

Teen Cranes target second round

By Chrispus Baluku

FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup Qualifiers

First leg, April 11-12

Zimbabwe v Uganda

Return leg, April 18-19

Uganda v Zimbabwe

Uganda's U17 Women's National Football Team, the Teen Cranes, will face Zimbabwe in the first round of the FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup Morocco 2026 African qualifiers.

The draw was conducted last Saturday in Rabat, Morocco, where the CAF Africa Cup of Nations is currently taking place. Uganda will travel to Zimbabwe between April 10th and 12th before hosting the return leg a week later in Kampala.

Teen Cranes head coach Sheryl Ulanda Botes welcomed the fixture and called for focus and respect for the opponents.

"Zimbabwe is a strong and physical side, but we are preparing well. Our focus is discipline, teamwork and playing with confidence in both legs," Botes said.

The winner on aggregate between Uganda and Zimbabwe will progress to

the second round to face either Namibia or Kenya. There will be a final third round to decide the four African teams that will join hosts Morocco at the FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup finals.

A total of 31 teams are taking part in the qualifiers, which will be played over three knockout rounds starting in April 2026. Only four teams will qualify to represent Africa.

From the CECAFA Zone, eight teams are involved. Kenya's Junior Starlets, who featured at the 2024 FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup in the Dominican Republic, will face Namibia in the first round. Rwanda will play Zambia, Djibouti take on DR Congo, while South Sudan face Ethiopia.

The first-round matches will be played between April 10th and 19th, with the second round scheduled for May 22nd to 31st. The final round will take place between July 3rd and 12th. Last year, the Teen Cranes held a five-day assessment camp that brought together 33 players drawn from the FUFA Women Super League, FUFA Women Elite League and schools.