



# ENGAGE INTERNSHIP

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## Editor's Letter

We are thrilled to share with you the sixth issue of EMPHNET's Internship Newsletter "ENGAGE."

This issue features the graduation of a new cohort of interns from the program, and sheds light on a success story of graduates who later took part in one of EMPHNET's projects. In this issue, you will also read about mentor's experiences, and find testimonials from former interns, and the new group of interns for the next internship period.

We hope that the forthcoming pages offer you a delightful and enriching reading experience, and that they serve as source of inspiration for you all.

*ENGAGE Editorial Team,*



**EMPHNET**

The Eastern Mediterranean  
Public Health Network

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together for better health

## Feature Story

### Congratulations to ENGAGE's Graduates!

On February 21, 2023, EMPHNET celebrated the graduation of five interns who have completed three months of training, while working alongside their mentors. This remarkable achievement was celebrated in a ceremonial event, in which these interns were eager to get exposed to a real-work experience, and they also showed a high level of professionalism and commitment.

During the event, three graduates presented what they have done throughout the internship, focusing on their objectives, achievements, challenges, and future plans. These presentations were made to their mentors and members of the EMPHNET's management team; however, the other two interns made their presentations virtually. They also showcased their adaptability and problem-solving abilities by highlighting specific projects they worked on, outlining the challenges they faced, and showcasing the innovative solutions they devised.

These presentations were followed by an open discussion, in which the graduates shared their views of the program, and how they would like to see the program evolve in the months to come.

The event also included addresses given by EMPHNET Executive Director, Dr. Mohannad Al Nsour; the Director of the Center of Excellence for Applied Epidemiology, Dr. Yousef Khader, and others.

In his opening remarks, Dr. Khader expressed his pride in celebrating the successful completion of another cycle within ENGAGE. He also sheds light on the program's milestones by stating the number of graduates and applicants, and



how it has proven to be resilient in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. “To date, we have received over 700 applications for the program, showing once again that our region is in need for this learning opportunity. We also learn from the interns, as 12 of our teams at EMPHNET have hosted an intern at one time or another,” said Dr. Khader.

From his end, Dr. Al Nsour congratulated all the interns on achieving this milestone, and advised them to take the lessons learned from their internships to thrive in their future careers. He also thanked the mentors for sharing their knowledge with these ambitious minds. “I hope that our mentors found the experience of mentoring rewarding, as there is true value in contributing to someone's success,” Dr. Al Nsour said. He finally expressed his gratitude to the team who is working to ensure that ENGAGE continues to be of benefit to all interns.

In conclusion, the graduation of interns is a time of reflection, celebration, and anticipation. As these interns step into the next phase of their careers, they carry with them the knowledge, skills, and memories gained during their internship, setting the stage for a promising future.

## Success Story

### Their internship was Just the Beginning



After completing their internship as part of the ENGAGE program, three young professionals moved on to work with EMPHNET on large scale research projects.

transcribed audio results into written form, laying the foundation for EMPHNET’s experts to analyze and derive valuable insights and statistics.

Majd Arabiyat, Manar Al-Zaben, and Maya Marrow’s journey at EMPHNET transcended their roles as interns and they took on additional responsibilities as data collectors for the mental health program. Their dedication and commitment led them to become integral members of the team, actively involved in the field of data collection and data entry. They embarked on visits to various governorates, including Madaba, Al Balqa’a, and Al Mafraq, where they even ventured to al Zaatari Camp to gather crucial data. Their efforts went beyond mere collection, as they meticulously

Manar, driven by her determination, achieved a remarkable milestone by gaining acceptance into a master’s program. Her success stands as a testament to her exceptional abilities and relentless pursuit of excellence. Each intern, including Manar, possesses their unique success story, showcasing their achievements and growth in the field of pharmaceutical engineering. Their unwavering dedication and accomplishments serve as an inspiration to future interns, highlighting the transformative power of commitment and hard work in the pursuit of professional success.



## Mentorship corner

### From an Intern to a Mentor

**Sara Abu Khudair – Technical Officer, Research and Policy Unit**



In previous issues, we feature Dr. Sara Abu Khudair as one of the success stories, who as an intern, displayed exceptional dedication, and commitment that landed her a full time job at EMPHNET. In this issue, we are happy to feature Dr. Sara again, but this time as a mentor who demonstrated exceptional leadership skills and a genuine passion for helping others succeed.

According to Dr. Sara, time management, patience, and flexibility are some of the essential qualities that a mentor should have. She

added: “Having effective communication and instructional techniques to facilitate effective learning is also important, as possessing knowledge is quite different from the ability to convey knowledge and skills. This demands efforts from the mentor.”

When asked about her experience, she said that a high level of responsibility was needed as an intern and a mentor; however, in the mentorship experience, guidance and support should be provided to interns, based on understanding their objectives.

Dr. Sara used the “learning by doing” approach which aims to engage interns in both learning and participating in the organizational work done at the Research and Policy unit. She also believes that maintaining good relations with interns creates a comfortable and enabling environment for learning and engagement.

As a first-time mentor, Dr. Sara advises mentors to focus on different learning styles that enable effective transfer of skills and knowledge, to allocate sufficient time for mentoring, and to establish reasonable expectations from the intern.

In conclusion, this success is an inspiration to many, demonstrating the incredible potential within each individual and the power of investing in others.

ANNOUNCEMENT



**EMPHNET’s Electronic Learning and Training Unit is requesting interns to be among its crew to work on “Developing (Self-Paced) Online Courses” Project**

This opportunity is open to Instructional Design, EdTech, or any related field to eLearning undergraduate students or fresh graduates. Those who want to make a career shift are also welcome to apply.

To read more about the opportunity, [click here](#).

## A First-time Mentor at ENGAGE but not a Novice

**Dr. Randa Saad - Technical Specialist, Research and Policy Unit**



In the world of professional development, mentorship plays a vital role in shaping the future of aspiring individuals. Dr. Randa Saad, an accomplished mentor and public health expert, has dedicated her time and expertise to guide and inspire young researchers through the exciting journey of mentorship. In this article, we delve into EMPHNET's Technical Specialist, Dr. Randa's experiences, challenges, and her leadership philosophy that had led to her remarkable success as a mentor.

Dr. Randa's affiliation with EMPHNET and her diverse range of mentees from different countries set the tone for an intriguing discussion in which we learned more about her mentorship experience at ENGAGE.

She emphasizes her passion for mentorship and its transformative impact on early researchers. With mentees from Egypt and Jordan, Dr. Randa has witnessed the unique approaches individuals take towards research and public health. She highlighted the importance of understanding and nurturing each mentee's goals, emphasizing that a mentor's role is to support their mentees in realizing their own aspirations.

Dr. Randa reframes challenges as responsibilities. She considers mentorship a learning experience and recognizes her responsibility for the development of her mentees. Her approach involves providing guidance, and ensuring that her mentees feel supported throughout their journey. She feels it is her role to help them achieve their goals and she believes in leading by involving mentees in tasks, and by inspiring them to reach their full potential.

Dr. Randa's mentorship philosophy revolves around striking a delicate balance between providing guidance and allowing mentees to take ownership of their work. She emphasizes the importance of constructive feedback that encourages mentees to learn from their mistakes. Her approach implies involving mentees in tasks, allowing them to work independently, and providing constructive criticism to help them grow professionally.

*"Internship is not just about delegating tasks, it's about involving and supporting mentees, and guiding them to improve and achieve their goals." Dr. Randa Saad said.*

### Once a Mentee Forever a Friend

Dr. Randa shares her perspective on handling conflicts and differences of opinion with mentees. She emphasizes the absence of conflicts in her mentorship experiences, attributing it to maintaining open communication, involving mentees in decision-making, and fostering a positive and supportive environment. Her ability to understand the background and expectations of her mentees helps her navigate any differences, ensuring a harmonious mentor-mentee relationship.

In conclusion, Dr. Randa Saad's success story as a mentor is an inspiration for aspiring mentors and mentees alike. Her dedication to empowering young researchers, fostering growth, and maintaining positive relationships has led to remarkable achievements in the field of mentorship.

## Useful Tips

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### Make the Best out of your Internship!

Read the five do's and don'ts to maximize your internship experience, and to gain valuable skills:

#### Do's

- ✓ **Embrace a proactive mindset**  
Take initiative, and seek out opportunities to learn and contribute.
- ✓ **Ask questions**  
Never be afraid to ask questions and clarify any doubts that you may have to get the necessary support you need to carry out the required tasks.
- ✓ **Add Value**  
Think about how you can add value to the team or projects that you are working on by offering relevant suggestions and ideas.
- ✓ **Get Involved**  
Participate in the social events, and make new friends with different people and colleagues from other departments.
- ✓ **Seek feedback**  
Be open to constructive criticism and take steps to improve upon areas development.

#### Don'ts

- X **Don't shy away from challenges**  
Embrace new challenges and assignments as this will help you develop new skills and broaden your horizons.
- X **Don't underestimate the power of observations**  
Pay attention to how professionals in your field act. Observe their communication style, work habits, and problem-solving approaches.
- X **Don't be stressed**  
There is no perfect intern or employee at the workplace, so ask for help when required.
- X **Don't leave the experience behind**  
Stay in touch with coworkers to continue hearing about projects, industry developments or job opportunities.
- X **Don't forget to reflect and document your experiences**  
Reflect on your internship journey, noting key achievements, and challenges faced.

## Testimonials

### Hear from ENGAGE Former Interns!



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*“My internship experience at EMPHNET was extremely valuable and relevant to my career ambitions in public health. It allowed me to apply the knowledge gained from my master’s degree in public health to real-world projects, and to make a meaningful impact in the field. During the internship, I have improved my technical writing skills, specifically in writing reports, activity descriptions, and minutes of meetings. Now, I have a better understanding of the complexities and challenges of the public health field, and my communication skills were developed by engaging with EMPHNET’s employees.”*

*Workforce Capacity Intern  
– Sara Abu Hashish*

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*“My internship is a one of a kind experience, as my mentor always guided me in a way that helped me feel independent in my work, which is something I really appreciate. During my internship, I worked extensively on the Partnership and Resource Mobilization course, and I was able to work on many different kinds of projects and assignments in addition to the course, such as drafting concept notes, and creating PowerPoint presentations and partner mapping. What I liked about this internship was the flexibility and the feedback that I received on how to improve or change my work. For me, it was actually a very ideal internship.”*

*Partnership and Resource Mobilization Intern  
– Leen Abozaid*

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*“I had an excellent internship experience that surpassed my expectations. It was engaging, informative, and it provided me with valuable skills and knowledge. This internship has solidified my passion for clinical research and health education. It has equipped me with the necessary skills and knowledge to confidently pursue my career aspirations. I am excited about the next steps in my professional journey, and I am confident that the lessons learned, and connections made during this internship will significantly contribute to my future success. I extend my deepest gratitude to Dr. Sara Abu Khudair, the entire team, and everyone who supported me throughout this transformative journey. Their unwavering support and guidance was invaluable, and I am honored to have been a part of such a remarkable internship experience.”*

*Research and Policy Intern  
– Vivian Opoku*

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*“During my master’s program in public health at New York University, I sought to bridge theory with real-world application. EMPHNET provided me with the perfect opportunity to gain practical knowledge. Under the guidance of Dr. Haitham Bashier, I explored public health in practice through webinars and talks. The webinars I attended also highlighted the impact of politics on public health, emphasizing the role of development partners and multi-governmental collaboration, as exemplified by Sudan’s situation. My time at EMPHNET has been enjoyable, providing invaluable knowledge. As I am approaching the final year of my master’s program, I am excited to apply the competencies and skills acquired during my internship. I am grateful to everyone who made this experience unforgettable and who contributed to my professional growth.”*

*Workforce Capacity Intern  
– Joanna Samhuri*

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## New Interns

### Interns with Big Dreams

EMPHNET is delighted to extend a warm and enthusiastic welcome to our new interns for the next cycle. We hope that they approach each day with enthusiasm, and a willingness to learn from every situation.

Below is what they shared about their objectives and what they hope to accomplish from this internship.



**Olla Hamdan**

Meet Olla Hamdan, our newest intern, who is a current master’s of public health student at Vanderbilt University. Olla has demonstrated a remarkable dedication to making a positive impact on society through her work in pharmacy and public health. With a passion for alleviating suffering and contributing to community well-being, she actively seeks opportunities to apply her skills and knowledge. As a former public health coordinator at the Jordan Pharmaceuticals’ Student Association, she gained valuable experience in addressing public health threats and identifying gaps in healthcare systems. Through research at university, she contributed to assessing respiratory illnesses in children and understanding antibiotic use patterns. Now, starting an internship with EMPHNET, she is eager to apply her expertise in epidemiology and project implementation, to learn from public health experts, and to make a meaningful contribution to the team. With a background in pharmacy, research experience, and a strong dedication to public health, she is well-equipped to drive positive change.

ANNOUNCEMENT



**EMPHNET’s Knowledge Exchange and Networking Unit is seeking interns to join its team to work on several departmental tasks!**

The purpose of the internship is to develop content for newsletters and social media, proofread, edit, and translate content for different purposes, assist in creating campaigns, perform data entry, and carry out administrative tasks.

To read more and apply, [click here](#).



### Eno Ethel Ambo

Eno Ethel Ambo, a passionate master’s degree holder in public health, seeks to join EMPHNET, driven by her goal of promoting health and preventing diseases in communities. Inspired by EMPHNET’s global health promotion and disease outbreak preparedness efforts, she envisions a world free from epidemics. With expertise in disease prevention and control, health nutrition, and health promotion, gained through studies, research, and practical experiences, she is confident in her suitability for the position. Eno Ethel Ambo’s involvement in projects such as nutrition emergencies and HIV response has honed her skills in data analysis, public health interventions, and humanitarian work.

Collaborating with individuals from diverse backgrounds, Eno embraces teamwork, accountability, resilience, and time management to contribute to EMPHNET’s vision. She eagerly embraces the opportunity to make substantial contributions to strengthening health systems and protecting individuals. With an open mind and a desire to learn, she is ready to seize this opportunity to advance her career and contribute to the noble cause championed by EMPHNET.

ANNOUNCEMENT



### Do you want to take more courses in Public Health?

Check out IAPH and excel in the field of Public Health. Since 2021, IAPH is considered a leading professional development academy in the Eastern Mediterranean Region (EMR), that is offering a practice-led approach to education. Gain practical skills, connect with industry experts, and shape a talented future.

Visit: <https://iaph.org/en/> to learn more and apply for our distinguished courses.

GHD|EMPHNET: Working Together for Better Health

The Eastern Mediterranean Public Health Network (EMPHNET) is a regional network that focuses on strengthening public health systems in the Eastern Mediterranean Region (EMR) and beyond. EMPHNET works in partnership with ministries of health, non-government organizations, international agencies, private sector, and relevant institutions from the region and the globe to promote public health and applied epidemiology. To advance the work of EMPHNET, Global Health Development (GHD) was initiated to build coordination mechanisms with partners and collaborators. Together, GHD|EMPHNET is dedicated to serving the region by supporting efforts to promote public health policies, strategic planning, sustainable financing, resource mobilization, public health programs, and other related areas.

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