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LESSONS FROM DISASTER GOVERNANCE

Port of Beirut Explosion Reform Recovery and
Reconstruction Framework



GFDRR
Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery



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Cover design, layout, and illustrations: Vladimir E. Herrera (iGraphi)

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This case study, led by GFDRR's Disaster-Fragility, Conflict and Violence (FCV) Nexus thematic area, aims to present the lessons learned from Lebanon's Reform, Recovery and Reconstruction Framework (3RF) as an example of developing post-disaster recovery governance structures in a context of FCV, specifically under compounded crises.

This report was prepared under the overall guidance of Karima Ben Bih (Senior Disaster Risk Management Specialist), in coordination with Hiromi Akiyama (Consultant) and Pol Nadal Cros (Consultant).

The authors would like to acknowledge the valuable insights shared by interviewees from the European Union (EU), the United Nations (UN), the World Bank, and Lebanese state institutions and civil society. They also wish to extend their appreciation to the valuable contributions of Zoe Trohanis (Lead Disaster Risk Management Specialist), Mouna Couzi (Senior Operations Officer), and Mona Harb (Professor at the American University of Beirut).

The team would like to express its gratitude to Niels Holm-Nielsen, GFDRR Practice Manager, for his strategic guidance in the preparation of this report.

About the Disaster-FCV Nexus Thematic Area at GFDRR:

In a world grappling with multiple crises, addressing the complex challenges at the intersection of disasters in Fragile, Conflict, and Violence (FCV) settings is more crucial than ever. Recognizing this urgency, GFDRR has launched its pioneering Disaster-FCV Nexus Thematic Area in 2018. This initiative provides operational support, strategic guidance, and global public goods, leverages development finance to enhance disaster resilience in FCV environments, and produces original analytics to deepen our understanding of the compounding effects of FCV and disasters.



**Disaster-FCV
Nexus website**

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

3RF	Reform, Recovery and Reconstruction Framework
3RP	Regional Refugee Resilience Plan
ALDIC	L'Association Libanaise pour les Droits et les Intérêts des Contribuables
ALI	Association of Lebanese Industrialists
BE	Bank-Executed
BHI	Beirut Heritage Initiative
CCI	cultural and creative industries
CDR	Council for Development and Reconstruction
CG	Consultative Group
CMU	Central Management Unit
CSOs	civil society organizations
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
EIB	European Investment Bank
ERP	Emergency Response Plan
ESCP	Environmental and Social Commitment Plan
EU	European Union
FCV	fragility, conflict, and violence
FER	Forward Emergency Room
GIZ	German Agency for International Cooperation
HRC	Higher Relief Council
I3RF	Iraq Reform, Recovery and Reconstruction Fund
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IFIs	international finance institutions
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INGOs	international nongovernmental organizations
IOB	Independent Oversight Board
IOF	Institute of Finance (Institut des Finances), Lebanon
IS	Islamic State
LAF	Lebanese Armed Forces



LCHR	Lebanese Center for Human Rights
LCRP	Lebanon Crisis Response Plan
LFF	Lebanon Financing Facility
LHDF	Lebanon Humanitarian & Development NGOs Forum
LHIF	Lebanon Humanitarian INGO Forum
LLB	Live Love Beirut
LLWB	Lebanese League for Women in Business
LUPDD	Lebanese Union for People with Physical Disabilities
MDTF	multi-donor trust fund
MFI s	microfinance institutions
MSE s	micro and small enterprises
NGO	nongovernmental organization
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OEA	Order of Engineers and Architects
OMSA R	Office of the Minister of State for Administrative Reform
PDO	Project Development Objective
PIA	Project Implementation Agency
RCO	UN Resident Coordinator's Office
RDNA	Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment
RE	Recipient-Executed
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SSVP	Society Saint Vincent de Paul
SWOT	strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats
TA	technical assistance
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
WG	Working Group



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

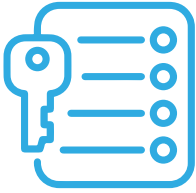
Purpose

Lebanon's experience of compounding crises over the past several years points to the nexus of fragility and disaster. The country has recently experienced one of the worst financial and economic crises in human history. The crisis derives from a set of structural causes of fragility: a combination of chronic macroeconomic imbalances and political inaction stemming from political polarization and decision-making paralysis. Lebanon's economic model has failed to generate economic opportunities, leading to high levels of inequality and poverty. The privatization of services and their patronage-based access, coupled with the capture and mismanagement of public funds intended for infrastructure, have led to a decline in the quality of virtually all public services—including a near collapse in electricity provision.

The devastating August 2020 explosion in Beirut exacerbated many of the preexisting drivers of fragility in Lebanon. The impact of the explosion at the Port of Beirut that destroyed homes, businesses, and infrastructure aggravated the already grave socioeconomic impact on the population of COVID-19–induced lockdowns and the presence of a large refugee population from Syria, with worsening poverty rates, unemployment, basic service delivery, social stability, and food security. Despite this dire situation, the government's response was limited, relegating the response coordination role to the Forward Emergency Room (FER) set up by the military and relying on the humanitarian relief efforts of international partners. The accumulation of public frustration at failing public services, the lack of accountability, and low economic growth has eroded public trust in the state and given rise to mass protests, social unrest, increased crime and violence, and increased tensions between refugees and host communities.

The international community's response after this humanitarian disaster was an innovative institutional platform—the Reform, Recovery and Reconstruction Framework (3RF)—aiming

to facilitate recovery and reconstruction in the aftermath of the disaster while reactivating reforms to address the drivers of fragility in the country. Organized by the European Union (EU), the United Nations (UN), and the World Bank in December 2020, the 3RF not only provided a prioritized comprehensive plan across various sectors to support Beirut's recovery and reconstruction but also included a second track to advance critical reforms to address governance challenges in Lebanon. The 3RF is a unique governance platform, backed by a fund-pooling facility (the Lebanon Financing Facility, or LFF), which links the unlocking of investments in Lebanon with the reform results so that nonhumanitarian assistance received through national institutions is conditional on the implementation of reform. While the people-centered recovery response (Track 1) concluded in June 2022, the 3RF continues on Track 2, which focuses on inclusive policy dialogue, the implementation of reforms, and the reconstruction of critical services and infrastructure.



Key takeaways from the 3RF

Despite challenges at each stage, the 3RF has itself presented a governance mechanism that goes beyond a recovery roadmap document to facilitate reforms needed to address the underlying causes of fragility. The examination of interviews with stakeholders involved in the 3RF and a desk review of literature reveal four big-picture achievements that provide insights into the work in other post-disaster settings under conditions of fragility, conflict, and violence (FCV) (see also table ES.1). These achievements are listed below.

1. Holistic vision of recovery and development.

While initiated as a framework for the recovery of Beirut in the aftermath of the port explosion, the 3RF was simultaneously conceptualized as a driver for nationwide reforms to address the underlying drivers of fragility that have contributed to the ongoing crises and the humanitarian disaster. The Port of Beirut explosion came after a series of failed attempts at national reforms (Paris I, II, III, and the CEDRE) and the popular uprising in October 2019. To achieve a long-lasting impact from recovery, policy and governance reforms at the national level were essential. The 3RF not only reactivated these past efforts at reform but also introduced an implicit conditionality that linked the disbursement of investments in Lebanon to the implementation of reforms, to make a lasting impact on recovery and development.

2. Strong commitment from the three organizations and donors.

The 3RF has had strong commitment to recovery, reconstruction, and reform in Lebanon from all three partner organizations—the EU, the UN, and the World Bank—as well as from donors. This commitment helped to define a holistic vision for recovery and development in Lebanon, clear strategic objectives, and a common agenda that transcends different mandates and functions of the international organizations. It also helped to anchor the mobilization of funds.

3. Bringing everyone to the same table. The participatory process of setting up the 3RF has been unprecedented, considering the challenges that countries with fragile contexts normally experience. The setup of the 3RF is the tripartite partnership between the EU, the UN, and the World Bank that encourages civil society, the private sector, and other relevant local stakeholders to come to the same table to increase interaction among each other. This setup had a positive effect by including a broader range of public voices and airing grievances along the way, thereby increasing the legitimacy and accountability of the process.

4. Change in the perception of development partners and better partnership.

Prior to the 3RF, one of the inhibiting factors to the engagement of the World Bank and other development partners was the lack of trust within the Lebanese state toward development partners. Despite the initial challenge of engaging the Lebanese government, there was a window of opportunity for increasing engagement. The increased interactions between international partners and the Lebanese state and civil society organizations (CSOs) have gradually helped to build trust, a critical component that facilitates collaboration on important work for reform and recovery.

Key challenges

Despite the above achievements, the 3RF has faced challenges that may impact its effectiveness in facilitating reform and recovery. These are summarized below. Key lessons of the 3RF are summarized in table ES.2 and described in more detail in section 4.

Impact on fragility. While the reform track and the institutional setup that promotes inclusive dialogue facilitated wider engagement of stakeholders compared to past attempts by Lebanon's international partners, it still fell dramatically short of bringing stakeholders together. The impact of the 3RF on making meaningful political progress is yet to manifest in a meaningful and measurable way. Set against the original plan, the 3RF yield on policy reforms after two years of 3RF is low, particularly regarding the enactment of laws and decrees that require high political commitment

Table ES.1. 3RF Approaches to Overcoming Causes of Fragility

Cause of fragility	3RF approaches to overcome fragility causes
<p>Elite-level power-sharing arrangement. Lebanon's political settlement, grounded in a sectarian power-sharing agreement, has led to elite capture, widespread clientelism, and patronage that increase polarization and political paralysis.</p>	<p>A recovery framework as a governance mechanism. In the context of a dysfunctional government without either a donor coordination structure or a planning ministry, the 3RF proposes itself not only as a fund platform but also as a governance structure to discuss and address short-, medium-, and long-term strategies.</p> <p>A framework for nationwide reforms. Although the disaster (that is, the explosion) is local, policy reforms are addressed at the national level.</p> <p>A framework as an anchor for funds mobilization. An inclusive, transparent, and long-term recovery and reform framework has the capacity to convene donors; this, in turn, consolidates the independence of the governance structure.</p>
<p>State-society relations. An increasing divide between people's needs and expectations and the political elite's priorities has undermined state-society relations and fueled discontent, grievances, and widespread unrest.</p>	<p>An accountable, integrated, and participatory framework. The framework promotes the integration and harmonization of strategies, plans, and programs for recovery and reconstruction, explicitly linked to reforms and owned by all stakeholders by strengthening the role of oversight, human rights, and rule-of-law institutions. As a governance mechanism rather than a roadmap, the 3RF setup seeks to engage many stakeholders and to empower representative sections of communities, including local actors and businesses, and creates space for their meaningful participation in the recovery process beyond the catastrophe. The inclusion of a group of civil society organizations (CSOs) and the setting up of a third-party monitoring agency is vital to maintain legitimacy, strengthen the public voice, and build the capacity of civil society to become partners for the government.</p>
<p>Intra-societal relations. High levels of socioeconomic inequality and exclusion, very low levels of trust between communities, and (perceived) competition between host communities and refugees over access to services and economic opportunities harm the quality of social relations.</p>	

Source: Original table for this publication.

Note: 3RF = Reform, Recovery and Reconstruction Framework.

Table ES.2. Key Lessons and Recommendations

Lessons learned	Recommendation
Strategic level	
The sense of crisis and past experience around the Lebanese reform agenda highlighted the need for implicit conditionality on a reform.	1. Immediately prepare for longer-term reconstruction and economic recovery to make best use of momentum after a disaster.
The strong engagement of the three principals helped define an ambitious strategic objective and achieve commitment under the common agenda, overcoming the differences in mandates of the three organizations.	2. Employ coherent, collective, and disciplined messaging by all international actors to achieve any reform.
Unclear demarcation of objectives among coordination frameworks can lead to a significant delay in implementation. Refocusing the 3RF on longer-term challenges helped humanitarian actors focus on a purely humanitarian response.	3. Ensure alignment with other development structures to guarantee a rapid implementation.
Working level	
Much of the initial 3RF input was, at the strategic level, driven by the principals. This did not translate immediately into results on the ground either in setting specific objectives or in institutional arrangements.	1. While strategic-level decisions are important, it is equally critical to make use of concrete, technical-level actions to achieve the progress that matters to the people.
In the setup of 3RF, personal rapport between principals, fostered through weekly meetings, worked in favor of quick strategic-level decisions. Later, the departure of principal leadership caused a delay in implementing and revising the 3RF for almost a year.	2. Engaging principals is essential but not sufficient to maintain momentum. To maintain a momentum, it is recommended to invest in handovers, with solid institutionalization and especially in emergency context.
There was much goodwill immediately after the explosion, but a shift in priorities and political landscape among the international partners contributed to a decline in momentum.	3. For continuity, maintain the interest of headquarters and donors, as well as clear informing to the public.
Engagement with the Lebanese state	
Despite initial discussions of excluding the inefficient government from the 3RF setup, without engaging the government the reform agenda would not advance.	1. The government cannot be excluded from the Reform and Reconstruction Framework. Engage very visibly with the state, even if there is limited state capacity.
Besides the lack of incentives, the state also faces limited capacity in practical terms.	2. Support the state and CSOs practically to bring them into technical discussions on specific reforms and projects.
Until the new deputy prime minister, who was more receptive of the reform, agenda was appointed, the reform agenda of the 3RF struggled to advance.	3. Engage individually with the state beyond the government to avoid the tempo being dictated by national development beyond the framework's control.

Engagement with Lebanese civil society	
CSOs prefer setting up their own structures and meetings to avoid confrontation with a government that in their eyes lacks legitimacy, or with international actors that are perceived to be transitory.	1. Defend the space for civil society to avoid their discouragement when attacked by the state.
While it may be challenging to represent the entirety of civil society in the country, it is important to get a sense of which CSOs represent the people, their neutrality and agenda, and potential conflict with the reform agenda.	2. Have a clear understanding of the CSO sphere in the country and in their respective sectors, and maintain legitimacy with civil society, the government, and the broader public all at the same time.
The initial expectations among CSOs that they themselves would be direct recipients of funding created confusion and may have increased grievances.	3. Reflecting on the World Bank's funding mechanisms so that funding is allowed to empower local CSOs.
Funding	
Despite the initial promises and interests from donors, the LFF remained lacking in funding.	1. Although it is ideal that the financing facility is well replenished, expect funding to be insufficient and expect that it will be necessary to find a way to work with limited financial resources.
The costed priorities gave the impression that these projects were ready to be developed, while in fact they were conditional on reform progress.	2. Manage expectations on capacity funding to prevent disappointment when funding is waiting for conditional reforms.
The framework can become a way to provide tools for the government to deliver on reforms, including through technical assistance, equipment, and auditing of banks.	3. Use trust funds to help implement reforms.
Monitoring results	
The implementation of the results framework initially stalled.	1. Use a prioritized results framework with the simplicity and flexibility to improve outreach and maintain momentum.
Institutionalization is one of the strengths of 3RF that can move beyond personalities and skills. In 3RF, input and internal process took the bulk of the effort.	2. Compile a practical handbook for following up on the RDNA can streamline implementation.

Source: Original table for this publication.

Note: 3RF = Reform, Recovery and Reconstruction Framework; CSOs = civil society organizations; LFF = Lebanon Financing Facility; RDNA = Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment.

INTRODUCTION

Fragility, conflict, and violence (FCV) present unique challenges for countries in managing the impacts of disasters, making a state and its society vulnerable to shocks.

This is often the result of weak institutions, a lack of social cohesion, political instability and fragmentation, social tensions, and disputes. These challenges appear in full force after a disaster, when there is a heightened need for concerted effort and coordination of response actions and recovery. Managing disaster impact requires significant financial investments, the capacity to disperse finances, an effective coordination mechanism, and a sound legal footing that underpins the necessary actions. Financial investments are necessary to enable restoration and reconstruction of critical infrastructure, basic services, housing, and production capacities. Collaboration and coordination between national and local institutions, as well as with external stakeholders, is critical for swift and effective disaster recovery and for attracting and dispersing investments. The legal and institutional frameworks underpin all of these actions, including the swift setup of disaster response mechanisms, post-disaster reconstruction planning and implementation, and all aspects of managing investments.

Lebanon's experience following the August 2020 Beirut port explosion illustrates the intersection of disasters and FCV. The explosion of a large stock of ammonium nitrate stored at the Port of Beirut caused not only the loss of lives, but it also brought severe destruction to homes, businesses, and infrastructure within a 5-kilometer radius of the central area of Beirut. The impact extended beyond the immediate area, as the impact area comprised the core of economic, industrial, social, and cultural activity for the whole country. The financial and economic crisis that had unfolded in the country since the year before, along with the underlying elite-level power-sharing arrangement of governance, both were contributing factors to the port explosion and were exacerbated by the disaster. The increasing political polarization in the country and a decision-making paralysis stemming from sectarian allegiance, widespread clientelism, and patronage eroded trust between the state and its citizens and limited the country's capacity to lead post-disaster planning and deliver for recovery.

Lebanon's Reform, Recovery and Reconstruction Framework (3RF) presents a case of disaster recovery framework that goes beyond a recovery roadmap document (World Bank 2020c). It provides a platform that seeks to advance consensus building and national dialogue with the aim of formulating a vision for the country's post-disaster renewal and long-term reform. Under globally increasing FCV environments, this case can be used as an example in instances where governments struggle with the capacity, resources, and governance structure to plan and implement investments after a major disaster. In the absence of a functional governance structure and a planning agency to lead recovery in Lebanon, the 3RF functioned as both a roadmap to deliver short- to medium-term recovery projects and a channel through which to bring together multiple stakeholders to make political progress beyond the disaster. This strategy for post-disaster recovery and reconstruction is not limited to financing projects in the impacted area, but it also functions as a platform for advocating for critical reforms and

a capacity-building agenda for the entire country, with a focus on transparency, accountability, and inclusion. By employing the whole-of-Lebanon approach—which bridges state institutions, civil society, and international partners in its governance structure—the 3RF has pushed the government to engage with the public, which is a critical element of the reform. The 3RF has also become an opportunity for dialogue between international partners and the Lebanese government to impact its legal framework with a lasting effect on the country’s governance structure. While navigating the multiple challenges described in this study, the design of the 3RF has helped build consensus and the institution for continuous engagement between the country’s international partners and the stakeholders of Lebanese society. Such an inclusive approach ensures that recovery is grounded in and representative of the needs of the Lebanese people, rather than limited to selective segments of the society.¹

1.1 Objective of this study

The aim of this analytical case study is to showcase the lessons learned from Lebanon’s 3RF as an example of developing post-disaster recovery governance structures in an FCV context of compounded crises in the areas of economic, financial, political, and service provision. The case study aims (1) to conduct a retrospective analysis of the design, implementation, and the future prospects of the 3RF; and (2) to extract lessons and recommendations that can apply in other FCV contexts where a similar structure may need to be established.

Within the framework of the Global Program for Disaster-FCV Nexus at GFDRR, this case study is proposed as an entry point for operational discussions on post-disaster recovery and policy reforms modeled in a context where governance and coordination structures are lacking. The 3RF represents an innovative mechanism for engaging civil society and the broader public as well as a platform for dialogue that lays the groundwork for new coalitions for reform that support constructive citizen engagement. This work would be relevant in highly fragile states

whose governments lack the institutional capacity to organize recovery after having suffered a disaster. The Lebanon 3RF model presents insights about a collaborative mechanism at international, governmental, and local levels and an independent and inclusive governance framework, albeit with challenges that warrant attention from organizers of a similar framework.

This case study is addressed primarily to the practitioners and specialists of international institutions and donors interested in developing a post-disaster recovery framework, but it is also useful for planners at the governmental level who engage in post-disaster recovery issues as an example for engaging with civil society and local non-state actors. Likewise, the analysis can be useful for international partners and specialists in social development, economists, urban planners, and, in general, for all persons interested in the problem of post-disaster recovery and reforms in fragile contexts.

1.2 Methodology

This case study is based on interviews and a desk review of secondary information. Interviews were conducted with 25 respondents encompassing Lebanese state institutions; Lebanese civil society; diplomats based in and out of Beirut; and staff of the EU, the UN, and the World Bank who were closely involved with the 3RF in one phase or another and represented different levels of their respective organizations. Interviews were semi-structured, with questions divided into three parts: (1) country context before the 3RF setup, (2) implementation, and (3) lessons for the future. The findings from the interviews were complemented by a desk review of 3RF documents and other reports on the socioeconomic contexts and the crisis response and recovery in Lebanon.

1.3 Outline of this study

The document has the following main sections:



After this introduction, **section 2** briefly presents the country context of **Lebanon** in terms of its pre-disaster political and socioeconomic conditions, the disaster’s impact on these conditions, and the country’s and development partners’ response to the disaster.

SECTION 2



Section 3 presents an overview of the 3RF including its strategic vision, institutional arrangements, and memberships. Key interim results of the 3RF are presented.

SECTION 3



Section 4 draws key lessons learned from the implementation of the 3RF’s strategic vision and the challenges it faced along the way. This section is approached via themes of strategic decision-making, working-level progress, engagement with the Lebanese state, engagement with Lebanese civil society, funding, and monitoring. Priority lessons and recommendations are provided under each theme; these can provide insights for the preparation and implementation of a similar framework in the future.

SECTION 4



Finally, a series of **appendixes** are presented. Appendix A provides details about the institutional setup of the 3RF, appendix B considers the I3RF precedent in Iraq, appendix C lists investment projects developed under the 3RF, appendix D presents a summary of the Working Groups’ SWOT analysis, and appendix E summarizes the operational lessons needed to ensure effective implementation.

APPENDIXES



2. COUNTRY

CONTEXT

2.1 Socioeconomic conditions

Since 2019, Lebanon has undergone an unprecedented financial and socioeconomic crisis that affects every aspect of the lives of Lebanese citizens, who experience economic deterioration, inflation, and a decline in basic service delivery. The eruption of conflict in Syria and its spillovers in Lebanon, which is the recipient of the largest number of refugees per capita in the world, has exposed the Lebanese economy to increased risks since 2011. A financial crisis brought about by the sudden end to capital inflows—which widely impacted banking, debt, and the exchange rate—spilled over into a compounded crisis that culminated in a Eurobond default in March 2020. The imposition of COVID-19–related lockdown measures in late March 2020 closed borders and shut down both public and private institutions, severely contracting the country’s economy (World Bank 2020a). This economic and financial crisis in Lebanon ranks among the worst economic crises seen globally since the mid-nineteenth century (World Bank 2021a). The protracted economic contraction led to a marked decline in disposable income and dramatically increased the poverty rate.² Inflation continuously reached triple digits for three years (2020–22), averaging 171.2 percent in 2022; it was expected to reach 231.3 percent in 2023 (World Bank 2021a, 2023b). The hyperinflation disproportionately affects the

poor and vulnerable, as the highest contributor to inflation is the rise in the price of food and non-alcoholic beverages, averaging a 240 percent increase in 2022 (World Bank 2023c) Lebanon was reclassified by the World Bank as a lower-middle-income country in July 2022, down from its previous upper-middle-income status (World Bank 2022e).

The deteriorated economic conditions have led to a dramatic collapse in basic services, including power, water, and health care, giving rise to public grievances. Public service delivery had been already dilapidated by elite capture of the state’s resources for personal gain prior to the crisis. Severe fuel shortages further worsened electricity supply, resulting in more than eight rolling blackouts in the national electric grid that limited electricity supply to as little as two hours per day, hindering access to health care and clean water (World Bank 2022a). Food supply shops, transport service providers, and telecom network operators face severe disruptions to their supply chains. Health service delivery has deteriorated as 40 percent of doctors and 30 percent of nurses have left Lebanon and one out of five has lost their job since 2019 (WHO 2021).





2.2 The explosion

Further deepening the crisis was the devastating explosion that destroyed the Port of Beirut with wider socioeconomic impacts.

On August 4, 2020, a large stock of ammonium nitrate stored at the Port of Beirut exploded, causing severe destruction to homes, businesses, and infrastructure within 5 kilometers of the explosion. The explosion killed 218 people, wounded 7,000 people, and displaced over 300,000 people (including 80,000 children) (Human Rights Watch 2021). It caused significant damage to structures and basic services, damaging 77,000 apartments and 163 schools and disabling half of Beirut's health care centers. Some 56 percent of the private businesses in Beirut were affected (Human Rights Watch 2021). Damages to physical assets amounted to an estimated \$3.8–4.6 billion, with housing and cultural sectors most severely affected (World Bank 2020a). Estimated economic losses were \$2.9–3.5 billion, mostly in the housing, transport, and culture sectors. Although a localized incident, the economic impact of the port explosion extended beyond Beirut because of the concentration of demographic

and economic activities in Beirut and the importance of the port, severely impacting commerce, real estate, and tourism. The Beirut port functioned as the main point of entry for the country's economy, channeling 68 percent of the total external trade prior to the economic crisis (World Bank 2020a).

The issues that led to the explosion reflected the issues of governance and decision-making paralysis in the Lebanese state, deepening public grievances.

The explosion resulted from the mismanagement of tons of ammonium nitrate that was stored in the port (Human Rights Watch 2021). The call from both the domestic and the international community for the Lebanese government to take responsibility for the explosion led to Prime Minister Hassan Diab's resignation on August 10, 2020, propelling the government into a caretaker status. The fragmented political leadership of the Lebanese state failed to manage or coordinate an immediate disaster response, relegating nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to lead the response. Despite a new prime minister being appointed in September 2021, the government decision-making apparatus continues to be paralyzed with the heterogenous representation of the parliament and the Council of Ministers.³

The Beirut port functioned as the main point of entry for the country's economy, channeling **68 percent of the total external trade** prior to the economic crisis (World Bank 2020a).



The Lebanese state lacks a comprehensive disaster risk management system, has a historically divided disaster response mechanism along sectarian lines,⁴ and it relies on non-state organizations. In the past, the coordination of reconstruction processes in Lebanon has been led by state institutions and implemented by the nongovernmental sector. For instance, after the 1975–90 civil war, the reconstruction of the historic core of Beirut was led by Solidere, a private, joint-stock real-estate company led by long-serving Prime Minister Rafic Hariri.⁵ More recently, the reconstruction of Beirut’s suburban district following the 2006 Israel-Hezbollah War was led by the Waad Project, a private agency set up by Hezbollah, using foreign donations transited through the Higher Relief Council (HRC) that was established by the government.⁶ Unlike these precedents, the government did not have the sufficiently powerful political capacity to take over the early stage coordination of response or recovery efforts in the aftermath of the port explosion. The government relegated the damage monitoring to the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF), who established the Forward Emergency Room (FER) to map out and monitor the delivery of relief and goods mainly led by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), and NGOs.

In contrast to the lack of government response, the coordination of the first response to provide humanitarian relief, and later reconstruction, was led mainly by nongovernmental groups.⁷ Various CSOs—including NGOs, international NGOs (INGOs), political groups, universities, and domestic and international faith-based organizations—organically led and organized the humanitarian response immediately after the explosion. Some of them formed solidarity among them but, given the existing decision-making structure of the country, their capacity to act would not be reflected in decision-making for longer-term recovery and reconstruction.

2.4 Failed reforms

In addition to the humanitarian responses to various crises such as a refugee crisis, the international community’s past experience with the Lebanese state was characterized by failed attempts at promoting reform. In response to the economic and financial crisis, two major reform plans with the Brussels and CEDRE conferences did not materialize with sufficient change to address Lebanon’s governance failures.⁸ Policy makers do not see the international call for reforms as a genuine attempt to improve Lebanon’s prospects, but instead as political positioning by the West. When the political tide turns in Lebanon’s favor—by electing a new president, for example—a bailout can be expected. Undermining the sense of urgency and international leverage is the fact that the overall level of aid flows has not dropped compared to the pre-2019 level.⁹ This has also increased the perception among civil society actors that international support has reinforced the elite settlement structure and the reform preconditions for financial support have failed (World Bank 2022f).

Besides the systematic hurdle to decision-making, most Lebanese policy makers have little reason to want to reform. Their political and economic interests are best served by maintaining the status quo and their share of political power and of state enterprises and revenues. The same applies to international aid, which is often perceived as a support for political allies in Lebanon, distributed through networks of patronage.

2.5 The RDNA recommendations

The Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment (RDNA), published in August 2020, recommended a framework for Reform, Recovery, and Reconstruction (the “3Rs”) as an approach to build back a better Lebanon based on the principles of transparency, inclusion, and accountability (World Bank 2020a).¹⁰ The priority needs for recovery and reconstruction were estimated to be \$1.8–2.0 billion, with the greatest needs in the transport sector, followed by the culture sector and housing (World Bank 2020a). Besides the immediate recovery and reconstruction needs in the impact area of Beirut, the RDNA pointed to the structural drivers of fragility that have constrained Lebanon’s economic development and service delivery for a decade and highlighted the needs for structural and sectoral reforms to mitigate risks and boost economic growth. The recommendation of “build back better” in the Lebanese context was to increase inclusion and transparency to achieve a people-centered approach to recovery and restore the sense of hope, rather than to specifically target physical or resilience or improve emergency management mechanisms for future disasters such as the one at the Port of Beirut.

The RDNA proposed a whole-of-Lebanon approach to be achieved by including civil society in the 3RF to bring transparency and develop CSO capacity. CSOs in Lebanon have historically played a prominent role within the governance structure of the country in both service provision and promoting transparency and accountability.¹¹ Their relevance was demonstrated when CSOs led the response on the ground in the immediate aftermath of the explosion, funded both by humanitarian institutions and private initiatives, mainly through the Lebanese diaspora.¹² Civil society was a partner in data collection for the RDNA and in discussions about setting up the 3RF, although not involved in writing the 3RF.

It was under these circumstances that the 3RF was proposed and organized, with the aim of assisting beyond the immediate humanitarian response with medium- to long-term recovery in the aftermath of the Beirut port explosion.

The issue of central coordination that manifested during the early-stage response phase implied that the challenge of leading and coordinating recovery and reconstruction would persist without addressing the underlying structural governance. The political polarization and fiscal and economic policies that minimize state interference dates back to the 1990s (World Bank 2022f), and have led to the lack of a development coordination structure and a planning ministry that would raise funds and oversee the recovery and reconstruction efforts. The challenges of governance meant that presenting a roadmap for recovery is insufficient for implementation and that a deeper level of support was needed to enable effective reconstruction—one that incorporates inputs from wider segments of society to address the crisis of trust.



3. THE LEBANON REFORM

RECOVERY AND RECONSTRUCTION

FRAMEWORK

3.1 Background and goals

The Lebanon Reform Recovery and Reconstruction Framework (3RF) was set up as a multistakeholder governance structure in support both of the recovery of Beirut after the port explosion and of longer-term national reform to bolster the reconstruction process. In the early days of humanitarian response, it quickly became apparent that addressing recovery needs in the medium to long term is more extensive than merely providing a direction for recovery in a roadmap. A more fundamental governance reform was needed to solve the underlying cause of fragility that was partly responsible for the explosion itself. Following the RDNA's recommendations, the EU, the UN, and the World Bank established the 3RF, alongside a multi-donor trust fund, the Lebanon Financing Facility (LFF), to support its financing.¹³

The 3RF is an innovative institutional structure that served both to address the most urgent recovery needs after the port explosion and to promote reforms that would ensure including wider segments of society in Lebanon's decision-making structure.

A vision for the 3RF was provided by another preceding Recovery and Reconstruction Framework in an FCV context: the Iraq Reform, Recovery and Reconstruction Fund (I3RF) (for detailed description of the I3RF, see appendix B). The I3RF was the first multi-donor-led attempt to expand a recovery framework from a policy paper detailing a recovery roadmap into a structure that pushes for reform for long-lasting impact.



The 3RF was designed to pursue two tracks in parallel: a people-centered recovery track and a reform and reconstruction track

Building on the experience of the I3RF—which faced challenges that included limited technical engagement from the government, a low level of CSO engagement, and donor preference for fund use specifications—the Lebanon 3RF was established as a recovery governance structure that created space for larger societal engagement than the I3RF did in order to take advantage of the historically robust CSO presence in Lebanon. It was also designed to provide general monitoring and guidance on the recovery process, and to provide greater flexibility in the use of finances with an independent multi-donor trust fund (the LFF) administered by the World Bank that advises on what it finances.

The novelty of the 3RF lay in the whole-of-Lebanon approach, which would bring together actors that have rarely acted as part of the same institutional setup—namely, state institutions, international partners, and Lebanese civil society. Systemic institutional, economic, and social change was needed in the face of the expression of public frustration through widespread protests following the explosion. At the same time, the relatively high capacity of Lebanese CSOs as demonstrated by their spontaneous response efforts meant that there was potential to engage the wider society in the recovery and reconstruction process. The 3RF aimed not only at the reconstruction of critical assets, services, and infrastructure, but also at reforms toward promoting citizen trust and improving governance and at people-centered recovery.

The promotion of reforms as the focus of the framework was in part a reactivation of past failed reform attempts. In the view of the international community and civil society, Lebanon needed to address the underlying drivers of fragility as much as it needed to work on short- to medium-term recovery needs from the disaster itself. By setting the reform at the center of the core goals of the 3RF and linking the reform results to the disbursement of funding from the LFF, an implicit conditionality to push the government to undertake reform efforts was created.

3.2 The design of the 3RF

The 3RF was designed to pursue two tracks in parallel: a people-centered recovery track (Track 1) and a reform and reconstruction track (Track 2). Track 1 focused on essential actions that must be taken for recovery to address the urgent needs of the most vulnerable populations and small businesses

affected by the explosion in the first 18 months (until June 2022). Track 2 focuses on critical reforms needed to address governance and recovery challenges that are the underlying drivers of fragility, along with investments that would achieve the long-term reconstruction of critical assets, services, and infrastructure whose provision had been failing since before the port explosion.

The whole-of-Lebanon approach is reflected in the setup that urges engagement of both state institutions and Lebanese civil society. The engagement of the actors was achieved through CSOs, non-state actors (such as the Order of Engineers and Architects, or OEA), government representatives, and international partners in the Consultative Group (CG) and Working Groups (WGs). Bringing these actors to the same table was a useful tool that allowed them to air potential grievances both toward the government and toward international actors, and to promote a transparent consultative process of developing draft proposals for policy changes. By setting up a mechanism that enables inclusive consultation, the design of the 3RF aimed to increase interactions between state actors and CSOs, thereby facilitating transparent governance reform. CSOs are not only part of a steering committee but also represented in the CG, WGs, and Independent Oversight Board (IOB; appendix A provides more details on the institutional setup of the 3RF).

Strong support for the 3RF was reflected in the inclusion of international partners in the CG, which enabled stronger coordination. Notably, CG membership was not limited to LFF donors. A group of international partners, selected based on the size of their development portfolio, was invited to the CG: Canada, Denmark, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), the European Investment Bank (EIB), France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Spain, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States.¹⁴ The group met to discuss 3RF progress at the technical level and then at the ambassadors' level. This resulted in a larger awareness among international partners of the common priorities for recovery investments and the strategic direction of reforms.

3.3 Key interim results

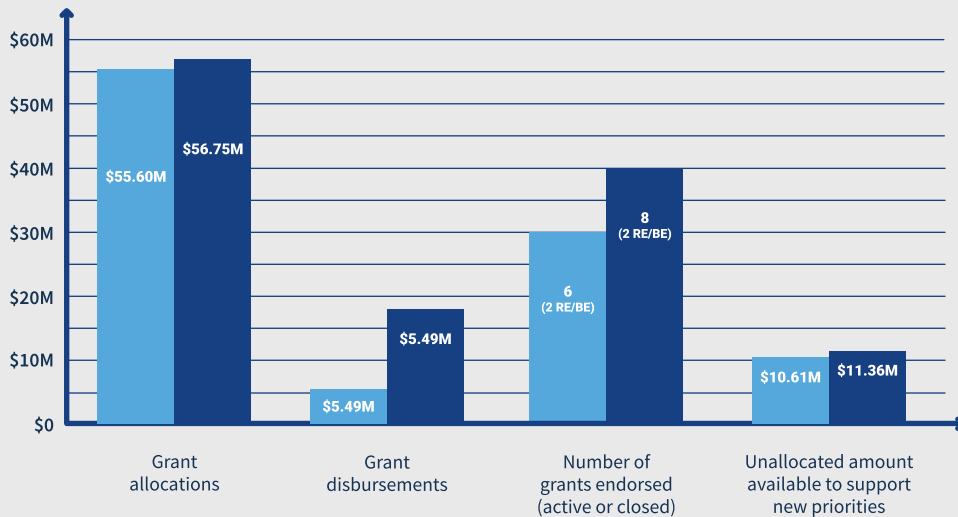
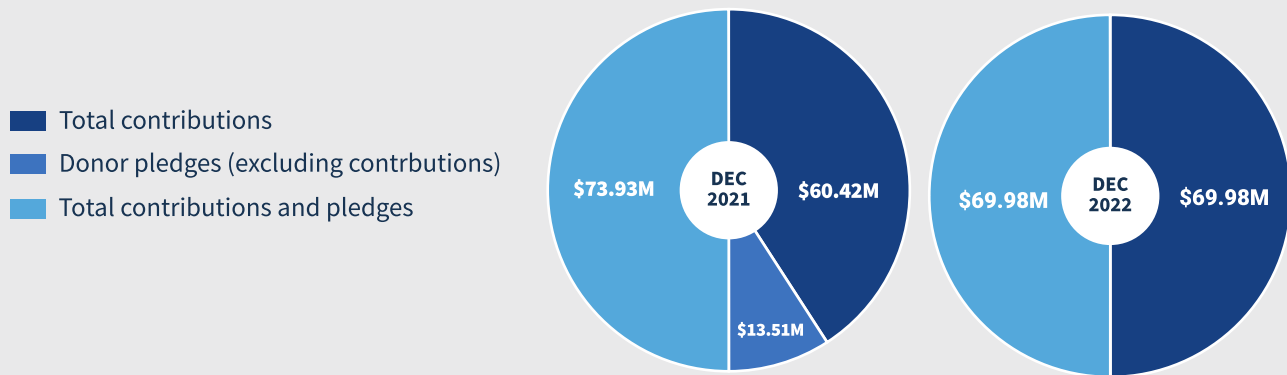
The key interim results of the 3RF are summarized in figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1. A Snapshot of the 3RF



Lebanon Financial Facility (LFF)

- Donors: The EU, Canda, Germany, Denmark, France and Norway.



Source: LFF 2022, LFF 2023.
 Note: RE = Recipient-Executed, BE = Bank-Executed.

4. PRIORITIES, CHALLENGES, AND LESSONS

This section describes the approaches in the 3RF setup and the challenges faced in the implementation under the following themes: strategic decision-making, working-level progress, engagement with the Lebanese state, engagement with Lebanese civil society, funding, and monitoring reform results. Lessons learned and recommendations are provided under each theme, which can be useful considerations for the preparation and implementation of a similar framework in the future. The overall key lessons are summarized in table ES.2. Operational lessons—equally important to ensure effective implementation—are summarized in a table provided in appendix E.

4.1 Strategic decision-making



From the outset, donors and international partners in Beirut and abroad expressed strong support for setting up a comprehensive framework that addresses issues of reform and reconstruction beyond the immediate crisis. The sense of crisis that resulted from the high economic volatility at the time and past experience around the Lebanese reform agenda highlighted the need for a reactivation of reform efforts with implicit conditionality.

4.1.1 Coordination of the principal organizations

As Lebanon has historically had limited donor coordination, the expectation of the international organizations and donors was that the 3RF would improve the government's capacity for

development coordination. The strong engagement of the three principals from the EU, the UN, and the World Bank helped define an ambitious strategic objective and achieve commitment under the common agenda of supporting recovery and reform of Lebanon. The strategic objective overcame the differences in mandates among the three organizations, eliciting commitment to the 3RF from all three organizations. Weekly meetings of principals during the design stage helped to formulate a clear division of labor for their strategic engagement.

The concerted effort to initiate planning for longer-term recovery ultimately helped with a focus on humanitarian aid activities. In August 2020, OCHA published a six-month flash appeal after the explosion, which referenced a new framework that was to become the 3RF (OCHA 2020). Knowing that longer-term challenges would be addressed by the 3RF helped humanitarian actors focus on purely humanitarian response, making humanitarian advocacy with beneficiaries and state actors more credible. The humanitarian-development nexus was covered, for instance, by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), leading the health sector on access to primary health care at the forefront of the emergency response and, in parallel, participating in the discussions for long-term rental subsidies options.¹⁵ While humanitarian response was explicitly left out of the 3RF, the inclusive process ensured that bridges were built between humanitarian and development actors.¹⁶

4.1.2 Multiple aid coordination mechanisms in Lebanon

The 3RF's national scope required demarcating issue areas and financing to avoid redundancy with other existing aid frameworks for Lebanon. Although the 3RF was set up primarily in response to the Beirut port explosion, its nationwide scope for reform established in Track 2 highlighted 3RF's unclear relations with other aid frameworks, namely the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP), the Emergency Response Plan (ERP), and the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF).¹⁷ While Track 1 of the framework focused on areas of Beirut affected by the blast, unaffected suburbs of Beirut were experiencing a drop in living standards due to the ongoing economic crisis. When the 3RF was set up, the ERP had not yet been launched, and the LCRP was set to expire in 2020 (though it was later extended). In summer 2021, the 3RF Secretariat and RCO staff prepared a proposal to merge the 3RF and the ERP at least at a technical level.¹⁸ This proposal was rejected by the UN management for two main reasons: (1) funding priorities for each mechanism had already been set, and (2) given the institutional interests involved, pushing through a merger would have required expending significant political capital from donors.

The conflicting mandates within the 3RF governance structure and the overlap with other frameworks were resolved through a consultative process to realign the 3RF's focus. Consultations with donors, the prime minister's team, key ministers, civil society, and working group leads clarified the 3RF's mandate and consolidated working groups in the context of other frameworks in Lebanon. A clearer division of labor was defined through realignment, with the LCRP and the ERP focused on providing humanitarian assistance and the 3RF focused on long-term reforms and economic recovery. The 3RF's Track 1, which aimed at a people-centered recovery of Beirut, was the main source of conflict with the LCRP and the ERP, which are better equipped than the 3RF for addressing humanitarian needs. Therefore Track 1 was not extended beyond its original target of June 2022, both resolving the conflict and realigning the 3RF's focus to Track 2. Consultations

identified the unique added value to the 3RF's efforts to maintain its focus on longer-term investments in reform and economic recovery beyond Beirut.¹⁹

4.1.3 Key lessons and recommendations: Strategic level

The three priority lessons taken from the 3RF's strategic decision-making efforts are listed below.

1. **Immediately prepare for longer-term reconstruction and economic recovery to make best use of momentum after a disaster.** Crises can be an opportunity for systemic change, and swift formulation of the longer-term needs helps grab that momentum. The strategic defining of objectives helps to avoid the "humanitarian trap" where the state actors plead only for emergency support and avoid long-term reforms related to development. Reforms should be urgent, but not limited only to emergency. They should be comprehensive, as ad-hoc solutions tend not to work.
2. **Coherent, collective, and disciplined messaging by all international actors is essential to achieve any reform.** The whole effort will fail if one slips—one actor softening on conditionalities creates dysfunctionality. This requires a very honest conversation among actors, which should involve their headquarters. Once the mandate is clear, it is important to ensure that the structure is used by all stakeholders to avoid parallel discussions. An internationally united position provides a convening power for a policy reform discussion with the government.
3. **Ensure an alignment with other development structures to guarantee a rapid implementation.** Unclear links among coordination frameworks can lead to a significant delay in implementation. This can be avoided by explicitly aligning frameworks from the outset, at strategic level and implementation through Working Groups (WGs).

4.2 Working-level progress

This section considers challenges encountered in translating the strategic vision of the 3RF into the working-level implementation, how the challenges were addressed along the way, namely by organizing the WGs, and other considerations to ensure accountability and legitimacy.

4.2.1 Challenges at the working level

Despite clear decisions at the strategic level, translating them to the working level and implementation stalled because of a lack of engagement by other senior staff within each organization. Much of the initial 3RF input was at the strategic level driven by the principals; this did not translate immediately to results on the ground. Setting up internal processes to manage differences of opinion at the working level took time. Some of the ideas for internal processes failed to materialize after much deliberation—including a communication strategy, a monitoring framework, and an aid tracking tool. Some working-level practices proved useful—for example, the shared drive, a reform tracker, and the later setup of WGs. When two of the 3RF principals left due to staff rotations within the principal institutions, the strategic direction of the 3RF paused for almost a year. Most of the proposals that had already taken shape in the Fourth CG meeting on April 4, 2022, were hanging until March 2023, when they were formally adopted. Only when all three 3RF principals had recommitted their organizations to revitalizing the 3RF could the process of revision resume.

The difference in visions and mandates across organizations emerged as hurdles of implementation at the working level; these included differences in ideas about staffing, obtaining resources, and decision-making. At first, slow hiring processes at the UN and the World Bank delayed the Secretariat coming together.²⁰ Three staff members of the Secretariat provide full-time dedication to bring stakeholders together to make progress and pull together the resources needed from each organization. The three members of the Secretariat, acting on the guidance of their respective principals and being their spokespersons to expedite decisions, are embedded in

their organizations to various degrees. The three organizations come from different perspectives on resources and coordination in their respective roles—the World Bank as a fund manager, the EU as a donor, and the UN as implementer. For instance, the EU's donor status meant that its role as political actor gave them more freedom to be critical of the Lebanese government, which is a member state for both the World Bank and the UN. As a result, for the most of the first year, the effort was concentrated at the strategic level and lacked working-level follow-ups to move the reform agenda forward.

4.2.2 Organizing the Working Groups

The solution to the imbalance between strategic and working-level progress was provided by setting up the WGs to advise on the implementation of 3RF priorities, albeit more than a year after the explosion.

The WGs were created to convene the full range of stakeholders and bring together resources needed to achieve reform progress. The interactions taking place at the WGs would enable the state institutions to present their strategies, highlight their challenges, draw on the expertise of civil society—which also monitors progress on reforms—and seek support from international organizations and donors.

However, the WGs were not as functional as intended; there was confusion about what they would do and a lack of engagement from the government. The WGs had a primarily advisory function rather than an executive one. Despite that being communicated, there was confusion among stakeholders, who were expecting more executive roles in the implementation of prioritized investments. While transparency and inclusion are core 3RF principles, adhering to these principles also undermines the



autonomy of organizations in their sector. Ultimately, reform still needs to be led by the government, which lacked the resources, the political support, and at times even presence. There was low-level government representation with limited decision-making power at WG meetings. Some WGs that were initially more effective later stalled on progress once the director general-level government representative left the country.

Furthermore, WGs did not all move at the same speed because of different stakeholder interests. The long time needed to set up the WGs led to issues of sectoral leadership and control of funding. When principals directed to empower WGs with the freedom to set their own agenda, the 3RF Secretariat took more than a year to act because of bureaucratic internal requirements within each of the organizations involved—for example, multiple SWOT analyses (see appendix D for a summary of the WGs SWOT analysis), multiple revisions of a new mandate, lengthy consultation processes, and delayed meetings. The prioritization of investments in the 3RF ultimately caused a rift between different WG parties over the control of funding.

4.2.3 Communications

Communications hold a key to the accountability and legitimacy of the 3RF in the eyes of the public, yet external communication took a back seat in the operation of the 3RF. The primary reason for the lack of public communication was a deliberate decision to avoid an unintended message. During the design phase, it was decided to focus on implementation over communication to avoid sending a wrong message about the intention of the 3RF. Trying to establish the 3RF as a separate “brand” could have easily been construed as being too focused on the international community’s efforts over the needs of the people. For this reason, communications were simply carried out through the existing channels of the World Bank, the EU, and the UN, and were limited to the publication of the RDNA, the 3RF document, and press releases of the CG meetings. A 3RF dedicated website (www.lebanon3rf.org) took more than a year to develop, in large part because of the World Bank’s procurement rules and technical requirements related to hosting a website with external partners (that is, the EU and the UN). At the operational level, the use of SharePoint as a portal of related documents was not communicated clearly to CSOs, and many CSOs did not know how to access it.

The insufficient external communication meant insufficient public awareness of the 3RF’s efforts on reform, which lessened civil society’s engagement and gave the impression that information was being withheld. In hindsight, the lower priority placed on public communication led to a loss of momentum among CSO actors. Virtually no public communication happened apart from press releases after CG meetings and a handful of interviews (Iskandarani 2021). A video was produced just before the two-year commemoration of the explosion (World Bank 2022c). A communications strategy was written, but its implementation faltered after the dedicated communication officer resigned to pursue a different career; the communication post was not filled until five months later. A citizen engagement module was under consideration but has not materialized. By focusing on communication within the existing channels, the

recovery and reform framework is kept invisible to decision-makers and the public even if the donors are informed about 3RF activities.

4.2.4 Key lessons and recommendations: Working level

The three priority lessons taken from the 3RF’s working-level efforts are listed below.

1. **While strategic-level decisions are important, equally critical are the concrete technical-level actions undertaken to ensure the progress that matters to the people.** While the setup of WGs in the 3RF later helped, a potential framework may consider the institutionalization of WGs at a technical level from the outset to help engagement with concrete practical matters. The technical-level action requires strong engagement from all stakeholders and a granular understanding of the conditionalities. Successful WGs require strong engagement from the government, especially as these WGs serve as policy dialogue platforms for reform.
2. **Engaging principals is essential but not sufficient to maintain momentum.** Given the sometimes diverging mandates of the three institutions, seniority of the staff matters in navigating strategic discussions. Involving staff of greater seniority would avoid a gap between the Technical Secretariat level and decision-making at each of the organizations. At the same time, too much reliance on personal commitment and connections would be costly at the time of staff rotation. To maintain momentum, it is recommended to invest in handovers with solid institutionalization and especially in an emergency context.
3. **For continuity, maintain the interest of headquarters and donors and keep the public informed.** There was much goodwill immediately after the explosion, but continuous engagement of the headquarters and donors is key. Recognizing a shift in priorities and political landscape, international partners headquarters need to be continually involved to support the principals, and to secure funding commitments of donors in support of reform and reconstruction. At the same time, without adequate external communications, the momentum from the public and civil society may be lost along the way.

4.3 Engagement with the Lebanese state

This section considers lessons on engaging with the state, specifically on identifying windows of opportunity for engagement and residual challenges for state engagement in the reform agenda of the 3RF.

4.3.1 Window of opportunity for engagement

The 3RF provided a legitimate and cohesive front on behalf of the international community, the CSOs, and non-state actors to engage positively and productively with the government. Initially, there were discussions about excluding what was perceived as the inefficient government from the 3RF setup, instead taking full advantage of the presence of an active civil society. In the end, by engaging the government, the 3RF provided the caretaker government with a clear roadmap for recovery and reconstruction and access to the Lebanese people's priorities.

During the initial stage of the 3RF, the limited mandate and incentives of the caretaker government led to limited engagement from the Lebanese state. As the caretaker government could not pass any legislation, incentives to deliberate policy reforms were limited. During the early stages of setting up the 3RF, the former deputy prime minister, who was appointed as the main counterpart, focused on specific investment projects by the LFF rather than leading the reform agenda; this was perceived as sidelining by the international community.

Besides the lack of incentives to engage, the state also faced limited practical capacity. The ongoing economic crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic added extra layers of difficulty to the caretaker government. The Lebanese government invested in the reform agenda mainly through a dedicated Office of the Minister of State for Administrative Reform (OMSAR), the Council for Development and Reconstruction (CDR), and dedicated semi-governmental organizations such as the Institute of Finance (IOF), each of which faced issues. OMSAR has focused on digitalization but lacks funding to implement. The CDR, which made a large investment to rebuild areas hard-hit by the 1975–90 civil war, has become highly politicized and does not function as an open forum for reforms. The IOF played an important role in drafting the Public Procurement law, but that very law created state bodies (such as the Public Procurement Authority) that made the IOF less central to policy; it now struggles to attract funding for training related to public procurement. Most coordinated efforts on reform happen with the prime minister and the deputy prime minister, but this is mainly focused on monitoring draft laws, not on investments in reform.

The tide turned for state engagement, which came in the form of a new government that was more receptive to the reform agenda. After Prime Minister Mikati took office just before the third CG meeting, the government became more responsive to repeated overtures by the Secretariat and the Technical Team. In the process of revitalizing the 3RF, which included establishing WGs for sectoral progress, the new government committed to comprehensive reforms. This signaled to the CSOs, which had

been reticent to engage with the government, the importance of working closely with the state to achieve aspired reforms and investment results. The Secretariat helped the government identify mutual priorities; draw on the expertise of civil society, which would also monitor progress; and seek support from international organizations and donors. The new government ensured the engagement of different ministries and set up a Central Management Unit (CMU), which has improved state participation in WGs to push their comprehensive reform plan (including the agreement with the International Monetary Fund, or IMF) with international support. The CMU was envisioned as a proto-Ministry of Planning staffed by the state that would develop national strategies and coordinate with major actors of the framework.

4.3.2 Challenges in state engagement

The Secretariat's separation from the government of Lebanon at the working level was a lost opportunity to strengthen government engagement and to build institutional capacity. As an independent unit to coordinate among the principals, the Secretariat enjoys no formal channel of engagement with the government. As a result, there was a slowdown in recommendations from WGs going to the Secretariat, then the CG, then on to the government's top officials. Institutionalizing a channel between the Secretariat and the state—such as incorporating an appropriate government entity into the Secretariat as an observer—may increase its sense of ownership and help increase the public perception that the state can work with international donors and civil society in a transparent manner.

Set against the original plan, two years since the launch, the 3RF yield on policy reforms is low. This is particularly the case regarding the enactment of laws and decrees that require high political commitment. A study by the Policy Initiative and the Beirut Urban Lab identified that the 3RF's reform agenda largely assembled pledges that the Lebanese state had made at previous international donor conferences, but it has not significantly advanced (Maktabi et al. 2023). Nearly two-thirds of the pledged legislative and executive texts under the 3RF were repeated pledges from Paris III or CEDRE, and only a quarter of them have been enacted by June 2022.²¹ The level of reform results measured in the number of completed laws and decrees are at a similar level as past experiences of the Paris III conference, which implies inaction in meeting the conditions of aid programs.²² Furthermore, as the progress on reform depends on the engagement of both the government and the parliament, the outcome of completed laws may not fully reflect the recommendations from the WGs. For instance, various stakeholders submitted ideas for and commented on the draft

Procurement Law, yet when the law went to the parliament, many phrases were removed before it passed, making the outcome much less impactful than originally intended.

4.3.3 Lessons and recommendations: Engagement with the Lebanese state

The three priority lessons on the 3RF's engagement with the Lebanese state are listed below.

1. **We cannot exclude the government from the reform and reconstruction framework, which must engage very visibly with the state even if there is limited state capacity.** Despite initial discussions about excluding the government from the 3RF setup, it was determined that the reform agenda would not advance without engaging the government. Reform is impossible without considering the politics and underlying conflict risks. Without addressing the concerns and skepticism of decision-makers—even if some are legitimate and others are not—proactive engagement of all stakeholders cannot be achieved.
2. **Consider providing practical support to the state and CSOs to engage them in technical discussions on specific reforms and projects.** Even if it is not strictly the responsibility of international organizations—and it in no way eliminates the decision-making—this practical support can make all the difference when state institutions are overwhelmed. This technical approach will help minimize the notion

that all development is political and can contribute to the identification of entry points for reforms that do not require legislation. The EU, the UN, and the World Bank together represent a significant portion of assistance to Lebanon, which gives the 3RF a convening power that the state or civil society lacks.

3. **It is important to bridge the distance between the government and the Secretariat and to engage in outreach across the political spectrum.** This may include engaging individually with the state actors beyond the government to avoid the tempo being dictated by national development beyond the framework's control. Engage other state actors with sufficient political power to move reforms, especially "champions of change" in the parliament and semi-state agencies that have proven to be efficient. Outreach should be undertaken across the political spectrum, not only to parties seen as friendly to the West. Small preparatory meetings to set the stage will help with large meetings such as the CG; these small meetings will also build trust for when more difficult discussions must take place. Champions of reform can also be found among traditional adversaries. Constructive individuals in the state and local government must be empowered, thus avoiding relying on a narrow group of counterparts. Engaging with civil servants will also help avoid feeding a "shadow bureaucracy" of international experts.

4.4 Engagement with Lebanese civil society

This section considers lessons on engaging civil society, namely the role of the whole-of-Lebanon approach and the challenges of civil society engagement.

4.4.1 The whole-of-Lebanon approach

With the whole-of-Lebanon approach proposed in the RDNA, bringing CSOs into the 3RF was emphasized from the outset. The crisis of trust in the government provided the impetus to make civil society central to the 3RF to maintain legitimacy, show politicians that they were neglecting the public voice, and build the capacity of civil society to become partners for the government.²³ Through the CG and WG setup where the government, civil society, the private sector, and donors are part of the same mechanism, the 3RF increased the level of interactions between these stakeholders. In this sense, the 3RF has become a step in the right direction to promote dialogue and collaboration in Lebanon.

The 3RF took the innovative financial approach of funding certain CSOs as implementers of LFF-financed projects, increasing interest from CSOs yet with limited scope. The perceived lack of legitimacy in the Lebanese system and the caretaker status of the governments led to the decision to distance the government from the implementation of the framework's priorities. This decision was perceived by CSOs as an opportunity to secure funding, which generated many applications to join the 3RF. In reality, only INGOs received funding from the LFF and local CSOs did not. Local CSOs would be funded only through different channels, such as contracting with funded organizations. A key criterion for the selection of a CSO to implement LFF projects would be their capability to meet the World Bank's fiduciary standards, as well as a demonstration of tested implementation arrangements, transparent governance, and operational independence, which favored CSOs with an inclination for reforms (Bloemeke and Harb 2022). The lack of clarification on the selection criteria created confusion and tension among CSOs.

Overall, the 3RF has contributed to an increased level of solidarity among the participating CSOs, but various technical and capacity challenges hampered taking advantage of the full spectrum and capabilities of Lebanese civil society. To allow space for a genuine voice of CSOs, the Secretariat avoided steering CSO discussions and let them self-organize. CSOs report that the 3RF allowed them to unite themselves and show the capacity of Lebanese experts for policy dialogue by presenting clear recommendations for each sector in the 3RF. At the same time, the process of CSO engagement did not take into account the capacity gap that some CSOs face, limiting CSOs' empowerment, full representation, and effectiveness (Bloemeke and Harb 2022).

4.4.2 Challenges of CSO engagement

CSOs' diverse nature and the history of involvement in policy dialogue resulted in a perception of lack of inclusion in the conception of the 3RF. A set of factors constrained the participation of the CSOs in the CG and WGs. Despite the criteria around impartiality and non-conflict of interest guided CSO selection, the CG does not reflect the full spectrum of CSOs because of the heterogeneous nature of Lebanese civil society (Bloemeke and Harb 2022). Some decisions and requirements—such as the language of the terms of reference (only in English) and the requisites for application—restricted the full participation of CSOs. Furthermore, generic terms of reference for CSOs' roles within the CG and WGs created lack of clarity in CSOs' coordination and led to further fragmentation. At the donor level, there was no financial support for the CG or WGs. At the government level, delegitimized ruling elites are not keen to engage CSOs.

At the working level, the way CSOs operate also at times came in conflict with that of the 3RF. For example, when a document is shared with CSOs, instead of engaging in a discussion to challenge the proposal, CSOs write their own alternative policy papers or organize their own conferences. A SharePoint was set up by the 3RF Secretariat for CSOs to access all 3RF information, including draft documents online; but CSOs rarely visited this SharePoint. The SharePoint was seen as technically too complicated for many CSOs to use, partly because of the capacity gap between international organizations and CSOs. Similarly, the CSOs have set up structures to coordinate among themselves, which was perceived as in some ways mirroring those of WGs.²⁴

Fragmentation, lack of cohesion, capacity gap, and competition for funding challenged effective CSO participation. CSOs that are part of the CG do not always agree on what the priority of the 3RF should be. Some CSOs pushed for reforms and institutional strengthening; others were more interested in investment project implementation. The CG has been working on consolidating itself and building its capacities with its previous co-chair of the Lebanese League for Women in Business (LLWB) and with the current co-chair of Live Love Beirut (LLB).

4.4.3 Lessons and recommendations: Engagement with Lebanese civil society

The three priority lessons of the 3RF's engagement with Lebanese civil society are listed below.

1. **Defend the space for civil society to avoid their discouragement when attacked by the state.** The lack of CSO participation deflates the platform given to them. It is vital that sponsors of the framework protect the space where CSOs are included even when it goes counter to international organizations' own established way of working with the state. The role of civil society should be explained from the outset: it is not to replace government decision-making, but to benefit transparency and accountability. This will help alleviate pushback from the government that is reluctant with CSO inclusion and negative media attention.
2. **Have a clear understanding of the CSO sphere in the country and in respective sectors, and maintain legitimacy with civil society, the government, and the broader public all at the same time.** It is important to get a sense of which civil society stakeholders represent the people. CSOs that are more established organizing broader discussions and channeling those discussions into the 3RF is an attractive proposition, but its success depends on the neutrality of the CSOs leading that effort.
3. **It is worth reflecting on the World Bank's funding mechanisms so that funding may be allowed to empower local CSOs.** In FCV environments with low government capacities but where relatively active CSOs are present, engaging CSOs with funding would increase investment impacts. However, if such direct funding to CSOs is not possible, it is important to transparently communicate this from the onset to avoid creating confusion and increasing potential grievances. The current operational experience does not provide knowledge about how to work directly with local CSOs through funding. Also important is the consideration of how to engage them in a symbiotic relationship with the government without increasing mistrust between them.

4.5 Funding

Thanks to the display of support from the international community and swift strategic-level decision making, the LFF—the funding arm of the 3RF—was established quickly. The LFF was administered by the World Bank in close cooperation with the EU, while the UN was an observer.²⁵ The LFF aimed to pool funding from key donors and international finance institutions (IFIs) to kickstart the immediate socioeconomic recovery of vulnerable population and businesses (Track 1) and to help the government of Lebanon prepare for medium-term reconstruction (Track 2).

However, although the LFF was set up quickly, the fund remained empty for several months, delaying project implementation and leading to a slump in momentum. An appetite for development financing to Lebanon was low among the donor community, due to the country's track record on implementing reforms and its lack of progress on the reform agenda. As investments were linked to results in reform (though there was no conditionality in the 3RF), donors were reluctant to contribute more because of the implementation delays caused by difficulties with securing approval from the Lebanese government. A blanket approval to implement LFF projects through civil society was rejected. The Ministry of Finance insisted that all funds flow through their accounts, but this proposed approach was rejected by donors as a result of the banking crisis already in full swing. Regardless of how much funding indirectly contributed to the 3RF, the LFF had difficulty filling its pipeline.

The lack of clarity about the availability of 3RF funds and its disbursement mechanism caused frustration among organizations and skepticism by the government that civil society would receive all the aid. Building on the RDNA, the 3RF presented fully costed priorities for the first 18 months, amounting to a total for recovery of \$584 million (Track 1) and \$2 billion for reform and reconstruction (Track 2). However, the LFF covered only part of the 3RF funding. The rest of the 3RF actions would be funded through bilateral and multilateral programs, which gave the 3RF, in theory, coverage of all international funding in Lebanon. The challenge of delineating what funding is counted as 3RF and who led the implementation generated confusion. In the absence of the government as project implementor, the 3RF has had to counter the false impression that funds were not flowing to the government, because all money was promised to the Lebanese people via civil society (but it was implemented by other entities, including the UN). This undermined the real reason investments in reconstruction were withheld: lack of reforms.

4.5.1 Key lessons and recommendations: Funding

The three priority lessons on funding are listed below.

1. **Although it is ideal that the financing facility would be well replenished, expect funding to be insufficient and that it is necessary to find a way to work with limited financial resources.** The dilemma with funding lies in the fact that funding availability indicates donors' commitment to rebuilding after the disaster, but donor funding is also set by the pace of implementation of reforms. This means that, without reform results, the LFF would not be fully replenished. The commitment to the reforms in Lebanon should ideally be reflected in larger contributions to the LFF from a more diverse donor base, which may include other Gulf states.
2. **It is important to manage expectations on capacity funding to prevent disappointment when funding is waiting for conditional reforms.** The costed priorities can give the impression that these projects are ready to be developed. In Lebanon's case, many stakeholders, including local CSOs, thought the 3RF was a funding modality for projects, largely because of the emphasis on the LFF from the outset. To avoid disappointment, clearer communication on funding mechanisms could have helped: the 3RF is a framework to align on reforms and reconstruction, with the LFF but one potential funding modality.
3. **Use trust funds to help implement reforms.** Rather than focusing only on large projects to be financed after reform results, draw in government actors by helping them implement reforms. The framework can become a way to provide tools for the government to deliver on reforms, including through technical assistance, equipment, and auditing of banks. Once reforms are in place, the framework can be the vehicle for larger investments with stronger government involvement. No single donor can do that by themselves; the framework can help donors spread political risks.

4.6 Monitoring reform results

At the setup stage, the rush to finalize the framework on time resulted in defining the results with unclear targets and lacking agreed upon progress tracking methodology. At the design stage, wide consultation with stakeholders was skipped to meet the setup deadline. The results framework was developed at the outset with goals and results defined for each of the sectors, in the three areas of reform, reconstruction (in the form of investment projects), and institutional strengthening. While the plan was clear in its objectives, there were few identified benchmarks or milestones with which to measure progress, and there was no system in place to collect data on progress, with clear roles and responsibilities among the actors in the 3RF.

To overcome the inefficiency in monitoring the results, during the implementation phase, a comprehensive monitoring framework was defined. The 3RF Secretariat prepared a packed monitoring framework for the fourth CG meeting in April 2022. The monitoring framework defined specific indicators and intermediary targets to track results progress, making it a clearer monitoring framework for the previously specified sectoral goals.²⁶ A reform tracker was developed to check progress and identify actions at sectoral WG meetings. Much deliberation was needed internally to define monitoring of the constant shift on the reforms. However, the length and countless indicators embedded in the monitoring framework sapped the energy and interest of stakeholders. A gap also exists between the framework and the existing programs or strategies: there are with few references to the indicators, and the framework does not include those prepared by the government.

Later, alignment with the IMF's prior actions and indicative benchmarks helped the 3RF to present clearer priorities. In April 2022, the IMF signed a staff-level agreement on economic policies with the Government of Lebanon (IMF 2022).²⁷ One of the recommendations in consultations was a reform monitoring framework, which was subsequently developed in time for the fourth CG meeting in the same month.²⁸ Substantive results mentioned are the successful passing of the public procurement law, improvement of the independence of the judiciary law (through the involvement of the Venice Commission), and an inclusive dialogue around investments in urban recovery.

Yet these results are still considered too abstract to make a difference for the Lebanese people. The Article IV mission by the IMF in March 2023 notes the limited progress on reforms and warns that "Lebanon is at a dangerous crossroads, and without rapid reforms will be mired in a never-ending crisis" (IMF 2023). The relevance of the 3RF for all the stakeholders (that is, the government, the international community, and civil society) is linked to proving the delivery on the ground. Hence, a prioritization of reforms in 2023 was proposed by WG leads and will in the first half of 2023 be agreed upon by all members.

4.6.1 Key lessons: Monitoring results

The three priority lessons on monitoring 3RF's results are listed below.

1. **A prioritized results framework with simplicity and flexibility to improve outreach and maintain momentum.** An agile and prioritized results framework from the outset would speed up implementation, improve advocacy, and prevent stakeholders from losing track of what was happening in implementation. A practical suggestion is to keep the RDNA as a live document with thematic priorities, to be regularly updated (yearly or biannual). It is important to define the reforms in terms of implementation, with a clear threshold, to avoid later discussion about whether state action towards reforms is sufficient to unlock investment.
2. **Compiling a practical handbook for following up on the RDNA can streamline implementation.** Institutionalization is one of the strengths of the 3RF that can move beyond personalities and skills. In the 3RF, input and internal processes required the bulk of the effort. Rather, results should be measured by output that can be publicized. A recommendation is to complement the joint declaration with a simple handbook that includes tools and methods developed in other contexts, such as a template of terms of reference for Secretariat, WGs, and the Trust Fund. Such a handbook may have different scenarios—for example, those with stable contexts or those in which there already is a protracted crisis, those with existing coordination mechanisms, those with or without strong government, with organized or disorganized civil society, with existing or constrained policy dialogue.





SUMMARY

As of publication of this report, the 3RF is still ongoing, beyond its originally planned lifespan of two years. The strategic thinking and solidarity evident among the organizations and the donor community have worked to create a framework that goes beyond presenting a reconstruction roadmap, which tends to fail in implementation given the governance and capacity challenges faced in an FCV environment. The unprecedented incorporation of CSOs into the recovery framework and the renewed engagement of the Lebanese state have paved the way for making progress on reforms that have historically stalled. Still, many challenges have emerged along the way, chiefly at the working and technical levels of implementation—particularly in clearly communicating agendas among all the stakeholders to keep them on the same page and maintain momentum, and in bringing the government actors on board with the reforms. The 3RF still has a possibility of becoming an all-encompassing donor framework, which is much needed considering how many separate initiatives coordinate part of Lebanese and international efforts.



APPENDIXES

Appendix A. Institutional Setup of the 3RF

The institutional architecture of the Reform, Recovery and Reconstruction Framework (3RF) is organized around five units: the Consultative Group, the Technical Secretariat, the Lebanon Financing Facility (LFF), sectoral Working Groups, and the Independent Oversight Board (figure A.1). The **Consultative Group (CG)**—comprised of the Lebanese government, the UN, a donor representative, and civil society—serves as a decision-making body for overall strategic guidance and a channel for high-level policy dialogue on 3RF priorities. The **3RF Secretariat** provides technical coordination for day-to-day implementation of the 3RF. The funding arm of the 3RF, the **Lebanon Financing Facility (LFF)**, is a multi-donor trust fund that pools funding to finance the investment projects under the 3RF. The 14 sectoral Working Groups (WGs) implement their respective 3RF priorities. In addition, the **Independent Oversight Board (IOB)** is a watchdog of the 3RF representing civil society that holds 3RF stakeholders accountable. The selection of civil society organizations (CSOs) was based on the criteria of impartiality and non-conflict of interest, as seen in the selection of 15 CSOs for the CG based on the principle of non-sectarianism, non-political, and balanced representation of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), academia, and the private sector.

- **The Consultative Group (CG)** serves as a decision-making body for overall strategic guidance and a channel for high-level policy dialogue on 3RF priorities. It is co-chaired by the Prime Minister of Lebanon, the UN Resident Coordinator, one of the donors, and one civil society representative. Current donor members of the CG are Canada, Denmark, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), the European Investment Bank (EIB), the European Union (EU), France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States. The EU Head of Delegation has served as the first donor co-chair of the CG; its initial one-year term was extended until mid-2023. Civil society is represented by two rotations of nine organizations each, who twice elected a co-chair among themselves (table A.1).
- **The 3RF Secretariat** provides technical coordination for day-to-day implementation of the 3RF. Staffed by the officials from the EU, the United Nations (UN), and the World Bank, the Secretariat acts on strategic guidance by the 3RF principals: the EU Head of Delegation, the UN Resident Coordinator, and the World Bank Country Director. The Secretariat has no formal connection to the government but maintains a network of technical civil servants and some key ministers in an attempt to link the 3RF to government realities.
- The 3RF is supported and partially funded by a multi-donor trust fund, the Lebanon Financing Facility (LFF), administered by the World Bank in close cooperation with the EU (World Bank 2021b). The LFF aims to pool funding from key donors and international finance institutions (IFIs) to kickstart the immediate socioeconomic recovery of vulnerable populations and businesses affected by the blast and help the government of Lebanon prepare for medium-term reconstruction. At the initial stage, the LFF planned to provide direct support to capable NGOs and CSOs and to private sector intermediaries, while also providing a mechanism to support program implementation by the UN and the World Bank. However, direct funding to CSOs did not materialize.
- **The sectoral Working Groups (WGs)** implement their respective 3RF priorities. The 14 sector WGs are co-chaired by two or more officials from the EU, the UN, or the World Bank, who work with members of Lebanese state institutions, international organizations, donors, civil society, and the private sector. Some 200 CSOs are involved in 3RF Working Groups, including those that are also members of the CG. The process of including the state, donors, and civil society in WGs was self-selection.²⁹
- **The Independent Oversight Board (IOB)**, composed of civil society, is a watchdog of the 3RF that holds 3RF stakeholders accountable. The IOB consists of six CSOs that are not involved in the CG, WGs, or implementing projects financed by the LFF, and thus have no vested interest in how recovery efforts are implemented. This setup enables truly independent oversight, which did not exist in any previous recovery frameworks. Key roles of the IOB include monitoring 3RF implementation progress and the use of financing, periodically disclosing reports to the public and presenting them to the CG, collecting feedback from beneficiaries and citizens, and reporting on its findings.

Track 1 focuses on essential actions needed to address urgent needs of the most vulnerable populations and small businesses affected by the explosion over the first 18 months. It comprises a costed proposal and a prioritized comprehensive plan of key actions—such as policy measures, investments, and institutional strengthening—across various sectors to support the recovery and reconstruction of Beirut. Track 2 focuses on critical reforms to address governance and recovery challenges in the country, along with investments that would achieve the long-term reconstruction of critical assets, services, and infrastructure. This is set up as an engagement model emphasizing direct support to affected communities through people-centered economic recovery while identifying a set of priority reforms as prerequisites for reconstruction.

WGs were established to help focus the reform agenda and strengthen results-based engagement (table A.2). The second 3RF CG meeting on July 28, 2021, provided an update on people-centered recovery in the area affected by the blast and urged the then caretaker government to act on key reforms (World Bank 2021c). While this meeting recommitted all CG members to the 3RF, it highlighted how much more hands-on engagement was needed to support the government to show results, especially on the reform agenda. At the third CG meeting on November 16, 2021, in which sparse progress on reforms were reviewed, a strategic decision was made to set up 14 sectoral WGs, according to the sectors defined in the RDNA, to focus the agenda and strengthen results-based engagement (EEAS 2021b).³⁰

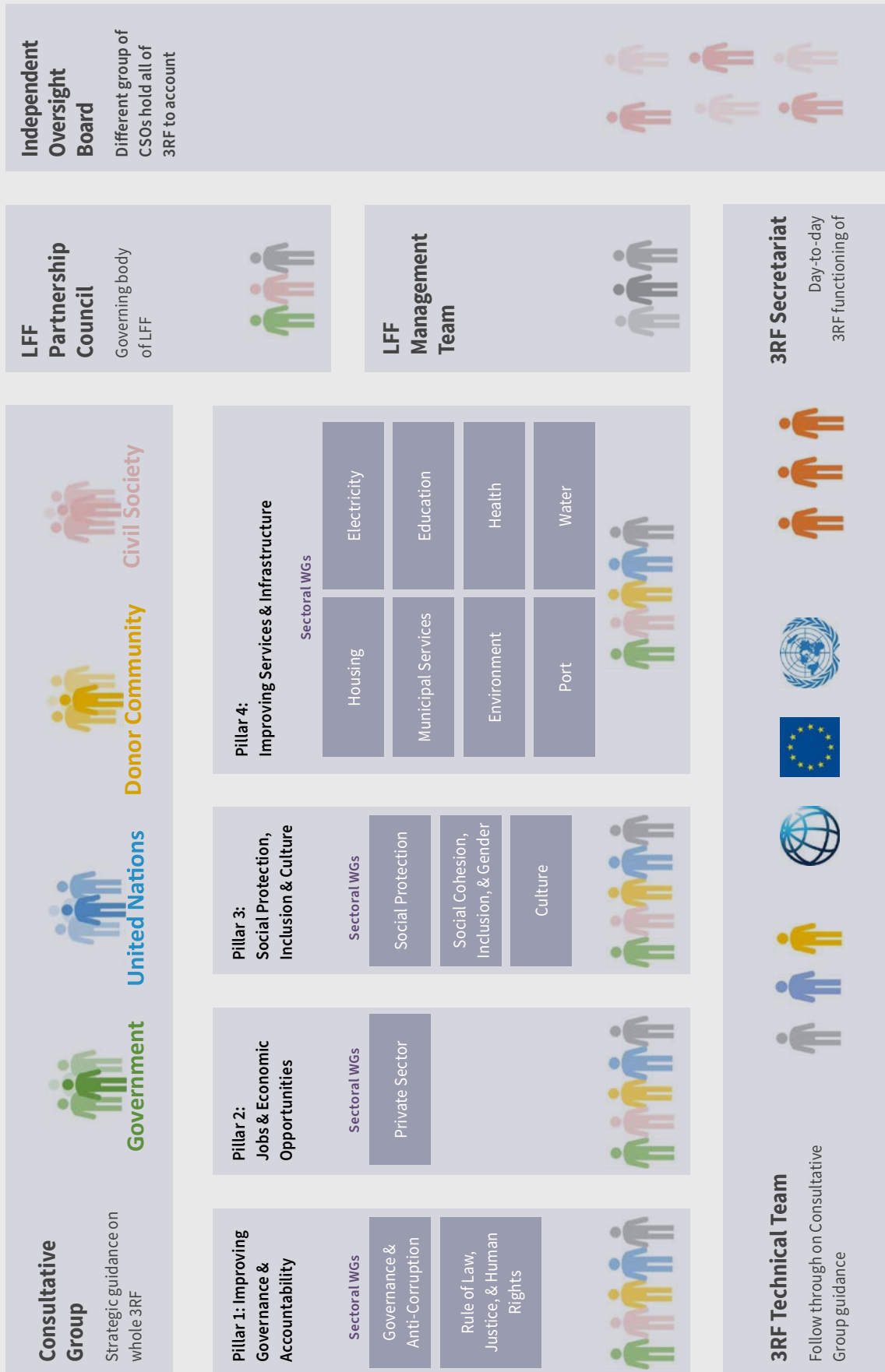
Table A.1. Civil Society Organizations in the Consultative Group

First rotation	Second rotation
CATEGORY I: NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS	
Lebanon Humanitarian & Development NGOs Forum (LHDF)	Lebanon Humanitarian INGO Forum (LHIF), replaced by (LHDF)
Society Saint Vincent de Paul (SSVP)	Live Love Beirut
Green Mind	Arc-en-ciel
CATEGORY II: CIVIL SOCIETY OR COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS OR INITIATIVES	
Beirut Urban Lab	Beirut Heritage Initiative (BHI)
Lebanese Union for People with Physical Disabilities (LUPDD)	Khaddit Beirut
KAFA (Enough)	KAFA (Enough)
ALDIC (L'Association Libanaise pour les Droits et les Intérêts des Contribuables)	Lebanese Center for Human Rights (LCHR), replaced by ALEF
CATEGORY III: PROFESSIONAL AND BUSINESS ORGANIZATIONS	
Lebanese League for Women in Business (LLWB)	Lebanese League for Women in Business (LLWB)
Association of Lebanese Industrialists (ALI)	Order of Engineers and Architects

Source: Created for this report based on World Bank 2021d and EEES 2021b.

Figure A.1. 3RF Institutional Arrangements

3RF Institutional Arrangements



Source: Created based on EEAS 2021a.

Table A.2. 3RF Timeline

Year	Month	Event
2020	Aug	Beirut explosion. Publication of the RDNA. Prime Minister Diab resigns and becomes caretaker prime minister.
	Sep	
	Oct	
	Nov	
	Dec	Publication of the 3RF and launch of LFF.
2021	Jan	
	Feb	Election of first CSO co-chair.
	Mar	Consultative Group meeting 1.
	Apr	
	May	
	Jun	Establishment of 3RF Secretariat. Setup of 3RF SharePoint.
	Jul	Consultative Group meeting 2. Technical briefing with CSOs. Publication of the Public Procurement Law.
	Aug	Principals' strategy retreat. CSO discussions on sector recommendations.
	Sep	The Mikati government is formed. Activation of WGs for the EU, the UN, and the World Bank. Activation of IOB.
	Oct	Principals present 3RF to Prime Minister Mikati. Principals brief ambassadors. Technical briefing with CSOs. Principals lunch 3RF private sector.
	Nov	Consultative Group meeting 3. Inclusion of CSOs in WGs.
	Dec	Meeting of 3RF CSOs with Mikati.
2022	Jan	Establishment of Central Management Unit under the prime minister. Opening of the 3RF SharePoint to CSOs, CMU, and IOB.
	Feb	Technical briefing with state counterparts. Inclusion of state representatives and donors in WGs.
	Mar	Principals brief Prime Minister Mikati. Technical briefing with Deputy Prime Minister Chami. Technical briefing with donors. Principals brief ambassadors.
	Apr	Consultative Group meeting 4. IMF signs staff-level agreement. Technical briefing with CSOs. Election of new CSO co-chair.
	May	Principals' strategy retreat (national scope). Start WGs SWOT. Parliamentary elections; Prime Minister Mikati resigns. CSO Council established.
	Jun	Official end of Track 1 on recovery (unofficially extended to end of 2022). Mikati named prime minister designate.
	Jul	End of term for UN RC and World Bank Country Director.
	Aug	Launch of 3RF video.
	Sep	Technical briefing with donors. Three principals recommit to the 3RF. Start consultations of new mandate.
	Oct	President Aoun's term ends. CSOs retreat. CSOs state of the sectors.
	Nov	
	Dec	
2023	Jan	Principals' consultation of new mandate with Prime Minister Mikati and CSOs. Technical briefing with donors.
	Feb	Principals' consultation of new mandate with ambassadors.
	Mar	Technical consultation new mandate with presidency.
	Apr	

Source:
Original table for this publication.

Appendix B. Precedent: Iraq Reform, Recovery and Reconstruction Fund

The Iraq Reform, Recovery and Reconstruction Fund (I3RF) was the first example of a reconstruction framework that was combined with a reform agenda, on which the design of 3RF was built. The I3RF was set up by the World Bank and the UN in 2018, in partnership with the government of Iraq in the aftermath of the 2014–17 war against the Islamic State (IS), as a platform for financing and strategic dialogue for reconstruction that addresses the underlying drivers of instability in Iraq, and to support the Iraqi government in meeting the needs of the Iraqi people.

Iraq has experienced a period of instability for over a decade, characterized by sectarian tensions among Sunni and Shiite groups and between Kurdish groups. The resultant power vacuum was taken over by ISIS in 2014, triggering armed actions from abroad that continued into 2017. After the declaration of victory by the Iraqi government in December 2017 and the subsequent withdrawal of foreign troops, Iraq faced significant challenges with post-conflict recovery. The underlying sectarian tensions continue to threaten the stability of the Iraqi state, which aims to prevent ISIS resurgence. More than 1.14 million people remain internally displaced,³¹ and nearly 3 million (including 1.3 million children) remain in need of humanitarian assistance as of mid-2023 (UNICEF 2023), and the reconstruction of the former ISIS-occupied areas (of the seven directly affected governorates) was projected to cost at least \$88 billion (World Bank 2018). To support the Iraqi government in the recovery and reconstruction from the conflict, a funding facility, the I3RF, was set up by the UN and the World Bank.

The I3RF is a \$126 million multi-donor trust fund (MDTF) to support Iraq's recovery and reconstruction plans and to inform its economic reforms. It is funded by four donors: Canada, Germany, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. The I3RF focuses on promoting targeted national reform efforts and improving the effectiveness of public and private investments in socioeconomic recovery and reconstruction. To ensure that there is a sense of ownership within the fund's results framework, the I3RF Secretariat has facilitated the development of a policy document (the White Paper) by the Iraqi government, with feedback from donors, as a leading document for the government's plan to tackle reform within the framework of the fund. Sector teams work closely with over 28 government counterparts to support the implementation of the reform agenda and the development of concrete action plans, through technical assistance, advisory and analytical work, as well as both Bank-Executed (BE) and Recipient-Executed (RE) pilot projects. The I3RF projects have informed policy and programming in areas including reconstruction, agriculture, environment, energy, social protection, education, public financial management, the financial sector, the private sector, economic diversification, poverty programming, and peacebuilding.

In 2021, following the adaptation of the White Paper, the I3RF increased its focus on reforms by supporting the Iraqi government to build coordination systems to manage reform efforts. The I3RF plays an important role as a platform for dialogue, by bringing together various stakeholders—including different government entities,

international development partners, experts, and beneficiaries—to discuss issues related to Iraq’s reconstruction and reform. The I3RF activities have increased engagement with the government in recent years, through enhanced coordination and communication between the Ministry of Planning (as the Co-Chair of the I3RF Secretariat) and the World Bank (as the Trust Fund administrator). The regular meetings and communication have helped align government counterparts and the Ministry of Planning technical team with the I3RF objectives, the I3RF Work Plan, its Results Framework, and the operational procedures of the Trust Fund.

As an evolving platform in the fragility, conflict, and violence (FCV) context, the I3RF is not without challenges. Security constraints, issues of institutional continuity and the funding, the lack of coordination with local stakeholders, deteriorating institutional capacity, and the issue of governance all contribute to low effectiveness of recovery and reconstruction despite high spending. The civil society organization (CSO) engagement in a post-conflict environment has also seen challenges, especially in the formal engagement of stakeholders outside of the public sector. To start with, Iraq’s CSO presence is much smaller than Lebanon’s, and the Iraqi government was not keen on listening to CSOs. While the Steering Committee includes a representation from CSOs and the private sector, their meaningful engagement and impact was limited because of the much smaller funding availability in the MDTF compared to the extent of the damage and the restrictive nature of funding. The MDTF, with its various priority agendas from the donors, was restricted in what it was financing, which meant little ownership from the Iraqi government in how the money should have been used.

Building on such lessons from the I3RF, the Lebanon 3RF incorporated the traditionally robust CSO, private sector, and academia presence in Lebanon. With CSO representation not only in the Steering Committee, CSOs are represented through the Consultative Group and the Independent Oversight Board.

Appendix C. Investment Projects Developed under the 3RF

Beirut Housing Rehabilitation and Cultural and Creative Industries Recovery (P176577)

Project Implementing Unit	Amount	Timeframe
United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)	US\$12.75 million	February 23, 2022 – December 15, 2024

Project Development Objective (PDO): The project aims to support the rehabilitation of prioritized historical housing for the most vulnerable people and to provide emergency support to creative practitioners and entities in the cultural sector in the Port of Beirut explosion areas.

Components

Component 1: Housing Recovery (\$8.28 million). Providing support for: (a) rehabilitation of select vacant structurally damaged residential units in the historical neighborhoods located within five kilometers of the epicenter of the Port of Beirut August 4, 2020, explosion and that were inhabited by lower-income and vulnerable households; (b) necessary inspection and supervision of the works; and (c) development of communication and awareness materials, website and a hotline for the grievance redress mechanism.

Component 2: Emergency Support for CCI Recovery (\$1.95 million). Providing grants (“CCI Grants”) to eligible practitioners and entities in the cultural and creative industry sector (“CCIs”) affected by the Port of Beirut August 4, 2020, explosion (“CCI Grant Recipients”), including carrying out of the outreach and communication campaign to raise awareness of the activity.

Component 3: Project Management and Monitoring and Evaluation (\$2.52 million). Project implementation support to the Project Management Team for the management, coordination, communication, awareness raising and outreach pertaining to the Project activities, and monitoring and evaluation of the Project, and to cover the Project-related management and Operating Costs, audits, financial management, and compliance Environmental and Social Standards, including Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP), Direct Costs and Indirect Costs.

Building Beirut Businesses Back & Better (B5) Fund (P176013)

Project Implementing Unit	Amount	Timeframe
Kafalat	US\$ 25.00 million	October 8, 2021 - July 31, 2024

PDO: The Project Development Objective is to support the recovery of targeted micro and small enterprises (MSEs) and sustain the operations of eligible microfinance institutions (MFIs).

Components

Component 1: Grants to Micro and Small Enterprises (Proposed Allocation: \$18.5 million). This component will provide grants to eligible MSEs that have been affected by the Beirut port explosion. It will award non-reimbursable grants to eligible MSEs, including self-employed, regardless of whether they are formal or informal, following a wholesale and retail implementation approach.

Component 2: Grants to microfinance institutions (MFIs) (Proposed Allocation: \$5 million). This component will provide self-sustainability grants to MFIs to preserve the microfinance sector and its capacity. MFIs have decades of experience serving micro and small businesses, low-income populations, and the informal sector at large. This component will help MFIs stand by the communities they serve and bounce back during the time of multiple crises. Initially, this component will help eligible MFIs sustain their activities by covering part of their operational expenses for an average of six months.

Component 3: Project Management and Gender Support (Proposed Allocation: \$1.5 million). This component will finance project management costs over the project life. Kafalat will be the Project Implementation Agency (PIA). Costs of the PIA include management and consultancy fees, operations and administrative costs for the management and supervision of the project activities. Project funds will support the PIA costs for the following: gender-sensitive capacity-building support to Women-Owned or Led Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs) beneficiaries, conducting of assessments and analysis (including climate change risks assessment), citizen engagement activities, monitoring and evaluation (M&E), safeguards monitoring and review, legal, accounting, auditing, financial management, and gender.

Support for Social Recovery Needs of Vulnerable Groups in Beirut (P176622)

Project Implementing Unit	Amount	Timeframe
International Rescue Committee (IRC)	US\$ 5 million	April 4, 2022 - October 31, 2023

PDO: To support the immediate social recovery needs of vulnerable groups following the Port of Beirut explosion.

Components

Component 1: Support for Social Services for Vulnerable Groups Affected by the Explosion (\$7,305,000). This component will finance NGOs to provide social services to vulnerable groups affected by the crises including: (i) survivors of GBV; (ii) those suffering from deteriorated psycho-social wellbeing; (iii) and persons with disabilities and OPs facing limitations related to their disabled or elderly status. Given the cross-cutting nature of their vulnerability, refugees and migrant domestic workers will be targeted across these beneficiary groups.

Component 2: Component 2. Capacity Building and Project Management (\$490,000). This component will finance project management over the project life, including incremental operating costs incurred while implementing and supervising project activities. Activities undertaken by the IA will include: (i) overall project management, fiduciary and safeguards management; (ii) providing technical assistance (TA) and institutional strengthening measures; (iii) developing and implementing a monitoring and reporting plan to provide visibility of the results and a transparent model for the development and implementation of all activities.

Beirut Critical Environment Recovery, Restoration and Waste Management Program (P176635)

Project Implementing Unit	Amount	Timeframe
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	US\$ 10.00 million	May 18, 2022 – June 30, 2025

PDO: To support immediate environment control measures from the impacts of August 2020 Port of Beirut explosion and planning for longer term environmental restoration efforts in Beirut City

Components

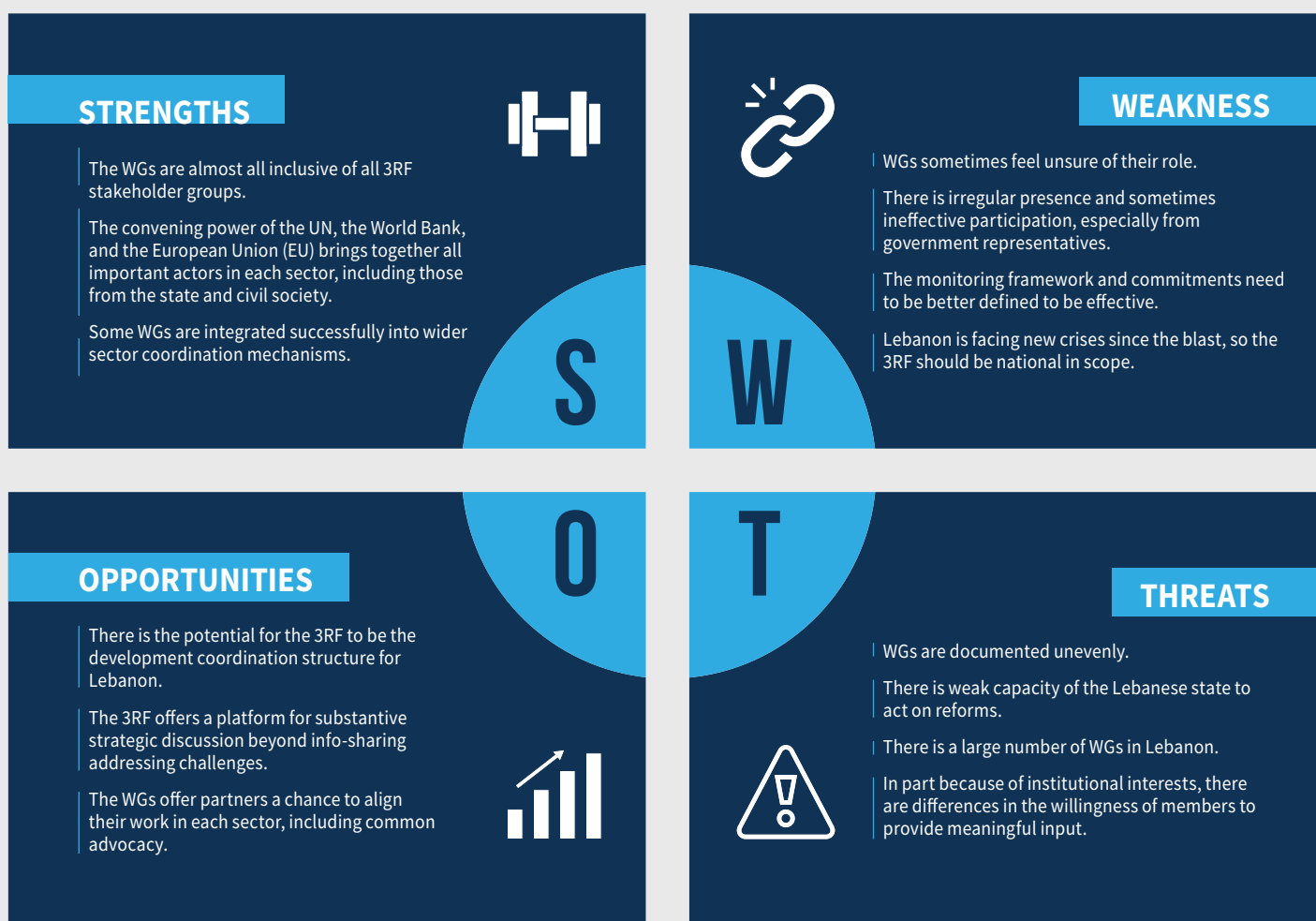
Component 1: Rehabilitation of damaged solid waste management infrastructure and management of asbestos contaminated debris generated due to PoB explosion (\$8.00 million). This component aims to support the refurbishment and reintegration of affected SWM infrastructure in Beirut, and the containment of contaminated waste material generated from the port explosion.

Component 2: Policy & institutional support for greening Beirut Reconstruction Agenda (\$0.50 million). This component supports the establishment of an enabling environment for policy and institutional reform for climate change and environmental management by strengthening the building blocks for environmental governance and climate action. In addition, the component will also support the participatory planning process for a green recovery of Beirut based on a comprehensive framework for responding to key priorities identified by stakeholders resulting from the explosion.

Component 3: Project Management (\$1.50 million). This component supports project management activities to be carried out by UNDP as an IIA. These include: (i) overall project management, fiduciary and Environmental Social Framework (ESF) compliance; (ii) conducting/managing necessary technical, financial, environment and social safeguard studies; (iii) supporting technical assistance and institutional strengthening measures; and (iv) developing and implementing a monitoring and reporting plan to provide visibility of the results and a transparent model for the development and implementation of all activities. A Project Management Unit (PMU) will be established by UNDP for this purpose comprising a project manager, environmental engineer and safeguards analyst, finance associate, procurement associate and a social and gender analyst.

Appendix D. Summary of the Working Groups SWOT Analysis

SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis is a strategic technique used to identify and analyze internal strengths and weaknesses and external opportunities and threats. A SWOT analysis was conducted for the Working Groups (WGs) in May 2022, following the Fourth Consultative Group meeting.



Appendix E. Table of Operational Lessons

Issue areas	Operational lessons
STRATEGIC DECISION-MAKING	
<p>During the design stage, weekly meetings of principals, where they had frank exchanges on challenges each faced within their mandate, led to an agreement on a clear division of labor for their strategic engagement.</p>	<p>International partners should remain committed and convey the added value of the framework by taking part in WGs. This will help mitigate confusion and concerns over competition for funding and other institutional interests and avoid the proliferation of ad-hoc working groups.</p>
<p>The intentions and implementation of conditionalities for fund disbursement were not clearly communicated or upheld, impacting the progress on reforms. The whole effort will fail if one slips—one actor softening on conditionalities creates dysfunctionality.</p>	<p>Conditionality should be specific to be effective. At the center of discussions about conditionality must be clearly defined thresholds for what constitutes a progress on reforms. This avoids political pressure to fund when progress on reforms is contentious. Difficult reforms can then be split up in implementation.</p>
<p>While the 3RF is a successful platform for coordinating donors and other actors, there has been a lack of clarity among meetings of different 3RF units that led to progress stalling. The CG meetings were always prepared at ambassadors' level to align statements and strategy. Between CG meetings, donors met only on an as-needed basis to review LFF progress at the technical level. Although this approach mitigated fragmented efforts in the donor community, the agendas were not aligned between the CG, the donors, and the WGs. This led to lost momentum, even though much effort was made behind the scenes to set up the WGs.</p>	<p>The coordination of different meetings should be made clear between the CG meetings, the Secretariat-level meetings involving the principals, the meetings to coordinate international actors, and the WGs.</p>
WORKING LEVEL	
<p>At first, slow hiring processes at the UN and the World Bank stalled the Secretariat coming together. The gap in implementation for the three months after the first CG meeting was due to a lack of peoplepower to operationalize the 3RF. Combined with the differences in perspectives and priorities for the three organizations, for the most of the first year, the effort concentrated at the strategic level, lacking working-level follow-ups to move forward the reform agenda.</p>	<p>Prompt staffing of the Secretariat, the engine of implementation, is needed to avoid a loss of momentum. A dedicated semi-embedded Secretariat should be instituted as soon as possible. The Secretariat staff should have strategic policy dialogue skills, in addition to project portfolios. A dedicated scheduler for the Secretariat would be helpful.</p>
<p>Knowledge of local contexts is especially important in long-term planning for recovery and reconstruction. For example, the port explosion in Beirut may appear on the surface to be a failure to handle hazardous materials, yet someone experienced in the Lebanese context can quickly point to the lack of accountability and transparency and the need for reforms with judicial independence.</p>	<p>Country-based staff versed in local contexts are crucial to the quick drafting of the framework and setting engagement parameters. Stakeholders with experience with the pre-crisis context can help to integrate political context and conflict sensitivity into the response, something regional or headquarters-based staff would take longer to grasp.</p>
<p>The lack of external communications led to low recognition of the 3RF and hence limited accountability in the eyes of the people.</p>	<p>Prioritizing external communications would help build trust among stakeholders and engage the public in a discussion about why reforms matter, increasing legitimacy and accountability. A detailed communication plan and strategic media engagement are needed. Clear communication to the public about legitimate money use would pressure the elite about their responsibility to the people.</p>

ENGAGEMENT WITH THE STATE	
As an independent unit to coordinate among the principals, the Secretariat has no formal channel of engagement with the government. There was a slowdown in the recommendations from WGs going to the Secretariat, the CG, and the government's top officials.	Including appropriate government entities in the working of the Secretariat as observers could increase ownership from the government and increase impact and effectiveness of operationalizing them. At the same time, it would be an opportunity to build trust in the government institutions in the eyes of the public by showcasing that the state can work with various parts of civil society and with international donors in a transparent manner.
ENGAGEMENT WITH CIVIL SOCIETY	
CSOs with access to 3RF internal documents rarely consult them or refer to their substance in meetings. Making information available through a passive medium such as SharePoint did little to engage stakeholders.	In-person information sessions are key to genuinely engaging civil society in lengthy internationally driven processes. High CSO capacity for advocacy and implementation does not necessarily translate to effective policy dialogue or cooperation with other stakeholders. Virtual meetings have become the default in the post-COVID environment, but this should not endanger engagement.
The representation of CSOs in the 3RF may not be in line with the full spectrum of Lebanon's CSOs. Capacity gaps of some CSOs kept them from fully participating.	Efforts should be made to select greater representation of CSOs, including, for example, whose staff do not speak English and those that come from outside the capital. Capacity building should be introduced, and discussions should be moderated by neutral experts.
Self-organizing was difficult for CSOs. CSOs complied with what the co-chairs advocated. Eventually, only a handful of CSOs continued to attend meetings that the co-chair called for. The attempt to create a Majlis (CSO council) was somewhat appealing to the CSOs but CSOs had already lost momentum.	A structure for capacity building and empowerment is needed. The CG should have had clearer ToRs and/or bylaws to guide its mandate. It could have been useful to fund the co-chair of the CG, and perhaps secure some overhead funding for their CSO to operate as a "secretariat" to incentivize the work.
Resource limitation of CSOs may prevent their participation. One cannot expect CSOs to operate on a pro-bono basis for a long time, especially in times of crisis. Only the CSOs that were financially more secure could continue attending meetings, while others needed to address their needs of fundraising, staffing, and administrative management.	Consider solutions for CSO resource limitation. From the CSO perspective, dedicating some funds to further build the capacity of the CG to become a more capacious interlocutor might have helped.
MONITORING RESULTS	
A SWOT analysis after one year was conducted to streamline the WGs (appendix D). This was considered to be too late as there was a sense that the momentum had already been lost.	A prompt and transparent SWOT would help avoid a loss of momentum and promote accountability. During implementation keep all stakeholders informed and involved, including an earlier SWOT analysis of WGs. Communication should create trust and define results together and avoid the perception of a missed opportunity.

Source: Original table for this publication.

Note: 3RF = Reform, Recovery and Reconstruction Framework; CG = Consultative Group; CSOs = civil society organizations; LFF = Lebanese Financing Facility; SWOT = strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats; ToR = terms of reference; WG = Working Group.

ENDNOTES

- 1 Effective citizen engagement, defined as the two-way interaction between citizens and the government that gives citizens a stake in decision-making, can help design and implement investment plans that are responsive to the needs of the wider society and engage their local knowledge for more effective outcomes (GFDRR 2018). Engaging with diverse stakeholders can enhance the sense of ownership and sustainability of DRM-related initiatives where trust in government is low (World Bank 2023a). Benefiting wider segments of society is also a step for conflict-sensitive approach in disaster risk management projects.
- 2 By the end of 2020, more than half of the population was expected to be living below the national poverty line (World Bank 2021a). According to estimates, the poverty rate in Lebanon increased from 25 percent in 2019 to 55 percent in 2020 and then to 74 percent in 2021 (UN ESCWA 2021).
- 3 The fragmentation in governance dates back to the system of dividing power and income that was adapted with the Taif Accords after the 1970–90 Lebanese Civil War between Maronite Christian, Sunni Muslim, and Shia Muslim groups. Legislation cannot be introduced without agreement from the president, the parliament, and the council of ministers—but the latter two bodies are heterogenous and rarely even agree to meet. The prime minister has limited control over the cabinet and no single actor can force a decision. Any decision is part of a complex of puzzles involving many political and economic actors, often regional, as a result of international patronage. Alignment on decisions, and therefore progress, is rare. The Fall 2020 World Bank Lebanon Economic Monitor characterized how elite capture contributed to the ongoing economic crises as “the deliberate depression” and proposed a reform agenda to turn around the governance failure (World Bank 2020b).
- 4 For example, different ambulance services serve different sociocultural sections of society (Peters and Holloway 2019).
- 5 Although led by the prime minister, Solidere is not a public organization but a private company. Yet the fact that the prime minister can set up a private organization to operate and work on reconstruction also points to the historically high levels of connectedness between political and business elites that characterize the Lebanese economy (World Bank 2022f; see also World Bank 2022b).
- 6 The Waad Project was later designated by the U.S. Department of the Treasury as an organization that provides support to terrorists or acts of terrorism (U.S. Department of the Treasury 2009), and this reconstruction was seen by the international community as the Hezbollah’s means to channel funding.
- 7 A study from The Policy Initiative and the Beirut Urban Lab identified 224 actors that led the first response on the ground from a wide range of nature; 69 percent of them were NGOs and 31 percent were political and religious groups. This effort mainly focused on the reconstruction of collective goods, such as heritage buildings, community facilities, and public and shared spaces (The Beirut Urban Lab and The Policy Initiative 2023).
- 8 Paris I, II, and III were the conferences convened by French President Jacques Chirac between 2001 and 2007 to mobilize international financial assistance for Lebanon. While the Lebanese reform agenda was part of these discussions, there was no explicit conditionality in return for soft loans and grants. By the time a Paris IV was conceived in 2018, it was clear that unconditional support was not sustainable in Lebanon. In place of a Paris IV, France in 2018 launched CEDRE (Conférence économique pour le développement, par les réformes et avec les entreprises), which explicitly linked reforms with investments, focusing on strengthening the Lebanese economy. The 3RF was set up in line with and referencing CEDRE’s objectives, though by mid-2021 the latter was considered to have failed.
- 9 Ninety percent of this aid is humanitarian aid for refugees and other crises and not targeted at general development of the country (such as infrastructure and service provision). This creates an impression that Syrian refugees receive more aid than the Lebanese, and that CSOs have replaced the state as an international partner.
- 10 The RDNA was prepared by the World Bank in collaboration with the United Nations and the European Union.
- 11 Two types of CSOs have existed in Lebanon: those that provided parallel services—particularly in health and education—to complement the low level of service provided by the government. These parallel services are often provided along sectarian and political lines. The other type is an advocacy type of CSO, which advocates for transparency and accountability, including the CSOs that monitored elections in the 1990s. This dichotomy in the types of CSOs in Lebanon deepened after the 2019 civil protests against the failing governance (the 17 October Revolution) and following the 2020 port explosion.
- 12 See, for example, the Beirut Urban Lab’s Initiatives in Response to the Beirut Blast (Beirut Urban Lab, no date) or the ActionAid report Participation of Local and International Civil Society in the Beirut Port Blast Response (2021).
- 13 Formally launched on December 4, 2020, the implementation of the 3RF began with the first Consultative Group (CG) meeting on March 31, 2021, through the formal end of the recovery phase (known as Track 1) in June 2022. The implementation then continued to a strategic discussion of the future of the 3RF in June 2022. Details about the LFF can be found at <https://www.lebanon3rf.org/lebanon-financing-facility>.
- 14 The Gulf states (the Gulf Cooperation Council) countries were excluded from membership as the result of a diplomatic incident, which suspended relations between Lebanon and most of these countries.
- 15 Details about UNHCR Lebanon’s response to the Beirut blast are available at UNHCR Lebanon (2024).
- 16 This process is especially important in Lebanon, where 90 percent of international response is humanitarian, much of it related to Syrian refugees.

- 17 The LCRP is the Lebanese chapter of the Regional Refugee Resilience Plan (3RP) in response to Syrian refugees in Lebanon (originally set for 2017–20 but extended because of growing humanitarian needs). The ERP was launched in 2021 to address increasing humanitarian needs caused by complicating shocks from the COVID-19 pandemic. The UNSDCF was signed in 2022 as a part of the global UN Agenda 2030 to coordinate efforts on implementing Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with the government of Lebanon for 2023–25. All of the three frameworks are led by the UN Resident Coordinator's Office (RCO).
- 18 The RCO is currently preparing a proposal to merge the LCRP and the ERP in response to criticism from donors on redundant coordination. The SDCF is currently being operationalized, and its operation does not include donors or civil society. There is considerable overlap in 3RF and SDCF objectives, including a proposal presented by the RCO to revive an old trust fund similar to the LFF.
- 19 While the LCRP offers strong sector operational coordination, it does not address long-term or reform needs. The LCRP has participation from CSOs at the level of implementation, but CSOs are not included at a strategic level. Donors are not part of the LCRP.
- 20 The EU-funded member joined in June 2021, the World Bank member joined in September 2021, and the UN representative—funded by the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ)—joined in February 2022.
- 21 Nearly half (66 out of 138) of the 3RF action points require legislative effort from the Lebanese government; this translates to 86 legislative and executive texts to be enacted by the government (Maktabi et al. 2023). Out of the 86 legislative and executive texts pledged at the start of the 3RF, 52 (60 percent) were previously pledged at Paris III or CEDRE. Only 20 (23 percent) had been enacted by June 2022.
- 22 Among the 60 legislative and executive texts that require moderate or high political commitment (39 laws and 21 decrees), 18 percent of laws (7 laws) and 10 percent of decrees (2 decrees) have been completed. This compares to the Paris III conference results of 14 percent of laws and 24 percent of decrees (Maktabi et al. 2023).
- 23 Some Lebanese CSOs, for example, refused to take part in the 3RF because they felt that engagement with the state would compromise their advocacy. Apart from a handful of umbrella organizations—the Lebanese Humanitarian Development Forum, for example, is involved in the 3RF—there is little coordination among CSOs. CSOs also prefer the creation of a big multi-donor trust fund. While the call for aid transparency has fostered a participatory approach, CSOs have focused less on advocating for reform, representing citizens, and holding state and international actors accountable.
- 24 When the second rotation of the CSOs in the CG started in the spring of 2022, the CSOs attempted to better organize their collective efforts by establishing a coordination and communication committee and a CSO council known as Majlis (Bloemeke and Harb 2022).
- 25 There was skepticism among the Lebanese state actors toward the UN, who were concerned that funding through the UN would flow to its own staff rather than to the people of Lebanon. To overcome this concern, the UN does not have decision-making capacity on LFF funding.
- 26 The 3RF monitoring framework dashboard can be found at <https://www.eeas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/3RF%20Monitoring%20Framework.pdf>.
- 27 The agreement, signed shortly before Lebanon's parliamentary elections, outlines a set of 10 prior actions that would unlock a \$3 billion aid package when approved by the IMF board. A further 28 actions indicative of structural benchmarks form a comprehensive economic reform program aiming to (1) rebuild the economy, (2) restore financial sustainability, (3) strengthen governance and transparency, (4) remove impediments to job-creating growth, and (5) increase social and reconstruction spending. The agreement was foreshadowed in the 3RF Foreword, and many of the recommendations are also part of the original 3RF.
- 28 See the tracker action points, which comprise a live document that take stock of action points over time, available at <https://www.eeas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/Tracker%20CG%20action%20points.pdf>
- 29 The co-chair of the CSO group in the CG was asked to consult and recommend WG members based on the organic organizing of CSOs from immediate post-disaster response phase. The group of donors in the 3RF was asked to fill in a table to join WGs. The prime minister's CMU was asked to select members, after an information session by the 3RF secretariat for political advisors of all relevant ministries.
- 30 Sectors defined in the RDNA are the Anti-Corruption Coordination Group; the Justice Working Group; the Private Sector; the Social Protection Coordination Forum; and the sectors of Social Inclusion and Gender, Culture, Housing, Municipal Services, Port, Environment, Electricity, Education, Health, and Water.
- 31 At its peak, in June 2017, the number of internally displaced persons reached 3.35 million. Returnees have steadily increased since 2017—numbering nearly 5 million by December 2022. See the IOM Displacement Tracking Matrix, Iraq Mission. Last update August 31, 2023 (accessed October 2, 2023) <http://iraqdtm.iom.int>.

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LESSONS FROM DISASTER

GOVERNANCE

Port of Beirut Explosion Reform Recovery and Reconstruction Framework



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