

THE BEIRUT BLAST RECOVERY AND RECONSTRUCTION MONITOR

The catastrophic Beirut Port Blast of August 4 caused a massive loss of human life and immense destruction. It has prompted the international community to pledge significant emergency assistance to alleviate the damage and help Lebanon recover from this disaster.

In response to the significant threat of corruption and misuse of funds undermining this response, the Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs (IFI) at the American University of Beirut (AUB), in collaboration with the Lebanese Transparency Association (LTA) and Transparency International, are launching **“The Beirut Blast Recovery and Reconstruction Monitor”**.

According to IFI’s Director of Research and Interim Director Dr. Nasser Yassin, “The Beirut Blast Recovery and Reconstruction Monitor will conduct research and collect data while focusing on transparency and accountability aspects of international aid, recovery, and reconstruction. It will have a particular focus on how assistance will be handled in the absence of a unified governmental agency or program tasked with coordinating aid efforts.”

Daniel Eriksson, Managing Director of Transparency International, stressed that, “reconstruction following the devastating explosion in Beirut will involve huge sums of money. The people of Lebanon have a right to know it is being used where it is most needed and is not being misused or stolen. The Beirut Blast Reconstruction and Recovery Monitor will help ensure accountable, transparent, and independent oversight of the process”.

The Monitor aims to track, monitor, and assess the transparency and effectiveness of the emergency assistance that will be received. “The Lebanese Transparency Association and Transparency International will provide guidance, expertise, and global support for transparency and accountability in the use of emergency assistance,” according to Julien Courson, LTA Executive Director.

This joint project is part of IFI’s Lebanon Crisis Observatory that was created at the beginning of 2020 to collect data on Lebanon’s multiple crises. Through the creation of an evidence database to illustrate how Lebanon’s economic crisis is unfolding, the Observatory seeks to identify potential social implications of the economic crisis on Lebanon’s most vulnerable populations, including

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vulnerable host communities and refugees, so as to inform and catalyse policy and community dialogues, as well as responses to the crisis.

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