

LENS

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



Dear Lens Readers,

For the past three months, the world has been witnessing a global pandemic that affected humanity at all levels. The novel coronavirus (COVID-19) that has spread to almost every country has crashed economies, crippled health systems and disrupted the daily social life in many parts of the World. Yet, it is still hard to predict the true impact of the COVID-19 pandemic as scientists are still learning about this new form of the corona virus.

Since the start of the spread of COVID-19 globally, the Global Health Institute has launched an emergency digital response plan focusing on awareness, health messaging and interventions in vulnerable groups. The awareness campaign included educational videos, a daily highlights blog and weekly interactive graphs to track the evolution of the disease. At a later stage, GHI launched three main initiatives as part of its efforts to mitigate the COVID-19 crisis 1) CRSP (COVID-19 Refugee Support Program) that established a community-based network of GHI previously trained Syrian refugee women and equipped them with contextualized information to control the spread of the virus among Syrian refugees 2) CONNECT (COVID-19 NGOi Network) that built a network of 112 NGOs to work collaboratively in implementing a practical plan to address the challenges associated with COVID-19 in Lebanon and 3) COV-AM (COVID-19 Arab Monitor) which aims at highlighting the response to COVID-19 across the twenty-two countries in the Arab Region.

The last quarter (pre COVID-19) also witnessed a key event in which GHI, in partnership with EPIC, celebrated the creation of 10.000 electronic health records for refugees in Lebanon. 'Sijilli', an Arabic word for "My Record", is a cloud-based model that archives refugees' medical information electronically so they and their health service providers can access it anywhere in the world. Sijilli aims to enhance access of refugees to health services throughout their migration journey.

As a concluding remark, the Global Health Institute urges everyone to practice physical distancing and stop the COVID-19 stigma; the responsibility for containing the novel coronavirus depends on us as much as on health authorities. I hope you enjoy reading this issue of the lens and I invite you to visit our COVID-19 webpage to stay updated with all news and initiatives. We look forward for your continuous engagement and support!

Stay safe!

Shadi Saleh

THROUGH THE LENS

- GLOBAL HEALTH IN THE ARTS
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- GHI WELCOMES NEW STAFF
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- GLOBAL HEALTH IN WORDS



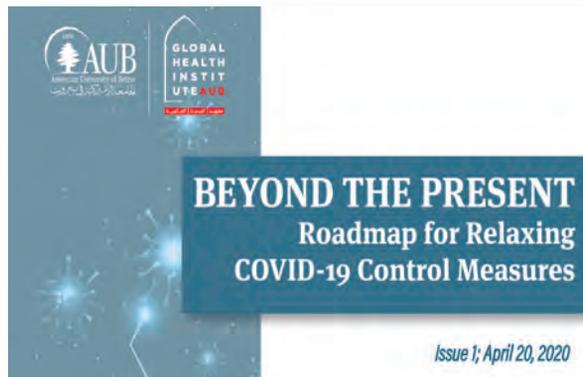
Edvard Munch's: The Scream (1893); PaintingMania.com

Edvard Munch's (1863-1944) is a Norwegian painter famous for this iconic piece of world art, his 'soul painting'. The Scream depicts the artist's intensely troubled emotional and psychological state of angst and chaos against a vivid background of swirling turmoil. Later in a poem describing his intensely anguished mental state in the painting, Munch writes: *"Then I heard the enormous infinite scream of nature."* The selection of "The Scream" for this special issue on COVID-19 is an invitation for reflection during the current global crisis, on whether we are all now experiencing "the infinite enormous scream of nature" at the same time .

GHI COVID-19 INITIATIVES

GHI PUBLISHES A GUIDANCE DOCUMENT FOR RELAXATION OF CONTROL/LOCKDOWN MEASURES

April 2020 | Global Health Institute, Lebanon



GHI has recently published a first of a series of guidance documents on how to relax the control/lockdown measures for Covid-19 . This report, entitled “Beyond the Present” was published in both Arabic and English. The report highlights key principles and a phased approach with sector-specific recommendations. Using evidence, previous experiences and experts’ opinions, it aims to help governments and experts draft a more detailed and contextualized plan. Short videos were generated to provide an easier access to information available in the report.

[Reports](#)

[Videos](#)

GHI LAUNCHES THREE INITIATIVES AS PART OF ITS EFFORTS TO MITIGATE THE COVID-19 CRISIS

April 2020 | Global Health Institute, Lebanon



As part of its efforts to mitigate the COVID-19 crisis, GHI launched three main initiatives:

CRSP (COVID-19 Refugee Support Program)

CRSP established a community-based network of GHI previously-trained Syrian refugee women and equipped them with tailored, contextualized, and evidence-based COVID-19 information. GHI targeted refugee communities as their living arrangements and high level of misinformation circulating related to COVID-19 may facilitate the spread of COVID-19. The trained community health workers are serving as information resources, as well as providing informal support in case an intervention may be needed.



CONNECT (COVID-19 NGOi Network)

CONNECT comprises a network of 76 NGOs with the strategic aim of promoting collaborative approach to COVID-19 response. The networking and coordination component is organized based on the regions in which the respective NGOs are operating COVID-19 response to both Lebanese and refugee communities. CONNECT is providing member NGOs with contextualized knowledge resources, customized capacity building through weekly webinars based on the groups’ identified needs and serving as a convening platform for lessons learned and best practices.



COV-AM (COVID-19 Arab Monitor)

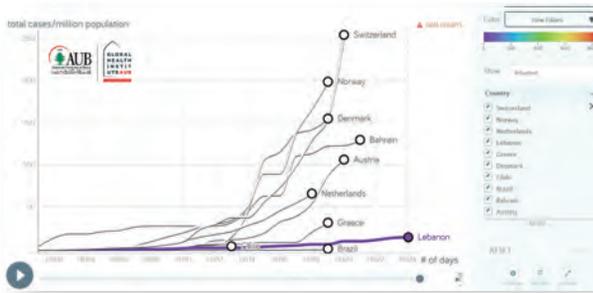
COV-AM monitors the COVID-19 response of the twenty-two countries in the Arab Region. The work covers three strands: an up-to-date automated live feed of emerging cases across the 22 Arab countries, COVID-19 visualizations exploring the disease dynamics in the Arab world and a timeline of each country’s official government directives (health, education, politics, economics and travel Restrictions) in the areas of COVID-19 response.

[Visit the COVID-19 webpage](#)

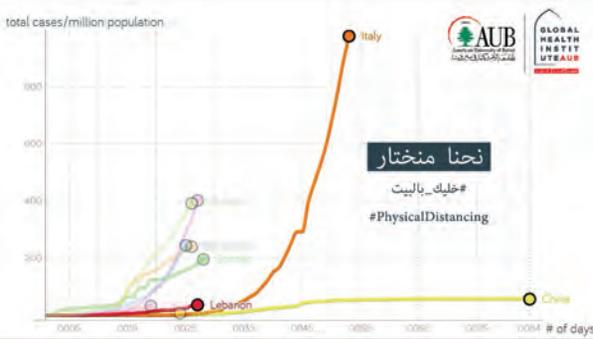
GHI COVID-19 INITIATIVES

GHI LAUNCHES A SERIES OF INTERACTIVE GRAPHS TO TRACK THE EVOLUTION OF THE COVID-19 CRISIS LOCALLY AND GLOBALLY

February 2020 | Global Health Institute, Lebanon



As part of the digital response to the COVID-19 crisis, GHI launched multiple interactive graphs to visualize the evolution of the disease dynamics in Lebanon and globally. The first interactive graph explored the prevalence, incidence and mortality of COVID-19 globally. The next graph, which received attention from local, national and international news outlets, highlighted that Lebanon has done better than other countries in containing the COVID-19 virus. We emphasized however, the importance and need of vigilant social and health systems.



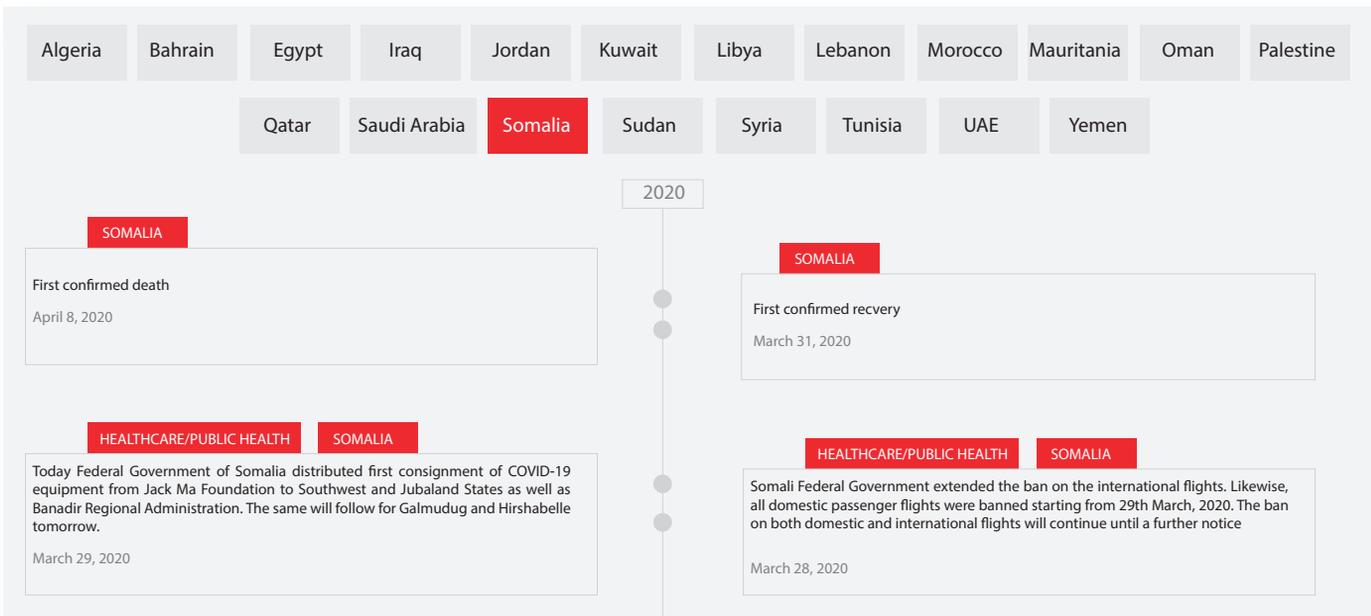
Next, we sought to help raise awareness on the importance of social distancing in containing the disease in Lebanon through contrasting the progression of the disease in Italy versus China. We also used projection models to predict the approximate dates when Lebanon reaches its health capacity under scenarios of no social distancing, social distancing, and extreme measures. Lastly, we highlighted the slowing of the rate of growth of cases in Lebanon after the governmental response to COVID-19.

Such visualizations have served to disseminate data-driven approaches to raise awareness and share information on COVID-19.

Graphs

GHI LAUNCHES COVID-19 TIMELINES FOR LEBANON AND THE ARAB COUNTRIES

MARCH 2020 | Global Health Institute, Lebanon



GHI launched the COVID-19 timelines that highlight major political decisions, health milestones and notable developments in managing the virus in Lebanon and the Arab region. These detailed timelines encompass the developments in the areas of health, education, politics, economics and travel restrictions in each of the twenty two Arab countries. The timelines are updated regularly focusing on official governmental directives, decisions and initiatives undertaken by each country to combat and contain COVID-19 since the outbreak of the virus.

Timelines

E SAHHA PROGRAM

ESP

GHI'S E-SAHHA PROGRAM RECEIVES FUNDING TO EXPLORE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF A MULTI-COMPONENT mHEALTH INTERVENTION IN IMPROVING MATERNAL HEALTH

April 2020 | Global Health Institute, Lebanon



The E-Sahha Program (ESP) received funding for “The Gamification, Artificial Intelligence and mHealth Network for Maternal Health Improvement (GAIN MHI)” project that aims to investigate ways of improving maternal health outcomes and enhancing the uptake of antenatal care services among disadvantaged Lebanese and refugee pregnant women in Lebanon. It will employ a multi-component mHealth intervention consisting of mobile-based messaging, artificial intelligence, and mobile-based gamification. The project is characterized by its multidisciplinary approach in addressing the topic with the project’s team consisting of experts from different backgrounds including computer science, health systems, women’s health, among others.

GHI AND EPIC CELEBRATE THE CREATION OF 10,000 SIJILLI CLOUD-BASED ELECTRONIC HEALTH RECORDS FOR REFUGEES IN LEBANON

March 3, 2020 | American University of Beirut, Lebanon



GHI celebrated the completion of the first phase of the ESP project Sijilli, the cloud-based electronic health records (EHR) for refugees. The completion of the creation of 10,000 Sijilli cloud-based EHR for refugees in Lebanon was celebrated on the 3rd of March, 2020 at AUB in the presence of the AUB’s president, Dr. Fadlo R. Khuri, GHI Founding Director, Dr. Shadi Saleh, and Chief Executive Officer of Epic Systems, Ms. Judith R. Faulkner. ‘Sijilli is envisioned as a much-needed model to enhance access of refugees to health services throughout their migration journey’, said Dr. Shadi Saleh.

Prior to the celebration, the GHI Sijilli team accompanied the Epic delegation to one of the informal tented settlements located in South of Lebanon, where refugee beneficiaries welcomed the teams and shared their satisfaction with having the Sijilli EHR.

Sijilli is a cloud-based Mobile EHR characterized by its contextualized design, applicability in low-resource settings, and potential for upscaling. It aims to serve as a model to securely collect and maintain health data of refugees throughout their displacement journey. The Sijilli EHR can be accessed globally by both refugee patients and their health providers.

[Read more](#)

[Learn more about Sijilli](#)

CONFLICT MEDICINE PROGRAM

CMP

NEW POLITICAL ECONOMY OF HEALTH OP-ED PUBLISHED IN E-INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL

March 2020 | Beirut, Lebanon



addresses the need for the Ministry of Public Health to be the integral player in a pluralistic/sectarian system in defining the areas of public and private sector operation. This work is part of the research for health in conflict (R4HC) project for developing capability, partnerships and research in the MENA region.

[Read more](#)

CMP PARTICIPATES IN THE NIHR PROTECT PROJECT ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

March 2020 | London, UK



The NIHR Global Health Research Group on Post Conflict Trauma (PrOTeCT) is a three year collaborative project that brings together researchers from Imperial College London, GHI Conflict Medicine Program, and the University of Morutawa in Sri Lanka to examine the long term burden of physical trauma post-conflict and develop low-cost interventions for conflict-affected populations. As part of the PrOTeCT project activities, CMP team presented progress updates from the work on the long term burden of war injuries in Lebanon and participated in active discussions towards identifying opportunities to build sustainability and maximize the impact of the

research and capacity strengthening on post conflict trauma. The team also participated in lab tours arranged by Imperial College researchers during which the development of state-of-the-art innovations that can alleviate the burden of amputations in conflict settings were shown.

CMP CONVENES EXPERTS ON WASH AND AMR IN AN ECOLOGY OF WAR (WAMREW) AND HOLDS FIRST WORKSHOP

February 2020 | Beirut, Lebanon



As part of the GCRF Networking Grant in partnership with the University of East Anglia in the UK, CMP organized the first WAMREW workshop to review the evidence and develop a framework to further the understanding of the challenges that WASH and AMR present in conflict settings. The 3-day workshop convened 23 health and policy researchers, engineers and practitioners from the water, engineering, medical and health sectors with representation from MSF, ICRC and relevant academic institutions. A second workshop is planned for the end of 2020 and several papers are underway.

REFUGEE HEALTH PROGRAM

RHP

NIHR/ RHP PUBLISHES A NEW RESEARCH PAPER IN BMC: GLOBALIZATION AND HEALTH

April 2020 | Global Health Institute, Lebanon



NIHR research team has recently published a new research article. Aya Noubani, the project lead research associate, led the work on "A community-based system dynamics approach for understanding factors affecting mental Health and Health seeking behaviors in Beirut and Beqaa regions of Lebanon" which has been published in BMC in March 2020. The study adopted a participatory system dynamic approach and aimed to examine the factors affecting mental health onset and the associated health seeking behaviors as perceived by the community members in Lebanon.

[Read more](#)

GHI ACADEMY

CENTER FOR RESEARCH IN THE ECOLOGY OF WAR (CREEW) LAUNCHES THE 2020 FELLOWSHIP

February 26, 2020 | American University of Beirut, Lebanon



CREEW's inaugural cohort kicked off the 2020 fellowship, on February 26, with five fellows joining from Palestine, Syria, Yemen, Iraq and Sudan. The fellows, who came from a variety of settings and professional backgrounds, completed a 3 week intensive health research in conflict training, which is the first phase of the fellowship. With the support of GHI's subject-matter experts and mentors, the CREEW fellows developed their research topics pertaining to antimicrobial resistance in conflict settings in to full-fledged research

protocols. Over the next year, the CREEW fellows work with their mentors and the CREEW research support team will focus on collecting reliable data, analyzing it and eventually presenting it in a research manuscript publication.

HUMANITARIAN LEADERSHIP DIPLOMA ROLL OUT

February 2020 | Global Health Institute, Lebanon



The Humanitarian Leadership Diploma is an initiative aiming at empowering the humanitarian workforce in the MENA region. It adopts an innovative learning modality and consists of eight online courses delivering the humanitarian tools and programs contextualized for the MENA region. The first four courses were delivered through the GHI's online learning platform GHLAD, during which the learners virtually interacted and shared thoughts and ideas about humanitarian

situations within the context of the course. The fifth course of the diploma "Interpersonal Communication Skills for Humanitarian Managers" introduces effective communication used for strategic decision-making in humanitarian contexts and settings started on April 2020.

NGOi | GHI SIGNS A PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT WITH ASFARI

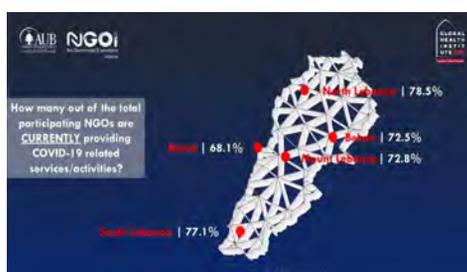
January 2020 | American University of Beirut, Lebanon



With the aim to empower the societies and strengthen the role of the NGO sector in the region, the NGOi signed a three-year partnership agreement with the Asfari Foundation. As part of this agreement, the NGOi will focus on the organizational development of the NGOs supported by the Asfari Foundation in Lebanon and the region, through a combination of different services offered by NGOi including training and capacity building, performance improvement, and organizational certification.

NGOi HOLDS A VIRTUAL MEETING FOR ALL NGOS TO WORK ON A COLLABORATIVE RESPONSE PLAN TO THE COVID-19 SITUATION

April 2020 | Global Health Institute, Lebanon



More than 100 staff members from 80 NGOs operating across Lebanon virtually attended a webinar held by the NGOi on “COVID-19 in Lebanon: How can NGOs work together towards Achievable Goals”. Using the webinar as a platform, different NGOs shared ways of adapting their services to meet the needs of the different communities in Lebanon in lights of the COVID-19 situation in the country.

NGOi HOLDS A SEMINAR ON COMPLIANCE & LEGAL MANAGEMENT FOR NGOS

February 2020 | American University of Beirut, Lebanon



As part of its continuous efforts to convene NGOs and build their capacity, the NGOi held last February a seminar on “Compliance & Legal Management for NGOs”. During the seminar, the NGO’s legal framework and identity, legal compliance, as well as the NGO’s establishment and termination were discussed. More than 60 participants from over 30 organizations, including law firms and NGOs, attended this event. The seminar was followed by an extended Q&A session during which attendees interacted together and shared experiences.

NGOi BUILDS CAPACITY OF NGOS STAFF ON HOW TO DEVELOP SUSTAINABLE STRATEGIES AND EMPLOY EFFECTIVE FUNDRAISING TECHNIQUES

February 2020 | American University of Beirut, Lebanon



As part its capacity building activities, the NGOi offered last February its third course on “NGOs Sustainability & Effective Fundraising Techniques”. The four-day course was attended by 32 staff members from 24 different NGOs operating in Lebanon. With a focus on NGOs sustainability, participants learned during this course how to maximize the financial of their NGOs and develop targeted fundraising

approaches based on different types of donors. The course was characterized by its dynamic way of delivery that enhanced the learning experience of the attendees through group work and real scenarios.

Dr. Abdul Rahman Bizri is a Consultant in Internal Medicine and Infectious Diseases at AUBMC, Assistant Chairperson for Clinical Affairs and the Director of Quality and Compliance Program at the Department of Internal Medicine. He is also Affiliate of the Conflict Medicine Program at GHI. Dr. Bizri served as the Chairperson of the Infection Control Program and Infection Control Committee at AUBMC till 2005 and has established many infection control programs in various teaching medical centers in both the private and public sectors. He is a member of the editorial board of several international and regional journals and has numerous publications on antibiotic resistance, changing epidemiology of infectious diseases, invasive mycosis, microbiology of war related infections, refugee medicine and adult immunization.

Dr. Bizri serves as a WHO expert and advisor on infectious and transmissible diseases and main investigator in several research projects related to wound management and healing. He is Founding Member and past President of the Lebanese AIDS Society as well as being a Founding Member and Past President of the Lebanese Society of Infectious Diseases and Clinical Microbiology. He chairs and serves on several national expert committees on infectious diseases and immunization practices.

Dr. Bizri is the past Secretary of the Executive Committee of the Arab Board of Internal Medicine and Chairperson of the committee to establish the Arab Board of Infectious Diseases. He chairs the National Certification Committee that overlooks polio eradication activities and is an active member of the Expanded Program on Immunization (EPI) in Lebanon. Dr. Bizri is an active member of the National Expert Group on Transmissible Diseases that advises the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) on the management of outbreaks including the most recent COVID-19 pandemic. He is an active member of the COVID-19 taskforce that was formed by the Lebanese Society for Infectious Diseases and Clinical Microbiology. He is also a member of the COVID-19 taskforce at the MoPH and an advisor to KAFALAT-World Bank on grants and loans related to COVID-19 innovation and investment. Involved in establishing and updating several Lebanese Clinical Practice Guidelines including those belonging to the management of COVID-19. Contracted by WHO and UNICEF to establish national and regional guidelines on several transmissible diseases. He also co-authored several regional guidelines on the management of viral hepatitis and tuberculosis. Dr. Bizri was elected and served as the Mayor of City of Saida and the President of the Federation of Municipalities Saida-Zahrani Region between 2004 and 2010.

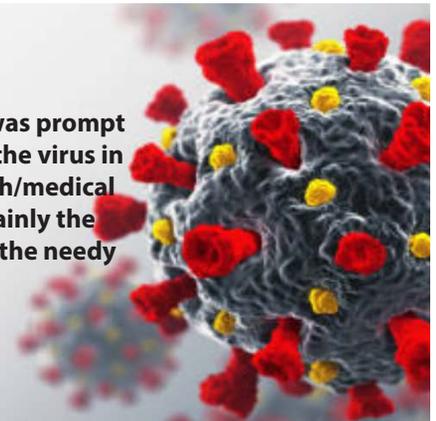
CORE EXPERT PROFILE

Dr. Abdul Rahman Bizri
MD MSc DLSHTM

Director Quality Program
Internal Medicine Department
American University of Beirut
Medical Center (AUBMC)



“ Lebanon’s response to the threat of COVID-19 was prompt and efficient and prevented the widespread of the virus in the country at large. However, other non-health/medical components of the response were lagging mainly the socioeconomical component directed towards the needy and stumbling businesses.”



GHI WELCOMES NEW STAFF



Fatima Sadek, MPH, RD, CDE
Project Coordinator, GHI Academy

Fatima is the Mobile University for Health Coordinator. She holds a BS in Nutrition & Dietetics from the American University of Beirut, Lebanon and an MS in Public Health from the University of Waterloo, Canada. Fatima previously led Imperial College London Diabetes Centre's Public Health Outreach Programme. In this capacity, she managed the development and delivery of a series of innovative and comprehensive public health projects across the UAE. Fatima is also a knowledge translation specialist and regularly appears as a nutrition expert on a number of broadcast outlets.



Rania Mansour, MPH
Research Assistant, GHI Academy

Rania is the Research Assistant for the GHI Academy who is currently working on global health capacity building initiatives. She holds a Master's in Public Health from the University of Pennsylvania. Rania is a public health professional with substantial experience in global health research, policy and programming. Her varied skill set has enabled her to intern and work at the international and community level in Canada, USA, Lebanon, Greece, France, Switzerland, and Peru. Rania aims to build a career in the international health sector where she can capitalize on her expertise in scientific research with her passion for sociopolitical analyses of health issues to improve health delivery specifically within humanitarian and crisis settings.



Jad Doughman, BS
Artificial Intelligence Consultant, E-Sahha Program

Jad is the Artificial Intelligence Consultant of the E-Sahha Program (ESP), he aims to transition his expertise to the ESP through his envisioned applicability of deep learning in modern global health and medical quests. Jad holds a Bachelor's degree in Computer Science from AUB and was awarded the "CCT Computer Science Student of the Year Award (Undergraduate) 2018-2019". Jad worked for two years as Research Assistant in the field of deep learning and natural language processing. Jad's work was recently accepted by the "The International Conference on Language Resources and Evaluation" (LREC 2020).



Karim Ferekh, PhD
Project Coordinator, E-Sahha Program

Karim is the Project Coordinator for the E-Sahha Program. He holds a BS in Nursing from the University of Balamand and an MS in Epidemiology from AUB. He is an epidemiologist from the University of Edinburgh, UK. Karim worked as a research assistant at the Calcium Metabolism and Osteoporosis Program, and WHO collaborating center for Metabolic Bone Disorders. He was also the administrator of the Scholars in HeAlth Research Program (SHARP), a major capacity building initiative funded by NIH to advance the agenda of non-communicable diseases nationally and regionally. During the Syrian war, he worked as an emergency epidemiologist for International Organization of Migration (IOM-UN) and MoPH to structure a database for Tuberculosis cases and maintain surveillance and followup for 6 months.

GHI WELCOMES NEW INTERNS



Dana Jumaa, MPH
American University of Beirut

Dana is the new intern at the GHI ASSIST division. She holds an MPH from the American University of Beirut (AUB) with a concentration in Health Management & Policy and a BS in Pharmacy from the Arab International University. Prior to interning at GHI, Dana worked as a data collector and project coordinator on multiple research projects in AUB and did her practicum at IMC's headquarter in Beirut.



Apply to the GHI internship program

GLOBAL HEALTH IN WORDS



"The virtual hug cannot replace the actual hug,
And "I-contact" is not the same as
Eye contact.
Yet we make do, with Zoom,
And FaceTime,
And whatever else there is.
But still, we long for what comes after,
And what used to be.

And when I walk,
I see the faces,
keeping social distance,
doing the dance,
Yet they're still close enough to read the hat,
And I think they are feeling what I am feeling
That maybe there are days ahead,
As good, or maybe better, than those we left
behind,
At least for those who survive to see them."

'For Better or Worse' By Dan Arbon

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PROGRAMS



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