

Botswana Football Association

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**Additional guidance for teams
regarding return to play**

25.09.2020



PREAMBLE

Health (mental and physical) should always be the guiding principle for BFA, its structures and stakeholders when making decisions of return to play football. BFA will continuously gather and analyse information to protect footballers from COVID-19.

This document is a compilation of recommended international and national guidelines and measures to be observed and applied by BFA structures for safe return to football.

The aim is to minimise the risk of COVID-19 spreading among all those participating in BFA Competitions and sets out the recommended guidance for the Clubs.

This document should not be read in isolation. It serves as additional guidance and should be read with other COVID-19 regulations enforced by government and the BFA medical committee.

The purpose of this process is to assist in planning for trainings and resumption on football. Further guidelines will be published when necessary.

It should be read in conjunction with BFA Return to play guidelines from the BFA medical committee and national guidelines on public health and mass gatherings.



Resumption of Training



From 12 days of total inactivity, it is necessary to: Start all over again find your physical qualities



PHASE 1

The first period will be dedicated to medical and athletic tests (3 to 4 days). During this phase only light training is recommended.



PHASE 2

Divide the football pitch in corners, that small groups conduct drills (basic techniques) with enough social distancing.



PHASE 3

Gradually increase the intensity and use e.g. Small-sided games. Friendly games can be included in this phase.

Proven measures to lower infections

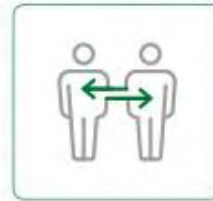
Sanitary rules



Wash your hands with soap and water



Cover your mouth and nose with your bent elbow when you cough or sneeze



Keep social distancing at least 2m apart



Stay home if you feel unwell



Dispose of the used tissue immediately



NO handshaking or hugging



Wear a face mask



Wear gloves if necessary

Organization of Training

The resumption of training and matches will not be easy to manage, from the point of view of health security and the situation given especially in our regional structures.

A great challenge awaits also the professional teams as at the moment no competitions are allowed. Friendly games without zonal crossing can be played after the players have reached a sufficient performance level (not before 3 weeks of training).

Designate or recruit within each team a person (Corona Officer/SHE-Officer) in charge of coordinating all actions related to the pandemic. An infection control training program is planned as stated in the return to play guidelines form the BFA medical committee. Further details will be released.

The players in the game must be protected and insured, and therefore reassured. The responsibilities of leagues, clubs, must be recognized and assumed beforehand.



Procedures must be in place, sufficient, simple but precise, which must absolutely be followed. Follow the BFA Return to play guidelines.



Course of training



WEEK 1

Light training until the necessary medical tests are done. Divide the pitch in 4 areas and 4 training groups. Do not mix the players from those groups. At the beginning choose e.g. passing exercises by respecting 2m distance between the players. Non-contact.



WEEK 3

Gradually increase the intensity and use e.g. a variety of Small-sided games. Friendly games can be conducted but reduce the duration (e.g. 2x 30min.).



WEEK 2

Gradually increase the intensity. Use the same field set-up with 4 areas and 4 groups. Do not mix the players from those groups. Choose more complex drills by respecting 2m distance between the players. Still non-contact.



WEEK 4

Gradually increase the intensity and use a variety of Small-sided games. Friendly games can be conducted.

Course of training

01

Professional players should receive their exercises before training:



by WhatsApp

or



any other preferred communication channel

02

They will have to arrive at the training center already:



in uniform



coach with gloves



and wear a mask until they enter the pitch

03

They will be able to keep their distance:



Try to have max. 4-5 players in the four corners at the same time.

04

After this first recovery phase, the teams should gradually lift the protective measures to return to normal collective training conditions, keeping the safety precaution put in place by the club/team.

Content of training



You have to think carefully to offer relevant exercises despite the safety distances. This will allow the players to touch up the ball, strike the goal and have feelings again.

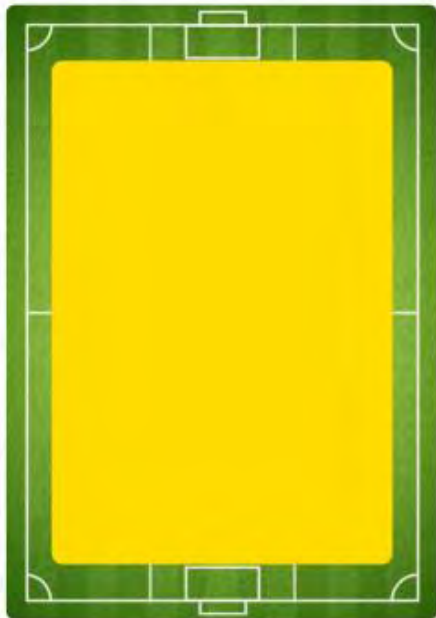


And then form groups of e.g. 6 players (from week 3): integrate tactical elements, and work more on situations in details, something that we do not do with a larger group.



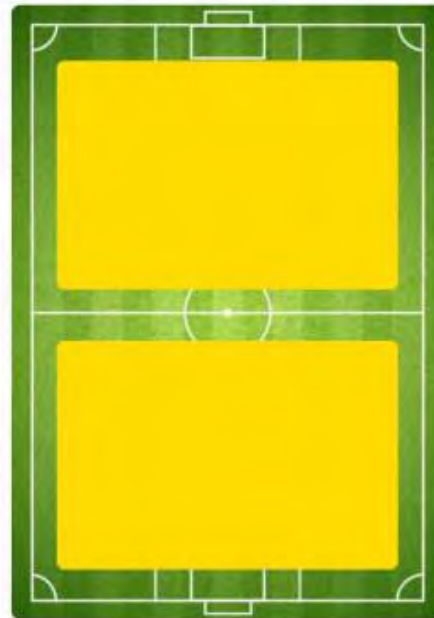
In terms of defensive positioning, finishing, centers and placements in the area in particular, it's to be introduced last and gradually.

Methodological Advice



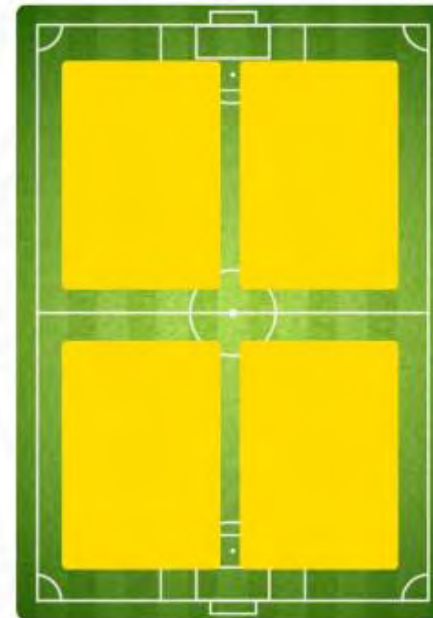
9 vs 9

Minimum: 45m x 60m
Maximum: 50m x 67m



7 vs 7

Minimum: 30m x 45m
Maximum: 35m x 50m



5 vs 5

Minimum: 20m x 30m
Maximum: 25m x 35m



4 vs 4

Minimum: 12m x 20m
Maximum: 15m x 25m

Recommendations

The implementation of a health protocol is essential for a resumption of football-related activities both in training and during matches



Ensure screening of players before training



No spectators



No children to accompany the players



Team staff must ensure that everybody follows guidelines about COVID19 prevention



Respect for physical distance before and after the training.



Prohibition of handshakes or hugs to celebrate goals



All players must be informed and cooperate with medical staff



Divide the team in smaller groups



Equipment disinfection. Only if it is not possible, (e.g. dusty grounds) limit the contact persons who deal with the equipment to the coach only. Anyone who touches the equipment needs to immediately wash or sanitize their hands.



This document should not be read in isolation. It should be read together with the following documents:

- Lifting of Restrictions on Sports and Recreational Activities - Government Gazette Notice Nr. 390 of 2020
- BFA Return to play guideline for football activities – BFA Medical Committee (Aug/Sept 2020)

References:

- CAF Recommendations for the development of football activity plan recovery plan:
<https://images.cafonline.com/image/upload/caf-prd/uh1shk6fbnckbkelinjj.pdf>
- FIFA Covid-19: Medical considerations for a return to football activities
- <https://resources.fifa.com/image/upload/1718-covid-19-medical-considerations-for-a-return-to-footballing-activity.pdf?cloudid=cpng0f3y5pclmxn0prdb>

