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Adidas Exchange Programme underway

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The maiden edition of the Adidas Exchange Programme got underway in Accra with the general public tasked with the importance of using football as a tool for ensuring social development.

The programme which is under the theme: "Football - a tool for social development", and a collaboration between the world soccer governing body, FIFA and Adidas, is being implemented through Football for Hope, a movement led by FIFA and 'Streetfootballworld' with Play Soccer Ghana and ACRO Ghana as the local partners.

The program which lasts until October 29 aims at providing the organizations under the umbrella of 'Streetfootballworld' with a unique opportunity to exchange and develop key expertise and capacities that are vital for their everyday success and community impact.

Dr Bella Bello Bitugu, a Lecturer at the Institute of Educational Sciences at the University of Innsbruck, Austria, in a keynote address, emphasized on the strength of sports with its power to gather people of all walks of life irrespective of race, religion and ethnic background amongst others.

He said that football has the potential to serve as an effective communication platform for, especially children to interact with others and also give hope and chance to people with less opportunities.

The Lecturer acknowledged the role of sports and particularly football in the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals whilst urging all to build on their capacities in their respective fields of endeavour to aid in the realization of the objective of using football as a tool for social development.

Nii Nortey Dua, Deputy Minister of Youth and Sports described the timing of the programme as opportune and positive since it comes at a time when the focus of the Ministry is on sports development.

He said the four-day event would serve as a catalyst for the identification of talents for the various sporting disciplines and pledged Government's total support for the event.

Nana Sam Brew-Butler, a Director of Play Soccer Ghana said the event will seek to enhance the capabilities of the participants as to how to use football as a medium for touching the lives of children.

Panagiotis Manologlou, an official of 'Streetfootballworld' explained that the Adidas Exchange Programme will aid in the mobilization of resources and the establishment of networks towards achieving the desired goals.

Ex-Black Stars defender, Anthony Baffoe also assured of the support of former footballers towards shaping the lives of the under privileged in the society.

Baffoe, who is the General Secretary of the Professional Footballers Association of Ghana (PFA) urged his playing mates to give back to society.

He made special references to retired captain of the Black Stars, Stephen Appiah as well as Michael Essien, John Mensah and John Paintsil all of the Black Stars who have all established Foundations to serve society.

The Adidas Exchange Programme seeks to use the power of the game for social development and will feature two main elements; Coerver coaching and Capacity Development, which will take place at Bunso in the Eastern Region.

The Coerver Coaching Seminar will provide hosts and visiting coaches with a 12-14 hour advanced football training including practical and theoretical modules to improve the coaches' methods and skills whilst a seasoned Business Development expert, Charlotte Obidaro with more than 15-years experience, will handle the capacity building session.

Participants from 13 organizations from Ghana, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Cameroon, Liberia, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal and Sierra Leone are taking part in the four-day event.

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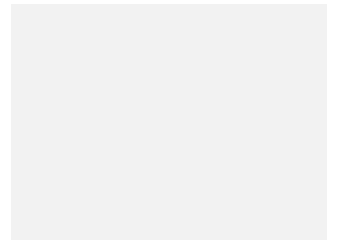
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