

1 **Operating methods and reasons for funding shortfalls in the Decentralized Management**
2 **Committees of Schools and the Municipal Federation of said committees in the**
3 **municipality of Droum (Niger).**
4
5

6 **Abstract**

7 The current research is about the financing of school participatory structures, particularly FC /
8 CGDES and CGDES in the commune of Droum, Niger Republic. It essentially aims at
9 determining the explanatory factors of financial gap of these structures that are partnership
10 frameworks between the State, development partners, schools, families and community.

11 To do this, both qualitative and quantitative data have been collected across the questionnaire,
12 the snowball technique, the direct observation. Our analyzes showed the existence of factors
13 which created a financial lack directly hindering the achievement of activities of these
14 structures within schools. Added to this, are internal and external parameters including the
15 reluctance of parents linked to their bad connotation of school of "white", local actors'
16 strategies of co-optation, etc. The whole of these factors determined the low mobilization of
17 funds for the financing of these structures in Droum.

18 **Keywords: Working, municipal federation, committee and decentralized management.**
19

20 **Introduction**

21 Man is a social and rational being endowed with knowledge of how to live, know-how, and
22 interpersonal skills that he passes down from generation to generation through education. The
23 latter, according to Ferréol (2010), encompasses all social activities aimed at transmitting to
24 individuals the collective heritage of the society in which they are integrated.

25 In Niger, the family constitutes the primary basic unit of the educational system, within which
26 the child receives their first socialization. In addition to the family, there are the Quranic
27 school and the modern school. Considering the socio-political and economic contexts of the
28 country, numerous reforms have been undertaken to improve the performance of schools.
29 Among these reforms, one can mention, among others: television education from
30 independence in 1971, teaching in traditional languages in experimental schools, etc.
31 (UNESCO, 1987).

32 Despite all these reforms, educational performance across schools did not meet the
33 government's expectations. Thus, during the national sovereign conference, it was
34 emphasized: 'Our system is at an impasse, Nigerien schools are in crisis.' (MEN, 1992) and
35 the General States of Education were considered as the ultimate solution to this crisis,
36 attempting to make schools democratic and popular. Thus, being less satisfied with all the
37 reforms implemented, it was necessary to adopt law no. 98-12 of June 1, 1998, concerning the
38 orientation of the Nigerien educational system, in 1998, six (6) years after the holding of the
39 General States, to see Niger equip itself with a legal and institutional framework that
40 organizes its educational system (MEN, 2010). Arising from the reforms generated under this
41 law was the establishment of participatory school structures FC/CGDES and CGDES
42 respectively at the level of each commune and each school in the country.

43 This research focuses on those of the commune of Droum, one of the seven (07) communes in
44 the Mirriah department in the Zinder region. The FC/CGDES covers all the CGDES of
45 primary and secondary school institutions. That is why, during this research, the analysis
46 focused on the functioning of its structures in order to understand the parameters and motives

47 for the deficit of their fund. In view of all of the above, this work is structured around two
48 points, namely the methodology and the results obtained and their discussions.

49 **1. Methodology**

50 The research was of a mixed nature but predominantly qualitative because it focused more on
51 qualitative analysis to show the financing deficit of the CGDES and its impacts on its actions
52 at the level of the Droum commune. Thus, documentary analysis, observation, interviews, and
53 survey questionnaires were used as techniques to collect data. In terms of sampling, for the
54 target group, the research addressed members of the FC/CGDES, the CGDES, and actors of
55 the Droum commune. Indeed, the target population of this research is composed of:

- 56 • The sub-population of members of the Communal Federation of CGDES of the Droum
57 commune, numbering fourteen (14) people;
- 58 • The sub-population of twenty (20) CGDES of educational institutions, each consisting
59 of seven (07) members;
- 60 • The sub-population of parents of students with children attending school.

61 Thus, taking into account the time factor, the availability of financial resources, as well as the
62 desire to collect reliable data, collective interviews were first conducted for the members of
63 the FC and each CGDES, and then individual interviews were held with all the SGs of the FC
64 and the CGDES to complete the information. Nevertheless, a number of resource persons
65 were interviewed. These are the following individuals:

- 66 • The National Coordinator of the National Coordination of the Communal Federation
67 of CGDES and the CGDES of Niger: to collect information on the financing and
68 monitoring/support of the operation of the FC/CGDES and the CGDES at the national
69 level;
- 70 • The former SG who served for a long time within the FC; The departmental focal
71 point to collect information on the monitoring/support of the FC/CGDES and the
72 CGDES at the departmental level;
- 73 • The mayor of the commune of Droum: to gather information on the issue of education
74 at the commune level and on the tutoring of the FC/CGDES;
- 75 • The traditional chief of the canton of Droum in order to obtain information on the
76 origin of the creation of Droum and his participation in the functioning of participatory
77 school structures;
- 78 • The sector educational advisor of Droum to inquire about information concerning him
79 regarding the support of the FC/CGDES in its activities.

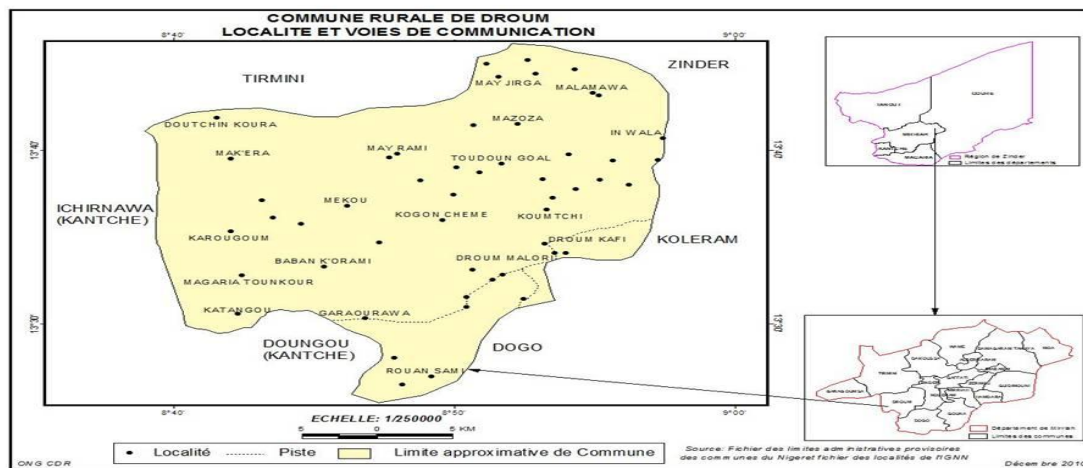
80 For the sample of this research, it should be noted that in social science research, in the
81 impossibility of surveying a large parent population, the researcher must use a sampling
82 technique. In view of the nature of this research, the technique used was probabilistic, with
83 the use of cluster sampling allowing the questionnaire to be administered to parents of
84 students who have children enrolled in the school, and who are not members of CGDES of the
85 The village school. Nevertheless, purposive sampling was also used, as the present research is
86 limited to a sample of CGDES from schools chosen according to a number of criteria such as
87 the school's enrollment, its location relative to the municipal center, its seniority, and the
88 support of partners. Thus, clearly, the population surveyed in the research is composed of 200
89 parents, representing a little more than 20% of their total number (877) in the population. The
90 survey was conducted from February 1 to March 24, 2017.

91 **2 Overview of the Commune of Droum**

92 The Commune of Droum is one of the seven (07) communes in the department of Mirriah in
93 the Zinder region. Like all other communes, it was officially established by law 2002-014 of
94 June 11, 2002. Its administrative center is the village of Droum, which is located about 45
95 kilometers (km) west of Mirriah, 35 km southwest of the city of Zinder, and approximately
96 1000 kilometers (km) east of the capital (Niamey). It is bordered to the east by the fifth (5th)
97 communal district of the city of Zinder; to the south by the rural commune of Dogo; to the
98 west by the rural communes of Doungou and Ichirnawa (department of Kantché); and to the
99 north by the fourth (4th) communal district of the city of Zinder and the rural commune of
100 Tirmini (department of Takeita) (Ibrahim, 2016).

101 The commune comprises 74 administrative villages. It is also equipped with a municipal
102 council composed of 15 local councilors. It covers an area of 880 km² for a population of
103 94,782 inhabitants, or a density of 107.70 inhabitants/km² in 2012. This is one of the highest
104 in Niger (PDC, Droum 2013).

105 **Figure 2: the position of the Commune of Droum/region of Zinder/department of Mirriah.**



106
107 **Source: 2010 PDC of the Commune of Droum**

108 **3. Results and Discussion**

109 In this section, the focus was on analyzing the functioning of community school participatory
110 structures (the FC/CGDES and the CGDES) as well as the internal and external drivers of
111 their funding shortfall.

112 **3.1 Functioning**

113 From a functioning perspective, the analysis revealed that these participatory structures
114 operate according to Decree No. 000168/MEN/SG/DGEB of October 24, 2008, amended and
115 supplemented by Decree No. 000040/MEN/A/PLN/SG of February 22, 2012, and Decree No.
116 000192/MEBA/SG of November 15, 2006, amended and supplemented by Decree No.
117 000039/MEN/A/PLN/SG of February 22, 2012, which established them. In this regard, three
118 (03) General Assemblies conclude the school year.

119 This concerns the General Assembly (GA) dedicated to preparing for the school year and
120 developing the school's action plan, the mid-year GA, and finally the annual review GA to
121 evaluate the activities carried out. Thus, it is during the first GA that the CGDES schedules all
122 activities (both priority and secondary) to be carried out during the year. Furthermore, the
123 analysis of action plans developed by the CGDES of different schools allows two (2) main

124 categories of activities to emerge. The first category includes activities that can be considered
 125 usual for each CGDES. They fall within the areas of material environment (building of
 126 thatched classrooms, purchase and maintenance of school supplies, etc.) and operations
 127 (monthly holding of GAs, participation of CGDES in the three (3) annual GAs of the FCC,
 128 etc.). The second category of activities is not usual. They depend on the locality and the needs
 129 of the schools. They themselves related to areas of school time, the quality of teaching and
 130 learning. Thus, Table 7 below provides some information on this second category of
 131 activities.

132 **Table 1: Distribution of Unusual Activities Performed by CGDES**

| Type/No. | Second Category of Unusual Activities Performed | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|---|-----------|-----------|---------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| | Nber of Schools | M/caped | Rat | Follow-up/Ass | Clot | Ach | Rec | Sen | Tutoring |
| School with cafeteria | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| School without cafeteria | 15 | 14 | 9 | 2 | 2 | 5 | 7 | 3 | 7 |
| Ecole subventionnée | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Total | 20 | 18 | 12 | 4 | 2 | 9 | 8 | 5 | 8 |

133 **Source: Field data, February-March, 2017 58 NB: Rat: catch-up; Clot: fencing; Sen:**
 134 **awareness; Ach: purchase; Rec: recruitment**

135 In this table, it is noticeable that some activities predominate over others, varying according to
 136 the type of schools in the research sample. By examining the results of these activities, it was
 137 understood that awareness-raising was one of the essential points of the action plans of any
 138 institution, since it participated on the one hand in improving access and equity between the
 139 sexes and on the other hand in encouraging actors to participate in management. However,
 140 according to the table, only five (05) schools, or 25% of all categories combined, had
 141 scheduled this activity and where barely 15% carried it out. Parents, under- or poorly
 142 informed about the functioning of the school, developed prejudices to condemn the CGDES
 143 members of their school. Thus, 24% of the respondents said that they had not been made
 144 aware of the situation by the members of the committee.

145 The latter, due primarily to a lack of resources, especially financial, unavailability, and
 146 negligence, do not convey information to raise awareness among stakeholders as they should.
 147 In some villages, stakeholders take the principal's message more seriously, and he does not
 148 live in the village where the school is located in most of the CGDES visited, while the
 149 appropriate time to convey information or raise awareness among stakeholders is in the
 150 evenings. This situation led to low participation from stakeholders and discredited the
 151 principal, who, in their eyes, deliberately refused to integrate into their village. Regarding
 152 remedial classes, a total of twelve (12) schools out of twenty (20), or 60% of the sample,
 153 organized them. The fear of delays due to disruptions (strikes, fire, and rain) represents the
 154 reason for conducting this activity.

155 The teacher also practiced it with the aim of completing the program on time and giving
156 students enough time for reviews in preparation for end-of-year assessments. As for tutoring,
157 it is almost a common activity at schools without cafeterias and without subsidies. Indeed, out
158 of fifteen (15) schools, seven (07), that is 47%, practiced it, unlike other categories of schools
159 where only one (01) out of five (05) was concerned. This is due to the fact that at the level of
160 the first 59 school categories, there are more students without a tutor who would be paid, as in
161 the case of subsidized schools. However, it should be noted that the activities planned by the
162 CGGES, which ranged in amount from 50,000F to 500,000F, were not all carried out due to
163 lack of funds. Thus, apart from the influence of partner support and the free nature of
164 schooling, this deficit was explained by two main motives classified in terms of internal
165 motives related to the functioning of these structures and external motives coming from other
166 authors at the level of Droum.

167 **3.1.1 From Functioning to Internal Drivers of Funding Deficit**

168 The internal drivers of the funding deficit with respect to the financing of CGDES can be
169 grouped into four (04) main points, namely: the illiteracy of members, the low involvement of
170 members, the lack of transparency in management, and the lack of initiatives and strategies in
171 fund mobilization.

172 **3.1.1.1 Illiteracy of Members**

173 Within the framework of this research, the functional analysis of CGDES revealed that 75%
174 of their members were elected during a General Assembly. The appointment of members only
175 represents 25%. This election and appointment of members were not random. The
176 stakeholders deemed the members to be capable of playing a major role in management,
177 functioning, and fund mobilization. However, it turned out that the majority of them were
178 illiterate. Which makes accomplishing their mission very difficult. Indeed, 70% of members
179 do not have the approach methods necessary to properly convey the message.

180 Also, due to poor memory, they rarely reported the decisions made during General
181 Assemblies or meetings and found it difficult to explain them to other stakeholders. Not
182 having received any training apart from the CGDES members currently in partnership with
183 the PAQUE project, 80% of the members did not take notes during General Assemblies or
184 training sessions held by the Secretary General and also did not keep notebooks or registers
185 for accounting or managing food stock in schools with cafeterias. At the level of the latter,
186 this still causes unrest when actors were asked to pay their contributions. They accused
187 CGDES members of embezzlement. Consequently, this situation affects not only the financial
188 contribution but also the physical and material contribution of the actors in carrying out the
189 missions of the CGDES. The actors, 40% of them were not satisfied with the management of
190 the schools. 65% of the members did not properly manage the archives. That said, the next
191 point addresses the issue of the low involvement of CGDES members and parents.

192 **3.1.1.2 Low Member Involvement**

193 Alongside member illiteracy, the low involvement of members led to their limited financial
194 participation in carrying out activities within the CGDES. Indeed, within the committee, it
195 was only the Secretary-General, specifically the school principal, who largely carried out the
196 tasks. Due to the lack of dynamism of the other members, the principal is obliged to organize
197 the general meetings alone while relying only on the contributions paid by parents to execute
198 the activities.

199 Although he is better positioned to make the request to mobilize funds, he cannot single-
200 handedly carry out the awareness mission without the assistance of the other committee

201 members. Nevertheless, 45% of committees had presidents and treasurers who fully
202 participated in the management of the school alongside the principal. The contributions of the
203 other members were much more material and physical. These members often explained their
204 low involvement by the fact that they are marginalized and their proposals and opinions are
205 not taken into account in the decisions made. Thus, this resonates with the idea of Dodo and
206 Lugaz (2011), explaining that “the management committee offices are not always
207 representative of the community's composition. Social strata that are not representative or are
208 marginalized did not participate in the development of the school. Thus, they did not attend
209 meetings or give their opinion even when present.” On the other hand, eight (8) directors
210 explained that these members were looking for an excuse to justify their under-participation.

211 Most of the actors even insisted on the fact that some members were not active in
212 management. That is why it very often happened that the directors found themselves obliged
213 to finance the 61 activities themselves by mobilizing funds from willing teachers in their
214 school to carry out tasks requiring lower costs. The dynamism and active participation of
215 members were only observed in schools supported by partners and in schools with canteens. It
216 is within this context that members hope to earn or receive bonuses from training or try to
217 become the director's accomplice to share or divert the food stock. Thus, some actors,
218 witnesses, and aware of this state of affairs, decided not to pay their contribution, and others
219 hesitated to settle it. This seems quite normal and reasonable in the eyes of the actors who are
220 underrepresented or not represented at all, to refuse on the one hand to contribute and get
221 involved in the school's development activities, and on the other hand, to influence other
222 actors to join them, leaving it at the mercy of the director and the village chief. Thus, as the
223 present research discusses the management of committees, it is important to have a clear
224 understanding of what is happening regarding the issue of transparency.

225 **3.1.1.3 Lack of transparency**

226 The lack of transparency among members constituted another factor leading to the funding
227 deficit for CGDES. At this level, the analysis focused more on CGDES that have partners.
228 Being appointed or elected, CGDES members must regularly hold general assemblies in order
229 to review the management of the school. Unfortunately, this is not the case. Thus, at the level
230 of the CGDES with partners, indeed, 40% of surveyed parents of students accused the
231 members of not being transparent in their management. They are dissatisfied, on the one hand,
232 with the way the fund intended for the additional action plan for the CGDES is managed, as
233 they requested a continuous report during the general assemblies, which in many cases does
234 not happen.

235 On the other hand, parents criticized the management of food stocks in schools with canteens.
236 They suspected the committee members, particularly the school principal, of being complicity
237 with certain people to divert or use the food for their own benefit instead of making it
238 sufficiently available to the school. This behavior leads other parents to withdraw from
239 everything related to the operation of the CGDES. Overall, at the level of all the villages,
240 although 62 percent of respondents who cited reasons of lack of transparency is not high as it
241 is only 13%, it nevertheless contributed to the fund deficit for carrying out the activities of the
242 CGDES concerned. Thus, the next point is dedicated to the lack of initiatives and strategies in
243 fundraising.

244 **3.1.1.4 Lack of initiatives and strategies in fundraising**

245 At the level of the Droum commune, the operational review of the various surveyed CGDES
246 showed that the lack of initiatives and fundraising strategies is among the key factors in the
247 funding deficit for activities within the committees. Very few committees had strong,

248 innovative, and highly effective mechanisms in place to encourage stakeholders to financially
249 support CGDES actions. In fact, for all the surveyed CGDES, only 10% had a good
250 fundraising initiative. The committee solicited contributions in kind, which, as previously
251 mentioned, consisted of inviting the parents of students to give a measured amount of cereals
252 instead of contributing in cash at the end of each harvest. This promising initiative had
253 enabled these CGDES to achieve a recovery rate between 80 and 90%, compared to the
254 average of 65.5% for all CGDES in the municipality during the 2016-2017 academic year.
255 The CGDES understood that it is very difficult for parents to contribute to the financing of the
256 committee's activities in cash. That is why they proposed, for greater ease and possibility, that
257 they bring a very negligible part of their harvest to be sold at the right time in order to execute
258 activities. Moreover, other CGDES representing 15% of the sample, lacking this initiative,
259 given their situation, focused more on the physical and material contribution of the population
260 within the framework of building thatched classrooms. However, failing that, they requested
261 the contribution of the village chief. In this case, the CGDES rarely relied on parents'
262 contributions, with collection rates around 55 to 57%. Thus, faced with this situation, they
263 turned to their peers to cover certain expenses and sought assistance from the hierarchical
264 level 63 for the need for manuals or guides, or sometimes bought them in case of emergency.

265 However, by conducting an analysis on the research sample, it emerged that 75% of CGDES
266 do not have appropriate initiatives and strategies for fundraising. They were content only with
267 the contributions paid in cash by parents to carry out the activities. All of these establishments
268 together achieved a collection rate of 61% in the 2016-2017 year. For the entire Commune
269 over three (03) academic years (2014-2015, 2015-2016, and 2016-2017), the amounts planned
270 and mobilized were respectively 4,566,600f planned and 2,739,960f mobilized, i.e., 60%. In
271 the 2015-2016 year the collection rate was 58%, that is, 4,708,760f planned of which
272 2,731,080f was mobilized. This not only delayed the start of classes on time but also created
273 disagreements between the committee members or the school principal and the community.
274 Thus, apart from internal motives, external motives also influence the functioning and
275 financing of CGDES.

276 **3.1.2 External Motives for Financing Deficit**

277 This section, which represents the external reasons for the deficit of funds intended for
278 financing school participatory structures, is structured around the following three (03) points:
279 the interference of traditional chiefs and political actors in management, the negative
280 connotation of the school by stakeholders, and the influence of various costs (direct, indirect,
281 and opportunity) of the school.

282 **3.1.2.1 Interference of Traditional Chiefs and Political Actors**

283 In the Droum commune, the governing entities that interfered in school management were the
284 administrative authority and the customary authority. At the head of these entities were
285 respectively the mayor and the traditional chiefs with their representatives. The chiefs are
286 more influential not only because of the ties they built with all ethnic layers but also due to
287 the period they spent on the throne. They are 30% members of the committee and have more
288 than 85% of representatives within the FC and the CGDES. Even though they played the role
289 of mediator and provided land for the creation of schools, the chiefs interfered in the
290 functioning of the FC/CGDES and the CGDES. They used their power to influence the
291 decisions made within the structures to the detriment of consensus. However, it must be
292 revealed that the political stakes and those of traditional power forced many chiefs to develop
293 strategies to intervene in the functioning of certain institutions. Although it was also their duty
294 to support all state policies at the level of their entity, most actors interpreted their actions

295 differently. Actors, rightly or wrongly, continued to develop prejudices to discredit the chiefs
296 and/or to please them. Furthermore, at the level of the other CGDES as well, the village chiefs
297 interfered in the management of the school.

298 This is the case here with a school whose action plan is funded by partners. Indeed, the
299 village chief interfered through his family. The latter holds the key positions on the committee
300 (the presidency and the treasury). The holders of these positions used their social status to
301 influence the committee's decisions in their favor. Thus, with the aim of improving the
302 students' level through the extra course, the president decided to teach this course to the
303 students because he has a secondary level. Since this course was paid at 250f per hour, in
304 collusion with the other members, he influenced the population to oppose the director
305 teaching the course. This behavior disturbed some actors who benefited nothing from the
306 management and demotivated them from further involvement in CGDES activities. It also
307 affected the school's director's involvement in the management of the committee, as he felt
308 unsupported. This showed that the first action plan developed by the CGDES is, in a way, a
309 mere formality. The committee develops it to claim to receive additional action plan grants.
310 Furthermore, in the same vein, Dodo and Lugaz (2011) in their research, raise the issue of
311 interference by the chief in the management of a school. The director of the latter was
312 transferred following a dispute with the canton chief in the context of setting up the FC office.
313 They explain the director's statement as follows: "It was a question of setting up the office of
314 the Communal Federation of COGES (FCC). The COGES Relay Observer (OR) from the
315 department asked me to take him to the canton chief in order to inform him personally, even
316 though I had already done so, about the holding of the elective general assembly of the
317 members of the FC office.

318 After the departure of the latter, the chief called me to inform me that there was no question of
319 holding elections in his canton and that, besides, he had a candidate who was to be appointed
320 president. Despite attempts at explanation supported by texts, he refused to understand
321 anything. When the chief of the canton's candidate lost the elections, he notified me not to
322 contact him anymore for school-related matters and at the end of the year, he pressured the
323 inspector and instructed that I be assigned outside his canton. Which was done.

324 Furthermore, regarding political interference in school management, this affected the
325 assignments of teachers. The analysis of field data showed that this phenomenon affected only
326 25% of all the CGDES visited. Political actors interfered in the functioning of the institutions
327 by assigning their militants to a given locality in order to preserve or promote an electorate.
328 Some teachers, being on the same side as a politician, were soliciting a reward to assign them
329 to areas not far from or less distant from the municipal headquarters. These assignments
330 disrupted the functioning of the CGDES. Still regarding the interference of political actors in
331 the functioning of schools, a member of a CGDES explained that he had fallen victim to it.
332 Unlike the previous cases, for him this interference was to his disadvantage. He expressed
333 himself in these terms:

334 Because of a teacher, a lady related to an influential politician, I was assigned not even at the
335 level of the same inspection, but on behalf of another. The problem is that the lady assigned to
336 my school only showed up twice throughout the whole year. I reported it to my superiors by
337 writing them a letter, but there was no follow-up. Thus, during a workshop, I mentioned the
338 case, and it cost me the assignment to be at this level, leaving everything I had undertaken
339 there. (Interview conducted on 02/25/2017 with members of CGDES/SG of the Medersa
340 Droum school)

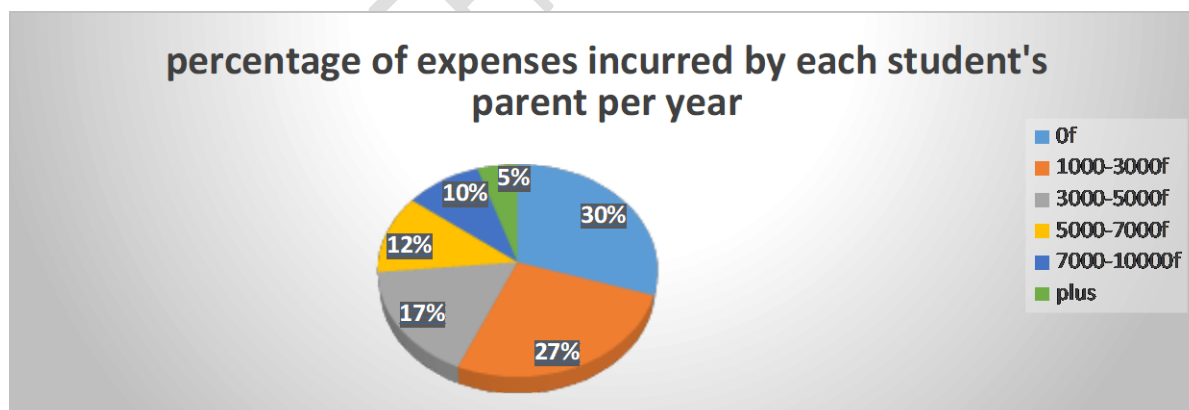
341 **3.1.2.2 Negative connotation of school by the actors**

342 Although the number of CGDES who mentioned this phenomenon in the analysis does not
 343 reach the average at 45%, they nevertheless assert that there are still parents who have a poor
 344 perception of school, and this can be justified for, among other reasons: First of all, the school
 345 is not adapted to the realities of the country in general and of the commune in particular; some
 346 actors, especially opinion leaders who are not informed, find the flaw to discredit it. This
 347 creates reluctance and low participation from the actors. The latter are influenced by this
 348 category of marabouts, opinion leaders, so that they do not send their children to school. They
 349 perceive that by being in school, these children would not have enough time to attend Quranic
 350 schools, which they consider mandatory before reaching maturity. Then, most parents, even if
 351 it is their children who are teaching, talk a lot about the issue of the drop in standards
 352 following the massive recruitment of contract teachers without any initial training. The event
 353 of the financial crisis also contributed to tarnishing the image of many teachers who were
 354 forced to take out loans from villagers because of their unpaid salaries. Finally, another
 355 phenomenon that also prevented the school from being accepted by everyone in the Droum
 356 commune is the situation of outputs. Indeed, the actors relied on the observation to show that
 357 since the creation of the school in the village, the number of their members who have
 358 succeeded is very insignificant. They perceive that success at the school today is reduced to
 359 the teaching career. This means that, for many of them, it is better to go into business than to
 360 be a contract teacher. Nowadays, this phenomenon constituted a real obstacle to the
 361 involvement of stakeholders in the development of the school because they somewhat
 362 considered it a waste of time or only as a means allowing them to know how to read and write
 363 to keep up with the evolution of the world with all the new technologies.

364 3.1.2.3 Influence of education costs

365 This refers to parental expenses that negatively affect their financial participation in CGDES
 366 activities. Direct costs are not included. For this research, it is important to analyze the
 367 influence of these indirect costs on the funding of CGDES activities through Figure 2.

368 **Figure 2: Distribution of the school's indirect cost**



369

370 **Source: Field data, February-March 2017.**

371 These perpetual expenses made for children cause parents to be reluctant in response to the
 372 financial requests of the CGDES. After analyzing the financing deficit factors related to the
 373 CGDES, it is now necessary to also examine those of the FC.

374 3.2 Operation and Funding Deficit of the FC: Shared Responsibilities

375 3.2.1 Operation and Funding Deficit of the FC/CGDES

376 As mentioned above, the FC/CGDES operates according to the decree establishing it
377 regarding the holding of AGs. It holds three (3) AGs each year in ordinary session at the
378 convocation of its President. To this effect, the FC/CGDES, after having developed its action
379 plan amounting to 250,000f to 500,000f, presents it to the administrative and customary
380 authorities as well as to development partners. It also centralizes each year the action plans of
381 all CGDES that are part of its entity. However, the analysis of the functioning of the
382 FC/CGDES showed that it was not performing all its duties. Indeed, for the past five (05)
383 years, it had carried out the awareness campaign only once. Yet, a SG of a CGDES speaking
384 about the importance of the latter said the following:

385 The awareness caravan led by the FC/CGDES in our village did us a lot of good. It allowed
386 the population to become more involved in the functioning of the school, and it also
387 encouraged them to enroll children in preschool education, which today makes it easier for us
388 to admit students to the first year of primary school, unlike before. The visit from the
389 FC/CGDES also motivated us to conduct mini CAPED sessions for capacity building of
390 teachers, especially those newly hired without any initial training. You know, the village
391 population is more motivated when they feel considered by seeing other members and not just
392 those from the CGDES mobilizing them. (Interview conducted on 03/09/2017 with the
393 members of CGDES/president of the Kogo school).

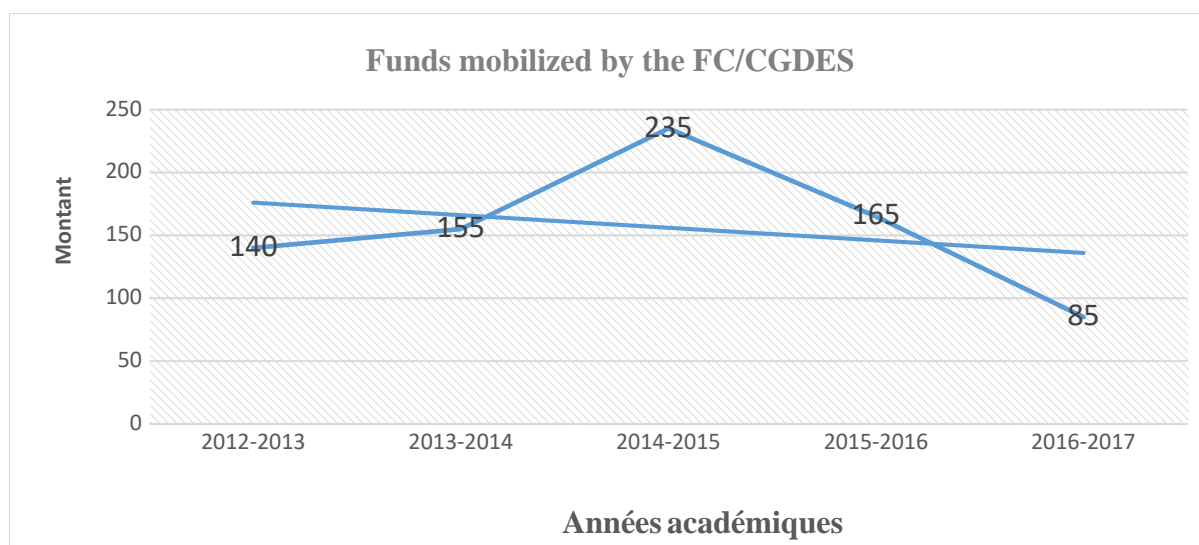
394 This proved the failure of the FC/CGDES in one of its responsibilities (see paragraph 4 of
395 article 4 of the decree establishing it) over the past three years, as no awareness-raising
396 activities were carried out during this period. Furthermore, even regarding the fulfillment of
397 its responsibilities that appear essential according to paragraphs 1 and 3 of article 4 of the
398 decree establishing it—respectively, the monitoring and coordination of CGDES actions, and
399 the supervision and training of members of the CGDES offices in areas related to
400 organizational and financial management, communication, and advocacy—the FC/CGDES
401 did not play its role. It did not provide any supervision to the CGDES.

402 On the contrary, it requested their integration fees (3000f for newly integrated CGDES
403 members and 2000f for mandatory participation in the activities of the FC/CGDES). The fund
404 she mobilized is intended solely for the organization of General Assemblies. Whereas in other
405 municipalities, such as Dogo and Mirriah, their FC/CGDES put their modest contribution into
406 improving study conditions, especially by addressing the problem of insufficient desks in the
407 classrooms (Ibrahim, 2012) and the IEB report of Dogo (2014-2015). In addition, it should be
408 noted that the FC/CGDES is responsible for conducting advocacy/lobbying campaigns with
409 school partners. However, this responsibility has not been fulfilled to date. As a result, the
410 municipality of Droum suffered the most from the lack of partners. This was part of the
411 reasons for the PAQUE project intervention in the municipality very recently, an intervention
412 guided by public authorities.

413 Yet, normally, it is the role of the communal federation to inform the State through
414 hierarchical channels by submitting a request or verbally reminding the inspectors or the focal
415 point of their situation of lack of partners. Which further proved another point of irregularity
416 in the fulfillment of its missions. She was content with only a few contributions that were
417 barely paid by the CGDES. This year, just like the CGDES, the FC/CGDES had not, up until
418 the conduct of the survey in February and March, held its mid-term review general assembly,
419 which, according to the regulations, was supposed to be held in February. The actors, at 85%,
420 said that they were neither consulted nor informed about any actions. In view of the above,
421 members aware of the situation of the deterioration of the FC's actions disengage from all
422 their responsibilities as if they had nothing to do with the management. They consider the
423 core of the problem to be the insufficiency of funds allocated for the execution of the

424 developed action plan. What is important for the research is to analyze these funds through
425 this chart 3.

426 **Chart 3: the situation of funds mobilized by the FC/CGDES**



427

428 **Source: Field data, February-March, 2017**

429 It appears from the chart the situation of funds mobilized by the FC/CGDES over five (05)
430 consecutive school years, from 2012-2013 to 2016-2017. Indeed, it can be observed through
431 this chart that the maximum level of mobilization reached was 235 thousand during the 2014-
432 2015 school year. The dynamism in actions and the fundraising strategy demonstrated by the
433 members of the FC/CGDES at the time, notably the president and the secretary general,
434 justified the amount raised that year. The members, in addition to contributions from the
435 CGDES and the municipality, conducted collections from individuals to carry out these
436 activities. Thus, between the years 2012 to 2015, the chart shows a slight and a large variation
437 in fund mobilization, respectively ranging from 140 thousand FCFA (2012-2013) to 155
438 thousand FCFA (2013-2014) and 235 thousand FCFA (2014-2015).

439 This amount mobilized had not even been sufficient to cover the expenses for holding regular
440 AGs. As a result, they were unable to hold the second mid-term review AG, the AG that was
441 supposed to be held in February. Overall, the observed trend curve shows a fundamental
442 decline in the funding of actions carried out by the FC. In the face of this situation of the FC's
443 fund deficit, responsibilities were shared at three levels (the members of the FC, the
444 Commune, and the Public Authorities).

445 **3.2.2 Shared Responsibilities**

446 **3.2.2.1 Members of the FC**

447 Just as at the level of the CGDES, within the FC, the responsibility of its members is engaged
448 regarding the fund deficit for the execution of duties. The following reasons can prove this.
449 Firstly, in analyzing the functioning of the FC as explained by the members, it emerged that
450 they were unaware of the text. Apart from the SG who for a long time played almost alone the
451 role of the other members in the outgoing office, the office recognized that one of the
452 problems facing the FC is the lack of knowledge of the texts by most of its members. The
453 irony for this office is that it has not yet sought the assistance of the departmental focal point
454 to obtain the documents, if only the support tool. It turned out that mastering the latter would
455 be an asset for rational and efficient management. Secondly, due to the lack of knowledge and

456 mastery of the texts, the members have no initiatives or strategies for fundraising, except that
457 in 2014, the former office, in accordance with article 15 of the order dealing with the financial
458 issue as mentioned above, requested and received a contribution of fifty-five (55) thousand
459 francs from the two national deputies, which was used solely for the organization of AGMs
460 and meetings. Nevertheless, during the year 2017, the secretary in charge of information and
461 relations with partners had drafted a request with the intention of presenting it to partners for
462 potential funding. Apart from this advocacy, no strategy had been adopted by the members to
463 mobilize funds. The members, 79% of whom had no training, had not conducted the handover
464 process under normal conditions. Thirdly, 60% of the members do not participate in the
465 office's activities. The unavailability of members was also noted due to their accumulation of
466 functions, as in the case of the CGDES. However, the text (MEN) clearly specified in a nota
467 bene within the roles and functions of the members and selection criteria that 'members of the
468 office must demonstrate leadership and have the capacity to mobilize and manage a team.
469 They must also inspire confidence and show commitment and availability.' Adherence to
470 selection criteria constitutes one of the essential conditions for the proper functioning of the
471 office. It is therefore difficult for members who have not fulfilled all these conditions to be
472 able to effectively mobilize sufficient resources.

473 While the text emphasized the financial issue by mentioning that "the funding resources for
474 activities constitute one of the priority axes of the FCs because the insufficiency of financial
475 resources constitutes an obstacle to the implementation of their actions. To this end, it is
476 necessary to establish a funding mechanism for activities that is functional, sustainable, and
477 effective." This was not the case at the level of the Droum FC, where almost everything was
478 centered at the level of the SG. The latter, overwhelmed, had difficulty properly coordinating
479 the actions of the structure. Thus, after the role played by the members, it is important to
480 understand that of the Commune.

481 **3.2.2.2 Responsibility of the commune**

482 The FC operates under the administrative supervision of the municipality (see Article 3 of the
483 decree). In the era of decentralization, it is the municipality's responsibility to monitor the
484 implementation of state educational policy within its jurisdiction, using the FC and CGDES as
485 pillars on the ground. This is why, in its educational role, each municipality supports these
486 structures in order to carry out their missions. However, according to field results, at the level
487 of Droum, the municipality did not fully assume its function. Indeed, since the establishment
488 of the FC, the municipality has only participated in funding to the extent of 60,000F per year
489 due to 20,000F during each general assembly.

490 According to its authorities, it extends its contribution to equip schools with infrastructure.
491 This was testified by the CGDES of a school, noting that the municipality began the
492 construction of a semi-hard classroom in their school, which, until the field survey was
493 conducted, had not been completed for three (03) years. In 2017, the FC only received five
494 (05) thousand francs as a contribution from the municipality on the pretext that it had not been
495 informed in advance. However, Figure 2 illustrates the effort made by the municipality with
496 the support of partners. Both have built school latrines in a few schools in the municipality,
497 eight of which are part of the sample of this research. These latrines fall within the framework
498 of promoting hygiene and health within educational institutions.



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508 **Board 2: The school latrines built by the municipality and the partners Source: Camera**
509 **2017/03/08-06017 and 06018.jpg/field February-March 2017**

510 This board showed us the achievements made by the municipal authority in the management
511 of schools, particularly in the area of school hygiene. Over four (04) consecutive years, the
512 town hall had built only two (02) latrines and had purchased a piece of land intended to host
513 the construction of a latrine built by partners working on school hygiene. Despite the effort
514 made by the municipal authority in purchasing the small space between the classrooms and
515 the latrines for 80 thousand francs, as shown in the image on the right, it can be said that it
516 had lagged significantly in this area. As a result, the latrines were insufficient for all the
517 schools; only eight (08) out of twenty (20) schools visited had them, a rate of 40%. Also, for
518 the first time, during the 2016-2017 year, it had provided travel expenses to the pedagogical
519 advisor of the Droum sector for supervising teachers and conducting CAPED.

520 **3.2.2.3 Public authorities**

521 At the national level, a system for monitoring/supporting the activities of CGDES and
522 FC/CGDES was established by decree No. 00031/MEP/A/PLN/EC/SG/DL of January 29,
523 2016. Regarding this research, the monitoring system is represented by the departmental focal
524 point based at the primary education inspection of Mirriah and by the sectoral educational
525 advisor of Droum from the primary education inspection of Dogo. Indeed, each of these
526 supports, in their respective capacity, the FC/CGDES in its operation. Thus, the educational
527 advisor wrote reports for his inspection on the activities of the FC. As for the departmental
528 focal point, he represented the CGDES Coordination Unit at the departmental level (IEB
529 Mirriah). He was responsible for accomplishing three (03) main missions overall: monitoring
530 the activities of the FC and the CGDES, coordinating all activities related to the decentralized
531 management of the school by harmonizing the interventions of partners, and preparing
532 periodic and annual reports on the activities of the FC/CGDES and the CGDES of the
533 department. He managed to carry out most of his tasks well before the revision of the text in
534 recent years. Members of the FC/CGDES and the CGDES of the commune stated that he fully
535 played his role as a supervisor in the sense that he not only regularly attended general
536 assemblies but also supported the structures in carrying out their activities. However, it should
537 be noted that the lack of necessary resources, especially an efficient means of transportation
538 (cross motorcycle) to travel across the entire department in time, greatly hindered the
539 monitoring/support system. During the 2016-2017 year up until the conduct of the research,
540 the State had not allocated resources intended for the fulfillment of the focal point's missions.
541 Furthermore, it should be added that the withdrawal of subsidies to the FC by the State greatly
542 hindered its operation and even its financing. Indeed, previously, the public authorities
543 subsidized the FC's operations to the tune of 250 thousand francs. Thus, it was these subsidies
544 and training allowances that led the actors to actively participate in the management of the
545 school. They paid their dues and attended meetings and general assemblies in large numbers,
546 hoping sooner or later to be integrated into the board and enjoy the same privileges as the
547 other elected members. But the withdrawal of subsidies by the State on the pretext that they

548 were granted on an experimental basis led to a disengagement of some members regarding
549 their missions to be accomplished for the FC. Which has considerably reduced the financial
550 participation of the actors within the framework of decentralized school management at the
551 municipal level.

552 **Conclusion**

553 Throughout this research on: "Financing Methods of Decentralized Management Committees
554 of School Institutions (CGDES) and the Communal Federation of said Committees
555 (FC/CGDES) in the commune of Droum in Niger," the issue of the funding deficit for the
556 activities of these two structures was addressed. Indeed, the establishment of the FC/CGDES
557 and the CGDES reflects the national and international commitments of the Nigerian
558 government in favor of the education sector, notably achieving the goals of EFA 2015 and
559 sustainable development in education, whose corollaries are, respectively, the universalization
560 of primary education, equality and access for all to quality education, and finally the
561 promotion of lifelong learning opportunities. It is in this perspective that a tight system of
562 control and monitoring has been developed at the level of all administrative representations in
563 the country. This work is carried out at the decentralized level by the FC/CGDES and the
564 CGDES. At the level of the Commune of Droum, the establishment of these structures, which
565 coincides with decentralization, creates a new method of multipartite partnership work. Thus,
566 through this partnership, progress has been recorded in the educational field, particularly in
567 the area of access, where the gross enrollment rate in CI and the school enrollment rate
568 increased from 16% in 2006 to 52% in 2012 (IEB Report, 2011-2012).

569 However, irregularities are to be noted, particularly regarding quality, where the FC/CGDES
570 and the CGDES do not have sufficient resources to make available to the schools. The main
571 causes of this financial insufficiency since 2012 are attributable to the mode of operation of
572 these structures. The latter had played a major role in their low mobilization capacity. Indeed,
573 70% of the committee members are illiterate. In such circumstances, it is difficult for them to
574 grasp the extent of their role, especially since everything is governed by texts. In the same
575 vein, the lack of initiative and method in fund mobilization among 61% of the CGDES
576 constitutes an additional factor that prevents achieving the expected recovery rate.
577 Furthermore, aside from the lack of transparency raised by 12% of respondents, one must also
578 mention the interference of politicians and traditional leaders, not to mention the indirect costs
579 of the school and the low involvement of the Commune, which affect the functioning and
580 financing of the FC/CGDES and the CGDES. This keeps the latter mired in a funding deficit.

581 Thus, all in all, it should be noted that the lack of funds allocated for carrying out the
582 activities of the FC and the CGDES observed at the level of the Droum commune justifies the
583 irregularity and ineffectiveness of decentralization at the local level. Public authorities are
584 unable to provide communes with sufficient resources and to convince parents that the
585 education of their children must be a major and daily concern.

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