

Building Capacities in Public Financial Management in a Post-Conflict Country: A practice from the

Ministry of Finance and the Institute of Finance of Lebanon

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## Abstract

This paper seeks to highlight the potential role that a leading training institution can play in post-conflict reconstruction, drawing on the experience of the Institut des Finances Basil Fuleihan, in supporting and complementing the Lebanese Ministry of Finance's policies and reform goals with capacity development. The paper shortly introduces the importance of Public Financial Reform in the MENA region and emphasizes the positive role that training and capacity development can have on such reforms. It then seeks to address the importance of such reforms and capacity development in post-conflict Lebanon, presenting the experience of the Institut des Finances Basil Fuleihan and assessing it against four main criteria that define a suitable framework for sustainable capacity development, namely the Action Environment, the Public Sector Institutional Context, the Task Network, and the Organizational Structure. It tries to provide elements of response to the following set of questions:

- What is the most suitable administrative and financial set-up and recommended organizational culture required to effectively run a capacity-building institution?
- What is the role of political leadership?
- Is the successful reform of core governance institutions of a country both a necessary and sufficient condition for overall governance improvement?
- What is the role of donors? How can the country make its homegrown agenda prevail?

**Keywords:** Lebanon, Public Financial Reform, Public Sector, Accountability

**Introduction**

The universal trend is moving towards demanding more performance and accountability from the public sector. In answer to various social and economic pressures, governments around the world have initiated sets of public finance reforms, often adopting different scopes and approaches.

In Lebanon, more than fifteen years of wars and invasions (1975-1990) damaged the country's economic, social and institutional capabilities. In 1993, taking the lead on the reform and modernization agenda, the Ministry of Finance of Lebanon embarked on a comprehensive reform program that targeted public finance as an entry point to the modernization of civil service and the state as a whole. It engineered the groundwork for a comprehensive reform program under three broad categories:

1. Fiscal and economic policy formulation and implementation;
2. Public financial management;
3. Service delivery to both the public and to other government agencies.

To streamline reform initiatives and ensure their sustainability, the Lebanese Ministry of Finance established the Institut des Finances Basil Fuleihan (IOF) in 1996, in order for it to become a source of sustainable, high-quality, and specialized training and communication services as well as for it to properly coach and prepare the new generation of leaders. Since its inception, the Institute has developed into becoming the main provider of financial management training to public sector agencies in Lebanon and a specialized resource center for the public at large. It has in fact become the school of finance of the government.

The present paper provides the reader with an in-depth look at this institution. It tries to reflect upon its experience to date, to narrow down key factors of success or failure and to identify lessons that will be of value to other institutions, countries and the donor community.

**The Importance of Public Financial Management Reform in the MENA Region**

The World Bank (2010) report on “Public Financial Management in the Middle East and North Africa” found that

According to the most recent World Bank data, governments throughout the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region spent approximately \$407 billion dollars in 2007 in delivering their policy, regulatory and service functions. The way in which this money is spent has huge implications for their broader development trajectory. (p.1)

A well-functioning Public Financial Management (PFM) system is a prerequisite for the implementation of sustainable government policies aimed at promoting economic growth and social development. Sound PFM policies and practices respond to the challenges of greater economic openness and globalization, and act as a lever for equity in development, fair access to public service, and poverty reduction. Moreover, efficient public expenditure performance entails that government choices be consistent with national monetary and fiscal policies, and achieve sustainability over time.

In recent years, countries all over the world have experimented with public finance reforms. Generally, these reforms have included the move towards performance-focused policies, multi-year programming frameworks in budgeting through fiscal and revenues projections, the shift from cash to accrual accounting, and the enhancement of oversight and scrutiny frameworks. For the past ten years, countries in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region have made strong commitments to modernize fiscal performance, public finance operations, and governance (The World Bank, 2010, p. ii-xiv). The driving forces behind these reforms were many: They included supporting economic growth, improving social welfare, rebuilding state apparatus, and benefiting from international assistance. Moreover, the financial crisis of 2007-2008, which has blown through the MENA region's economic landscape, and the increasing popular desires for good governance, integrity and rule of law which were reflected by demands for a more inclusive, efficient, and transparent public sector, reiterated the need for proper and sustainable PFM reform. As a matter of fact, deficiencies in PFM systems that hindered the provision of public services and social policies were among the main

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catalysts of the Arab revolutions (Alami & Karshenas, 2012). Moreover, the governments of countries that have not witnessed mass-scale uprisings are similarly expected to meet popular demands and promote better efficiency, performance and value-for-money in their delivery of public services. But the question remains on how to best address the rising PFM-related challenges in order to pave the way for a sustainable economic and social development model?

Drawing on his long experience in Africa, Stephen Peterson (2011) delineated a strategy for stakeholders to adopt, prior to embarking on reforms. He identified four tasks in successfully initiating public sector reforms: “recognize, improve, change and sustain” (Peterson, 2011, p.209). According to Peterson (2011), stakeholders and policymakers are encouraged to act carefully to recognize the contextual environment of the reforms. The author points out that "All too often, governments in developing countries do not understand the strengths of their systems and are too quick to change them, often on the advice of others", while improving current practices can sometimes prove to be more effective than change (Peterson, 2011, p.210-211). A key component that could allow for the improvement of current practices is capacity development.

### **Capacity Development: The Missing Factor**

Within the context of the efforts invested by local and regional stakeholders as well as by the donor community for the purpose of successfully implementing PFM reform lies a key challenge in supporting the development of adequate country capacities. Country capacities and their potential for development have come to be considered among the most critical factors for strengthening governance and improving development performance. According to the OECD (OECD, 2006) development efforts can fail, even if supported with funding, should the development of sustainable capacity not be given greater and more careful attention, the matter which has become increasingly recognized by stakeholders (p.7). Creating sustainable sources of quality training and capacity building has the power to stimulate change and modernization. Capacity development facilitates the transfer of technical and managerial knowledge and skills but also influences attitudes, provokes organizational reviews and creates an enabling environment conducive of change. As such, capacity

development becomes a powerful catalyst for reform and modernization programmes by allowing for the development of an efficient, competent, and responsible civil service that reflects the aspirations of the public.

However, implementing reform and accompanying it with capacity development has been proven to be challenging and arduous. Training institutions have been pressured to overhaul their regulatory frameworks, internal structures, scope of work, and institutional networks in order to keep abreast with the challenge of supporting reform policies. Of equal importance is the fact that many countries in the region are now experiencing political instability and armed conflicts, the matter which further renders capacity development and cooperation initiatives as difficult as they are necessary. In that respect, training institutions, whether local, regional or international, are expected to play a central role in such transitional settings. They are expected to foresee, trigger and accompany change.

### **Rebuilding Public Financial Management Systems in a Post-Conflict Era: The case of Lebanon**

Lebanon has witnessed more than fifteen years of civil war (1975-1990) and invasions that have led to across-the-country destruction amounting to a loss of well over U.S. \$ 25 billion in physical assets (Republic of Lebanon, 2007, p.1). The country's infrastructures and institutions were hampered by years of neglect, and more significantly, the country's social canvas was greatly shattered. While the Taef agreement of 1989 might have ended the physical conflict, the true challenge, in fact, lay ahead. Financing Lebanon's reconstruction and rebuilding its human and physical capacities following the end of the war brought the Lebanese government to launch a comprehensive Public Finance reform plan.

However, while such a program was rooted in the conviction "that economic recovery and growth can act as the single most important unifying force in restoring Lebanon's battered national fabric" (Saidi, 1999, p.249), it was also understood that without a well-planned and equitable distribution of public resources, regional disparities would surface and stability would inevitably relapse. It was therefore imperative to acknowledge that for any peace to be sustained, it had to outweigh any prospect for resurgence of conflict.

The aftermath of the prolonged war brought a pressing need to reduce the growing fiscal deficit. The country had witnessed substantially increasing debt service absorbing a high percentage share of total revenues. This resulted in a chronic budget deficit that required borrowing to finance it, which led to an ever-growing public debt.

**Table 1. Economic growth rates for the period 1993-2012 (Annual Percentages)**

Year	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
GDP Growth	7%	8%	6.5%	5.1%	-2.3%	3.6%	-0.5%	1.3%	4%	3.4%
Year	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
GDP Growth	3.2%	7.5%	1.0%	0.6%	7.5%	9.3%	8.5%	7.0%	3.0%	-

*Note:* From GDP Growth (%) for Lebanon for 1993-2012, World Databank, The World Bank

**Table 2: Gross and net public debt for the periods from the end of 1993 until end-December 2010, as a percentage of GDP**

	Dec-93	Dec-94	Dec-95	Dec-96	Dec-97	Dec-98	Dec-99	Dec-00	Dec-01
Gross Public debt	50%	71%	78%	99%	98%	109%	132%	151%	166%
Net Public debt	39%	53%	63%	80%	92%	101%	116%	141%	158%
	Dec-02	Dec-03	Dec-04	Dec-05	Dec-06	Dec-07	Dec-08	Dec-09	Dec-10
Gross Public debt	164%	166%	165%	176%	179%	167%	156%	146%	137%
Net Public debt	153%	156%	152%	159%	166%	155%	138%	126%	117%

*Note:* From *General debt overview*, Lebanese Ministry of Finance

The war period had been an obstacle for the Ministry of Finance in what relates to its ability to efficiently perform its functions. The advent of peace in 1990 marked a new era in which the Ministry would seek to reclaim its lost role as the public sector's leader of governance and central

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PFM institution. Setting the recovery course on track was sternly undermined by war damages in infrastructure, physical assets, and human resources. By the early nineties, the Lebanese Ministry of Finance premises were scattered over eleven buildings across the country. The average age of the Ministry's staff reached a high 56 years (for a retirement age set at 64 for civil servants); its skilled personnel had emigrated, either retired, or passed away. Recruitment had been stalled since 1975 and there had been no capacity building initiatives taking place ever since. The compensation framework was inadequate, the administrative system was outdated and administrative procedures were perceived as over-centralized and complicated.

In 1992, the Ministry of Finance embarked on a comprehensive reform program that targeted public financial management through three components:

1. Fiscal and economic policy formulation and implementation;
2. Public financial management;
3. Service delivery to the general public and to other government agencies.

Having set a clear vision and well defined priorities, the Lebanese MOF opted for a reform implementation plan based on a project approach of “Islands of Excellence” that was coordinated by a central unit reporting to the Minister. The unit was in charge of policy formulation, project management and technical assistance coordination. The aim of the Ministry was to re-establish an efficient and accountable organization supported by modern fiscal, monetary, trade, and market structural reforms. The main characteristics of these modernization initiatives included policy reform, institutional capacity-building (organizational, technical and administrative), transparency, easy access to information, and data dissemination. In establishing an efficient PFM system, the government hoped to effectively establish a peace course and reboot the economy to pre-war growth levels at the least. The action framework took into account six key functions of effective PFM systems, delineated by Andersson and Isaksen (Andersson and Isaksen, 2002) as part of the conceptual framework of PFM reform, namely: Governance, Planning and Budgeting, Accounting, Payments, Audit, and Revenues.



**Table 3. Conceptual framework**

Functions	Components
Governance	Parliamentary and Cabinet role in planning, budgeting, accounting, audit
Planning & Budgeting	Work plans, multi-year plans (national medium-term plans as well as PRSPs), one-year plans, annual budgets, multiyear budgets, poverty strategy, MTEF/MTEF, sector programme, project planning, recurrent budget, capital/investment budget, statistics, policy analysis
Accounting	Bookkeeping, statistics, operational accounting, quarterly reports, mid-annual reports, annual final accounts, result reports, chart of accounts, classification, tracking studies
Payments	Tranches, periodicity, payment system, treasury account, bank statement, liquidity, reconciliation, disbursement audit, disbursement, payment authorisation, bank account, procurement
Audit	Internal audit, independent audit, own/external audit, financial/management audit, performance/value-for-money audit
Revenues	Customs/taxes, fees, donations, loans, direct/indirect taxes, revenue ratio, collection of taxes/fees

*Note: from Best practice in capacity building in public finance management in Africa: experiences of NORAD and Sida p.8 by G. Andersson & J. Isaksen, 2002, Bergen, Norway: Chr. Michelsen Institute, Development Studies and Human Rights.*

### **Institutionalizing Capacity Development**

The capacity of the public service to implement and manage state functions, including public finance, remained a critical factor for the successful implementation of the Lebanese home-grown reform agenda. In this respect, capacity building emerged as a key component in the reform projects: the successful outcome of reforms planned by the Lebanese government depended to a large extent on proper application. Proper application itself depended on the extent to which the government would recognize the need for the development of training programs bent on instilling professional working practices and training a new generation of highly skilled staff. It was therefore essential to recognize the centrality of professional training, continuous learning, information systems, and modern human resources management systems, which would in turn re-establish an efficient delivery of public services.

Human resources development therefore became a priority at the MOF. The Ministry also acknowledged that governance in post-war reconstruction entailed significant concentration on

restoring institutional legitimacy by widening the Ministry's outreach and increasing its credibility.

This comprehensive reform program also entailed widening the participation and involvement of the public, and more specifically the private sector and civil society organizations.

For this purpose, the Lebanese Ministry of Finance established the Institute of Finance in 1996. It was maintained that the Institute would become a sustainable source of high quality specialized training, a space for dialogue with partners and a specialized resource center for the public at large.

The section that follows will discuss the experience that the Institute has so far accumulated in building capacities in PFM-related issues in an attempt to document lessons learnt. In our discussion, we run through four levels of analysis that have been identified by Mary E. Hilderbrand and Merilee S. Grindle (Hilderbrand & Grindle, 1994) as concomitant to capacity building interventions: the Action Environment, the Public Sector Institutional Context, the Task Network, and the Organizational Structure (p. 8-17).

## **I. The Action Environment**

The Action Environment, identified as the first level of analysis, studies the economic, social, and political conditions in which an organization (in this case, the MOF of Lebanon and more specifically the IOF) attempts to operate. (Hilderbrand & Grindle, 1994)

### ***A. Socio-Political Conditions***

Although the post-conflict constitution, the Taef Accord, provided Lebanon with a sound framework for proper recovery, peace and social cohesion remained fragile. Politically and socially, Lebanon was fresh out of a civil war that has shaken its very foundations, and was lacking political stability and leadership. In the immediate years after the civil war, the MOF was still suffering from heavy financial restrictions that adversely affected its ability to support reform programs and capacity-building programs. Practices and skills had become obsolete due to the stalemate state of training initiatives. Moreover, the period of post-war peace was often marred by tremendous security threats such as the intermittent Israeli attacks in 1996, 1999, leading to the full-fledged 2006 assault. These violent episodes often forced the government and the MOF to shift their efforts to reconstructing

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damaged areas and assisting conflict-stricken citizens. Furthermore, since 2005, Lebanon witnessed a

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series of internal and external shocks that overshadowed any near future hopes for a full-fledged recovery and further deepened the division between the communities of Lebanon:

- Prime Minister Rafic Hariri was assassinated in 2005 along with MP Basil Fuleihan; wide protests broke out and led to the eventual withdrawal of Syrian troops and the resignation of the government;
- A series of assassinations and explosions ravaged Lebanon through the next three years, killing many promising new leaders;
- Israel launched, in 2006, a rampaging attack that imposed heavy costs on Lebanon, estimated at around US\$2.8 billion in total direct cost of early recovery and reconstruction (Republic of Lebanon, 2007, p.5);
- In May 2007, a three-month war broke out between the Lebanese army and Islamic militants in the Palestinian refugee camp of Nahr-el-Barid in Tripoli;
- Sectarian clashes broke out in 2008 culminating in human losses and increased social fragmentation;
- The Syrian crisis spilled over to Lebanon, increasing political divisions among the two main political camps and pouring more than 400'000 refugees into the country (Dockery, 2013).

### ***B. Economic Conditions***

Due to political circumstances, no budget law has been passed in Lebanon since 2005, the matter which weighs heavy upon the PFM system and upon the reform agenda. Despite the political and social turmoil, Lebanon was still able to record high-quality economic indicators. For instance, in 2004, real growth hit 7.4% and budget deficit declined to less than 8 % (UNDP, 2009, p. 41). In the aftermath of the 2006 Israeli attack on Lebanon, the Lebanese Government embarked on an ambitious reform program and committed to pursuing economic, social and financial reforms in line with a comprehensive strategy presented at the Paris III conference (Republic of Lebanon, 2007). The Government and the MOF centered their priorities on:

- Undertaking revenue management and administrative reform, towards a function-based structure;

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- Undertaking budget and financial management reform through reducing the fiscal deficit, rationalizing public expenditure, and reforming the public pension system;
- Strengthening debt management;
- Creating sustainable growth by reviving the economy, establishing a liberal economic environment, and encouraging the private sector to act as the engine of growth;
- Improving the business environment through improved dialogue with the private sector, trade unions and professional syndicates (Lebanese Ministry of Finance, 2008, p.80-81);

Over time, the MOF had come to play a key role in the impressive growth and resilience that the Lebanese economy manifested since the signing of the Taef agreement. The Ministry initiated revenue management and administration reforms that reaped impressive results in favor of the Lebanese economy.

**Table 4: Fiscal performance by economic classification (1992-2011)**

<i>(in LL billion)</i>	<b>Total Revenue</b>	Tax Revenue	Non Tax Revenue	Treasury Revenues	<b>Total Expenditures</b>	Wages and Salaries	Interest Payments and Foreign Debt Principal Repayment	Other Current Expenditures	Capital Expenditures	Other Treasury Expenditures, EDL, Budget Advances, Unclassified Expenditures and Customs Cashiers
2011	<b>14,070</b>	9,885	3,468	718	<b>17,600</b>	5,533	6,034	1,648	676	3,709
2010	<b>12,684</b>	9,976	2,043	666	<b>17,047</b>	5,066	6,218	1,653	701	3,409
2009	<b>12,705</b>	8,967	3,069	669	<b>17,167</b>	4,936	6,087	1,594	550	4,000
2008	<b>10,553</b>	7,182	2,613	758	<b>14,957</b>	3,970	5,304	1,364	514	3,804
2007	<b>8,749</b>	5,583	2,511	655	<b>12,587</b>	3,583	4,940	1,138	558	2,367
2006	<b>7,316</b>	4,943	1,945	428	<b>11,879</b>	3,307	4,557	1,063	551	2,401
2005	<b>7,405</b>	4,867	2,117	421	<b>10,203</b>	3,193	3,534	1,197	534	1,745
2004	<b>7,515</b>	5,169	1,907	439	<b>10,541</b>	3,094	4,021	937	817	1,672
2003	<b>6,655</b>	4,502	1,717	436	<b>10,593</b>	3,087	4,874	871	714	1,047
2002	<b>5,830</b>	3,995	1,390	445	<b>10,139</b>	3,008	4,622	691	610	1,208
2001	<b>4,646</b>	2,961	1,299	386	<b>8,875</b>	2,992	4,312	626	325	620
2000	<b>4,684</b>	2,934	1,238	512	<b>10,621</b>	2,908	4,197	863	900	1,754
1999	<b>4,873</b>	3,350	1,109	414	<b>8,453</b>	2,760	3,624	709	1,097	265
1998	<b>4,449</b>	3,097	882	470	<b>7,906</b>	2,352	3,352	798	1,061	343

1997	4,010	2,684	579	747	9,162	2,466	3,378	1,851	1,467	n.a
1996	3,534	2,869	665	n.a	7,225	2,261	2,653	1,088	1,223	n.a
1995	3,033	2,100	933	n.a	5,856	1,869	1,875	896	1,216	n.a
1994	2,241	1,656	585	n.a	5,204	1,710	1,488	756	1,250	n.a
1993	1,855	1,208	647	n.a	3,017	1,295	784	545	393	n.a
1992	1,138	n.a	n.a	n.a	2,219	660	518	895	146	n.a

*Note:* From *Public finance statistics 1992-2011*, Lebanese Ministry of Finance.

### ***C. Enabling Conditions***

#### ***A. Political Support:***

In the direct post-war era, the role of the state had become further indispensable in regulating inefficiencies and adjusting social discrepancies. New political leaders had to work towards regaining their legitimacy to implement and even initiate reform plans. The Lebanese Government recognized early on the need of a source that would introduce training programs, and hence, a highly skilled personnel, to the MOF. With the close support and collaboration of the French government, the Institute of Finance was established in 1996, under a French-Lebanese bilateral protocol of administrative cooperation.

#### ***B. Technical and Financial Assistance:***

Given the support provided by the French Government, the IOF was offered a healthy and enabling financial and functional environment, a platform the Government of Lebanon could not have secured in these early stages of reconstruction. Securing this sound operational framework was a prerequisite to the success of its early mission: enhancing the technical and operational skills and competencies of the MOF staff and developing their sense of adherence to a professional community. During many of the difficult periods that followed, and which required a strong commitment from the Ministry's side, the MOF was rather incapacitated to pilot the mission of the Institute. French sponsorship was proven crucial yet again, especially before the year 2000.

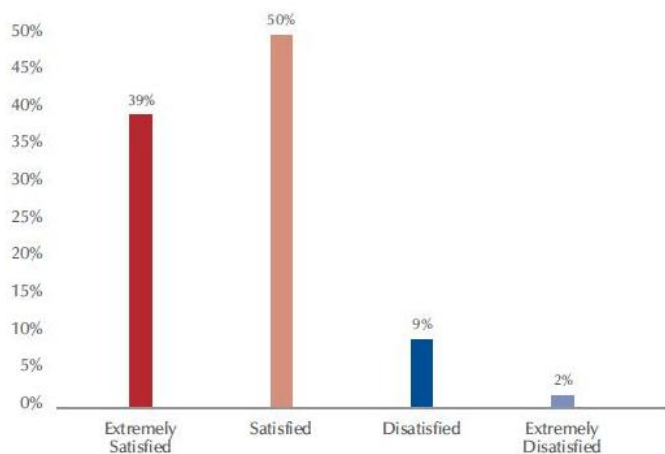
#### ***D. The Institute within its Action Environment***

The IOF played, and is still playing, an integral part in implementing and supporting reform initiatives on several front through capacity building programs, sustained dialogue with all

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stakeholders and citizen-awareness initiatives. It has actively worked towards creating and disseminating a "PFM culture" among the civil service. Indeed, its technical trainings in the various areas of PFM have improved the capacities of the MOF and public sector staff that benefited from these training programs. In fact, the World Bank Country Financial Accountability Assessment (The World Bank, 2005) had recognized the key role the IOF had assumed in carrying capacity development for fiscal reform and management for the Lebanese MOF. It described the Institute as "a valuable resource that can be developed in order to mitigate serious staffing shortages that will soon impair the Government's ability to manage and reform its PFM system" (p. xii)

**Figure 1. Respondents' satisfaction with how management training improved their work**



*Note : From 15 years in review: Results of the beneficiaries satisfaction survey p.15, Institut des Finances Basil Fuleihan, 2012, Beirut: Institut des Finances Basil Fuleihan*

The support to public procurement reform provides a concrete example of the central role played by the IOF in PFM reform. In order to meet the reform objectives of public procurement, for example, the MOF and the IOF synchronized their actions towards the following fields:

1. The standardization of public procurement procedures into a national procurement guide and the five national bidding documents and their dissemination to achieve an efficient procurement cycle and enhance transparency and integrity;
2. Professionalizing training delivery on a competency-based framework and building the capacities and operational skills of civil servants working in public procurement;

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3. The transfer of knowledge and the introduction and adaptation of international good practices and trends such as sustainable public procurement (Institut des Finances Basil Fuleihan, 2012);
4. Building of a community of practice in public procurement at the central, sub central and local levels.

In the period 2008-2010 alone, a total of 351 trainees attended 11 different training courses on public procurement.

In what relates to customs reforms, the IOF has closely accompanied the continuous modernization process launched in 1993 and that aimed at reorienting the culture and role of customs towards one that emphasizes trade facilitation and contributes to the improvement of Lebanon's trade competitiveness as well as his potential accession to the World Trade Organization. Since 1996, the IOF has trained more than 7,000 agents of the Customs Administration, thus helping to promote the image of a new, modern, responsive and professional public administration.

As for the introduction of the new Tax Procedure Code in 2009, more than 1,000 staff from the MOF and concerned syndicates took part to the training programs organized at the IOF.

## **II. The Public Sector Institutional Context**

A second level of analysis that affects capacity-building intervention is the Public Sector Institutional Context. This dimension revolves around the laws and regulations affecting civil service and Government operations of which the operations of public institutions. Administrative rules and regulations can have different effects on the public's sector ability to carry out its function and further initiate reforms and enhancements (Hilderbrand & Grindle, 1994). In Lebanon, the Civil Service Board (CSB) handles the public sector organizational sphere. It is a central agency operating under the tutelage of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers. The CSB is responsible for organizing civil service operations, recruiting civil servants, setting the entrance and qualification exams, and managing personnel issues such as compensation schemes, promotion patterns, etc.

However, ever since the start of the civil war in 1975, the Lebanese civil service has been suffering from employment and recruiting irregularities that has casted a dim outlook on the sector's performance and future. Public sector recruitment was further restricted by the Decision No.14 of the

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Council of Ministers dated 9 December 1999, in an attempt to resolve a surplus problem the sector was witnessing. This measure continues to undermine the human capacity of the civil service, in addition to any effort for effective staff planning and career path development.

Furthermore, the absence of a national strategy that institutionalizes training for civil servants has further burdened the capacity of the Lebanese administrations. Training servicing the public sector was weak until 1975 when it was nearly halted. The Institute of Finance was created in 1996 to fill part of this gap. It has since been operating as the main provider of capacity-building and training agency in the Lebanese public sector. In the past years, the picture has slightly changed and a number of institutions operating on various scopes were created:

- The National School for Administration (ENA) was created in 2002 and instated responsible of public administration training at a national level. Unfortunately, it was not provided with the most efficient operating framework.
- The Office of State Minister for Administrative Reform (OMSAR) also organizes training programs for civil servants, mainly on topics related to Information and Communication Technologies and management.
- Other training institutes targeting specific administrations such as the Ministry of Justice, Internal Security Forces, and the Rafic Hariri International Airport were also recently either created or refurbished. However, these institutions provide technical services to specific target audiences and their contribution on the wider public sector scope remains limited.

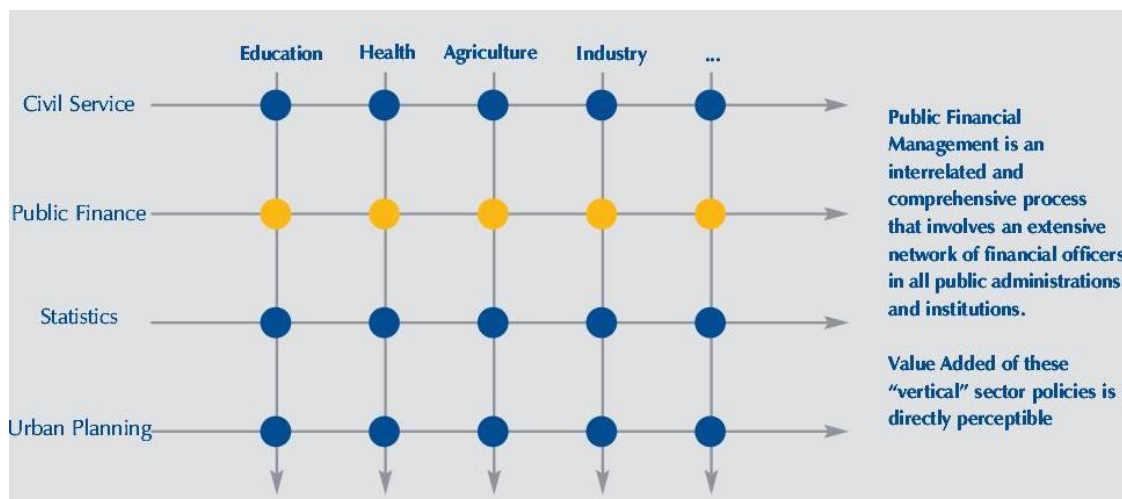
In such a context, the MOF provided the IOF with a strong ground to act as a modernization tool to its run-down practices. The year 2003 was a turning point as the Institute was granted the legal status of public autonomous agency operating under the tutelage the Minister of Finance. Since then, it benefits from a yearly budget allocation from the MOF and enjoys independent management as well as financial and administrative autonomy. Also in 2003, the IOF was appointed by a decision of the Council of Ministers as the main provider of training in PFM to the Lebanese public sector. This decision has steered the IOF towards becoming the School of Finance of the Lebanese Government. The IOF was one of the very few projects whose sustainability was ensured.

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### III. The Task Network

**Figure 2. The Institute supports the Ministry of Finance in improving financial management in all public administrations and institutions**



*Note: From Training catalogue 2012-2014. p.4, Institut des Finances Basil Fuleihan, 2012, Beirut: Institut des Finances Basil Fuleihan*

The Ministry of Finance acts as the head of the Public Financial Management system. It is the guarantor of budget preparation, proper execution, and reliable accounting systems, as well as the enabler of sound monitoring and controlling mechanisms. Reforms at the Ministry of Finance's level thus affect the entire public sector's PFM. Therefore, the role of leadership at the managerial level combined with the competencies at the staff level is considered to be the enabling factor that puts these reforms into practice. However, sound PFM reform should not solely take into consideration reforms at the MoF level. As a matter of fact, the horizontal nature of public finance and the execution of the budget, which affects all of the administrations and institutions operating in the public sphere, implies that all the public sector is involved and responsible of the proper implementation of sound PFM practices. As of such, sound capacity development that would enable and accompany such practices and reforms at the MoF level should also be directed to the entire civil service. Capacity development, as previously mentioned, would affect the performance of the entire public sector in terms of public financial management, leading to a support and proper implementation of the reforms

implemented by the Ministry of Finance. As of such, the Institute had to envisage interacting with a wide set of players, stakeholders, and service recipients. The IOF focused its strategy on promoting a culture of value-for-money and accountability, while presenting contemporary best practices in the field of PFM. Its action focused on two intertwined aspects: Catering for the betterment of overall institutional capacities through improved procedures and awareness-raising and fostering the improvement of individual competencies.

In its effort to sustain and expand its task network as well as to create sustainable synergies with its direct and indirect stakeholders, the Institute operated on the following levels:

#### ***A. Training and HR Development***

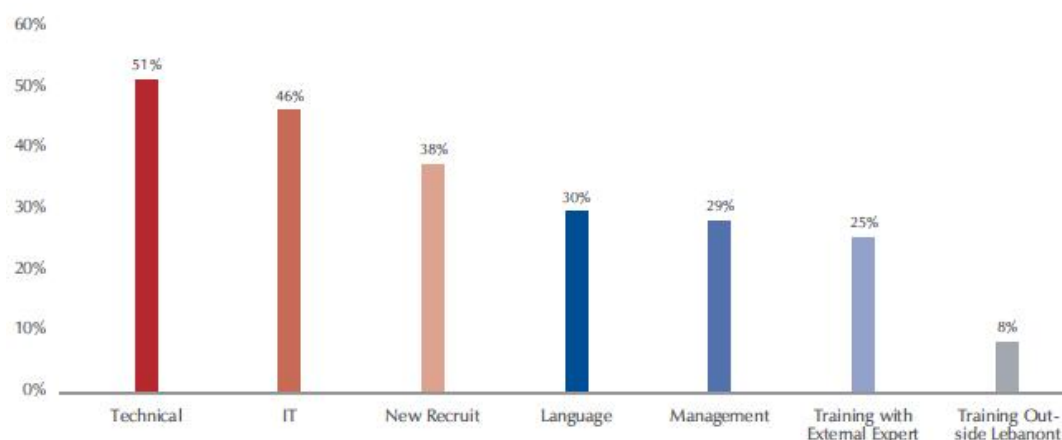
Training programs provided by the Institute were addressed to the four main directorates of the MOF: the Directorate General of Finance (DGF), the Directorate General of Customs (DGC), the Directorate General of Cadastre and Land Registry (DGCLR), and the Directorate General of National Lottery (DGNL). Staff training and development have been precursors to, and concomitants of, the main categories of reform and of the introduction of new technologies.

The IOF embraced four types of programs:

- Preparatory programs for entry and promotion exams;
- Induction training for new recruits;
- Specialized job-related trainings;
- Continuous trainings;

**Table 5. Number of beneficiaries from IOF training programs (1996-2010)**

<b>Year</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>
No. of trainees	370	428	1315	1135	1137	1453	2263	2741
<b>Year</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
No. of trainees	2977	4068	4391	3302	2742	4192	3159	<b>35673</b>

**Figure 3. Training Courses Attended per type since 2005**

*Note:* From 15 years in review: *Results of the beneficiaries satisfaction survey* p.9, Institut des Finances Basil Fuleihan, 2012, Beirut: Institut des Finances Basil Fuleihan

### 1. Developing Training Modules

In 15 years, the IOF developed for its clientele 120 training modules ranging from public finance, to economy, taxation, accounting, law, management and leadership, financial education, training engineering, foreign languages, information technologies, customs and cadastre (Institut des Finances Basil Fuleihan, 2012).

### 2. Expanding the Beneficiaries List

Since 2003, beneficiaries expanded to include new categories such as public institutions (public hospitals, water authorities, etc.), Parliament, municipalities, other ministries and the public sector at large (Institut des Finances Basil Fuleihan, 2012).

### 3. Establishing Specialized Communities of Practice

The wider audience targeted by the training programs has helped creating national communities of practices specialized in various areas of PFM such as procurement, budget, accounting, financial education and training.

Training programs at the IOF have also been characterized by:

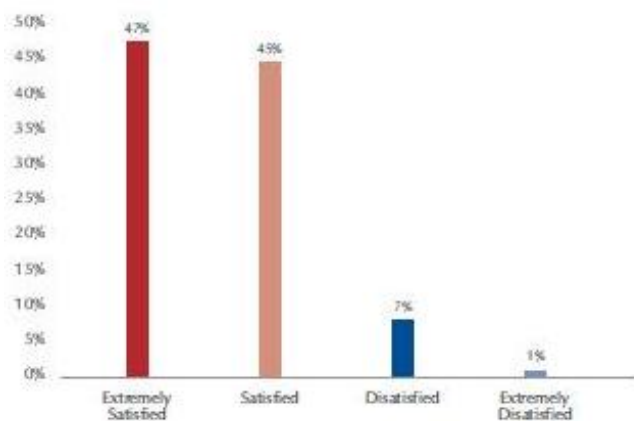
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- A Standardized training engineering and management system monitored through a “Training Protocol” for quality management;
- Interactive training methods;
- The expertise of a wide network of qualified and competent trainers;
- Reference material put at the disposition of the trainers, trainees and the public;
- The know-how of a training team specialized in multiple fields of intervention;

#### 4. Supporting Human Resources Management

On the other hand, the IOF was involved in the various aspects of human resources management. More specifically, the IOF assisted and supported the recruitment and training new MOF employees by designing and conducting the three-month induction training for more than 1,600 new recruits at MOF. This initial training aimed to ensure the harmonious and smooth integration of new recruits within the administration.

**Figure 4: Respondents’ satisfaction with understanding their rights and duties as civil servants**



*Note: From 15 years in review: Results of the beneficiaries satisfaction survey p.10, Institut des Finances Basil Fuleihan, 2012, Beirut: Institut des Finances Basil Fuleihan*

From the results of the survey conducted by Infopro which measured, for a representative sample of 1’547 individuals who attended IOF training programs from 2005 until 2009, satisfaction levels with various IOF training activities.

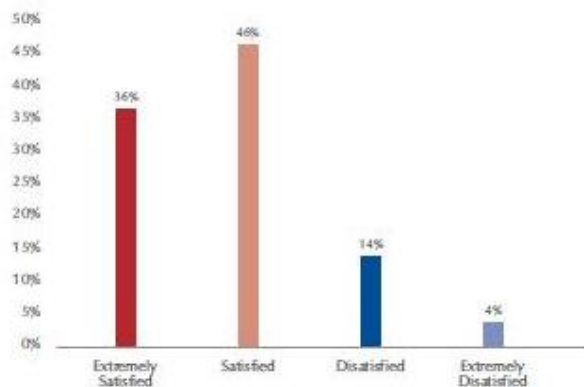
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Finally, at a national level, the IOF has assisted the Directorate General of Finance in

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improving the quality of the recruitment process by redesigning the content of the entry examination by the CSB to the 4<sup>th</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> categories, in parallel to conducting a communication campaign for the 2006/2007 recruitment session, in an effort to attract the most qualified staff to the MOF.

**Figure 4. Respondents' satisfaction with acquiring the needed knowledge to start working at the Ministry of Finance**



*Note: From 15 years in review: Results of the beneficiaries satisfaction survey p.10, Institut des Finances Basil Fuleihan, 2012, Beirut: Institut des Finances Basil Fuleihan*

##### 5. Advisory Role

The IOF also played an advisory role upon the establishment of new units within the MOF, accompanying the Ministry throughout the establishment of new units that the development of the capacities of these units.

The introduction of the Value Added Tax (VAT) provides an example of the accompanying role played by the Institute in the process of supporting the implementation of fiscal reform: The 18 mid-managers and 300 MOF staff selected to establish the new VAT unit in 2002 received up to 140 days of specialized training on systems and procedures before commencing their jobs, in addition to good practices study visits to Tunis, Morocco, Egypt, Singapore, France, Canada and Ireland, in an effort to expose concerned staff to interesting international practices. Also prior to the introduction of the new tax, extensive public awareness-raising and education campaigns targeting different client groups were conducted. As a result, instead of having to personally collect and manually fill long and

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information incorporated in advance by the system. A stamped addressed envelope is included for postal returns. Payments processes have also been speeded-up. The above has helped to achieve a high level of compliance in a very short period. In fact, the courteous and efficient service provided to customers won the Lebanese Ministry of Finance the 2007 United Nations Public Service Award. (Lebanese Ministry of Finance, 2008, p.10).

### ***B. Communicating within the Task Network***

The IOF underwent an active internal and external communication campaign through several initiatives and a set of professional publications. The internal campaign aimed at defining a professional community (the Ministry of Finance) and developing a sense of belonging within it. This was mainly effectuated through the publication of a quarterly newsletter - Hadith el Malia.

The external campaign aimed at reinforcing the national vision of the ministry, promote transparency, facilitate easy and equal access to information, and bridge the gap between the private and public sectors.

Over the years, the Institute has:

- Published the Citizens' Guides series, a set of guides aiming at raising citizen awareness on the most important tax procedures;
- Designed and coordinated the implementation of communication strategies for specific projects such as the UN Public Service Award (Lebanese Ministry of Finance, 2008, p,10);
- Organized programs and events dedicated to the Lebanese youth such as the participation in job fairs and the organization of one-day orientation programs to introduce university students to the MOF;
- Supported the work of the Joint Consultative Committees between public and private sectors aimed at improving the relationship between taxpayers and the financial and customs administrations and expediting administrative procedures;
- Produced booklets, pamphlets and flyers directed to the citizens on major tax procedures;
- Set-up a public documentation center, the Library of Finance, specialized in PFM publications;
- Organized several awareness events, conferences and workshops and participated in major

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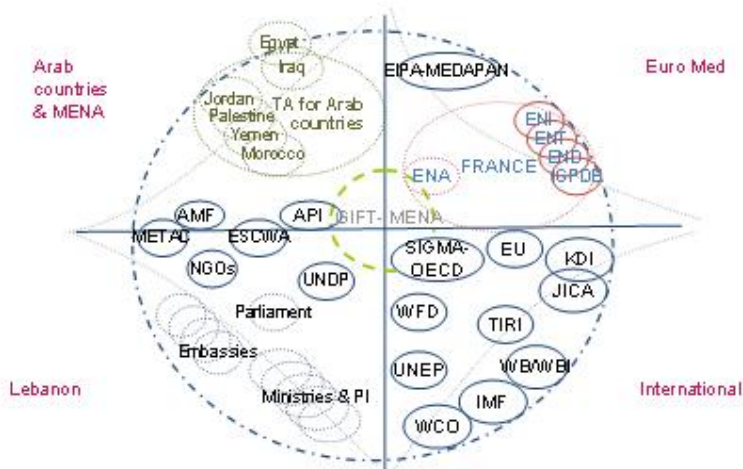
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book fairs to promote the reform program undertaken by the MOF;

More recently, the IOF decided to contribute more actively to the policy dialogue arena in Lebanon and the Arab World. As of such, it launched a biannual journal, "Assadissa", which tackles public financial management and state modernization in Lebanon and the Arab world. It is an "ambitious attempt to bring together some of the foremost thinkers and practitioners concerned in state modernization and public finance reform in Lebanon and the Arab region and to foster dialogue between researchers, practitioners and policy-makers" (Bissat & Abi Saab, 2011, p.102-103). The communication activities of the IOF were thought and designed to promote and reinforce good governance through consensus building, enhanced inclusiveness, responsiveness and transparency as well as improved awareness of laws and regulations by the citizens.

**C. Partnership Building**

**Figure 5. The Institute’s local, regional, and international partners**



Since 2004, the IOF worked towards becoming a regional center of excellence in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). It sought and was able to build strong partnerships with regional and international organizations and launch a series of regional services aiming at positioning itself as a regional training hub. A major highlight and moreover a precedence in the MENA region was that the IOF's working language is Arabic. With technical assistance and support in capacity

building expertise being provided in Arabic, this advantage made the regional cooperation efforts much more in line with needs of the targeted partners.

### *1. Bilateral Initiatives*

The IOF worked on reinforcing bilateral cooperation with Arab governmental institutions through the organization of technical study tours that would allow the Arab counterparts to get acquainted with the reforms undertaken by the Lebanese Ministry of Finance and the IOF. It offered diversified tailor-made training programs in response to pressing training needs of civil servants in the region.

### *2. The GIFT-MENA Network*

Still, the biggest leap was the creation in 2006 of the Network of Civil Service Training Schools and Institutes in the MENA region – know as the GIFT-MENA network. The network works towards increasing regional cooperation and exchange and focuses on five pillars:

- Capacity-building and training, exchange of expertise and good practices;
- Easy access to knowledge information and material Curriculum development;
- Institutional set-up and networking.

The network provided an innovative platform for civil service training operators in the region to get together and exchange their experiences, best practices and knowledge with peers. GIFT-MENA serves as a global hub for networking among MENA centers of excellence, in a collective effort to document successful regional experiences, knowledge and solutions to specific reform implementation constraints in areas mainly related to taxation, public financial management and public sector performance. The network marked the launch of the first South-South cooperation initiative in the MENA region from Beirut (GIFT-MENA Learning Network, 2013). It also stimulated the development of new training modules in the Arabic language (Regional Programs, 2013). The added value of the network remained that it was born out of the will of its members who took a determined step towards the establishment of a collaborative regional environment to disseminate knowledge and share expertise, resources and know-how.



*c. Regional and International Organizations*

The IOF has consolidated its relations with regional and international organizations operating in MENA through the signature of several Memoranda of Understanding (MoU). Such agreements played a major role in placing the Institute of Finance at the heart of the learning and training panorama in the region. Main agreements were signed with:

- The World Bank Institute, in April 2004: The agreement envisages building on Lebanon's human capital advantage and fostering knowledge-sharing activities in the MENA region.
- The World Customs Organization, in January 2006: The agreement designates the IOF as the WCO regional training center for the Gulf countries.
- The Arab Planning Institute, in January 2009, for the joint organization of yearly events.
- The ADETEF, in January 2010, for the development of the GIFT-MENA network.

The IOF also maintains close collaboration ties with other regional and international organizations such as the METAC, the Islamic Development Bank, the ESCWA, UN agencies, and other organizations in addition to embassies and international representations based in Lebanon. The regional and international exposure it enjoys granted the IOF access to a wide pool of Arab and international experts, trainers, consultants that have a solid academic background and practical expertise in addition to their knowledge of the regional context.

*3. Cooperation with France*

The Institute was established on a basis of a French-Lebanese bilateral protocol. As of such, the IOF maintained a close and distinguished cooperation with France, and in particular with the ADETEF – Agency for International Cooperation of the French Ministries of Economy and Finance. The Institute acts as the local link for ADETEF, ensuring the coordination and follow-up of bilateral cooperation initiatives with the Lebanese administration. In partnership with ADETEF, the IOF started in 2007 to provide technical assistance services to the development of training centers at the Ministries of Finance of Jordan and Palestine. It has also been coordinating demands from Morocco, Yemen, Iraq and Egypt. These types of institutional cooperation were set in accordance to the

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respective countries development agendas as to secure the proper advantages. The "ADETEF-IOF for

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MENA" consortium offered a platform to tackle common and cross-boundary issues at a regional and multi-country level, to disseminate the French expertise and good international practices at a larger scale and most of all, to implement capacity development programs that enjoy strong local ownership.

#### **IV. Organizational Structure**

An undeniable factor contributing to the success of capacity building interventions is the organizational framework in which stakeholders attempt to carry out their efforts (Hilderbrand & Grindle, 1994). Since its inception, the IOF defined a roadmap to its organizational goals and had since sought to instill a sense of mission and commitment to these goals among its staff. Such an effort was vital as to provide the IOF with an identity that would strengthen its legitimacy as a public institution. However, compared to other public institutions in Lebanon, the IOF enjoys a singular organizational structure and management scheme.

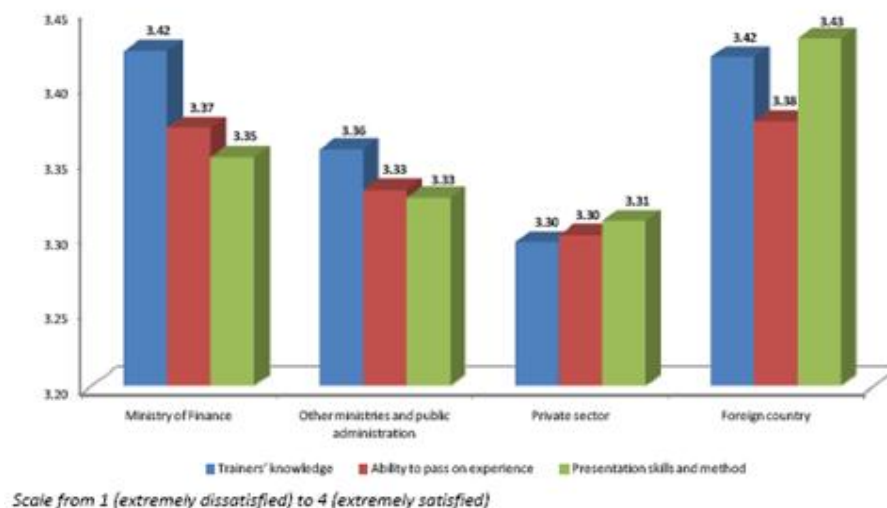
##### ***A. Human Resources***

Four departments, Training, Administration, Information and Communication, Institutional Building and Outreach, make up the organizational structure of the IOF. They draw their efficiency on the IOF's ability to tap on polyvalent and highly qualified staff recruited based on a competitive selection process.

##### ***B. Trainers***

The IOF does not employ any in-house trainers. It draws on the expertise of a wide network of more than 220 professionals, practitioners and experts carefully selected from the Ministry of Finance, other public institutions, the private sector and the academia. The IOF also works on continuously enhancing the skills and competencies of its network of trainers by sending them to trainings abroad, exposing them to best international practices and organizing yearly train the trainer programs. In fact, a satisfaction survey carried out in 2009 by an external consultancy firm indicates that the majority of trainees were satisfied with the high abilities of the trainers (Institut des Finances Basil Fuleihan, 2012, p.18-19).

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**Figure 6: Average level of satisfaction for trainer characteristics**

*Note:* From 15 years in review: Results of the beneficiaries satisfaction survey p.18, Institut des Finances Basil Fuleihan, 2012, Beirut: Institut des Finances Basil Fuleihan

### C. Resources

The legal status of public institution granted in 2003 (Financial and Administrative Autonomy) provided the IOF with a yearly budget allocation drawn on the MOF overall budget to run operations. It also allows the IOF to receive donations/grants/aids that may be made available by local, regional and international organizations. In this context, the IOF has on several occasions tapped on external funding provided by the donor community. External funding was granted to advance on the capacity-building and reform agenda of the MOF. The funds were used to answer growing training demands for training in PFM by stakeholders outside the MOF, develop new training modules and tools, build the institutional capacities of the IOF and provide it with the means to develop into an evolving learning institution.

**Table 6. The IOF Financial resources (1996-2010)**

Year	Contribution of the MOF		Donor funding in USD
	in LBP	equiv. in USD	
1996	-		361,442.48
1997	-		361,442.48
1998	-		361,442.48
1999	-		557,965.65
2000	44,780,000	29,853.33	417,446.38
2001	400,000,000	266,666.67	472,684.49
2002	500,000,000	333,333.33	183,371.56
2003	490,000,000	326,666.67	288,444.31
2004	660,000,000	440,000.00	177,800.80
2005	600,000,000	400,000.00	160,263.24
2006	600,000,000	400,000.00	170,263.24
2007	900,000,000	600,000.00	259,763.24
2008	1,000,000,000	666,666.67	202,079.14
2009	1,200,000,000	800,000.00	148,517.37
2010	1,400,000,000	933,333.33	820,272.03
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7,794,780,000</b>	<b>5,196,520.00</b>	<b>4,943,198.89</b>

## Lessons Learned and Findings

### A. Achievements at the MOF

Fifteen years later, there is a wide acknowledgement that the effort started in 1993, and continuing, transformed the MOF, the main "client" of the IOF from antiquated turn-of-century operation, atrophied by years of neglect during the civil war, to state-of-the-art process benchmarked by other countries. In spite of the difficult political and security situation that still prevailed in Lebanon, programs were successfully implemented and capacities built in a sustainable fashion. Visible, tangible, desirable results were achieved since macroeconomic stability was sustained and showed incredible resilience in face of internal and external shocks such as multiple Israeli attacks on Lebanon, internal confessional and political conflicts and the international financial crisis. The main service improvements for citizens, the private sector and civil society have been realized in terms of

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speeding-up the delivery of services provided by the MOF (such as post clearance controls in customs, e-declaration, and payments in private banks, etc.); Increasing the validity, accuracy, and consistency of assessments and records; Improving the availability and accessibility of valid, comprehensive and up-to-date financial, fiscal, and trade data; and improving the delivery of services to other government entities. Staff of the MOF is considered to be among the most qualified of the Lebanese administration.

Indeed, specialized technical capability was built in fiscal and PFM policy development and management; High quality staff was recruited, well prepared and coached.

At the IOF, adapted and enhanced training material was provided in the Arabic language, networks of partners and contacts with local, regional and international stakeholders were established and their expertise had been put at the disposition of all stakeholders. Demands for replication from other countries in MENA were channeled. And most of all, Lebanon was able to set a status of a post-conflict developing country that has a record of success in critical areas of governance reform: capacity-building in financial governance.

First delegated to upgrade the technical skills of the MOF staff, the IOF assumes today a much wider mission:

- Building the skills and knowledge of the Ministry of Finance staff ;
- Enhancing the capacity in financial management of Government agencies;
- Improving financial education of citizens, internal and external communication, and information to the public;
- Networking with local, regional and international institutions;
- Acting as a regional hub for training in PFM.

### ***B. Main Challenges***

A set of challenges were identified as critically restraining to the work of IOF:

- A limited budget to run operations and respond to all training demands, in the context of an unsteady economic situation characterized by a high level of insecurity and an increasing public

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debt;

- The absence of a national strategy regulating training within the public sector as well as the absence of legislation instating the right of civil servants to benefit from training;
- The absence of linkages between training received and career path development;
- Difficulties to recruit and retain professional qualified staff at the IOF prior to the institutionalization of the Institute in 2003 (when it was granted the status of public autonomous agency);
- Little awareness by the Lebanese public of the IOF initiatives. This challenge was addressed with a more proactive press coverage and external relations strategy including representation of the IOF at major local, regional and international events;
- Resistance to change and to moving from traditional work practices to improved and modern procedures from the "old" generation at the MOF;

### *C. Ingredients of Success*

Though success can be catchy, it is important to have an in-depth look at the ingredients of success and lessons learnt from 15 years of service to the Lebanese Ministry of Finance, the public sector and the MENA region. The main factors identified as drivers of performance may be the following:

- 1. A strong political endorsement by the Minister of Finance:** All consecutive Ministers of Finance provided their support to the IOF and were committed to its mission. This was a necessary and sufficient condition for success, particularly in cultures like Lebanon where there is strong respect for authority, position, and status within the governance hierarchy and where political and sectarian affiliations can still outweigh professional qualifications in the public sector.
- 2. Government and local ownership:** The story of the IOF cannot be isolated from other reform initiatives taken by the Government of Lebanon. Experience made it clear that sustainability of efforts was function of having visionary leaders at a policy-making level and qualified civil

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servants at the technical level. Also, the involvement and co-ownership of the staff at MOF in training initiatives facilitated the achievement of a performance record by the IOF.

- 3. Institutional location:** The institutional location of the IOF at the heart of the MOF, being the trend setter and key institution driving the national reform agenda, imparted the Institute with considerable internal (within the public sector) and external (among donors, the private sector and civil society) legitimacy.
- 4. Quality and commitment of staff:** The staff of the IOF, qualified in relevant fields and multilingual, was enabled to speak the same 'languages', not only as the administration but also as donors and to be sufficiently credible technically to make reasonably informed judgments about problem identification and channeling – and sometimes giving and interpolating - advice concerning the development and implementation of appropriate reform and capacity-building solutions. It is also significant that all staff members were Lebanese nationals. This has facilitated to a great extent the relationship and communication with the local administration and promoted an approach of peer-to-peer learning.
- 5. Administrative and financial flexibility:** The administrative and financial autonomy that the IOF enjoys from its status of public institution provides the staff, beneficiaries and all partners with a flexible and adaptable work environment to cater for their needs and requests. A different administrative set-up might have constituted an additional challenge to the performance of the IOF.
- 6. Approach to reform – No single recipe for success:** The IOF has always put forward a pragmatic, progressive and participatory approach to reform. It promoted national consultations and the involvement of all concerned stakeholders such as the Court of Audit, the Parliament and others in any major reform initiative. It has looked at reform as a continuous and long-lasting process, not limited to a particular time schedule. Finally, the IOF continuously worked toward being an actor of reform and having a voice in the adoption and adaptation of knowledge and practices made available by the international community and foreign experts.

- 7. Benefiting from experience sharing:** Taking the time to study and learn from other/peer experiences before engaging into reform was key to designing effective solutions, mainly in the capacity-building field.
- 8. Performance record of accomplishment:** The record of accomplishment and sustained evolution within the MOF and the IOF is securing the continuous strong support of the public, the business community and the donor community.
- 9. Demand for replication:** The recognition by regional and international actors of the performance and success of the IOF and their request for the provision of technical assistance increased the sense of responsibility of the staff at the IOF and provided additional incentive to strengthen their approach and continuously improve their practices.
- 10. The role of the donor community:** The donor community provided substantive technical and financial support to PFM reform in Lebanon. Lessons from experience encourage the donor community to rethink approaches and rhythm, suggesting greater use of country systems, better coordination, and heavier investment in the country institutions over longer periods of time to leave out linear models to the benefit of flexibility and longer term follow-up. The donor community in Lebanon recognizes the role of the IOF and provides it with its support.

## **Conclusion**

The MOF and IOF experience in the field of Public Financial Management in post-Taef Lebanon overcame - and continues to overcome - a plethora of security, political, social, and economic challenges. Is this enough to call it a "best practice"? It should be understood that best practices in governance are relevant to the conditions, circumstances, legal environment and needs of each country. What is important is to acknowledge with objectivity the success of an institution within its institutional and operational framework.

In 15 years, the services of the IOF are largely satisfactory to their users, and in many cases exceeded expectations. Beneficiaries expressed their high appreciation of capacity-building activities as it helped them acquire new skills, improve their knowledge and work practices. Satisfaction was also derived from the professionalism and performance of trainers. In respect to communication

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activities, the role of the IOF improved citizen-awareness of PFM issues and lead to better participation of all concerned stakeholders in the process of devising policies and understanding new procedures at the MOF (Institut des Finances Basil Fuleihan, 2012).

The action of the IOF for better financial governance has instilled a culture of good governance based on 4 pillars:

1. Strategic vision: Civil servants are equipped with perspective on what is considered as good practice in their job and what is needed to reach this goal;
2. Efficiency: Civil servants are encouraged to achieve results making the best use of available resources;
3. Responsiveness: People – Civil servants – are trained to better serve other people – the citizens;
4. Accountability and public service ethics.

The IOF is looked at from within and outside Lebanon as an efficient institution inspired by a philosophy of continuous improvement and development, performance and client-service delivery. It is a good prototype of a performing organization in a post-conflict environment that has undoubtedly contributed to set one governance record for Lebanon and the MENA region.

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**List of Acronyms**

ADETEF	Association pour le Développement des Echanges en Technologie Economique et Financière
CSB	Civil Service Board
DGC	Directorate General of Customs
DGCLR	Directorate General of Cadastre and Land Registry
DGF	Directorate General of Finance
DGNL	Directorate General of National Lottery
ENA	Ecole Nationale d'Administration
ESCWA	Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
EU	European Union
GIFT-MENA	Governance Institutes Forum for Training in the Middle East and North Africa
GOL	Government of Lebanon
IOF	Institute of Finance Basil Fuleihan
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
METAC	Middle East technical Assistance Center
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MP	Member of Parliament
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
OMSAR	Office of State Ministry for Administrative Reforms
PM	Prime Minister
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
WCO	World Customs Organization

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