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## Editor's Letter

Dear Readers,

We are happy to share with you the second issue of our internship bulletin, through which we shed light on our interns' success stories, testimonials, and experiences.

In this issue, we share with you a success story from one of our past interns who published his first public health research, and in the mentors' corner, we share with you our new mentors' experiences, and some mentoring techniques. This bulletin also brings inspiring stories from interns who became employees, as well as testimonials from interns who recently completed their internships with us.

This issue also introduces some of the activities our interns participated in throughout their internship period, and finally, we are pleased to welcome our new interns to our different teams. We hope they will benefit from their experience with us and upgrade their abilities, and we look forward to welcoming more interns in the upcoming months.

We hope that you find the content of this bulletin beneficial, and we do welcome your feedback.

ENGAGE Editorial Team,

## Feature Story

### Adi Mattal; Former Intern at GHD|EMPHNET Publishes his First Public Health Research

#### FROM INTERN TO CO-AUTHOR

In 2019, GHD|EMPHNET expanded and institutionalized its internship program “ENGAGE” with aims to help interns get hands-on experience in their fields of choice. The internship program is designed to offer interns an opportunity to apply their theoretical knowledge into practice and to help them to explore their chosen career paths.

In the same year, GHD|EMPHNET former; Adi Mattal published his first public health article upon the end of his internship period at EMPHNET.



During his internship period, Adi focused on the healthcare status of Syrian refugees in Jordan. He was so intrigued by this subject matter, that he decided to publish his first public health article that sheds light on issues faced by the Syrian refugee community in Jordan. Adi introduced his idea to his mentor, Workforce Capacity Team Leader, Dr. Haitham Bashier who welcomed his initiative and guided him through this experience. However, there were some challenges that Adi had encountered on his journey.

The major challenge in Adi’s story was to get approval to publish his article. In fact, his article went through a series of rejections from a number of journals. It also went through a series of edits to which his mentor guided him through.

Getting approvals to submit his article was critical, but Adi realized that the restriction of visiting refugee camps in Jordan was quite another challenge, as he was not able to collect primary data from refugees. However, the wide network of public health experts set up by his mentor was very helpful and it contributed to enabling him to get the data he needed.

He was further challenged by the lack of practical training in the area of publishing that universities don’t seem to offer. “University students mainly learn academic skills, there is rarely any chance for them to be exposed to the practical side of the work or to be taught the process of getting the work published. As a result, this internship helped me to address this gap’ he said.

In order to overcome these challenges, some actions were taken. These included constructive feedback from Adi’s mentor; Dr. Bashier, which resulted in a series of edits and improvements to the article. Dr. Bashir also connected Adi with Dr. Mohammad Abu-Khader, a public health specialist at EMPHNET, who shared his experience in working closely with the refugees’ community in Al-Zaatari Camp, a Syrian refugee camp situated in the North of Jordan. Other EMPHNET resources he had access to also helped him in collecting accurate and reliable data for his article.

Adi’s article took some time to be published, but after his persistent focus, trials, and the guidance he received, he succeeded to publish it. “The most valuable lesson I have learnt is not to give up and be persistent,” he said.

According to Adi, there were key elements that made his internship experience at EMPHNET a success. These included: the knowledge and professional skills he gained from his mentor, the honest feedback from his mentor, and the amount of information he received from other public health professionals working in the field. Such experience made him feel like he was in the field with them. Together, these elements made the internship period a fruitful experience for him.

During his internship at GHD|EMPHNET Adi said that he benefitted greatly, as the experience helped in widening his professional horizons, and it enabled him to experience public health differently.

**“ I think EMPHNET's internship really gave me a view of public health in a way that I have not experienced before, I really had almost no experience in public health prior to the internship.”**

**- Adi Mattal, Past Intern**

Internships bridge the gap between what interns study in the classroom and what they experience in the real world. Adi's internship exposed him to the public health work, and it helped him in strengthening his public health writing styles. It also gave him a better understanding of refugees' healthcare, and it inspired him to publish his own article. This development also helped him get into medical school.

Today, Adi aims to build on his successes in continuing what he addressed in his article. He hopes to work on the grounds with refugee communities around the world.

To read Adi's article, please follow this [link](#).

## From Intern to Employee - Inspiring Stories

Throughout the internship period from December to March 2021, three interns were given the opportunity to secure a full-time position at GHD|EMPHNET. These are the stories of interns who have achieved success. Their stories and experiences inspire and motivate us. Therefore, we would like to share their journey towards employment at the organization and inspire our readers.

### HANEEN DAGHER



Haneen started her internship in November 2020 at GHD|EMPHNET within the Technology and Innovative Solutions unit. She stated that during her internship, she developed new skills such as computer skills, and the building of E-Learning courses. Haneen also said that her internship strengthened her communication skills, and it sparked her interest in learning more about the field of information technology.

Haneen received a job offer after completing her three-month internship. She showed a great capacity to learn new skills. She attributes her achievements to the assistance of her mentor, and her hard work, especially in the first few months.

Haneen also expressed her delight when she learned that the team she worked with had recommended her for the job opening at GHD|EMPHNET. On a side note, Haneen said that she was very proud of what she achieved during this period. Her best success, she said, was being nominated to develop an entire course using the Articulate Storyline Software. “It is a great chance to get an internship opportunity at GHD|EMPHNET because you will get to work with a highly skilled team who are very professional. The work environment the organization fosters is unique. I felt that their motto is that investing in their employees is investing in the future of the organization”.

Through her hard work and perseverance, she worked her way up to the top. She challenged herself to do her best in order to earn a full-time job in a new field.

Haneen’s long-term goals include honing her skills and creating an E-learning course from scratch.

“The lesson I want to share with future interns is to focus on their work, not waste their time, not stress, and not complain regardless of the workload they have,” she added.

## ZAINA ASSAF

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Zaina joined the internship program at GHD|EMPHNET to pursue her dream of starting a career in public health. Zaina described her internship at GHD|EMPHNET as a fruitful and beautiful experience that prepared her for a career. This internship provided her with the opportunity to gain new skills such as: communication skills, teamwork skills, in addition to learning the practical side of public health. She said that these skills helped her in performing her duties effectively.

Zaina found her journey at GHD|EMPHNET rewarding in more than one way. The opportunity of getting hired at the organization and being mentored by highly skilled public health professionals were the best parts of this experience.



She thanked her mentor, Dr. Haitham Bashier, who helped her in both her personal and professional development. Zaina added that Dr. Bashier taught her how to think strategically and how to work effectively and efficiently remotely. She noted that one of the most intriguing aspects of the internship program is the willingness and readiness of other team members to offer their assistance and share their knowledge.

Zaina concluded by expressing how beneficial her internship period was. She also thanked the Knowledge Exchange and Networking unit for their support and efforts in making the internship program successful.

“I’m confident that the future will be fruitful for me at this reputable organization, I believe the values of the organization are relatable to my own values, and it is my ultimate dream to grow with it”.



## SHYMAA KHRAISAT



Shymaa Khraisat interned at GHD|EMPHNET within the Technology and Innovative Solutions unit. She described her internship period as an eye-opening experience. She looks back upon her internship with pride and appreciation. She said that she was very fortunate to be under the supervision of her mentor, Head of Technology Enhanced Learning, Eman Nairoukh. Shymaa mentioned that her experience working with the Articulate Storyline Software and the Learning Management System (LMS) prepared her for her current role as Learning Management System Admin.

Shymaa said that despite the challenges she encountered during her virtual internship, she learned new skills such as time management, planning, and organizational skills.

Considering her successful internship experience, Shymaa advised future interns to take full advantage of their internships and to keep asking questions.

Shymaa plans to pursue a master's degree and to be involved in activities that contribute to professional growth and development.



### Tips to Increase Your Chances of Getting Hired After Your Internship

1. Take Initiative.
2. Ask for Additional Work.
3. Demonstrate Dedication.
4. Show Commitment.
5. Request Feedback.
6. Show Interest in Learning.
7. Act Professionally.

## Mentorship Corner

### MEET OUR FIRST TIME MENTORS:

“Mentoring is a brain to pick, an ear to listen, and a push in the right direction.” John Crosby

During this period, more GHD|EMPHNET employees participated in the internship program, and for the first time in their careers at the organization, they were mentors. In this section of the bulletin, we share with you our mentors' experiences throughout their journey.

## HERE ARE THEIR STORIES!

### Omar Rashid : Mentorship is a Key Driver of Success

Communication Specialist Omar Rashid described his three-month mentorship experience as different, exciting, and pleasant. He said that he was thrilled to have the opportunity to be Media and Communications intern Haitham Dahbour's mentor especially since Haitham shares his interest in design and web development. He said that they took a training on web development together. This training session offered them a shared learning experience. They had discussions after each session, shared ideas, and taught each other new things.

He added that he was very surprised by how quickly Haitham adapted and how he was receptive to learning new skills. Additionally, Omar said that Haitham was very keen to take initiatives which is an important attribute for interns to have. This is what makes the internship experience successful for both the intern and the mentor, as internships require dedication and devotion from both sides.



On another note, Omar stated that this opportunity was very beneficial for him. "It was a refreshing experience to meet new people and share knowledge and experiences with them". Omar said, "However, the biggest challenge we faced was trying to maintain follow-up during the remote aspect of the internship." While remote internships are challenging, Omar had the opportunity to enhance his time management skills, and this was an opportunity presented by the remote working conditions.

As an advice, Omar encourages anyone taking on a mentorship role to set plans, training programs, and objectives. He also advises mentors to focus on fundamentals and enjoy the experience.

Finally, Omar said that he was very proud of Haitham's skills progression. Furthermore, he said that as a result of this experience, he was also able to learn from the intern, and to see things from different perspectives. He saw alternatives to how he thinks.

## A HIGHLIGHT FROM OMAR

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**A** good mentor should be motivating, and he should understand that there are differences in the experiences, he or she should have good time-management and teaching skills.

- Communication Specialist, Omar Rashid .

”



*I really enjoyed mentoring and I will definitely do it again, I believe that mentorship is a great thing, and I advise all employees to participate in the internship program as mentors.*

*- Communication Specialist, Omar Rashid .*



## **Ilham Abu Khader - Gaining Knowledge through Experience**



Part of the benefit of being a mentor is that you get the chance to learn from the intern. With this idea in mind, Public Health Specialist, Ilham Abu Khader was very happy that she had the opportunity to share her knowledge and experience with someone who has the knowledge but does not have the experience. Ilham said that during the three-month experience she learned how to be patient and to watch interns in action and the experience was really inspiring.

Ilham said that she has extensive experience in the work of field epidemiology, especially the work of Field Epidemiology Training Programs (FETPs), and she wanted to share this experience with future public health practitioners.

“During the internship period, interns get hands-on experience, we are not an academic institution that will only give our interns an assignment.” Ilham said. “They will learn about some new tools, for example, our past intern, learned how to work on EpiInfo, so most of the experience they will gain is practical, not theoretical.” Ilham added.

Speaking of her proudest moment, Ilham said: “I was more than happy when I knew that my intern used the tools she has learned during her internship in her thesis”.

Ilham advises future mentors to have clear objectives and expectations of what a successful internship looks like. She also said that a good mentor should know his/her roles and responsibilities. Finally, Ilham said that she is so excited for the upcoming internship period and looking forward to mentoring more interns, learning from their experiences and different backgrounds, and enhancing her skills.

## **A HIGHLIGHT FROM ILHAM**



*I feel that the mentoring relationship should be based on mutual trust and respect.*

*- Public Health Specialist, Ilham Abu Khader .*





## How to Give Constructive Feedback

- **Balance the Positive and the Negative.**
- **Don't Make it Personal.**
- **Be Specific and Clear- State the Purpose of your Feedback.**
- **Provide Recommendations.**

## Their Advice

### The Bright Side of Virtual Internships

In light of the COVID-19 situation, GHD|EMPHNET started running its internship program remotely. Working remotely presented certain challenges, such as lack of teamwork, security concerns, and distractions. Remote work, on the other hand, is not all bad as it has brought advantages for both interns and mentors.

Here are some of the reasons why our interns from different units such as: Media and Communications, Workforce Capacity, Technology and Innovative Solutions, and Knowledge Exchange and Networking, believe that the benefits of virtual internships significantly outweigh the disadvantages.

According to our previous intern, Zaina Assaf, one vital advantage of virtual internships is ensuring the safety of the interns. "For me, the virtual internship was a better-than-expected experience as it reduced our exposure and our loved ones to illnesses." Zaina explain.

On another note, former intern, Shymaa Khraisat suggested that she was more productive and had the opportunity to focus and work on herself more while saving time. She also said that instead of waiting for someone to reply to her questions, she had to do her own research. In addition to that, Shymaa said that the working from home experience gave her more time to pursue her interests and hobbies.

One of the benefits of virtual internships is having a work-life balance. The majority of our previous interns stated that having a flexible schedule was important to them. They also said that they were able to stay more focused as they had the chance to regulate their working environment.

Our virtual internship program is a huge success, and we will continue to offer virtual opportunities. Interns will be able to receive knowledge and professional experience through our virtual internship program, allowing them to attain their professional goals.



**Enroll in our virtual internship program by sending a resume and a cover letter to : [internships@emphnet.net](mailto:internships@emphnet.net)**



## Testimonials – From Our Past Interns

“The GHD|EMPHNET internship program was very beneficial. It provided me with a unique opportunity to understand and learn more about the research in public health and epidemiology fields. I have gained and developed many practical skills such as communication and teamwork. I also experienced a new field of my career possibilities.”

**Intern with the Director of the Center of Excellence for Applied Epidemiology – Mona Qandeel**

“During my internship at EMPHNET, I was very lucky to have been paired with my wonderful mentor, Dr. Hana Taha. Dr. Hana is a very experienced researcher, advocate, and scientific writer. She was always there to offer guidance and answer my questions. I learned a lot about the healthcare system in the MENA region, writing grants, and epidemiology. This opportunity also helped me improve my writing skills and Public Health research methods.”

**Intern with Health Protection and Promotion – Lujain Al-Omari**

“The experience with EMPHNET is known for the benefits that it brings to the health sector in the Eastern Mediterranean Region, it has been a great opportunity to discover the NGO’s field, to meet a great team who are passionate. The internship broadened my knowledge in media and communication and in ICT. I am extremely grateful to have been able to live this experience at EMPHNET. I thank the entire EMPHNET team and in particular, my mentor, Omar Rashid.”

**Intern with Media and Communication –Haitham Dahboor**

“Through my work at GHD|EMPHNET, I felt like I was doing my part in helping the global community fight the COVID-19 Pandemic. I would like to thank my mentor Dana Shalabi for her continuous guidance and my fellow team members Seela Al Zubaidi, Meral Al Gunaid, and Adna Maiteh for their constant support and their friendliness. Working at GHD|EMPHNET has been an honor and something that I will always take pride in.”

**Intern with Knowledge Exchange and Networking – Rabee Assaf**

## Meet Our New Interns

In May 2021, GHD|EMPHNET welcomed four new interns to its different departments. Here is what our interns want to achieve from their internships.

“I would like to improve my capabilities as a health care worker and be able to perform the required work of the workforce capacity unit.”



### **RANA HAMAWI**

**Workforce Capacity Intern, Public Health Master’s Student at the University of Jordan**

“I would like to improve my capabilities as a health care worker and be able to perform the required work of the workforce capacity unit.”

## TEEBAH ABU ZAHRA

Fundraising and Project Management Intern, MSPH in Health Policy from Corvinus University of Budapest, Hungary

“This internship opportunity will help me to get an insight into how, EMPHNET, as one of the leaders in promoting public health in the region operates and get the advantage of learning from the knowledge and expertise of EMPHNET’s team. I will learn how to locate important resources and key stakeholders for funding public health projects in the region and around the world while gaining strategical skills that EMPHNET’s experts utilize when accomplishing their goals in managing public health projects.”



## GOFFRAN ABABSEH

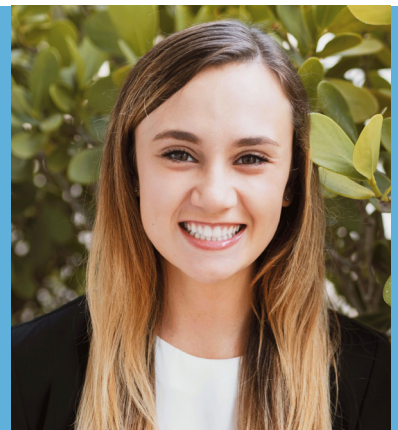
Workforce Capacity Intern, Public Health Master’s Student at the University of Jordan

“I would love to put into practice what I am Learning during my studies and enhance my research skills.”

## ELLEN MITCHELL

Disease Control and Prevention Intern, Master of Public Health (M.P.H.) in Global Epidemiology at Emory University Rollins School of Public Health

“As an intern in the Disease Control Program at GHD|EMPHNET, I hope to gain a new perspective and a better understanding of infectious disease epidemiology in the Eastern Mediterranean Region and enhance my technical skills as a public health professional.”



## Yazeed Blan

Technology and Innovative Solutions Intern, Computer Science Graduate from the University of Jordan

“It is a great opportunity for me to join GHD|EMPHNET internship program. I hope that I will learn new technologies, learn how to work and improve my skills with dynamic team, and explore new working environments. “

## GHD|EMPHNET Interns' Activities

**Public Health Emergency Management Center Intern, Aya Shatnawi Works in the Field with Syrian Refugees in the Zaatari Refugee Camp.**



According to the Public Health Emergency Management Center intern, Aya Shatnawi, working with GHD|EMPHNET in the Zaatari Refugee Camp was one of the most fulfilling experiences of her career journey.

During her fieldwork, Aya had the chance to know more about the fieldwork challenges, and how to solve these challenges especially with the difficult circumstances caused by COVID-19.

With the help of her mentor Dr. Mohammad Abu Khudair, Aya was involved in conducting active surveillance to detect all suspected and confirmed COVID-19 cases among Syrian refugees in the Zaatari Camp. She was also involved in data analysis and creating Epi-curves, writing bi-weekly and monthly reports, preparing accumulative sheets, and sharing them with other organizations. Alongside, she was involved in coordinating with other NGOs to conduct PCR tests for their staff and IBVs and participating in weekly health coordination meetings with other NGOs in the camp to share the latest updates in the Zaatari Camp.

“It was a big honor for me to join EMPHNET which is one of the best organizations working to strengthen public health systems and improve health outcomes, . This internship gave me a chance to learn more, gain new skills, and enhance my experience in the field of public health.”

### **Interns Participate in Organizing Operational Research Symposium, and Abstract Book**

On April 7 and 8, 2021, EMPHNET held its First Virtual Regional COVID-19 Operational Research Symposium. Our interns: Zaina Assaf and Rabee Assaf contributed to the release of the symposium's abstract book. They did a great job in writing, editing, and proofreading some of the abstract book sections. Also, Zaina and Rabee supported in drafting and editing the symposium's technical report.

## Former and Current Interns Participate in Data Collection and Data Entry

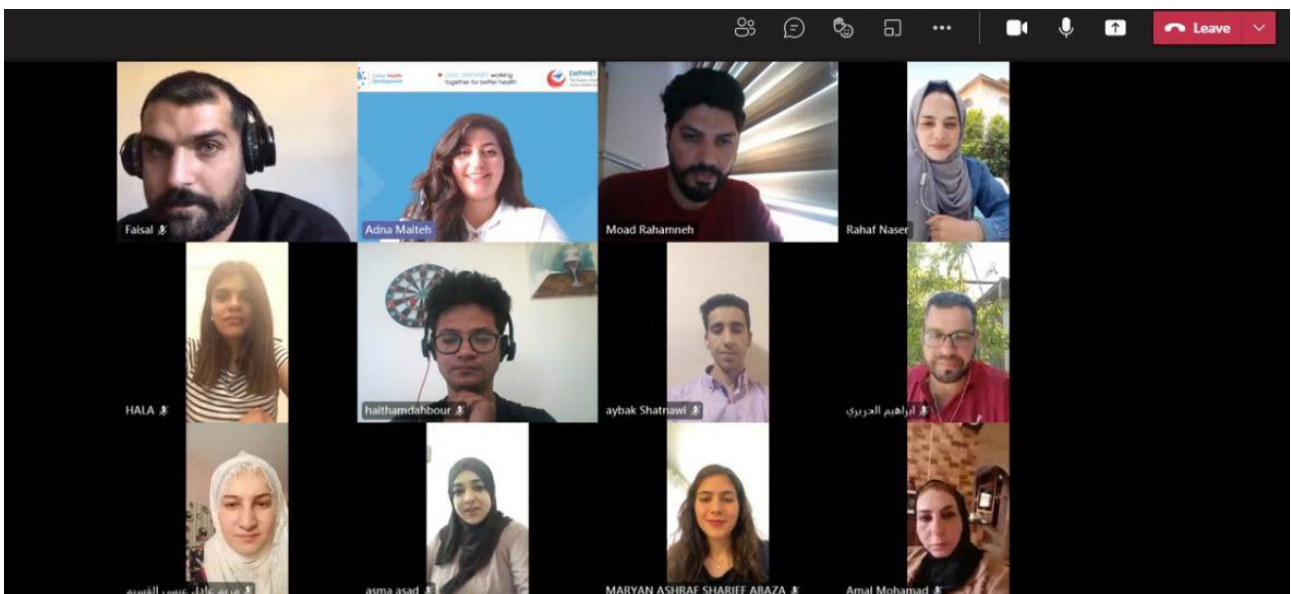
EMPHNET offered an opportunity for its past and current interns to take part in field data collection and data entry. The data assists to establish how the overall community is aware of Tuberculosis (TB) and Human Immunodeficiency Virus/ Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS).

During this period, the interns were divided into two groups. The first group carried out the home visits and the second group entered completed questionnaires into a survey database.

The survey results are used by EMPHNET to gather information about Tuberculosis (TB) and Human Immunodeficiency Virus/ Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS).

**“During home visits, we explained the purpose and nature of the study to the people and gave them the questionnaires. Despite some challenges I encountered during home visits, the experience was very interesting; I was very happy that I took part in conducting real-world data and being part of this study team.”**

**Media and Communication Intern – Haitham Dahbour**



## Contact Us



Abdallah Ben Abbas St, Building  
No. 42, Amman, Jordan



+962-6-5519963



+962-6-5519962



comm@emphnet.net