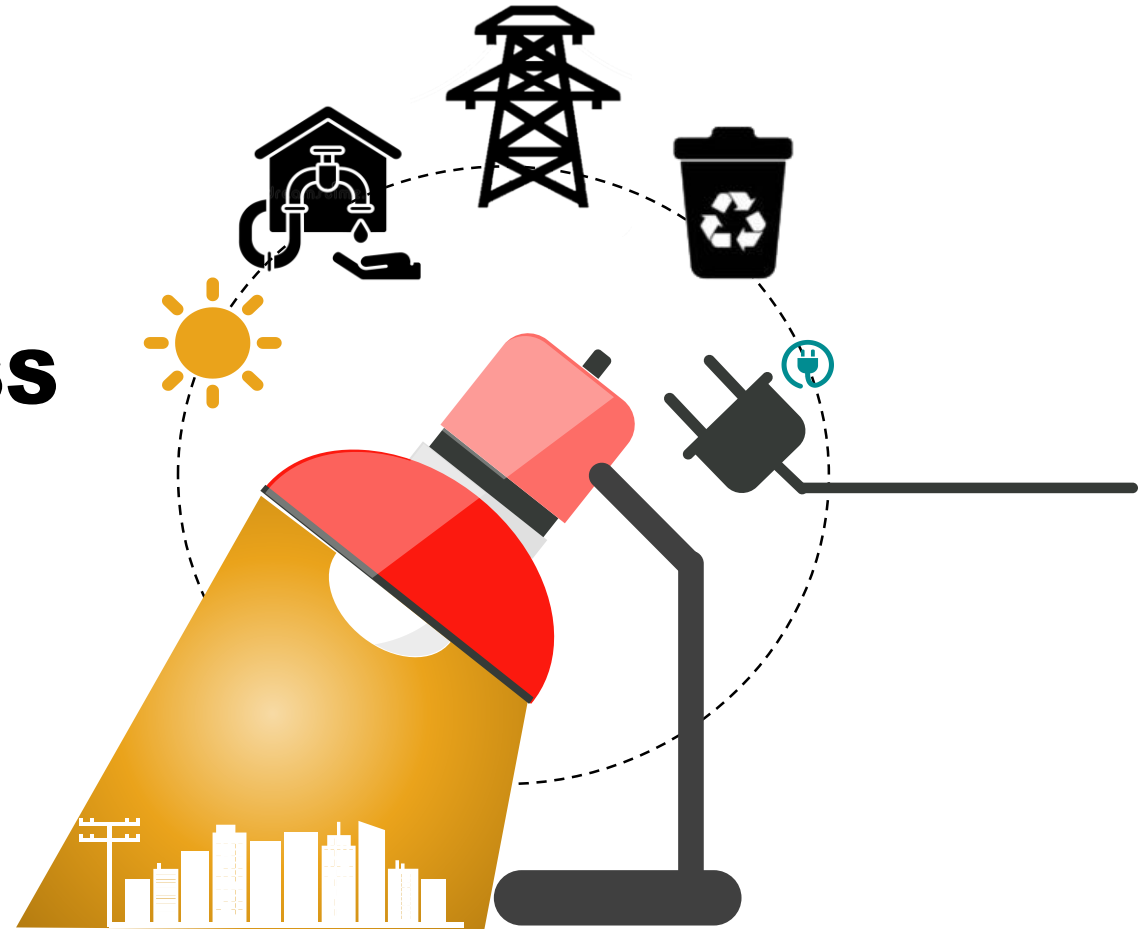




THE CHALLENGES OF ACCESS TO URBAN SERVICES DURING ARMED CONFLICT

Regional WaSH Working Sub-Group, 11th November 2020



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TODAY, 11th November 2020

Urban population is highly reliant on services to meet their essential needs and therefore **is highly vulnerable to a disruption in service delivery**, which often occurs **during armed conflict**.

The scope of this presentation is to give a glimpse at the challenges of access to urban services during armed conflict, with a specific focus on the Near and Middle East region.

- 1. Urban Services**
- 2. When War Comes To City**
- 3. The Regional Context**
- 4. ICRC Modus Operandi**
- 5. Concluding Messages**



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1. WHAT **URBAN SERVICES** ARE



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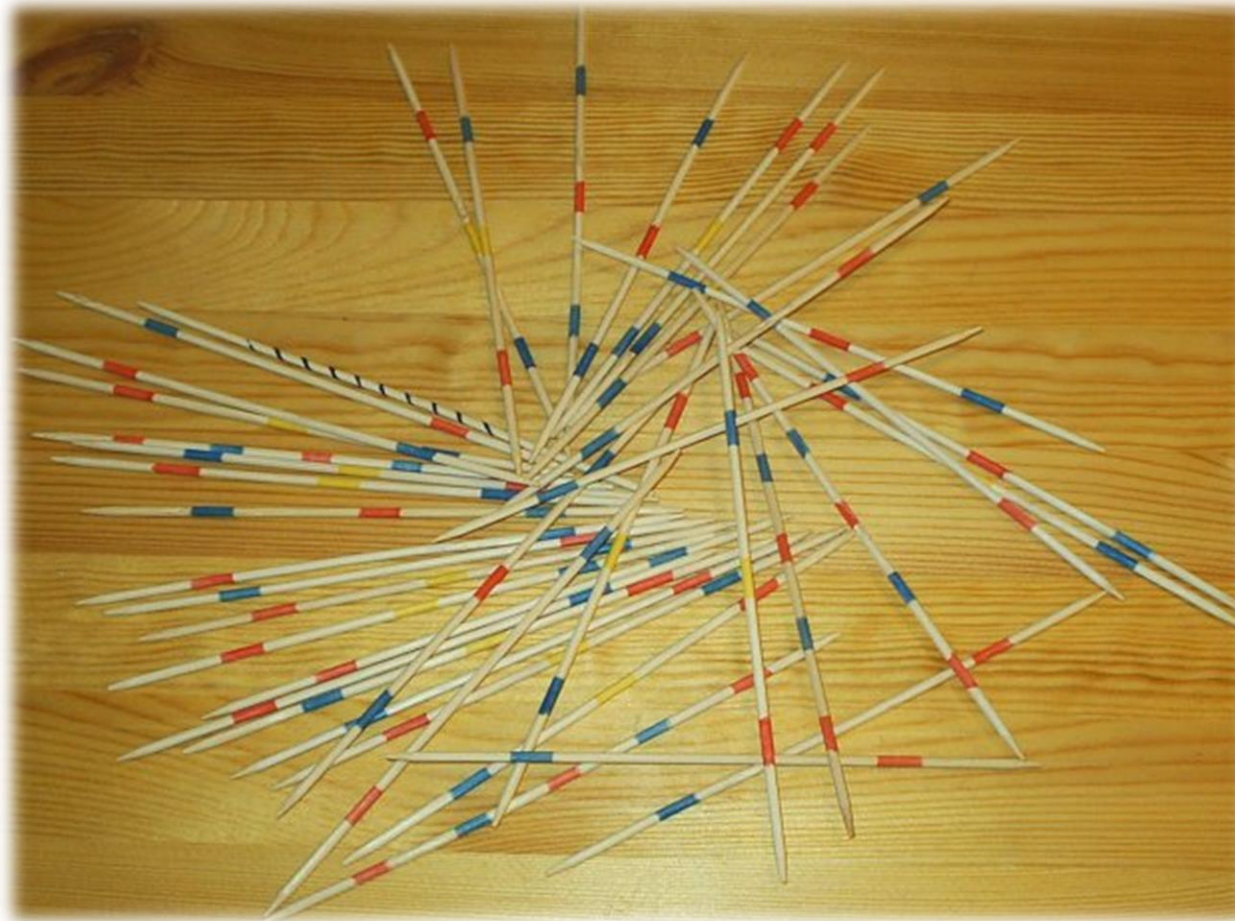
URBAN SERVICES: **COMPLEX SYSTEMS**

Water supply service

Wastewater supply
service

Electricity supply
service

Health service



Roads

Ports and Airports

Education facilities

Solid waste disposal
service

Other ...

**Essential services are those that are vital
to ensure the subsistence of civilian
population.**



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URBAN SERVICES: **COMPONENTS**

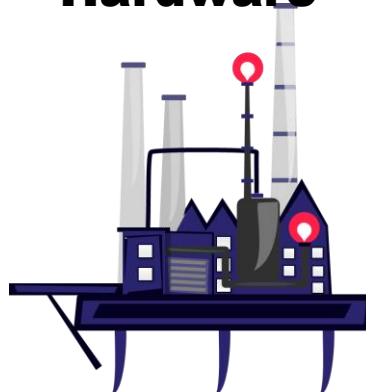
- **All Essential Services Depends On**

People



- Operators
- Techniciens
- Admin & Management

Hardware



- Infrastructure
- Equipment: pumps, motors, generators
- Heavy machinery

Consumables

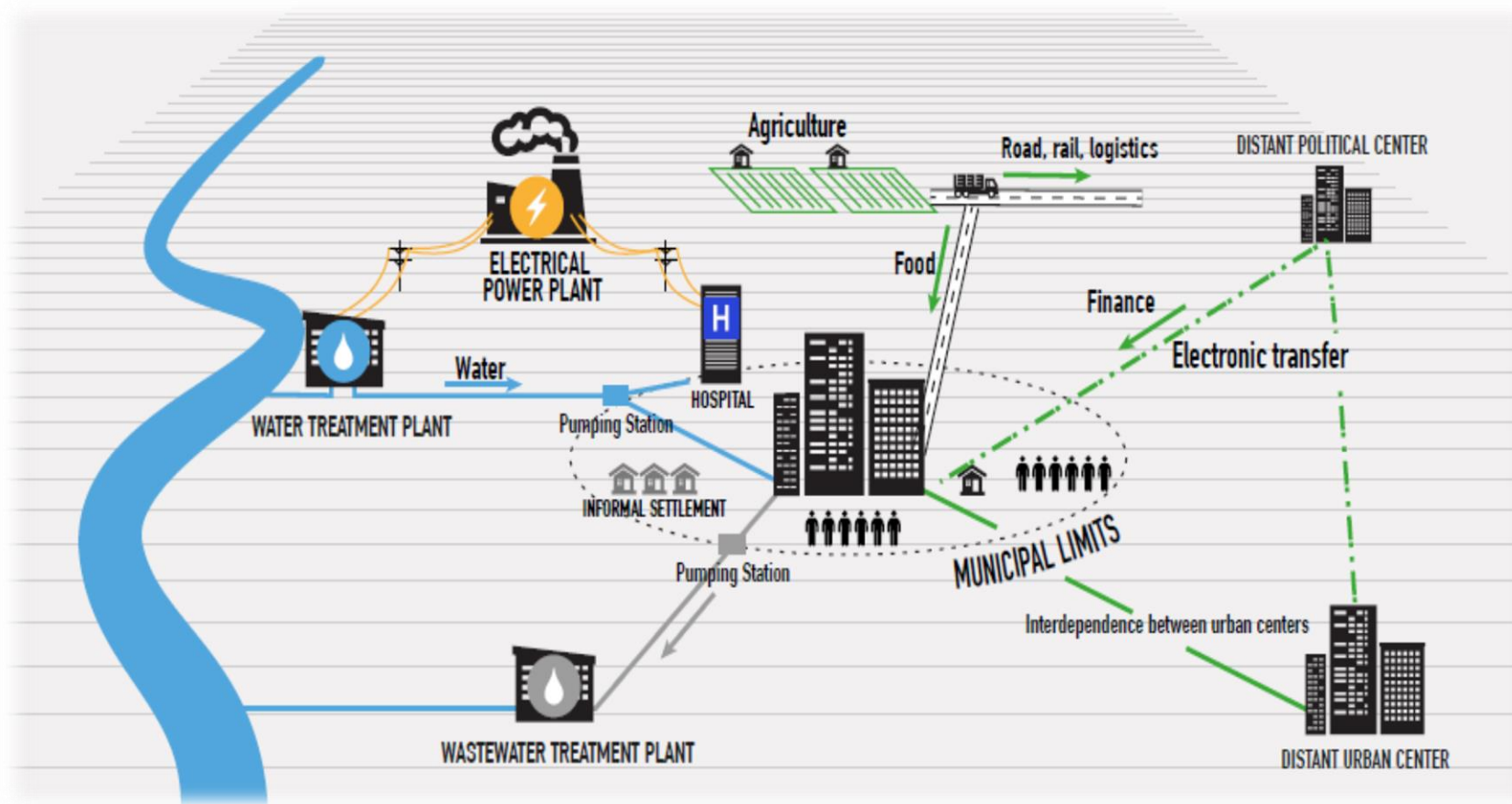


- Chlorine
- Fuel
- Filtres
- Spare parts, pipes, fittings...

- **Provision of service is more than infrastructure**
- **No one component is sufficient on its own**



URBAN SERVICES: COMPONENTS



- **Urban services are interconnected**
- **“Urban” goes beyond “urban”, Consequences in one area/service goes beyond that area/service**

2. WHEN WAR COMES



TO CITY



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URBAN SERVICES: (DIRECT) IMPACT



Water reservoir



Power station



Water reservoir



Offices Room



Electric stock yard



Warehouse (spare parts)



Road/ Bridge



Hospital Ward



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URBAN SERVICES: **IMPACT**

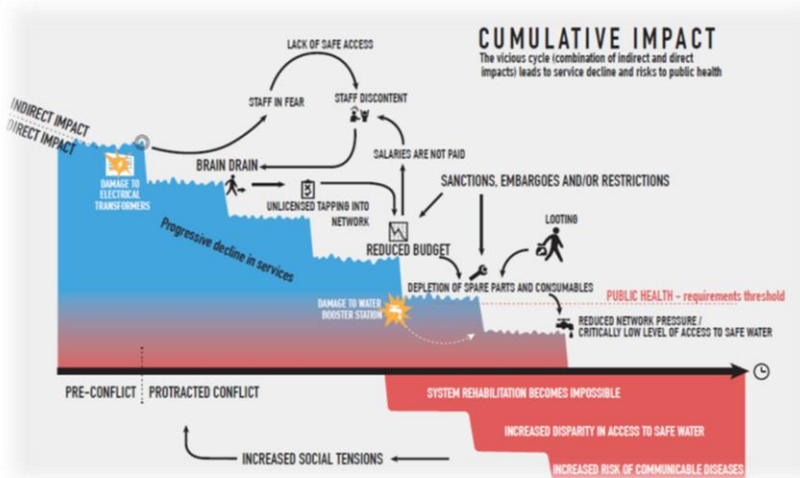
Direct impact



Indirect impact

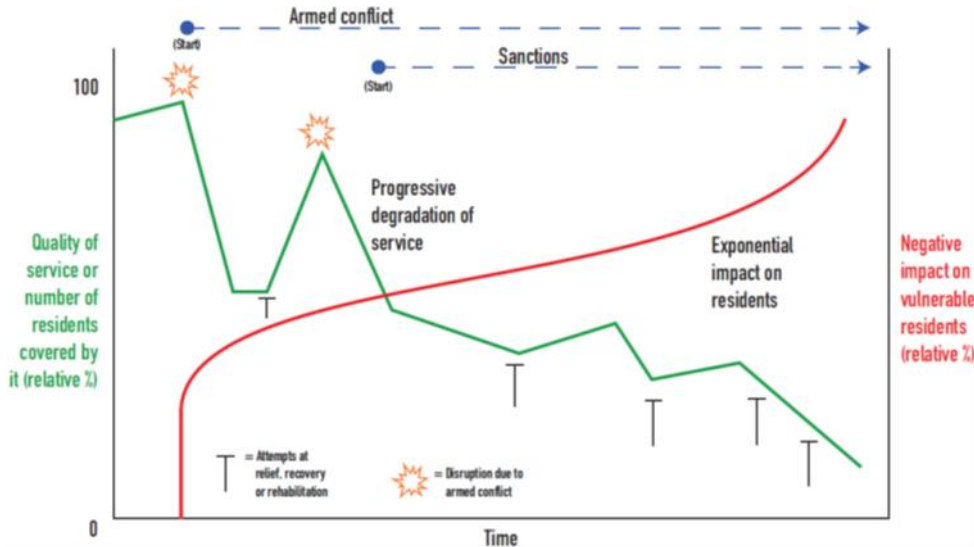


Cumulative impact



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URBAN SERVICES: HUMANITARIAN CONSEQUENCES



**Public Health Hazard
Deterioration of livelihoods**

Lack of access to essential services



Damages to residential buildings



**(Further)
Displacement**



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CHALLENGES

1. The **complexity**, the scale and fragility of the urban services
2. The **duration of the challenges** and the nature of the conflict
3. Shrinking humanitarian space – **Lack of safe access**
4. The diverse and complex urban environment, with different stakeholders (institutions, organizations, bodies, armed groups,...) and the importance of **working in partnership** with local service providers and the National Society, coordinating the efforts among all the actors.
5. The short-term/reactive response shall be able to **take into account the long-term consequences/needs**
6. **Lack of respect for International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and the weaponry used** in urban areas
 - The use of explosive weapons with a wide impact area should be avoided in densely populated areas due to the significant likelihood of indiscriminate effects.
 - Protection based dialogue on the conduct of hostilities in relation to civilian object is crucial (Addressing root causes as well as the consequences)



CHALLENGES



Traditional Emergency Response



Quick fix



Rehabilitation



Energy



Staff



Machinery



Access



Logistics

3. THE REGIONAL CONTEXT



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REGIONAL CONTEXT

The Near and Middle East

- **Rapid population growth** (+ 20.9% in the last 10 year) and urbanization (+ 3%), 24% (2018) living in informal settlements
- In the last 10 years **high instability** (at country and regional level), several (highly destructive) armed conflicts.
- The **crucial Intersection** between cities and armed conflict
- **High displacement** (in 2019: 2.5 millions for conflict and 0.6 for disasters), very often urban displacement, loss of human capital
- **Unsustainable use of natural resources** (esp. water which is scarce and unequally distributed) and widespread **environmental degradation**, considerable vulnerability to **climate change**
- **Ageing infrastructure** with little preventive maintenance (high inefficiency, high non revenue water) and little room for planning/investments, in a highly politicized environment. Public services do not cover all the population, leaving room for private/informal sector
- **Little economic value** given to water (cost recovery not covered), a weak power sector, a neglected waste water treatment sector



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4. ICRC MODUS OPERANDI



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ICRC URBAN PROGRAMMING APPROACH



**Emergency WatHab
Response (Reactive)**



**Support to Urban
Services
(Reactive and Proactive)**



**Protection /
Prevention of Civilian
Objects**



The approach serves the immediate needs of the population in terms of contributing to the prevention of a deterioration in WaSH conditions and health outcomes, but also works towards securing “development holds” against the development reversals of protracted conflict and displacement



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5. CONCLUDING MESSAGES



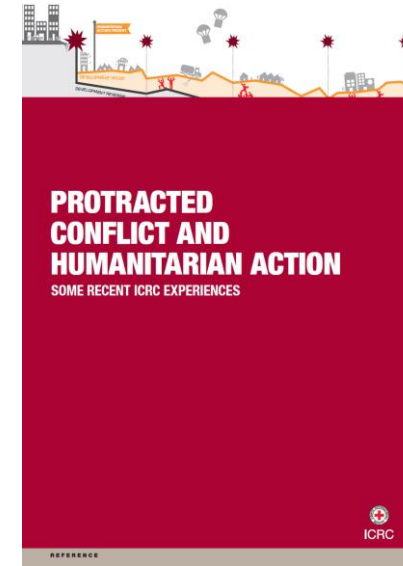
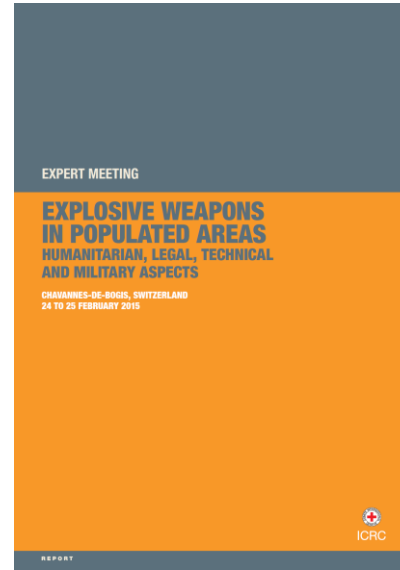
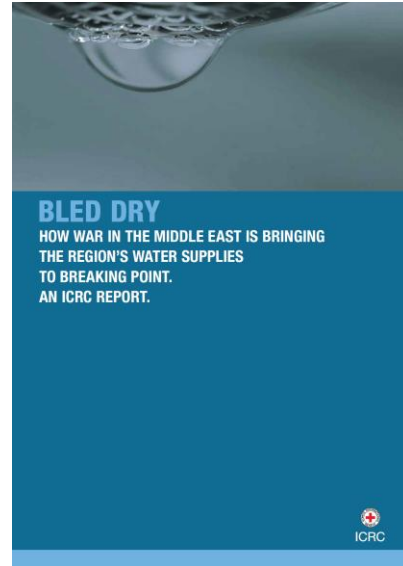
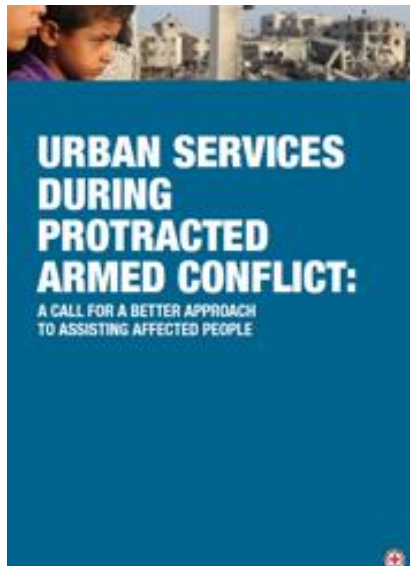
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CONCLUDING MESSAGES

1. Urban population is highly reliant on services to meet their essential needs and therefore is highly vulnerable to a disruption in service delivery, which often occurs during armed conflict. An urban community resilient to shocks shall **rely on a resilient infrastructure**.
2. Urban services (water, wastewater, energy...) are not immune to the impact of armed conflict.
 - Urban essential services and the **interdependencies between them** must be carefully understood and **in advance**, if a prolonged disruption in service delivery is to be avoided.
 - To deal with the complexity, **data and data management** play an important role
 - An effective approach to urban services shall combine **preventive/proactive, reactive** and **protection** measures. **Emergency preparedness** is crucial.
 - **Short-term and long-term** are intertwined and shall be always considered at the same time.
3. **In a degraded environment** where **climate risks** play an increasingly important role, **protection of natural environment, natural resources and essential services** are of utmost importance, during war time (but also during peace). A more sustainable management and a more equitable sharing of natural resources – especially water – could contribute to conflict prevention and to mitigate humanitarian needs.



FOR MORE INFORMATION



The impact of explosive weapons on urban services: Direct and reverberating effects across space and time

Mark Zetoun and Michael Talhami*

You can download the ICRC Urban Services Report at:

<https://www.icrc.org/en/document/urban-services-protracted-conflict-report>

You can download the ICRC Bled Dry Report at:

<https://www.icrc.org/en/document/bled-dry-how-war-middle-east-bringing-region-brink-water-catastrophe>

You can download the ICRC Expert Meeting Report at:

<https://www.icrc.org/en/document/explosive-weapons-populated-areas-humanitarian-legal-technical-and-military-aspects>

You can download the International Review of the Red Cross article at:

<https://www.icrc.org/en/international-review/article/impact-explosive-weapons-urban-services-direct-and-reverberating>

You can download the ICRC Protracted Conflict and Humanitarian Action at:

<https://www.icrc.org/en/document/protracted-conflict-and-humanitarian-action>



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