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FIFA global integrity programme: An in-depth analysis

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Abstract

FIFA Global Integrity Programme aims to provide Integrity Officers within FIFA's 211 member associations all around the world with an in-depth understanding of the scourge of match manipulation and ways or measures to tackle it effectively. The programme, developed in collaboration with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), will deliver the knowledge and tools needed to prevent and fight match manipulation as well as to promote integrity by setting up successful and sustainable initiatives at member association level. The programme will be structured in three core modules and organised regionally, with a dedicated edition for each confederation across 2021 and 2022. With the objective of setting up successful and sustainable integrity and anti-corruption initiatives at local level, the new programme is organised regionally per confederation and includes a series of three-module virtual workshops to be delivered to all FIFA member associations. However, with the objective of setting up successful and sustainable integrity and anti-corruption initiatives at local level, the new programme is organised regionally per confederation and includes a series of three-module virtual workshops to be delivered to all FIFA member associations.

Keywords: FIFA; FIFA Global Integrity Programme; Integrity Material; Integrity Support; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC); Member Associations (MAs); International Betting Integrity Association (IBIA)

Introduction

FIFA Global Integrity Programme aims to provide Integrity Officers within FIFA's member associations all around the world with an in-depth understanding of the scourge of match manipulation and ways or measures to tackle it effectively. The programme, developed in collaboration with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), will deliver the knowledge and tools needed to prevent and fight match manipulation as well as to promote integrity by setting up successful and sustainable initiatives at member association level. As part of its ongoing integrity initiatives, FIFA signed a memorandum of understanding with the UNODC in September 2020 to step up their joint cooperation to address the threats posed by crime to sport. Furthermore, it will provide insight into how to conduct investigations into match manipulation incidents by means of practical examples. The programme will also serve as an opportunity for Integrity Officers to share experiences and best practices between one another. The programme will be structured in three core modules and organised regionally, with a dedicated edition for each confederation across 2021 and 2022. The programme will kick off with the AFC edition in March 2021, followed by CONMEBOL as of April, Concacaf from August and CAF starting in September, and will continue in 2022 with the editions for the OFC and UEFA. Due to the restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic, the programme will be delivered in a digital format. FIFA, in coordination with every confederation, will follow up individually with each member association's integrity officer prior to the start of the respective edition ^[1]. FIFA has also announced that it will shortly be launching the FIFA Integrity Officers Community Platform. This will be the first-ever community-driven online platform dedicated exclusively to integrity officers across all member associations and confederations worldwide. This confidential platform will bring together a global network of integrity officers to share their experience and exchange best practice related to preventing and fighting match manipulation and promoting integrity in football ^[2].

The first edition of the Global Integrity Programme, dedicated to the member associations from the Asian Football Confederation (AFC), launched the first module on 4 March, with the

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second module scheduled for 16 March. On 14th May 2021, FIFA concluded the second series of virtual workshops within its Global Integrity Programme, which is being implemented in collaboration with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). This edition of the programme saw integrity officers and anti-corruption experts from CONMEBOL's ten member associations gather for three modules to discuss key matters, including the regulatory framework, prevention and education, and investigations. The sessions also featured dedicated round tables with the participation of government anti-corruption officials from several South American countries. In line with FIFA's overall vision of making football truly global, as well as its ongoing commitment to protecting and promoting the integrity of the game, the FIFA Global Integrity Programme is designed to improve education and build integrity capacity within all 211 member associations by sharing advanced know-how and resources with integrity officers. The programme also reflects the UNODC's objective of supporting governments and sports organisations in their efforts to safeguard sport from corruption and crime. Following the CONMEBOL sessions, the programme is due to resume in August 2021 with the participation of Concacaf's member associations [3].

Description

FIFA has teamed up with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to launch a FIFA Global Integrity Programme, setting an objective of equipping the 211 member associations with the knowledge and tools to identify and eradicate match manipulation. Reaffirming its commitment to protecting and promoting the integrity of the game, the Global Integrity Programme has been established to improve education and build integrity by sharing advanced know-how and resources with integrity officers. The programme also reflects the UNODC's objective of supporting governments and sports organisations in their efforts to safeguard sport from corruption and crime, having already signed a memorandum of understanding with FIFA last year. Earlier this year, the International Betting Integrity Association (IBIA) revealed that there had been a 48% increase in suspicious betting activity between from 2019 to 2020, with football recording a 25% rise in illicit betting alone. "Match-fixing is an issue that is very real and threatens the integrity and credibility of football in many countries around the world," FIFA President, Gianni Infantino, explained. "Working in close collaboration with experts at the UNODC and alongside other ongoing efforts that FIFA is taking, the FIFA Global Integrity Programme is another important step by FIFA to protect the integrity of football and will play an important role in educating and building capacity within member associations to help fight match-fixing at a local level." Organised regionally per confederation, the initiative includes a series of three-module virtual workshops to be delivered to all FIFA member associations. In addition to the Global Integrity Programme, the governing body has also launched the FIFA Integrity Officers Community Platform – the first-ever community-driven online platform dedicated exclusively to integrity officers across all member associations and confederations worldwide. Underlining Infantino's promise that there will be 'no room for wrongdoing' in the new FIFA, the platform will bring together a global network of integrity officers, who will be able to share the best practices used to combat match manipulation and promote integrity within the sport [4]. With the objective of setting up successful and sustainable

integrity and anti-corruption initiatives at local level, the new programme is organised regionally per confederation and includes a series of three-module virtual workshops to be delivered to all FIFA member associations. The first edition of the programme, dedicated to the member associations from the Asian Football Confederation, started with the first module on 4 March and will continue with the second module on 16 March. Speaking about the FIFA Global Integrity Programme, FIFA President Gianni Infantino said: "Match-fixing is an issue that is very real and threatens the integrity and credibility of football in many countries around the world. Working in close collaboration with experts at the UNODC and alongside other ongoing efforts that FIFA is taking, the FIFA Global Integrity Programme is another important step by FIFA to protect the integrity of football and will play an important role in educating and building capacity within member associations to help fight match-fixing at a local level." Alongside the FIFA Global Integrity Programme, FIFA has also announced that it will shortly be launching the FIFA Integrity Officers Community Platform. This will be the first-ever community-driven online platform dedicated exclusively to integrity officers across all member associations and confederations worldwide. This confidential platform will bring together a global network of integrity officers to share their experience and exchange best practice related to preventing and fighting match manipulation and promoting integrity in football. FIFA's Global Integrity Programme is in line with The Vision 2020-2023: Making Football Truly Global, which reaffirms FIFA's commitment to fighting match manipulation by implementing integrity initiatives and reporting mechanisms, as well as setting up dedicated educational programmes. As part of its ongoing integrity initiatives, FIFA signed a memorandum of understanding with the UNODC in September 2020 to step up their joint cooperation to address the threats posed by crime to sport [5].

Integrity Material Explained

FIFA has produced a number of materials designed to support its member associations and the confederations in developing and implementing their own integrity initiatives at national and/or regional level. Some of these integrity materials can be tailored to the needs and considerations of member associations and confederations on request (e.g., an association's own logo and reporting mechanisms can be inserted into all the integrity posters). The following support materials are intended to be used as part of a wider effort to promote integrity and protect football matches and competitions from manipulation:

- **Practical Handbook – Protect the Integrity of Football**
Enabling and empowering FIFA's member associations and the confederations to create and implement their own integrity initiatives, as well as supporting them in such endeavours, is vital for the promotion of integrity and the prevention of match manipulation worldwide. Therefore, FIFA has developed this practical handbook in order to provide member associations with a guide on how to build and/or strengthen their own integrity initiatives.

- **Integrity Flyer – Protect The Integrity Of Football**
This flyer contains key information on what match manipulation is, the applicable FIFA regulations against it, how to report any approach and how the members of the global football community are expected to contribute to

protecting the integrity of football. These flyers are distributed to all players, officials and delegations prior to all FIFA competitions.

- **Protecting Integrity Poster - Keep It Clean**

This poster targets the correlated issues of match manipulation and corruption and highlights the key messages anyone involved in football should know.

- Recognise – Be Alert of Any Approach
- Resist – say no to match manipulation
- Report – do your duty

- **Integrity Poster - Do Not Bet On Football**

This poster highlights the rules applying to everyone involved in football regarding involvement in betting, gambling or similar activities:

- Betting on football matches – any match, anywhere and anytime – is prohibited

- **Integrity Poster - Protect The Integrity of Football**

This informative poster highlights in a more comprehensive manner the relevant applicable rules and regulations in relation to match manipulation and betting activities, as well as FIFA's reporting mechanisms.

Integrity support for member associations

FIFA understands that to best promote integrity and protect football matches and competitions worldwide from match manipulation and integrity-related misconduct, coordination, joint efforts and support from and to football stakeholders are key. Equally, while each FIFA member association (MA) and each confederation is responsible for the development and implementation of its integrity initiative based on its own strategic priorities, FIFA Integrity is available to actively support such initiatives upon request. The following description outlines some of the ways in which FIFA Integrity can assist and support its MAs and the confederations in the implementation of their integrity initiatives.

- **Development Support: Integrity Initiative**

Upon request, FIFA Integrity can assist a MA or confederation in the development, strategy, structure, organisation, delivery and/or implementation of its integrity initiative. FIFA Integrity can also help an MA engage with its operational and administrative staff, as well as local stakeholders and actors involved in football at national level. FIFA Integrity can also help a MA engage with its operational and administrative staff, as well as local stakeholders and actors involved in football at national level. In particular, FIFA Integrity can assist, inter alia, with the following activities and training:

- **At Confederation Level**

- I. Initial engagement and introductory work with the confederation's integrity officer
- II. Tailored sessions with the confederation's management on the key issues linked to integrity in its region
- III. Empowerment of the confederation to protect the integrity of its competitions
- IV. Coordination to assist and support the respective MA's national integrity initiatives
- V. Coordination of agreed objectives and competition-protection measures relating to integrity
- VI. Follow-up and around-the-clock assistance and support on integrity matters

- **At MA Level:**

- I. Introductory engagement and work with the MA's integrity officer
- II. FIFA has designed new tools to assist MAs (e.g., a practical handbook for MAs, which provides key, best-practice content to put in place an efficient and sustainable national integrity initiative).
- III. Tailored sessions with the MA's management on the key issues linked to integrity
- IV. Engagement with the MA's relevant internal departments/units (e.g., legal, competitions, refereeing and independent judicial/disciplinary bodies)
- V. Coordination of agreed objectives and competition-protection measures relating to integrity
- VI. Follow-up and around-the-clock assistance and support on integrity matters

- **Groups of Interest and Local Stakeholders**

- I. Engagement and capacity-building with the football club's officials and/or representatives
- II. Engagement and capacity-building with players and players' union representatives
- III. Engagement and capacity-building with match officials (e.g., referees, assistant referees, match commissioners)
- IV. Engagement and education with grassroots and young people (e.g., players and head coaching staff)
- V. Engagement and capacity-building tailored to e-sports competitions at national level
- VI. Engagement with national public authorities, law enforcement agencies, actors from the private sector and civil society (e.g., partnership development meetings)
- VII. Any other assistance or request made by the MA relating to integrity

- **Investigative Support: Assistance with Ongoing Investigations**

Investigations into allegations of match manipulation and integrity-related misconduct are often complex, potentially involving a significant number of individuals and requiring a wide range of investigative measures, techniques and tools.

FIFA Integrity is ready to assist a MA or confederation in ongoing investigations on a case-by-case basis into allegations of match manipulation and integrity-related misconduct once the investigation has been initiated by the MA/confederation. For this purpose, FIFA Integrity relies on its expertise and the added value provided by its partners in the integrity field to support the MA or confederation on individual requests. If any MA or confederation wants to request the assistance of FIFA Integrity in order to implement development or investigative support as explained above, they will need to get in touch with FIFA Integrity using the email address: integrity@fifa.org ^[6].

Conclusion

FIFA has launched the Global Integrity Programme that is a comprehensive international programme aimed at providing all 211 member associations with enhanced knowledge and tools to fight and prevent match manipulation. Let us share that FIFA launched this program in collaboration with the United Nations on Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). The programme also reflects the UNODC's objective of supporting governments and sports organisations in their efforts to safeguard sport from corruption and crime. In line with FIFA's overall vision of making football truly global, as well as its ongoing commitment to protecting and promoting

the integrity of the game, the FIFA Global Integrity Programme is designed to improve education and build integrity capacity within all 211 member associations by sharing advanced know-how and resources with integrity officers. However, here it is to be noted that with the objective of setting up successful and sustainable integrity and anti-corruption initiatives at local level, the new programme is organised regionally per confederation and includes a series of three-module virtual workshops to be delivered to all FIFA member associations ^[7].

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