench and change the mood of the game by unlocking the opponent's defense by dangerous passes.

The Kenyan international joined The Brewers in January 2016 from defunct Thika United FC and has been an integral part of coach Robert Matano side that recently booked a next season CAF Champions League slot after beating KCB FC who were in contention also for the spot. Despite shining in professional football, Macharia is also a serious farmer.



“ I own J's farm, an acre piece in Kiambu county where I do my onion and capsicum farming and the results have been good since I've been able to get a lot of customers from the Nairobi and Kiambu regions ”

Shedding more light on his intentions, he says the Covid-19 pandemic enlightened him to venture into farming as a side hustle to get some extra coins.

" When Covid-19 hit our country in 2020, all sporting activities including football were brought to a standstill. Instead of just being idle at home, I decided to venture into onion and capsicum (Pilipili hoho) farming so that I can get some extra coins ". " It's my dad who has inspired me to venture into farming and he usually tells me that most of his property came from farming, so I decided to follow the route.

" I own J's farm, an acre piece in Kiambu county where I do my onion and capsicum farming and the results have been good since I've been able to get a lot of customers from the Nairobi and Kiambu regions ".

About his career and life football, Macharia says " football or any other sport is a short career and can even end prematurely before an athlete gets what he wanted to gain from the game, so it's wise to at least get a side hustle business and start earning from it.

It shouldn't be just farming, there are many varieties of businesses that one can engage in, for instance, like me let's say I get an injury now by bad luck or Tusker releases me due to some reasons, I'll shift concentration to farming as it has helped me a lot.



KEFWA team visit to Kathimani where Jackson Macharia runs his Agribusiness activities.

He concludes by thanking KEFWA for getting involved in the players' affairs.

ways such as education, awareness, business promotions, and many others, kudos to the entire organization."

"I've been a member of KEFWA for quite some time and indeed I can say they have a good touch for the players. At first when I heard of KEFWA, I thought it was only dealing with players' contract affairs with clubs but I've learned and benefited a lot from the body. It has supported us in many



“I am a beneficiary of the Mind The Gap program. My story was first highlighted and they branded the workshop and also organized training for me. This has not only given me visibility, but my sales have also increased because now even mainstream media is covering my story.”

*Geoffrey Kataka
Former Posta Rangers
Fabrication*



“I learned how to make multipurpose soap in 2019 since football is not a well-paying career in Kenya. I also have one employee who does the distribution while I am away. I would advise my fellow players to embrace side hustles since at the end of the day, you need to make extra coins.”

*Kamanda Rael
Makolandars FC
Multipurpose Soap*



“When KEFWA highlighted my story, I was ridiculed but that is not a problem at all. It was positive since so many other players reached out to me and asked me to show them how this business is done. I have inspired others and that is a win. As a follow-up, they invited me for training, built us a shade, and also got me another motorbike in addition to the other bikes I own.”

*Wesley Onguso
Nairobi City Stars
Bodaboda*



“We deal with modernized furniture at Mcheza Workshop. I drew inspiration from my father, who taught me this business from a tender age. This business pays well, especially when you are consistent and put your customer’s needs first. Remember, when you do a good job, a big chunk of business will come from referrals. Your work speaks for you.”

*Aaron Omari
Zetech Titans
Carpentry*



“I started making mats after being taught by a friend of mine who ironically, did not continue doing the business. Honestly, I do not regret it since it paid my bills for the longest time, especially amid the pandemic. I am glad that KEFWA is encouraging its members to embrace second careers. You never know when you will get injured, or dropped from the team. If you have something else to do, it gets easier and less stressful.”

*Christine Nafula
AEL – Greece
Custom-made Mats*



“The Covid-19 pandemic showed me that football can stop at any time, but my needs will always be constant. Those were tough times that saw me and my business partner Sharon start selling fast foods such as Bhajia and French fries. It was not until when I had about the Mind the Gap program, that I reached out to KEFWA, of which I am a member. Besides taking us for training, they also boosted our business and we are very grateful.”

*Juliet Auma/Sharon Miloya
Kayole Starlets
Restaurant*



“For the last ten years, I have been passionate about running small-scale businesses. It started slowly by making and selling Mabuyu during league matches. After a while, I decided to invest my savings in a poultry business which is now doing very well. I sell Kienyeji chicken, and I make a good profit out of it.”

*Angela Musabi
Spedag FC
Poultry Farming*



“I started the business in 2013 when I won the league with Gor Mahia. There are times I had to close down at some point due to a lack of finances. What motivated me to start this business was when I picked an injury while at Tusker FC. No team could sign me, so I decided to look for an option. Most footballers do not think about investment, when they get money all they do is a party. Not that partying is bad, but think about the future, invest now, and have fun later.”

*Joseph Njuguna
Former Tusker FC Defender
Apparel business*

Football Players' Pregnancy and Parental Management Policy

Mathare United Women FC head coach Anne Aluoch is delighted that the policy is now in place and wishes that advocacy work should be done around it so that clubs can fully embrace it.

Ideally, professional sports women should be provided an enabling, safe and inclusive environment if they get pregnant, or want to have children.

This is however not the case in the Kenyan context. Most pregnant footballers do not return to play due to the socio-cultural space and perceptions that they feel limit them to competing without prejudice.

While the need for support is mostly lacking, sometimes players get proper guidance right from the health care practitioners, club, and even close family members.

Last year, FIFA in collaboration with FIFPro -World players footballers union came up with a maternity policy; which is aimed at guiding National Associations, Player representatives, confederations, and FIFA on the support that should be offered to professional football players who are pregnant or have young children, and the contractual options and obligations.

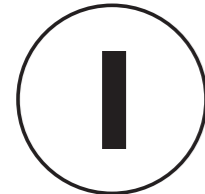
The big question is, is it being implemented? The country is still

grappling with the issue of sports mothers being denied maternity leave like other workers.

Mathare United Women FC head coach Anne Aluoch is delighted that the policy is now in place and wishes that advocacy work should be done around it so that clubs can fully embrace it.

"I was a mother at 16, but that did not bar me from playing to the highest level. I have captained the Harambee Starlets team to an Africa Women Cup of Nations (ACW-CON) qualification when I had been written off a long time ago when I got pregnant as a teenager," says the former Spedag FC midfielder.

Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic



The former Under 20 Women national team, who has been instrumental in the development of football players at the Mathare Youth Sports Association (MYSA)

Academy recounts how during the Covid-19 pandemic, she has lost four of her key players who got pregnant but did not return to play.

While one of her key strikers is now back from maternity leave and trying to get her scoring form back, Aluoch admits that it has not been a walk in the path for her. The stigma and outright discrimination are unfathomable.

Imagine coming back to your team after giving birth and no one wants anything to do with you. You are viewed as a bad influence to the rest, while team officials get a feeling that it will take you a long time to get back to your usual form and they feel like supporting you is a waste of time.

Players go through that and much more according to the former Kenya Under 20 Women national team.

"I have had to talk to my players and even shared my own experience. To me, giving birth should not end anyone's career unless they choose to quit. The problem is the treatment they get when they come back. Support is lacking both from their fellow players to the officials," she continues.

It is important to get sports stakeholders and government policymakers involved in Maternity for sports mothers' issue. Is there a return to play policy across all sports in Kenya? If not, are there plans to come up with one that will protect

sports mothers who besides flying the country's flag high in the various sports disciplines, also have the right to raise their families?

This can only be answered if the maternity policy implementation is brought to fruition. KEFWA as the players' union in Kenya has been at the forefront, sensitizing its members on the policy. As new as it may seem, it will go a long way in protecting sports mothers should it be embraced.

"I welcome the Maternity policy idea and believe that it is long overdue. You cannot stop an idea whose time has come. It is my prayer that other sports practitioners will embrace and support it, as well as help tailor-make it to suit our context," Aluoch concludes.



The COVID-19 crisis has had a grave impact on local, regional and global football. It has particularly impacted African football given the structural economic precariousness of a large number of countries on the continent.

According to the FIFPRO Secretary-General Stéphane Burchkalter who also doubles up as the FIFPRO Deputy Secretary-General, the long halt on competitions inevitably resulted in negative social repercussions for the players.

"There was an immediate effect on respect of contracts and the payment of wages. The actions carried out by FIFPRO and those carried out by the African members of the international union of professional footballers should be considered separately," he says.

Steps that were taken by FIFPRO:

In response, FIFPRO approached FIFA and conducted awareness for the International Federation to adapt its regulations concerning the crisis to:

Protect the interests and players contracts

This was aimed at ensuring the payment of salaries, limit breaches of contracts without negotiation with the player or without his prior agreement. It will also require that players' unions are consulted and collective bargaining agreements respected.

Players whose contracts had been broken could seek redress from the FIFA Dispute Resolution Chamber. Beyond the regulations, FIFA and FIFPRO, in collaboration with the European Club Association (ECA), have drawn up rules to take better account of the health of players.

This is done by:

- Allowing players not to go to a "risky" area; Working on better conditions and enabling environment that has respect for rest times between matches;
- Recognizing the right to leave/breaks during the season, and to a minimum number of weeks of leave between two sports seasons.

In a bid to protect the health of players while promoting the holding of competitions, FIFA, in collaboration with FIFPRO, has enacted a strict health protocol to:

- Avoid quarantine harms for players returning to play.
- To allow a player, (if he feels that the sanitary conditions are not satisfactory) to refuse to make a trip with his national team, without being sanctioned.



Stephane together with Jonas baer-hoffmann SG FIFPRO (middle) and Simon Colosimo Deputy SG FIFPRO (right)

FIFPRO Africa and its members

FIFPRO Africa to protect its members, approached CAF with a couple of recommendations. As Burchkalter explains, in many countries the adverse effects saw FIFPRO Africa increased support for its members.

"Since the start of the crisis, we approached CAF so that the regulations, recommendations, and health



Stéphane BURCHKALTER
Deputy SG FIFPRO and FIFPRO Africa SG

protocol put in place by FIFA are respected on the continent. FIFPRO Africa also ensured that part of the aid funds paid to African federations by FIFA and CAF were distributed to the players.

"Besides enforcement of respect of contracts and payment of wages, players were supported through actions such as distribution of food and moral support. This also included the creation of awareness among top players, to encourage them to support national players in dire need".



KEFWA MEDIA 2021

Unzipped Magazine first Edition



The first edition of the KEFWA Unzipped Magazine is a reflection of how the players' union operates, as well as its mandate. The life-changing stories are aimed at creating a positive impact on other footballers players. This, in as much as it is featured in the local context, can be relatable to anyone around the globe.

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