

**For immediate release**

 **Strengthen integrity of aid response in Lebanon to ensure it reaches Syrian refugees most in need**

***Berlin / Beirut, 15 June 2017 –*** Transparency International called today on the government of Lebanon, donor agencies and humanitarian agencies operating in the country to strengthen transparency and accountability in their humanitarian response to the Syrian crisis in order to ensure that the aid benefits those who need it most.

In a new report, [*Collective Resolution to Enhance Accountability and Transparency in Emergencies: Lebanon Report*](https://www.transparency.org/whatwedo/publication/create_lebanon)*,* developed in partnership with [Groupe URD](http://www.urd.org/?lang=en), the global anti-corruption organisation found that adopting a stronger risk management approach and enhancing communication with – and the participation of – affected people are necessary in order to strengthen the effectiveness of the response as well as the integrity of humanitarian aid.

Through in-depth interviews with affected communities and stakeholders, the study shows that in a highly fragile context, with a governance system weakened by years of national and regional turmoil, the level of risk for inappropriate and corrupt practices increases which threatens the overall integrity of the aid response.

The most notable risks are linked to the programme approach, such as aid delivery through public institutions and sub-contracted actors, as well as in various operational processes, including the registration of refugees, targeting beneficiaries, needs assessments and needs coverage, human resources management, financial transactions, and monitoring, evaluation and accountability mechanisms.

The unusual context in which this aid response is taking place – a middle income country with significant involvement of public institutions and diverse actors – as well as a certain level of acceptance of corruption among Lebanese society creates new and different challenges.

Most humanitarian actors recognise that the Lebanese context exposes their operations to specific corruption and integrity risks and have therefore put in place mitigation measures, including using social media and new technologies for whistleblowing and complaints mechanisms, implementing a clear separation of duties of programmatic functions, as well as having anti-fraud policies and internal complaint mechanisms in place.

However, for most organisations or programmes, risk analysis and management are split into a diverse set of tools which do not always allow for a comprehensive approach. Analysing integrity risks in a systematic and continuous manner is challenging but critical for humanitarian actors in order to improve the transparency and integrity of their response to the refugee crisis in Lebanon.

Transparency International makes the following **recommendations**:

Humanitarian aid agencies should:

* Advocate for and support more systematic, comprehensive risk assessments and tools.
* Organise, participate in and encourage internal and inter-agency fora for humanitarian actors to discuss integrity risks, and collective strategies to respond to these risks.
* Strengthen the information provided and enhance communication with affected populations.
* Continue to improve the management of feedback, whistleblowing and complaint mechanisms, and ensure that feedbacks, alerts and complaints are dealt with.

Donor agencies should:

* Advocate for more transparency in monitoring expenditure of grants disbursed via all actors and develop integrity indicators in selection criteria for partners and local intermediaries.
* Support improved publishing of timely, transparent, harmonised and open high-quality data on humanitarian funding, in particular in line with FTS and IATI.

The Government of Lebanon should:

* Publish a national budget and report on all public sector expenditures as well as all financial reports received from humanitarian actors.
* Increase anti-corruption training of public authorities and staff to help them prevent, detect, report and respond to corruption risks.

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*Transparency International is the global civil society organisation leading the fight against corruption.*

**Note to editors:** Click [here](https://www.transparency.org/whatwedo/publication/create_lebanon) to download the full report. Funded by the European Commission's humanitarian aid department, this report is part of a series of four case studies looking at corruption risks in the delivery of humanitarian assistance in complex emergencies as well as recommendations on how to prevent corruption. Case studies on Somalia, Guinea and Afghanistan are available [here](https://www.transparency.org/whatwedo/publications/top/83).

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