The Ministry of Health has launched a new electronic surveillance system that links data on human, animal, and environmental health, a move officials say will help the country detect and respond to outbreaks more quickly.

The system, known as the Electronic Integrated Disease Surveillance and Response (e-IDSR), was introduced Monday and is designed to collect and monitor data on epidemic diseases that spread among humans, livestock, and wildlife.

Officials said the platform will strengthen Rwanda's ability to spot potential health threats early, share information across sectors in real time, and coordinate faster national responses to emerging diseases.

"The launch of this technology is a major step in Rwanda's effort to promote the One Health approach integrating human, animal, and environmental health to prevent disease and improve overall well-being," said Dr. Claude Muvunyi, director general of the Rwanda Biomedical Centre (RBC). "This gives us the ability to respond promptly, use resources efficiently, and gain a clearer picture of how diseases spread."

Before the rollout, more than 500 veterinarians across the country and over 30 wildlife specialists from national parks received training to use the new platform.

Dr. Léandre Gashema, head of the One Health Division at RBC, said roughly 75% of infectious diseases originate in animals, making it essential to expand disease reporting beyond hospitals.

"We needed to include data from livestock and wildlife and even from the environment to understand disease patterns more comprehensively," Gashema said.

The new digital system replaces slower, paper-based reporting that sometimes delayed the transmission of information by days.

"Previously, someone might record information on paper in the morning and wait until they could access the internet to upload it," said Dr. Fabrice Ndayisenga, head of the Animal Resources Department at the Rwanda Agriculture and Animal Resources Development Board. "That delay gave diseases time to spread within households or farms."

Rwanda has previously detected several animal-borne diseases, including

COVID-19, Marburg virus, and Rift Valley fever. Health officials say the e-IDSR platform will help prevent similar outbreaks by improving coordination between medical, veterinary, and environmental sectors.