

## Volunteerism During Crises: The Case of the Paramedics' Association in Relizane

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### Abstract:

Volunteerism is one of the most important means of participating in the advancement of societies in our current era. Volunteerism is increasingly important day by day. With the complexity of life conditions, social needs have increased and become constantly changing, and governments are unable to meet the needs of their members. Volunteerism has a great role in the renaissance of society because of the material and moral assistance it provides to those in need, in addition to the social response in times of distress and crises and relief efforts to resolve and mitigate conflicts.

**Keywords:** Volunteerism, crisis, social development, charities.

### Introduction

Many topics address certain issues, and perhaps the most important and noble of them is volunteer work. It addresses the problems of people in need, contributes to the development of society and instills lofty values in the hearts of people, such as cooperation, tolerance and solidarity, thus spreading goodness throughout society. Volunteerism is evident in times of crises facing our society, where we find volunteers joining hands and forming one hand to solve and alleviate the impact of these calamities on those affected by their plight. We also find charitable organizations of all kinds at the head of these volunteers, striving with all the tools and moral and financial energy they have to help those in distress and need. This charitable and voluntary support is considered one of the most important and noble tasks due to its great and lofty goals, including putting a smile on the faces of those affected and bringing joy and happiness to their hearts and all those in need. These charities are civil society organizations that are active in finding appropriate and urgent solutions to some crises and disasters, regardless of whether they are natural, such as earthquakes or artificial, such as fires etc. They take care of the vulnerable, the helpless and those who lack the most basic means of livelihood and extend a helping hand to them.

### Problematic:

The state, with all its structures and organizations, cannot solve all crises, especially if they escalate on their own. This makes it necessary for charitable associations to accelerate the mitigation of disasters or natural or other issues, thereby contributing to sustainable development alongside the state. In this way, they contribute to sustainable development alongside the state. Here lies the great role of these charities and their importance in creating a cooperative atmosphere, serving the public interest, providing for people in need, orphans and people with special needs, spreading health awareness, educating youth about the dangers of road traffic accidents, and protecting the environment so that we can live in a society full of love, harmony, goodness and peace.

Volunteerism is noble humanitarian work and civilized behavior with an intrinsic and precious value that benefits others. Its great importance lies in achieving social solidarity and spreading the spirit of collective initiative to maintain society's stability. It is no secret that the state, in turn, encourages these charitable associations, congratulates them on their great efforts in their noble profession and enacts laws to protect and support them. It also encourages citizens to engage in these voluntary works; what increased the fame and interaction of these charities is the sensitization campaigns broadcast through social networking sites such as Facebook and other sites that helped to reach the largest possible group of people, which increased their activity and the number of their charitable programs and increased the

number of volunteers and people involved in this charitable work. From the above, we can pose the fundamental question that we seek to address, namely:

What is the effective role of charitable voluntary work during crises, and how successful is it?

**Hypotheses:**

After formulating the question of the study, we had to formulate hypotheses to validate and answer them as follows:

**First hypothesis:** Volunteerism has a significant and effective role in resolving crises.

**Second hypothesis:** The charity was successful in achieving its planned outreach programs.

**The importance of the study:**

Charities are one of the main pillars of society as a whole, and the state cannot do without them and the many services they provide and their great role in establishing the pillars of social cohesion and stability, as well as spreading joy and happiness on the faces of those in need and those affected, During that crisis, all charitable organizations rushed to assist all those in need and minimized the escalation of this issue that affected us, especially in remote villages, and provided them with food and medical supplies. Internationally, rescue teams have played a prominent role in extending a helping hand to countries in need, as has happened recently in the natural disasters that affected Syria, Turkey, and Libya. This is the greatest proof that rescue teams have been of paramount importance in reducing the size of disasters and humanitarian crises, and even charitable associations have a great place in their contribution through various voluntary works to spread the culture of cooperation in society and to achieve their desired objectives.

The more these charitable associations are in society, the more noble their values are and the more fraternal, cooperative, and solidarity prevail among their members. Thus, this country progresses thanks to the cooperation of these charitable associations towards progress and development.

Thanks to their great efforts, these charitable associations teach society and the whole world about spreading the culture of tolerance, cooperation, and goodness and helping others. They give a great impression and create good citizens with high morals who will serve their people and society.

Objectives of the study:

This study aims to achieve the following objectives:

- Recognizing this charitable organization and discussing the deficiencies it suffers from.
- Knowing the importance of volunteer work and the place it occupies in society.
- Knowing the most important means used during the charity's voluntary work.
- Know the positive or negative effects of volunteering on the individual and society as a whole.
- To look at the problems and difficulties that stand in the way of voluntary work and try to remove and solve them.
- Enriching scientific research on these important topics, as there is a great shortage of such studies dealing with voluntary work.

**Defining concepts and terms:**

Before we start analyzing this scientific topic, we have to define some of its terms and concepts that will help us clarify the phenomenon; here are some of the terms used in our research:

**Volunteering:**

This term has many and varied definitions by scholars and researchers, including:

Robert Barker's 1999 definition: 'Volunteerism is the act of an individual or group, of their own volition and without compensation, providing humanitarian services to the community.' ( أبو النصر، 2016، ص 19). The definition of Salah El-Din Jowhar: 'Volunteering is the effort exerted by any human being for his community or certain groups without compensation' (ص26، 2015، أحمد إبراهيم).

To volunteer something is to donate it, and the volunteer is the one who does the thing voluntarily. Therefore, volunteering is what a person donates from his/her self, in terms of money, effort or time, which is not obligated by anyone but motivated by him/her to contribute to the responsibility of organizations working to provide social welfare (ص7، 2011، نادية سعيد حسن). In the Arabic language of Ibn Manzur, examples of this include: He came voluntarily without being coerced, and to do it voluntarily or involuntarily, as Almighty God says: 'So whoever volunteers, it is good for him.' البقرة 184، which refers to the great psychological benefit of volunteering for the volunteer. (صالح بن مطر، 33 (الهطالي، ص 33).

There are three main terms used to describe volunteering. *Volunteering* is the most commonly used term to describe the work of volunteers and refers to the performance of voluntary tasks either through an organization or informally.

**Volunteerism:** It is a term that refers to everything related to facilitating and making volunteering possible.

A third term we often hear is volunteering, which is older than voluntarism. Voluntaryism is a broader term that refers to anything that is done in our societies from a voluntary logic of research. (جوي نوبل، ص 24، 25، 1431)

**Crisis:**

**1—Crisis linguistically:** The Al-Musbah Al-Munir dictionary expresses crisis in the sense of severity and barrenness. It is said that the time of the year has become more severe and less favorable for us or that the year has become more difficult for them, meaning it has become more barren.

**Crisis in terminology:** A crisis is a sudden disruption caused by unstable situations that result in unforeseen developments due to the concerned parties' inability to contain them (أحمد هادي طالب، جامعة بابل، ص 3).

**The concept of crisis:**

The concept of crisis is one of the widespread concepts in this era and has become, in one way or another, affecting all aspects of life, from individual crises to international crises. Some believe that the crisis is only an advanced stage of conflict, starting from within the human psyche and ending with international conflicts (محمد عبد الله المرعول، 2014، ص 19).

**The benefits of volunteering:**

**For the community:** There are many benefits that society reaps from volunteering, including

- Volunteerism allows for the identification of gaps in the service system throughout the community.
- Experimenting with new ways to meet the needs of the community.
- Complementing and supporting government work for the benefit of the community by raising the level and expanding the scope of services.
- Volunteerism provides solidarity between the members of this community.
- The movement, flexibility and speed that characterize voluntary work are similar to government administration.
- Providing citizens with the opportunity to practice contributing to the work and participating in democratic decisions that affect their lives and the lives of their community.

**For the volunteer himself:** There are many benefits for the volunteer himself, as follows:

- The volunteer receives intensive training for effective participation in volunteer work.
- The volunteer develops self-confidence and feels satisfied and comfortable.
- The volunteer's sense of selfishness disappears, and his love for the good of others emerges.
- The emergence of teamwork and thus working as a team to draw plans and make decisions.
- Helping to utilize leisure time.
- They are forming beneficial social relationships with individuals and civil organizations (نادية، ص 15، سعيد حسن، 2011).

**Forms of voluntary work:**

**1. Individual voluntary work:**

It is social work practiced by the individual on his initiative, desire and will. It does not seek any material return and is based on ethical, social, humanitarian or religious considerations. For example, an individual provides financial assistance to orphans.

**2 - Institutional volunteering:**

It is more advanced than individual voluntary work, more organized and has a wider impact on society. Charitable institutions contribute to large voluntary work to serve the community. If all the efforts of individuals come together and form a body that organizes voluntary work, this has a great and effective impact. (جابر بن عويص العنبي، 2022، ص 13، 12).

**Methodological procedures of the study:**

Throughout this research, we will present the methodology used to study and address this social phenomenon.

### **1. Methodology:**

The method can be considered a set of systematic methodological procedures and instruments through which we can obtain theoretical and field data that are closely related to the research question. Through this research, we used a scientific method that is appropriate to the nature of the topic, and the approach of this study falls under the so-called exploratory studies. Procedurally, it is a descriptive and analytical study where we analyzed the concept of volunteer work, its types, its effects on the individual and the group, and its effects on deepening national unity.

#### **Data collection instruments:**

**1. Observation** is considered an important tool of scientific research because it helps the researcher investigate and scrutinize facts to identify and analyze social phenomena, understand their mechanics, and interpret them scientifically to find appropriate solutions.

**2. Interview:** One technique of scientific research is to collect as much information and facts as possible about the studied topic.

#### **Research community and sample:**

Defining the research community is one of the most important methodological steps in social research, and the research community for our study consists of a charitable organization in the Wilaya of Relizane called the Paramedic Association of the Wilaya of Relizane.

#### **Research sample:**

In this study, we relied on the purposive sample, which means that the researcher relies on it to conduct his study on a specific group without others, as this group represents the original community well. This choice achieves the desired objective of the study and the study period, i.e., the time frame of the research, which extends from June 15, 2023, to August 15, 2023, while the place frame is Aouad Ben Djebbar Street No. 11, Relizane. This association was established on May 11, 2017, in Relizane in accordance with Law No. 12/06 dated 18 Safar 1433 AH, corresponding to January 12, 2012, concerning associations and authorizing the members of the managing committee of a local association consisting of Messrs:

President, First Vice-President, Second Vice-President, Secretary General, Deputy Secretary General, Treasurer, Deputy Treasurer, First Assistant, Second Assistant. The members became nine members, and this was approved by the registration of permit number 9 on 11/05/2017. This permit is renewed every five years and is renewed until this year, 2023. It is active and has an intensive program for this year.

The Association of Paramedics of Relizane has a model statute for associations, in which general provisions define its objectives, conditions for joining it, members' duties and rights, and the organization and functioning of the association's organs and everything related to them. This association is social and service-oriented for young people. The founders and members share their knowledge and resources on a voluntary basis and for a non-profit purpose to promote and encourage its activity within the framework of the public interest. This is without contravening national constants and values and without prejudice to public order and morals and the provisions of laws and regulations.

The Association of Paramedics has many objectives, including:

- 1- Voluntary sensitization campaigns in first aid for various segments of society, as well as for school children.
- 2- Urgent intervention in various natural accidents, domestic accidents and traffic accidents.
- 3- Assisting patients and people with special needs.

This association strives to do good and provide assistance on all occasions. It must implement a specific program during the year.

Articles (09) through (13) of the association's statute explain the conditions and methods of joining and quitting, as well as the duties and rights of members.

The association organizes meetings twice a year to study its annual program and conduct some of its affairs. During our interview, the association's president told us that he has an intensive program for 2023, which he intends to achieve in coordination with other companies that provide the humanitarian services needed by civil society.

As for the year 2022, the report provided me with a program of activities that were carried out for this year, including, for example:

The Association of Paramedics sterilized mosques in January 2022 in coordination with the municipal health office.

- We are helping people with special needs.
- A sensitization and awareness campaign on the dangers of gases (carbon monoxide) for 2000 Adel dwellings in coordination with Sonelgaz.
- A sensitization campaign on the dangers of traffic accidents for February 2022 in coordination with the Directorate of Transport and the Preventive Delegation of Traffic Accidents in the Wilaya of Relizane with the National Gendarmerie, the Civil Protection and the Association of Paramedics.
- A mass circumcision for children (30 children) at the House of Culture with the presentation of clothes and gifts for March 2022 to the Association of Paramedics.
- They are helping some citizens after the burning of their houses on Bouchnaq Street in Relizane for February 2022 for the Association of Paramedics.
- A sensitization campaign for security officers about the ambulance at Mazouna Hospital in February 2022 in coordination with Mazouna Hospital.
- Distribution of mineral water and nutritional supplements to patients at Boudiaf Hospital in May 2022 by the Paramedics Association.

These are some of the activities programmed for the year 2022, and all these activities were carried out with the association's team, which was joined by a large number of 25 members, all of whom are active in the Association of Paramedics in Relizane. The association's president, along with the members, assured me that they are doing their best to ensure that these activities run smoothly and are completed on time. He also added that he trains his team, conducts awareness campaigns, and even holds training classes to teach his team the right ways and how to use the tools safely. This is through the training courses that he conducts for this team so that they are properly trained and make no mistakes while carrying out these programmed sensitization and awareness campaigns. He is also active on his own Facebook page to show everyone these noble services he provides to his community and introduce them to this association that seeks to develop volunteer work and commemorate various religious and national events. The sole aim of this association is to help the needy and poor of this wilaya, to highlight the marginalized classes, and to extend a helping hand to them. This association also cleans neighborhoods, donates blood for the benefit of the sick and needy, and distributes the Ramadan gift every year. It also coordinates with other associations and with various security and national authorities for various companies and specialized authorities. In the context of preventing traffic accidents, this organization provides health services and traffic accident relief.

It also spreads health awareness, especially in poor and isolated areas. It provides care for orphans, feeds the fasting people and sponsors people in need. All this is done to contribute to the civilized construction of the nation and reduce disasters and humanitarian crises, which is a noble profession.

Volunteerism is considered a human behavior that manifests all the meanings of goodness and good deeds and is considered the main partner in serving the community and its development. This charity fulfills its role in parallel with government agencies in meeting the needs of citizens. The success and pride of this association increase when it provides goodness and assistance that is appreciated by others and finds encouragement and appreciation.

### **Conclusion**

Volunteering is an opportunity for individuals to participate and engage in order to improve their quality of life and thereby train and acquire advanced skills for personal and social development. It instills in them a sense of responsibility and social belonging and contributes to building strong relationships among them and achieving public benefit over private benefit. This is what the charity has proven to us, which has played an effective and essential role in managing humanitarian crises and has succeeded in absorbing and minimizing the exacerbation of the issues with all the merit and deservedness and forming a more cohesive and progressive society.

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