

LENS

GLOBAL HEALTH INSTITUTE E-NEWSLETTER
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MESSAGE FROM THE FOUNDING DIRECTOR

Dear Lens Readers,

During the past quarter, many changes took place at the Global Health Institute most of which focusing on streamlining our intra-organizational structure to better address our mission and goals. GHI has now three divisions: GHI Programs, tackling global health challenges through research and advocacy, GHI Academy which is the capacity building arm of the institute and GHI ASSIST (Arm for Specialized Services Initiatives and Support) focused on our service portfolio.

In addition, GHI is pleased to have launched a new program on ehealth, eSahha, within the GHI Programs Division that focuses on the use of low-cost ehealth tools to enhance global health challenges such as the growing burden of disease, inequitable access to health services, and implications of migration and displacement.

Another integral part of GHI's work during the last quarter was community service and outreach activities, which is the theme of this issue. As part of our community outreach, GHI opened the opportunity for volunteers from different specialties and backgrounds to step outside their professional day-to-day responsibilities and contribute to the communities that lack access to health care (see stories in the LENS). To that effect, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed with Malaak Non-governmental Organization (NGO) for joint community services, capacity building offerings and outreach activities for displaced populations and host communities.

We are happy to also announce the launch of the new GHI website that underwent major updates; we hope you enjoy browsing through it. The new website was revamped to have continuous updates on GHI research, activities, projects, job offerings, capacity building, upcoming events and other activities and initiatives.

I hope that this new year brings peace and health globally and more particularly to the MENA region. Enjoy reading this issue of the lens and we look forward to your continuous engagement as we embark on a new year for the Global Health Institute.

Shadi Saleh

THROUGH THE LENS

- GLOBAL HEALTH IN THE ARTS
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- GHI ACADEMY
- EXPERTS IN THE LENS
- GHI WELCOMES NEW STAFF
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Semaan Khawam: Birdman series, 2018, Gypsum (p.o.p bandage) cardboard and non-recycled material, 82x76x13 cm. Courtesy of Agial Art Gallery

Semaan Khawam is a Lebanese painter, designer, graffiti artist, actor, writer and poet. He was born in 1974 and lives and works in Beirut, Lebanon. His art and poetry have been featured in Arab and international newspapers. In his work, Khawam shows the power of art in challenging official state censorship, sectarianism and limits on freedom of expression in the Middle East.

A NEW MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH MALAAK NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION FOR JOINT COMMUNITY SERVICE

December 2018 | Global Health Institute, American University of Beirut



On December 7, 2018, the Global Health Institute signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Malaak Non-Governmental organization (NGO) to expand the reach of its community service, capacity building, and research activities.

The aim of this MOU is to address the health needs of displaced and host communities through collaborating with a respectable and action-oriented organization that can facilitate access to the target populations whether in camps, or other convening spaces, and can serve as the logistical and technical support lead in the field.

PARTNERING ON RESEARCH FOR HEALTH IN CONFLICT-MENA PROJECT

November 2018 | British Academy, London



On November 23, 2018, AUB President Fadlo Khuri, AUB's Global Health Institute (GHI) Founding Director Shadi Saleh, and faculty members and researchers from AUB participated in the launching event of the Research for Health in Conflict-MENA project (R4HC-MENA). The event took place at the British Academy in London and was attended by regional and international partners.

AUB's GHI is a key partner on the R4HC-MENA, which is a four-year project led by King's College London. It aims to strengthen and sustain research capacity in the region to address major health challenges arising from conflict. The project tackles mental health, cancer, political economy of health, and capacity building on health in conflict with a focus on Jordan, the Occupied Palestinian Territories, Lebanon, and Turkey, as well as conflict-affected populations in the region. [Read more](#)

GLOBAL HEALTH FORUM 2018 DISCUSSING GLOBAL HEALTH CHALLENGES IN LOW AND MIDDLE INCOME COUNTRIES

November 2018 | Global Health Institute, American University of Beirut



Aiming to explore innovative approaches to global health challenges in low- and middle-income countries, most of which are geographically located in the Global South, AUB's Global Health Institute (GHI) collaborated with the Consortium of Universities for Global Health (CUGH) to organize the first biennial Global Health Forum.

Policymakers, global health professionals, academics, professionals from the private sector, and stakeholders from various disciplines attended the Global Health Forum, which was an open platform for them to evaluate and anticipate global health challenges pertaining to LMICs. It also allowed them to exhibit innovative ideas and practical cases of innovations in global health either originating in or applicable to the LMIC context. [Read more](#)

E SAHHA PROGRAM

ESP

GHI launches a new program on eHealth at the fifth Global Symposium on Health Systems Research

October 2018 | Liverpool, United Kingdom



GHI announced the launch of a new program on ehealth during the fifth Global Symposium on Health Systems Research that took place in Liverpool, United Kingdom in October 2018. The program, named 'E-Sahha Program' (Sahha means health in Arabic), will focus on designing, implementing, and evaluating low-cost eHealth interventions in low- and middle income countries. "As one of the very few global health institutes based in the global south, where the needs are many and the resources are limited, we have an obligation to incubate and implement innovative approaches to global health challenges. There is little doubt that ehealth is a main area where innovations can have an impact", said Dr. Shadi Saleh, GHI's Founding Director. The launch happened during a panel session, supported by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), which also featured the release of a supplement in the Journal of Public Health on the gender and equity dimensions of eHealth and mHealth in low and middle-income countries.

The newly launched E-Sahha Program aims to join efforts of experts from different disciplines to develop innovative eHealth approaches. ESP will particularly focus on addressing health issues of global relevance including the growing burden of diseases, the gender gap in equitable access to quality health services, and the barriers imposed by displacement and migration. [Read more](#)

Findings from a 4-year eHealth project presented at the fifth Global Symposium on Health Systems Research

October 2018 | Liverpool, United Kingdom



Findings from a four-year research project on eHealth were presented at the fifth Global Symposium on Health Systems Research that took place last October in Liverpool, United Kingdom. The project, led by ESP co-director Dr. Shadi Saleh, highlighted the role of eHealth in enhancing the access to primary healthcare services among individuals with hypertension and/or diabetes, living in refugee and rural settings in Lebanon. **Three research articles** have been published so far to disseminate findings from this project.

ESP coordinator Nour El Arnaout presented the findings alongside other researchers from Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Peru, and Vietnam, who collectively contributed to a recently published peer-reviewed open access IDRC-supported supplement titled **"Advancing health equity and gender equality: Digital health in the Global South"**. The supplement, published in the Journal of

Public Health, included original research and commentaries from IDRC-supported research, highlighting the role of digital health (eHealth and mHealth) in responding to key challenges among underserved populations.

CONFLICT MEDICINE PROGRAM

CMP

CMP Team presents work progress during R4HC MENA Executive Board Meeting in Ankara

December 2018 | Ankara Turkey



The fourth Executive Board meeting for R4HC MENA took place in Ankara in Turkey in December 2018. Researchers from GHI and partner institutions presented on the progress of their needs assessment work across different health workstreams that aim to strengthen research capacity on health in conflict.

During the two-day meeting, the team presented an overview of GHI's work progress across cancer, political economy of health and health in conflict.

Surgical challenges in conflict by Dr. Abu Sittah during the International Community of the Red Cross Movement War Surgery Report launch in Beirut

December 2018 | Beirut, Lebanon



The ICRC launched the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement report that shed light on war surgery based on experience in Gaza, Yemen, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Egypt over the past ten years. During the launch, a panel of experts presented on their work in the treatment of war wounded patients and the challenges faced in caring for the patient as he transitions from injury to rehabilitation and social reintegration in conflict. Dr. Abu Sitta highlighted the need for surgeons to receive specific medical training to be better equipped to manage war-injured patients.

CMP Co-Director joins the International Advisory Board on global burns trauma in Swansea

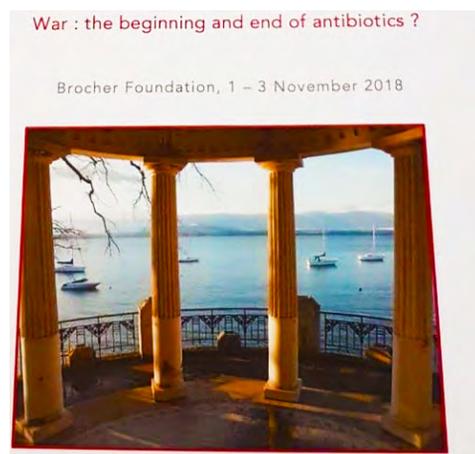
December 2018 | Wales UK



Dr. Abu Sitta has recently joined the Strategic Advisory Board (SAB) for the Centre for Global Burn Injury Policy and Research. The SAB meeting took place at Swansea University in Wales in December during which the board discussed the research framework for the center that also aligns with the MOU between GHI and Swansea for burn trauma.

CMP co-directors participate in the Brocher Foundation workshop and closed roundtable consultations on Antimicrobial Resistance

November 2018 | Switzerland



Building on the global collaboration of multidisciplinary researchers in the dialogue on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) in conflict settings, Drs. Abu Sitta and Dewachi participated in the Brocher Foundation 3-day workshop on war and AMR in Switzerland. The workshop is one among a series of meetings that aim to help build a comprehensive and systematic interdisciplinary approach to the study and response to AMR infections in war injuries, which also contributes to consolidating the conflict medicine framework. Dr. Abu Sitta also participated in the closed roundtable consultations on AMR at the Graduate Institute of Geneva the same month.

[Read more](#)

The political and social determinants for breast cancer patients in the Gaza Strip by CMP co-director on ecancer

October 2018 | London, United Kingdom



In an interview with eCancer, Dr. Abu Sitta who leads the cancer in conflict workstream of the R4HC MENA project at GHI, discussed the determinants of breast cancer in areas of conflict and the different research methods used to generate evidence on breast cancer situation in conflict settings, and mainly in Gaza. Dr. Abu Sittah also highlighted the importance of regional and international collaborations through the R4HC

project to better understand how conflict impedes the pathway of treatment from diagnosis to treatment and palliative care. [Read more](#)

REFUGEE HEALTH PROGRAM

RHP

World Diabetes Day organized by RHP team as part of the global awareness campaign for screening, prevention and management of diabetes

November 2018 | Lebanon



As part of its community outreach activities, RHP organized a World Diabetes Day on Saturday November 17, 2018. The event took place at the Marj ElKhokh camp in Marjayoun and the AlKhiyam Municipality in AlKhiyam, Lebanon, in collaboration with Amel Association. The activities in both locations covered diabetes screening, prevention, and management, which were provided to citizens and refugees. More than 40 health

professionals from several backgrounds such as medicine, public health, nursing, nutrition and dietetics, volunteered to take part in the event. These volunteers came from different universities from within Lebanon and abroad such as the Lebanese University, Université Saint Joseph, University of Balamand, Lebanese American University, Lebanese International University, Phoenicia University, Damascus University, University College London and the American University of Beirut. [Read more](#)

RHP co-director participates in a series of conferences on health systems and protracted crises

September-October-November 2018 | DC- UK- Qatar



During the past quarter, RHP co-director Dr. Fouad Fouad was engaged in a series of conferences on Health Systems and protracted crises. His first participation was in the 8th ACCESS Arab Health Summit in Washington DC where he presented the GHI Refugee Health Program's project on the role of Syrian health workers in addressing the health needs of refugees in Lebanon. His second participation was as a keynote speaker in the 5th Global Symposium on Health System Research where he discussed protracted conflicts and their implications on health systems. And finally he concluded with his participation in the World Innovation Summit for Health (WISH 2018), in Qatar where he was part of the panel "climate change, forced migration and health: how can we create a more effective global response". Dr. Fouad discussed the importance of an effective global response to address climate change and its consequences such as conflict, forced migration and the impacts on health.

Education in Resilience at the AUB4Refugees Forum

November 2018 | Global Health Institute, American University of Beirut



On November 27, 2018, the GHI academy presented in a panel on education in resilience at the AUB4Refugees second forum on tackling fatigue and building resilience for refugees and hosting communities. The project presented was the Mobile University for Health (MUH); an innovative educational model for building health care workforce among lay refugees and host communities. MUH aims to build professional health skills of refugees and host communities using state of the

art distance learning. The outcome is a competent health care workforce, with recognized certification from AUB, which would support the targeted communities and at a later stage support the rebuilding of their health care system. [Read more](#)

Global Health Institute Collaborates with the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation on a Global Burden of Disease Workshop

November 2018 | Global Health Institute, American University of Beirut



To promote evidence-based decision making in the Middle East and North Africa region, the GHI Academy in partnership with the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME) at the University of Washington organized the first regional workshop on "The Global Burden of Disease Study: Understanding and Using Health Evidence for Decision Making". The workshop took place from Monday, November 5 to Tuesday, November 6 at AUB. The Global Burden of Disease (GBD) workshop is designed to build competency to assess and analyze trends and patterns in health outcomes and build proficiency in evidence-based decision-making. Four expert members from IHME, including Chief Strategy Officer for Population Health Dr. Ali Mokdad, taught over 50 participants. The participants travelled from Syria, Jordan, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates and different regions in Lebanon to take part in this timely workshop. Participants included representatives from academic, governmental and non-governmental organizations.

[Read more](#)

Center for Research and Education in the Ecology of War (CREEW) Initiation Workshop

October 2018 | Global Health Institute, American University of Beirut



On October 4 and 5, 2018, the GHI Academy held the initiation workshop for CREEW. CREEW is the center for global excellence in frontline research capacity building in the ecology of war. The workshop was attended by members from the Swisscross Foundation and the GHI team. The workshop aimed to lay the foundations and structure of the CREEW fellowship program. The fellowship will equip frontline health practitioners from conflict zones or seeking to work in conflict zones with the necessary skills that would enable them to conduct research into the relationship between health and war. [Read more](#)

Dr. Lamis Jomaa is an Assistant Professor in Community Nutrition at the Department of Nutrition and Food Sciences within the Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences (FAFS) at the American University of Beirut (AUB). She is also the co-director of the Refugee Health Program within the Global Health Institute at AUB and an affiliate assistant professor at the Pennsylvania State University (PSU), USA.

Her research interests include the assessment of food and nutrition security of vulnerable population groups, including refugees, women and children; exploring the dietary intake and nutritional status of children and young adults; as well as designing and evaluating the effectiveness of community-based nutrition interventions to help alleviate the risk of food insecurity, obesity, and malnutrition. She is involved in other innovative research projects including the development and validation of qCal-n, (quality of Calories), a novel unit of measure to assess food and diet quality. In parallel to her research and academic duties, Dr. Jomaa organizes and coordinates community-based nutrition and public health interventions aimed at promoting healthy diets, preventing non-communicable diseases, and improving the nutrition security, overall health

and wellbeing of diverse population groups in different settings across Lebanon. Her outreach activities involve close collaborations with various international and local nongovernmental organizations, including Action Against Hunger, International Orthodox Christians Charity, and Makhzoumi Foundation.

To date, Dr. Jomaa received several awards in recognition of her academic, research, and outreach excellence, including the prestigious Fulbright scholarship, the Collaborative Research Stimulus Award at AUB, and most recently she was selected as one of the top 2018 World Economic Forum Young Scientists involved in the advancement of science, engineering and technology.

**CORE
EXPERT
PROFILE**

**LAMIS JOMAA,
Ph.D**

Assistant Professor
Department of Nutrition and
Food Sciences
Faculty of Agricultural and Food
Sciences



“Community and outreach activities should be considered as integral components of any educational system and should extend beyond schools and universities to become a way of life. I believe it is an ongoing responsibility and opportunity to give back ethically and responsibly to our local communities while also learning more about ourselves and how we can be of added value in this world. And finally, I like to think of outreach activity in the words of Albert Einstein “Only a life lived for others is a life worthwhile”

LAMIS JOMAA



Dana Nabulsi, MD

Coordinator, Refugee Health Program

Dana Nabulsi is the Refugee Health Program Coordinator. In this capacity she coordinates all research, capacity building and outreach activities within the program.

Dana earned her undergraduate degrees in Nutrition and Biology, followed by an M.D. from AUB with a minor in Human Rights. Upon graduation she was the recipient of the Penrose Award that is given based on scholarship, character, leadership and contribution to university life. Her main interests are health of vulnerable populations, and sexual and reproductive health and rights.



Nadine Zablith, MSc, PhD candidate

Coordinator, Nutrition Obesity and Related Diseases Program

Nadine Zablith is a Program Coordinator and NIHR RUHF Research Fellow at the Global Health Institute at the American University of Beirut (AUB). Amongst her previous roles, Nadine taught at AUB and Qalamoun Universities, conducted research in McGill University, AUB, and AUBMC, coordinated internships, worked on dietetic programs accreditation, managed hospitals' dietary departments, sat as a juror at Lebanese national colloquium examinations, worked on international NGOs projects such as WHO and War Child Holland, and supported student online learning for a Johns Hopkins University course on Coursera platform as a volunteer.

Nadine is currently a PhD in Public Health candidate at Lancaster University, UK, and holds a Master of Science in Nutrition and Dietetics from McGill University in Canada, and a Bachelor of Science in Human Nutrition and Dietetics from AUB. Nadine completed her dietetic internship at the American University of Beirut Medical Center.



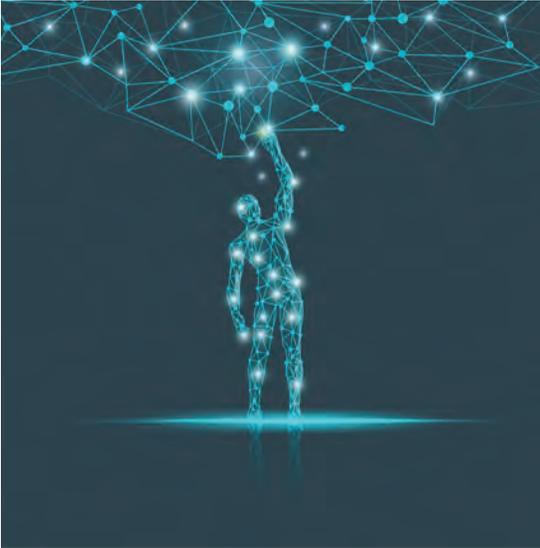
Cosette Maiky, PhD candidate

Post Doctoral Research Fellow

Cosette joined the team as the Research Fellow for the R4HC-MENA project that is a part of GHI's Conflict Medicine Program. She is currently handling the Political Economy of Health in Conflicts work stream.

Cosette is a PhD candidate in Political Sociology (Lebanese University). She holds a Master of Research in Clinical Psychology (Lebanese University) and a Master of Advanced Studies in Psychosocial Intervention in War-torn Societies (Lebanese University). She is currently enrolled in a Master of Research in Strategic Studies (Lebanese University). Her professional experience consists of 12-year hands-on work geared towards conflict and post-conflict governance with international organizations and intergovernmental bodies, in more than 20 conflict settings in the Middle East and North Africa, Central, East and Southeast Asia.

GLOBAL HEALTH IN WORDS



*" Mix a little shake of laughter
in the doings of the day,
Scatter golden bits of sunshine
as you plod along the way,
Stop to cheer a fellow human
that's a bit worse off than you
Help him climb the pesky ladder
that you find so hard to do
Show by every daily motive,
every thought and every deed
You are one that folks can turn to
when they find themselves in need
Just forget the rugged places
make believe they're slick and smooth"*

Royal Neal, Credo.

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