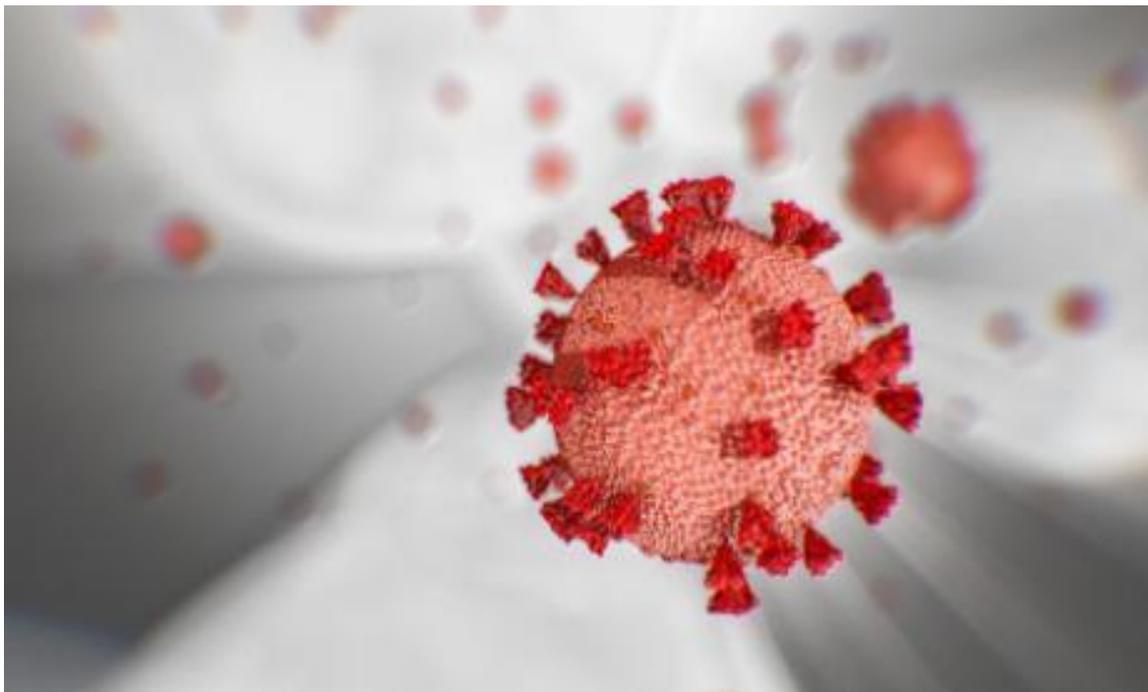




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## **Quick Survey on impact of COVID 19 crisis to teen mothers' life**



**Huye, March 2020**

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Rwanda like many other countries in the world has been affected by COVID 19. Currently, over 70 positive cases have been confirmed and more than 600 people are suspected and have been isolated.

The government of Rwanda has put in place different measures on different levels to prevent wider spread of COVID 19 and combatting new infections. Initially; the government closed all Places of worship, schools and higher education institutions both public and private. All employees were advised to work from home, large gathering like meetings, workshops were postponed, and unnecessary movement were restricted. One week later, it was realized by the Government of Rwanda that more measures should be taken to strengthen the prevention of COVID-19 and these include; stopping unnecessary movements outside the home (STAY HOME), all employees shall work at home except those who provide essential basic services (health care), borders were closed including the airport, travels between different cities and districts in the country are not permitted, shops and markets were closed except food and hygienic stuff, motorcycles are not allowed to carry passengers, all bars are closed, and flights have all been postponed. This situation is affecting people who survive based on daily earning from the casual work accomplished, most of them now have challenges of food, hygiene materials, water, wood, and so on to survive.

This report explains the current situation from the quick survey, faced by teen mother during this COVID 19 crisis. The survey explored different elements including, knowledge of COVID 19 preventive measures, implementation of those measures, prevalence of GBV, living conditions, income, psychosocial, moral and coping strategies to COVID 19 respecting all measures taken by the government. It also explains the level of engagement of teen mother to stop the spread of coronavirus, the recommendation for immediate intervention during this emergency.

## **2. OBJECTIVE OF THE ASSESSMENT**

The assessment describes the impact COVID 19 crisis to teen mothers and their kids, to their psycho-socio-economic life and the strategies to copy with the situation.

### **3. SCOPE OF THE SURVEY**

The survey consisted of collecting qualitative information in two districts Huye and Kicukiro district, on impact of COVID 19 crisis to teen mother's life. The targeted sectors are the former intervention area of Twiceceka Activity: Mukura Sector in HUYE District and Kigarama Sector in KICUKIRO District

### **4.MYTHOLOGY**

#### **4.1 Collection of data**

Data was collected through online interviews with teen mothers and local leaders. KEEPCARE staff, and volunteers conducted interviews with different teen mothers via phone and ask them some information related to the current situation of live, they are facing and the execution of government measures to prevent the spread of COVID 19. It was developed a guide tool of interview composed by few open questions asked to the teen mothers. Thereafter, we conducted the interview with Vice Mayor social affairs, the chairperson of council and gender officer in Huye district and the sector social affairs in Kigarama sector, Kicukiro district. The Vice mayor in Kicukiro did not respond to our call.

#### **4.2 Sampling**

The sample was chosen purposively based on the profile of teen mothers' beneficiaries of TWICECEKA activity.

It was sampled 31 teen mothers among 120; 15 in Huye and 16 in Kicukiro districts. The targeted teen mothers are the former beneficiaries of KEEPCARE RWANDA through Twiceceka activity and Keeping girls' safe project.

#### **4.3 Data analysis**

The qualitative data collected was translated into proportion (%) in order to analyses and interpret them clearly. The data were presented in form of diagrams for easy understanding of the meaning of results. The analysis done was based on the responses from respondents and some of them were quoted.

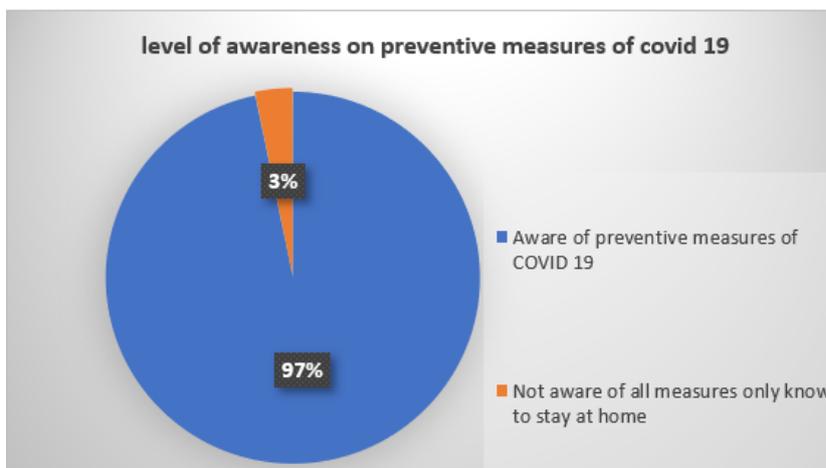
The simple interpretation was made based on needs and recommendation given by teen mothers themselves during the interview.

## 4.FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS

### 4.1. Awareness on the preventive measures to stop the spread of COVID 19

The assessment looked at the level of awareness that teen mothers have in this period of stopping the spread of COVID 19. The principle, measure we focused on during the interview were; stay home and avoid unnecessary movements, handwash, social distancing and avoid any contact with other person secretions via sneezing, cough etc.

**Figure1:** Level of awareness on prevention of covid-19



It was found that 30 teen mothers (97%) are aware of all the preventive measures taken by the government, 1 teen mother (3%) was not aware of those measures. This means that local leaders did well the mobilization and

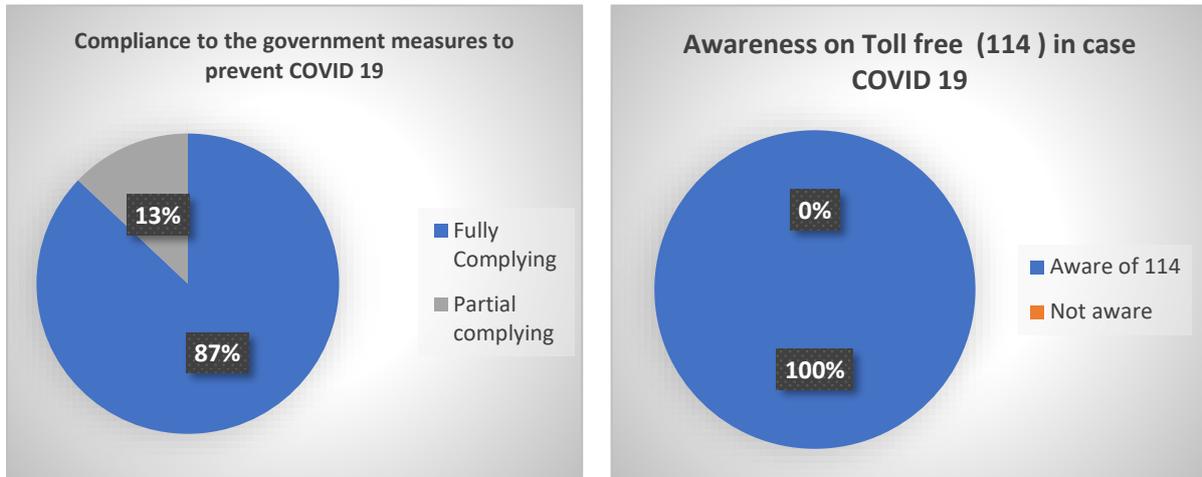
sensitized citizens about prevention of COVID 19. KEEPCARE also sent the messages to all its beneficiaries informing them about the pandemic and the measures of prevention. The following figure shows the results from survey.

### 4.2 Compliance to the government measures to prevent COVID 19

The survey was also conducted to know how teen mothers are respecting the preventive measures of COVID 19 and if any challenges. The awareness of the measures was one side but respecting them is another side to know. Among 31 teen mothers participated in the survey, 27 (87%) confirmed that they fully respect all preventive measures but because the situation pushes them for example to stay home. One of respondents in Kigarama sector said” nothing else we can do than staying at home, they every day work we used to do is not possible these days, no one who accept us to enter in their home for asking job as we used to wash clothes for them, when leaders or security people find you outside home it is a problem so willingly or not we have to stay home’. and 4 (13%) do not respect those measures fully.

The raison given by the 4 teen mothers who do not respect the measures, were related to financial incapacity of buying soap, access to clear water, looking for woods and food.

**Figure2 and 3: Respect of preventive measures covid-19 and awareness of 114 toll free**

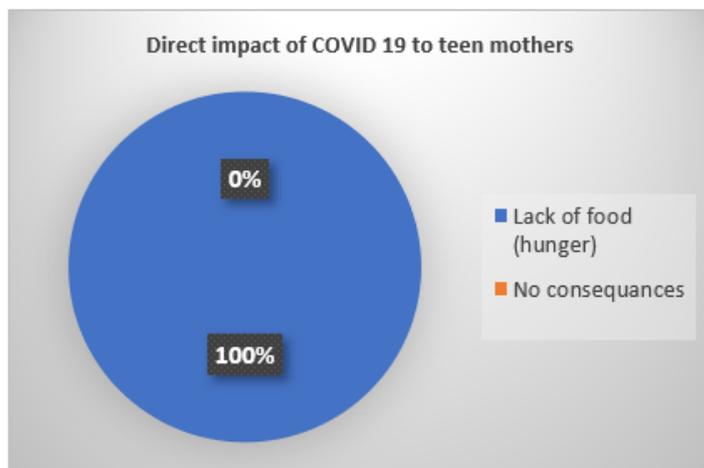


The government of Rwanda has putted in place toll free number to call for emergency of any case of COVID 19, all respondent knows this number.

#### 4.3 Direct impact of COVID 19 to teen mother’s health

The government of Rwanda has put in place different measures on different levels to prevent wider spread of COVID 19 and combatting new infections. Initially; the government closed all places of worship, schools and higher education institutions both public and private.

**Figure 4: Impact of COVID 19 to health of teen mothers,**



All employees were advised to work from home, large gathering like meetings, workshops were postponed, and unnecessary movement were restricted. One week later, it was realized by the Government of Rwanda that more measures should be taken to strengthen the prevention of COVID-19 and these include; stopping unnecessary movements

outside the home (STAY HOME), all employees shall work at home except those who provide essential basic services (health care), borders were closed including the airport, travels between different cities and districts in the country are not permitted, shops and markets were

closed except food and hygienic stuff, motorcycles are not allowed to carry passengers, all bars are closed, and flights have all been postponed.

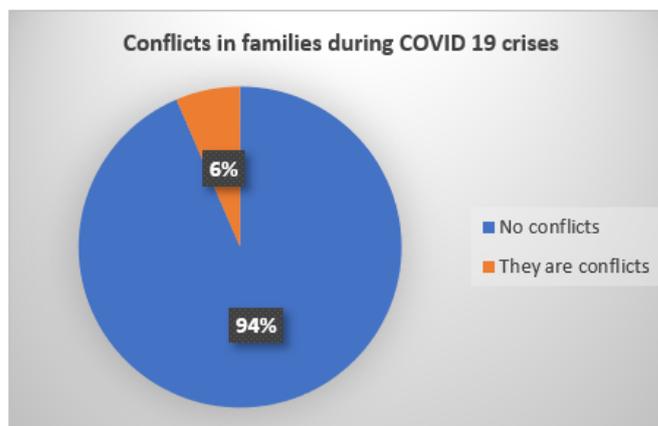
KEEPCARE RWANDA wanted to know the impact of these listed above measures on teen mothers. This situation affected 100% means 31 of 31 teen mothers participated in the survey. Teen mothers survive based on daily earning from the casual work accomplished, most of them now have challenges of food, hygiene materials, water, wood, and so on to survive.

The most affected are their children under 3 years old averagely, the issues of malnutrition and stunting are going to be manifested.

#### 4.4 Family conflict during COVID 19 crises period

The “**stay home**” strategy is one of preventive measures to COVID 19, has gathered all family members at home all the time. The hypothesis was that, it might cause conflicts among the members of family.

*Figure 5: Family conflict during COVID 19 crises*



The survey assessed the level of conflict caused by that strategy; 94% of participants responded that there is not conflicts in the family, 6% confirmed that family conflicts are there because COVID 19 crises. Those conflicts were related to fights and misunderstanding about food management and the source of food during this period.

#### 4.5 SGBV prevalence

According to Word Relief Report 2019; Women, the elderly, adolescents, youth, and children, persons with disabilities, indigenous populations, refugees, migrants, and minorities experience the highest degree of socio-economic marginalization. Marginalized people become even more vulnerable in emergencies.

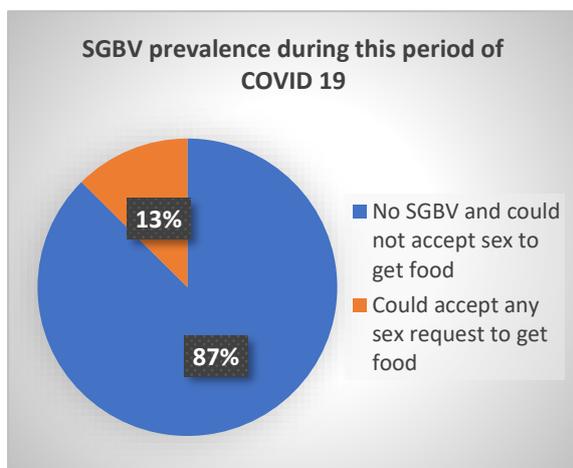
This is due to factors such as the lack of access to effective surveillance and early-warning systems, and health services. The COVID-19 outbreak is predicted to have significant impacts on various sectors. The populations most at risk are those that: depend heavily on the informal

economy; occupy areas prone to shocks; have inadequate access to social services or political influence; have limited capacities and opportunities to cope and adapt and; limited or no access to technologies.

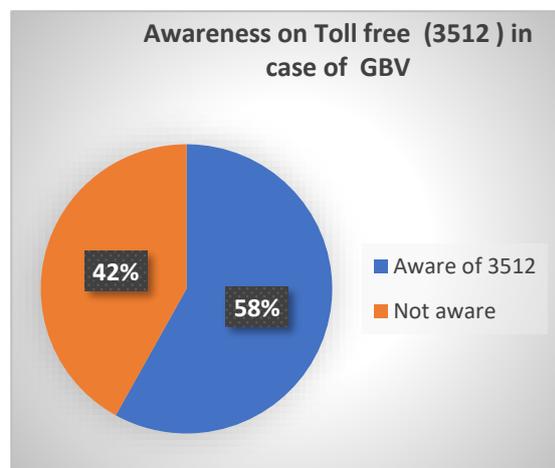
By understanding these issues, we can support the capacity of vulnerable populations in emergencies. We can give them priority assistance, and engage them in decision-making processes for response, recovery, preparedness, and risk reduction.

KEEPCARE also wanted to know how teen mothers are affected by this emergency of COVID 19, they may probably increase risks of gender-based violence, including sexual exploitation, harassment, exploitation and abuse. The findings revealed that 87% did not experience any SGBV and did not become at risk, 13% confirmed that they did not experience any SGBV, but would accept any request for sex in order to get food. These figures are very significant just after one week of quarantine; 4 respondents out of 31 confirmed that high-risk of accepting any request for having sex in order to get food.

**Figure 6:** Prevalence of SGBV during crises



**Figure 7:** awareness on GBV referral

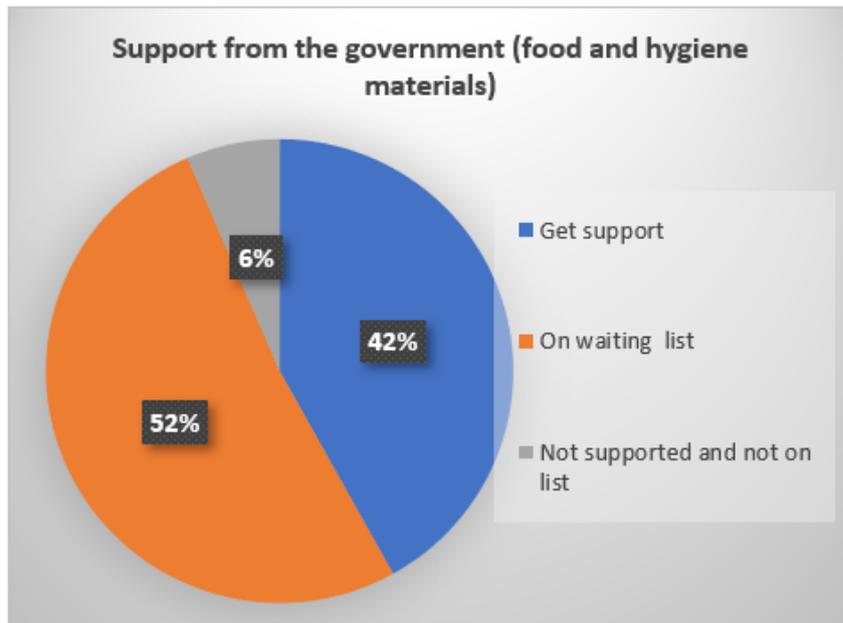


The government of Rwanda has the toll free for reporting on any case of GBV. This number was only the easily way to use during this crisis, the assessment found that 58% of respondents know this number, and 42% do not know it. According to those who are aware, it was from different radio emissions and training like the ones provided by TWICECEKA activity.

## 4.6 Support of the government

Due to COVID 19 crises, the government of Rwanda started the distribution of essentials items; including food, hygiene materials to vulnerable citizens.

**Figure 8: Teen mother benefited from Support of government**



This activity is coordinated by local leaders means that all people who need supported are listed and get support depends on availability of support. Teen mothers are also among the vulnerable people who might be eligible to that support. KEEPCARE RWANDA wanted to know if the program is reached them.

The 42% of respondents already get that support of food, 6% are on waiting list and 52% were not supported and are not on the list.

One responded said' *"You see,..... the support we get is not enough, it will last between three and 4 days. We do not know what will be next"* UA quoted.

We talked with the Vice Mayor social affairs and Gender officer in Huye district asking them how teen mothers are considered during this program. The identification **was** done by local leaders who know the citizens financial capacity in the village, starting to vulnerable and poor families, teen mothers are part of. The further information gets from teen mothers who are not on the waiting list and did not receive any support was because their families are not more vulnerable (not vulnerable at the level of those selected to be supported), however do not support them.

#### 4.7 Source of income

The findings show that 81% of respondents their income is from on daily casual work accomplishes, 3% have monthly salary, 10 are supported by their parents and 3% had small income generation activities like small capital to sell vegetables and fruit on the street.

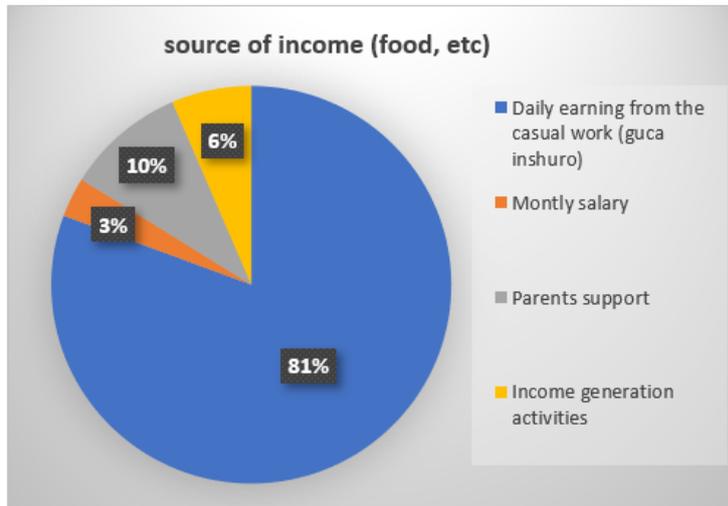


Figure 9: Source of teen mothers

The big number of respondents 81%, their income is based on daily casual works with a maximum of 1000 RWF of remuneration a day. means that COVID 19, has affected their life because they have to stay home. 10% of respondents are supported by they parents in every thing but according to them the source of income of their parent is also

affected by this COVID 19 situation because 100% was also a daily casual work. 3% with income generating activities, according to them with this situation their services are no longer needed, they used to sell different things including vegetables and fruits in villages and these days people do not trust this way of supplying fruit and vegetables.

According to Word Economic Forum new letter; In recent weeks, they have seen the significant economic impact of the coronavirus on financial markets, life style and vulnerable industries such as manufacturing, tourism, hospitality and travel. Travel and tourism account for 10% of the global GDP and 50 million jobs are at risk worldwide. Global tourism, travel and hospitality companies closing down affects SMEs globally.

This, in turn, affects many people, typically the least well-paid and those self-employed or working in informal environments in the gig economy or in part-time work with zero-hours contracts. Some governments have announced economic measures to safeguard jobs, guarantee wages and support the self-employed, but there is a lack of clarity in many countries about how these measures will be implemented and how people will manage a loss of income in the short-term. Teen mother are also vulnerable and affected by the crises, their income is not stable and can sustain during the crises.

#### 4.8 Life style of teen mothers

The vulnerability of teen mothers is caused by different issues including the life style where only 13% live with both parents, 71% live with one parent, a mother or a father, 3% live with parents and head that family in terms of providing food (the family depend on them) and 13% live alone with their babies.

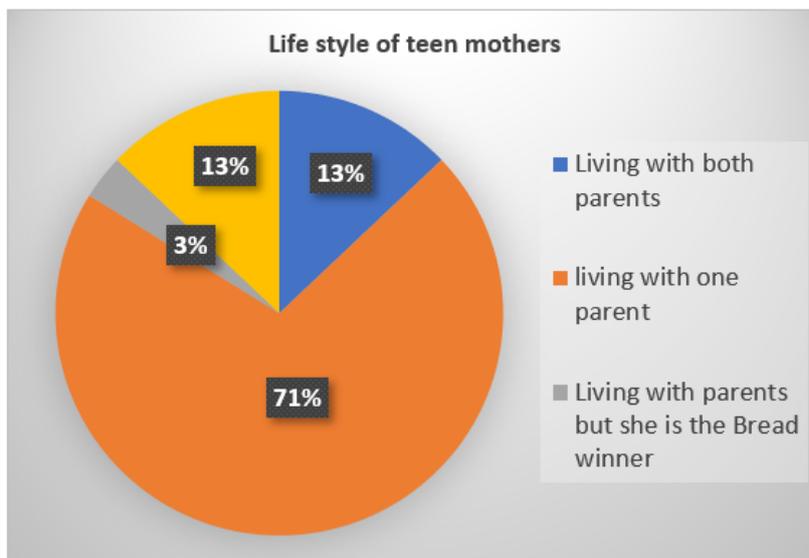


Figure 10: Life style of teen mothers

Teen mothers currently living alone are at high risk of getting unwanted pregnancies because of this crisis, staying home without food, and no hope for getting all those basic needs, will probably engage them in misbehaviors and subjected to sexual abuse and/or exploitation.

The interventions done to socio-economically empower these teen mothers, boosted some of them to start running small business that can generate income. The most of the business they were doing include selling vegetables, fruits and others (gucuruza agataro) with small capital of two to three thousand. During this crisis, they have used that small capital and finished.

The teen mothers living with one parent, mostly those parents are widowers, they are experiencing hard life conditions to feed the family.

## **5.CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The crises of coronavirus are affecting more people, and specifically vulnerable like teen mothers and double affected than other. The life condition is not possible without basic needs like food, wood, hygiene materials etc. The current quick survey shows that teen mothers are ware of COVID 19, the preventive measures, ways of reporting for any symptoms, however financial means remain a burden to them. After analyzing the impact of COVID 19 to teen mother's life, we recommend the following:

- Teen mothers need emergency support for basic needs; food and hygiene materials.
- Advocacy to government/leaders to prioritize teen mother as vulnerable during distribution of basic needs,
- Put in place preventive measures of unwanted pregnancies during in and after crises because teen mother become at high risk of sexual exploitation, and abuse.
- Social norms that put a heavy caregiving burden on teen mothers are likely to cause their physical and mental health to suffer and impede their access to education, livelihoods, and other critical support; need of psychosocial support.

### **In Long Term:**

- Reinforce the income generating activities for teen mothers, during post COVID 19 crises, because their capital was consumed during this period.
- Develop targeted economic empowerment strategies and/or explore cash transfer programming to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 pandemic, including support for teen mothers who lose their revenue stream once the outbreak is contained, and for communities to recover and build resilience against future shocks;

### **To Donors**

- Provide immediate flexibility and additional funding to ensure that existing operations/projects/activities/programs can rapidly scale up and adapt to the risks posed by COVID-19;