Rwandan Senators have expressed worry over the increasing cases of school drop-outs especially in rural communities.

Senator Adrie Umuhire, the president of the committee on social affairs attributes the problem to refusal to enroll after failing.

“The issue includes children from primary school and general secondary school who refuse to enroll after failing,” the Senator said.

The senators pointed out that the issue needs everyone’s participation, including parents and local authorities to have it stopped and to ensure that all school drop outs are re-enrolled.

The school dropout in six districts has moved from 7.8 percent in 2019 compared to 9.5 percent in the last two years.

Nyanza, Musanze, Burera, Gisagara, Rutsiro and Gatsibo are the most affected districts. The report, reveals that the districts of Ruhango, Kicukiro, Huye, Rubavu and Karongi have the least dropouts.

The findings also revealed that the majority of primary school dropouts are boys, at 11.3%, while at secondary school, girls are the majority at 11.1%.

The Commission for Social Affairs visited 12-year basic education schools and technical, vocational and as well as technical schools in 21 districts. The commission talked with leaders including those at the national level, local level, teachers and students.

Senator Marie Rose Mureshyankwano also said that it is hard to comprehend how village authorities, as leaders, can advise other parents to enroll their children in school yet their children stay at home.

In order to reduce school absenteeism and enrollment in primary and secondary schools, last year the government introduced free lunch at school.

Prime Minister Dr. Edouard Ngirente said for the program to be successful, the government will spend Rwf27 billion ($27 million USD), Rw35 Billion ($35 million USD) and Rwf42 billion ($ 42 million USD) in the respective three years.

According to the revised budget spending for the year 2022-2023, the government

is planning to raise spending on teachers’ pay and school feeding by Rwf100billion.

“We want the school feeding project to last long and therefore we invite private investors in the education sector to invest their money,” Dr Ngirente said

For that program to be successful parents will play a role by paying school fees. Ngirente said the government expenditure is 40% of the school feeding budget on every student and parents are required to pay 60% which is paid through tuition.

There are 2612 primary and secondary public schools, according to official statistics.