

THE WEATHER AUTHORITY BOSS SAID THIS WEEK THAT LANDSLIDES WOULD HIT MOUNTAINOUS AREAS

Floods kill four in western Uganda

KISORO

By Vision Reporters

The weather looked tame as residents of Bukimbiri and Nyundo in Kisoro in southwestern Uganda were ushered into Wednesday. They went about their routine activities expecting no mischief from Mother Nature. But when the rain came in the afternoon, the situation became stormy and floods swept through the villages in the sub-counties of Bukimbiri and Nyundo, leaving three people dead.

"We did not expect the floods, but things changed so fast. The floods swept away people, as well as animals and sunk gardens," said Lydia Nyiramigisha, the LC3 at Bukimbiri sub-county.

Nyiramigisha described the stormy weather as something she had never experienced in her lifetime. She said apart from the rain, there was a lot of water and stones coming from the upland areas and that this resulted in a troublesome afternoon.

By the time the three-hour

"The homeless people need help from the Ministry of Disaster Preparedness."

Kisoro Woman MP

downpour stopped at 5:00pm, three people had perished, as well as 11 goats. Fifty sacks of Irish potatoes that had been harvested and awaiting delivery to Kampala were also swept away.

"Help us, people have died and we have been hit hard. Our means of survival is gone, we need help," Nyiramigisha told *New Vision* in a telephone interview.

In a separate interview, Abel Bizimana, the chairperson of Kisoro district, said the floods

claimed the life of one woman in Bukimbiri sub-county.

Two children died in the floods. James Hatangaimana, the LC1 chairperson of Mburabuturo village, Gisorora parish, Nyakabande sub-county, in Kisoro district, identified the children as Confidence and Flavia. He said they were carried away by the floods and that one of the bodies has already been recovered, while the search is on for another.

He said some of the casualties, including Gerald Twinomugisha and his two children, have been admitted to Mutolere Hospital.

Rose Kabaganyi, the Kisoro Woman MP, is appealing to the Government to rescue the people of Kisoro. She also said 10 families are now homeless as result of the rain that pounded southwestern Uganda on Wednesday.

"The homeless people need help from the Ministry of Disaster Preparedness," she said, adding that houses were washed away.

The heavy downpour also claimed the life of an eight-year-old child and destroyed property worth millions of shillings in Rukiga district.

The deceased was identified as Gideon Nabaasa, a resident of Rwemiba cell, Kyerero parish, Bukinda sub-county.

He was in Primary One at Wakyeba Primary School. According to the deceased's father, Donozio Maruru, Nabaasa's death occurred as they tried to go home after the downpour.

"We were with him on our way home and as we tried to wade through the water, he missed a step and fell into a stream and that marked his



Some of the livestock that perished in the flood. Below: Residents cleaning up

end," Maruru said.

Heavy rains also destroyed the villages of Kandago and Kabimbiri in Bukinda sub-county.

In Rwamucucu sub-county, gardens, livestock and roads were destroyed in Sindi, Kitojo, Bulime and Nyakagabagaba villages.

Eddie Mugisha, the Rwamucucu sub-county LC5 councillor, said this is not the first time such an incident is occurring there.

"We live in a hilly area and, therefore, find it always challenging whenever it rains," Mugisha said.

The rains also left most roads in the district impassable. Some of the roads affected include Kabale-Rwamucucu-Kisiizi road.

Eernard Kibuuka, a local bar owner in Sindi village, said his bar mostly deals in local brew and was affected by the rains.

"I had 120 bags of sorghum flour in my store for brewing local porridge, they are all gone," Kibuuka said.

Milton Kwesiga, an environmentalist in the region, said heavy rains will continue to destroy people's property if they do not adopt good



farming methods.

"We are in a hilly area and our people need to learn how to survive in such areas by adopting good farming methods," Kwesiga said.

Early this week, the executive director of Uganda National Meteorological Authority (UNMA) warned that landslides would hit

mountainous areas such as Mt. Elgon, Rwenzori and the high areas of southwestern Uganda. The UNMA chief, who was

presenting the weather outlook, also said floods would hit low-lying areas. He also said other hazards expected include lightning.

The long rainy season, expected to end in December, will be favourable for farming outside areas that are prone to flooding and landslides.

Compiled by Kate Atuzarirwe, Job Namanya and Gerald Tenywa



Some of the damage caused by the downpour