

Land Governance, Natural Resources and Climate Change in the Arab Region



الاراضي العربية Arab Land Initiative

Coordination and collaboration

Knowledge

Capacities

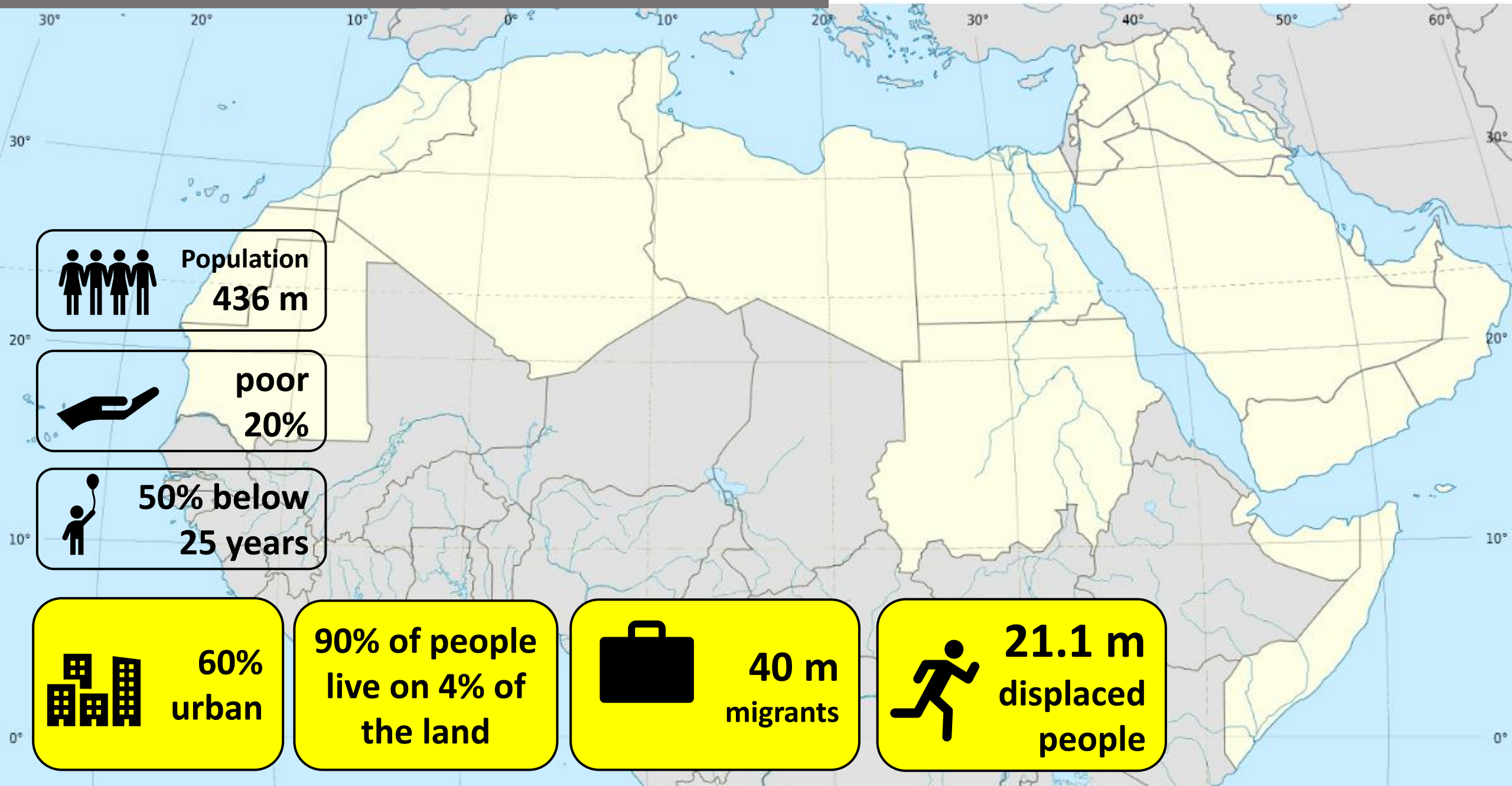
Country interventions



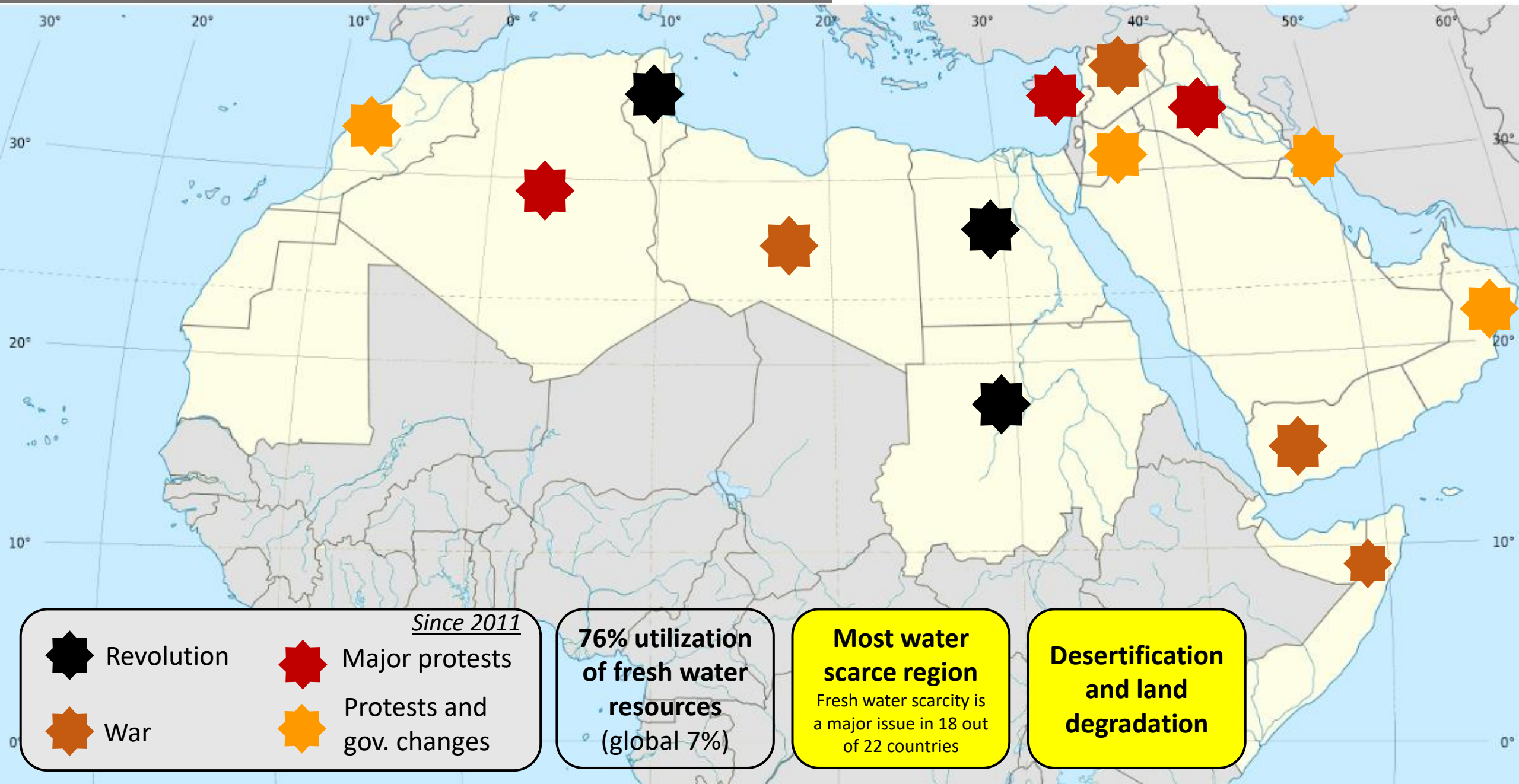
LAND GOVERNANCE, NATURAL
RESOURCES AND CLIMATE CHANGE
IN THE ARAB REGION

SECURING LAND AND PROPERTY RIGHTS FOR ALL

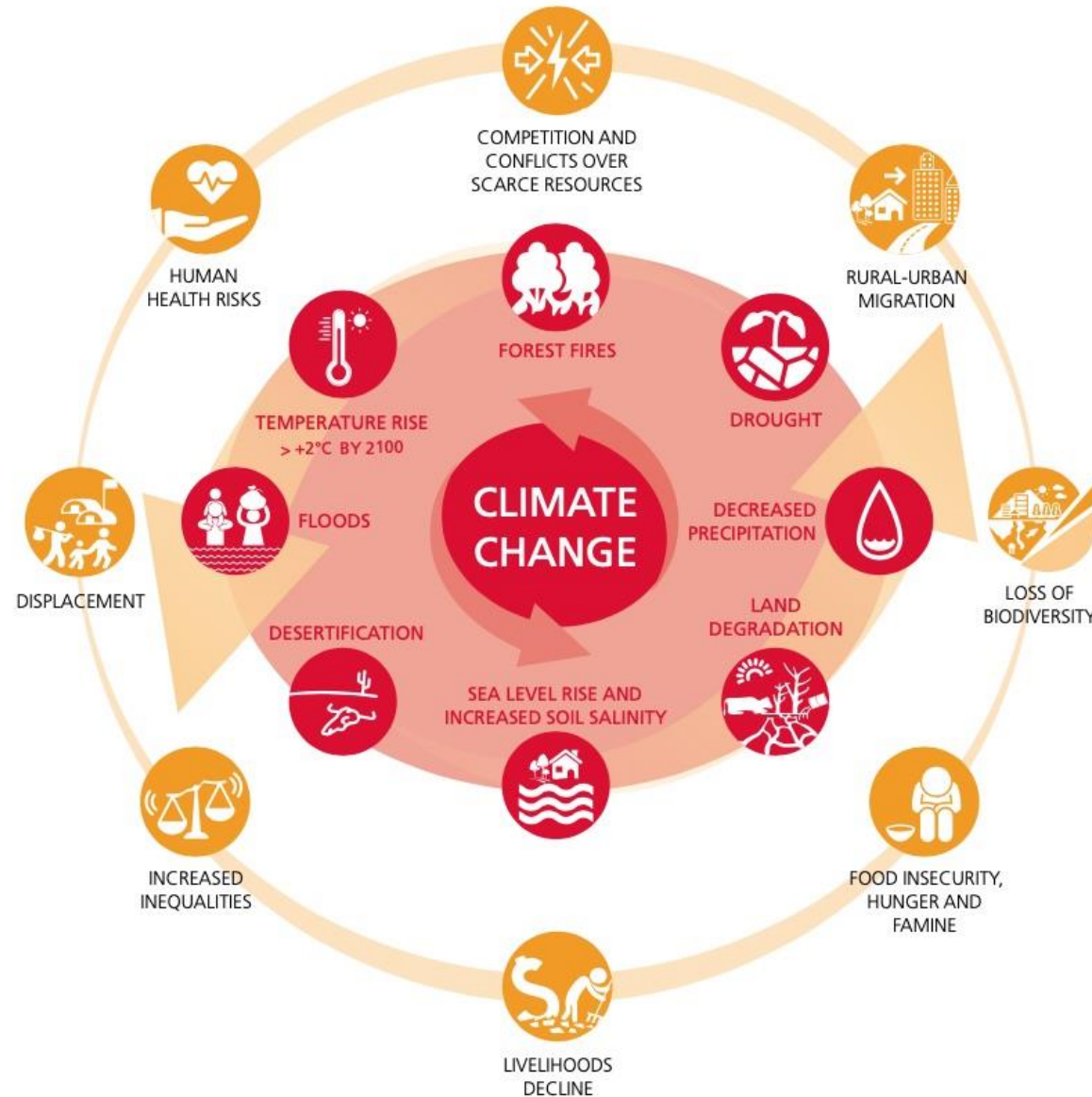
The context



The context



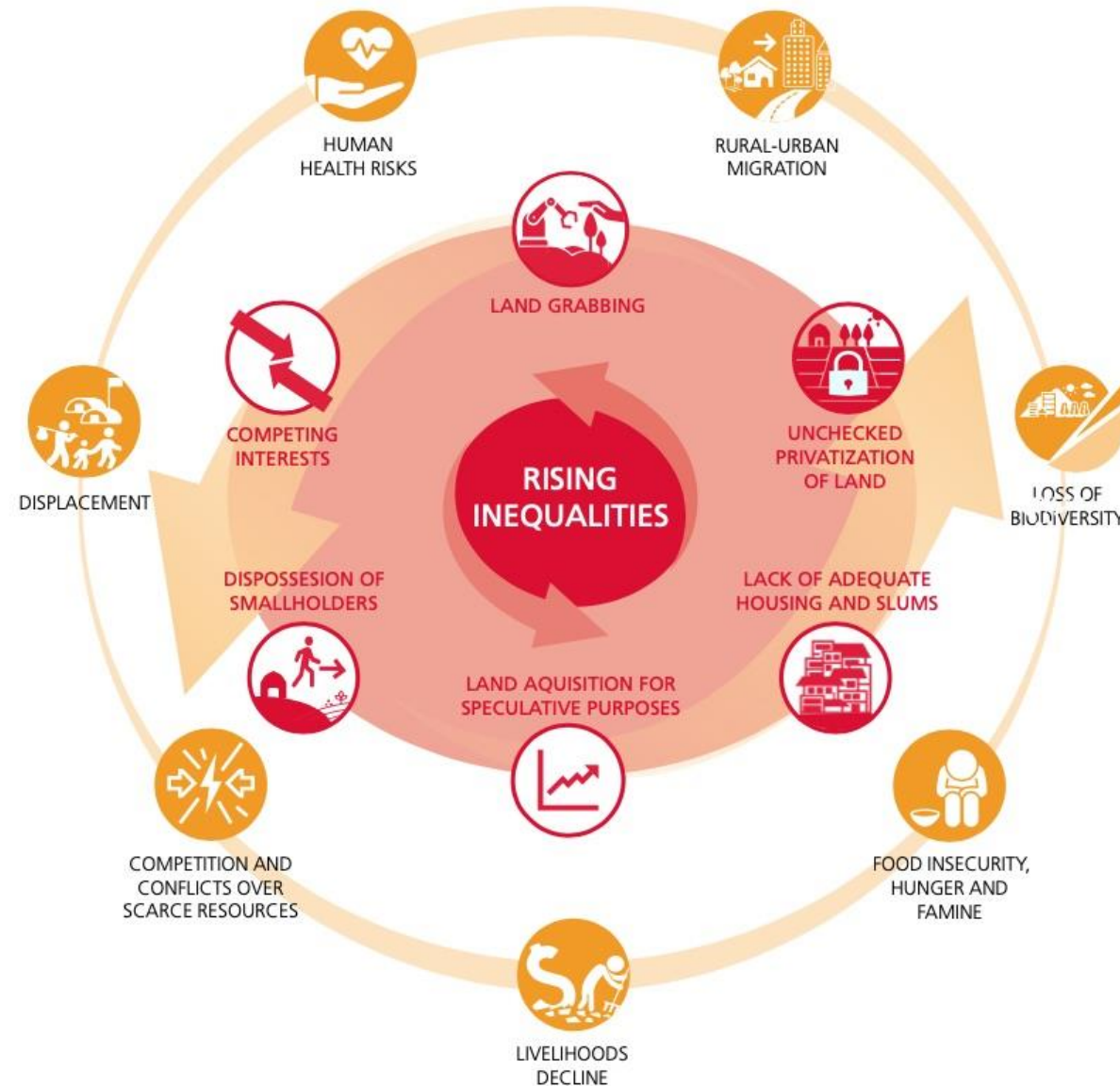
Manifestation of **climate change** in the Arab region and impact on people



Manifestation of **poor land governance** in the Arab region and impact on people



Manifestation of the **rise of inequalities** in the Arab region and impact on people



Key challenges related to Land, Natural Resources and Climate Change in the Arab Region

- 1. Land degradation**
- 2. Land use and resource based-conflicts**
- 3. Land dispossessions and displacements**
- 4. Chaotic urbanization**

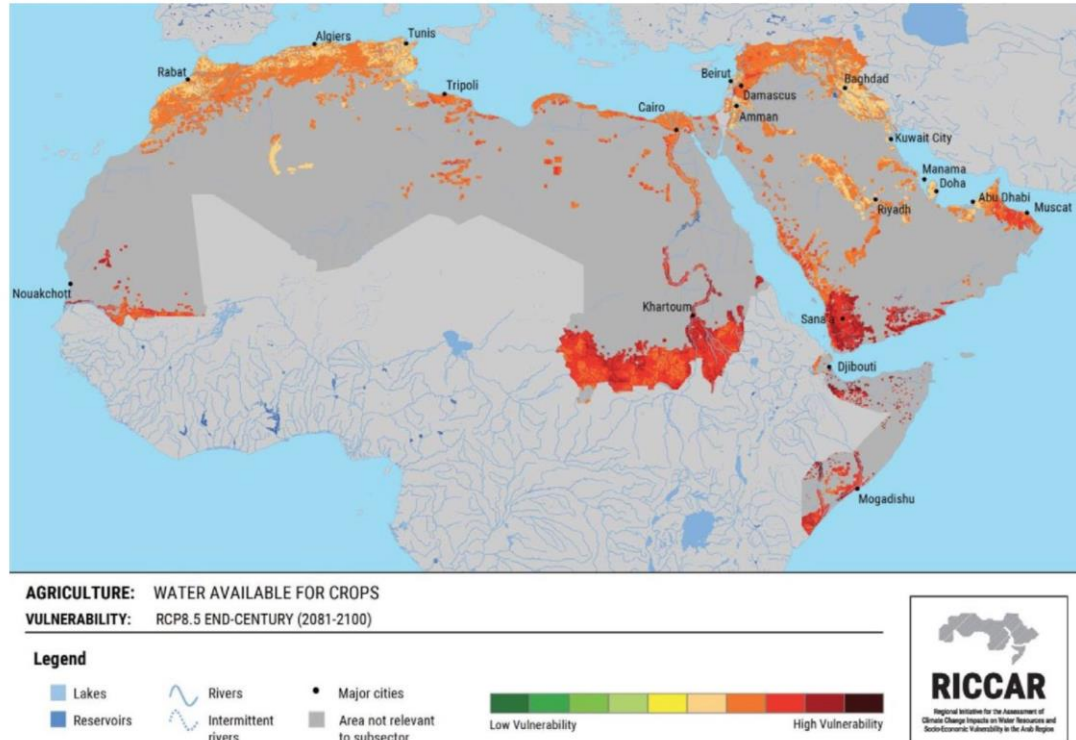
1. Land degradation and disruption of agrarian and pastoral systems



Drivers of land degradation in the Arab region

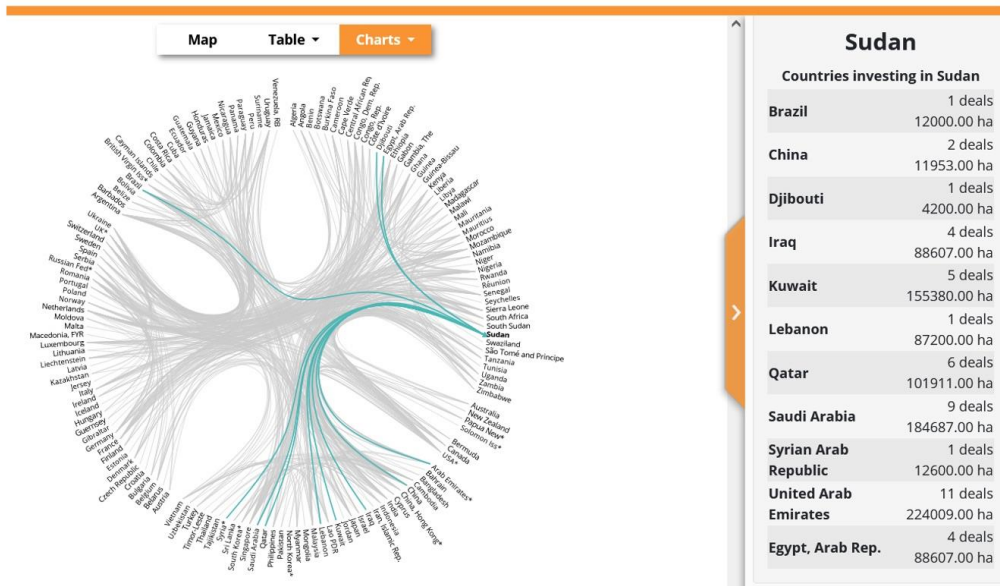
- Land degradation is undermining rural and nomadic livelihoods.
- Climate variations, land fragmentation, and the enclosure of the commons are forcing herders into smaller areas and accelerating their degradation due to over grazing.
- Land abandonment, due to social unrest and economic factors, is accelerating land degradation and susceptibility to climatic factors in many countries.

2. Land use and resource based-conflicts in pastoral areas



- Climate change is amplifying resource-based conflicts in countries where pastoralism is still a main source of livelihoods (like Djibouti, Somalia and Sudan).
- Reduced rainfall and seasonal changes are affecting the calendars and routes of herders are leading farmers to expand and fence-off their cultivated lands and abandon older cultivation practices that relied on their exchange with herders.

3. Land dispossession and development-induced displacements



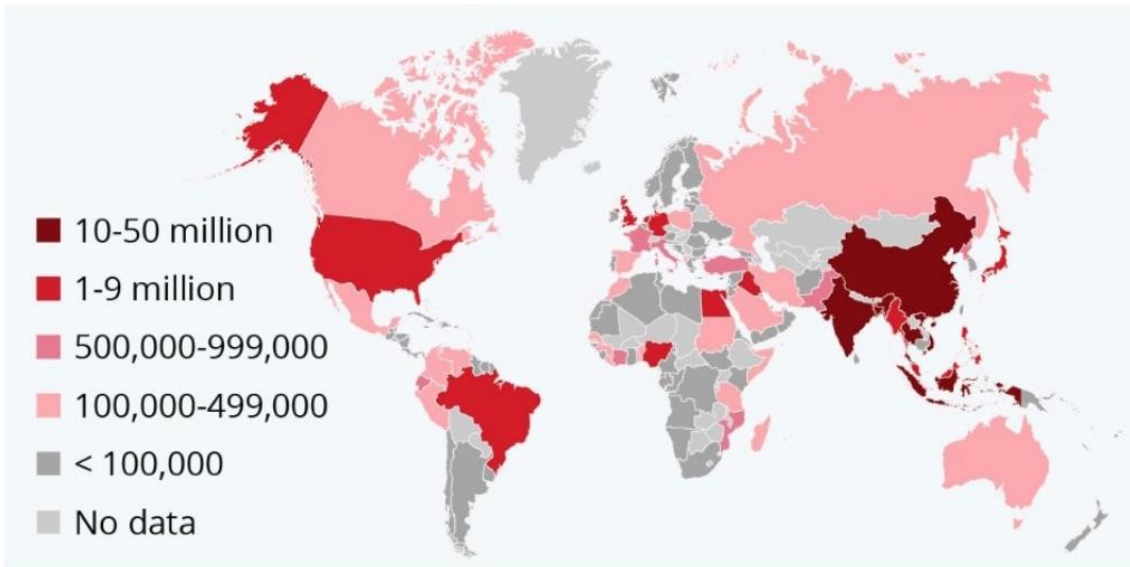
SUDAN: 97 % of investors in large scale land deals (total more than 1 million ha) are from Arab countries

Source: LandMatrix (Sudan)

<https://landmatrix.org/charts/web-of-transnational-deals>

- Unjust land policies and land governance systems.
- Rise of neoliberal policies and the growing power of the transnational and financial actors in the economy.
- Expansion of commercial farmlands, infrastructure projects and extractive industries.
- ‘Green grabbing’ where governments are facilitating land enclosure.

4. Chaotic urbanization including in climatic sensitive zones



Countries where most people are affected by rising sea levels (*assuming a rise in sea levels of 50-70 cm (2°C temperature increase/not taking into account ice sheet instability).

Source: Statista, 2020.

- **Most vulnerable cities are those that lack basic urban services. Most vulnerable social groups are the urban poor, refugees, and rural migrants living in high-risk areas.**
- **Poor housing quality in coastal zones exposes the inhabitants of these areas to risks of Sea Level Rise, floods, and storms.**
- **Affluent groups also built private houses and resorts in areas prone to natural hazards. Yet enjoy tenure security.**

Recommendations to address key challenges related to land, natural resources and climate change in the Arab region

- 1. How to address the critical relationship between land degradation, climate change, and the disruption of agrarian and pastoralists systems?**
- 2. How to address the criticality of natural resource-based conflicts in pastoral areas in the Arab region?**
- 3. How to protect vulnerable social groups from development induced displacements and secure their right to land and adequate housing? How to protect land and people in contexts of rapid urban growth and climate change hazards?**

Recommendations related to land degradation and agrarian and pastoralists systems

- Promote **participatory land governance** to deal with land fragmentation by encouraging collective ownership, joint land use arrangements and recovering traditional systems.
- Foster **agroecological approaches**, support small farmers, protect land tenancy rights, and encourage land cooperatives.
- Support the **sustainable management of rangelands** and protect pastoralist land tenure rights to increase land productivity, halt rangeland and forest degradation, and protect rural and pastoral livelihoods against climate change effects.

Recommendations related to natural-resource based conflicts in pastoral areas

- **Map, demarcate, protect and regulate pastoral corridors (*merhal*)** to maintain herders' mobility and reduce their tension with farmers.
- Place these corridors within a broader **land use planning and policy** framework that recognize, legitimize, and institutionalize the right of the diverse land users to access and benefit from available resources.
 - Regulate corridors access and rationalize their land uses
 - Strengthen the capacities of “tribal” institutions and civic unions and establish recognizable local entities to protect the rangelands
 - Embrace land policies that recognize herders' traditional knowledge and rights

Recommendations related to securing the right of vulnerable social groups to land and housing

- **Develop compensation and resettlement schemes**, when relocation is unavoidable, that recognize the customary, formal and informal land rights of vulnerable groups and that are negotiated and accepted by the affected population.
 - Ensure that new housing projects are planned in safe areas and close to the previous homes and sources of livelihoods.
 - Adopt fit-for purposes land approaches to document land rights in unsurveyed areas.
- **Recognize the land rights continuum** in land redistribution schemes and encourage and support land cooperatives to improve the land tenure security of smallholders in contexts dominated by large-scale landholders.

Recommendations related to protecting land and people from chaotic urbanization

- **Put in place integrated land use plans** to guide urban expansion away from significant landscapes, natural sites, and productive lands.
- **Identify climate-sensitive areas** (areas prone to sea level rise, flooding and fires) and restrict and regulated their land uses.
- Develop **planning directives and legal** instruments to regulate land uses, protect natural sites of high significance and guide urban expansion; and enforce these directives.
- Implement **preventive and proactive measures** to protect exposed areas against possible natural hazards.
- **Raise people's awareness** of climate-sensitive areas to reduce their exposure to risks of natural hazards.

- **Set targets and commit to the LDN, SDGs, and VGGTs**
- **Ensure public engagement in the decision-making process at the community level**
- **Put in place effective environmental and social safeguards systems**
- **Develop legal and institutional frameworks that foster social inclusion and justice in the resolution of disputes on land and natural resources**
- **Embrace multi-level governance and ensure effective coordination and coherence of plans and objectives at all levels**
- **Promote knowledge sharing by build committed in-country and cross-country partnerships**