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By Rose Chipumphula Chalira

Chimwemwe: Following Dad's Footsteps

He has inborn flair for shoe making. You might say the talent was genetically transferred from his father to him. And it is this talent that has tremendously yielded him so much fame and distinction. Meet Chimwemwe Mwenyemasi, 21, whose shoe making skill is growing at super-sonic speed.

He is a household name not only in Balaka but also in Europe especially in Italy. Chimwemwe has already graced newspaper columns and granted interviews to international media houses of reputation. Social networks and some local television stations continue to feature and discuss his amazing products.

Andiamo Youth Cooperative Trust (AYCT) in Balaka, where he works, fetched him a proper working studio with colleagues and all sorts of machines to nurture his talent.

He hasn't worked for long but Chimwemwe is proving that he is one of the most talented youths at Andiamo. He is the head of Cobbler Section at AYCT.

He makes different brands of shoes labeled *Andiamo Youth Cooperative Trust*. A lot of local and international customers have flocked to Andiamo to admire and buy his designs of durable, top class, and fashionable shoes.

He owes it all to his late father who encouraged him to make shoes when



Chimwemwe with works of his hands

he was young.

"When my father died I was the one who took the responsibility of looking after my siblings. I pay their school fees and do everything for them," said Chimwemwe.

He disclosed that his younger brother who is still at school is also taking his path of making shoes and now is able to depend on himself. He said that shoe making is a process that needs seriousness and patience.

He said lack of materials is one of the biggest challenges he is facing. Chimwemwe says some of the materi-

als are imported from Italy.

But did he just get into shoe making after completing his education?

"I once worked as a Power 101 FM DJ and I was called DJ Wawo. But then I was simply ignoring the inner shoe producing vocation in me until Andiamo Youth Cooperative Trust incorporated me in the year 2012. I now see myself on the way to realizing great things," says Chimwemwe.

Chimwemwe hails from Malika Village, Traditional Authority Mpama in Chiradzulu district.