

Assessing Budget Participation Readiness

THE MINISTRY OF ENERGY AND WATER IN LEBANON

Assignment conducted by
Transparency International – Lebanon Chapter



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABOUT THE PARTICIPATION READINESS SCORE	1
SELECTION JUSTIFICATION	1
METHODOLOGY	1
CHALLENGES AND GAPS	1
ASSESSMENT AND JUSTIFICATION	2
1. BUDGET TRANSPARENCY	2
A1.1 Production of Key Budget Documents & Fiscal Information	2
A1.2 Online Platform for Budget Documents & Fiscal Information	4
A1.3 Public Availability of Key Budget Documents & Fiscal Information	5
A1.4 Public Availability of Budget Data in a Machine-Readable Format	6
A1.5 Timeliness of the Availability of Budget Documents & Fiscal Information	7
A1.6 Production of a Citizens' Budget	8
A1.7 Public Availability & Timeliness of a Citizens' Budget	9
2. POLITICAL WILL	10
A2.1 Political Will of the Head of the Institution	10
A2.2 Political Will of the Institutional Staff / Public Officials	14
A2.3 Institutional Understanding of Open / Good Governance	16
A2.4 Institutional Commitment to Open / Good Governance	16
3. LEGAL MANDATES & OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORKS	17
A3.1 Constitutional Provisions on Public Participation	17
A3.2 Local Laws & Governing Legislation on Public Participation	18
A3.3 Regulatory Framework on Access to Information	19
A3.4 Institutional Experience with Participatory Processes & Mechanisms	20
A3.5 Quality of Budget Process & System	21
4. CIVIC SPACE	23
A4.1 Civic Space Conditions	23
A4.2 Civil Society Participatory Environment	25
A4.3 CSO Consultation	26
A4.4 The Right to Peaceful Assembly	27
A4.5 Citizen Readiness to Participate	28
SCORING	30
ASSESSING PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN BUDGET PROCESSES	31
PARTICIPATION READINESS SCORE	32

ABOUT THE PARTICIPATION READINESS SCORE

The **Participation Readiness Score** is part A of the state of participation measurement tool developed by TI-S. The **Participation readiness Score** is measured via a range of unique and proxy indicators that assess the extent to which the main pre-conditions and enabling factors of meaningful public participation in budget processes are met in a national or local context. It aims to measure readiness at an institutional level, drawing on broader contextual factors.

SELECTION JUSTIFICATION

- The selection was based on Transparency International -Lebanon Chapter sector priority.
- Since the assessment tool was not conceived to assess a sector, but rather an institution, the Ministry of Energy and Water, was selected to represent the sector, knowing that the Energy sector is not strictly limited to the intervention of the selected ministry.
- As a matter of fact, the below assessment is indicative of the participation readiness of the Ministry of Energy and Water which is a key stakeholder in the Energy sector.

METHODOLOGY

The researcher followed the methodology detailed in the [SANCUS Assessment Toolkit](#).

1. Selection of sector.
2. Selection of the relevant public institution to represent the sector.
3. Dissecting of indicators and development of supplementary questions.
4. Identification, for each indicator, the various sources of information (KIs, media, websites, observations, etc.).
5. Conducting data collection.
6. Cross-analysing information.
7. Assessing indicators and justifying rating and responses.
8. Reviewing.

CHALLENGES AND GAPS

- KIs sampling biases
 - The researcher faced some difficulties in identifying an acceptable number of CSOs actively working on the Energy sector.
- Sectors specificity
 - The researcher has inferred that some sectors such as the energy sector heavily relying on capital intensive industries, are more prone to corruption and less open to transparency and participation (**Toukan, 2016**).
- Public sectors buy-in
 - Transparency International – Lebanon Chapter face some difficulties in getting the ministries to commit to such exercises, especially in times of crisis when the priorities are obviously elsewhere. As a mitigation measure, the researcher attempted to interview former employees and TI-Leb will attempt to solicit the ministries feedback on the preliminary results in a later stage.

ASSESSMENT AND JUSTIFICATION

1. BUDGET TRANSPARENCY

A1.1 Production of Key Budget Documents & Fiscal Information





Assessment Pillar	A1. Budget Transparency
Indicator	A1.1 Production of Key Budget Documents & Fiscal Information
Indicator Question	<p>Which of the following key budget documents does the public institution produce? (Please select all that apply).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Budget Statement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Executive's Budget Proposal <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Enacted Budget <input type="checkbox"/> Citizens' Budget <input type="checkbox"/> In-Year Report <input type="checkbox"/> Mid-Year Review <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Year-End Report <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audit Report <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please Specify): _____ <input type="checkbox"/> None <p>Guidance: Please see here for more information on the characteristics and content of the key budget documents; each produced at different stages of a typical budget cycle.</p> <p><i>In locating key budget documents, researchers may refer to the website of the public institution, request direction from relevant public officials at the public institution, and/or refer websites or consult officials from other associated public institutions, such as the Ministry of Finance.</i></p>
<p>Justification Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.</p>	<p>At the Ministry level:</p> <p>The Ministry of Energy and Water (MoEW) follows the regular procedure during the budget preparation process, similarly to any other public administration. The budget is prepared at department level, compiled at the general directorate level, and submitted as a budget proposal to the budget directorate the MoF:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The MoEW does produce a budget proposal but does not publish it separately on its platforms. ▪ The MoEW does not publish its enacted budget separately on its platforms. ▪ The MoEW neither produces nor publishes any citizen friendly guide specific to its proposed or enacted budget. ▪ The MoEW neither produces nor publishes any in-year, or mid-year reports. ▪ The MoEW produces the closure of accounts on a yearly basis but does not publish it. ▪ The MoEW does not produced audit reports. ▪

<p style="text-align: center;">Justification Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.</p>	<p>At the government level</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The government of Lebanon only produces a budget circular which is no longer considered a pre-budget statement. The concerned ministry does not produce any pre-budget statement. ▪ The Ministry of Energy and Water (MoEW) produces a budget proposal and submits it to the Ministry of Finance as part of the budget preparation process. The MoEW has never published its budget proposal on its website; Yet the Ministry of Finance (MoF) used to publish the government Executives' budget proposal (EBP) (including the full version of the MoEW budget proposal), however during the last couple of years, the EBP is no longer available on the MoF's website. It is usually leaked unofficially to the media, yet it is always unclear which is the final version. ▪ The ministry's enacted budget is also published as part of the state enacted budget. It is systematically published in two versions: (i) a brief version published in the Official Gazette, (ii) a detailed version published on the MoF website. ▪ The Citizen's budget is only produced for the state budget including one single mention of the MoEW budgeted allocation for the upcoming year. Therefore, we decided not to consider that it is representative of the selected ministry budget. ▪ In year reports are rather general and not specific to ministries. They are produced based on treasury data and published with significant delays by the Ministry of Finance. ▪ Mid-year reviews are not produced at all. ▪ Year-End reports, also referred to as "closure of accounts reports" are produced on a yearly basis but not available for the public. ▪ The court of account is mandated by the law to audit the closure of accounts and produce audit reports for each administration. It has produced audit reports with significant delays. The reports were not published officially, but rather leaked in the Media.
<p>Source(s) of Information</p>	<p> Link to the MoF website Link to the official gazette The Institute of finance (IoF) website Link to the Citizen Budget The researcher knowledge and observation of the financial information management system linking the Ministry of Finance to all ministries and public administrations. </p>

ASSESSMENT AND JUSTIFICATION

1. BUDGET TRANSPARENCY

A1.2 Online Platform for Budget Documents & Fiscal Information

Assessment Pillar	A1. Budget Transparency
Indicator	A1.2 Online Platform for Budget Documents & Fiscal Information
Indicator Question	<p>To what extent does the public institution maintain one or more websites or web portals for publishing institutional budget and fiscal information? (Please provide relevant links in the source(s) of information box below).</p> <p>Guidance: This question assesses whether the public institution maintains a dedicated, functional online platform for the publication of its own budget and fiscal information; the question does not aim to assess whether the platform itself publishes up-to-date budget information (see A1.3).</p>
Scoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="443 1010 1453 1111">  High (2): The public institution maintains a functioning website or web portal to support the publication of budget and fiscal information. <li data-bbox="443 1144 1417 1323">  Medium (1): The public institution does not maintain its own website or web portal to support the publication of budget and fiscal information, but such information may be hosted on the website or portal of a different public institution (e.g., the Ministry of Finance etc.) <li data-bbox="443 1357 1453 1536">  Low / None (0): The public institution, or other associated institution, does not maintain a functioning website or web portal to support the publication of budget and fiscal information; or the public institution does not produce key budget documents (refer A1.1). <li data-bbox="443 1547 847 1615">  <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable (-)
Justification Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.	The Ministry of Energy and Water maintains a functioning website or web portal to support the publication of budget and fiscal information.
Source(s) of Information	Link to the Ministry of Energy and Water Website

ASSESSMENT AND JUSTIFICATION

1. BUDGET TRANSPARENCY





A1.3 Public Availability of Key Budget Documents & Fiscal Information

Assessment Pillar	A1. Budget Transparency
Indicator	A1.3 Public Availability of Key Budget Documents & Fiscal Information
Indicator Question	<p>To what extent does the public institution make key budget documents (refer A1.1) available to the public?</p> <p>Guidance: To be considered ‘available to the public’, a budget document should be: 1) published on the official website of the institution or on that of another relevant public institution (e.g., Ministry of Finance), and 2) available free of charge and/or entail no additional cost to access. If both these conditions are not met, the budget documents cannot be considered available to the public.</p> <p><i>NB. This question is adapted from the International Budget Partnership’s “Open Budget Survey Guidelines on the Public Availability of Budget Documents”. Please see here for more information.</i></p>
Scoring	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> High (2): One or more key budget documents are published on the official website or portal of the institution, or that of another public institution, and are available free of any additional cost.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Medium (1): One or more key budget documents are available in hard copy format but are not available online, and thus entail additional cost to access.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Low / None (0): Key budget documents are produced but are available for internal purposes / use only; or the public institution does not produce key budget documents (refer A1.1).</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable (-)</p>
<p>Justification Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A detailed version of the enacted budget specific to the Ministry of Energy and Water showing line by line appropriations is available as part of the state budget document published on the Ministry of Finance Website. ▪ Over the last decade, the proposed budget was rarely published. In fact, it was published for a couple of years by the MoF as part of the overall state budget proposal, but never published by the MoEW as a standalone document. ▪ The year-end report (closure of accounts), although produced at the ministry level on a yearly basis, it was never published. ▪ Relevant audit reports produced by the Court of Account are not published.
Source(s) of Information	<p>The Ministry of Finance Website: www.finance.gov.lb link to the specific page publishing the enacted budget. The operational budget is detailed from page 696 to page 715 The investment budget is detailed from page 973 to page 983</p>

ASSESSMENT AND JUSTIFICATION

1. BUDGET TRANSPARENCY

A1.4 Public Availability of Budget Data in a Machine-Readable Format





Assessment Pillar	A1. Budget Transparency
Indicator	A1.4 Public Availability of Budget Data in a Machine-Readable Format
Indicator Question	<p>To what extent does the public institution ensure that the numerical data contained in the budget documents are made available to the public in a machine-readable format?</p> <p>Guidance: Budget data may be considered ‘machine-readable’ if it is in a format that can be easily processed by a computer (CSV, JSON, XML). Numerical data contained in PDF, Word (.doc / .docx), or HTML files do not qualify as machine-readable. Please see here for more information.</p>
Scoring	<p> <input type="checkbox"/> High (2): All numerical data contained in the key budget documents are available in a machine-readable format.</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Medium (1): Some of the numerical data contained in the key budget documents are available in a machine-readable format.</p> <p> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Low / None (0): The numerical data contained in the key budget documents are not available in a machine-readable format; or key budget documents are not made available to the public (refer A1.3).</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable (-)</p>
<p>Justification Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All numerical data contained in the key budget documents are only made available in a PFM format¹. Some aggregate indicators are available in an online version of the Citizen Budget which is Citizen budget dashboard. Although the dashboard is technically the front-end of a very disaggregated budget data re-produced in a tabular format on an excel sheet. The raw data sets are not made available to the public.
Source(s) of Information	<p>The Ministry of Finance Website Link to the Ministry of finance website</p> <p>The Ministry of Energy and Water website Link to the Ministry of Energy and Water website</p> <p>The Institute of Finance website Link to the Institute of finance website</p>

¹ Although some PDF content can be extracted to excel, the budget data are not displayed in a tabular format with makes it almost impossible to use the new technology to extract a usable set of data.

ASSESSMENT AND JUSTIFICATION

1. BUDGET TRANSPARENCY

A1.5 Timeliness of the Availability of Budget Documents & Fiscal Information

Assessment Pillar	A1. Budget Transparency
Indicator	A1.5 Timeliness of the Availability of Budget Documents & Fiscal Information
Indicator Question	<p>To what extent does the public institution ensure that the key budget documents produced by the institution are made available to the public within a reasonable timeframe?</p> <p>Guidance: A timeframe may be considered 'reasonable' if the budget documents are published in time for the information they contain to be useful and relevant to all stakeholders. Please see here for accepted timeframes for the publication of specific budget documents based on international best practice.</p>
Scoring	<p> <input type="checkbox"/> High (2): All key budget documents produced by the institution are made available to the public within a reasonable timeframe.</p> <p> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medium (1): Some key budget documents produced by the institution are made available to the public within a reasonable timeframe.</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Low / None (0): Key budget documents are made available to the public but not within a reasonable timeframe; or key budget documents are not made available to the public (refer A1.3).</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable (-)</p>
<p>Justification Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Even though the ministry's budget might be considered published as part of the enacted state budget, yet the MoEW does not take action to actively publish any of its budget related documents. ▪ The Access to Information index, that assesses the compliance of the ministry to the proactive disclosure of budget related documentation, states that The MoEW does not publish its annual reports related to budget and finance. ▪ Since key budget documents are not made available to the public by the ministry, option 3 seems to be the most accurate answer in reflecting the reality.
Source(s) of Information	The open budget survey questionnaire Link to the questionnaire (to check page 13)

ASSESSMENT AND JUSTIFICATION

1. BUDGET TRANSPARENCY

A1.6 Production of a Citizens' Budget

Assessment Pillar	A1. Budget Transparency
Indicator	A1.6 Production of a Citizens' Budget
Indicator Question	<p>For which of the following budget documents does the public institution produce a corresponding Citizens' Budget? (Please select all that apply).</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Executive's Budget Proposal <input type="checkbox"/> Enacted Budget <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please Specify): _____ </p> <p> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> None (The public institution does not produce a Citizens' Budget) </p> <p>Guidance: A Citizens' Budget is a simplified, non-technical representation of budget and fiscal information. They are designed to be understood by as many people as possible and thus encourage wider public engagement in budget processes. While this is important for all key budget documents, Citizens' Budgets typically correspond to the Executive's Budget Proposal and the Enacted Budget.</p> <p>Please see here for more information and examples of Citizens' Budgets.</p>
<p>Justification Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Ministry of Energy and Water does not produce a citizen budget. ▪ The citizen budget produced by the Institute of Finance cannot be considered as representative of the Ministry of Energy and Water budget since the latter only shows as one line in the document.
Source(s) of Information	<p>The Ministry of Energy and Water website Link to the Ministry of Energy and Water website The Institute of Finance Website Link to the Institute of Finance website The Ministry of finance website Link to the Ministry of Finance website</p>

ASSESSMENT AND JUSTIFICATION

1. BUDGET TRANSPARENCY

A1.7 Public Availability & Timeliness of a Citizens' Budget

Assessment Pillar	A1. Budget Transparency
Indicator	A1.7 Public Availability & Timeliness of a Citizens' Budget
Indicator Question	<p>To what extent does the public institution make Citizens' Budgets available to the public, and within a reasonable timeframe?</p> <p>Guidance: To be considered 'available to the public', a Citizens' Budget should be: 1) published on the official website of the institution or on that of another relevant public institution (e.g., Ministry of Finance), and 2) available free of charge and/or entail no additional cost to access.</p> <p>According to best practice, the publication of a Citizens' Budget should take place at the same time as the corresponding budget document. For example, a 'reasonable timeframe' for the publication of a Citizens' Budget corresponding to an Enacted Budget would be no later than 3 months after legislative approval.</p> <p>Please see here for timeframes for the publication of specific budget documents based on international best practice.</p>
Scoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> High (2): The Citizen Budget is published on the official website or portal of the institution and published within a reasonable timeframe. <input type="checkbox"/> Medium (1): The Citizen Budget is published on the official website or portal of the institution but is not published within a reasonable timeframe. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Low / None (0): The Citizen Budget is not published on the official website or portal of the institution, and thus not made available to the public; or the public institution does not produce a Citizens' Budget (refer A1.6). <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable (-)
Justification <i>Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Ministry of Energy and Water does not produce any citizen budget specific to its budget.
Source(s) of Information	N/A

ASSESSMENT AND JUSTIFICATION

2. POLITICAL WILL

A2.1 Political Will of the Head of the Institution

Assessment Pillar	A2. Political Will
Indicator	A2.1 Political Will of the Head of the Institution
Indicator Question	<p>To what extent does the head of the institution* demonstrate support for public participation in decision-making processes?</p> <p>Guidance: Support for public participation and engagement in decision-making processes may take many forms. This may include initiatives or positive actions to introduce, encourage, or strengthen participation in decision-making processes, or references to public participation through speeches, statements, interviews, publications, and/or other official communications.</p> <p>* For the purposes of this assessment, the 'head of the institution' may be any individual, or group of individuals, legally empowered or officially charged with decision-making authority in relation to the overall function and administration of the public institution.</p> <p>Please see here (p.16) for more information on a range of potential considerations involved in measuring political will.</p>
Scoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> High (2): The head of the institution leads, or proactively supports and advocates for public participation in decision-making processes. <input type="checkbox"/> Medium (1): The head of the institution is neutral on the value and importance of public participation in decision-making processes and neither supports nor actively opposes initiatives to facilitate or strengthen such participation. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Low / None (0): The head of institution opposes or demonstrates limited interest in supporting initiatives to facilitate of strengthen public participation in decision-making processes. <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable (-): The head of the institution is willing to support and promote participation in decision-making but is unable to do so due to legal (refer A3), civic space (refer A4), or other constraints.

<p style="text-align: center;">Justification Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The feedback from the Key Informant Interviews (comprising representatives of NGOs and a former director general), implied that the decision making is rather concentrated in the hand of the minister and their advisors, while the administration and external stakeholders were systematically excluded. Suggested policy design and solutions were enforced by the minister team without seeking advice neither from the administration nor from the civil society organizations. ▪ The researcher did not capture any statement of the minister on the media openly supporting or willing to support public participation in decision-making processes. ▪ In conclusion, the researcher followed 2 lines of evidence: one based on the KIIs showing a clear opposition to openness and participation, and the second based on a desk review not showing any proof or official reference indicating that the ministers might be supportive of public participation. ▪ The researcher decided to opt for number 3 “Low/None” score.
<p style="text-align: center;">Source(s) of Information</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ KIIs ▪ Desk review

ASSESSMENT AND JUSTIFICATION

2. POLITICAL WILL

A2.2 Political Will of the Institutional Staff / Public Officials

Assessment Pillar	A2. Political Will
Indicator	A2.2 Political Will of the Institutional Staff / Public Officials
Indicator Question	<p>To what extent do the institutional staff / public officials demonstrate support for public participation in decision-making processes?</p> <p>Guidance: <i>Support for public participation and engagement in decision-making processes may take many forms. This may include initiatives or positive actions to introduce, encourage, or strengthen participation in decision-making processes, or references to public participation through speeches, statements, interviews, publications, and/or other official communications.</i></p>
Scoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> High (2): Staff / public officials lead, or proactively support and advocate for public participation in decision-making processes. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medium (1): Staff / public officials are neutral on the value and importance of public participation in decision-making processes and neither support nor oppose initiatives to facilitate or strengthen such participation. <input type="checkbox"/> Low / None (0): Staff / public officials oppose or demonstrate limited interest in supporting initiatives to facilitate or strengthen public participation in decision-making processes. <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable (-): Staff / public officials are willing to support and promote participation in decision-making but are unable to do so due to legal (refer A3), civic space (refer A4), or other constraints.

<p style="text-align: center;">Justification <i>Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Based on the feedback collected during the Key Informant Interviews, the researcher concluded that the ministry staff was also excluded from the decision making. The decision making is concentrated in the hands of the minister and readymade solutions are enforced without consultation with relevant stakeholders. ▪ The researcher could observe that the staff was open to participatory approaches. Yet, the researcher could not capture any official statement that backs up the claim that the staff is open to public participation. ▪ Based on the above, and since the researcher could not make a clear-cut decision regarding the position of the staff, he decided to opt for option 2 “Medium” score”. ▪ Remark: The researcher could not rely on any press coverage since public officials are not allowed to speak to the media without prior approval from the minister.
<p style="text-align: center;">Source(s) of Information</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Key Informant Interviews ▪ Desk review

ASSESSMENT AND JUSTIFICATION

2. POLITICAL WILL

A2.3 Institutional Understanding of Open / Good Governance




Assessment Pillar	A2. Political Will
Indicator	A2.3 Institutional Understanding of Open / Good Governance
Indicator Question	<p>To what extent does the head of the institution, and public officials at the institution, understand the concept, principles, and/or features of open / good governance, or public participation in decision-making processes?</p> <p>Guidance: <i>Public institutions may demonstrate understanding of the topic(s) through, for example, an ability to elaborate key concepts, attendance at related training programs or workshops, or evidence of prior exposure to activities or initiatives promoting transparency, participation, and accountability.</i></p> <p><i>The institution would possess a 'high' level of understanding if the head of the institution and institutional staff, i.e., at both levels, consistently demonstrate a strong understanding of the topic and exposure to related activities or training.</i></p>
Scoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> High (2): The public institution possesses a high level of understanding of the concepts, principles, and features of open / good governance. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medium (1): The public institution possesses a moderate level of understanding of the concepts, principles, and features of open / good governance. <input type="checkbox"/> Low / None (0): The public institution possesses limited or no understanding of the concepts, principles, and features of open / good governance. <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable (-)

<p style="text-align: center;">Justification Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The feedback from the Key Informant Interviews was not conclusive of whether the ministry head and public officials have an acceptable level of understanding of the concepts related to open and good governance. ▪ Number of employees have participated in workshops aimed to enhance their knowledge on international good practices such as medium-term budget framework, governance and other. ▪ Although these workshops were neither planned to be part of any initiative promoting good governance, nor projected to be part of an individual or institutional development plan, they are still linked to the concepts of transparency, participation, and accountability. ▪ The Desk review has brought to light few occasions showing a certain level of understanding of good governance reflected either in official reports or in interventions. ▪ Based on the above, the researcher opted rather for a moderate choice no 2 “Medium”.
<p style="text-align: center;">Source(s) of Information</p>	<p>Key Informant Interviews The website of the Ministry of Energy and Water Link to the policy statement. The website of the OECD Link to the report</p>

ASSESSMENT AND JUSTIFICATION

2. POLITICAL WILL

A2.4 Institutional Commitment to Open / Good Governance

Assessment Pillar	A2. Political Will
Indicator	A2.4 Institutional Commitment to Open / Good Governance
Indicator Question	<p>Is the public institution part of any formal or informal arrangements and partnerships at a national, regional, or global level that aim to promote and support the principles of open / good governance?</p> <p>Guidance: Evidence of institutional commitment to open / good governance may comprise any formal or informal arrangements or partnerships in the open / good governance space, including membership of global or local initiatives such as the Open Government Partnership or participation in civil society forums and working groups.</p>
Scoring	<p> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes (2): The public institution is a member of one or more formal or informal institutional arrangements or partnerships.</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> No (1): The public institution is not a member of any formal or informal institutional arrangements or partnerships.</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable (-)</p>
<p>Justification Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.</p>	<p>The desk review shows that the MoEW has participated in some arrangements and partnerships aiming to support the principles of open governance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) Oil and Gaz ▪ The Ministry is represented by the Lebanese Center for Energy Conservation (LCEC) in Lebanon's Committee of the World Energy Council. Since 2012, LCEC acts as the secretariat of the Lebanon Committee of the World Energy Council (WEC), whose mission is 'To promote the sustainable supply and use of energy for the greatest benefit of all people' and to secure affordable and inclusive energy transition through pulling together intelligent leadership, catalysing informed dialogue, and building up the needed knowledge and skills. ▪ LCEC is an entrusted partner to many national, regional, and international entities dedicated to the development of sustainable energy. Jointly, many initiatives and projects are currently under implementation, targeting the public and private sectors in Lebanon. Among the initiatives supported by LCEC: Energy Efficient Home Appliances, target energy efficiency in schools, efficient initiative in the public sector, etc.
Source(s) of Information	<p>Lebanon commitment to EITI Link to the announcement World Energy Council Website Link to the website LCEC website Link to LCEC website</p>

ASSESSMENT AND JUSTIFICATION

3. LEGAL MANDATES & OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORKS





A3.1 Constitutional Provisions on Public Participation

Assessment Pillar	A3. Legal Mandates and Operational Frameworks
Indicator	A3.1 Constitutional Provisions on Public Participation
Indicator Question	<p>Does the country's constitution, or equivalent supreme law, enshrine the right for citizens to participate in decision-making process?</p> <p>Guidance: : Please specify the relevant constitutional provision(s) in the justification box below.</p>
Scoring	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes (2): The country's constitution, or equivalent supreme law, explicitly provides for citizen participation in decision-making processes.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No (1): The country's constitution, or equivalent supreme law, does not explicitly provide for citizen participation in decision-making processes.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable (-)</p>
<p>Justification Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.</p>	<p>The Constitution of Lebanon does not provide for the right to participate in decision-making.</p>
Source(s) of Information	<p>Presidency of the Republic website: Link to the constitution</p>

ASSESSMENT AND JUSTIFICATION

3. LEGAL MANDATES & OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORKS

A3.2 Local Laws & Governing Legislation on Public Participation

Assessment Pillar	A3. Legal Mandates and Operational Frameworks
Indicator	A3.2 Local Laws & Governing Legislation on Public Participation
Indicator Question	<p>To what extent do the laws, polices, and/or regulations establishing or governing the function of the public institution provide for public participation in decision-making processes?</p> <p>Guidance: Legislative provisions outlining public participation may include a wide spectrum of participatory approaches ranging from active involvement in decision-making processes to citizen consultations and satisfaction surveys.</p> <p>Please specify the name of the legislation / policy that contains such provisions and provide links where available in the source(s) of information box below.</p>
Scoring	<p> <input type="checkbox"/> High (2): The governing laws / regulations include a binding provision(s) that explicitly mandates public participation in decision-making processes.</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Medium (1): The governing laws / regulations include a non-binding provision(s) that recommends, but does not mandate, public participation in decision-making processes.</p> <p> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Low / None (0): Governing laws / regulations do not exist or do not include provisions that mandate or recommend public participation in decision-making processes.</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable (-):</p>
<p>Justification Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Public Accounting Law 14969/1963 that organizes the budget preparation process in Lebanon, does not stipulate any provision on public participation and consequently does not grant citizens the right to public participation in decision making. ▪ The law 20/1966 (and its amendments) establishing the ministry does not stipulate any provision on public participation and consequently does not grant citizens the right to public participation in decision making. ▪ The decree 5469/1966 organizing the ministry's operation does not stipulate any provision on public participation and consequently does not grant citizens the right to public participation in decision making.
Source(s) of Information	<p>Ministry of Energy and Water website: Link to the law 20/1966 Link to the decree 5469/1966 Lebanese University website: Link to Public Accounting law 14969/1963</p>

ASSESSMENT AND JUSTIFICATION

3. LEGAL MANDATES & OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORKS





A3.3 Regulatory Framework on Access to Information

Assessment Pillar	A3. Legal Mandates and Operational Frameworks
Indicator	A3.3 Regulatory Framework on Access to Information
Indicator Question	<p>To what extent does the country's regulatory framework grant citizens the right to access public information?</p> <p>Guidance: <i>The regulatory framework around access to public information may include laws or policies, including executive directives, on Access to Information or Freedom of Information Acts, and are often implemented by a government agency mandated to enforce and coordinate the provision of such information.</i></p> <p><i>Please specify the name of the legislation / policy that contains such provisions and provide links where available in the source(s) of information box below.</i></p>
Scoring	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> High (2): The right to access public information is guaranteed through dedicated legislation on access to information and enshrined in the constitution, or equivalent supreme law.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Medium (1): Specific provisions on access to public information are included in relevant, non-binding policies and guidelines but are not mandated by law and/or enshrined in the constitution.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Low / None (0): The right to access public information is not guaranteed through dedicated legislation, enshrined in the constitution, or included in any relevant policies and guidelines.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable (-):</p>
Justification <i>Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The right to access public information is guaranteed through the Right of Access to Information Law 28/2017 and its amendments. ▪ The right to access information law is a dedicated legislation granting all citizens the right to access all state information including all data, reports, documents, contracts, decisions, etc. and any other type of document produced by a state entity, while respecting the confidentiality of personal information and excluding specific fields such as defence, national security, etc. It also requires the administration to publish specific documentation automatically, including document disclosing financial information. ▪ The public procurement law 244/2021 requires all procuring entities to publish procurement documents on a central online platform.
Source(s) of Information	<p>Lebanese university website: Link to the Access to Information Law 28/2017 and its amendments article 5. Link to Public Procurement Law 244/2021 Link to the Law Enhancing Transparency in the Petroleum Sector 84/2018</p>

ASSESSMENT AND JUSTIFICATION

3. LEGAL MANDATES & OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORKS





A3.4 Institutional Experience with Participatory Processes & Mechanisms

Assessment Pillar	A3. Legal Mandates and Operational Frameworks
Indicator	A3.4 Institutional Experience with Participatory Processes & Mechanisms
Indicator Question	<p>To what extent does the public institution have prior experience in facilitating and implementing participatory processes and mechanisms?</p> <p>Guidance: <i>The public institution may demonstrate prior experience in a wide range of public engagement activities and initiatives, often varying in quality and depth. However, this question focuses on assessing the existence of participatory processes and the extent to which the institutional leadership or staff possess experience in this regard.</i></p> <p><i>To qualify as 'recent' experience, the participatory process or mechanism should have been implemented within the past 24 months of this assessment.</i></p> <p><i>Please see here (p.19-20) for more information on the broader importance of experienced personnel and political management skills in ensuring that the results of participatory processes successfully feed into policy decisions.</i></p>
Scoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  <input type="checkbox"/> High (2): The public institution has significant, recent experience facilitating and implementing successful participatory processes and mechanisms.  <input type="checkbox"/> Medium (1): The public institution has infrequently facilitated and implemented participatory processes and mechanisms with mixed results and success.  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Low / None (0): The public institution has limited or no prior experience in facilitating or implementing participatory processes or mechanisms.  <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable (-):
<p>Justification Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The feedback from key informant interviews implies that the Ministry of Energy and Water has limited experience in facilitating participatory processes. ▪ No written or formal participatory mechanism was identified.
Source(s) of Information	KIs Desk review

ASSESSMENT AND JUSTIFICATION

3. LEGAL MANDATES & OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORKS

A3.5 Quality of Budget Process & System





Assessment Pillar	A3. Legal Mandates and Operational Frameworks
Indicator	A3.5 Quality of Budget Process & System
Indicator Question	<p>To what extent does the public institution implement a high-quality budget process and system?</p> <p>Guidance: This question draws on an OECD survey that aims to benchmark good budget practices. Please see here for more information. As outlined in this survey, there are several features or practices that may comprise a 'high-quality' or successful budget process and system. These include: 1) aligning the budget process with strategic priorities; 2) ensuring transparency, access, and openness; 3) adhering to budget timelines; 4) presenting comprehensive and accurate public finances; 5) facilitating inclusive participation; 6) ensuring effective budget execution; 7) providing for independent audits.</p> <p>If scored 'high' or 'medium' on account of meeting three or more of the above criteria, please provide specific examples of practices implemented at the public institution at any stage of the budget cycle (formulation, approval, execution, or oversight) in the justification box below.</p>
Scoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="443 1218 1453 1357">  <input type="checkbox"/> High (2): The public institution consistently implements a high-quality budget process, meeting a minimum of five listed criteria around good budgeting practice across the budget cycle. <li data-bbox="443 1393 1453 1532">  <input type="checkbox"/> Medium (1): The public institution implements a moderately effective budget process, meeting a minimum of three listed criteria around good budgeting practice across the budget cycle. <li data-bbox="443 1563 1453 1702">  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Low / None (0): The public institution does not implement an effective budget process, rarely or inconsistently meeting criteria around good budgeting practice across the budget cycle. <li data-bbox="443 1733 863 1783">  <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable (-):

<p style="text-align: center;">Justification Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lebanon still adopts a line-item budget. The current budget structure, by default, does not allow the establishment of automatic and direct linkages between spending lines and policy objectives. Practically, the MoEW plans its budget based on spending lines and not objective priorities. For instance, the ministry would review the previous year’s spending on salaries and wages and would project to spend the same amount or a bit more for the upcoming year and consequently allocate an equivalent amount in the budget proposal. While in the ideal situation, it should build the annual plan based on policy objectives such as (i) increasing power supply, (ii) diversifying power supply, (iii) reducing transmission losses, (iv) improving the performance of distribution services. ▪ On the fiscal level, the MoF did not implement a binding medium term budgetary framework with clear fiscal goals and ceiling per ministry. The framework showing in the circular is rather indicative and brief. ▪ On the transparency level, Lebanon lags behind, registering low scores compared to peer-countries such as Jordan. ▪ The budget timeline is not respected across the process. Line-ministries are more likely to abide by the official deadline when submitting their draft budgets, however the remaining of the processes has been subject to systematic delays over the last decade or two. ▪ Institutional coverage is not comprehensive. Many public institutions such as Electricité du Liban (EDL) spend and operate off-budget. Other financial transactions financing the sector are not covered in the budget such as the treasury advances to EDL that were never returned to the treasury and that can be technically considered similar to loans. Such transactions are a source of significant fiscal risk, and a high likelihood for contingent liabilities to materialize. ▪ Independent audit is not being conducted on a regular basis due to the lack of human capacity hindering the efforts of supreme audit institutions. ▪ Budget execution is subject to ad-hoc budget amendments including additional spending provisions, systematic transfers from the reserve line, treasury advances without prior guarantee of paying back.
<p style="text-align: center;">Source(s) of Information</p>	<p>Lebanese University website: Link to the public accounting law no 4969/1963 The Institute of Finance website: Link to the citizen budget The International Budget Partnership website: Link to the Open Budget Index – Lebanon page Transparency International website: Link to the regional comparative study Financially Wise Website Link to the report on off-budget spending Budget circulars</p>

ASSESSMENT AND JUSTIFICATION

4. CIVIC SPACE

A4.1 Civic Space Conditions





Assessment Pillar	A4. Civic Space
Indicator	A4.1 Civic Space Conditions
Indicator Question	<p>What is the CIVICUS Monitor rating of civic space conditions in the country of the public institution? Please refer here for the latest ratings.</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Closed <input type="checkbox"/> Repressed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Obstructed <input type="checkbox"/> Narrowed <input type="checkbox"/> Open </p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable (No Country Rating available)</p> <p>b. To what extent does the public institution operate in conditions of open civic space?</p> <p><i>Guidance: Please see here for more information on how civic space conditions under each CIVICUS Monitor rating category are broadly understood. If civic space conditions at a specific institution / municipality are worse, or better, than the country rating, please describe how this is so in the justification box below.</i></p>
Scoring	<p> <input type="checkbox"/> High (2): The state enables and safeguards civic space; authorities provide space and platforms for open dialogue with the public (CIVICUS Rating equivalent: Open).</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Medium (1): The state allows individuals and civil society to exercise rights and freedoms, but with occasional violations and restrictions (CIVICUS Rating Equivalent: Narrowed).</p> <p> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Low / None (0): Civic space is heavily contested, significantly constrained, or completely closed (CIVICUS Rating Equivalent: Obstructed, Repressed, or Closed).</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable (-):</p>

<p>Justification Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.</p>	<p>This indicator attempted to assess the various aspects of civic space conditions according to the CIVICUS methodology, covering the freedom of assembly and expression, the freedom of speech, the media, and access to information, through direct Key Informant Interviews.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Most respondents to Key Informant Interviews considered that citizens and CSOs are to a certain extent free to organize and exercise their rights to freedom of association, peaceful assembly, and expression. ▪ On the right of Association: All citizens are free to join a formal or informal group to take collective action, and this right is guaranteed by the constitution article 13. ▪ On the right of peaceful assembly: it has been reported that this right was either violated or challenged by the political authorities in reference to the event of the Bisri Dam. ▪ On the right of expression: most respondents to Key Informant Interviews considered that, despite free media being guaranteed by the constitution article 13, the ministry is not open for positive dialogue and most of the media is controlled and funded by political groups leading to self-censure, except for alternative media. ▪ Most respondents to Key Informant Interviews considered that access to the ministry information is very limited and many cases the data does not exist especially when it comes to data related to procurement contracts.
<p>Source(s) of Information</p>	<p>Key Informant Interviews Press coverage: Link 1 Link 2 Presidency of the Republic website: Link to the constitution</p>

ASSESSMENT AND JUSTIFICATION

4. CIVIC SPACE





A4.2 Civil Society Participatory Environment

Assessment Pillar	A4. Civic Space
Indicator	A4.2 Civil Society Participatory Environment
Indicator Question	<p>To what extent do citizens voluntarily participate and get involved in the work of independent civil society organisations (CSOs)?</p> <p>Guidance: This question draws on the Varieties of Democracy indicator (V-Dem Indicator 3.10.0.5) exploring the involvement of people in civil society organisations. In making this rating, researchers may enter the relevant country and variable (i.e., “CSO participatory environment”) to generate a graphical representation of trends linked to the assessed variable here.</p> <p>Please see here for the codebook of V-Dem Indicators.</p>
Scoring	<p> <input type="checkbox"/> High (2): There are many independent CSOs, and it is common for people to be at least occasionally engaged with CSO work.</p> <p> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medium (1): There are many independent CSOs, but public involvement in CSO work is minimal.</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Low / None (0): Most CSOs / associations are sponsored by the state, and public involvement is limited or not purely voluntary.</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable (-):</p>
<p>Justification Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ According to the V-Dem indicator (original scale), Lebanon scores 2.69, which suggests that although the country has many diverse CSOs, popular involvement is minimal/limited. ▪ According to most respondents to the Key Informant Interviews, the involvement of citizens in the work of independent CSOs is limited, since of the CSOs work is technical and does not require voluntary engagement from citizens. ▪ The researcher could not rely on any official source of information to measure the actual level of citizen engagement in NGOs work concerned with the energy sector. <p>The researcher could not gather conclusive evidence when it comes to the energy sector, therefore he opted for option 2.</p>
Source(s) of Information	<p>Link to the V-Dem indicator Key Informant Interviews</p>

ASSESSMENT AND JUSTIFICATION

4. CIVIC SPACE





A4.3 CSO Consultation

Assessment Pillar	A4. Civic Space
Indicator	A4.3 CSO Consultation
Indicator Question	<p>To what extent do policymakers, either at the national or local level, consult CSOs on policies relevant to their membership or domain?</p> <p>Guidance: This question draws on the Varieties of Democracy indicator (V-Dem Indicator 3.10.0.3) exploring the consultation of civil society organisations on policies relevant to their members. In making this rating, researchers may enter the relevant country and variable (i.e., “CSO Consultation”) to generate a graphical representation of trends linked to the assessed variable here.</p> <p>Please see here for the codebook of V-Dem Indicators.</p>
Scoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  <input type="checkbox"/> High (2): Relevant CSOs are recognised as stakeholders in various policy areas and are formally or informally consulted on such issues.  <input type="checkbox"/> Medium (1): A select group of CSOs are recognised as stakeholders in various policy areas are occasionally consulted on such issues.  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Low / None (0): CSOs are not recognised as stakeholders in policy areas are often not consulted in the formulation of policies.  <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable (-):
<p>Justification Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ According to the V-Dem indicator (original scale) the government of Lebanon scores 0.92 on a scale of 0 to 2, which suggests that the government rarely considers CSOs opinion. 0.92 refers to the following statement as defined by the V-Dem methodology: To some degree. CSOs are but one set of voices that policymakers sometimes take into account. ▪ According to some respondents to KIIs, the government may sometimes enlist or mobilize CSOs after policies are adopted, but it does not often consult with them in formulating policies. The 3RF framework (Electricity working group) illustrates a practical example of the MoEW low reactivity to CSOs involvement in the decision making. ▪ According to most respondents to Key Informant Interviews, CSOs are rarely consulted by MoEW and when consulted it would only be for formalities. ▪ This indicator is rated as 'low/none' as there is no clear evidence that a recurrent group of CSOs is recognized as stakeholders to feed into policy making at the MoEW.
Source(s) of Information	Key Informant Interviews Link to V-Dem Indicator

ASSESSMENT AND JUSTIFICATION

4. CIVIC SPACE





A4.4 The Right to Peaceful Assembly

Assessment Pillar	A4. Civic Space
Indicator	A4.4 The Right to Peaceful Assembly
Indicator Question	<p>To what extent do state authorities respect citizens' right to peaceful assembly?</p> <p>Guidance: This question draws on the Varieties of Democracy indicator (V-Dem Indicator 3.15.1.3) exploring the extent to which state authorities respect and protect the right to peaceful assembly. In making this rating, researchers may enter the relevant country and variable (i.e., "Freedom of Peaceful Assembly") to generate a graphical representation of trends linked to the assessed variable here.</p> <p>Please see here for the codebook of V-Dem Indicators.</p>
Scoring	<p> <input type="checkbox"/> High (2): State authorities allow and protect peaceful assemblies except in rare cases of lawful, necessary, and proportionate limits.</p> <p> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medium (1): State authorities sometimes allow peaceful assemblies but often arbitrarily deny citizens this right.</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Low / None (0): State authorities rarely or do not allow peaceful assemblies and may use force to prevent them.</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable (-):</p>
<p>Justification Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ According to the V-Dem indicator (original scale), Lebanon scored 3.14 over 4 which indicates that "Mostly. State authorities generally allow peaceful assemblies, but in rare cases arbitrarily deny citizens the right to assemble peacefully." The ministry has witnessed multiple protests against recurrent power cuts and protesters attempting to break in. The authority dealt with the protesters rather in a reasonable way, preventing them from breaking in the ministry, without compromising their safety. ▪ According to the respondents to Key Informant Interviews, state authorities allow peaceful assemblies most of the time. Yet, it requires pre-approval form the security forces. ▪ Sometimes, when the right to assembly constitutes a threat for the political elite, compromising their vested interest, this right is more likely to be violated. A blunt example is the Bisri Dam where the authority attempted to crack down on protesters under the umbrella of measures to fight covid-19.
Source(s) of Information	<p>Link to press article Key Informant Interviews Link to V-Dem Indicator Link to press article</p>

ASSESSMENT AND JUSTIFICATION

4. CIVIC SPACE

A4.5 Citizen Readiness to Participate

Assessment Pillar	A4. Civic Space
Indicator	A4.5 Citizen Readiness to Participate
Indicator Question	<p>To what extent are citizens ready to engage and contribute meaningfully to participatory decision-making processes?</p> <p>Guidance: Citizens' readiness to engage and contribute meaningfully to a participatory decision-making process may be demonstrated through one or more of the following criteria. Please select all that apply.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Prior Experience in or Awareness of Participatory Processes <input type="checkbox"/> Knowledge of Public Finance Management / Budget Processes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Organised Civil Society and Citizen Groups (see A4.2) <input type="checkbox"/> Citizen Trust in the Public Institution* <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please Specify): _____ <input type="checkbox"/> None / Not Applicable <p><i>The meeting of these criteria may be determined through, inter alia, interviews with citizen stakeholders and CSO representatives, feedback from public institutions, and/or the use of composite indicators. Please substantiate all selections and indicate the corresponding sources of information below.</i></p> <p><i>* Please see here (p.43) for more information on different approaches to measuring citizen trust in a public institution.</i></p>
Scoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/>  High (2): Citizens demonstrate a high level of readiness (i.e., meet three or more criteria) to participate in a decision-making process. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>  Medium (1): Citizens demonstrate a moderate level of readiness (i.e., meet one, but less than three, criteria) to participate in a decision-making process. <input type="checkbox"/>  Low / None (0): Citizens do not demonstrate sufficient readiness to participate meaningfully in a decision-making process. <input type="checkbox"/>  Not Applicable (-):

<p>Justification Please briefly describe the reason(s) for the score provided.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Most respondents to KIIs have stated having prior experience in or awareness of participatory process. ▪ Knowledge in public finance meets the basic level but is not elaborate to improve the negotiation power of CSOs. ▪ Civil Society and Citizen Groups' level of organization is moderate. ▪ According to KIIs, Citizen trust in the public sector (particularly the Ministry of Energy and Water) is weak, the ministry has systematically failed (over decades) to secure a minimum level of quality and sustainable service. This claim is also supported by the people discourse in the street and the late tendency to install solar power system as an alternative to the service that should have been provided by the government, and because the ministry failed to fairly regulate the privately owned generators sector. ▪ Besides, the fiscal loss generated by the sector was a key contributor to the build-up of the unsustainable debt that led to the default.
<p>Source(s) of Information</p>	<p>Key Informant Interviews Link to the article portraying the lack of trust in the government ability to deliver public services including energy. Link to article on solar power shift in Lebanon. Link to article showing household experience in shifting towards the solar power.</p>

SCORING

ASSESSING PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN BUDGET PROCESSES

Assessed Public Institution:

[Ministry of Energy and Water in Lebanon]

Date / Period of Assessment:

[March-June 2023]

Assessing Organisation / Researcher:

[Transparency International – Lebanon Chapter]

External Reviewer:

[Anoukh de Soysa]

Assessment *



A. Participation Readiness

13 / 38
(34.2 %)

B. Participation in Practice

N/A / 46
(N/A%)

State of Participation

N/A / 84
(N/A %)

*Please select the overall assessment rating of the State of Public Participation in Budget Processes in accordance with the following key:

- **High:** A State of Participation Score between **80% – 100%**
- **Medium:** A State of Participation Score between **50% – 79%**
- **Low:** A State of Participation Score between **0 – 49%**

STRENGTHS & OPPORTUNITIES

- Despite the ministry's limited effort to officially recognize good governance as a guiding principle for policy intervention (Reference the policy statement for setting up Lebanon's electricity sector on a sustainable growth published in march 2022 available on the [Link](#)), the MoEW is called upon to seize a momentum of international support, to engage in rapid, transparent, and inclusive reform and to reverse the 3-Decade of sectoral failure.
- The regulatory framework is inducive for fiscal transparency and guarantee the right to access to information. The latter being a key element to improve budget participation. The MoEW is yet to take the necessary actions to make sure that citizens can actually enjoy this right.
- The CSOs community has the minimum level that allows a meaningful and impactful involvement. However, a better organization and coordination could drastically improve the bargaining position of CSOs.

GAPS & AREAS TO IMPROVE

- The researcher has concluded that the main gap hindering public participation is the lack of conducive legal framework. In a context of crisis and scarcity of public resources, public participation is not considered a priority. If public participation is rendered compulsory by the legal framework regulating the budget process, the public administration will more likely be open to more CSOs involvement and participation.
- Since the institution does not have any experience with participatory processes and mechanisms, it could be very beneficial to start building this portfolio by launching limited-scale participatory initiatives, before thinking of comprehensive approaches.
- Another area to improve revolves around building the capacities of local NGOs to monitor budget and programmatic data and information, to improve their lobbying skills and techniques, and to influence the budget process at all levels.
- A national effort should be invested to instil a culture of free speech, free media, private-public dialogue, and finally a culture of shared responsibility and duty of participation.

PARTICIPATION READINESS SCORE

Part A: Participation Readiness: 13 / 38 (34.2%)

A1. Budget Transparency: 4 / 10

The Ministry maintains a functioning website to support the publication of budget and fiscal information and make it available to the public. However, budget documents are not produced in a simplified manner. The enacted budget specific to the Ministry is available as part of the state budget document published in detail on the Ministry of Finance Website. The budget is not published in a readable format and the disaggregated data is not made available to the public.

A2. Political Will: 4 / 08

The ministry official narrative does not reflect a political will to encourage public participation. All decisions are taken at the minister level and concentrated in the hands of the political elite. Despite that the Ministry participated previously in formal arrangements and partnerships related to the oil and gas sector, the concept of good governance is not clearly reflected in the ministry's work and operations.

A3. Legal Mandates & Operational Frameworks: 2 / 10

Neither the constitution, nor the legal framework governing the ministry's operations, enshrine or grant citizens the right to public participation. In Lebanon, only access to information is guaranteed by the law. Additionally, there is no institutional arrangement that favours any modality of public participation.

A4. Civic Space: 3 / 10

The assessment has shown significant weaknesses in terms of civic space conditions. Although the right to freely associate, the right to peaceful assembly is being compromised occasionally. Additionally, CSOs are systematically excluded from participation, and they operate in a highly technical field, thus reducing their scale of representation and diminishing the opportunity for volunteering.

RESEARCH PROCESS

Reference sections labelled:

- Methodology
- Challenges and gaps

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

The main sources of information consisted of:

- Desk review of relevant websites including the concerned ministry's website, the ministry of finance website, the institute of finance website, the Presidency of the Council of Ministers website.
- Desk review of media and press coverage.
- Key informant interviews with former director general at the ministry and public institution affiliated to the ministry.
- 2 Key informant interviews with CSOs working on the subject of energy in Lebanon.

NOTES / ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

In the presence of structural weaknesses, lack of participation and/or coordination within the ministry and malfunctioning of key administrative and financial functions, public participation will remain weak and limited.

However, it is recommended that the ministry seize the opportunity of rethinking the power sector and setting the path towards sustainable and responsible growth, to adopt a participatory approach when designing and implementing policies and starting new initiatives of public engagement activities.

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