Arab Reform Initiative

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Creative and Persistent: Lessons and Examples from Youth Activism in MENA

Arab Reform Initiative



The Arab Reform Initiative today launched a series of short videos of MENA youth activists, telling the stories of how they have sought to challenge in innovative and persistent ways "politics as usual" in order to bring about meaningful change.

These videos are part of a wider project that explored how youth as political actors have been practising new forms of politics since 2011. It looked at how young women and men activists do politics differently, how they build or create agency even in highly restrictive contexts, and the generational gap they perceive in their understanding of "politics" and their action and methods to achieve change on the ground.

"The purpose of these videos is to provide a go-to platform for activists to check what others in different contexts in MENA have done. The idea is not to "teach" or lecture them, but rather to encourage exchanges of experience around tactics and alternative strategies to effect positive change in their country or community," said Sarah Anne Rennick, Deputy Director at the Arab Reform Initiative and coordinator of the project.

[embed]https://youtu.be/7MO3MM1VgWM?list=PLb2toWDsmAiRz3e-MsgXUZ-hrJpBqKpULhttp://[/embed]

This series contains over 60 videos covering seven main themes that include "overcoming fear and repression", "strategies and tactics", "coordination and coalition building", "fundraising and finance", "organization models", "governance and politics". They include tips from activists from Algeria, Egypt, Lebanon, Syria and Tunisia.

"The new waves of protests that are now sweeping Iraq, Lebanon, and Algeria have shown that youth-driven change is still in the making in MENA, and that citizens' activism is ongoing despite new forms of authoritarianism," said Sarah Anne Rennick. "More importantly these protests have marked the arrival of a new political generation that is not satisfied with empty promises and cosmetic changes and that is out there seeking fundamental changes to the way they are governed."

Background



Arab Reform Initiative

The Arab Reform Initiative is a policy research centre whose key mission is to articulate a home-grown agenda for democratic change in Arab countries. We operate on the principles of impartiality, social justice, gender equality, and diversity and maintain a strict line of independence from any external agendas. ARI's current priority areas of work include research, policy, and advocacy work on women, new diasporas, youth in contexts of conflict and new forms of social mobilization and political economies across the Arab world.

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About the author

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The Arab Reform Initiative is the leading independent Arab think tank working with expert partners in the Middle East and North Africa and beyond to articulate a home-grown agenda for democratic change. It conducts research and policy analysis and provides a platform for inspirational voices based on the principles of diversity, impartiality and social justice.

- We produce original research informed by local experiences and partner with institutions to achieve impact across the Arab world and globally
- We empower individuals and institutions to develop their own concept of policy solutions
- We mobilize stakeholders to build coalitions for positive change

Our aim is to see vibrant democratic societies emerge and grow in the region.

Founded in 2005, the Arab Reform Initiative is governed by a Plenary of its members and an Executive Committee.

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