

## COVID-19 and the Promotion of Social Entrepreneurship in Public Health: Case Studies of "United Algeria" and "Win Nelka"

كوفيد-19 وتعزيز المقاولاتية الاجتماعية في مجال الصحة العمومية: حالات

"الجزائر المتحدة ووين نلكا"

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### Abstract:

It is widely recognized that crises can significantly favor the promotion of entrepreneurship in all its forms. Based on this finding, the present article shed lights on COVID-19 as a context that has contributed to the development of social entrepreneurship in the field of public health. We examine this within the framework of the associative fabric and particularly through the study of "United Algeria and Win Nelka" which are two civic organizations established during Covid-19. The analysis of their journey and their activities revealed that the experiences they learned during the Covid-19 paved the way for them to undertake more robust and sustainable social projects in the field of public health, particularly in terms of ameliorating the conditions of vulnerable citizens to access to the care system, in addition to educating citizens about dangerous diseases and ways to prevent them.

**Keywords:** Crisis, COVID-19, Social Entrepreneurship, Associations, Public Health.

### ملخص:

من المعترف به على نطاق واسع أن الأزمات تساعد على تعزيز المقاولاتية بجميع أشكالها. واستناداً على هذا الطرح، يسلط هذا المقال الضوء على أزمة كوفيد-19 كسياق ساهم في ظهور وتطوير مبادرات المقاولاتية الاجتماعية في مجال الصحة العامة. ونتناول ذلك في إطار الحركة الجمعوية، وخاصةً من خلال دراسة حاليّ "الجزائر المتحدة ووين نلكا"، وهما منظمّتان مدنيّتان ولدتا وتطورتا خلال أزمة كوفيد-19. كشفت دراسة مساههما وأنشطتهما أن التجارب التي تعلمهما خلال أزمة كوفيد-19 فتحت الطريق أمامهما للقيام بأشكال أكثر متانة واستدامة لمشاريع المقاولاتية الاجتماعية في مجال الصحة العامة، لا سيما على مستوى تسهيل ظروف المواطنين الذين يعانون الهشاشة في الوصول إلى الخدمات الصحية ونظام الرعاية، إضافة إلى توعية المواطنين بالأمراض الخطيرة وطرق الوقاية منها.

**كلمات مفتاحية:** أزمة، كوفيد-19، المقاولاتية الاجتماعية، الجمعيات، الصحة العمومية.

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## 1. Introduction

Associations' awareness of health issues is not a new phenomenon in Algeria. Several studies have already highlighted the contribution of certain associations in this area through analyzing their initiatives as emerging projects of social entrepreneurship and innovation. For example but not limited to, there is the case of the cancer support association "El Badr" in the Wilaya of Blida (Chibani & Billaudeau, 2019), the Wafa association of parents of mentally retarded children in Constantine and TEJ for the health of Guemar in El Oued (Benramdane, 2015), as well as other associations. According to estimates, 08% of the national associative fabric is active or at least carries out actions relating to the promotion of public health (Bendimerad, Chibani, Boussafi, 2019).

By the advent of COVID-19, the importance of associative initiatives in the health sector has increased. Indeed, this pandemic has not been entirely a curse despite all its economic, social and psychological consequences. The different forms of mutual aid reflected impressive and inspiring images of social solidarity between citizens (Mihoubi, 2022, Guema, Northey, Boukramic, 2022). This crisis also gave rise to several civic initiatives attempting to respond to the needs of people affected by this pandemic, including initiatives related to health issues, such as "United Algeria" and "Win Nelka", respectively a foundation and an association that are the focus of this study. Our objective in studying them is to show how a crisis context has favored the emergence of social entrepreneurship linked to health system promotion.

To do so, our theoretical perspective is based on the theory of "creative destruction" which grants importance to entrepreneurs - whether economic or social - in the process of rebalancing the destruction produced by crises. This theory emphasizes on the fact that entrepreneurs are the most appropriate people to realize rebalancing due to their reflection and their action informed by opportunity seizing (Janssen et al, 2021, Bureau, 2013). As applied to COVID-19, we question the reactions of social entrepreneurs and how they interacted with this pandemic to invent practices and contribute to resolving the new health and social problems caused by COVID-19 (Bacq, Lumpkin, 2020, Satar, Alarifi, 2022). We investigate this in the framework of the associative fabric which is considered as a space for the development of social entrepreneurship given its anchoring in society, non-profit orientation of its services as well as its capacity to lead a bottom-up change processes (Chibani & Billaudeau, 2019, Levy & Rival, 2010, Gérome, 2015).

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In the following, we briefly discuss the crisis and its relationship with social entrepreneurship, as evidenced by the relevant literature. We then move on to explaining our methodology relating to the choice and analysis of our case study. After presenting our results, we discuss our conclusions in the light of studies on the development of social entrepreneurship in a crisis context.

### **2. Crises and Social Entrepreneurship: A Focus on COVID-19**

At first glance, the term crisis seems simple and familiar given its common use in the daily discourse of individuals, the media and in political speeches. However, defining its meaning and its effectiveness in the social analysis has been the concern of social scientists for centuries. This term has long been part of medical vocabulary and was used to describe the patient's paroxysmal moment relating to life and death (Ordioni, 2011). Then, its use extended to all scientific disciplines, including the social sciences which have adopted it since the 19th century following major historical changes linked, for example, to the Industrial Revolution, the rise of modernization, the First and Second World Wars, the Great Depression of 1929, the collapse of the Berlin Wall and communism, and the financial crisis of 2008 (Costales, Zeyen, 2022; Wieviorka, 2009).

The insertion of this concept into the social sciences gave birth to numerous social theories that articulated around it. In the Marxist theory, the crisis of the capitalist system was formulated as a factor leading towards the emergence of communist society. In the context of functionalist theory, the challenge was how to preserve the social order based on the values of Western societies and individualism from dysfunctions caused by postmodernism, while the theory of Ulrich Beck on the risk society and the globalized world alerted to the weakening of individual destinies in a world increasingly shaped by unstructured societies and uncertain paths (Dafermos, 2022; Wieviorka, 2009).

However, the intense use of this concept has raised challenges related to the existence of a robust theoretical framework that makes it more effective in the analysis of social phenomena. Recently, some attempts have emerged to fill this gap, especially during and after the COVID-19 pandemic, such as the work of Sylvia Walby (2022). This scholar proposed a theorization that emphasized on the following criteria for a better sociological use of this concept:

1. She emphasized that lack of proportionality between the cause and consequence of the crisis-creating event is important for crisis definition. The study of this disproportionality makes it possible to understand the temporality of the crisis-generating event, its spatiality and the scope between the event and its consequences.

2. She considered that crises are socially embedded and called for taking into account the specificities of societies and their historical and cultural backgrounds in dealing with crises.
3. She invited to explore if the crisis is real or socially constructed and imagined through analyzing the discourse of different social actors.
4. The impact of the crisis and its scope is another criterion to define it since a crisis can induce changes and damages at different levels and fields of social life.
5. The researcher invited to approach contemporary societies as complex systems that are undergoing substantial changes. Complexity sciences provide tools for understanding sudden changes in a social system and identifying turning points in its evolution.

In the context of entrepreneurship, including that with a social dimension, the notion of crisis is not strange. Since the inception of classical economics, scholars such as Adam Smith, Jean-Baptiste Say, and John Stuart Mill argued that entrepreneurs are the most suitable people to satisfy the growing economic demands and manage the problems of economic resources shortage. Their analyses therefore focused on how to solve problems of economic scarcity and achieve better exploitation of the elements of production such as land, capital, workforce and the means of production (Costales, Zeyen, 2022; Van Praag, 1999).

Later scholars such as Joseph Schumpeter revolutionized thinking on entrepreneurship by introducing the dimension of creativity along with risk-acceptance and the organizational skills that were required from entrepreneurs. His perspective fits well with social entrepreneurship given his idea outlining that capitalism would decline, resulting in a typically socialist civilization as a natural reaction of social and environmental problems of the 21st century. Schumpeter believed that entrepreneurs must involve an innovative spirit and mechanisms in their management through doing things that were already done in a new way and exploiting the opportunities that change created (Costales, Zeyen, 2022; Alam, Mohiuddin, 2014).

This conception was extended to the field of social entrepreneurship. Over the past quarter century, the field of social entrepreneurship has grown rapidly and attempted to solve complex social problems with innovative methods responding to limits in commercial entrepreneurship or state public policy towards sensitive social issues such as employment, precariousness, the environment, and health. Given its social and non-profit purpose, this type of entrepreneurship was associated with greater innovation and invention to guarantee the resources necessary for its functioning in solving social problems (Bacq, Lumpkin, 2020).

During the COVID-19 crisis, social entrepreneurship and enterprises have been discussed in terms of the challenges they face, the impact they have

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created during the crisis, as well as the opportunities they have identified and invested subsequently. Among the challenges raised by the relevant research are: the lack of financial resources, the disruption of supply chains, the need to adapt quickly to changing social and economic needs, the lack of institutional collaboration and the deviation from its basic social mission. Regarding opportunities, social enterprises have been involved in creating and facilitating supply chains of goods and medicines, expanding social protection for employees who lose their jobs and introducing new forms of digital management (Durán Benavides, Quintero Alvarez, De la Garza López, 2023; Gigauro, Bogacz-Wojtanowska, 2022).

### **3. Method and Tools**

The case study method was employed to implement an in-depth analysis of the experience of two associations. The choice of these organizations was made on the basis of their emergence, progress and contributions during COVID-19. Since we recognize that our choice is subjective and insufficient to better understand the social and health entrepreneurship of associations during COVID-19, we estimate that the two associations we selected at least ensure the conditions of “emergence and progress” in a crisis context, which is the main focus of this study.

To collect data from these organizations, we followed a qualitative methodology. On the one hand, we conducted semi-structured interviews with members of these associations. The topics of the interviews focused on the trajectory of their constitution, composition, actions, skills learnt from the crisis and future prospects. On the other hand, we followed their activities on their Facebook pages, a process that provided us with additional data to enrich our analysis.

Data processing implemented reflexive thematic analysis. This method produces and generalizes codes and themes based on an interpretative reading process of data (Braun & Clarke, 2021). However, to ensure the minimum of reliability, the authors of this article read and interpreted the collected data separately, then compared interpretations to validate commonalities and discuss different understandings. According to many users of this method, this option minimizes over-interpretation of data and limits readers' subjectivity during interpretation (Nowell et al., 2017).

### **4. Results**

Data processing showed that COVID-19 was a context of formalization, affirmation and greater investment in sustainable social entrepreneurship projects in the field of public health for the two civic organizations we have studied. Below we present these three themes in more detail.

#### **4.1 COVID-19: context of formalization and coalition**

The official recognition of these organizations coincided with the advent of COVID-19. It was precisely in 2020 when they received approval from the Ministry of the Interior and local collectivities, after the associative fabric at the national level showed a significant reaction to COVID-19. However, its founding core existed before the pandemic and was active in the field of public health and social solidarity actions. This gives these organizations experiences and a greater opportunity to start a process of formalization and increase their impact in society during and post-COVID-19. In this regard, the Win Nelka is the result of a group of doctors and pharmacists who fought against the penury of medicines while United Algeria is a coalition of associations active in the field of charity and social solidarity.

#### **From Pharmet to Win Nleka**

In 2017, a group of doctors and pharmacists called "*Pharmet*" decided to create a medicine dictionary. The idea of this project aimed to make their profession at the service of volunteering and society. During this phase, the group was limited to introducing and defining pharmaceutical products. Gradually, they began to receive requests from patients and people in need of medicines not available on the market. This gave birth to the idea of creating a group that would work to provide medicines to group members and their families, and then it evolved into a national association after realizing the extent of the medicines penury. Win Nelka, which has become the new name of the association, (means lit. *Where May I Find?*), which practically addresses this problem.

The goal of this group then shifted to uniting efforts and acting as mediator between those who need medications and those who can provide them. This latter category included both ordinary people who have medicines they do not need, pharmacy owners, as well as mobilizing the network of relations with the national community abroad to supply medicines which are not available on the national market. Composed mainly of doctors and pharmacists, this unique composition has enabled significant progress to be made in the medicines supply process. The team could mobilize more than 800 pharmacists, medical specialists in various fields, investors and owners of private institutions working in the field of medicines and medical equipment.

#### **United Algeria**

"United Algeria" is a coalition of associations which have decided to gather within a foundation. COVID-19 was the trigger for the formation of this group, who observed an urgent need for greater and more influential collective action to address the devastating effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. The statement from a founding member of this collective explains the reasons for forming this foundation, he says:

"At the beginning of Covid-19, we brought together a group of active associations in Algiers, around (12) associations, into a coordination. Four

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months later, we asked ourselves why everyone remains active in a neighborhood or municipal association. Why don't we organize ourselves? We all have experience and goodwill and uniting into a foundation will create a great and lasting impact.”

The objective of this foundation was therefore to unify efforts, experiences and means. To do this, the expression “together to build the individual and society” represented the slogan that brought this collective together. It also determines its orientations and actions which adopted a bottom-up, or even micro-level approach to societal engagement. They believe that the resolution of the society’s problems requires focus on individuals, through ameliorating their living conditions and working more on education and values. Although the experience of this foundation was limited in the field of charitable and humanitarian work, its engagements during the COVID-19 pandemic in health-related actions and the development of several projects supporting people health in the post-Covid-19 period can make it an emerging case to study.

### **4.2 COVID-19: a context of affirmation and evolution**

To explore how COVID-19 has pushed these organizations towards more investment in social entrepreneurship in the field of public health, we analyzed the actions taken during the pandemic and the impacts produced both on organizations and society. Four forms of impacts have been identified which include: asserting the capacity to mobilize material and human resources, extending networks and partnerships, acquiring new skills and techniques in the field of public health, and finally investing in the digital spheres and platforms.

#### **- Demonstrating mobilization capacity**

COVID-19 was an opportunity to affirm the capacity of these two organizations to mobilize human and material resources. Based on their previous experience of volunteering in the social and health fields, the two organizations quickly mobilized their networks since the early weeks of the pandemic and subsequent quarantine measures. Initially, their actions focused on the collection and redistribution of prevention materials and equipment, such as masks, sterilizers, gloves and medical uniforms. These supplies were directed to hospitals and medical personnel who faced a complex health situation. For example, Win Nelka association was able to cover part of the needs of 140 health establishments during this period. Then, the operations of these two organizations extended to the entire population, through conducting medical awareness campaigns and the contribution to preventive actions.

By the second wave of the pandemic, the mobilization capacity of these organizations was sharpened, through conducting larger-scale operations, particularly in the context of the oxygen concentrator crisis. The increased demand for these devices and their strategic importance in this second wave,

as well as the saturation of state supply networks, all these elements have favored the actions of these organizations. The campaign “Whoever Saves One [life]” provide a good example in this context. Launched by the United Algeria Foundation, this expression involves a strong religious meaning. This is a phrase taken from the Quran, in verse 32 of Surah Al-Ma'idah which states “And whoever saves one [life] -it is as if he had saved mankind entirely.” The Foundation therefore used the religious reference in its campaign to encourage donations from people in exchange for the reward they would receive from God. Due to this campaign, the foundation has collected 120 oxygen concentrators that benefited more than 480 people. In the same context, the Win Nelka association was initially able to provide 150 oxygen concentrators, with capacities ranging from 5 to 10 liters. The number of beneficiaries of the association's services exceeded 1,000 patients in different regions of the country.

The capacity of mobilization included the Algerian community abroad, through unifying efforts and initiatives with community coordination efforts abroad, particularly during the crisis of oxygen concentrators whose price increased and their supply in Algeria was limited. Through their overseas network, the two organizations were able to communicate with many factories and procure oxygen concentrators at a reasonable price. A publication from the “United Algeria” Foundation in its Facebook page specifies:

"This is a video of the first order from the factory. One hundred and forty oxygen concentrators will arrive in Algeria within the week. Thank you to the entire Algerian community around the world for their support and contribution. Thanks to all those responsible for coordinating the Algerian communities in the diaspora, notably the Corona dz group in Canada."

- **From Expanding Networks to Creating Partnerships**

We also noticed that the actions of these two organizations during the pandemic consolidated their mobilization networks and, in some cases, evolved into a partnership. In this regard, the crisis has sharpened their negotiating skills with public authorities, particularly in terms of granting import licenses and exemptions from customs duties. Both organizations could convince public authorities to allow them to import and receive concentrators from abroad. For example, the “United Algeria Foundation” sent a request to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in order to intervene and facilitate the arrival of devices donated by philanthropists abroad. In collaboration with other associations, it also succeeded in securing licenses from the Ministry of the Pharmaceutical Industry which authorizes the possession of these devices and using them for medical purposes.

Another form of partnership with public authorities was implemented through the initiative of “*Ikram El Ahiba*” [honoring the loved ones] and managing the burial of those who died from Covid-19, which was a project

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based on a partnership with hospital, health services and cemetery services, in order to facilitate the burial process of the Covid-19 dead. The "United Algeria" Foundation took charge of all procedures related to the burial process, from the preparation of documents, equipping the dead, managing health security conditions during the funeral, transporting the death in the cemetery and assistance at his burial. The Foundation's action in this area came after the pressure to which hospital services were exposed, as well as the fear of families and the lack of knowledge on how to manage this problem in this context.

Organizing joint actions with institutions and actors of civil society is another aspect of strengthening networking and partnership. With the "MC Alger" sports club, a joint campaign was organized under the slogan: *"There is no smoke bomb, there is oxygen"*. This campaign was held on the occasion of the club's centenary, during which donations were collected to purchase oxygen concentrators, distribute them and collect them once their use was achieved. The Foundation played an important role due to its organizational skills and human capabilities in managing the pressures resulting from daily communications and telephone calls.

### **- Developing Managerial and Organizational Skills**

In addition to strengthening management capacities when organizing aid collection operations and communicating with hospital institutions and official authorities, the creation of specialized cells and committees to manage the crisis -especially during the oxygen concentrator crisis- seems to be the most important experience in terms of developing managerial skills for both organizations. Among these cells was the "Orientation and Listening Cell," which was in charge of receiving all calls and applications arriving at the organization from those requesting oxygen concentrators. Requests were placed on a waiting list, pending the recovery of one of the concentrators or the arrival of new donations to the organization. This unit also supported citizens in terms of patient treatment orientation, use of concentrators, prevention measures, priority of intervention, and recovery of concentrators. According to a member of the Win Nelka association, the organization received and managed more than 200 calls per day on these subjects. Another significant unit was the "Distribution and Recovery Cell." This cell was responsible for contacting the patient or the person requesting the oxygen concentrator according to the order on the list and allocating devices as soon as a concentrator became available. Before returning a concentrate, the cell sterilized it, and maintained it before delivering it again to the beneficiary. The cell also undertook to communicate constantly with the patient's family and to ensure that the concentrator was being used correctly and effectively.

Within these cells, the foundation was able to mobilize specialized medical professionals, who were responsible for answering all questions and requests related to the patient's health, the state of oxygen saturation to

determine to what extent the patient needed the concentrator and the appropriate size, and other information related to the patient's health condition. Through this dedicated staff, it also provided a home treatment service (*home hospitalization*), with the number of medical interventions carried out by the Foundation reaching 123 in-home treatments in Algiers, Blida, Boumerdes, Tipaza, and Médéa.

- **Investing in Digital Platforms**

This dimension represents a significant evolution in the practices of these organizations. In addition to their systematic presence on Facebook and Instagram, putting into service a digital platform to quickly interact with citizens represents a strategy that has not only facilitated the management of their requests during a situation of social distancing and confinement, but also made it possible to instill a practice of using digital technologies. In this regard, during the oxygen concentrator crisis, they created a platform which allowed citizens to apply online for a concentrator.

“United Algeria” has created a platform called “*Concentrator Request*”. This platform was designed professionally. It contained detailed information on the status of the requester and whether it merits the organization's eligibility to help. In addition to personal information linked to name, family name, place of residence and contact details, the platform also asks for information on the applicant's state of health such as age, weight, whether they suffer from a chronic illness and information on the percentage of oxygen in the blood. These pieces of information were important to classify requests and prioritize urgent cases requiring devices. The creation of this platform was associated with a video explaining its use. A post on Facebook page of United Algeria said:

“You can request an oxygen concentrator directly through the website in a simple and convenient way by filling in the patient’s information. The video in front of you explains the method. Link to order the concentrator: [www.algeriaunited.org](http://www.algeriaunited.org).”

From this experience, we notice how the foundation was able to invest in digital technologies and used them to solving a problem imposed by COVID-19. During the oxygen concentrator crisis, confinement measures prevented people in need from moving, particularly those living in areas far from the capital.

### **4.3 Towards Sustainable Social Entrepreneurship Projects**

The contribution of these two organizations to public health did not stop in the COVID-19 period; it evolved to establish sustainable projects that had an impact on the conditions of access to health services. Below, we present the most important projects.

- **Support to Patients: United Home and Ambulance**

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United Algeria Foundation has launched a project that helps cancer patients to benefit from accommodation in a center that was specifically constructed for this purpose. The conception of this project arose after recognizing the suffering of people with cancer and their companions in terms of travel and accommodation costs. In this regard, it is evident that cancer treatment centers are not equitably distributed across all regions of the country, necessitating patients to travel long distances to continue their treatment. Since their state of health does not allow them to resist frequent travel, the foundation thought about this project in Algiers to alleviate the suffering of this category of patients. Taking the name "United Homes", the project provides a complete support to all cancer patients, including accommodation, food and coverage of the costs of examinations, medical x-rays, medical analyses, and transportation to and from the hospital. Another project implemented by the foundation concerned the purchase of an ambulance, which will allow patients to be evacuated and provide medical transportation for people in need.

### **- From "Where Can I Find My Doctor" to "Health for All": The Health Caravan**

Win Nelka association has set up two interrelated projects. "*Where can I find my doctor?*" is a project based on a partnership with the private sector, where the idea seeks to involve as many private sector doctors as possible in order to help patients in need to continue their treatment. The idea includes a process of collecting doctors who show acceptance to afford a free or a cheap treatment to patients. The association played in this process the role of mediator through orienting patients to the appropriate doctors according to their sick and socioeconomic situation. To date, the project has mobilized 45 doctors from various specialties, benefiting approximately 145 patients. The second project, "**Health for All,**" provides healthcare assistance and advice through the organization of medical caravans and the mobilization of general practitioners, specialists, and pharmacists. This project focuses on areas lacking adequate health infrastructure. Since its inception, the project has treated 6,785 patients across 20 medical specialties through six caravans in five Wilayas.

This idea is original, because it instilled a medical practice based on "mobile health", which can reach infected people and examine them in their locations instead of waiting for them in health centers. This practice therefore makes it possible to detect many serious illnesses early and treat them before it is too late.

### **- Good Health Should Also Include Support Livelihood Conditions of People**

"From Need to Production" is a slogan through which the United Algeria Foundation launched a project aimed at accompanying and supporting unemployed people who carry out small projects with socioeconomic impact. To achieve this, the foundation created a digital platform allowing project holders to enroll and pursue their application. Initially, the project was limited to the Wilayas of Algiers, Boumerdes, Blida, Tipaza and Médéa. Candidates' applications are subject to an evaluation grid applying the criteria of family situation, financial capacity and project idea. Once accepted, the candidates benefit from training, during which they learn the principles of project development for a period of six months. After the training, comes the financing stage, which is based on the mastery of the training skills of the beneficiary. Once this microfinance has been granted to the beneficiary, a support and monitoring process is applied, which lasts from one to three years. The financing formula is purely Islamic, relying mainly on Qard Hasan. Even though it is still in progress, the foundation was able to provide initial training on the theme of "business modeling". It has also led an intensive training workshop on creating a personal brand. This workshop benefited people facing difficulties in obtaining employment, or who have difficulty highlighting their skills, and who need a better digital presence.

## **5. Discussion**

The aim of this study is to emphasize that crisis can create contexts that strengthen social entrepreneurship. It's sought to reinforce the argument suggesting that social entrepreneurs play an important role in creating innovative, non-profit solutions that meet social needs. The experiences of our case studies align with many findings highlighted by a body of literature which emerged during COVID-19 to analyze social entrepreneurship. Most of the research invites to explore how social entrepreneurship organizations seized direct and indirect opportunities created by the pandemic (Saidi Adedeji, James Olanipekun, 2022). In the light of our case studies, Covid-19 provided an opportunity for them to formalize their activities, as is the case of the Win Nelka association, or to form a coalition, as is the case of United Algeria. This is either due to the pandemic context itself, which required mobilization and more initiatives, or to the opening up of public authorities to the associative fabric through the granting of more accreditations.

The literature raises also the question of adaptation strategies with the new conditions induced by the pandemic (Benavides, Alvarez, Garza López, 2023). This has manifested in our study through mobilizing the previous experiences gained before COVID-19 and their adaptation to be beneficial in the context of the pandemic. In this regard, the Win Nelka association benefited greatly from its specialized staff (doctors and pharmacists) and its experience during the crisis of medical shortcoming which enhanced its capacity to formalize and evolve, especially after the increase in demand for

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medical services. The association was able to mobilize its staff to serve individuals infected by the virus while maintaining its original objective of medication provision. Similarly, United Algeria reflects the aspect of charity and how the experience in the field of social charity has favored it to provide social assistance to families infected by the quarantine measures.

Learning new skills and integrating new working methods is another aspect that studies are invited to explore in the context of the pandemic (Nakpodia, 2024). In this study, the cases studied showed learning to form listening and monitoring cells, as well as managing pressure and urgent cases. They also integrated digital platforms to communicate with people in need, and get used to managing remotely. Ultimately, sustainability of practices and projects during COVID-19 was an essential condition for the success of social entrepreneurship projects (Kamaludin, Xavier, Amin, 2022). The two cases we studied made it possible to launch sustainable projects in the field of public health development, including the creation of a cancer center, an ambulance, and mobile health caravans to raise awareness among citizens of the importance of early medical treatment.

The achievement of these advances and elements by the cases of our study leads us to describe them as promoting initiatives in social entrepreneurship. Since they are the product of a crisis situation, this reinforces our argument suggesting that the pandemic, although it has been deconstructive at multiple levels, has left opportunities that must be identified and defined in order to exploit them, particularly in favor of the development of our health system.

### **6. Conclusion**

In this article, we drew on a theory suggesting that crises are contexts favoring entrepreneurship, including those with a social impact. The use of this theory to analyze actions and evolution of two civic organizations in the context of COVID-19 has demonstrated significant progress both in terms of their contribution to the fight against this pandemic and in the acquisition and development of new practices related to the field of health. The pandemic has allowed these associations to formalize and consolidate their mobilization networks and invest in their human, financial and managerial potential. More importantly, the crisis encouraged them to engage in social entrepreneurship projects in the post-Covid-19 period, after having identified gaps in the health system, particularly in terms of care, difficulties in access to services, and a lack of knowledge of diseases and prevention methods.

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