

Call for Researcher

To Conduct a Research on the Impact of Corruption on Marginalized Groups in the Current Volatile Lebanese Context

Project Title	Building Integrity and National Accountability in Lebanon (BINA')
Activity Number	3.2.1: Conduct short research piece to examine impact of corruption on groups at risk of discrimination in Lebanon, including women and youth

1. Entity Background

About TI-LB

Transparency International Lebanon – No Corruption (TI-LB) was established in 1999 with the aim of reducing rampant corruption in Lebanon, promoting the principles of transparency and accountability, establishing the rule of law and respecting the fundamental rights inaugurated in international laws and the Lebanese Constitution, by focusing on systematic improvement, building alliances, and encouraging civil society organizations to take measures towards transparency and accountability. TI-LB later became the national chapter of Transparency International.

TI-LB has worked to enhance transparency in the public and private sectors in Lebanon for more than a decade, by implementing a number of projects that ranged from contributing to the development to lobbying the anti-corruption laws (such as the draft law on the Right to Access to Information, the Whistleblowers Protection Law, the Asset and Interest Declaration and the Punishment of Illicit Enrichment Law, etc.), and the monitoring of parliamentary and municipal elections since 2009, in addition to other projects aimed at empowering youth and municipalities on issues related to good governance.

TI-LB was chosen as a member of the first Independent Oversight Board (IOB) for the Reform, Recovery and Reconstruction Framework (3RF), which was launched in response to the aftermath of the Beirut Port explosion.

Vision

A Lebanon with well governed, transparent and accountable institutions, free of corruption and built on the rule of law.

Mission

To promote transparency and integrity as well as prevent and fight corruption through collaboration, advocacy and active engagement, in public, private and non-governmental organizations.

2. Project Background

1. BINA' project brief

Funded by the European Union (EU), and in partnership with Transparency International Secretariat (TI-S) and the Lebanese Center for Policy Studies (LCPS), BINA' (Building Integrity and National Accountability in Lebanon) project overall objective's is to enhance the role of civil society actors as active pillars in enhancing governance, accountability and transparency in Lebanon, as it specifically expands the abilities of civil society, both local and national, to actively monitor and advocate for transparency and accountability on the 3RF in Lebanon.

BINA's key objectives are:

- (1) To improve the capacities of CSOs, expand organizational abilities and coordinated efforts among civil society networks to ensure transparent and sustainable implementation of the 3RF in Lebanon.
- (2) To improve capacities of local CSOs, grassroots and community-based organizations outside Beirut to participate in policy dialogues and monitoring processes related to recovery and reform at local and central level.
- (3) To sustain an inclusive multi-stakeholder dialogue with local, national and international actors that advance reform efforts, with an emphasis on the role of CSOs.

BINA's target audience is diverse: (1) Civil Society Organizations (formal and informal) in Beirut and across Lebanon, (2) Youth groups and initiatives, (3) Women's organizations/initiatives promoting gender equality, (4) Municipalities/Local Authorities and (5) citizens as Final Beneficiaries.

2. BINA' and the 3RF

The World Bank Group (WBG), United Nations (UN), and European Union (EU), Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), Lebanon's government, and the international community launched the framework for Reform, Recovery and Reconstruction (the 3RF) which is part of a comprehensive response to the massive explosion on the Port of Beirut on August 4, 2020.

The 3RF recognizes that regaining the trust of the Lebanese people in governmental institutions is imperative for successful recovery. The government needs to assume responsibility and take urgent action to promote recovery and reconstruction. Lebanon also needs to adopt a new governance model that breaks the capture of political elites over state institutions and ensures that these institutions serve people's needs and can respond to the crises the country faces.

The 3RF aims to help Lebanon achieve three central goals in response to the Beirut port explosion. First, a people centered recovery that returns sustainable livelihoods to the affected population; improves social justice for all, including women, the poor, and other vulnerable groups; and ensures participatory decision making. Second, the reconstruction of critical assets, services, and infrastructure provides equal access for all to quality basic services and enables sustainable economic recovery. Third, the implementation of reform to support reconstruction and to help restore people's trust in governmental institutions by improving governance.

The 3RF framework provides a critical foundation for the reform, recovery and the reconstruction of Beirut that has been deeply affected by the Port Explosion. Although BINA's project falls under the 3RF, it aims at pushing forward its goals beyond the Beirut Explosion affected areas. The 3RF is structured around four strategic pillars, each of which identifies a limited set of priorities across both the recovery track and the reform and reconstruction track. These priorities are based on detailed sectoral assessments in 17 sectors that were affected by the Beirut port explosion. Each sector is anchored in one of the pillars; cross-sector aspects are considered and prioritized in relevant sectors and pillars, with a view to ensuring coherence in the overall response.

A: Sodaqa Square Center, Bloc B, 4th Floor, Ashrafieh, Beirut - Lebanon

T: +961 616 00723 | M: +961 70 035 777

E: transparency@transparency-lebanon.org

WWW.TRANSPARENCY-LEBANON.ORG



3RF promotes the sustainability of service provision by reinforcing the role of the Ministry of Social Affairs and its Social Development Centers (SDCs) in providing social welfare and protection services; invest in capacity building for local government and civil society organizations and systematize linkages between SDCs and CSOs (Civil Society Organizations) for more efficient delivery of services. This is where BINA' recognizes CSOs as the main pillar and target group of the project. One of its main objectives is to enhance the role of civil society actors as active pillars in enhancing governance, accountability and transparency in Lebanon, as it specifically expands the abilities of civil society, both local and national, to actively monitor and advocate for transparency and accountability on the 3RF in Lebanon. Transparency and accountability are relevant to the first Thematic framework of 3RF (out of 4) which is "Improving Governance and Accountability To promote the transparent, accountable, and inclusive governance of Lebanon's economic and social resources". Under this thematic framework, four main aspects are covered (PFM & Procurement; Anti-Corruption, Integrity & Transparency and Justice & Human Rights) and this is where BINA's would be operating in synergy with 3RF.

BINA's framework can effectively support this: (1) through the strengthening of internal governance of CSOs that the action is focusing on, (2) the creation of a coalition/network focused on monitoring and conducting advocacy, (3) the creation of tools and platforms to share knowledge and sustain monitoring processes. A comprehensive program of capacity building, peer-to-peer exchanges offer CSOs and activists support to increase their organizational resilience. Most importantly the action empowers local small organizations through (4) third party sub granting related projects to enhance social accountability, collaboration and partnership with municipalities to achieve greater transparency and accountability. Similar to the 3RF Framework, the Action promotes the inclusiveness of communities as a cross-cutting priority through (5) its inclusive approaches adopted whether in research, capacity building, focus groups, advocacy efforts and awareness that will enable a wide range of citizens, particularly individuals and groups at risk of marginalization and discrimination, to have voice and representation that will reach national decision makers and the international community. The action will also (6) encourage the fostering of dialogue and strategic collaboration among CSOs and with the EU and the Government especially in relation to advocacy and monitoring reform efforts.

3. CSOs

Civil Society Organizations (Formal and Informal) in Beirut and across Lebanon are one of the main target groups under the scope of the BINA' project. TI-LB is looking to secure technical and financial support in order to empower them to play a more active role in advocating for reforms at the local and national levels. This Action will directly support TI-LB to implement BINA' main output towards working to empower Lebanese civil society with the knowledge, tools, networks and skills to strengthen their organizational capacities, making them capable of sustaining long term projects; to limit and reduce their own risks of corruption and mismanagement of funds, and to help them become credible and formidable actors of governance able to dialogue and debate with decision makers on how to collectively advance reform efforts.

In addition to their participation in the capacity building program, CSOs could benefit from a Third-Party Financial Support to conduct local accountability actions. An inclusive and participatory approach will be prioritized in developing advocacy plans to ensure local ownership and a strong representation of diverse voices is adopted. Moreover, the project encourages the fostering of dialogue and strategic collaboration among CSOs under 3RF and beyond, as well as with the EU and the Government especially in relation to advocacy and reforms monitoring efforts.

This financial support consists of grants to support Civil Society Organizations, grassroots organizations, community-based organizations, individual human rights activists, local media, bloggers, and digital platforms focused on democracy and good governance, rule of law and fundamental rights, public administration reform, civil society development and local democracy, social inclusion, anti-discrimination, gender equality, media and freedom of expression, education, culture, and youth.

The Third-Party Financial Support will be carried out in different phases. The first phase consists of a pilot for the implementation of the 3RF-focused accountability actions and targets CSOs involved in the 3RF. The pilot will be rolled out throughout the course of the project to include additional CSOs across the country. This current call for application targets the pilot for actions in the context of the 3RF, and aims to support relevant CSOs in their work in the context of this framework, as well as monitoring and advocacy for the targeted reforms.

3. Scope of work

As Lebanon enters its 4th year of in socio-economic crisis, state institutions are severely incapacitated due to decades of corruption and fiscal/political mismanagement. This has led to diminished authority and delayed service delivery of public goods, which in turn has led to a surge in corrupt activities such as extortion, bribery, violence, abuse, human trafficking, and state-endorsed discrimination against marginalized groups. Marginalized groups in Lebanon have long been grappling with declining socio-economic conditions and are now confronted with additional forms of corruption, which are often waved off or masked as societal norms, particularly in sectors like healthcare and education.

In this context, Transparency International - Lebanon aims to enlist the services a researcher to identify and analyze the linkages between Lebanon's ongoing crisis, the heightened corruption within failing state institutions, and the resulting exacerbation of marginalization and discrimination against vulnerable peoples. The research methodology should employ desk-based reviews to comprehensively examine existing literature and theoretical underpinnings, while also engaging in Key Informant Interviews with experts to solicit first-hand insights and perspectives. The anticipated outcome of this analysis and research is a comprehensive paper encompassing the following:

Dimensions – Research Components:

1. Vulnerability and Corruption:

The first component should investigate the intricate correlation between corruption and vulnerability on a wider scope given the clear indication that vulnerable groups are usually significantly more prone to fall victims to corrupt practices present in institutions that are tasked with supporting and protecting those groups. The theoretical aspect will analyze how corruption interacts with aspects of vulnerability through looking at the socio-economic, political, and institutional dimensions that permit exploitative practices within the Lebanese context. Through establishing a clear conceptualization of vulnerability and the multifaceted nature of corruption, the aim is to shed light on how corruption thrives through exploiting vulnerabilities which perpetuates a parasitic cycle that continuously seeks vulnerabilities to feed corruption. To reinstate, this component should be centred around the nuanced ways in which corruption disproportionately impacts marginalized communities in Lebanon.

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2. Marginalization in the Lebanese context:

This research component seeks to identify and analyze the various dimensions of marginalization in Lebanon, aiming to establish a comprehensive understanding of 'multidimensional vulnerability'. After identifying the multiple layers of marginalization and vulnerability, the research should focus on examining how ongoing cycles and agents of corruption exploit discriminatory laws and practices that specifically affect these groups. Pre-crisis (pre-2019) facets of marginalization: To better contextualize the current situation, the research should consider past patterns of corruption, and discrimination that have targeted vulnerable groups and understand how those patterns were exacerbated with the rising polarization as a consequence of the crises with emphasis on the exacerbated socio-economic impact sustained by those groups.

3. Community Mobilization and the Civil Society's Role:

The aim behind this component is to highlight the role of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in disrupting or reinforcing cyclical patterns of corruption that loom over vulnerable groups, pre- and intra-crisis. Importantly, this component should look into the distinct strategies employed by CSOs to address the marginalization experienced by these vulnerable groups. A pivotal dimension of this research entails a focused study of the active engagement of these organizations within local communities, including assessing the efficacy of community mobilization in mitigating the effects of marginalization.

4. Perceptions Among Marginalized Communities'

Considering that this research study is centered on vulnerable groups and the effects of the current multi-layered crisis on their marginalization, this component should take the opinions of these groups on multiple issues including their perception or recognition of corruption within social service provisioning, their take on their socio-economic exclusion, and their perception of the relevance/efficiency of the CSOs assistance.

5. Targeted Stakeholder Recommendations

The ultimate aim of the research study is to publish several policy recommendations targeted to specific stakeholders including:

- Marginalized/vulnerable groups
- Civil Society Organizations
- State and Local (municipal) institutions

These recommendations should include actionable items that the different stakeholders can implement in order to alleviate and diminish the effects of corruption on vulnerable groups.

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A: Sodeco Square Center, Bloc B, 4th Floor, Ashrafieh, Beirut - Lebanon

T: +961 1 616 001/2/3 | **M:** +961 70 035 777

E: transparency@transparency-lebanon.org

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4. Proposal Submission

4.1. Required Competencies:

4.2. Selection Criteria

- Relevance to required competencies (including academic qualifications, professional experience and proven track record)
- Relevance of proposed methodologies including desk-based, Key Informant Interviews and field data collection tools
- Reasonable financial proposal
- Reasonable and actionable implementation plan and timeframe with identified milestones for delivery
- Ability to mobilize required resources including team members, existing work and other resources

4.3 How to Apply:

- Interested candidates are encouraged to send the following documents to hr@transparency-lebanon.org, with "BINA" Performance Measurement Report" in the subject line:
 - CV and Cover Letter including links to relevant publications
 - Proposed Methodology, and
 - Relevant Financial Proposal that includes all costs related to developing the policy paper.
- **Type of Call:** Call for Researcher
- **Intervention Sector(s):** Anti-Corruption, Good Governance, Transparency, Advocacy, Marginalization
- **Deadline of the call:** Two weeks upon the posting of the call
- **Duration of Contract:** 3 Months
- **Budget:** 3000-3500 USD

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