Teenage pregnancy in Rwanda has increased over the past five years, according to new data released by the National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda, raising concerns among health officials and policymakers about the impact on maternal and child health.

The 7th Demographic and Health Survey shows that 8% of girls aged 15 to 19 had become pregnant by 2025, up from 5% recorded in 2020. The survey, released Wednesday, provides a snapshot of trends in health, education and living conditions across the country.

Health Minister Dr. Sabin Nsanzimana described the rise as worrying, citing increased risks for both adolescent mothers and their children. He said teenage pregnancies are often linked to complications during childbirth, premature births, child stunting and higher rates of maternal and infant mortality.

“This is a challenge the government is determined to address,” Dr Nsanzimana told reporters. “The data reflects developments over the past five years, and measures have already been introduced. Their results will become more visible in the coming years.”

He said the government has revised laws and expanded access to youth-friendly reproductive health services, while also working to ensure that girls who become pregnant are not forced to drop out of school.

Medical experts say adolescents who give birth face higher health risks than older women. Nsanzimana noted that health facilities frequently treat complications related to early childbirth and that a significant share of stunted children are born to mothers who gave birth at a young age.

NISR Director General Ivan Murenzi said the findings underscore the need for coordinated action among government institutions, civil society and development partners to address teenage pregnancy and other persistent challenges in the health sector.

Finance and Economic Planning Minister Yusuf Murangwa said the survey highlights areas that require increased funding. He said the government will continue prioritizing investment in the health sector under the Second National Strategy for Transformation for 2024–2029.

“The increase in teenage pregnancies shows us where more effort and resources are needed,” Murangwa said. “These findings help guide how we allocate our budget to address existing problems.”

The survey shows that among adolescents who became pregnant between 2020 and 2025, 1% were 15 years old, 2% were 16, 6% were 17, 12% were 18 and 20% were 19. Education data indicates that 21% of pregnant adolescents did not attend school, 13% completed primary education and 4% reached secondary education.

Historical data from previous surveys shows teenage pregnancy rates stood at 4% in 2005, rose to 6% in 2010 and 7% in 2015, declined to 5% in 2020, and increased again to 8% in 2025.