

LENS

GLOBAL HEALTH INSTITUTE E-NEWSLETTER
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GLOBAL
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MESSAGE FROM THE FOUNDING DIRECTOR



Dear Lens Readers,

The global health challenges that many regions of the world are facing, especially poor countries, necessitate innovative, yet low-cost, solutions. The business-as-usual approach has proven its effectiveness in certain contexts but failed to keep up with the scale and magnitude of increasing problems. Add to that the challenges of devising sustainable strategies with depleting resources.

Digital health/eHealth is a topic that has generated considerable global interest as a transformative innovation in health, and an impactful approach to attain equitable health outcomes at a global level. However, despite the exponential growth of technological development, there are still many obstacles to implementing eHealth programs including funding challenges, development of the “business case” and inadequate infrastructure.

The E-Sahha Program (ESP/Sahha means health in Arabic) at the Global Health Institute was launched in October 2018. Through ESP, GHI aims to explore, evaluate and streamline eHealth solutions in LMICs in an attempt to overcome the growing burden of global health threats. This issue of the LENS will be focusing on eHealth to further shed light on this field and engage our readers and partners on ways to capitalize on innovative and low-cost technology.

The LENS specifically highlights a flagship project for ESP, ‘Sijilli’, which is a mobile electronic personal health record for refugees. Sijilli is envisioned as a much-needed model to enhance the resilience of health systems in situations of fragility, especially for refugees as a mobile population, taking into consideration as a priority the vulnerability of this population and the need for a secure, safe and valid access to medical information. We are happy to report that 10,000 refugees across Lebanon now has a Sijilli Electronic Health Record. These refugees have now at their disposal their medical information wherever they move around the world through safe access and in a modifiable format.

We are also happy to launch, in winter 2020, a new webinar series (three webinars) to explore the role of digital health in strengthening health systems and its application in Low and Middle-Income Countries (LMICs). I will be sharing my expertise in the first webinar on ‘Employing eHealth Solutions in Fragile Settings’, on February 18; with colleagues from Africa and North America contributing to the webinar series.

Lastly and during the last quarter, GHI celebrated with fifty Syrian refugees and host community women their completion of a Certificate in Women’s Health. The Certificate is part of our Mobile University for Health (MUH) initiative serving as an innovative solution to compensate the lost opportunities of continuing education due to migration, displacement, instability and lack of access to needed educational resources.

I hope you enjoy reading the GHI news in this upcoming issue of the LENS and we look forward to your continuous engagement.

Shadi Saleh

THROUGH THE LENS

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Ghazi Baker: Narcissus, 100x100cm, Acrylic on canvas. Courtesy of Mark Hachem Gallery.

Ghazi Baker (1967) is a self-taught artist, a practicing architect and a manager of his own firm, CC&A. Since his early teens, he has been learning and intellectualizing in a constant state of communion and renewal with the world around him. An avid photographer and passionate bike rider, his trips, rides and photographs have always been a source of inspiration and self-awareness. Baker's style could be characterized as an exotic cocktail of lines, post-structuralism art, cerebral and deliberately anti-thematic.

ESP RESEARCH TEAM REACHES 10,000 REFUGEES WITH ITS SIJILLI PROJECT

January 2020 | Global Health Institute, Lebanon



On January 11, 2020, the ESP research team, through their flagship project 'Sijilli', hit their first target of 10,000 cloud-based Electronic Health Records (EHR) for female and male refugees of all age groups.

The project was implemented in different Lebanese areas namely Bekaa, Akkar, South of Lebanon, and Beirut in collaboration with different local Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). The project execution consisted of 45 field trips, involving more than 50 volunteers with health or medical backgrounds from different universities across Lebanon.

► [Know more about Sijilli](#)

► [Read the commentary on Sijilli](#)

NGOI AWARDS BESME INTERNATIONAL GROUP FOR HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE THE GOLD ORGANIZATIONAL CERTIFICATION

November 2019 | Global Health Institute, Lebanon



After undergoing the NGOi organizational certification, "Besme International Group for Humanitarian Assistance" received the gold certification after successful fulfillment of the requirements of the certification process. The AUB-certified NGO received its certification during a ceremony that was held at AUB on the 28th of November, 2019, in the presence of NGO's leadership and team members as well as the NGOi team.

The NGOi 'Organizational Certification' service is a voluntary and non-governmental review process that assesses the governance and administrative structures as well as operational principles of the NGOs using evidence based criteria.

► [Know more about the NGOi Organizational Certification](#)

MOBILE UNIVERSITY FOR HEALTH BLUE VEST CEREMONY

October 2019 | American University of Beirut, Lebanon



Aiming to empower female Syrian refugees and host communities, the Mobile University for Health (MUH) delivers specialized certificates in global health topics. The first certificate on Women's Health was delivered to 50 female Syrian refugees and host community members in the North of Lebanon and Greater Beirut areas. The training sessions were delivered at partner NGO facilities whereas the practical sessions took place at primary health care centers in the north and at AUB Medical Center.

The project culminated in the blue vest ceremony that occurred on October 16, 2019. The ceremony gathered over 200 people from

the private sector, governmental agencies and non-governmental organizations sector, governmental agencies and non-governmental organizations who have directly or indirectly contributed to the empowerment of women in the Middle East and North Africa region.

► [Watch the video](#)

E SAHHA PROGRAM

ESP

GHI E-SAHHA PROGRAM'S CO-DIRECTOR PRESENTS THE SIJILLI PROJECT AT THE GLOBAL DIGITAL HEALTH FORUM 2019

December 2019 | Maryland, United States



GHI E-Sahha Program (ESP) Co-director, Dr. Shadi Saleh, presented in December 2019 the program's flagship project 'Sijilli' at the Global Digital Health Forum 2019 that was held in Bethesda, Maryland. The attending ESP team was considered as the only representation from the Arab Region in the Forum, that adopted the theme of 'Celebrating Innovation and Supporting Proven Practices at Scale'. The ESP presentation titled 'Sijilli: A Collaborative Project to Establish a Mobile Electronic Health Record System for Refugees in Low-Resource Settings' was part of a panel on Health Information Systems (HIS) architecture and Innovation in HIS. During his presentation, Dr. Saleh emphasized on the contextualized design of the cloud-based of the Sijilli Mobile Electronic Health Record, its applicability in low-resource settings, and its role in enhancing access of refugees to health services throughout their migration journey.

► [Know more about ESP](#)

REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN FOR THE UPCOMING ESP WEBINAR SERIES

January 2020 | Global Health Institute, Lebanon



The ESP announced the opening of registration for its upcoming webinar series on the 'Role of digital health in strengthening health systems: Applications in LMICs'. The series, delivered through the GHI Academy platform, consists of three webinars by experts in digital health and health systems, featuring applications of digital health in LMICs such as Lebanon, Tanzania, South Africa, and beyond.

To register



► Webinar 1 (February 18, 2020): Employing eHealth Solutions in Fragile Settings: a case from Lebanon



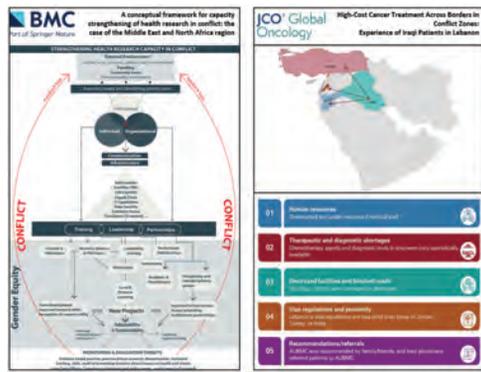
► Webinar 2 (February 25, 2020): Foundations of Establishing a National Digital Health Strategy: Lessons Learnt from Tanzania



► Webinar 3 (March 3, 2020): Global State of Digital Health 2020: Opportunities and Challenges of Implementation in LMICs

CMP PUBLISHES TWO NEW PAPERS IN BMC AND GLOBAL ONCOLOGY

June 2019 | London, UK



CMP Research Fellows, Dr. El Achi and Dr. Abdul Sater have recently published two new papers. Dr. El Achi led the work on “A conceptual framework for capacity strengthening of health research in conflict: the case of the Middle East and North Africa region” which has been published in BMC in November 2019. This work adapts existing models and frameworks of research capacity building to conflict settings. Dr. Abdul Sater, contributed to the AUBMC publication in the Journal of Global Oncology on “High cost

Cancer Treatment Across Borders in Conflict Zones: Experience of Iraqi Patients in Lebanon” that was released in January 2020. This work aimed to understand the social and financial contexts of conflict-related cross border travel for cancer diagnosis and treatment as well as the barriers to long-term planning in Lebanon.

CMP PARTICIPATES IN THE R4HC MENA HEALTH ECONOMICS TRAINING WORKSHOP AND 8TH EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING IN JORDAN

December 2019 | Amman, Jordan



As part of the Political Economy of Health workstream capacity building activities, CMP researchers completed alongside colleagues from other institutions the Health Economics Training Workshop on December 8-10, 2019 at King Hussein Cancer Center in Jordan. The workshop was facilitated by Dr. Adrian Gheorghe from Imperial College London and took place during the week leading up to the 8th Executive Board meeting for R4HC MENA. During the meeting, the CMP team presented progress updates from the cancer, political economy, and health in conflict workstreams and participated in active discussions towards identifying opportunities to build sustainability and maximize the impact of the research and capacity strengthening. The team also led a session to develop the thinking and design of an emerging project with the R4HC MENA consortium.

CMP RESEARCH FELLOW PRESENTS ON CAPACITY BUILDING OF HEALTH RESEARCH IN CONFLICT DURING THE GLOBAL REFUGEE AND MIGRATION CONGRESS IN TURKEY

October 2019 | Gaziantep, Turkey



CMP Research Fellow, Dr. Nassim El Achi, presented her work with colleagues on the conceptual framework for capacity building of health research in conflict settings at the Global Refugee and Migration Congress hosted by Gaziantep University on October 14-17, 2019. The international conference was attended by many academics and stakeholders from 24 countries.

REFUGEE HEALTH PROGRAM

RHP

ANSWERING THE BIG QUESTIONS IN FORCED DISPLACEMENT AND HEALTH

January 2020 | New York, USA



The Refugee Health Program in collaboration with Columbia University, Brandeis University and the University of Los Andes is part of a collaborative multi-country study supported by the World Bank that aims to answer the "Big Questions in Forced Displacement and Health".

GHI Founding Director, Dr. Shadi Saleh, RHP Co-director Dr. Fouad Fouad and RHP Coordinator Dr. Dana Nabulsi participated in the first consortium meeting in New York on

January 14-15, 2020 to discuss obstacles, innovations and health system challenges in forced displacement. The RHP team will be working closely with the consortium to identify best practices and produce policy recommendations for Jordan.

4TH INVESTIGATORS MEETING - THE SEEK TRIAL

January 2020 | Istanbul, Turkey



The 4th investigators meeting of the SEEK Trial took place in Istanbul on January 22, 2020. Investigators initiated the intervention phase of the project and discussed the intervention package developed with the World Health Organization. The intervention package aims to empower adolescent and young Syrian girls in Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey to utilize health services.

The country teams presented progress updates as well and discussed the formative phase of the project, the barriers to access and engage the community and the key partnerships as part of the commitment to community based participatory research.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

NIHR

RUHF RESEARCH ASSOCIATE PRESENTS IN THE "RESEARCH FOR HEALTH IN THE SYRIAN CONFLICT" CONFERENCE AT KING'S COLLEGE LONDON

October 2019 | King's College, London



Ms. Aya Noubani, the Research Associate of the NIHR/RUHF project, presented at the "Research for Health in the Syrian Conflict" conference at King's College London on October 10, 2019. The conference was hosted by the Union of Medical and Relief Organization in partnership with the Conflict and Health workstream of the Research for Health and Conflict in the Middle and East and North Africa (R4HC-MENA) program. Aya presented the findings of the study on

"A Community-Based System Dynamics Approach for Understanding Factors Affecting MHPSS and Health Seeking Behaviors in Beirut and Beqaa Regions of Lebanon". The NIHR RUHF focuses on addressing the delivery of vital health services in places where displacement, conflict, pandemic disease or weak capacity makes this especially challenging.

CENTER FOR RESEARCH AND EDUCATION IN THE ECOLOGY OF WAR FELLOWSHIP INITIATION

January 2020 | Global Health Institute, Lebanon



The application period for the Center for Research and Education in the Ecology of War (CREEW) fellowship program was closed on September 30, 2019. Following a thorough evaluation process, the CREEW fellowship program selected among 80 applicants seven fellows from diverse professional backgrounds and different countries including Syria, Iraq, Somalia, Yemen, Sudan, Palestine, Libya, South Sudan, and

Nigeria. Around 32% of applicants were women and the median age was 31. The selected cohort of fellows includes health practitioners of diverse backgrounds including doctors, pharmacists, and water and sanitation engineers. They will conduct their research in five key conflict areas: Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Sudan, and Palestine. The fellowship begins on February 26, 2020 and will kick off with a 3-week training on research methodologies in conflict settings, followed by six-months of field research.

HUMANITARIAN LEADERSHIP DIPLOMA LAUNCH

September 2019 | Global Health Institute, Lebanon



On September 2019, the GHI Academy Division launched the Humanitarian Leadership Diploma. The online diploma consists of eight courses covering the humanitarian tools and programs contextualized for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. With over 200 applicants, ten scholarships were granted to learners with diverse cultural and professional backgrounds.

The first two courses on “Project Management in Humanitarian Settings” and “Humanitarian Programming Monitoring and Evaluation” were delivered. The learners virtually interacted and shared thoughts and experiences about the humanitarian field as they relate to the courses. Following the completion of the first two courses, the third course of the diploma on “Budgeting and Reporting for Humanitarian Programming” was launched in January 2020.

EMPOWERING WOMEN • EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES

October 2019 | Global Health Institute, Lebanon



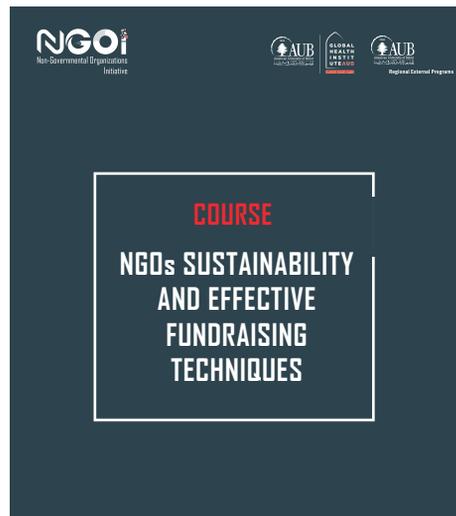
As a way to respond to the lost opportunities of higher education of affected female refugees and host communities, the Mobile University for Health (MUH) serves as an innovative model for capacity building that adopts context specific pedagogic approaches through innovative learning modalities. Through MUH, Syrian refugees and host community members receive certification on leading health issues.

MUH aims to compensate for lost opportunities of higher education by empowering women and developing their educational and professional abilities. It provides women with the skills needed to assume major roles in rebuilding the health system in their country post-conflict and secure needed jobs in the healthcare sector.

► [Learn more](#)

NGOI ANNOUNCES THAT REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN FOR THE UPCOMING COURSE ON 'NGOS SUSTAINABILITY & EFFECTIVE FUNDRAISING TECHNIQUES'

December 2019 | Global Health Institute, Lebanon



The NGOi at AUB announced the opening of the registration for the upcoming NGOi course on 'NGOs Sustainability & Effective Fundraising Techniques'. The 4-day course that is one of the requirements of the NGOi certificate on "NGO Fundraising & Proposal Management", is expected to be delivered throughout the month of February 2020. The course targets professionals involved in fundraising activities for NGOs regardless of their main role in the NGO, and aims to equip the latter with key skills to develop a sustainability strategy for the NGO with an emphasis on financial sustainability and employment of effective fundraising approaches.

[Register for the course](#)

NGOI EQUIPS NGOS STAFF WITH PRACTICAL METHODS AND SKILLS TO ASSESS COMMUNITY NEEDS

November 2019 | Global Health Institute, Lebanon



A 4-day course on 'Methods of Assessing Community Needs' was delivered last November to 35 staff members from 15 different local and international NGOs operating in Lebanon. This course, offered as part of the 'Training and Capacity Building' Service of the Non-Governmental Organizations Initiative (NGOi) at AUB, is one of the requirements of the NGOi certificate in "NGO Fundraising & Proposal Management".



The course received remarkably positive feedback from the participants who stressed on the importance of the hands-on training component of the course in linking the theoretical concepts to actual field-based projects.

[Browse all the NGOi courses](#)

Know more about the NGOi and its services



I- Organizational Certification



II- Training and Capacity Building



III- Performance Improvement



IV- Knowledge Resource Center



V- Convening Platform

Dr. Shady Elbassuoni is Assistant Professor of computer science at the American University of Beirut (AUB). He received his Bachelor of Science in computer science from Alexandria University, Egypt and his Masters and PhD degrees from Max-Planck Institute for Informatics (MPII) and Saarland University in Germany. During his PhD, he worked on effective searching of RDF knowledge graphs. Before joining AUB, Dr. Shady was a Postdoctoral Researcher at Qatar Computing Research Institute (QCRI), where he worked on information extraction from disaster-related social posts.

Dr. Shady's current research spans multiple areas including machine learning, information retrieval and crowdsourcing. His research work focuses on searching and ranking for knowledge graphs, and applications of machine learning, particularly deep learning, in various domains including natural language processing, computer vision, information retrieval, public health and digital humanities. His research work also addresses problems related to fairness in algorithmic decision making and crowdsourcing. Dr. ElBassuoni has more than 45 publications in top-tier journals and conferences. His work has garnered over 1600 citations and has received multiple best-paper award nominations. He has received various internal and external grants, most notably a grant of over 1 million dollars from the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) in Canada.

CORE EXPERT PROFILE

Dr. Shady Elbassuoni PhD

Associate Professor | Department of Computer Sciences, American University of Beirut



“E-health is causing a revolution in healthcare and is drastically changing healthcare and how both doctors and their patients deal with all kinds of medical conditions. From wearable sensors to smartphones, digital records to mobile monitors, digital care is evolving in many ways simultaneously, and social media is also creating new avenues for physicians and patients to communicate with each other. Nonetheless, it remains a work in progress everywhere. This is particularly evident in the case of developing countries where innovative methods for healthcare are still crucially needed”

E-HEALTH

Shady Elbassuoni

GHI WELCOMES NEW STAFF



Lina Abdouni, MSc
Research Associate, E-Sahha Program

Lina is the ESP Research Associate where she is currently working with the team on developing a systematic approach to the employment of eHealth in the MENA region. Lina holds a BS in biochemistry from the Beirut Arab University and a BS in nutrition and dietetics from AUB. Lina earned her MS in nutrition from AUB, during which she developed experience in research and co-authored conference and research papers. Prior to joining GHI, Lina worked in the medical genetics unit at AUBMC on a variety of medical genetics case studies and research projects.



Jasmin Lilian Diab, MA, MAst
Research Associate, Conflict Medicine Program

Jasmin is 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 workstream. Jasmin holds a Master of Arts in international law from Notre Dame University in Lebanon and a Master in human rights and democratization from the Saint Joseph University of Beirut. She is currently a PhD candidate at the Centre for Diplomatic and Strategic Studies at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes Internationales et Politiques in France. Jasmin currently serves as the MENA regional focal point on migration for the United Nations Major Group for Children and Youth.



Nadeen Hilal, MD, MPH
Clinical Associate, Conflict Medicine Program

Nadeen recently joined GHI as a Clinical Associate. She is currently working on developing an undergraduate curriculum on conflict medicine targeting medical students in conflict zones in the MENA region. She is a practicing physician in the field of rheumatology and an instructor of medicine at the Lebanese University. She holds a BS in chemistry, a medical degree, and a Masters in public health, all from AUB. She was involved, as a clinical investigator and researcher, in various projects pertaining to public health and medicine and has published several articles in these fields.



Dina Muhieddine, MSc
Field Research Coordinator, GHI Academy

Dina is the new Field Research Coordinator for the 'GHI Academy'. She holds a MS in cardiovascular pharmacology from the Lebanese University. Dina is currently working on the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR/RUHF) project to identify sources of resilience with a focus on non-communicable diseases and mental health. Prior to GHI Dina worked as a research assistant in the pharmacology department at the Faculty of Medicine at AUB.

GHI WELCOMES NEW INTERNS



Danny Eter
Johns Hopkins University

Danny is an undergraduate student at the Johns Hopkins University majoring in Public Health and Economics. He worked with the GHI teams on different projects including the NGOi, the political economy of health and the bibliometric analysis for cancer research.



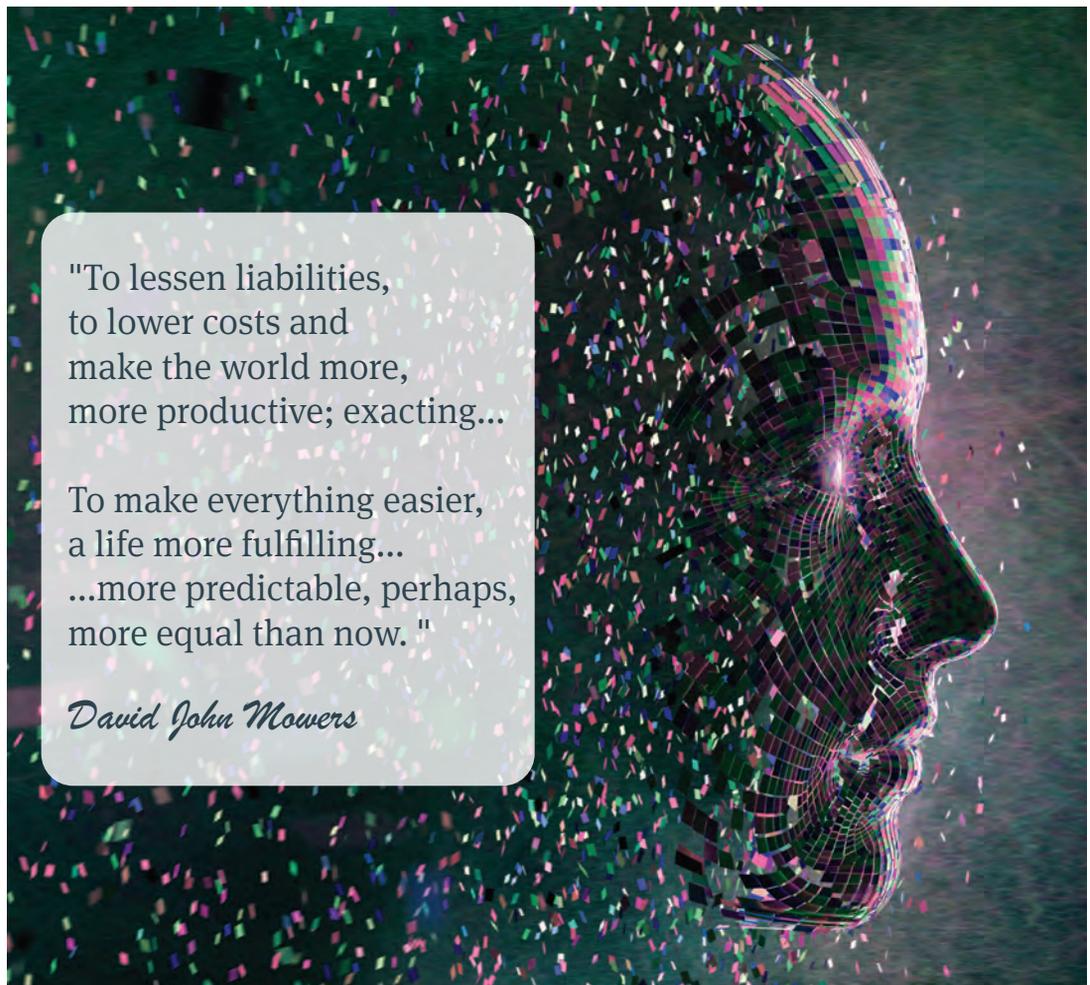
Apply to the GHI internship program

GLOBAL HEALTH IN WORDS

"To lessen liabilities,
to lower costs and
make the world more,
more productive; exacting...

To make everything easier,
a life more fulfilling...
...more predictable, perhaps,
more equal than now. "

David John Mowers



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PROGRAMS



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