



Arab Reform Initiative



معهد الرباط للدراسات الاجتماعية
Rabat Social Studies Institute

Public Conference - 04 June 2024 – 2:30pm-6:30pm

Mobilizing from the Margins: Meanings, Modes, and Effects of Women and Youth Social Mobilization in the Arab Region

Location: Dawliz Art and Spa - Avenue du Prince héritier - Salé- Rabat

Please fill out this form to RSVP:

<https://forms.gle/ddHki5JbMLg3uHJL7>



The mass popular mobilizations calling for regime change that swept across the Arab region in 2011 and then again in 2019 were unprecedented not only for the content of demands and outcomes but also for the profiles of the protagonists. In countries across the region, women and youth – historically marginalized as political actors – came to the fore, taking on new roles in the public sphere and demonstrating a degree of politicization that had been largely ignored previously. Yet, in considering the agency of women and youth in the instance of mobilization only, the historical and generational antecedents to mobilization are lost. Indeed, such an ahistorical perspective fails to consider how previous cycles of mobilization and their outcomes shaped distinct participation dynamics and allowed for a new generation of feminist and youth politics to emerge. Likewise, in limiting the discussion to the period of mobilization only, the ensuing impact of mobilization on women and youth as political actors is missing.

Through a presentation of women and youth mobilization in popular uprisings and contentious politics in Morocco, Algeria, Lebanon, and Iraq, this conference seeks to explore how the historical trajectories of each country, and previous modes of participation from the margins, shaped the mobilization of women and youth. Likewise, in considering the reactions, counter-reactions, and outcomes of mobilization, this conference considers the effects on the political participation of women and youth and their new margins of maneuver. The conference seeks to address the following questions:

- 1) How can we situate the recent mobilizations of women and youth in Morocco, Algeria, Lebanon, and Iraq in historical perspectives, and what does this contribute to our understanding?
- 2) What are the intergenerational dynamics that shape feminist and youth politics today?
- 3) How did the popular mobilizations affect women and youth as political actors, and what opportunities and constraints for political participation do they face in the aftermath of social mobilizations?

Organized by the Arab Reform Initiative (ARI) and the Rabat Social Studies Institute (RSSI), this conference convenes activists, researchers, civil society representatives, international organizations, and public authorities to collectively reflect on and reassess the meanings, modes, and effects of women and youth participation in social mobilizations in the Arab region.

Program

Welcome and Registration

2:00pm–2:30pm

Opening Remarks

2:30pm–2:45pm

Dr. Saloua Zerhouni, Université Mohammed V
Dr. Sarah Anne Rennick, Arab Reform Initiative

Panel 1: Feminine and Feminist Mobilization: Reassessing the Nature of Women Participation in Social Movements and the Impact on Women's Political Claims and Spaces

2:45pm–4:15pm

Looking at women's participation in different social movements in Morocco, Algeria, and Iraq, the panel will assess the role of women in popular uprisings and social mobilization in the three countries, the reactions of governmental authorities to women mobilization and women's expanding roles in the political sphere, and the ensuing impact on modes of participation and new feminist claims and understandings.

Panel (45 minutes)

Discussion: (30–40 minutes)

Open discussion with conference participations to reflect on the research findings and their own experiences.

Moderated by Dr. Rola El Husseini, Lund University

Coffee Break

4:15pm–4:45pm

Panel 2: Youth between Mobilization, De-Mobilization, and Non-Mobilization: Explaining Patterns of Youth Participation in Social Movements and their Aftermath

4:45pm-6:15pm

Considering youth mobilization in revolutionary movements in Iraq, Lebanon, and Morocco, the panel will consider how the broader political context and generational transmission of memory shaped the patterns of mobilization of young people and the nature of their demands and collective identity. The panel will also consider how youth mobilization and the ensuing reaction of public authorities serves to both challenge and reproduce the political order.

Panel (45 minutes)

Discussion: (30-40 minutes) Open discussion with conference participations to reflect on the research findings and their own experiences.

Moderated by Dr. Saloua Zerhouni, Université Mohammed V

Closing Remarks: What are the New Margins for Women and Youth?

6:15pm-6:30pm

During the closing session, participants to the conference will be invited to share their own reflections on the evolution of women and youth social mobilization, activism, and political participation and the new opportunities and constraints they face.