

THE DINA AS A COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE MECHANISM FOR STRENGTHENING EDUCATION IN ATSIMO ANDREFANA, MADAGASCAR

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Abstract

This study aims to explore the role of Dina as a community governance mechanism in supporting educational development in the rural municipalities of Milenaka, Ankililoaka, and Ankilimaliniky, located in the Atsimo-Andrefana region of Madagascar. Dina, a set of customary rules rooted in ancestral Malagasy traditions, has traditionally focused on maintaining public order, regulating social behavior, and resolving community conflicts. This study uses a qualitative case study approach, collecting data through semi-structured interviews, group discussions, and document analysis of local Dina regulations. 18 key informants participated, including mayors or vice mayors, Dina executive committee members, and representatives of youth, women, and persons with disabilities, ensuring diverse perspectives on governance and education. Thematic analysis was applied to identify patterns related to governance practices, community-based learning, and the integration of educational objectives within customary structures. Findings reveal that Dina remains primarily associated with social regulation. However, its participatory mechanisms enable the transmission of social norms, the promotion of school attendance, and the engagement of marginalized groups. Women, youth, and persons with disabilities play critical roles in enhancing Dina's educational potential. In contrast, challenges such as harsh enforcement practices, limited coordination with formal educational policy, and inconsistencies with constitutional principles constrain its effectiveness. The study concludes that reforming Dina to incorporate education-focused norms, fostering inclusive representation, and linking customary governance with local educational institutions can transform Dina into a culturally grounded, community-driven mechanism that supports both social cohesion and sustainable learning outcomes in rural Madagascar.

Keywords: *DINA, Governance, Education, Inclusion, Madagascar.*

Introduction

Community-based institutions continue to play a decisive role in shaping social organization and governance in many parts of Madagascar (Léa et al., 2025). Among these institutions, the Dina occupies a central role in regulating collective life within the fokonolona, the traditional community structure governing local social relations (Rakotoson & Tanner, 2006). The Dina refers to a set of customary rules collectively agreed upon by community members to maintain social harmony, manage conflicts, and ensure adherence to shared norms (Andriamalala & Gardner, 2010). Rooted in ancestral Malagasy traditions often associated with the practices of the "Ntaolo" Malagasy, this mechanism has historically functioned as a locally legitimate form of governance that complements state structures.

Communities adopt and enforce these rules through collective deliberation, symbolic sanctions, and moral authority derived from shared cultural values. Malagasy courts may formally homologate certain Dina agreements, allowing them to operate within the broader national legal framework (Bien-Aimé et al., 2025). This hybrid position between customary authority and state recognition has made the Dina an important institution for community regulation across many regions of the country.

In contemporary Madagascar, Dina is most widely associated with maintaining public order and community security (Oktari et al., 2025). Numerous local agreements focus on preventing cattle theft, regulating land use, or maintaining social discipline in rural areas. Such functions have been particularly visible in the southern and southwestern regions of the island, where state administrative capacity is often limited, and communities rely on customary governance mechanisms to manage everyday challenges (Eric et al., 2025). The region of Atsimo-Andrefana presents a distinctive setting in this regard. Characterized by significant cultural diversity and strong adherence to customary norms, the region has long relied on local institutions such as the Dina to regulate community life (Rakotoson & Tanner, 2006). Local leaders, elders, and community assemblies play an active role in establishing and enforcing these regulations, creating a governance environment that blends tradition with evolving social realities (Emynorane et al., 2026).

Public discourse surrounding Dina has generally focused on its role in security, conflict resolution, and the protection of community resources. Local agreements often emphasize sanctions related to theft, violence, or violations of communal land arrangements (Jailani et al., 2025). This orientation reflects the historical conditions under which Dina emerged as a mechanism for maintaining order in contexts where formal institutions were distant or insufficient. In many communities, Dina's legitimacy stems from collective consensus and moral obligations embedded in Malagasy cultural values such as *fiavianana*, respect for social harmony, and responsibility to the community (Andriamalala & Gardner, 2010). The participatory nature of the *fokonolona* allows members to deliberate on rules and sanctions that reflect their shared priorities.

Recent social transformations in Madagascar have introduced new challenges that extend beyond traditional security concerns. Educational development remains uneven across many regions, particularly in rural areas where access to resources, qualified teachers, and institutional support is limited (Daniele, 2021). Community participation has increasingly been recognized as an important factor in strengthening educational outcomes (Edwards et al., 2020). Local governance structures can influence school attendance, the protection of children's rights, and the promotion of inclusive learning environments. In regions where customary institutions continue to shape social behavior, the potential interaction between these institutions and educational development deserves careful examination (Augustin & Emynorane, 2025).

Scholarly discussions on the Dina have largely concentrated on its legal status, its role in community justice, and its interaction with formal state law. Studies in anthropology and legal studies have examined how customary regulations coexist with national legislation, sometimes fostering cooperation and sometimes generating tension (Bashir et al., 2021). Scholars have documented cases in which Dina contributes to local conflict resolution and social cohesion, as well as instances in which its enforcement methods raise concerns about legality or human rights protections (Domitrovich et al., 2025). Studies have also analyzed the role of local elites and traditional authorities in shaping Dina agreements and ensuring their enforcement (Essuman, 2019).

Attention to the educational dimensions of Dina remains limited. Academic literature rarely explores how this institution may influence learning environments, socialization processes, or community engagement in education (McLain et al., 2023). In many Malagasy communities, the transmission of norms and values occurs not only within schools but also through communal practices and customary regulations (Oktari et al., 2025). Collective

gatherings where Dina rules are discussed provide opportunities for social learning, as members of different generations engage in dialogue about acceptable behavior and community responsibilities (Yamada, 2014). These interactions contribute to informal educational processes that shape attitudes toward discipline, respect, and collective accountability.

The region of Atsimo-Andrefana offers a particularly relevant context for examining such dynamics. Communities in this region maintain strong ties to customary governance structures, and Dina agreements often reflect deeply rooted cultural norms (Mashyaka & Ndayambaje, 2025). Women, youth, and local leaders participate in various forms of community dialogue that influence how rules are interpreted and applied. Educational institutions operating in these communities interact with the broader social environment, which is shaped by customary regulations (Emynorane & Arrive, 2024). Schools frequently depend on community cooperation to address issues such as student attendance, discipline, and protection against social risks (Phuangsuwan et al., 2025). The relationship between Dina and educational development, therefore, warrants systematic investigation.

Discussions surrounding Dina also reveal important debates regarding its contemporary application. Some forms of enforcement have been criticized for being excessively punitive or incompatible with constitutional principles (Klein, 2024). Concerns about the protection of individual rights and the risk of extrajudicial practices have led to calls for reform and modernization of customary governance mechanisms. Malagasy law permits the homologation of Dina agreements through the judicial system, which theoretically ensures that such rules remain consistent with national legislation (Andriamalala & Gardner, 2010). The practical implementation of this legal framework varies widely across communities, and some local agreements continue to operate without adequate oversight.

Current debates highlight the need to reconsider the scope and structure of Dina within modern Malagasy society. The transformation of Dina from a mechanism primarily associated with public order into a broader instrument of community development presents an important opportunity (Rakotoson & Tanner, 2006). Integrating educational objectives into Dina agreements could reinforce community responsibility for schooling, promote inclusive participation, and strengthen social support for children's learning (Zhang et al., 2023). Such a transformation would require adjustments in the composition and functioning of Dina committees. Greater representation of women, young people, and persons with disabilities could ensure that educational concerns and social inclusion receive adequate attention within community decision-making processes (Farrell et al., 2001).

An interdisciplinary perspective offers valuable insights into these issues. Legal analysis helps clarify the relationship between customary governance and constitutional principles (Bérard, 2011). Educational research provides frameworks for understanding community participation and social learning processes (Sadat et al., 2025). Anthropological approaches illuminate the cultural foundations that sustain institutions such as the Dina. Combining these perspectives allows for a more comprehensive understanding of how customary norms influence educational environments and community development.

Examining Dina as a potential mechanism for supporting education also contributes to broader discussions on local governance and sustainable development. Many policy initiatives emphasize the importance of community engagement in addressing social challenges (Emynorane et al., 2026). In contexts where traditional institutions maintain strong legitimacy, aligning them more closely with national legal frameworks and contemporary educational goals can enhance their effectiveness. The integration of customary governance structures into modern development strategies remains an ongoing challenge across many parts of Africa and the Global South.

The present study explores how Dina functions within the social and institutional landscape of Atsimo-Andrefana, with particular attention to its implications for education. The analysis considers the actors involved in implementing Dina, the mechanisms by which

norms are transmitted, and how community members perceive its role in shaping social behavior. Attention is also given to the tensions between customary practices and constitutional principles, as well as to opportunities for reform that could enable Dina to contribute more directly to educational development.

Understanding these dynamics offers insights into how locally embedded governance institutions can evolve to address contemporary social needs. Communities in Atsimo-Andrefana continue to negotiate the balance among tradition and modernization, customary authority and state regulation, and social control and individual rights (Bien-Aimé et al., 2025). Investigating Dina's educational potential contributes to a deeper appreciation of how cultural institutions influence learning environments and community development in Madagascar.

Methodology

This study uses a qualitative case study approach to examine how the Dina functions as a community governance mechanism that may support educational development in the Atsimo-Andrefana region of Madagascar. The study was conducted in three rural municipalities that actively practice Dina within their local governance systems: the Rural Municipality of Milenaka, the Rural Municipality of Ankililoaka, and the Rural Municipality of Ankilimaliniky. These locations were purposively selected for their strong reliance on customary governance structures and active community participation in local decision-making. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, group discussions, and document analysis of local Dina regulations where available. A total of 18 informants participated in the study, selected through purposive sampling to ensure representation from key community actors involved in the implementation and social influence of Dina. The participants consisted of three mayors or vice mayors representing the formal local government authority, six representatives of Dina executive committees who are directly responsible for the formulation and enforcement of customary rules, three youth representatives reflecting the perspectives of younger members of the community, three women representatives who often play an important role in community education and social cohesion, and three representatives of persons with disabilities in order to incorporate inclusive perspectives on community governance and social participation.

The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis in several stages, including data familiarization, coding, categorization, and interpretation of emerging themes related to community governance, social regulation, and educational support within the Dina system. Interview transcripts and field notes were carefully reviewed to identify recurring ideas, relationships, and patterns reflecting participants' perceptions and experiences of Dina's role in community life. Codes were then grouped into broader thematic categories that explain how local governance practices interact with social learning processes and community involvement in education. The credibility of the data was strengthened through triangulation of multiple data sources, including interviews, group discussions, and documentary evidence, allowing the comparison and validation of information obtained from different participants. Member checking was also conducted by clarifying key interpretations with selected informants to ensure that the findings accurately reflected their perspectives. In addition, prolonged engagement in the field and careful documentation of the study process contributed to the trustworthiness, consistency, and reliability of the analysis.

Results and Discussion

Results

The findings of this study provide insight into how the Dina functions as a community governance mechanism and its potential influence on educational support in the rural municipalities of Milenaka, Ankililoaka, and Ankilimaliniky. Analysis of interviews, group discussions, and documents from the Dina executive committees revealed several key themes: the perception of Dina's purpose, the roles of community representatives, inclusive

participation in governance, mechanisms for social learning, and challenges in aligning traditional practices with modern educational goals.

Informants consistently reported that Dina remains primarily associated with maintaining public order and regulating social behavior. All six representatives of Dina's executive committees emphasized that rules traditionally target conflict resolution, land management, and adherence to communal norms. For example, one committee member noted, "Dina has always been about controlling behaviors that disrupt community harmony, but we see an opportunity to include education-related norms." Similarly, mayors and vice mayors highlighted that while the formal municipal government recognizes Dina's authority, the rules rarely address educational outcomes directly. Despite this, youth and women representatives indicated that Dina's activities, such as community meetings and public deliberations, function as informal spaces for transmitting values, including respect for education and collective responsibility.

The inclusion of diverse community actors proved crucial to broadening Dina's impact on education. Youth representatives reported participating in discussions on school attendance and behavioral expectations, while women emphasized community-based mentorship and the promotion of literacy and numeracy through local initiatives. Persons with disabilities stressed the importance of ensuring that Dina rules accommodate inclusive practices, highlighting the potential for education to be more participatory and accessible when governance is more representative. The following Table 1 summarizes the main findings, highlighting the perspectives of different informant groups and the themes identified through thematic analysis.

Table 1. Community Perspectives on the Role of Dina and Its Contribution to Education			
Informant Group	Perception of Dina's Role	Contribution to Education	Observed Challenges
Mayors / Vice Mayors	Primarily, public order and social control	Limited direct involvement	Lack of formal integration with educational policy
Dina Executive Committee	Traditional governance, conflict resolution	Potential to include educational norms	Enforcement is sometimes harsh and inconsistent with modern law
Youth Representatives	Engagement in rule-making and compliance	Promote school attendance and behavior	Limited influence in formal decisions
Women Representatives	Community cohesion and mentoring	Support literacy, numeracy, and social learning	Underrepresented in committee leadership
Persons with Disabilities	Advocate for inclusive community rules	Emphasize accessible and inclusive education	Often overlooked in decision-making

The table shows that, even though Dina has historically focused on public order, its structure allows for the integration of educational objectives. Youth and women's representatives demonstrate how community engagement can indirectly contribute to educational awareness, while persons with disabilities highlight the necessity of inclusivity in governance. The challenges identified by informants, particularly regarding harsh enforcement and gaps in formal integration with education policy, underscore areas where reform and modernization could enhance Dina's role in supporting local educational development. Collectively, these results suggest that Dina operates not only as a mechanism

of social control but also as a latent platform for community-based learning and educational support when inclusive practices are promoted.

Discussion

Dina's Traditional Role versus Educational Potential

Dina has historically served as a cornerstone of community governance in Madagascar, particularly within the rural municipalities of Milenaka, Ankililoaka, and Ankilimaliniky. Rooted in ancestral traditions, its primary function has been to maintain public order, regulate social behavior, and resolve conflicts within the community. Informants consistently highlighted that the rules established under Dina agreements were traditionally designed to discourage disruptive behavior, enforce communal norms, and ensure cohesion among members of the *fokonolona*. For example, executive committee representatives emphasized the use of sanctions and community deliberations to manage land disputes, theft, or breaches of social conduct. These functions have long positioned Dina as an effective tool for preserving communal harmony, particularly in areas where formal government oversight is limited. Its authority is derived not only from customary legitimacy but also from recognition by Malagasy courts, which have homologated certain agreements, allowing Dina to operate as a hybrid institution straddling customary and formal governance (Edwards et al., 2020).

Despite its historical focus on social order, Dina presents untapped potential to support educational objectives. Youth and women representatives in the study indicated that existing communal meetings and enforcement processes provide opportunities for informal learning and the transmission of social values that relate directly or indirectly to education. For instance, discussions on civic responsibility, participation in communal work, and compliance with agreed-upon norms offer a platform to reinforce the importance of school attendance, literacy, and numeracy (Eric et al., 2025). These observations suggest that even though Dina was not originally conceived as an educational tool, its structure inherently allows for the incorporation of normative guidance that can shape behaviors beneficial to learning environments. By recognizing and harnessing these informal pathways, Dina could evolve into a mechanism that simultaneously upholds tradition and fosters community-based educational engagement.

The expansion of Dina to include educational objectives requires careful balancing to preserve its customary authority. Informants stressed that Dina's legitimacy is closely linked to its role in regulating social behavior, and any effort to introduce new functions must respect the institution's cultural foundations. The integration of education-related norms could be achieved through incremental adjustments, such as encouraging committee deliberations to address school participation, mentoring initiatives, or community literacy programs (Jailani et al., 2025). The involvement of diverse actors, including women, youth, and persons with disabilities, can further enhance Dina's relevance to education while maintaining its traditional governance functions (Rakotoson & Tanner, 2006; McLain et al., 2023). By emphasizing inclusive participation, communities can expand the scope of Dina without undermining the respect and compliance that its customary authority commands.

Finally, integrating educational objectives into Dina has broader implications for community development and social cohesion. Aligning traditional governance with contemporary educational priorities can strengthen community accountability for children's learning and foster a culture of shared responsibility (Léa et al., 2025). Informants noted that even modest shifts, such as framing certain sanctions or discussions around educational participation, could influence parental and youth attitudes toward schooling. Such initiatives would not only preserve Dina's foundational role in social regulation but also transform it into a dynamic platform for promoting educational equity and accessibility. Dina's potential to serve as both a regulatory and an educational mechanism underscores the institution's adaptability, highlighting its capacity to evolve to meet the changing needs of Malagasy communities while sustaining its cultural legitimacy.

Inclusive Participation and Representation

Inclusive participation within governance structures has become increasingly recognized as a crucial factor for ensuring effective community engagement and equitable decision-making. In the context of Dina committees in the Rural Municipalities of Milenaka, Ankililoaka, and Ankilimaliniky, the involvement of diverse groups significantly enriches the decision-making process. Informants highlighted that traditional Dina committees often reflect the authority of elders and male leaders, limiting the perspectives that shape community rules. By incorporating women and youth representatives, committees gain insights into social issues and priorities that may otherwise be overlooked, including education-related concerns such as school attendance, literacy programs, and informal mentorship initiatives. Inclusive representation allows the committee to reflect the lived experiences of all community members, making governance more responsive and socially legitimate (Essuman, 2019).

Women's participation in Dina committees proved particularly influential in promoting education and social cohesion. Interviewees from women's groups emphasized that they frequently act as mediators in the community, facilitate learning opportunities for children, and encourage parental involvement in schooling. Their perspectives help ensure that decisions made under Dina take into account family and household dynamics that affect educational participation (Eric et al., 2025). Additionally, women representatives often advocate for programs targeting girls' education and equity, bridging gaps that may persist in traditional governance. Their inclusion strengthens Dina's social legitimacy, as communities perceive its decisions as more representative and sensitive to the needs of all members, including those most affected by educational policies and interventions.

Youth representation provides a complementary perspective that aligns community governance with evolving social realities. Youth participants in the study highlighted their ability to communicate the interests, challenges, and aspirations of younger community members, including barriers to school attendance and engagement. Their involvement ensures that Dina's deliberations do not solely reflect the priorities of older generations but also incorporate insights into how governance mechanisms influence learning environments and youth behavior. Youth representatives can advocate for community-led programs that promote peer mentoring, extracurricular educational activities, or civic engagement initiatives, making educational support a tangible part of local governance processes. By including young voices, Dina committees become more adaptive and forward-looking, fostering intergenerational dialogue and participation (Edwards et al., 2020).

The inclusion of persons with disabilities in Dina committees underscores the importance of equitable and accessible governance. Informants representing persons with disabilities emphasized the need for rules that ensure educational access and inclusion for all community members. Their participation allows the committee to consider challenges such as physical accessibility, adaptive learning strategies, and social barriers that might otherwise be ignored (Domitrovich et al., 2025). Integrating these perspectives creates a governance structure that is more socially just and better able to address the diverse needs of community members. Collectively, inclusive participation in Dina committees strengthens both governance and educational outcomes by ensuring that decisions are informed, representative, and oriented toward the community's holistic development. This approach enhances community engagement and fosters a shared responsibility for educational success across all groups.

Community-Based Learning and Norm Transmission

Informal gatherings and community deliberations play a central role in shaping social behavior and transmitting values within Malagasy rural communities. In the Rural Municipalities, Dina meetings serve not only as spaces for regulating public order but also as platforms where community members collectively reflect on acceptable conduct and communal responsibilities (Emynorane et al., 2026). Participants reported that during these

gatherings, elders and committee members often emphasize behaviors that promote cooperation, respect for others, and adherence to communal norms. Such discussions indirectly reinforce the importance of education, as school attendance, responsible learning habits, and civic engagement are frequently linked to broader expectations of discipline and accountability in daily life (Bérard, 2011). These forums thus function as informal learning spaces where social norms and values are communicated across generations.

Local sanctions, a core feature of the Dina system, also contribute to the transmission of normative behavior. Informants noted that sanctions are applied to both minor and major breaches of community rules, from neglecting communal obligations to disruptive conduct. Youth and women representatives emphasized that these sanctions are often accompanied by explanations of the consequences of certain behaviors and the values underlying the rules. By linking corrective measures to communal expectations, Dina creates opportunities for moral and social education. Children and adolescents observe the outcomes of both positive and negative behaviors, internalizing lessons that extend beyond the immediate context of enforcement (Klein, 2024). In this way, the sanctioning process becomes a mechanism through which communities reinforce behaviors aligned with educational and social norms.

Mentorship and guidance are additional ways in which Dina fosters community-based learning. Women representatives highlighted the use of community rituals, informal gatherings, and collaborative activities to support children's literacy, numeracy, and social skills. Youth representatives also reported that peer-to-peer interactions were facilitated by Dina events, in which older adolescents guide younger members on responsibilities, teamwork, and civic participation. These interactions create a network of social learning that complements formal schooling, providing practical reinforcement of educational and ethical principles (Sadat et al., 2025). The participatory nature of these interactions allows community members to actively engage in the learning process, rather than being passive recipients of rules, thereby promoting the internalization of both social and educational values (Daniele, 2021).

Observations from informants indicate that the transmission of norms through Dina is strengthened when inclusive participation is encouraged. When all important stakeholders are involved in discussions and decision-making, the lessons conveyed during gatherings reflect diverse perspectives and address the needs of all community members. This broad representation ensures that social norms and educational values are communicated in ways that are culturally relevant, practical, and sensitive to local realities (Bashir et al., 2021). The integration of informal learning into governance processes highlights Dina's dual function as both a regulatory and an educational institution, demonstrating its potential to foster social cohesion and promote educational engagement through culturally grounded, community-driven mechanisms (Mashyaka & Ndayambaje, 2025).

Challenges and Opportunities for Modernization

The application of Dina in rural municipalities faces several challenges that limit its effectiveness in supporting education. Informants repeatedly noted that enforcement of Dina rules can be excessively punitive, sometimes creating fear rather than promoting understanding among community members. Executive committee representatives explained that certain sanctions, although intended to maintain order, may not align with contemporary legal standards or the principles of proportionality enshrined in Malagasy law. Such practices can undermine trust in the institution and discourage active participation, particularly from youth and marginalized groups who may feel excluded or unfairly treated (Rakotoson & Tanner, 2006). The persistence of harsh enforcement methods poses a significant barrier to using Dina as a platform for fostering inclusive educational engagement.

The relationship between Dina and formal constitutional principles also presents difficulties. While local courts homologate some agreements, many informal rules continue to operate without explicit alignment with national legislation. Mayors and vice mayors highlighted inconsistencies between customary regulations and the rights guaranteed under

the Malagasy constitution, particularly regarding equity, gender inclusion, and protection of vulnerable populations. These gaps complicate efforts to integrate educational objectives into Dina, as community members may be reluctant to adopt norms that appear legally or ethically questionable (Phuangsuwan et al., 2025). Ensuring compliance with constitutional standards is, therefore, a critical step for legitimizing Dina as a modernized governance tool capable of supporting education alongside social regulation.

The lack of formal integration with educational policy constitutes another significant challenge. Informants emphasized that educational authorities rarely coordinate with Dina committees, thereby limiting the institution's capacity to promote educational initiatives systematically. Youth and women representatives reported that, although community gatherings often touch on education indirectly, there is no structured framework linking Dina deliberations to local schools or educational programs. This disconnect reduces Dina's potential to influence student attendance, literacy efforts, or inclusive educational practices (McLain et al., 2023). Bridging this gap would require deliberate collaboration between local government, educational institutions, and Dina committees to establish shared objectives, reporting mechanisms, and accountability structures that reinforce education as a community priority.

Opportunities for reform, however, are evident in community members' willingness to adapt Dina to contemporary needs. Informants highlighted that incorporating inclusive representation, emphasizing participatory decision-making, and aligning sanctions with constitutional and human rights standards could enhance both legitimacy and effectiveness. Introducing education-focused norms, mentorship programs, or community literacy initiatives within the existing structure would allow Dina to serve as a dual-purpose institution: maintaining social cohesion while promoting learning and inclusion (Andriamalala & Gardner, 2010). These reforms could preserve Dina's cultural authority while expanding its relevance to modern social and educational challenges, demonstrating its potential to evolve into a culturally grounded, community-driven mechanism for sustainable development.

Conclusion

The study reveals that Dina, as a community governance mechanism in the rural municipalities of Milenaka, Ankililoaka, and Ankilimaliniky, holds significant potential to support educational development by broadening its traditional focus on social regulation to include inclusive, learning-oriented objectives. Findings indicate that Dina has historically emphasized public order and communal cohesion, and that the structures and participatory mechanisms of these efforts, especially with the active involvement of women, youth, and persons with disabilities, can serve as platforms for transmitting social norms, promoting school attendance, and fostering community engagement in education. Informants highlighted both the strengths and limitations of the system, including challenges such as harsh enforcement, limited integration with formal educational policy, and inconsistencies with constitutional principles. To strengthen Dina's role in education, it is recommended that local authorities and community leaders formalize collaboration between schools and Dina committees, incorporate inclusive representation in decision-making, and adapt sanctions and rules to align with human rights and constitutional standards. Further research could examine the long-term effects of education-focused Dina initiatives on student outcomes, gender equity, and community cohesion, and conduct comparative analyses with other regions where customary governance intersects with modern education systems. Aligning traditional governance with contemporary educational goals positions Dina as a culturally grounded, community-driven institution capable of preserving social harmony while actively contributing to the development of human capital and sustainable learning environments in rural Madagascar.

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