The Comparative, International & Development Education Centre (CIDEC) is pleased to present:

**CIDE SEMINAR**

**From Educational Relief to Reform: “Khaddit Beirut” as a Community-led Response to the Beirut Explosion**

*Carmen Geha & Rima Karami Akkary*

*Carmen Geha* is an Associate Professor of Public Administration, Leadership and Organizational Development, at the American University of Beirut. She is also a Research Associate and Founding Member at the Center for Inclusive Business & Leadership (CIBL) for women. Carmen has a BA and MA in Public Administration from the American University of Beirut, and a PhD in International Relations from the University of St. Andrews. Her research examines the nexus politics and public institutions with a focus on three areas: women’s political and economic participation, refugee policies, and civil society and protest movements. Geha has held Visiting Research positions at the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs at Harvard University and the Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs at Brown University. Between 2018 and 2020, she was the Founding Director of “Education for Leadership in Crisis” Scholarship Program for Afghan women at AUB. Additionally, she is the 2018-2019 Fellow in the Program in Social Science at the Institute for Advanced Study. In addition to her academic track, Geha has an extensive experience advising and consulting in public sector reform and organizational development.

*Rima Karami Akkary* is an Associate Professor of Educational Administration, Policy and Leadership in the department of Education at the American University of Beirut. She is also the program advisor for the Educational Management and Leadership program. She holds a Bachelor in Science, Diploma for teaching science at the secondary level, and Master of Arts in Science Education from the American University of Beirut (AUB), and a Doctorate in Education from Portland State University with a specialty in [K-12] Educational Administration and Supervision with a focus on school principalship, organizational change and educational policy. Rima is the director and the principal investigator of the TAMAM project launched in 2007 as a grant funded by the Arab Thought Foundation at AUB to initiate school-based reform and research on how to build leadership skills for sustainable schools. The project has received additional funding from the LORE Foundation, the Taawon Association, and Al Maymouna organization and has partners in 67 schools in 8 Arab countries. She has published in international and local journals on the principal role, approaches to professional development, program and organizational level evaluation, and models for school-based reform. She also has an extensive experience advising and consulting public and private schools in Lebanon and the Arab region. She currently serves as the Chairperson of the executive committee of Shamaa (Arab Information Educational Network); a member of the executive committee of LAES (Lebanese association of Educational Sciences); and the coordinator for the Education sector in Khaddit Beirut.

The education system in Lebanon is a disaster. It fails to graduate students with the skills and knowledge they need to be future leaders and engaged citizens. From curriculum to pedagogy to infrastructure, for decades Lebanon’s education sector has been devastated by the heavy burden of corruption, sectarianism, and lack of resources. The massive influx of Syrian refugees could have been an opportunity to reform, revamp, and improve but instead was another excuse for failed strategies. Young people pay the price of ineptness and lack of a will to provide free education for all. The pandemic and the explosion of August 4th now exacerbate existing challenges and render schools utterly incapable to respond to the aftermath of the disaster while also catering for a rapidly changing reality across the nation.

Khaddit Beirut (meaning “Beirut Shake-Up” in Arabic) is a Lebanese national initiative which aims to develop an evidence-based, community-led, and locally-drive roadmap for recovery. Created in the wake of the explosion on August 4th, Khaddit Beirut is a grassroots platform connecting the local community with experts and activists to devise solutions to the context of the explosion and its implications on four vital areas: Community Health, Environmental Health, Education, and Small to Medium Size Enterprises. With this interdisciplinary bent, the first speaker Dr. Geha explains how relief and aid have historically been co-opted to impede reforms in the education sector and how we can break this cycle in the wake of this current disaster.
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This latter will be the focus of Dr. Karami, who will contextualize the educational landscape highlighting the shortcomings of the relief efforts over the past three decades. She will present Khaddit Beirut as an initiative aimed at shifting the approach of the top-down, internationally led emergency responses from a relief mindset towards supporting sustainable community led reform. Her presentation will highlight potential collaborations with Lebanese Educators in the Diaspora and international educational researchers interested in cross-cultural dialogue on effective educational reform.

**Monday October 5th, 2020 - 11:30 AM-1:00 PM**

**Chair: Kathy Bickmore**

**OISE Room 7-105 | 252 Bloor Street West, Toronto**

To login to ZOOM: [https://zoom.us/j/661234725](https://zoom.us/j/661234725)