



**AMERICAN
UNIVERSITY
OF BEIRUT**

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

Beirut, July 18, 2025

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Lebanese Ministry of State for Administrative Reform and AUB Sign Agreement to Advance Public Sector Innovation and Reform

In a step toward reforming Lebanon's public institutions, the Lebanese Ministry of State for Administrative Reform (OMSAR) and the American University of Beirut (AUB), through its Office of the Provost and Government Engagement Platform (GEP), signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on July 17, 2025. This memorandum aims to establish a broad framework for collaboration aimed at strengthening evidence-informed policymaking, driving innovation in public service delivery, and bridging academic expertise with institutional reform efforts.

Celebrating a shared commitment to advancing effective, transparent, and citizen-centered governance, the MoU signing ceremony was held at AUB and was attended by Dr. Fadi Makki, minister of state for administrative reform, and Dr. Fadlo R. Khuri, president of the American University of Beirut, who signed the agreement in the presence of Dr. Zaher Dawy, AUB provost; in addition to university vice-presidents, deans, senior administrators, and academics; as well as senior representatives from OMSAR.

Acknowledging the gravity of the current public sector crisis, Makki stated, "At a moment when Lebanon's public service is facing a near-total collapse—marked by acute capacity gaps and a critical shortage of human resources—this collaboration offers concrete and much-needed solutions to strengthen our institutions and restore public confidence."

He added that "through this collaboration, we will work with the American University of Beirut and our partners to launch a platform that matches the evolving needs of public institutions with the academic expertise and student support that AUB has." This platform, he explained, "will provide quick access to specialized knowledge that can augment the capacities of public administrations.

It will also serve as a space for engagement between students and faculty on the one hand, and the realities of policymaking and institutional reform on the other."

The collaboration leverages AUB's academic strengths to co-develop and test innovative solutions that support public sector transformation; design and implement applied learning opportunities, such as internships and student-led projects, that immerse students in real-world policy challenges; and provide advisory and technical support on administrative reform and service improvement. It also includes the delivery of tailored training programs to build public sector capabilities in areas such as digital innovation, data literacy, behavioral insights, and co-

American University of Beirut

PO Box 11-0236, Riad El Solh, Beirut 1107 2020, Lebanon
T +961 1 35 00 00 – Ext 2650 | communications@aub.edu.lb

aub.edu.lb

creation; while promoting inclusive dialogue and stakeholder engagement to enhance transparency, accountability, and public trust.

Khuri highlighted AUB's full institutional commitment to the collaboration, emphasizing that the university is prepared to work "in a data-driven manner," and "with no limits on what we are willing to contribute from the perspective of our students, faculty, staff, and administration—and where possible, pull in our extraordinary alumni." He added, "we do believe that we can contribute meaningfully to the rebuilding of a better and more sustainable state."

He also spoke about the need for cross-sector collaboration to rebuild the state, noting that, "There is a broad acknowledgement that the private sector, the academic institutions, and the public sector have to sit at the same table. Even if there is shouting, there has to be an honest dialog as to what can be done in the fastest and most efficient time possible, but in the most sustainable manner possible, to rebuild the institutions of the state."

AUB has also outlined a structured engagement strategy for the four key initiatives identified in discussions with Minister Makki. Each initiative will be led by the relevant institutional entities to ensure alignment with public sector needs and maximize impact.

The Digital Platform for Academic Engagement will facilitate connections between AUB experts and public institutions to promote evidence-informed collaboration. The Behavioral Science and Innovation Lab will bring together expertise from across the university to contribute to this initiative. This includes the Business Practice and Policy Initiative at the Suliman S. Olayan School of Business, the Center for Collaborative Design at the Maroun Semaan Faculty of Engineering and Architecture, the Center for Public Health Practice at the Faculty of Health Sciences, and the TAMAM Project at the Faculty of Arts and Sciences.

To support the digital capacity-building needs of public institutions, a university-wide taskforce will be established to design and implement a Digital Transformation Academy in collaboration with relevant faculties and IT units. Additionally, the university will provide support for the "Reinventing the State" initiative, through the Good Governance and Citizenship Observatory, Asfari Institute for Civil Society and Citizenship, Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs, and the Department of Political Studies and Public Administration. These entities will work collectively to contribute to the process of advancing public sector transformation and governance reform.

By joining forces, OMSAR and AUB's Office of the Provost and Government Engagement Platform (GEP) aim to empower the next generation of public leaders, strengthen institutional resilience, and co-create solutions that reflect Lebanon's aspirations for effective and equitable governance.

ENDS

For more information please contact:

Simon Kachar, PhD

Executive Director of Communications
Lecturer – Political Studies and Public Administration Department
Founding Director – Good Governance and Citizenship Observatory
Fellow – Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs
Member of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences Research, Innovation, and Creativity Hub

T +961 1 37 43 74 Ext: 2676 | **M** +961 3 42 70 24
sk158@aub.edu.lb

American University of Beirut

PO Box 11-0236, Riad El Solh, Beirut 1107 2020, Lebanon
T +961 1 35 00 00 – Ext 2650 | communications@aub.edu.lb
aub.edu.lb

Note to Editors

About AUB

Founded in 1866, the American University of Beirut bases its educational philosophy, standards, and practices on the American liberal arts model of higher education. A teaching-centered research university, AUB has more than 790 full-time faculty members and a student body of over 9000 students. AUB currently offers more than 140 programs leading to bachelor's, master's, MD, and PhD degrees. It provides medical education and training to students from throughout the region at its Medical Center that includes a full-service 365-bed hospital.

Stay up to date on AUB news and events.

aub.edu.lb | [Facebook](#) | [X](#)

American University of Beirut

PO Box 11-0236, Riad El Solh, Beirut 1107 2020, Lebanon
T +961 1 35 00 00 – Ext 2650 | communications@aub.edu.lb

aub.edu.lb