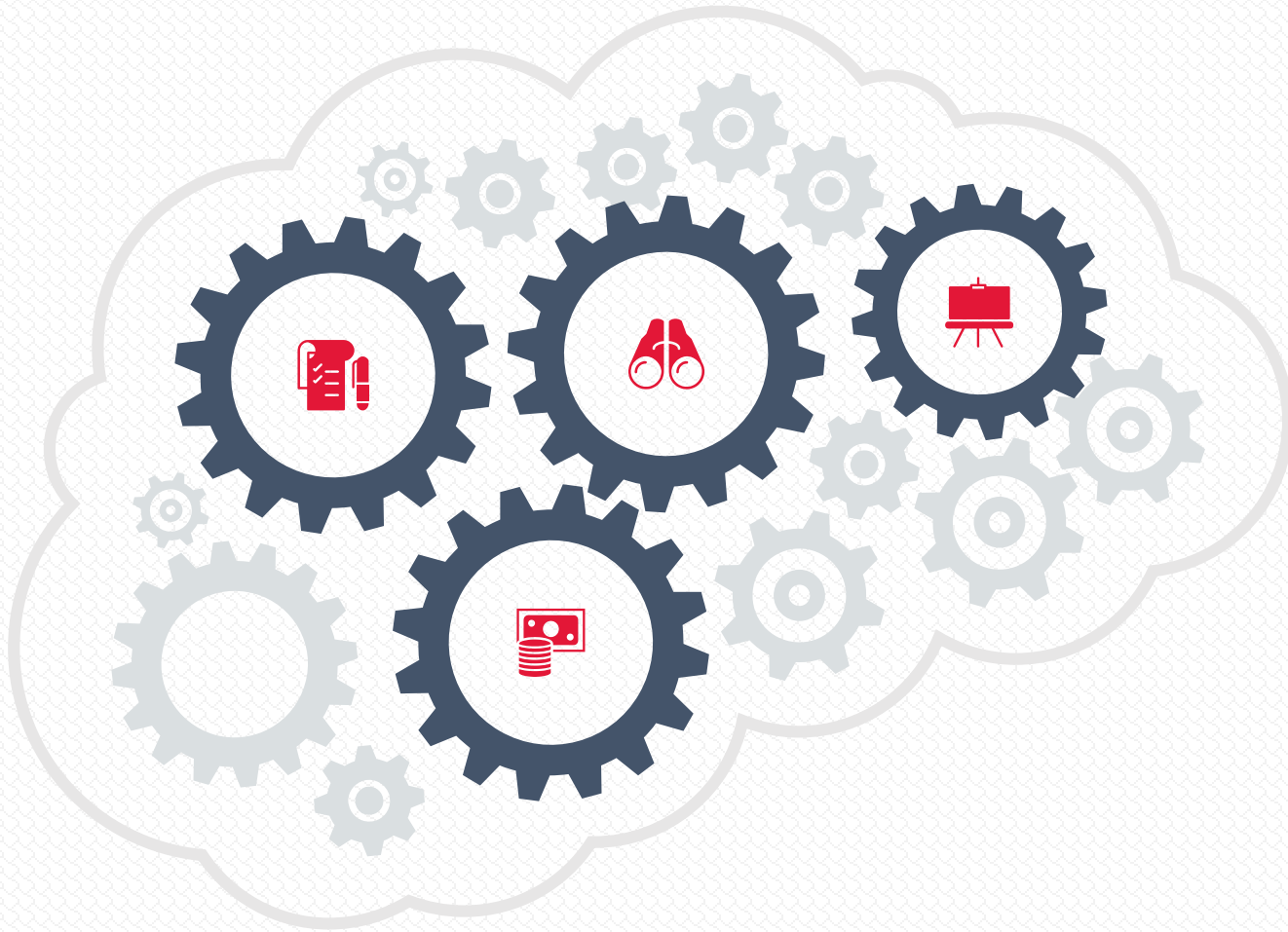




# Asfari Institute MARCH 2019 Monthly Events Roundup

# MONTHLY ROUNDUP



The monthly roundup of the Asfari Institute for Civil Society and Citizenship is a summary of :

- Events organized by the institute
- Events attended by team members
- Publications
- Interviews
- Research and projects updates
- New team members

# Events Organized – Steering Committee Meeting



**Program/ Project:** *A Social Mapping of the Daily Practices in Informality Amongst Syrian Displaced Communities in Lebanon*

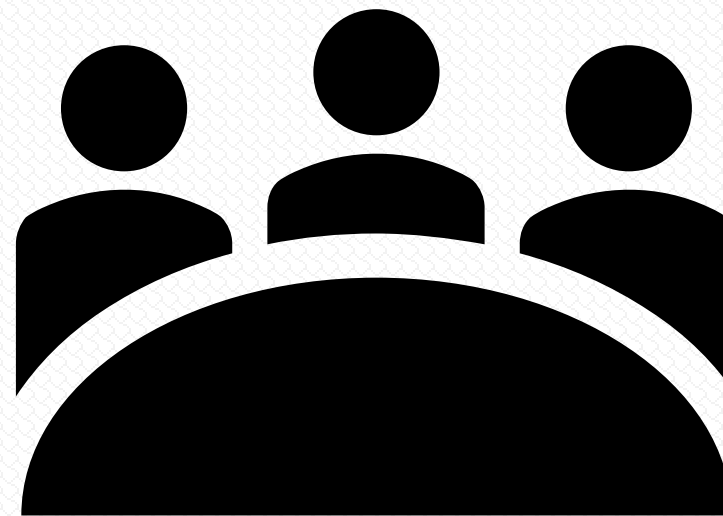


**Donor:** *Ford Foundation*



**Date:** 1 March

Project Coordinator Manar Fleifel headed the third Steering Committee (SC) Meeting for the project entitled: *The Lay of the Land: A Social Mapping of Daily Practices in Informality Amongst Syrian Displaced Communities in Lebanon*. The purpose of the meeting was to update the SC members on the progress of the project publications and activities. SC members also presented the outlines of the chapters of their edited volume, divided the labor of reviewing some project publications amongst themselves and helped refine the overall project workplan for the coming year.



# Events Organized – Workshop

*War Economy/ Reconstruction Economy in Syria*



**Program/ Project:** *A Social Mapping of the Daily Practices in Informality Amongst Syrian Displaced Communities in Lebanon*



**Donor:** *Ford Foundation*



**Date:** 2 March

The workshop was organized to fulfill the goals of the project and that is “to engage with the Syrian displacement academic debate, offering a more nuanced fact based analysis about realities on the ground”. By inviting practitioners and scholars from Syria and the region, the workshop aimed to cover the broad facts and realities of the war economy in Syria, looking at service provision, the major structures and actors during the and in the reconstruction process. The workshop also covered current debates and perspectives on reconstruction drawing out from the standpoints of biggest actors in Syria such as Iran and Russia and the host communities such as the European Union and Lebanon.





# Events Organized – Report Launch

"إصلاح وتطوير جامعة الدول العربية"



**Program/ Project:** *League of Arab States - The Reform and Development of the Arab Regional Order project*



**Date:** 11 March



**Location:** Conference Room – IFI, AUB

The launching event gathered the steering committee members and the working team of experts and researchers, along with a number of Arab ambassadors in Lebanon and various actors in the fields of political sociology and political economy, who are interested in or working on the topic in question, from academia, Arab media, and Arab NGOs/ research centers. The attendees were walked through the background information that framed the research work, including the challenges which have been facing the Arab systems and the LAS, the major findings and key messages of the report, the methodology and processes that led to them, and the main controversies that were noted during the consultancy workshops, roundups and interviews.



# Events Organized – Book Launch

*For the War Yet to Come – Planning Beirut's Frontiers*

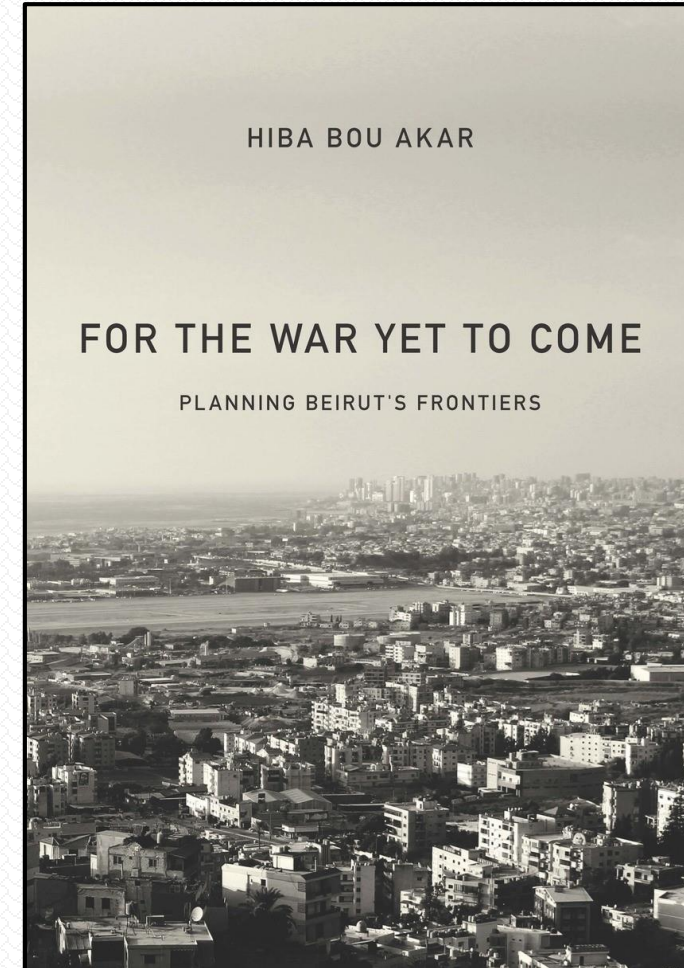


**Date:** 14 March



**Location:** IFI Auditorium, AUB

The MSFEA Urban Lab and the Asfari Institute for Civil Society and Citizenship at the American University of Beirut launched the book, "*For the War Yet to Come*" by Hiba Bou Akar, the assistant professor of urban planning at Columbia University. The writer argues that spaces for urban planning have become “post-conflict” battlegrounds for political and religious groups seeking to gain control of what they see as potential future frontiers.





# Events Organized – Training Workshop

كيف نبني مبادرة في الحقل الثقافي



**Program/ Project:** *Culture as Resistance*



**Date:** 25 – 28 March



**Location:** Asfari Institute, AUB

The Asfari Institute organized over the course of four days a training workshop on building a cultural initiative. The workshop saw the participation of 11 youths from the cultural field who received a theoretical and practical training. The aim of the workshop was to help civil society activists from the Arab world to gain the means to produce culture as a resistance either through initiatives, or through increasing awareness on the concept of resistance in independent cultural production.

The poster features the Asfari Institute for Civil Society and Citizenship logo at the top, which includes the AUB logo and the text 'Asfari Institute for Civil Society and Citizenship' and 'معهد الأسفاري للمجتمع المدني والوطنية' along with the website 'www.activearabvoices.org'. Below the logo, the text reads 'دعوة للتقديم – البرنامج التدريبي' followed by the main title 'الفاعلية الثقافية' and the subtitle 'كيف نبني مبادرة في الحقل الثقافي'. The dates '2019 - 25 آذار (مارس)' are listed below. A central image shows a mural of a green frog-like character with a red mouth and a black suit, standing next to a purple and white circular graphic with Arabic text. At the bottom, there is contact information: 'للمزيد من المعلومات وللتنسجيل، قوموا بزيارة موقعنا' followed by the website 'ActiveArabVoices.org', 'أو مراسلتنا على' followed by the email 'AsfariInstCAR@aub.edu.lb', and 'www.ActiveArabVoices.org' and 'ASFARI INSTITUTE BLOG' at the very bottom.







# Events Organized – Training Program Selection



**Program/ Project:** *ASAP Arab Social Activism Program*



**Date:** 29 March



**Location:** Asfari Institute, AUB

Dr. Dina El Khawaga, director of the Asfari Institute, convened a closed meeting with the selection committee for the second edition of Arab Social Activism Program (ASAP), which is to be held this year from 16 June to 6 July, 2019. During this meeting, 19 young activists from 8 Arab countries were selected rigorously and the content and format of the training material was discussed to ensure the optimality of the prospective training sessions.



# Events Organized – Report Launch

التقرير الأول عن الناشطة المجتمعية: تداخل المعاني والمجالات



**Program/ Project:** ASAP Arab Social Activism Program



**Date:** 29 March



**Location:** College Hall, AUB

The “Social Activism in the Arab Region” report was launched during a panel discussion in the presence of speakers who contributed with research papers on the different focus and case studies of Arab social activism, and some of which had trained the first cohort of young Arab activists during the first edition of ASAP last summer. The speakers are: Dr. Dina El Khawaga; Dr. Youssef El Chazli; Abdou Moussa; Dr. Hassan Abbas; Dr. Mohamed Abouelghit Ahmed; Amr Ismaeil Marzouk; Dr. Ala Talbi; Salma Hussein; and Mona Khneisser.

The launch agenda can be found [here](#).





# Events Attended

## *L'art Contemporain Syrien : Histoire D'une Révolution Visuelle*



### **Organizing Entity:**

*Portes ouvertes sur l'art contemporain syrien  
à Paris*



**Date:** 1 March



**Location:** National School of Fine Arts – Paris,  
France

The «Portes ouvertes sur l'art contemporain syrien à Paris» (Open Doors on Contemporary Syrian Art in Paris) collective organized a workshop on the history of visual revolution in contemporary Syrian art, in the presence of 18 artists and academics from Syria and France, including Asfari Institute's Dr. Hassan Abbas.



# Events Attended

*The Middle East and the EU: New Realities and Possibilities*



**Organizing Entity:**

*MEDRESET*



**Date:** 6 March



**Location:** Egmont Palace – Brussels, Belgium

With fast changing realities in both the Middle East and Europe, a reset in Euro-Mediterranean relations is more needed than ever. How can we reset our thinking, understanding, and definition of the Mediterranean, as well as EU policies in the region, making them more inclusive, responsive, and flexible? After more than two years of research, this MEDRESET conference presents answers to these questions in diverse policy areas, including political ideas, migration, energy and industry, as well as agriculture and water.





# Publications

أوراق عمل



WORKING PAPERS



Picture Source: flickr.com

**Report of the Advisory Committee  
to Reform and Develop the “Arab  
Regional Order”**

Gamil Matar / Dr. Yousef Al-Hassan / Dr. Nassif Hitti



Picture Source: Flickr.com

إصلاح وتطوير  
“النظام الإقليمي العربي”



**Title:**

إصلاح وتطوير “النظام الإقليمي العربي”

*Report of the Advisory Committee to Reform and Develop the “Arab Regional Order”*



**Advisory Committee:**

Gamil Matar, Dr. Yousef Al-Hassan, and Dr. Nassif Hitti



**Project:**

*The Reform and Development of the Arab Regional Order*



**Summary:**

The Arabic version of the report includes a policy paper developed by the project’s steering committee of experts in the field of Arab regional relations and the League of Arab States (LAS). It also includes a number of background papers written by researchers working on this topic, the reports of the several consultation workshops that the Asfari Institute organized with its partners on different dimensions of the topic, and finally a report on the interviews that the experts’ committee had conducted with current and former LAS officials as well as on their periodic meetings. The English version, as the title implies, includes only the report of the advisory committee.

# Publications



## Title:

التقرير الأول عن الناشطة المجتمعية: تداخل المعاني والمجالات



## Editorial:

Dr. Dina El Khawaga



## Summary:

The report emerges as a culmination of the first round of the research project Arab Social Activism Program (ASAP). The Asfari Institute launched the program in 2018, funded by the Asfari Foundation, in order to place social activism at the core of civil society studies in the Arab world. This report aims to swim against the current of prevalent outlook, and supports the hypothesis that is for the continuity of a democratic movement, and the variety of its form beyond organization.

