

President Paul Kagame has sharply criticized Rwandan leaders for failing to fulfill their responsibilities, citing arrogance and poor work habits as key causes of mismanagement.

Speaking at the National Reflection Forum for Leaders of State Institutions and Local Government at the Gako Higher Military Academy on Monday, Kagame urged officials to take responsibility for their duties rather than avoiding them. The event was attended by district leaders, ministers, and other senior officials.

“The main reason is bad habits, including arrogance. You are destroying your own country. And yet you boast for no reason,” Kagame said. “Leaders here, what are you showing off?”

The President stressed that leaders must execute their roles properly or step aside. “If someone steals, let them face the consequences, they may be caught and imprisoned, or face repercussions wherever they go,” he said. He warned that forgetting projects that benefit citizens is a form of wrongdoing.

Kagame cited examples of incomplete projects and poor planning. In the Eastern Province, he noted a project intended to provide both irrigation and water to residents, but officials implemented only the irrigation component, leaving citizens without access to water.

Eastern Province Governor Pudence Rubingisa told the forum that local leaders plan to involve citizens in future project decisions. Kagame asked if these measures would resolve the issues, and Rubingisa confirmed they would.

He also addressed repeated mistakes by leaders who apologize but fail to correct their errors. “Making the same mistake repeatedly, apologizing, and then repeating it is not normal behavior. It becomes a problem,” Kagame said. “Even when one person makes a mistake, their successor must not repeat it.”

The forum highlighted ongoing governance challenges, including poor coordination among officials and declining service delivery. According to the National Governance Observatory Report, service delivery fell from 78.2% in 2023 to 75.8% in 2024 and further to 71.7% in 2025.

Kagame emphasized accountability, saying that meetings alone are insufficient to improve governance. “Decisions must be followed up with action. People must be

held responsible when projects meant to serve thousands are delayed or abandoned,” he said.

The President urged local government leaders to monitor citizen concerns and solve problems proactively. He warned that neglecting duties and failing to work collaboratively undermines national progress.

The forum brought together leaders from state institutions and local government to review past governance shortcomings and discuss strategies for improving public service delivery.