

AFC GRASSROOTS Football
Let's Play!

AFC GRASSROOTS REVIEW 2015


DNA
EVO

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Every journey has a beginning and for football, the first step begins at the grassroots. As the backbone of every thriving football community, grassroots football defines the success of the beautiful game at all levels. At its core, grassroots football is accessible for everyone, regardless of playing ability, gender or culture. It generates the power of football and creates an enriching and enjoyable platform to nurture positive values, promote a healthy lifestyle and foster social integration.

For some, it is the beginning of a pathway to compete on the world stage, but for most, grassroots football presents an opportunity to learn team work, sportsmanship, to build confidence and friendships. At all levels, grassroots football serves as a means to instil educational values and ignite a life-long passion for the global game.

We should all be heartened by the spirit of unity among our Member Associations who are determined to ensure that grassroots football remains in the forefront of their development plans in recent times. Across the continent, Member Associations have been working tirelessly to organise opportunities for players of all ages and playing abilities to get to know the beautiful game. The 2015 Grassroots Day was celebrated in 31 Member Associations – doubling the participation rate since it was first launched in 2013.

As part of the AFC's strategy to develop the game, we will continue to provide more opportunities for our Member Associations to enhance the development of grassroots football.

Shaikh Salman bin Ebrahim Al Khalifa
President

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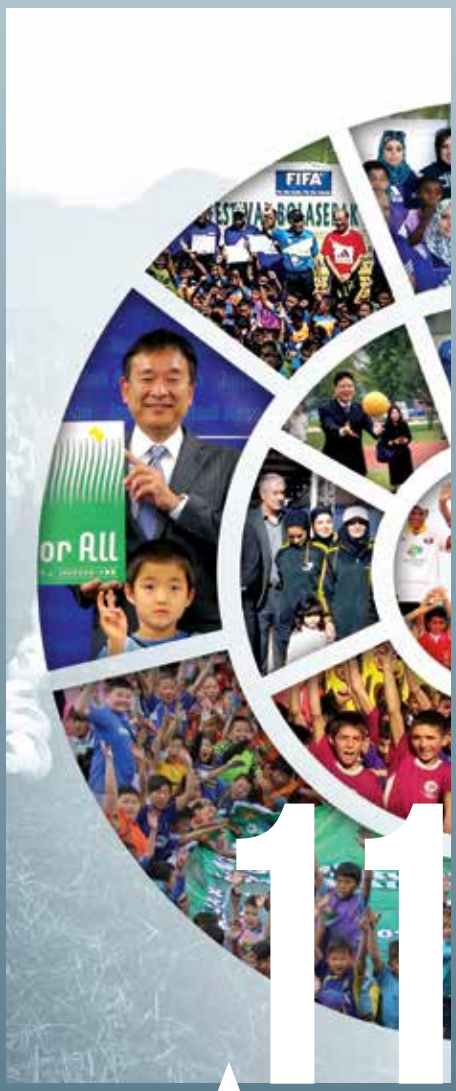
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WHY FOOTBALL?



Parents want to know why, grassroots coaches need to know why, while children, by playing, intuitively know why. What is it that makes football the number one sport in the world, both in terms of participants and spectators, what is the secret? Why play football?

The popularity of football is indeed undeniable and the people's game continues to inspire legions of passionate supporters in continents and countries across the globe. Asian youngsters who play today, aspire to become tomorrow's Omar Abdulrahman or Son Heung-Min. While the game's inherent values are often taken for granted, rarely are they articulated.

Simplicity certainly plays a part – the rules have been fairly consistent over the years and the game can be played with any kind of a ball, anytime, anywhere. In addition, it is cheap and safe in comparison to many other sporting activities. For most, their love affair with football began, not on glistening eleven-a-side pitches, but in neighbourhood streets, playgrounds, beaches and community spaces. Fully engrossed youngsters

would experience imagination and trickery, unbridled joy, friendly competition, and try to acquire the basic movements and skills.

As the late great Rinus Michels, FIFA's Coach of the 20th Century, said: "Good coaches use the basic criteria of street football for their vision of grassroots development; they realise that these elements produce a natural process which gives the most efficient training for young kids." And while the street football landscape continues to slowly disappear, its legacy continues in progressive grassroots programmes throughout Asia which use small-sided games as a valuable teaching tool.



Good coaches use the basic criteria of street football for their vision of grassroots development.

But why should parents be encouraged to send their children to play football rather than another sport? Firstly, the dynamic nature of the game can have enormous benefits for the health, physical and material, of those who participate. Furthermore, being part of a football club is a way of life which encourages social integration and inclusion, and offers young people the opportunity to develop their skills, to build friendships and to enjoy themselves.

Indeed, football has the power to engage the mind and body like few other activities. It embraces all, regardless of age, gender, social status or physique. Consider, for a moment, the life lessons that children learn through football – they develop confidence, discipline, resilience and other vital qualities for human and social endeavours.

During the 'golden age' of learning between 9 and 12 years of age, youngsters begin to share a passion for the ball and spend hours committing themselves to perfecting the basic techniques (juggling, dribbling, passing shooting, etc.). They acquire the fundamental concepts of the game, through free play and guided discovery.

The ball in flight, the bulging net, the colourful jerseys, the enthusiastic opponents and friendly team-mates are all motivating elements for young players. Expression and creativity are prized in football and children learn problem-solving and experimentation. However, to progress, they need to be fully engaged in the action, learning from others and showing a great deal of commitment and discipline.

Why play football? Watch children playing the game and the reasons will be self-evident: you will observe a fascination for the ball, a commitment to teamwork, a competitive spirit, a resilience to rise above adversity and an abundance of joy and energy.

Children love to play, and through football, they can experience the emotions of life and dream of becoming Asia's next big star. Why play football? Just ask the players.





SO, WHAT IS GRASSROOTS?





The Asian Football Confederation (AFC) defines grassroots football as “all non-professional and non-elite football”. This definition was approved by the AFC Technical Committee in October 2015.

1. Fun and stress free
2. For every-one, anytime & anywhere (but in a safe environment)
3. A school of life

AFC GRASSROOTS Football Let’s Play!



A DAY FOR ALL TO CELEBRATE

The number of Member Associations (MA) marking the annual AFC Grassroots Day on May 15 has doubled since the inception of the initiative in 2013. Thirty-one Member Associations celebrated the day in 2015.

Everyone, regardless of skill or talent , is given a chance to play football on the AFC Grassroots Day, which is celebrated across Asia. The AFC provides MAs with equipment to support their activities.

Grassroots football forms the basis for success at all levels of football. Without strong and healthy roots, the tree will not flower – in other words, without strong grassroots, the youth and adult levels will not succeed.





AFC PRESIDENT'S RECOGNITION AWARD FOR GRASSROOTS FOOTBALL 2015



Japan, Vietnam and Brunei won the AFC President Recognition Award for Grassroots Football 2015. The nominations for the award are based on a points system which takes into account several criteria, such as the structure and management of grassroots football, as well as the overall grassroots philosophy and policy of Member Associations.

In addition, Member Associations' grassroots partnerships with various external organisations are also assessed, as are technical programmes such as courses, workshops and talent identification.

Other criteria include exchange programmes - such as those with schools - administrative sub-regional football associations, communities and clubs as well as grassroots activities, for example promotional, educational and social responsibility events.

MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS' INITIATIVES IN 2015



AFGHANISTAN



Afghanistan Football Federation (AFF) organised a grassroots football festival with the participation of around 250 children in the capital Kabul.

One of the AFF's main grassroots objectives is to establish triangle relations between the AFF, players and their families. Such festivals are an effective way to reach this goal.

AUSTRALIA



The AIA Vitality Miniroos is a program run by Football Federation Australia (FFA) targeting children aged from five to -11. The program introduces children to the game through basic and fun exercises. In 2015, the AIA Vitality Miniroos Kickoff Program, aimed at four to nine year-olds, was piloted. Building on the success of the Miniroos Club Football program, Kickoff targets boys and girls who are beginning to play the game, and provides short, game-based sessions for them to enjoy all year round.

The FFA has also developed a program introducing football into schools across Australia, both in city centres and in rural and regional areas. This has opened up an opportunity to allow linking school students with other programs, such as the AIA Miniroos. Since the start of the school initiative, the FFA has recorded a record 15,525 Miniroo registrations over a three-month period.

BHUTAN



The Bhutan Football Federation (BFF) celebrated the AFC Grassroots Football Day at Druk School in Thimphu, with 17 districts also observing the occasion across the country. In Thimphu, the day was celebrated with students of Druk School taking part in skill-drills and other fun football activities. Some 100 students aged between six and 12 took part in the celebration.

Grassroots football in Bhutan has spread all over the country thanks to the close cooperation between the BFF and coaches in the districts.

BRUNEI



More than 250 pupils between six and 12 years of age old took part in the AFC Grassroots Football Day celebration at the Hassanal Bolkiah National Sports Complex in Berakas. The participants were divided into two age categories – six to eight and nine to 12. The participants were coached in eight football disciplines covering basic training, ball control, passing, kicking and mini games under the tutelage of 22 FIFA grassroots coaches.

The National Football Association of Brunei Darussalam (NFABD) holds monthly briefing and coaching sessions for grassroots coaches to discuss and monitor the progress of any grassroots activity conducted under the NFABD Grassroots Programme.

The Grassroots Football Department organised the program also for schools. The Department takes the initiative to approach local, international and also private schools to conduct grassroots sessions during the schools' physical education classes. The main objective is to encourage a healthy life style by involving students and as well as their teachers in physical activity.

CHINA



Between July 10 and August 9, the National Grassroots Football Office organised ten grassroots-football-themed summer camps in eight different camping locations. The annual grassroots football summer camp was held in August at the Chinese Football Academy in Qinhuangdao.

The camp gave the opportunity to 2,400 players in 176 teams from 17 provinces and cities to exchange experiences, live together and enjoy the charm of the game they love. A total of 406 matches were organised, including futsal, with sides ranging from eight to 11 players.

DPR KOREA



A total of 165 girls aged between nine and 12 took part in a festival at the Pyongyang International Football School on May 15.

30 coaches, 30 parents, 7 provincial FA officials and 5 members of the media were also present at the event.

Exhibition games between teams from the school, technical exercises and small-sided games lined the festival which was opened by DPR Korea Football Association General Secretary Kim Jong Man.

GUAM



Close to 300 girls competed in the 8th Annual Sugar-N-Spice Girls' Middle School Soccer Festival at the Guam Football Association (GFA) National Training Centre in March.

The event kicked off the GFA's weekend celebration of the AFC Women's Football Day.

HONG KONG



The Hong Kong Football Association LTD organised Summer Scheme 2015, with 9,100 children participating and 404 classes conducted. Eighteen supervisors and 240 football coaches were employed on the programme.

The District Development Programme 2015-16 was aimed at under six-year-olds boys and girls and it attracted 320 players.

The increase in number of regions the programme was offered in, from six to eight, in turn increased the number of participants and opportunities for children around Hong Kong.

The number of children on the District Development Programme has increased by 13 per cent in one year, from 3,624 in 2014-15 to 4,096 in the 2015-16 season.

INDIA



The All India Football Federation (AIFF) labelled the month of May 2015 as the 'AIFF Month for Grassroots Football'. The programme included eight Grassroots Leader Courses organised across India. The widespread outreach of the courses saw more than 200 grassroots coaches trained, helping them to understand the AIFF grassroots philosophy.

State Associations, the I-League, ISL and 2nd Division I-League clubs also organised at total of 87 festivals to help popularise the game among youngsters, with the help of AIFF grassroots coaches.

To implement the State Association's Grassroots Development Plan, the AIFF has appointed a total of seven Development Officers in seven affiliated states. They are responsible for the implementation of their State Association's Annual Plan and the development of its grassroots programme.

IR IRAN



The IR Iran Football Federation (IFF) held its first Girls' Football Festival in the Alborz province in November, an event that was attended by 322 girls from 23 teams. Other than talent scouting and football activities, the U-12 participants took part in various educational and entertaining courses and sessions, including one on anti-doping called Let's Say No to Doping.

Under the supervision of the provincial Football Association, the IFF organised football festivals in several cities, with IFF certified football schools and clubs participating. The players were in the U-8/10/12 age groups and the events took place in July and August. More than 160 city festivals were held during this period. Provincial festivals, organised the provincial FAs took place in August in 30 provinces. These were for 10-12 year-olds. In order to develop football among girls, the IFF also offered festivals for U-12 girls at provincial and national levels, with 25 provinces organising the events all over the country.

IRAQ



The Iraqi Football Association (IFA) organised a grassroots day festival in May. A total of 120 boys and girls attended and enjoyed the skill training sessions for passing, receiving and shooting. These were followed by small-sided matches.

JAPAN



The UNIQLO SOCCER KIDS was an open, fun football event for pre-school children under the age of six, organised by the Japan Football Association (JFA). With co-sponsorship by the Football Association of Singapore (FAS) and some of the main football stadiums across the country, the event was held in Singapore on Saturday November 7. Approximately 250 children gathered at the Jalan Besar Stadium. Poster and brochure promotion to attract participants for this event was conducted via UNIQLO shops across the host country and Albirex Niigata playing in the S. League, at various promotional events in Japan as well as, at Japanese kindergartens in Singapore.

The JFA Nadeshiko Friends Square, a grassroots event for girls, was also held at FC Tokyo's training grounds. The event was organised in three age categories and was composed of activities such as stretching, dribbling and shooting. After the various sessions, the event concluded with the girls and coaches playing 3v3 mini matches, with the young participants passionately chasing the ball to score goals.

JORDAN



The Jordan Football Association (JFA) observed the AFC Grassroots Football Day by holding a football festival, an annual event, attended by children and their parents. The JFA also organised a festival for 150 girls with the collaboration of FIFA in August.

In order to develop grassroots coaches, the JFA held workshops in January and July and a grassroots coaching course supported by the Bavarian FA (Germany) in May.

KYRGYZ REPUBLIC



The Football Federation of Kyrgyz Republic (FFKR) held the Nanum Youth Football Festival between the FFKR and the Korea Football Association (KFA), with the participation of 18 teams from all the regions of the country in April. Three age groups of 9-10, 11-12 and 13-14 participated in the tournament. The FFKR also held a women's football festival in June.

To further football for all abilities, the FFKR held a football festival for children from five orphanages, child protection and rehabilitation centres from the Bishkek and Chui Regions in August. The FFKR men's national team visited orphanages and gave presents to children within the FFKR's corporate social responsibility policy and in order to raise awareness among the society on issues of socially vulnerable groups.

LAOS



Children aged between six and 12 in Laos had fun on the National Grassroots Day in May. The event was organised by the Lao Football Federation (LFF) and took place at the FIFA Training Centre at Ban Houay Hong, Vientiane.

MALDIVES



Some 300 kids and 30 coaches participated in a festival in the Maldives in May. The festival consisted of basic techniques workshops and opportunities to play the game. A one-day seminar for coaches was held as well.

MONGOLIA



The Mongolian Football Federation (MFF) organised an "AFC Grassroots Festival 2015" in three cities: the capital city of Ulaanbaatar, Zamiin-Uud and Dornod province in June. Under the program Children - Football - Future the MFF aims to develop children's football in Mongolia in line with the long-term strategic plan 2012-2022, according to the FIFA PERFORMANCE Program.

The MFF held also "family weekends" in order to encourage children to play football. The parents were also welcomed in order to promote healthy, active life based on grassroots football. A pitch at the MFF was designated for this grassroots activity during the weekends.

MYANMAR



Myanmar celebrated the AFC Grassroots Football Day in Yangon on May 10 with 400 students from 10 townships taking part, along with 60 coaches, some of whom were film actors and physical education teachers. The festival was closed with a ball donation ceremony where 20 balls were given to each township.

NEPAL



The All Nepal Football Association (ANFA) held its first Grassroots Festival at the ANFA Complex with 16 teams from 13 schools participating.

All the participating schools were required to conduct football activities throughout the year involving children aged 11 to 13 years. The coaches were required to monitor performances and report their development to the ANFA who, in turn, supported the schools by providing balls, bibs, markers and cones.

NORTHERN MARIANA ISLAND



The Northern Mariana Islands Football Association (NMIFA) organised an event for the AFC Women's Football Day in March and a total of 60 girls participated.

To mark the AFC Grassroots Day, the NMIFA also held a 3v3 Grassroots Festival. The tournament was played at the Oleai Sports Complex (aka Ada Field) in May.



PALESTINE



Grassroots festivals were held by the Palestine Football Association (PFA) in the southern area at Dura international stadium. 200 players under the age of 12 participated in the event.

The PFA with the cooperation of the Ministry of Education organised another football festival for women and girls in the Northern area (Nablus) at the Nablus international Stadium.

150 girls participated in the festival with supervision by 25 coaches and freshly graduated physical education teachers from the Al Najah University.



PHILIPPINES



The Philippine Football Federation (PFF) conducted Grassroots Courses and Festivals (GCF) for public school students, teachers, coaches and community volunteers, in cooperation with the Department of Education and Local Government Units.

The GCF is a three-day activity where, on the first day, 60 teachers are trained on how to teach basic football. On the second day, each teacher trains ten under 12 year-old pupils.

On the third day, the 600 students participate in a day-long Festival of Football. The PFF has conducted a total of 26 GCFs introducing football to 1,470 students and training 308 teachers to be teacher-coaches nationwide.

QATAR



The AFC Grassroots Football Day was celebrated in Qatar by 340 boys of six to eight years of age. The celebration was organised after a ceremony by Qatar FA to reward Qatari clubs who had successfully developed grassroots during the season 2014 /2015.

SINGAPORE



More than 100 school children had a ball of a time at the launch of the Football Association of Singapore Cubs Grassroots Programme at Jalan Besar Stadium in August.

The children, aged between six and 12, took to the pitch to explore the various coaching stations promoting fun football and life's social values.Initially, four centres offered the Cubs Programme – Sembawang Primary, Queensway Secondary which is an all-girls training centre only, Serangoon Stadium and Admiralty Primary.

A fifth centre was opened on August 16 at Bowen Secondary. Like Queensway Secondary, it is an all-girls centre, open to all female students from the neighbouring primary schools located around the Bowen area.

SRI LANKA



The Football Federation of Sri Lanka (FFSL) held three grassroots festivals in Anuradhapura, Vavunia and Mannar in February and April. Around 600 children under the age of 12 participated in the festivals.

UAE



The United Arab Emirates Football Association (UAEFA) celebrated the AFC Grassroots Football Day on May 15 in collaboration with the Ministry of Education.

Eighty children enjoyed the programme which included football matches between the association's training centres.

UZBEKISTAN



Approximately 250 boys and girls from the different regions of Uzbekistan attended a festival held on the artificial turf of the Uzbekistan Football Federation (UFF) headquarters in Tashkent in May.

In addition, the UFF organised grassroots festivals in Tashkent for more than 800 players (including FIFA, AFC and UFF Festivals).

VIETNAM



Vietnam's investment in grassroots football has paid off with 13 girls from grassroots projects recently recruited for the national young female football team.

Grassroots football is more developmental than competitive in nature but the recruitment is seen as an encouraging sign after 12 years' efforts between the Vietnam Football Federation (VFF) and its grassroots partner NGO Football for All in Vietnam (FFAV).

The girls have been recruited from the Provincial Youth Festivals and the FFAV Cup 2015, and will be gathered for training at VFF's Youth Training Centre, in which they will take part in academic education programmes together with football training. The group is expected to train for national festivals and continental tournament qualifiers between 2016 and 2018.


MARI BERMAIN!
MARI BERMAIN! Let's Play! اجازه دهید بازی
Maglaro Tayo! Chơi bóng nào! வா! விளையாடுவோம 같이 놀자!
一起踢球吧! നമുക്ക് കളിക്കാം खेल्न जाऔं 一起踢球吧!
Maglaro Tayo!
چلو کھیلتے ہیں खेल्न जाऔं プレーしよう! プレーしよう!
هيّا لنلعب
Let's Play!
Maglaro Tayo! MARI BERMAIN!
வா! விளையாடுவோம
اجازه دهید بازی MARI BERMAIN! चलो खेलें
一起踢球吧! هيّا لنلعب 같이 놀자!
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வா! விளையாடுவோம چلو کھیلتے ہیں 一起踢球吧!
Chơi bóng nào! Let's Play! اجازه دهید بازی
Chơi bóng nào!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The AFC would like to thank all Member Associations for organising activities that have introduced children to football, possibly offering them a life-long passion in the beautiful game.

The AFC would also like to acknowledge the contribution of the photographs of grassroots to the following Member Associations:

Afghanistan Football Federation, Football Federation Australia Limited, Bhutan Football Federation, National Football Association of Brunei Darussalam, Chinese Football Association, DPR Korea Football Association, Guam Football Association, The Hong Kong Football Association Ltd, All India Football Federation, IR Iran Football Federation, Iraqi Football Association, Japan Football Association, Jordan Football Association, Football Federation of Kyrgyz Republic, Lao Football Federation, Football Association of Maldives, Mongolian Football Federation, Myanmar Football Federation, All Nepal Football Association, Northern Mariana Island Football Association, Palestine Football Association, Philippine Football Federation, Qatar Football Association, Football Association of Singapore, Football Federation of Sri Lanka, UAE Football Association, Uzbekistan Football Federation and , Vietnam Football Federation.



Carry the ball close to your heart!’

Andy Roxburgh (AFC Technical Director)





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