

Football Federation of Armenia: the Grassroots department activities

It is well known that mass football is the first step towards big sport and the professional game. Grassroots football development and promotion has a positive impact on the sport as a whole. The grassroots football is one of the most efficient ways to attract children and people of any ages to physical education and resume their interest in sport.

As the grassroots football includes children's football, amateur football, women's football, futsal, disability football and more besides, we value its role both as a popular sport and a worthy means of involving different social groups.

The Grassroots department (the head: Marina Tashchyan) is the structural division of Football Federation of Armenia which cooperates closely with other departments. The Grassroots department also coordinates the CCPA-OFFS project in Armenia using constructively the OFFS principles in grassroots development strategy.

One of the most important achievements of mass football promotion is the project "Football in comprehensive schools." In 2008 the Football Federation of Armenia signed an agreement with the Ministry of Education and Science and the Ministry of Sports and Youth about including football as a regular subject in comprehensive secondary school curriculum within the Republic of Armenia (RA).

Of the three hours a week set aside for physical education, one is devoted to football as a subject. FFA has produced program materials and manuals for physical education teachers, which it has delivered to all the schools. All 1,500 secondary schools have already adopted and implemented this educational programme. FFA Grassroots department instructors have also organized seminars for the physical education teachers to establish and apply suitable teaching methods.

At the end of December 2009, an extensive, nationwide PE teacher training programme was completed. The FFA seminars included both theoretical and practical training. The schools were provided with sports equipment such as manuals, balls, cones, pumps and bibs).

This year the Grassroots department's project "Football in comprehensive schools" was awarded by UEFA bronze medal.

The FFA grassroots department is always positive and open to new ideas and endeavours to promote football throughout the country. We follow the stance of the UEFA President, Michel Platini, in believing that, as one of the most popular sports around, football must be organized not as a product, but as a wonderful, enthralling and pleasant game to be enjoyed by everyone. Grassroots football is therefore the key starting point for us.