



General Inspection Preliminary Report





INTRODUCTION

- Developed on IMPACT through the General Inspection module, this extensive survey of public administration in Lebanon helped the Central Inspection identify enabling factors of corruption in the public sector.
- On the occasion of the International Anti-Corruption Day, the Central Inspection is issuing its preliminary report to present the current situation of public administrations and institutions (PAIs), which have responded to the General Inspection module.
- This will help identify opportunities and challenges in improving the performance of the public administration in Lebanon.



92

PAIs
were contacted

77

of them initiated
survey response





INTRODUCTION

The General Inspection Module relied on 14 different sections each pertaining to a particular aspect of the public administration. Out of these, six were selected to produce this preliminary report, as deemed most relevant to the fight against corruption.

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1 Strategic Planning | 2 Internal Oversight | 3 Financial Management |
| 4 Information Technology | 5 Relationship with Citizens | 6 Right to Access Information |

Period covered by the General Inspection Survey

From June, 1 2021

To November 30, 2021





MAIN FINDINGS

STRATEGIC PLANNING: A GRIM OUTLOOK

The General Inspection survey reveals a serious lack of strategic planning and clear implementation standards in the Lebanese public administration.

- As a significant ratio of PAIs lack strategy, the Lebanese public administration operates in the absence of a long-term vision and clear goals.
- Roughly a third of PAIs that have filled this section have worked on a strategic plan, but the ratio decreases to 23% for PAIs that have prepared and approved such strategic plan.

This points to a structural gap in the Lebanese public administration, indicating its ill-preparedness in anticipating needs and performing under a strategic vision.

Results last updated on November 30, 2021



of PAIs do not have strategic plans



of PAIs have set up strategic plans



of PAIs have approved the strategic plans



of PAIs have no planning unit

Results in this section are based on a sample of 47 PAIs that started the survey to date, given that not all have finalized all sections.



MAIN FINDINGS

INTERNAL OVERSIGHT: IRREGULAR PROCEDURES

Central Inspection uncovered many irregularities among PAIs which lack internal oversight settings, in violation of dispositions under Decree-Law 111/1959 which constitutes the foundational regulation for organizing public administration in Lebanon.

- Despite the importance of ensuring internal oversight within PAIs, a significant portion of respondent administrations are not enforcing such dispositions.
- Such inconsistency indicates a degree of confusion in the concept of internal oversight among PAIs, which must urgently be addressed.
- PAIs are also behind on the matter of assessing civil servants' performance, in violation of Article 4 of Civil Servants' Performance Regulations prepared by the Civil Service Board.
- For those ensuring such performance evaluation, the question remains whether the process is done in compliance with the relevant objective standards.

Results last updated on November 30, 2021



of PAIs have internal oversight setting



of PAIs lack internal oversight setting



of PAIs do not conduct a performance appraisal system

Results in this section are based on a sample of 51 PAIs that started the survey to date, given that not all have finalized all sections.



MAIN FINDINGS

RELATIONS WITH CITIZENS: MINIMAL DIGITIZATION

PAIs seem productive and effective when managing citizens' complaints through traditional mechanisms. However, complaints mechanisms lack institutionalization, with few procedures going through digital channels.

- Yet, when dealing with the received complaints, respondent PAIs managed to resolve 73% of the 1,640 complaints received by citizens since early 2020. Only 2% were not addressed, where 25% are still under review.
- That said, such productivity is carried out through traditional paperwork, as only 17% government buildings have digital complaint mechanisms.
- It is also important to remind PAIs to align any existing complaints mechanisms with Central Inspection guidelines which were reiterated under Circular No. 2/86 issued by the Presidency of the Council of Ministers

Results last updated on November 30, 2021



of government buildings
have a complaint
mechanism



of government buildings rely on
paper trail procedures to address
complaints



of government buildings have
digitalized channels for complaint
mechanism

Results in this section are based on a sample of 48 PAIs that started the survey to date, totaling for this section 90 government buildings.



MAIN FINDINGS

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT: SIGNIFICANT FAULT LINES

The survey uncovered large disregard of financial management regulations relevant to accounting, in violation to Articles 214 and 215 of the Public Accounting Law No. 14969 dated December 30, 1963.

- Financial oversight constitutes a crucial pillar to prevent corruption and embezzlement of public funds. As such, the General Inspection module integrated a section dedicated to accounting for materials.
- Based on the survey, this aspect of financial management showed significant fault lines, with 47% of PAIs not doing any form of accounting for materials.
- Among the 53% of PAIs that cover accountings for materials, only 38% actually comply with transferring their annual report to the Court of Audit, showing a serious inconsistency in channeling the information to the relevant authorities for proper oversight.
- On the management of warehouses, of the 80% of PAIs which have such storages, 90% comply with the annual inventory.

Results last updated on November 30, 2021



of PAIs do not oversee accounting for materials



Among 21 PAIs that manage accounting for materials hands in reports to Court of Audit



of PAIs manage warehouses

Results in this section are based on a sample of 41 PAIs that started the survey to date in the accounting sub-section and 43 for the warehouses sub-section.



MAIN FINDINGS

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY: MOVING FORWARD

Despite the challenges hindering the capacities of PAIs in Lebanon today, the survey showed an improvement of the IT situation for those responding to the General Inspection survey. The road towards digital transformation, however, remains steep.

- In the technology and information era, PAIs have made some progress in terms of basic IT infrastructures, with 70% of their buildings connected to Wi-Fi and W-Lan networks.
- Those having accomplished important achievements need to make sure to comply with data protection and privacy standards. Others have still some way to connect with the digital touch.
- Most government buildings (86%) actually own their IT system, with 14% relying on a private contractor owning the equipment. On the issue of maintenance, improvements can be made as 43% of government buildings resort to private companies for IT maintenance, when more internal resources could be developed for that purpose to ensure sustainability.

Results last updated on November 30, 2021



of government buildings are connected to Wi-Fi and W-Lan networks



of government buildings have one or more IT systems



of government buildings rely on private companies for IT maintenance

Results in this section are based on a sample of 51 PAIs that started the survey to date, totaling for this section 94 government buildings.



MAIN FINDINGS

RIGHT TO ACCESS INFORMATION: PROGRESS NEEDED

Initial steps to comply with the Right to Access Information Law are insufficient to entrench a culture of transparency and responsiveness between PAIs and the public.

- The adoption of Law No. 28 dated 10/2/2017 under the Right to Access Information was a major step in upholding the principles of transparency and combating corruption in the public sector.
- Most surveyed PAIs (71%) have appointed a focal point designated to address any access to information request by the general public, in compliance with the law.
- However, the small number of requests handled by the PAIs shows that these rights still need to be embedded in the culture and customs of citizens and civil society organizations.
- At the same time, PAIs need to make more significant efforts in systematically publishing the administrative acts to be made public under Lebanese legislation.

Results last updated on November 30, 2021



of PAIs have appointed a focal point under Right to Access Information Law



requests for access to information were handled by respondent PAIs since early 2020



of administrative acts enacted by surveyed PAIs were published on their websites

Results in this section are based on a sample of 49 PAIs that started the survey to date.



RECOMMENDATIONS

ENSURE ENFORCEMENT OF EXISTING LAWS & REGULATIONS

- Enforce compliance of PAIs with existing regulations and laws, under liability of legal sanctions;
- Strengthen the role of the head of units in terms of internal oversight and measuring productivity;
- Enforce regulatory provisions relevant to managing accounting of materials;
- Oblige PAIs to comply with the Access to Information Law by appointing a focal point to handle public requests for information and making their administrative acts publicly available;

IMPROVE PERFORMANCE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATIONS

- Raise awareness among PAIs on the importance of using strategic planning tools;
- Develop civil servants' performance appraisal system;
- Switch to digital complaints mechanisms, especially among PAIs providing vital public services, and in direct interaction with citizens;
- Ensure procurement contracts related to IT systems grant PAIs ownership rights over the entire infrastructure and its management.
- Train qualified personnel in departments to carry out maintenance work on IT systems to ensure integrity and continuity of public service.
- Urge PAIs to use the IMPACT platform to upload their relevant administrative acts, in order to create a comprehensive electronic database for the Lebanese public administration.

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