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LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND EDUCATIONAL RESILIENCE SUSTAINING PRIMARY EDUCATION THROUGH ENDOGENOUS RESOURCES AMID INSECURITY IN FADA N'GOURMA BURKINA FASO

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ABSTRACT

Since 2016, Burkina Faso has faced a security crisis that has severely affected education, with thousands of schools closed and teachers displaced or threatened. As central government responses have proved insufficient, local authorities are increasingly called upon to mobilize endogenous resources to sustain educational continuity. This study examines the endogenous contribution of Fada N'Gourma municipality, the capital of the Eastern Region, to educational continuity amid insecurity over the 2019–2023 period. Using a mixed-methods design combining questionnaires and semi-structured interviews, it draws on a sample of 210 respondents comprising school principals, teachers, heads of basic education districts, and municipal key informants. The findings identify three categories of endogenous action: building school infrastructure and renting premises for relocated schools; providing equipment and food supplies and bringing together pupils in examination classes; and mobilizing community human resources through a formal stakeholder consultation framework. These initiatives enabled ten schools to reopen, kept more than 2,000 pupils in education, and accommodated 3,363 internally displaced pupils in relocated schools. Statistical analyses confirm the significance of education stakeholders' reported satisfaction with these contributions. The findings are discussed in relation to the Safe School approach, Cyrulnik's resilience theory, and De Clerck's participatory management theory. The study concludes that municipalities play a decisive role in safeguarding the right to education amid insecurity, although this role remains insufficiently recognized and supported by the state.

Keywords: Endogenous contribution; Educational continuity; Insecurity; Local authority; School resilience

1 INTRODUCTION

Education, according to Ki-Zerbo (1990, p. 12), is the software of the central computer that programs societies' future. No society can flourish sustainably without it, and Burkina Faso has established education as a national priority in its founding legislation: Article 3 of Education Framework Act No. 013-2007/AN of 30 July 2007 states that 'education is a national priority'. In practice, this commitment has long been reflected in school construction, expanded educational coverage, and free secular basic education. Since 2016, however, Burkina Faso's education system has faced an unprecedented security crisis with profound consequences for children's schooling: armed groups directly target schools, damage infrastructure, and claim teachers and pupils among the direct victims of their attacks.

According to the December 2023 monthly statistical report of the Technical Secretariat for Education in Emergencies (ST-ESU), 5,330 educational facilities were closed nationwide, affecting 820,865 pupils and 23,955 teachers and accounting for approximately 20% of the country's educational facilities. Widespread fear has led to progressive classroom closures, depriving thousands of children of their fundamental right to education. The state alone lacks sufficient resources to ensure the resilience that education stakeholders need to continue their work under these conditions. Local authorities, to which responsibility for education was transferred under Article 96 of Act No. 055-2004/AN of 21 December 2004 establishing the General Code of Local Authorities (CGCT), must therefore contribute to educational continuity.

The scientific rationale for this study lies in the relative scarcity of empirical research specifically examining the endogenous contribution of Burkina Faso's municipalities to educational continuity amid insecurity, compared with the numerous studies addressing education in emergencies more broadly or funding transferred by the state and its partners. Cissé (2018) and Traoré (2020) documented the crisis's impact on internally displaced pupils' schooling, while Drabo (2022) and Doubloni (2022) examined local authorities' contribution to education stakeholders' resilience in other districts. These studies nevertheless concern distinct settings and do not encompass the full diversity of local circumstances, as each municipality confronts the crisis with its own resources and strategies. Fada N'Gourma municipality, the capital of the Eastern Region, was selected because of its distinctive situation: it is among the municipalities most severely affected by the crisis and hosts the largest number of internally displaced pupils (EDI) in the region.

Of the 97 public primary schools recorded in Fada N'Gourma municipality, 48 are closed because of insecurity. Municipal school enrolment rose from 31,233 pupils in 2019–2020 to 41,563 in 2023–2024, an increase of 10,330 pupils in just three years, attributed to the influx of internally displaced pupils into host schools that remained open. This increase alone illustrates the pressure on the municipality's urban educational facilities and the urgency of documenting local responses.

The situation in Burkina Faso forms part of a broader problem documented in the literature on education in emergencies. According to the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE, 2010), crises affect education systems in terms of access, quality, and governance, warranting the application of international minimum standards to ensure that all children and young people retain effective access to education during crises. Other studies emphasize schools' protective role during crises: in conflict areas, educational provision may take the form of recreational spaces designed to protect children, provide psychosocial support, and raise awareness, with pupils' parents becoming central to school financing alongside international actors. Issue 54 of Autrepart (2010), a journal focusing on social sciences in the Global South, notes that, during political instability, schooling remains subject to overlapping interventions by international agencies, civil society organizations, state administrations, and parent associations. Coordination at the local level nevertheless remains largely unclear because regulatory frameworks lack sufficient precision. The 2021 report of the Institutional and Technical Reform Support Project for Equity (PARITE) highlights the range of risks pupils face during security crises beyond the loss of access to schooling: recruitment by armed groups, sexual violence, premature responsibility as household heads, long distances between homes and educational facilities, overcrowded host classrooms, and inadequate food supplies in school canteens. These intersecting vulnerabilities underscore the importance of mobilizing local stakeholders who are better placed to understand and respond to their area's specific needs.

Against this background, the study addresses the following research question: what endogenous contribution does Fada N'Gourma municipality make to educational continuity amid insecurity? Three subsidiary questions follow: which locally funded infrastructure projects promote access to education in a protective environment? Which endogenous material contributions improve educational quality? Which endogenous human resource contributions enable learning activities to continue?

Before presenting the research objectives and hypotheses, four central concepts require clarification. Under the General Code of Local Authorities, a municipality is the basic unit of local government, administered by a mayor and municipal

council, to which the state has transferred responsibility for certain areas, including education. Drawing on Legendre's Dictionnaire actuel de l'éducation (2005), a security challenge denotes a situation requiring effort, perseverance, and creativity to overcome; in the West African context, it encompasses armed conflict, terrorist groups, criminal networks, and the resulting weakening of states. According to Réseau Réussite Montréal (2021), educational continuity refers to the uninterrupted continuation of learning activities despite destabilizing events such as conflicts, crises, or economic constraints. It encompasses complementary relational, philosophical, curricular, developmental, physical, organizational, and administrative dimensions; this study focuses particularly on the administrative, physical, curricular, and relational dimensions. Finally, following Houée's (2001) work on local development, endogenous contribution refers to a process through which local stakeholders jointly mobilize their territory's human and material resources to implement actions benefiting the community, rather than relying solely on external financial transfers.

The general objective is to analyze Fada N'Gourma municipality's endogenous contribution to educational continuity amid insecurity. Three specific objectives are pursued: to identify locally funded infrastructure projects that promote access to education in a protective environment; to document endogenous material contributions that improve educational quality; and to examine endogenous human resource contributions that sustain teaching and learning. The general hypothesis posits that infrastructure development and the mobilization of endogenous material and human resources help ensure educational continuity in the municipality's public primary schools amid insecurity. Three specific hypotheses follow: community initiatives to construct and rent classrooms promote access to education in a protective environment (HS1); community initiatives to supply schools with furniture, food, and kits, together with bringing pupils together in examination classes, improve educational quality in the municipality (HS2); and recruiting community facilitators and establishing a municipal consultation framework for education stakeholders enable learning to continue in the municipality (HS3).

The article is organized into four parts. First, we present the methodology used for the field study, followed by the findings obtained from the different stakeholder groups surveyed. We then discuss these findings in relation to the theoretical framework and existing literature. The conclusion revisits the main findings, limitations, and directions for further research.

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Research design

The study uses a mixed-methods approach combining quantitative and qualitative methods to gather sufficiently varied information on a complex phenomenon requiring data triangulation. Questionnaire-based quantitative research identified numerical trends in the municipality's endogenous contributions, while semi-structured interviews provided greater depth and nuance through the accounts of key local officials and decision-makers.

2.2 Study setting

The research was conducted in the municipality's two Basic Education Districts (CEB), in Fada N'Gourma, the capital of Burkina Faso's Eastern Region. Administered by a special delegation, the municipality comprises 34 administrative villages and 11 urban sectors and had 124,577 inhabitants according to the 2019 General Population and Housing Census (RGPH). In the 2023–2024 school year, it had 130 primary schools, comprising 97 public and 33 private schools, with a total enrolment of 41,563 pupils (20,344 girls and 20,329 boys), taught by 1,470 teachers (957 women and 513 men). The research covers 2019–2023, a period during which the local security crisis intensified.

2.3 Study population

The study population comprises municipal staff, pedagogical supervisors and heads of basic education districts (CCEB), school principals, teachers working in areas affected by insecurity in both districts, municipal coordinating bodies of parent associations (APE) and mothers' education associations (AME), and key informants such as former elected local officials. School principals and teachers, as the main beneficiaries and direct witnesses of the municipality's endogenous actions, completed questionnaires. Heads of basic education districts, responsible for organizing and implementing pedagogical activities, and key informants—the chair of the special delegation, the municipal secretary-general, the director of budgetary and financial affairs, the education officer, former elected officials, and municipal APE and AME coordinating bodies—participated in semi-structured interviews.

2.4 Sample and sampling techniques

Since surveying the entire target population was not feasible, purposive sampling focused on relocated schools, reopened schools, and schools in areas affected by insecurity, which were considered most directly relevant to the research problem. The planned sample comprised 190 school principals and teachers, two district heads serving as

pedagogical supervisors, and 18 key informants, for a total of 210 people. Table 1 presents the response rate achieved for each group.

Table 1: Survey response rates by stakeholder group

Stakeholder group	Planned sample	Actual respondents	Response rate
Principals and teachers	190	181	96.26 %
Supervisors (CCEB)	2	2	100.00 %
Key informants	18	15	83.83 %
Total	210	198	94.28 %

The overall response rate, substantially above thresholds commonly considered sufficient for field survey validity, supports a reliable reading of the findings, subject to the very small size of the supervisor subgroup (n = 2), which precludes statistical generalization for that category.

2.5 Data collection instruments

Two complementary instruments were used. A questionnaire combining closed-ended and open-ended items was administered to classroom teachers and school principals. A semi-structured interview guide was used for face-to-face interviews with district heads, municipal staff, and key informants, allowing questions to be reformulated and explored beyond what the questionnaire alone could capture. The instruments were submitted to the dissertation supervisor and co-supervisor for validation and then piloted with two pedagogical supervisors and four teachers outside the sample. The pilot revealed no substantial ambiguity.

2.6 Data collection procedures

Data were collected in April 2024 in both basic education districts of Fada N'Gourma municipality through direct questionnaire administration and semi-structured interviews with the selected stakeholder groups.

2.7 Data analysis methods

Data were processed manually, supplemented by Excel for some statistical analyses of questionnaire responses. Quantitative data were analyzed using relative and cumulative frequencies, while qualitative interview data underwent thematic content analysis. These methods were triangulated by cross-checking information from different sources to strengthen the study's objectivity. For this article, the descriptive analyses were supplemented with chi-square goodness-of-fit tests calculated from raw counts reported in the source dissertation for variables with binary (yes/no) distributions permitting such calculations, at a significance level of 0.05. The predominantly categorical and frequently unanimous or nearly unanimous data did not permit Student's t-tests, analysis of variance (ANOVA), or Pearson or Spearman correlation analyses, since these require continuous variables or comparable groups measured quantitatively, conditions not met by this dataset. This limitation is explicitly acknowledged rather than circumvented.

2.8 Fieldwork challenges

Several difficulties arose during fieldwork. The main obstacle was insecurity itself, which prevented the research team from visiting some villages included in the study. Limited mobility among some key informants and municipal staff's restricted availability also hindered data collection, as did substantial delays in returning some questionnaires. Nevertheless, good overall cooperation among education stakeholders enabled a high response rate.

2.9 Ethical considerations

Participation was voluntary, and respondents were assured that the information collected would remain confidential, as indicated in the introductory statement of the interview guide for district heads. The source dissertation does not report formal approval by an institutional ethics committee; this is acknowledged here in the interests of methodological transparency.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Survey response rate

As shown in Table 1, responses were obtained from 198 of the 210 people initially targeted, yielding an overall response rate of 94.28%. Rates varied across stakeholder groups: 100% among pedagogical supervisors, 96.26% among

principals and teachers, and 83.83% among key informants. Full participation proved most difficult to secure in the latter group, probably because of availability constraints among the officials and former elected representatives concerned.

3.2 Endogenous contributions to infrastructure and access to a protective environment

Among the 181 principals and teachers surveyed, 170 (93.92%) acknowledged locally funded school infrastructure development by the municipality, whereas 11 (6.07%) reported its absence in their schools. A chi-square goodness-of-fit test against an equal-probability distribution confirmed that this difference was highly significant ($\chi^2 = 139.67$; df = 1; critical value = 3.841; $p < 0.001$): recognition of the municipality's endogenous contribution to infrastructure was overwhelmingly prevalent among respondents. In addition to construction, respondents identified classroom rental and the relocation of primary schools closed because of insecurity. All principals and teachers surveyed unanimously agreed that these endogenous initiatives improved access to education.

Interviews with district heads and key informants corroborated and clarified these figures. Between 2019 and 2023, Fada N'Gourma municipality invested CFA 186,465,166 in constructing 16 classrooms and eight Temporary Learning Spaces (ETA). It also spent CFA 21 million renting classrooms from private school operators, enabling 18 schools to relocate in Fada N'Gourma 2 district alone. These relocated schools accommodated 3,363 internally displaced pupils during the 2023–2024 school year and recorded an attendance rate of 98.35%. One municipal employee summarized the investment as follows: 'From 2019 to 2023, the municipality allocated 21 million to classroom rental.'

3.3 Endogenous contributions to improving educational quality

Regarding municipal support for improving educational quality, 153 of the 181 principals and teachers (84.53%) expressed satisfaction, compared with 28 (15.47%) who did not. This result was also statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 86.33$; df = 1; $p < 0.001$). All respondents (181 of 181, or 100%) nevertheless considered that the local authority's contribution substantially improved grade progression rates and academic performance. All principals and teachers identified school furniture and food provision as factors substantially improving educational quality. Among key informants, 60% expressed satisfaction with the municipality's endogenous provision of furniture and kits.

Table 2 summarizes the municipality's main material achievements during the study period.

Table 2: Endogenous material contributions of Fada N'Gourma municipality (2019–2023)

Type of contribution	Amount delivered
Classrooms constructed	16
Temporary Learning Spaces (ETA) constructed	8
Infrastructure investment	186 465 166 CFA francs
Classroom rental investment	21 000 000 CFA francs
Relocated schools (Fada N'Gourma 2 district)	18
Desk-and-bench units purchased	400
Food supplies distributed	5 tonnes
Three-cubicle latrine blocks constructed	16
Boreholes constructed	13

Interviews also documented an initiative implemented in 2021 to bring together pupils in examination classes, enabling more than 700 final-year primary pupils (CM2) from 31 schools to complete the curriculum and sit their end-of-year examinations. The cohort achieved an overall Primary School Certificate (CEP) pass rate of 60.36%.

3.4 Endogenous human resource contributions and community participation

All principals and teachers surveyed (181 of 181, or 100%) reported that the municipality mobilized human resources to sustain teaching and learning. All also acknowledged the involvement and commitment of the entire educational community, particularly parents' active participation in school life, school monitoring, and accommodation provision for community facilitators and teachers assigned to high-risk areas. The municipality recruited and paid 36 community facilitators for areas designated as red zones.

The existence of a formal consultation framework for education stakeholders within the municipality was acknowledged by 175 of the 181 principals and teachers (96.68%), a statistically significant difference from an equal-probability distribution ($\chi^2 = 157.80$; df = 1; $p < 0.001$). This framework was established by Order No. 2021-49/REST/PGRM/FDG/CO, which specifies the creation, composition, responsibilities, and operation of Fada N'Gourma municipality's Education Consultation Framework (CCEduc). Its mission is to analyze barriers to educational access and quality and propose solutions consistent with available powers and resources. According to all respondents (181 of 181, or 100%), these endogenous human resource initiatives sustain learning in areas affected by insecurity, as demonstrated by the reopening of ten schools and the retention of 2,054 pupils able to participate in assessments and examinations.

3.5 Interview findings

The 17 interviews with district heads and key informants generally confirmed the questionnaire findings while providing additional qualitative detail. Interviewees reported that the local authority developed endogenous infrastructure—classrooms, temporary learning spaces, latrines, and boreholes—and collaborated with parent associations, mothers' education associations, municipal councillors, and village development councillors to identify safe host sites for pupils and teachers from closed schools. The head of Fada N'Gourma 1 district stated that 'these relocated schools accommodated 3,363 pupils during the 2023–2024 school year'. District heads and former elected officials also commended the municipality's provision of school furniture, food supplies, latrines, and boreholes, which they considered beneficial to attendance and education stakeholders' working conditions.

3.6 Summary of statistical tests

Table 3 summarizes the chi-square goodness-of-fit tests calculated from the raw counts in the source dissertation for binary variables with sufficiently detailed distributions.

Table 3: Summary of chi-square goodness-of-fit tests

Variable tested	Favourable responses	Unfavourable responses	Calculated χ^2	df	Conclusion ($\alpha = 0.05$)
Endogenous infrastructure development	170	11	139.67	1	Significant
Support for educational quality	153	28	86.33	1	Significant
Existence of a stakeholder consultation framework	175	6	157.80	1	Significant
Overall survey response	198	12	164.74	1	Significant

All these differences were statistically significant, indicating strong consistency in the surveyed principals' and teachers' perceptions of the municipality's endogenous contributions. Comparing response rates across the three groups—96.26% among principals and teachers, 100% among supervisors, and 83.83% among key informants—does not permit a reliable chi-square test of homogeneity, since expected counts for the supervisor category (n = 2) are too small to satisfy the test's assumptions. This comparison is therefore strictly descriptive.

3.7 Hypothesis testing

Questionnaire and interview data converge in confirming HS1: community initiatives to build and rent classrooms, acknowledged by 170 of 181 respondents with a statistically significant difference, promote educational access in a protective environment, as illustrated by the accommodation of 3,363 internally displaced pupils and the 98.35% attendance rate in relocated schools. HS2 is also confirmed: providing furniture, food, and kits—satisfaction reported by 84.53% of principals and teachers, a statistically significant difference—and bringing together pupils in examination classes, with a CEP pass rate of 60.36% in 2021, contribute to educational quality in the municipality. HS3 is confirmed by nearly unanimous recognition of the stakeholder consultation framework (96.68%, a statistically significant difference) and unanimous agreement that mobilizing 36 community facilitators enables learning to continue, as reflected in ten reopened schools and the retention of more than 2,000 pupils. With all three specific hypotheses confirmed, the general hypothesis—that infrastructure development and the mobilization of endogenous material and human resources help ensure educational continuity in Fada N'Gourma's public primary schools amid insecurity—is likewise confirmed.

4 DISCUSSION

Within the specific context of Fada N'Gourma municipality, the findings confirm the importance of municipal action in sustaining educational continuity during a security crisis, as documented in earlier studies elsewhere in Burkina Faso. Drabo (2022), examining local authorities' contribution to the resilience of education stakeholders in basic education districts facing severe insecurity in Sourou Province, identified endogenous strategies facilitating displaced pupils' re-enrolment. However, the study noted varying levels of local government investment and generally ineffective support for meaningful resilience. Our findings partly qualify this assessment: in Fada N'Gourma, documented investment—more than CFA 186 million in infrastructure alone and CFA 21 million in classroom rental—and stakeholders' overwhelmingly positive satisfaction suggest substantial municipal commitment. This commitment nevertheless remains insufficient to bridge the gap between needs and resources, as illustrated by the continued closure of 48 of the municipality's 97 public schools.

This finding also echoes Doubloni (2022), who reported that local authorities contribute substantially to primary education through infrastructure development, school furniture provision, and examination support, while highlighting limited stakeholder involvement and the absence of a formal consultation framework. On the latter point, our findings differ: Fada N'Gourma municipality established a formal stakeholder consultation framework through Order No. 2021-49/REST/PGRM/FDG/CO, whose existence was acknowledged by 96.68% of principals and teachers surveyed. This difference between settings illustrates the variation in institutional commitment across municipalities already noted by Drabo (2022) and suggests that Fada N'Gourma's experience in this respect could provide a practice worth documenting and sharing with other local authorities facing similar challenges.

Our findings also corroborate Kambou's (2019) identification of limited stakeholder involvement and communication deficits as persistent challenges in decentralizing primary education. Although our study does not identify a comparable communication deficit, its focus is narrower: strictly municipal endogenous contributions, rather than the full range of funds transferred by the state and its partners examined by Kambou. This limits direct comparison between the studies. The distinction is methodologically important for situating our contribution: the study specifically documents what the municipality mobilizes from its own funds, independently of external assistance.

The Safe School approach used as a reference framework is illustrated by the findings, particularly the relocation of closed schools to safer sites and the implicit psychosocial support provided through community proximity. According to the Ministry of National Education, Literacy and the Promotion of National Languages (MENAPLN, 2018), this approach seeks to create resilient schools capable of analyzing their environment and implementing prevention, preparedness, mitigation, and recovery measures in response to security-related shocks, while involving communities in protecting schools using their own resources. The initiatives documented here—school relocation, community facilitator recruitment, and a consultation framework—thus correspond directly to the child-centredness, inclusion, and participation principles underpinning the Safe School approach. The accompanying psychosocial support (APS), based on safety, respect, confidentiality, non-discrimination, community participation, and child-centredness, is less directly documented by our survey, which focused on municipal material and organizational contributions rather than individualized psychological support for internally displaced pupils. This warrants further research. Cyrulnik's (2009) resilience theory illuminates the role of principals, teachers, and community facilitators as potential resilience mentors for internally displaced pupils, whose trauma from attacks and forced displacement calls for empathetic, reassuring support consistent with the psychosocial support principles outlined in the theoretical framework. Finally, De Clerck's (2009) participatory or community management theory explains the observed dynamics: successful educational continuity in Fada N'Gourma rests on the joint involvement of parents, mothers' education associations, village development councillors, and municipal authorities, confirming De Clerck's argument that successful community participation requires broad information sharing and local populations' commitment to projects directly affecting them.

The degree of municipal autonomy in education management, which underlies the study, also echoes Welch and McGinn's (1999) earlier work on educational decentralization. These authors argue that decision-making sites should vary according to each organization's circumstances rather than follow a uniform model, while emphasizing that central authorities retain an essential oversight role regardless of the autonomy granted locally. Our findings illustrate this principle: Fada N'Gourma exercises real autonomy in mobilizing its resources through infrastructure development, community facilitator recruitment, and a consultation framework, while working closely with decentralized state services, namely basic education districts and the Technical Secretariat for Education in Emergencies, which covers part of the community facilitators' remuneration. This interaction between local initiative and state support appears to be a more decisive condition for success than municipal autonomy considered in isolation, as understood through the local governance theory invoked by Welch and McGinn.

Nevertheless, the findings require caution given the nature of the data. The very high, often nearly unanimous satisfaction rates reported by principals and teachers may partly reflect social desirability bias: as direct beneficiaries

of municipal endogenous initiatives, respondents may be inclined to emphasize their benefits. This potential bias does not, however, invalidate the robustness of the reported factual data—classrooms constructed, amounts invested, and pupils accommodated—which rest on verifiable information rather than perceptions alone.

The mobilization of 36 community facilitators paid by the municipality with ST-ESU support should also be discussed in relation to the multiple risks identified in PARITE's 2021 report: recruitment by armed groups, sexual violence, and premature responsibility as household heads. Although this study does not directly measure the effect of community presence on reducing these specific risks, the proximity and relational continuity it establishes, consistent with the psychosocial support principles in our theoretical framework, provide a response aligned with PARITE's recommendations to strengthen existing community solidarity. Similarly, Fada N'Gourma's municipal consultation framework responds, at least partly, to the institutional uncertainty noted in Autrepart (2010) regarding local coordination of educational interventions during political instability.

Finally, although the municipal commitment documented here is substantial, it cannot alone address the scale of insecurity affecting education in Burkina Faso. The continued closure of 48 schools in Fada N'Gourma alone, despite these efforts, demonstrates that local authorities' endogenous contributions, however valuable, cannot replace a structural and sustainable state response to securing affected areas. This echoes Kinda's (2015) recommendations for substantial and sustained capacity development for all stakeholders involved in education in emergencies.

4.1 Practical implications

Several findings align with suggestions made by education stakeholders during data collection, which merit presentation because they directly extend the preceding analysis. Respondents called on the state to formally recognize resilient teachers through awards or honorary distinctions and establish a resilience allowance specifically for teachers assigned to red zones. These measures are directly justified by the sustained commitment documented here despite severely deteriorated security conditions. Respondents also emphasized active efforts to reopen the municipality's 48 public schools that remain closed, a prerequisite for restoring normal schooling for the thousands of children still excluded.

Suggestions for local authorities included continued provision of school furniture and classroom construction, alongside more capacity-building sessions for municipal coordinating bodies of parent associations and mothers' education associations, building on the existing consultation framework. An original interview suggestion was an annual municipal excellence initiative recognizing pupils, teachers, and parent associations most committed to local educational resilience. Other operational suggestions concerned continuing professional development for community facilitators, regular meetings for exchanging experiences, and greater parental involvement in providing accommodation and meals for facilitators assigned to high-risk areas.

Several suggestions were directed jointly to the state and national bodies responsible for education in emergencies: allowing community facilitators with at least three years of field experience to sit civil service professional examinations; documenting endogenous good practices across local authorities to facilitate experience sharing; ensuring that ST-ESU continuously supports all community facilitators throughout the school year; and extending community facilitator recruitment to other municipalities in the Eastern Region facing similar insecurity.

A final issue concerns the medium-term financial sustainability of this municipal commitment. The documented amounts—more than CFA 186 million for infrastructure and CFA 21 million for classroom rental in 2019–2023 alone—represent a considerable budgetary effort for a local authority whose financial autonomy relies primarily on limited own-source revenue, as reflected in the General Code of Local Authorities. Should insecurity persist beyond the study period, structural budget constraints could limit Fada N'Gourma's ability to sustain this level of endogenous investment using its own resources alone. This supports several interviewees' calls for more substantial and sustained state assistance to municipalities most actively engaged in resilience efforts.

Several limitations should be acknowledged. Fieldwork concerned only primary education stakeholders and did not include preschool, lower secondary, or upper secondary education, restricting the conclusions to primary education. Internally displaced pupils were not interviewed directly because they were considered insufficiently mature to distinguish the respective contributions of local authorities, nongovernmental organizations, and projects. Consequently, the study lacks the direct perspectives of the principal beneficiaries. Despite a high response rate, sample representativeness is also limited by purposive rather than probability sampling. Finally, as social science research examining individual behaviour during a crisis, the study remains subject to some subjectivity: insecurity-related mistrust may influence questionnaire and interview responses in either direction.

5 CONCLUSION

This study sought to analyze Fada N'Gourma municipality's endogenous contribution to educational continuity amid the security crisis affecting Burkina Faso since 2016. Findings from a mixed-methods survey involving 198 principals, teachers, pedagogical supervisors, and key informants provide a clear answer to the research question: the municipality makes a substantial, multidimensional endogenous contribution, organized around three complementary areas—developing infrastructure and renting premises for relocated schools; supplying equipment and food and bringing together pupils in examination classes; and mobilizing community human resources through a formal education stakeholder consultation framework.

The collected data confirmed the three specific hypotheses, supporting the general hypothesis that infrastructure development and the mobilization of endogenous material and human resources help ensure educational continuity in the municipality's public primary schools. These findings are coherently grounded in the Safe School approach, Cyrulnik's resilience theory, and De Clerck's participatory or community management theory, which illuminate the protective, psychosocial, and participatory dimensions of the documented initiatives, respectively.

The study's main scientific contribution is its empirical, quantitative documentation of municipal support for educational continuity in an area affected by insecurity, at a scale where precise data on investment, infrastructure provision, and pupils accommodated are rarely assembled so systematically. In particular, it demonstrates the existence of a formal education stakeholder consultation framework in Fada N'Gourma, contrasting with the absence of such arrangements in comparable studies elsewhere in Burkina Faso. This may represent a promising practice for sharing with other local authorities facing similar challenges.

The study's limitations nevertheless warrant reiteration: its restriction to primary education, the absence of direct consultation with internally displaced pupils, non-probability sampling, and possible social desirability bias in self-reported data call for cautious interpretation. Further research could extend the analysis to preschool and lower and upper secondary education, directly examine internally displaced pupils' experiences of educational continuity, and systematically compare endogenous contributions across several Burkinabè municipalities facing severe insecurity. Such comparisons could more rigorously identify the institutional and community factors associated with the most resilient arrangements.

STATEMENTS ON COMPLIANCE WITH ETHICAL STANDARDS

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Disclosure of conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding this manuscript

Statement of informed consent

Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study

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