

Governance of the institutional framework for health security in Algeria

حوكمة الإطار المؤسسي للأمن الصحي في الجزائر

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Abstract:

Algeria established the National Agency for Health Security as a mechanism for activating strategic and proactive vigilance systems for all risks and threats that monitor population health and public hygiene, as well as managing and coordinating urgent cases related to health risks, periodic evaluation and expertise of health risks related to materials that affect human and animal health. With the strengthening of the role of scientific research for the advancement of the health sector in Algeria, therefore, the study shed light on this effective role, highlighting its importance and the need to activate the role of the National Agency for Health Security in the field in normal and exceptional cases.

Keywords: Health security - health development - National Agency for Health Security - strategic vigilance - health risks.

ملخص:

أنشأت الجزائر الوكالة الوطنية للأمن الصحي كآلية لتفعيل أنظمة اليقظة الإستراتيجية ، و الاستباقية لجميع المخاطر والتهديدات التي تترصد صحة السكان و النظافة العمومية، وكذا تسيير وتنسيق حالات الاستعجال المرتبطة بالمخاطر الصحية، إلى جانب التقييم الدوري والخبرة للمخاطر الصحية المتعلقة بالمواد التي تمس صحة الإنسان وكذا الحيوان، مع تعزيز دور البحث العلمي للنهوض بقطاع الصحة في الجزائر، لذا سلطت الدراسة الضوء على هذا الدور الفعال مبرزة أهميته و ضرورة تفعيل دور الوكالة الوطنية للأمن الصحي ميدانيا في الحالات العادية والاستثنائية بغرض تحقيق الأمن الصحي المنشود.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الأمن الصحي- التنمية الصحية- الوكالة الوطنية للأمن الصحي-اليقظة الإستراتيجية- المخاطر الصحية.

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Introduction :

The right to health is one of the fundamental human rights enshrined in international charters, as stated in Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948: "Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family..." This underscores the critical importance of health protection as a strategic issue that countries, including Algeria, have directed all their efforts towards establishing and maintaining through continuous reform and development of the health system, and by allocating a ministry dedicated to its affairs, namely the Ministry of Health and Hospital Reform. However, the health sector continues to suffer from the same persistent problems, leaving citizens deprived of the most basic human right, which is the right to healthcare, making the health sector one of the weakest sectors in Algeria.

Moreover, the recurrence of global health crises, the latest being the COVID-19 pandemic, has exacerbated the situation and revealed to Algeria and all countries worldwide that health security has become a global human demand. It necessitates the establishment of a comprehensive strategy aimed at modernizing health systems, enhancing their capabilities, and governing their management methods to advance the health sector, whether in normal or exceptional circumstances, after crises have exposed the fragility of all health systems worldwide, especially in facing exceptional conditions.

Health security is a critical component of national and global stability, particularly in the face of emerging infectious diseases, climate change, and geopolitical tensions. Algeria, with its strategic location in North Africa and its complex health landscape, presents a unique case for examining the governance of health security. The institutional framework governing health security in Algeria must balance public health needs, resource allocation, and coordination among various stakeholders.

Recognizing the necessity for the advancement of the health sector to enhance health security and modernize health systems, the Algerian legislator established the National Health Security Agency through presidential decree 20-158 dated 13/06/2020¹, which includes the establishment of the National Health Security Agency. This agency is tasked with developing an effective policy characterized by foresight and proactivity, enabling public institutions to manage and achieve health security in exceptional circumstances by embedding the principles of good governance in the public health sector. This highlights the importance of the study, which aims to shed light on the role assigned to the National Health Security Agency through the application of health governance rules to achieve the desired health security and to explore the effectiveness of the legal framework in Algeria, identify challenges, and suggest actionable recommendations for improvement. This research paper investigates the governance of the institutional framework for health security in Algeria, analyzing its effectiveness, challenges, and opportunities for improvement in the context of global health threats, which necessitates finding an answer to the problem of this study:

To what extent is the application of health governance effective and efficient in Algeria through the establishment of the National Health Security Agency? Is the achievement of health governance limited to the establishment of an independent advisory body capable of ensuring health security?

Answering this research problem requires adopting a descriptive approach to analyze the variables of the subject and link them together to reach conclusions. Therefore, we divide our research into two main axes: the first addresses the adoption of health governance policy to ensure health security, and the second discusses the strategic role of the National Health Security Agency.

1- Adopting health governance policies to ensure health security:

It has become evident to the public authorities in the country that it is no longer effective to rely solely on policies that reform the healthcare system through updating medical equipment and training personnel, a policy that has proven to be ineffective in the face of health crises. This has necessitated the development of other policies and strategies to advance the health sector by embracing modern concepts that require engagement in the global effort to establish health security for all countries. This is to be achieved through the implementation of governance policies aimed at enhancing the functional and regulatory performance of the relevant institutions and bodies and assigning the task of protecting health security to an independent body, namely the National Health Security Agency. The National Health Security Agency will be responsible for coordinating efforts with international organizations and other countries to ensure a comprehensive approach to health security. By establishing this independent body, Algeria can better prepare for and respond to health crises on a global scale. Centralizing the responsibility for health security under one agency allows for more efficient coordination and response in times of crisis. This shift towards a more proactive and comprehensive approach to health security is essential in today's interconnected world. This agency would be responsible for coordinating efforts with international organizations and other countries to ensure a comprehensive approach to health security. With the establishment of this independent body, Algeria can better respond to health crises and prevent future outbreaks through collaboration and information sharing on a global scale.

1-1 The Development of Functional and Regulatory Performance to Protect Public Health:

The concept of governance in modern times has been linked to financial and economic crises, especially following the collapse of major companies in financial markets and the bankruptcy of many of them. A clear example of this is the global crisis of 2008, which was primarily caused by the absence of sound practices and compliance with good governance systems, a lack of transparency and clarity in dealings, inequality in opportunities, and the inability to reconcile and balance conflicting interests. This has compelled many countries to regulate the rules for applying governance, which the World Bank defined in a report published in 1992 titled "Governance and Development" as "the way authority is exercised in managing a country's economic and social resources to achieve development. This includes the processes of selecting, monitoring, and replacing governments, as well as the government's ability to formulate sound policies and implement them effectively while also respecting institutional boundaries. 'The citizens and the state define the scope of action of institutions that govern economic and social interactions.'"²

Therefore, good governance refers to the methods and practices of managing and directing institutions by establishing principles of transparency and integrity to achieve effectiveness and enhance qualitative performance.

This concept expands to include many institutions that operate in various strategic fields, given the pragmatic understanding of governance and its impact on the quality of functional performance of different institutions and bodies, especially those related to vital areas in the state, such as public health, where there is an urgent need to reform the health system and restructure healthcare institutions in terms of their management systems and structural organization, as well as oversight. This has compelled all countries, especially Algeria, to adopt health governance, which is defined as "the process of directing the overall and effective performance of the health institution by setting objectives, with levels of awareness at the practical level. It is a process through which cooperation occurs between senior management officials and the medical staff of various categories, as well as stakeholders and interest holders, to develop oversight and public policies for these health institutions."³

So, it is clear that health governance is a process that requires the concerted efforts of many

actors in the field to achieve the desired results, which is to establish health security. This ultimate goal is what prompted the World Health Organization to emphasize the need to define the concept of health governance, considering it as "a set of established processes and tools related to decision-making to guide the performance and all activities of the health institution, the ability to control organizational behaviours, and to recognize the complex relationships governing the various parties involved within a framework that includes all normative values (ethics, equality, etc.), in addition to improving the quality of health services, ensuring patient safety, and the ability to respond to various changes in the health environment."⁴

Thus, health governance is a complex concept that encompasses many policies, procedures, and methods adopted to improve the quality of healthcare provided. This means that the nature of the institution and the field in which it operates determines the way governance is achieved, as the essence lies in achieving its purpose rather than the method itself, as long as it responds to "the oversight system that directs the activities of the health institution and increases the effectiveness of its performance, by activating a set of principles that support and monitor the extent to which the health institution achieves its tasks and objectives, in addition to ensuring the participation of all interested parties in decision-making to provide quality health services."⁵

Whenever health governance necessitates oversight of its effectiveness, this inevitably leads to the responsibility of each party that fails to fulfill its obligations, as long as it contributes in organising and directing the governance of the health institution according to specific procedures and systems⁶.

To avoid compromising the effectiveness and efficiency expected from health governance, it must be characterized by:

- Ensuring the existence of a professional and independent board of directors that provides the correct and effective direction in managing the institution.
- Activating the role of prior oversight and risk management systems to ensure the reduction of management risks and to anticipate and analyze everything that could facilitate the implementation of health governance.
- Facilitating the provision and disclosure of information to enhance transparency in order to improve productivity, efficiency, and communication.
- Protecting the rights of owners, shareholders, and other stakeholders by ensuring organizational sustainability and prosperity.
- Enhancing overall accountability, sustainability, and inclusiveness for the benefit of all internal and external stakeholders⁷.

1.2 The Necessity of Establishing a Structural Organization to Achieve Health Security:

The concept of human security evolved with the end of the Cold War and the emergence of globalization, expanding beyond merely protecting states from threats such as wars and military force against them. This concept now encompasses the protection of individuals from all types of risks that threaten them while enabling them to enjoy their fundamental rights and freedoms, such as the right to life and the right to good health, which ensures their well-being and enhances their dignity. Consequently, human security is viewed in a comprehensive manner that includes all threats to individuals, regardless of their nature, including the achievement of health security⁸.

The United Nations Development Programme, in its report published in 1994, considered health security to be a pillar of human security and a fundamental human right that must be respected and provided to all individuals, as it is a necessary condition for the survival and stability of states. This was reaffirmed by the Human Security Commission in its report published in 2003 titled "Human Beings Security Now," referring to the relationship between health and human security, considering

that the latter can only be achieved by preserving human life and that health security is at the core of maintaining human life⁹.

The concept of health security encompasses not only access to healthcare services but also the protection of individuals from health threats, whether natural or man-made. By recognizing health security as a fundamental human right, governments and organizations can work towards ensuring the well-being and resilience of populations worldwide.

The fundamental concept of health security revolves around "how to protect individuals in the community from all health risks they face in order to ensure they enjoy a health-safe and more stable life"¹⁰

Health security is based on several pillars, according to the World Health Organization:

- Establishing a well-performing and inclusive health system that increases opportunities for risk detection and preparedness.
- Universal health coverage can achieve trust and reassurance with the public.
- Strengthening countries' efforts to develop their health and medical sectors and prepare to face diseases and fortify their health security¹¹.

The areas of health security are defined by the risks facing public health, as identified by the World Health Organization, as follows:

- Emerging and infectious diseases, which include those diseases characterized by high contagion and rapid spread among different countries, such as plague, cholera, COVID-19, and Rift Valley fever...etc
- Malnutrition and food insecurity, which are particularly evident in poor countries where integrated health and food policies are lacking. Among these diseases are wasting, stunting, and underweight
- International crises, humanitarian emergencies, and climate change, which are crises that have caused the deaths of many individuals and significant material damage, revealing the failure of governmental health systems to contain them.
- Chemical and radiological hazards and the risk of biological terrorism are the total dangers resulting from chemical and nuclear activities that cause serious accidents and radiological leaks, posing a direct threat to human life and health, not to mention biological terrorism through the use of various dangerous chemical and biological materials in terrorist attacks¹².

Huge efforts are necessary for the establishment of strict rules and policies to contain these diseases and crises and the catastrophic effects they leave on humans, animals, plants, and the environment in general, which has prompted most countries to regulate health governance rules at both domestic and international levels. In addition, collaboration between countries is crucial in order to effectively address global health threats and prevent the spread of diseases across borders. By working together, nations can better coordinate responses and share resources to mitigate the impact of pandemics and other health emergencies on a global scale. This collective effort is essential in ensuring a coordinated and efficient response to protect the health and well-being of populations worldwide pandemics and other health emergencies.

In order to participate in the global endeavor and establish health security, especially during the periods of severe health crisis the world has faced due to the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Algerian legislators worked on structuring the institutional organization of health security through presidential decree 20/158, dated 13/06/2020. This involved the establishment of the National

Health Security Agency as a unique public organization with financial independence and legal personality. It is constituted of "bodies for scientific consultation and guidance and strategic monitoring composed of scientific figures and experts recognized for their competence in their fields of specialization," according to Article 05 of the same decree. It also contains management and administrative structures.

The agency is responsible for coordinating and implementing health security policies at the national level, ensuring a unified and efficient response to public health emergencies. This decree marks a significant step towards enhancing the country's preparedness and response capabilities in the face of health threats.

By establishing this agency, the government aims to streamline decision-making processes and improve coordination among various stakeholders in the health sector. The creation of this agency reflects a commitment to protecting the population from potential health risks and ensuring a prompt and effective response when needed.

The agency will also play a crucial role in monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of health security measures, as well as identifying areas for improvement. Additionally, it will serve as a central hub for communication and information sharing during times of crisis, promoting transparency and accountability in the government's response efforts. By facilitating collaboration between government agencies, healthcare providers, and other relevant organizations, the agency will streamline decision-making processes and enhance overall preparedness for public health emergencies. This proactive approach will help to minimize the impact of potential threats and safeguard the well-being of the population.

The establishment of the National Health Security Agency by the legislator as an independent administrative body is linked to several considerations presented by the World Health Organization, which are:

- Scientific research is more than just a fundamental tool for improving services; it is also a source of inspiration in the field of public health.
- Although the goal is to improve access to health services and protect vulnerable individuals, however, defining and measuring progress towards achieving universal health coverage represents a challenge.
- Expanding the coverage of health services and improving financial protection usually leads to better health; however, there is also a need for research to link service provision to health outcomes in a way that maximizes effectiveness.
- Developing human capacities is a fundamental function of national health research systems, so it is essential to enhance the capabilities of researchers.
- Despite all the efforts made, the gap between current knowledge and health practices still exists, and there is still a need for more efforts to translate data and policies into practical practices¹³.

It is crucial to invest in research that can bridge this gap and inform evidence-based policies and interventions. Collaboration between researchers, policymakers, and healthcare providers is essential to ensure that research findings are effectively implemented in practice. Additionally, fostering collaboration between researchers and policymakers can help ensure that research findings are effectively implemented into healthcare policies and practices. Furthermore, ongoing monitoring and evaluation of health interventions are crucial to continuously improve the quality and impact of healthcare services. By working together, stakeholders can ensure that research is translated into actionable steps that address public health needs. This collaboration can lead to more efficient and effective healthcare delivery systems that ultimately benefit the community as a whole.

Ultimately, the goal is to bridge the gap between research and policy to achieve better health outcomes for individuals and populations. By fostering a culture of collaboration and communication, stakeholders can work towards creating evidence-based policies that have a positive impact on public health. This can result in improved health outcomes, reduced healthcare costs, and a stronger overall healthcare system. By prioritizing evidence-based decision-making and working towards common goals, stakeholders can make significant strides in improving public health. Through ongoing dialogue and cooperation, stakeholders can ensure that policies are informed by the latest research and data, leading to more effective interventions and programs. This collaborative approach can help address complex health challenges and create sustainable solutions for the benefit of society as a whole.

2. The Strategic Role of the National Health Security Agency:

Establishing an advanced health system that ensures the provision of quality health services based on a dual role of prevention and emergency response is essential¹⁴. Therefore, the legislator has entrusted the National Health Security Agency with a significant role in the field of health security by activating strategic and proactive vigilance systems for all risks and threats that endanger public health and hygiene, as well as managing and coordinating emergencies related to health risks, alongside periodic assessment and expertise regarding health risks related to substances affecting human and animal health, while enhancing the role of scientific research to advance the health sector in Algeria, which reveals the role of the National Health Security Agency, especially in exceptional circumstances.

The agency also collaborates with international organizations and partners to ensure a coordinated response to global health threats and emergencies, further strengthening Algeria's preparedness and response capabilities. By promoting collaboration and knowledge-sharing, the National Health Security Agency plays a crucial role in safeguarding the health of the population and preventing potential health crises. Through its proactive approach and dedication to continuous improvement, the agency is able to effectively address emerging health challenges and adapt to changing circumstances. This ultimately contributes to the overall resilience of Algeria's health system and enhances the country's ability to protect its citizens from a wide range of health risks.

2.1 Adopting strategic vigilance to achieve health security:

The Executive Director of the Health Emergency Program at the World Health Organization, Mike Ryan, confirmed that about 70 percent of "high-impact epidemics" witnessed by the world occurred in "extremely weak and fragile" countries. He stated that global health security is "threatened due to the lack of strong monitoring and response systems in these fragile places; this is a threat to people in those areas, and it is a threat to the world"¹⁵, which emphasized the urgent need for increased investment in building resilient health systems in vulnerable countries to prevent future pandemics. Addressing health disparities and strengthening global cooperation are crucial steps towards ensuring global health security and emphasising the importance of addressing underlying social determinants of health, such as poverty and inequality, to combat future epidemics. So, the collaborative and coordinated effort among nations is essential to prevent the spread of infectious diseases across borders.

This highlights the essential role played by proactive information that allows for the prevention of many diseases and health crises or at least mitigates their negative impacts when they occur. Recognizing the importance and even the danger of information in the health field, especially after the COVID-19 crisis, the legislator entrusted the task of valuing information in this field to the National Health Security Agency. Article 03 of Presidential Decree 20-158, which establishes the National Health Security Agency, states: "The agency is an institution for monitoring, consultation,

strategic vigilance, guidance, and alertness in the field of health security. "This demonstrates the legislator's intention to engage in the global endeavour based on monitoring and managing information, known as strategic vigilance, which is a relatively new concept that emerged in the United States as a mechanism to enhance the competitiveness of institutions in an ever-changing environment. It was then referred to as Environmental Scanning¹⁶, which means surveying and collecting all necessary information about the business environment in which the institution operates to ensure its competitiveness and leadership, responding to the requirements of economic intelligence.

Strategic vigilance is defined as an effective tool that allows for understanding the environment in order to determine how to deal with it, which values the information obtained and makes it a raw material for institutions that use it to build their strategies and policies. Some have defined it as the observation of the environment followed by the analysis of information used in making strategic decisions¹⁷.

Thus, strategic vigilance is based on monitoring information with the aim of anticipating the business environment and preparing for potential risks, allowing for the appropriate strategic decisions to be made proactively, which enables control over all situations and avoids the element of surprise that often negatively impacts decisions and actions taken during unexpected crises.

The importance of strategic vigilance is determined by its characteristics, which are represented in:

- Strategic perception, as strategic vigilance works to make decisions of a future-oriented nature.
- Adapting to the changing social, economic, and political environment, which provides the ability to anticipate developments that may arise.
- Proactive foresight aimed at providing information for the future, sending forecasts and early warning signals about threats and risks.
- Monitoring the environment, which consists of a set of factors and variables surrounding the institution that affect its performance.
- Creativity, as strategic vigilance, contributes to creativity in envisioning what the institution will become by reviewing what it may face in the future, thus providing a creative future vision.
- The voluntary will, as early warning signals, necessitate the integration of the will of all members of the institution by promoting the idea of participatory democracy and shared responsibility among them¹⁸.

Given the significant importance of strategic vigilance, Presidential Decree No. 20-435 dated 30/12/2020, which clarifies the powers, organization, and operation of the National Health Security Agency, outlines the tasks assigned to the agency in the field of health security in Article 02: "... - Regular assessment and expertise of health risks related to pharmaceutical materials, human or veterinary medicines, biological materials, biotechnology, clinical studies, health supplies, nutrition, occupational health, animal and plant health, hygiene materials, cosmetics, water, the environment, and ensuring compliance with good practices, standards, and related protocols.

- Regular assessment and self-reporting regarding risks and threats from all sources to public health and hygiene.
- Coordination of health and epidemiological vigilance activities and the initiation of early warnings to enable emergency management systems to respond promptly across the entire national territory...

It is evident from this that the legislator aims to adopt a strategic diagnosis based on gathering

information about the public health situation to determine the extent of its threats and the degree of their severity. In this context, all sectors must provide the National Health Security Agency with the necessary information in accordance with Article 44 of Presidential Decree No. 20-435 mentioned above, which states: "All sectors represented in the Steering Council must make available to the agency the data related to health security that they possess in order to allow the agency to perform its assigned tasks in the best possible manner." Based on this information, the agency can achieve what is known as the strategic construction process, which is based on developing plans to confront potential threats and adopting the necessary decisions¹⁹.

To ensure the safety and security of the nation's health, and by collaborating with various sectors and sharing vital data, the National Health Security Agency can effectively mitigate risks and respond promptly to emergencies. This collaborative approach also allows for a more comprehensive understanding of potential health threats and the ability to implement proactive measures to prevent them. Through this strategic construction process, the agency can enhance the overall health security of the nation and protect its citizens from various risks. By continuously evaluating and updating protocols, the National Health Security Agency can stay ahead of emerging threats and adapt to changing circumstances. This proactive approach helps to build a resilient health system that can effectively address any challenges that may arise in the future. In addition, the agency can also collaborate with other organizations and agencies to share information and resources, further strengthening the nation's health security infrastructure. By fostering partnerships and cooperation, the National Health Security Agency can ensure a coordinated response to any potential health crisis.

This collaborative effort enhances the agency's ability to quickly mobilize resources and expertise in times of need, ensuring a swift and effective response to any health emergency. By working together with various stakeholders, the National Health Security Agency can maximize its impact and protect the well-being of the population. This proactive approach also allows for better communication and information sharing among different sectors, ultimately leading to a more robust and resilient health security system. Additionally, by engaging with communities and organizations at all levels, the agency can address vulnerabilities and gaps in preparedness, ultimately strengthening the nation's overall health security infrastructure.

Therefore, the National Health Security Agency is authorized to propose: "All measures aimed at improving the organization and operation of public structures related to health security, in consultation with the relevant sectors and establishing and integrating all structures assigned tasks that require specific competencies and resources," according to Presidential Decree No. 20-435, which clarifies the agency's powers, organization, and operation in Article 44.

This was carried out in order to activate strategic vigilance and optimize the efficacy of the governance plan intended to be implemented in the field of health security. In order to improve the overall effectiveness of public health structures, this directive highlights the significance of cross-sector collaboration. The agency can better address health security concerns and guarantee a coordinated approach to governance in this crucial area by merging certain capabilities and resources.

Furthermore, the decree outlines the responsibilities of the agency in terms of surveillance, prevention, and response to health emergencies. It also establishes mechanisms for information sharing and coordination with other relevant entities to ensure a comprehensive approach to health security. This multi-sectoral approach allows for a more holistic and effective response to public health challenges, ultimately benefiting the population as a whole. By fostering partnerships and communication among various stakeholders, the agency can more efficiently address emerging

health threats and protect the well-being of communities.

Moreover, the agency's collaborative efforts help streamline resources and avoid duplication of efforts in addressing health emergencies. This coordinated approach enhances the overall preparedness and resilience of the healthcare system to mitigate risks effectively and protect public health.

In addition, the agency's proactive approach to public health issues allows for early detection and rapid response to potential outbreaks, minimizing the impact on the population. By prioritizing prevention and preparedness, the agency is able to effectively manage and contain health crises before they escalate, ensuring a safer and healthier community for all. Furthermore, the agency's collaboration with other organizations and stakeholders helps to streamline communication and resource allocation during emergencies. This ensures a more efficient and effective response to health threats, ultimately saving lives and reducing the burden on healthcare systems.

2.2. Addressing Health Security Challenges in Times of Health Crises:

Effective health governance requires the establishment of a rigorous policy for managing health risks through:

- "Creating a structured body for disaster management to achieve the highest level of hospital operation.
- Involving all stakeholders, including administrative staff and specialists.
- The ability to mobilize resources continuously
- The interaction with various levels of leadership.
- The ultimate goal is to reduce deaths and diseases resulting from the disaster."²⁰

Effective health governance involves regular training and drills to ensure preparedness for any potential disasters. It also requires clear communication channels to disseminate information quickly and efficiently during emergencies. This ensures that all staff are well-equipped to respond effectively in crises. Additionally, collaboration with local authorities and community organizations is essential for a coordinated response to disasters.

Thanks to the activation of health governance policy, Algeria, during the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, took several legal measures²¹ aimed at controlling the pandemic and limiting its spread by imposing social distancing measures, activating home confinement procedures, and prohibiting movement in and out of the country, in order to meet the requirements of administrative control to maintain public health order, which relies on proactive plans to take appropriate actions in line with the epidemiological situation.

In this context, a committee for monitoring and tracking the COVID-19 pandemic was established, tasked with collecting data, information, and official statistics regarding the epidemiological situation. Based on its data, practical plans were developed to confront the pandemic and an emergency plan was put in place at the hospital level to take all necessary urgent measures.

Additionally, the committee works closely with healthcare professionals and government officials to ensure a coordinated response to the evolving situation. The emergency plan includes protocols for testing, contact tracing, isolation, and treatment to effectively manage and contain the spread of the virus.

The committee also regularly communicates updates and recommendations to the public to promote awareness and adherence to safety measures. By collaborating with various stakeholders.

The committee aims to minimize the impact of the pandemic on the community and protect public health.

The committee also monitors data and trends to make informed decisions and adjust strategies as needed. Through ongoing evaluation and adaptation, the committee strives to address challenges and optimize the effectiveness of their response efforts. Furthermore, the committee works closely with healthcare professionals and government agencies to ensure a coordinated response to the pandemic. By leveraging expertise and resources from different sectors, the committee can implement comprehensive strategies that address various aspects of the public health crisis.

In continuation of these measures and the diligent efforts by the Algerian state, the National Health Security Agency has been assigned a strategic mission to manage the health crisis by defining its powers through Article 2 of Decree No. 20-435, which granted the agency the authority to:

- “Manage and coordinate emergencies related to health risks at the national level.
- Establish and develop cooperative and partnership relations with similar foreign bodies and coordinate with specialized international organizations, especially during pandemics and major health crises, and exchange documents and information related to them.
- Monitor the evolution of data with various relevant structures regarding the management of strategic reserves of medicines and surgical medical consumables, diagnostic means, and protective equipment designated for handling health emergencies and major health risks.
- Conduct vigilance, foresight, and scientific research studies, as well as all analyses that assist in the effectiveness of policies in the field of health security.”

These powers indicate that the National Health Security Agency is tasked not only with managing the COVID-19 pandemic but also with all emerging diseases, international health crises, humanitarian emergencies, and all forms of malnutrition. It also aims to enhance scientific research to develop knowledge and exchange experiences with other countries in order to manage health crises characterized by their high severity and rapid and easy spread, which poses a significant threat to global health security. This requires the implementation of a sound governance policy to confront these challenges, relying on modern scientific methods and the use of contemporary knowledge and technologies, as well as strengthening international cooperation to combat health crises.

Working together with other nations, sharing information and resources, and implementing evidence-based strategies, countries can effectively respond to health crises and prevent them from escalating into global pandemics.

Additionally, investing in education and training programs for healthcare professionals can help build capacity and improve readiness to address future health emergencies. Moreover, promoting public awareness and engagement in health issues can enhance community resilience and response efforts during crises.

Governments need to prioritize funding for healthcare infrastructure and research to ensure a swift and effective response to emerging health threats. By strengthening collaboration and coordination between countries, information sharing and resource allocation can be optimized to contain outbreaks more efficiently. Furthermore, establishing robust surveillance systems and early warning mechanisms can help detect potential health threats early on and facilitate timely interventions to prevent widespread transmission.

In addition, investing in public health education and awareness campaigns can empower communities to take the necessary precautions and adhere to guidelines during outbreaks and

building strong partnerships with international organizations and local stakeholders, governments can enhance their capacity to respond effectively to global health emergencies. Collaborating with neighbouring countries and sharing information can also improve coordination and response efforts during health crises.

Additionally, ensuring access to essential medical supplies and resources is crucial in mitigating the impact of outbreaks on vulnerable populations.

Conclusion:

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic forced countries, including Algeria, to review their public health protection policies in response to the need for governance of management systems through the establishment of the National Health Security Agency, which has been assigned a strategic role in governing the health sector.

This agency is responsible for coordinating efforts to prevent, detect, and respond to health threats, ensuring a more efficient and effective response in times of crisis. By establishing this agency, Algeria aims to strengthen its capacity to protect the health and well-being of its citizens in the face of future challenges. Additionally, the National Health Security Agency will work to enhance collaboration between various stakeholders in the health sector, including government agencies, healthcare providers, and international organizations.

This coordinated approach helps ensure a more cohesive and comprehensive response to public health emergencies.

The agency focuses on developing strategies for early detection and rapid containment of potential outbreaks, as well as improving overall preparedness and response capabilities. By promoting a proactive and collaborative approach to health security, Algeria is taking significant steps towards safeguarding the health of its population and minimizing the impact of future crises.

Additionally, the agency works to strengthen partnerships with neighbouring countries to enhance regional health security efforts. This collaborative approach not only benefits Algeria but also contributes to global health security initiatives.

Through our study of the governance of the institutional framework for health security in Algeria, we have reached several conclusions, the most important of which are summarized as follows:

- The policy that Algeria had adopted was primarily focused on reforming the health system without engaging in the effort to establish health security.
- The crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic revealed the inability of the Algerian health system, like many other countries, to confront and address the health risks posed by this pandemic, which necessitated the adoption of health governance policies to ensure health security.
- The establishment of the National Health Security Agency was a result of the gradual evolution of policies pursued by Algeria. After relying on a committee to monitor and follow up on the COVID-19 pandemic, the agency was created as an independent administrative body with greater powers and capabilities.
- The powers of the National Health Security Agency are responsive to the requirements of strategic vigilance, meaning it has a proactive anticipatory role.
- The National Health Security Agency has not achieved the desired goals, as its role has remained limited to advisory functions and providing counsel to the President of the Republic without producing tangible results on the ground, whether regarding its powers related to establishing health

security or reforming the health system.

-Although the National Health Security Agency enjoys legal personality and independence, it is not authorized to make decisions due to the predominance of its advisory role.

We have reached several suggestions that could improve the performance of the National Health Security Agency and achieve tangible results:

-Grant the National Health Security Agency the authority to make executive decisions and not limit its role to submitting reports to the President of the Republic.

-It is essential for the agency to be independent from the Presidency of the Republic and to grant it actual autonomy in its management and operations, rather than being merely an agency placed under the President.

-Reorganizing the National Health Security Agency and strengthening it with effective executive committees and bodies.

-Expanding the agency's sources for proactive information and not relying solely on information provided by the sectors represented in the steering committee.

-Continuous training for its members and facilitating the utilization of foreign and national expertise.

-Expanding its membership to include specialists in crisis and disaster management, rather than limiting it to scientific and medical personnel.

-Modify the agency's operational method and move it away from administrative management by intensifying meetings and regular gatherings, rather than relying solely on semi-annual meetings, especially since the agency plays a crucial role in achieving health security, which requires continuous activity and close monitoring of all developments and emergencies.

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