

*By Jeje Muhinde;*

The Rwanda, Amavubi opening match of the 2022 FIFA World Cup Qualifiers against Mali that was scheduled for June has been postponed due to COVID-19 pandemic.

Rwanda was supposed to start the 2022 World Cup Qualifiers campaign with an away game against Mali, however according Thursday communication from the Confederation of African Football (CAF) all qualifiers on the continent have been suspended.

'Qualifiers will now take place in the existing windows in September, October, and November 2021 and March 2022,' CAF said in the statement.

CAF Emergency Committee said it took the decision because the current conditions could not ensure an optimal playing environment for all participating teams.

CAF added that it was in the process of assessing all its protocols and processes to enhance safety for the participating teams by among others, focusing on pre-match COVID-19 testing which it said was a source of some challenges in the past.

Rwanda is Group E which contains Kenya, Mali and Uganda.

For the Amavubi, this competition offered the only realistic chance of participating in an international tournament having failed to qualify for the Afcon tournament in Cameroon.

Qatar will host the finals of the prestigious tournament organized every four years. France is the defending champion of the 2018 World Cup final, they beat Croatia by 4 goals to 2.