



**AFC ENHANCE
MEMBER ASSOCIATION
PROGRAMME REGULATIONS**



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DEFINITIONS

In these Regulations, capitalised terms shall have the following meanings, unless the context specifically indicates otherwise:

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| AFC | Asian Football Confederation. |
| AFC Committees | Any committee of the AFC as constituted in accordance with the AFC Statutes. |
| Beneficiary Member Association | Any Member Association receiving the Enhance Programme Fund. |
| Budget | The proposed annual utilisation of the Enhance Programme Fund by the Beneficiary Member Association. |
| Central Audit | An audit of the Enhance Programme Fund undertaken by an independent auditor appointed by the AFC. |
| Declaration of Commitment | A document declaring that the Beneficiary Member Association will abide by the Regulations and the Enhance Programme Policy. This declaration must be signed by the President and General Secretary of that Beneficiary Member Association. |
| Enhance Programme | The AFC Enhance Member Association Programme |
| Enhance Programme Bank Account | The bank account(s) owned and operated by a Member Association solely for the purpose of receiving and disbursing the Enhance Programme Fund and any other development funds (whether in US Dollar and/or any other local currency). |

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| Enhance Programme Cycle | Period commencing from the 2021 calendar year for a four (4) year cycle 2021 - 2024. |
| Enhance Programme Fund | The financial assistance provided by the AFC to a Member Association pursuant to and for the purposes set out in these Regulations. |
| FIFA | The Fédération Internationale de Football Association. |
| Force Majeure | Any event affecting the performance of any provision of these Regulations and/or Enhance Programme Policy arising from or attributable to acts, events, omissions, or accidents which are beyond the reasonable control of a party, and shall include but not be limited to abnormally inclement weather, flood, lightning, storm, fire, explosion, earthquake, structural damage, power supplies, war, terrorist action, military operations, riot, crowd disorder, strike, lock-outs or other industrial action, civil commotion, epidemic or pandemic. |
| Member Association | A football association which is a member of the AFC. |
| Normalisation Committee | A body established by FIFA, in consultation with the AFC, following the removal of the Member Association's executive body under exceptional circumstances in accordance with the FIFA Statutes. |
| Enhance Programme Policy | The policy issued by the AFC which provides the mechanism and criteria for the operational implementation of the Enhance Programme in accordance with these Regulations. |

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| Regulations | These AFC Enhance Member Association Programme Regulations. |
| Restricted Funding | A targeted mode of funding in circumstances deemed necessary to enforce compliance with these Regulations and ensure good financial governance. |
| Sanctioned Member Association | A Member Association whose country or territory is subject to international economic, financial and/or other sanctions. |
| Suspended Member Association | A Member Association, which has been suspended by FIFA and/or the AFC. |

For the purposes of these Regulations, and provided the context so permits:

- a. the singular shall include the plural and vice-versa;
- b. the feminine gender shall include the masculine and vice-versa;
- c. references to natural persons shall include any legal person or corporation;
- d. references to the AFC shall include its successors and permitted assigns and, where the context requires, the AFC Committees; and
- e. all defined terms unless otherwise stated herein shall bear the same meaning as ascribed in the AFC Statutes, unless the context indicates otherwise.

AFC ENHANCE MEMBER ASSOCIATION PROGRAMME REGULATIONS

1. SCOPE OF APPLICATION

- 1.1. These Regulations, together with the Enhance Programme Policy, govern the:
 - a) operation of the Enhance Programme;
 - b) rights, duties, and obligations of all parties involved in the operation of the Enhance Programme; and
 - c) eligibility criteria to qualify for the Enhance Programme.
- 1.2. These Regulations and the Enhance Programme Policy shall apply to all Member Associations that apply to benefit from the Enhance Programme and all Beneficiary Member Associations currently receiving the Enhance Programme Fund.
- 1.3. Member Associations that benefit from the Enhance Programme are eligible to receive other forms of development support and participate in other development programmes offered by the AFC, subject to the approval of the relevant AFC Committee(s), availability of relevant budget(s) and compliance with the provisions of the relevant AFC development programme policies/regulations.
- 1.4. These Regulations and all related policies, directives, decisions, guidelines, and circulars issued by the AFC shall be binding upon all parties involved in the implementation of the Enhance Programme.
- 1.5. The Enhance Programme Policy forms an integral part of, and shall be read in conjunction with, these Regulations. The Enhance Programme Policy shall be binding upon all parties involved in the operation of the Enhance Programme. In the event of any discrepancy between these Regulations and the Enhance Programme Policy, these Regulations shall prevail to the extent of the inconsistency.

- 1.6. Any rights and proprietary interests associated with the Enhance Programme and any Enhance Programme Fund that are not granted by these Regulations or specific agreement to any Member Association and/or any third-party vest and shall continue to vest in the AFC.
- 1.7. Any reference to the AFC Statutes, Regulations and the Enhance Programme Policy refers to those in force at the time of application.

2. OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 The Enhance Programme is designed for the strategic and long-term development of football in the Member Associations, particularly in the areas of governance, administration, infrastructure, national teams (Men, Women, Youth), domestic football (Men, Women, Youth), futsal, beach soccer, grassroots, technical and referees.

3. BENEFICIARIES

- 3.1 All Member Associations have the right to benefit from the Enhance Programme in accordance with Articles 2 and 9.1 f) of the AFC Statutes.
- 3.2 Any Member Association that wants to benefit from the Enhance Programme must fulfil the criteria and follow the procedures set out in these Regulations and the Enhance Programme Policy.

4. FINANCIAL CONDITIONS

- 4.1 Subject to compliance with these Regulations and the Enhance Programme Policy, each Beneficiary Member Association may be provided financial assistance of up to a maximum of Two Million United States Dollars (USD2,000,000) during the Enhance Programme Cycle (at a maximum allocation of Five Hundred Thousand United States Dollars (USD500,000) per year per Beneficiary Member Association).

5. RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 AFC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

- 5.1.1 In accordance with Article 53 of the AFC Statutes and Article 9.55 of the AFC Organisation Regulations, the AFC Development Committee shall be responsible for and supervise the implementation of the Enhance Programme.
- 5.1.2 The specific responsibilities of the AFC Development Committee include:
- a) approving new applications to join the Enhance Programme;
 - b) approving the allocation of the Enhance Programme Fund for each Beneficiary Member Association, as well as determining the commencement date for the disbursement of the Enhance Programme Fund;
 - c) approving, reviewing, revising and amending the terms and/or format of the Enhance Programme and/or the allocation of the Enhance Programme Fund for any Beneficiary Member Association(s) at any time during the Enhance Programme Cycle;
 - d) excluding any Beneficiary Member Association from the Enhance Programme following a review and evaluation of the existing Enhance Programme and budget(s);
 - e) excluding any Beneficiary Member Association from the Enhance Programme upon the recommendation of the AFC General Secretariat due to non-compliance with these Regulations and/or the Enhance Programme Policy;
 - f) granting exemptions to these Regulations upon the proposal of the AFC General Secretariat; and
 - g) declaring cases of Force Majeure.

5.2 AFC GENERAL SECRETARIAT

5.2.1 The AFC General Secretariat shall manage the operational implementation of the Enhance Programme.

5.2.2 The specific responsibilities of the AFC General Secretariat include:

- a) making all necessary assessments and providing the AFC Development Committee with recommendations relating to the eligibility of a Member Association to join the Enhance Programme or continue to benefit from the Enhance Programme;
- b) making all necessary assessments and providing the AFC Development Committee with recommendations to exclude a Beneficiary Member Association from the Enhance Programme;
- c) proposing amendments to these Regulations for the approval of the AFC Development Committee;
- d) drafting the first (1st) edition of the Enhance Programme Policy for the approval of the AFC Executive Committee. For the avoidance of doubt, the Enhance Programme Policy is premised on the previous AFC Financial Assistance Programme (otherwise AFAP) Policy;
- e) amending the Enhance Programme Policy at its discretion and notifying such amendments to the AFC Development Committee and Beneficiary Member Associations. For the avoidance of doubt, the approval of the AFC Executive Committee or the AFC Development Committee is not required for any such amendment to the Enhance Programme Policy;
- f) deciding and/or amending the distribution ratio and schedule of disbursement of the Enhance Programme Fund subject to the AFC's finances and cash flow; and
- g) undertaking all tasks to ensure the operation of the Enhance Programme in compliance with these Regulations, the Enhance Programme Policy, and all other applicable AFC Regulations and policies.

5.3 BENEFICIARY MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS

5.3.1 The specific responsibilities of the Beneficiary Member Associations are to:

- a) fully comply with these Regulations, Enhance Programme Policy and all other applicable AFC Regulations and policies at all times;
- b) provide the AFC with all necessary information and supporting documentation relating to its participation in the Enhance Programme;
- c) provide the AFC with all the necessary information and supporting documentation to conduct the Central Audit;
- d) assist the AFC in monitoring and overseeing the operation of the Enhance Programme within its territory;
- e) immediately inform the AFC General Secretariat of any challenges faced in respect of the implementation of the Enhance Programme or of any revision to the approved Budget;
- f) utilise the Enhance Programme Fund solely for the activities proposed in the Budget, as approved by the AFC;
- g) establish appropriate practices and procedures, where applicable, particularly relating to the procurement of goods and services, in order to evaluate and select products, suppliers and/or subcontractors in compliance with local procurement laws and regulations;
- h) obtain all necessary government approvals required to operate the Enhance Programme;
- i) avoid, under all circumstances, cash transactions involving the Enhance Programme Fund;
- j) respect all applicable laws, including those relating to the confidentiality of data and privacy, and in particular, laws and rules on the preservation of human rights including those that prohibit child labour and forced labour; and
- k) evaluate and reduce the environmental impact of their projects and use the Enhance Programme Fund in a responsible manner in order to achieve growth that is sustainable, and which respects the environment.

6. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- 6.1 In order to join the Enhance Programme as a beneficiary, a Member Association must:
- a) comply with the requirements set out in Article 5 of these Regulations;
 - b) comply with the Enhance Programme Policy; and
 - c) be able to clearly demonstrate that they have insufficient financial means to support their football development and/or management activities.
- 6.2 A Sanctioned Member Association and/or a Suspended Member Association shall not be eligible to apply to join the Enhance Programme unless the applicable sanctions and/or suspensions are lifted by the relevant authorities, FIFA and/or the AFC.

7. APPROVAL

- 7.1 All applications for the Enhance Programme shall be subject to the following:
- 7.1.1 The AFC Development Committee shall decide on all new applications to join the Enhance Programme based on the eligibility report submitted by the AFC General Secretariat and subject to the availability of budget(s).
 - 7.1.2 Where an application is approved, the AFC Development Committee shall approve the allocation of the Enhance Programme Fund and determine the commencement date for the Beneficiary Member Association to receive the allocated Budget.
 - 7.1.3 Where an application is rejected, the Member Association may apply to join the Enhance Programme in the next application window subject to fulfilling the relevant requirements set out in these Regulations and the Enhance Programme Policy.
 - 7.1.4 The AFC Development Committee has absolute discretion to accept or reject any applications and is under no obligation to provide any reason where an application is rejected.

8. NORMALISATION COMMITTEES

- 8.1 The AFC Development Committee reserves the right at its discretion to decide on the amount of and procedure for the disbursement of the Enhance Programme Fund to the Normalisation Committees, following due assessments.

9. SUSPENDED MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS

- 9.1 The Enhance Programme Fund shall be immediately suspended if the AFC and/or FIFA suspend a Beneficiary Member Association and no funds will be released during the period of such suspension.
- 9.2 Once the suspension is lifted, the AFC General Secretariat shall assess matters and decide on the procedure for the release of the remaining funds and the amount of the Enhance Programme Fund.

10. MISUSE OF ENHANCE PROGRAMME FUND

- 10.1 If the AFC General Secretariat deems that funds or other benefits in connection with the Enhance Programme have been misused, it may:
- a) order the immediate suspension of any further disbursements of funds or other benefits until further notice;
 - b) order a member of the AFC General Secretariat or third party mandated by the AFC to inspect and audit the Beneficiary Member Association, including undertaking a forensic audit. The Beneficiary Member Association shall provide full access to relevant personnel, accounts, contracts, meeting minutes, and all other relevant documents to enable such audits. Any such audits shall be conducted at the expense of the AFC;
 - c) order the Beneficiary Member Association concerned to reimburse to the AFC in full all funds received under the Enhance Programme;
 - d) take any other measures deemed appropriate and/or necessary in the circumstances; and/or
 - e) refer the matter to the AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Committee.

- 10.2 Upon the recommendation by the AFC General Secretariat that funds or other benefits in connection with the Enhance Programme have been misused by the Beneficiary Member Association concerned, the AFC Development Committee may exclude the Beneficiary Member Association concerned from the Enhance Programme in accordance with Articles 5.1.2 e) and 5.2.2 b) of these Regulations.
- 10.3 Should a Beneficiary Member Association be excluded from the Enhance Programme pursuant to Article 10.2 of these Regulations, it shall:
- a) be required to reimburse all funds received and any expenses incurred by the AFC to date. The amount of expenses shall be determined by the AFC Development Committee; and
 - b) be immediately ineligible to benefit from the Enhance Programme from the time of its exclusion, including any payments for that year, and for the remaining calendar years during the Enhance Programme Cycle. The Beneficiary Member Association will not be able to access or benefit from any rollover funds.
- 10.4 The above Articles 10.1, 10.2 and 10.3 are not applicable in cases of Force Majeure recognised by the AFC Development Committee. The AFC Development Committee shall take whatever action it deems necessary in cases of Force Majeure.

11. RESTRICTED FUNDING

- 11.1 A Beneficiary Member Association may be placed under Restricted Funding by the AFC General Secretariat, if on the basis of the Central Audit reports and/or other information received, the AFC General Secretariat considers that:
- a) the Enhance Programme Fund has not been utilised for the activities proposed by the Beneficiary Member Association in accordance with the Budget approved by the AFC;
 - b) the transactions involving the Enhance Programme Fund have not been correctly categorised or documented;

- c) the Beneficiary Member Association has failed to comply with these Regulations or the Enhanced Programme Policy, or any other rule, regulation or instruction of the AFC relating to the Enhance Programme or any applicable laws; and/or
- d) the Beneficiary Member Association has poor internal controls relating to the management of the Enhance Programme.

In such cases, the release of the Enhance Programme Fund may be made in quarterly instalments, or such other allocations as determined by the AFC Development Committee, subject to satisfactory quarterly audits by the AFC.

12. ALIGNMENT OF FUNDING

- 12.1 Under these Regulations and in accordance with Article 72 of the AFC Statutes, the AFC is entitled to deduct from any amount allocated to a Beneficiary Member Association any amount owed to the AFC by that Beneficiary Member Association for any reason.

13. TAXES AND DUTIES

- 13.1 Beneficiary Member Associations are responsible for the payment of all taxes, duties, and other charges payable in relation to the operation of the Enhance Programme in their territory (including receipt of and disbursement to third parties in relation to the Enhance Programme Fund).
- 13.2 Beneficiary Member Associations shall declare such items where applicable within their Budget.

14. FEES AND EXPENSES

- 14.1 Beneficiary Member Associations are responsible for the payment of all fees and expenses in relation to the operation of the Enhance Programme in their territory, except where expressly identified otherwise in these Regulations.

- 14.2 For the avoidance of doubt, this includes all professional (legal, accounting, etc.), banking and monetary exchange costs.

15. INDEMNIFICATION

- 15.1 Beneficiary Member Associations shall indemnify, hold harmless and defend the AFC, its officers, members, agents, auxiliary persons, representatives, and employees from and against all liabilities, obligations, damages, losses, claims, demands, recoveries, deficiencies, costs or expenses (including without limitation all costs and expenses for withdrawal or exclusion from the Enhance Programme and/or all attorneys' fees and expenses) which such parties may suffer or incur in connection with, resulting from, or arising out of any breach by the Beneficiary Member Association (including its officers, directors, representatives, auxiliary persons, employees or agents) or any act or omission of the Beneficiary Member Association (including its officers, directors, representatives, auxiliary persons, employees or agents) in connection with the performance of its obligations pursuant to these Regulations and Enhance Programme Policy.

16. DISCIPLINARY MEASURES

- 16.1 All disciplinary measures in relation to these Regulations shall be undertaken in accordance with the AFC Statutes, AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Code, AFC Code of Conduct and any relevant AFC circulars and directives.

17. DECISIONS

- 17.1 All decisions made in accordance with these Regulations, except where expressly identified otherwise, are final and binding and not appealable in accordance with the AFC Statutes.

18. AMENDMENTS

- 18.1 The AFC reserves the right to make amendments to any part of these Regulations and the Enhance Programme Policy for any reason whatsoever. Such amendments shall be duly communicated in due course.

19. FORCE MAJEURE

- 19.1 The AFC Development Committee is the only body capable of declaring a Force Majeure event pursuant to these Regulations and the Enhance Programme Policy.

20. MATTERS NOT PROVIDED FOR

- 20.1 Matters not provided for in these Regulations shall be decided by the AFC Development Committee. Such decisions are final and binding and not appealable.

21. CLOSING PROVISIONS

- 21.1 The AFC General Secretariat is entrusted with the operational management of the Enhance Programme and is therefore entitled to make decisions and adopt the detailed provisions necessary for implementing these Regulations and the Enhance Programme Policy.

22. ENFORCEMENT

- 22.1 These Regulations were ratified by the AFC Executive Committee on 21 November 2021 and come into force immediately.

23. TRANSITORY PROVISION

- 23.1 Any project and/or funding that has already been approved prior to these Regulations coming into force and which utilises only funds allocated in the AFAP shall be governed by the AFAP Regulations (2020 Edition), with the exception of Articles 10 and 15 of these Regulations, which apply immediately as from when these Regulations come into force.
- 23.2 Funds allocated under the AFAP that are not used by 31 December 2021, irrespective of whether they have been transferred to the Beneficiary Member Association and not used according to purpose, shall be returned to the AFC or deducted from the entitlement of the AFC Enhance Member Association Programme Cycle.

For the AFC Executive Committee

Shaikh Salman bin Ebrahim Al Khalifa
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