

Article

Impact of Banditry, Terrorism and Kidnapping on Education Management in Kogi State, Nigeria

Esther Amina Akuh*¹

1. Department of Educational Management and Planning, Faculty of Education, Federal University Lokoja, Kogi State, Nigeria

*Correspondence: amina.aku@fulokoja.edu.ng

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Abstract: The increasing incidence of banditry, terrorism, and kidnapping has emerged as one of the greatest threats to educational development in Nigeria. Although Kogi State has historically been regarded as relatively peaceful compared to some states in the North-West and North-East, recent years have witnessed a rise in violent crimes, particularly kidnapping along major highways, attacks on rural communities, and abductions involving educational institutions. These security challenges have adversely affected the planning, administration, financing, supervision, and delivery of education across the state. This paper examines the impact of banditry, terrorism, and kidnapping on education management in Kogi State. Using documentary evidence from scholarly literature, government reports, and international organizations, the study discusses six major impacts: disruption of academic programmes, declining student enrolment and retention, shortage of educational personnel, increased security expenditure, destruction and underutilization of educational facilities, and psychological trauma affecting educational outcomes. The paper argues that the persistent insecurity experienced in parts of Kogi State threatens the achievement of national educational objectives and the Sustainable Development Goal 4 on quality education. The study concludes that education management cannot function effectively without a secure learning environment and recommends stronger collaboration among government, security agencies, host communities, school managers, and development partners to safeguard educational institutions.

Keywords: Banditry, terrorism, kidnapping, education management, educational security, Kogi State, Nigeria.

Introduction

Education is widely recognized as a strategic instrument for national development because it equips individuals with knowledge, skills, values, and competencies needed for sustainable economic growth and social transformation. In Nigeria, education management encompasses the planning, organization, coordination, supervision, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of educational programmes to achieve predetermined goals. Effective education management depends on a peaceful and secure environment in which learners, teachers, administrators, and other stakeholders can carry out their responsibilities without fear. Nigeria has experienced growing insecurity arising from terrorism, banditry, kidnapping, armed robbery, communal conflicts, and other forms of organized violence. These security challenges have become major obstacles to educational development across many parts of the country. While insurgency has been particularly severe in the North-East, banditry and kidnapping have expanded into the North-Central region, including Kogi State [1]. The state's

strategic location as the "Gateway to Abuja" and a link between northern and southern Nigeria has made it vulnerable to criminal activities, especially along major highways and rural communities.

Kogi State has recorded several cases of kidnappings involving students, teachers, traditional rulers, commuters, and residents. The abduction of students from the Confluence University of Science and Technology, Osara, in April 2024 demonstrated that higher education institutions are no longer insulated from organized criminal attacks. Such incidents create fear among parents, students, teachers, and educational managers while disrupting the normal functioning of schools and universities. Reports from security agencies and international organizations indicate that attacks on educational institutions reduce school attendance, increase dropout rates, discourage teacher retention, and compel governments to divert scarce educational resources toward emergency security measures rather than instructional improvement [2], [3].

Education management involves ensuring that schools operate efficiently through proper planning, staffing, funding, supervision, curriculum implementation, infrastructure maintenance, quality assurance, and policy execution. Persistent insecurity undermines each of these responsibilities by limiting access to schools, disrupting academic calendars, damaging educational infrastructure, increasing administrative costs, and weakening monitoring and evaluation activities. School leaders are increasingly required to devote significant time and resources to crisis management instead of educational development. Kogi State has not been immune to these challenges. Schools located in rural and forested communities face heightened security risks, while institutions situated near highways contend with fears of kidnapping and armed attacks. These conditions affect enrolment decisions, staff deployment, and educational planning. Consequently, understanding the implications of insecurity for education management is essential for designing policies that ensure continuity of learning and institutional resilience [4]. This paper therefore examines the impact of banditry, terrorism, and kidnapping on education management in Kogi State, Nigeria, with emphasis on how these security threats influence the administration and effective delivery of education.

Conceptual Terms

Concept Education Management

Education management refers to the systematic process of planning, organizing, coordinating, directing, supervising, controlling, and evaluating human, financial, material, and technological resources within an educational system to achieve institutional goals and improve teaching and learning outcomes. It involves the effective administration of educational institutions and programmes through appropriate decision-making, leadership practices, policy implementation, resource allocation, and monitoring mechanisms. According to UNESCO, education management involves the administrative and organizational arrangements required to mobilize resources such as teachers, infrastructure, instructional materials, and equipment to deliver quality education services [5]. It emphasizes the effective organization and utilization of educational resources, supported by accurate information systems, for planning, monitoring, evaluation, and decision-making at different levels of the education sector.

The UNESCO Thesaurus conceptualizes educational management as the management of educational establishments, including school administration, academic management, and institutional leadership. This implies that education management covers the processes through which educational institutions are governed and operated to ensure effective achievement of educational objectives. Bush defines educational management as the process of coordinating educational resources and activities through effective leadership and administrative practices to achieve educational goals.

According to this perspective, education management is concerned with how educational leaders organize people, policies, programmes, and resources to improve institutional effectiveness [6]. In the Nigerian context, education management can be defined as the process through which educational administrators at federal, state, and institutional levels plan, coordinate, supervise, and control educational activities, including staffing, budgeting, curriculum implementation, quality assurance, and policy execution, to ensure the attainment of national educational objectives. Education management refers to the activities and processes undertaken by educational administrators, school leaders, and policymakers in Kogi State to plan, organize, coordinate, supervise, finance, and evaluate educational programmes and resources for effective teaching and learning. It includes academic planning, personnel management, resource allocation, infrastructure management, security management, and policy implementation [7].

Concept of Banditry

Banditry refers to organized violent criminal activities perpetrated by armed groups for economic gain or territorial control. In the Nigerian context, banditry encompasses offences such as armed robbery, cattle rustling, kidnapping for ransom, murder, rape, attacks on villages, destruction of property, and other forms of violent crime committed by loosely organized criminal groups. Unlike terrorism, the primary motivation for banditry is generally financial rather than ideological or political. According to the European Union Agency for Asylum, banditry in Nigeria is "a multifaceted crime encompassing acts such as armed robbery, murder, rape, kidnapping, cattle rustling, armed attacks, and raids targeting local communities" committed by fragmented armed groups operating across several regions of the country [8]. Osasona describes armed banditry in Nigeria as the activities of violent non-state criminal groups involved in kidnapping for ransom, armed robbery, cattle rustling, attacks on farmers and travellers, and other organized criminal acts driven primarily by economic motives.

Concept of Terrorism

Terrorism is the unlawful use or threat of violence against individuals, communities, or property with the intention of intimidating a population or compelling a government or international organization to perform or refrain from performing a particular act. Terrorist acts are usually politically, religiously, or ideologically motivated and are intended to create widespread fear and instability. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) explains that international legal instruments characterize terrorist acts as intentional acts of violence designed to intimidate populations or coerce governments and international organizations to achieve political, ideological, or religious objectives [9]. Terrorism has been manifested through attacks by extremist groups against civilians, schools, religious institutions, security agencies, and public infrastructure, resulting in significant loss of lives, displacement of populations, and disruption of socio-economic and educational activities.

Concept of Kidnapping

Kidnapping is the unlawful seizure, detention, or abduction of a person against his or her will through force, threat, fraud, or deception for the purpose of obtaining ransom, material benefit, political concessions, or compelling another person or authority to perform or refrain from performing a particular act. According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), kidnapping is defined as the unlawful detention and taking away of a person against his or her will, including through force, threat, fraud, or enticement, for the purpose of demanding an illicit gain,

economic benefit, or compelling another person to do or not do something [10]. Within the Nigerian context, kidnapping has evolved from isolated criminal incidents into a highly organized form of transnational and domestic crime. Victims include students, teachers, traditional rulers, business people, farmers, commuters, politicians, and religious leaders. In many parts of Nigeria, kidnapping for ransom has become a major source of financing for organized criminal and armed groups, posing serious threats to national security, economic development, and the education sector [11].

Methodology

Impact of banditry, terrorism, and kidnapping on education management in Kogi State, Nigeria

Disruption of Academic Programmes and School Administration

One of the most serious consequences of banditry, terrorism, and kidnapping is the disruption of academic programmes and the administration of educational institutions. Education management depends on the orderly implementation of academic calendars, regular classroom instruction, examinations, staff meetings, supervision, and curriculum delivery. Okoli, and Ugwu, notes that violent attacks often interrupt these activities, making it difficult for school managers to achieve institutional objectives. Bandit attacks and kidnapping incidents frequently force schools to suspend academic activities either temporarily or indefinitely. Following security threats, school administrators often close schools to protect students and staff. Such closures shorten instructional time, disrupt semester schedules, postpone examinations, and delay graduation. In many cases, academic calendars are repeatedly adjusted, creating uncertainty for students, teachers, and parents. This weakens the effectiveness of educational planning because institutional programmes can no longer be implemented according to established timelines. In Kogi State, the abduction of students from the Confluence University of Science and Technology, Osara, in April 2024 significantly disrupted academic activities. Teaching, administrative functions, and student movements were affected as the institution introduced additional security measures while government agencies coordinated rescue operations. The incident heightened anxiety across tertiary institutions in the state and underscored the vulnerability of educational institutions to organized criminal attacks. Primary and secondary schools in vulnerable rural communities also experience intermittent closures whenever security intelligence suggests imminent attacks. School heads may suspend classes, cancel extracurricular activities, or reduce school hours to minimize exposure to danger. Although these measures are necessary for safety, they reduce effective teaching time and compromise curriculum implementation.

Educational managers equally encounter difficulties in conducting supervision and quality assurance activities. Officers from the Ministry of Education, school inspectors, and quality assurance personnel may be reluctant to visit schools located in high-risk communities. As a result, classroom observation, monitoring of instructional quality, and compliance with educational standards become irregular. This weakens accountability and reduces the effectiveness of educational administration. Another important consequence is the disruption of examinations. Ogunode, and Adanna, opines that public examinations require extensive coordination involving examination bodies, school administrators, invigilators, and security personnel. Where insecurity persists, examinations may be postponed or relocated, while candidates encounter transportation difficulties and heightened anxiety. Such disruptions undermine confidence in the educational system and impose additional financial and administrative burdens on educational authorities. Banditry and kidnapping also interfere with institutional meetings, staff development programmes, and strategic planning. Educational managers increasingly devote attention to emergency security planning, crisis response, and liaison with security agencies instead of focusing on instructional improvement, curriculum

innovation, teacher development, and institutional expansion. Consequently, the strategic functions of education management become subordinated to crisis management. UNESCO notes that attacks on education significantly reduce access to learning and compromise educational continuity in conflict-affected societies. Similarly, UNICEF emphasizes that persistent insecurity contributes to prolonged school closures, learning losses, and deterioration in educational quality. Studies conducted within Nigeria likewise indicate that kidnapping and banditry have become major impediments to effective educational administration because school managers are compelled to prioritize security over academic development. The disruption of academic programmes represents one of the most damaging impacts of banditry, terrorism, and kidnapping on education management in Kogi State. Without sustained security, educational institutions cannot effectively implement academic calendars, supervise teaching, conduct examinations, or achieve the goals of quality education.

Decline in Students' Enrolment, Attendance and Retention

Banditry, terrorism, and kidnapping have significantly reduced students' enrolment, regular school attendance, and retention in educational institutions across many parts of Nigeria. Education management relies on stable student enrolment to facilitate effective planning, budgeting, staffing, infrastructure development, and curriculum implementation. Oladipo., Awoyinka, and Adefarakan, observed that persistent insecurity in Kogi State has created fear among parents, guardians, and students, leading many families to withdraw their children from schools perceived to be unsafe. Enrolment is a critical indicator used by educational managers to determine teacher requirements, classroom allocation, instructional materials, school grants, and infrastructural expansion. When insecurity discourages school participation, these planning processes become unreliable. Parents increasingly prefer to enrol their children in schools located in urban centres or safer communities, while others transfer them to private institutions with stronger security measures. Some families relocate entirely from insecure communities, thereby disrupting the education of their children. In Kogi State, the kidnapping of students at Confluence University of Science and Technology (CUSTECH), Osara, in April 2024 heightened public anxiety regarding the safety of tertiary institutions. Following the incident, many parents expressed concern about the security of their children, while prospective students reconsidered their admission decisions. Although government intervention and enhanced security restored confidence to some extent, the incident demonstrated how a single security breach can influence enrolment patterns and institutional reputation. UNICEF notes that insecurity disproportionately affects girls' education by increasing school dropout, absenteeism, and vulnerability to exploitation. Reduced enrolment and retention create significant administrative challenges. Government funding allocations are often based on student population. Consequently, declining enrolment may reduce institutional funding, thereby affecting the provision of teaching materials, laboratory equipment, library resources, and maintenance of educational facilities. School managers may also encounter difficulties justifying requests for additional teachers or infrastructural expansion where enrolment figures continue to decline. Persistent insecurity further affects educational planning at the state level. The Ministry of Education depends on accurate enrolment statistics for teacher recruitment, budget preparation, policy formulation, and educational forecasting. Where insecurity causes unpredictable fluctuations in school populations, long-term planning becomes increasingly difficult. UNESCO observed that attacks on education discourage school attendance and contribute to significant learning losses in conflict-affected regions. According to UNICEF, insecurity remains one of the leading causes of school exclusion among children in several parts of Nigeria. Okoli and Ugwu similarly reported that kidnapping and armed violence have negatively influenced enrolment, attendance, and retention in Nigerian educational institutions,

thereby undermining educational development. From the perspective of education management, declining enrolment, poor attendance, and increasing dropout rates reduce institutional effectiveness and threaten the attainment of national educational objectives. Sustained improvement in access to education therefore depends on creating a secure learning environment that reassures parents, teachers, and students.

Result and Discussion

Loss of Teachers, Educational Administrators and Other Personnel

Another major consequence of banditry, terrorism, and kidnapping is the loss of qualified teachers, educational administrators, and other personnel through displacement, transfer requests, resignation, early retirement, or refusal to accept postings to high-risk areas. Human resources constitute the most valuable asset in any educational system, and effective education management depends largely on the availability, motivation, and retention of competent personnel. Teachers are the principal implementers of educational policies and curriculum objectives. Likewise, principals, head teachers, deans, registrars, and other administrators coordinate institutional planning, supervision, quality assurance, and resource management. However, insecurity exposes these personnel to physical danger and psychological stress, making many unwilling to remain in vulnerable schools [12]. In Kogi State, schools located in remote communities bordering forests or major highways experience greater difficulty attracting and retaining qualified teachers because of fears associated with kidnapping and armed attacks. Many teachers seek redeployment to urban schools where security is relatively better, while others request transfers to neighbouring states or resign from public service altogether. Consequently, rural schools often operate with inadequate teaching staff, thereby increasing teacher workload and reducing instructional quality. The fear of kidnapping also affects administrators. Principals and head teachers are responsible for supervising staff, organizing school activities, engaging with parents, and representing schools during official assignments. Where insecurity persists, these responsibilities become increasingly hazardous. Educational managers may avoid official travel, postpone supervisory visits, or limit community engagement due to security concerns [13]. Such restrictions weaken institutional leadership and reduce administrative effectiveness. Higher education institutions are equally affected. University lecturers and researchers require peaceful environments for teaching, supervision of students, fieldwork, conferences, and collaborative research. Security threats discourage academic mobility and reduce participation in scholarly activities. Some academics decline appointments in institutions located within areas perceived to be insecure, thereby contributing to shortages of experienced faculty members. Psychological effects further compound the problem. Teachers and administrators who experience or witness violent attacks often suffer anxiety, depression, emotional exhaustion, and reduced job satisfaction. UNESCO reported that insecurity contributes significantly to teacher displacement, absenteeism, and shortages in conflict-affected educational systems [14]. The Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack similarly found that attacks against schools and education personnel discourage teacher deployment and undermine the stability of educational institutions. Okoli and Ugwu further argued that kidnapping and banditry have contributed to declining teacher morale, increased staff migration, and weakened educational administration in Nigeria.

Increased Financial Burden on Education Management Due to Security Expenditure

Banditry, terrorism, and kidnapping have imposed enormous financial pressures on education management in Kogi State. Educational institutions require adequate financial resources to provide quality teaching, recruit competent personnel, maintain infrastructure, procure instructional

materials, and support research and innovation [15]. However, the growing threat of insecurity has compelled governments and school administrators to divert substantial portions of education budgets toward security-related expenditures. This shift reduces the resources available for core educational activities and ultimately affects the quality of education. Education management involves according to Zaifada, Olowonefa, and Ogunode, prudent allocation and utilization of financial resources to achieve educational goals. Under normal circumstances, educational budgets are expected to prioritize classroom construction, laboratories, libraries, teacher development, instructional technology, and students' welfare [16]. However, the emergence of kidnapping and banditry has altered expenditure priorities. Schools now spend considerable amounts on perimeter fencing, surveillance cameras, security lighting, access control systems, communication gadgets, security personnel, emergency response equipment, and other protective measures. Following the abduction of students from the Confluence University of Science and Technology (CUSTECH), Osara, in 2024, the Kogi State Government and university authorities strengthened campus security by increasing collaboration with security agencies and implementing additional protective measures. Although these interventions were necessary, they required financial resources that could otherwise have been invested in academic programmes, research facilities, staff development, and student support services. The financial implications extend beyond tertiary institutions [17]. Public primary and secondary schools also incur additional costs for employing local vigilantes, constructing security gates, installing alarm systems, and organizing security awareness programmes. School administrators are increasingly required to budget for emergency preparedness rather than focusing exclusively on educational improvement. UNESCO observed that insecurity compels governments to redirect educational resources toward emergency responses, thereby reducing investments in educational quality and expansion. Similarly, the World Bank reported that conflict and violence increase the cost of delivering education while simultaneously reducing the efficiency of public expenditure [18]. GCPEA further noted that attacks on educational institutions generate significant economic losses through infrastructure damage, security expenditure, and interrupted learning.

Destruction and Underutilization of Educational Infrastructure and Learning Resources

Educational infrastructure constitutes one of the most important resources required for effective teaching, learning, and educational administration. Classrooms, laboratories, libraries, administrative buildings, information and communication technology facilities, hostels, and recreational centres provide the physical environment necessary for quality education. Unfortunately, banditry, terrorism, and kidnapping have contributed to the destruction, abandonment, and underutilization of these facilities in many parts of Nigeria, including vulnerable communities in Kogi State. Education management includes planning, maintenance, utilization, and protection of educational facilities [19], [20]. When insecurity becomes widespread, educational managers encounter serious challenges in safeguarding school infrastructure. Criminal attacks often damage buildings, destroy equipment, and interrupt maintenance activities [21]. Even where facilities remain physically intact, fear of attacks may prevent their effective utilization. In Kogi State, heightened insecurity has compelled some schools to suspend boarding operations, reduce evening academic activities, and restrict access to laboratories, libraries, and sporting facilities. Educational institutions that previously organized evening lectures, tutorials, seminars, and extracurricular programmes now limit these activities because of security concerns. Consequently, available educational facilities are not utilized to their full capacity. Schools located in isolated rural communities experience additional infrastructural challenges. Construction and maintenance projects are sometimes delayed because contractors, engineers, and suppliers are reluctant to work in insecure areas [22]. This prolongs the

completion of classroom buildings, laboratories, and staff offices, thereby affecting the quality of educational service delivery. In some instances, educational facilities are converted into temporary shelters for displaced persons or security personnel during periods of heightened insecurity. While such interventions may be necessary for humanitarian reasons, they interrupt normal school operations and accelerate the deterioration of educational infrastructure [23]. Classrooms occupied for non-academic purposes often require substantial rehabilitation before learning can resume. Learning resources are equally affected. Laboratory equipment, computers, library materials, and instructional aids may become inaccessible because schools remain closed for extended periods or because students and teachers avoid certain facilities due to security concerns. Equipment that is left unused for prolonged periods often deteriorates, reducing its educational value. The inability to utilize available infrastructure efficiently also affects educational planning. Government may continue investing in facilities that remain underutilized because of insecurity, thereby reducing the overall return on public investment. Educational managers are therefore unable to maximize the benefits of capital expenditure allocated to infrastructure development [24]. The Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack similarly documented that conflict and insecurity contribute to the destruction, abandonment, and underutilization of school facilities across several countries, including Nigeria. The World Bank further argued that conflict reduces the effectiveness of investments in educational infrastructure because facilities cannot be fully utilized under conditions of insecurity.

Psychological Trauma, Poor Learning Outcomes and Weakening of Educational Planning and Policy Implementation

One of the most profound but often underestimated consequences of banditry, terrorism, and kidnapping is their psychological impact on students, teachers, educational administrators, and parents. Education management extends beyond the provision of physical facilities and instructional materials; it also involves creating an environment that promotes emotional well-being, effective teaching, meaningful learning, and sound educational planning [25]. When insecurity becomes persistent, the psychological health of education stakeholders deteriorates, leading to poor educational outcomes and weakening the implementation of educational policies. Students exposed to violent incidents or constant threats of kidnapping often experience fear, anxiety, depression, sleep disorders, and post-traumatic stress symptoms. These psychological conditions reduce concentration, memory retention, classroom participation, and motivation to learn [26]. Learners who witness attacks or know victims of kidnapping frequently develop feelings of insecurity that negatively influence their academic performance. Even where schools remain open, learning becomes less effective because students are preoccupied with concerns about their personal safety rather than academic activities. Teachers are similarly affected. Persistent fear of attacks reduces morale, job satisfaction, and professional commitment. Nwankwo, Cymeh, Oji, & Echeonwu, observed that many teachers experience emotional exhaustion arising from uncertainty regarding their safety and that of their students. Such psychological stress affects lesson preparation, classroom management, assessment practices, and relationships with learners. Consequently, the quality of teaching declines, ultimately reducing students' learning outcomes. Insecurity discourages the implementation of innovative educational programmes such as community-based learning, field trips, sporting competitions, educational excursions, agricultural education, and outdoor practical activities [27]. Many schools suspend these programmes to minimize security risks, thereby reducing students' opportunities for experiential learning and holistic development [28]. At the tertiary education level, insecurity affects research productivity and community engagement. Academic staff may be reluctant to undertake field research in rural communities, while universities postpone outreach programmes

because of security concerns. These developments undermine the teaching, research, and community service responsibilities that constitute the core mandate of Nigerian higher education institutions. UNESCO reported that conflict and violence have severe psychological consequences for learners and teachers, leading to reduced learning achievement and increased school dropout. UNICEF noted that insecurity negatively affects children's mental health, educational participation, and long-term development. The Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack further documented that attacks on schools significantly undermine educational planning, institutional resilience, and the continuity of learning in affected communities [29], [30].

Conclusion and Recommendations

Banditry, terrorism, and kidnapping have emerged as major threats to education management in Kogi State and Nigeria at large. Although Kogi State has not experienced the scale of violence recorded in some parts of the North-East and North-West, recent security incidents, particularly the kidnapping of students and increasing criminal activities along major transport corridors, demonstrate that the state is not immune to these challenges. The study has shown that insecurity disrupts academic programmes, reduces student enrolment and retention, contributes to shortages of qualified teachers and administrators, increases educational expenditure on security, limits the effective utilization of educational infrastructure, and causes psychological trauma that weakens teaching, learning, and educational planning.

These challenges significantly undermine the capacity of educational managers to achieve institutional objectives and implement government educational policies effectively. They also threaten Nigeria's commitment to providing equitable, inclusive, and quality education as envisioned in Sustainable Development Goal 4. Consequently, addressing insecurity should be regarded as an integral component of educational planning and management rather than solely as a security issue. A safe educational environment is indispensable for effective teaching, learning, research, innovation, and national development. Based on the findings, the study recommends the following:

The Federal and Kogi State Governments should strengthen security architecture around educational institutions through increased deployment of trained security personnel, surveillance technology, and rapid emergency response systems.

Educational institutions should establish comprehensive school safety and emergency preparedness plans, including regular security drills, early warning mechanisms, and crisis management committees.

Governments should provide adequate funding specifically for school security infrastructure such as perimeter fencing, CCTV surveillance systems, communication facilities, and access control mechanisms without compromising funding for teaching and learning.

Community leaders, traditional rulers, parents, and civil society organizations should collaborate with educational institutions and security agencies through community policing and intelligence-sharing initiatives to safeguard schools.

Counselling and psychosocial support services should be strengthened in schools to assist students, teachers, and administrators affected by insecurity and traumatic experiences.

The Kogi State Ministry of Education should integrate security risk assessment into educational planning, school location decisions, infrastructure development, and policy implementation to enhance institutional resilience.

Development partners, including UNICEF, UNESCO, and other international organizations, should continue supporting school safety initiatives, teacher capacity development, and psychosocial intervention programmes in vulnerable communities.

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