

More than 130 people have died after fresh floods and landslides hit Rwanda's northern and western provinces.

The downpour hit at night when many people were asleep – a reason why so many died.

According to Francois Habitegeko, the governor of the Western Province, many houses collapsed on people.

He said that main roads in the area “are not usable because of landslides”.

According to reports, the casualty numbers are expected to increase as floodwaters continue to rise.

President Paul Kagame offered his condolences to those who have been affected. His statement also added that residents were being evacuated from “affected and high-risk areas”.

The government's main priority now is to “reach every house that has been damaged to ensure we can rescue any person who may be trapped”, Mr Habitegeko said.

“Evacuees are temporarily relocated to different churches and schools at the same time receiving food and any other care at Nkamira transit center, an emergency camp located in Kanzenze sector, Rubavu District.” He added.

Authorities have also said that dozens of victims will be laid to rest Thursday, May 4, at Rubavu cemetery in Rugerero village

Heavy rains and consequent damage and casualties between March and May are commonplace in Rwanda, but the deluge on Tuesday night was unusually strong and long-lasting.

This is the worst flooding Rwanda has seen since May 2020 when around 80 people died.

Deaths have also been reported in neighboring Uganda, where six people have died after landslides, the Ugandan Red Cross says.

The country's weather focusing agency is linking the unusual rains seen in recent

years to climate change.