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Protracted urban conflict response: what needs to change

Introduction

6 September 2015

Michael Talhami

ICRC Regional Water & Habitat Advisor

Near and Middle East



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General Conflict-related Trends

- Sharp increase in the number of armed conflicts being played out in urban areas
- Several conflicts have taken on a protracted nature
- Insufficient respect for the applicable rules of IHL
- Shrinking humanitarian space due to a lack of safe access



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Unprecedented Humanitarian Needs

- Needs are increasing and becoming more geographically distributed
- In urban areas the needs span the full spectrum between humanitarian and development
- International sanctions, embargoes and/or other restrictions on trade, importation and delivery of goods at times makes it more difficult to ensure the provision of some crucial materials/consumables.
- Inadequate provision of essential services pose a risk to public health and can facilitate displacement



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A CALL FOR A BETTER APPROACH TO ASSISTING AFFECTED PEOPLE

- The paradigm to replace the relief-rehabilitation-development continuum
- Strengthening compliance with IHL
- The impact of the deterioration of essential urban services, specifically on public health
- Current humanitarian operations/practice, including the length of current planning periods, relationships with local actors and the local population, and technical capacity and competences
- The flexibility and duration of funding schemes and structures
- Further research to address knowledge gaps in support of the issues listed above

Urban Services During Protracted Conflict: a call for a better approach to assisting affected people

Report Launch
ALNAP/ODI 6 Oct 2015



Topics Covered

- A. Methodology
- B. Three Concepts
- C. Evidence


A. Methodology



B1. Components of an urban service

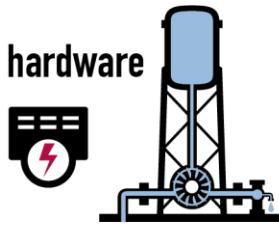
All essential services depend on ...

... people



The icon shows six black human silhouettes standing in a row. This entire icon and text are enclosed within a red oval.

... hardware



The icon represents hardware and infrastructure, featuring a power plug with a lightning bolt, a water tower, and a mechanical pump.

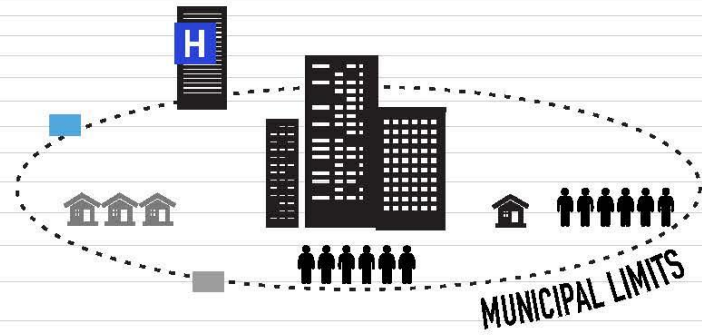
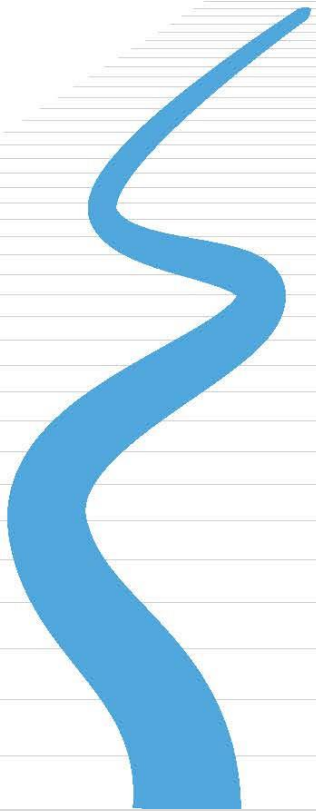
... consumables



The icon represents consumables, showing a fuel tank, a gas can with a red 'X' over it, and a tanker truck.



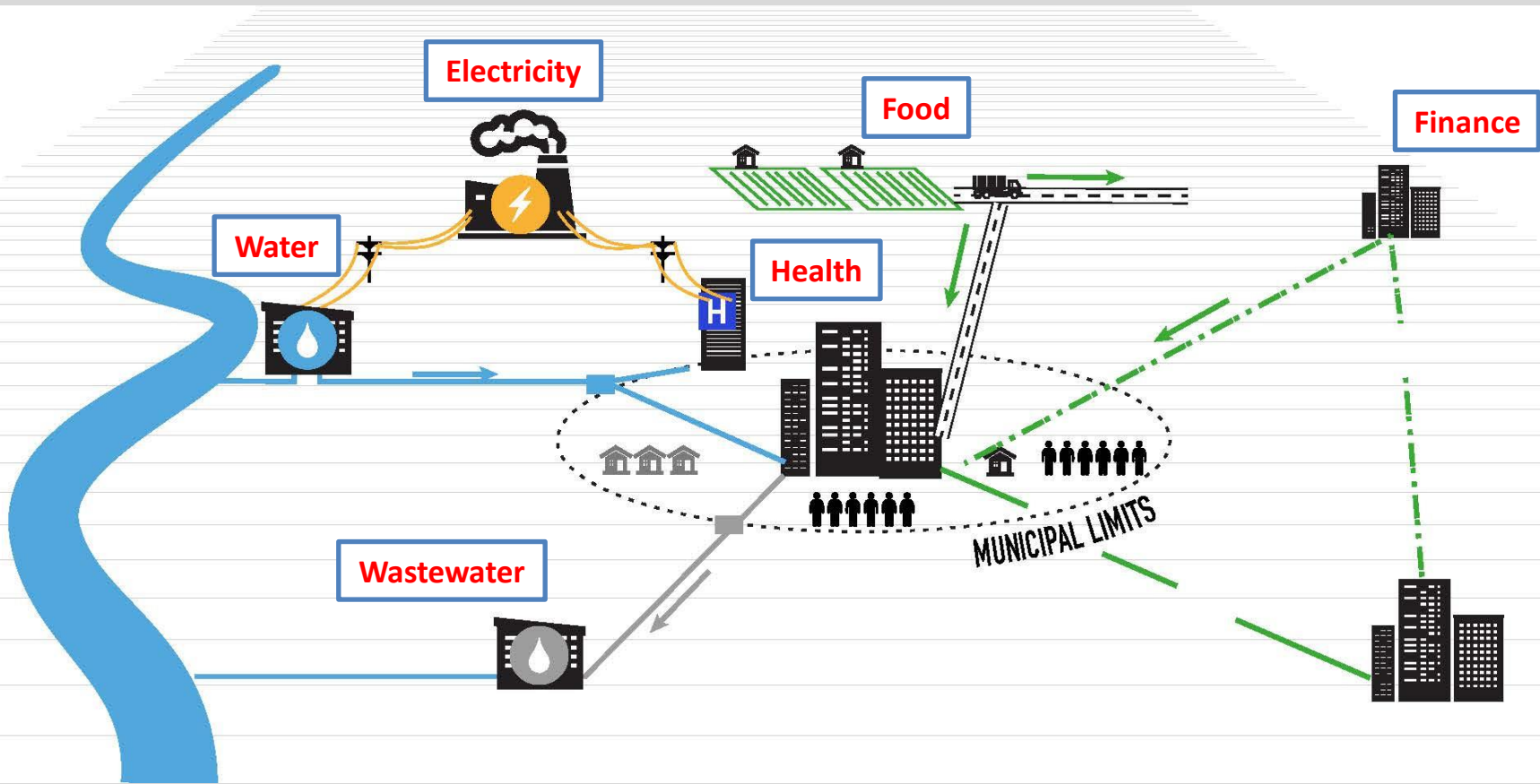
B2. Defining 'urban'



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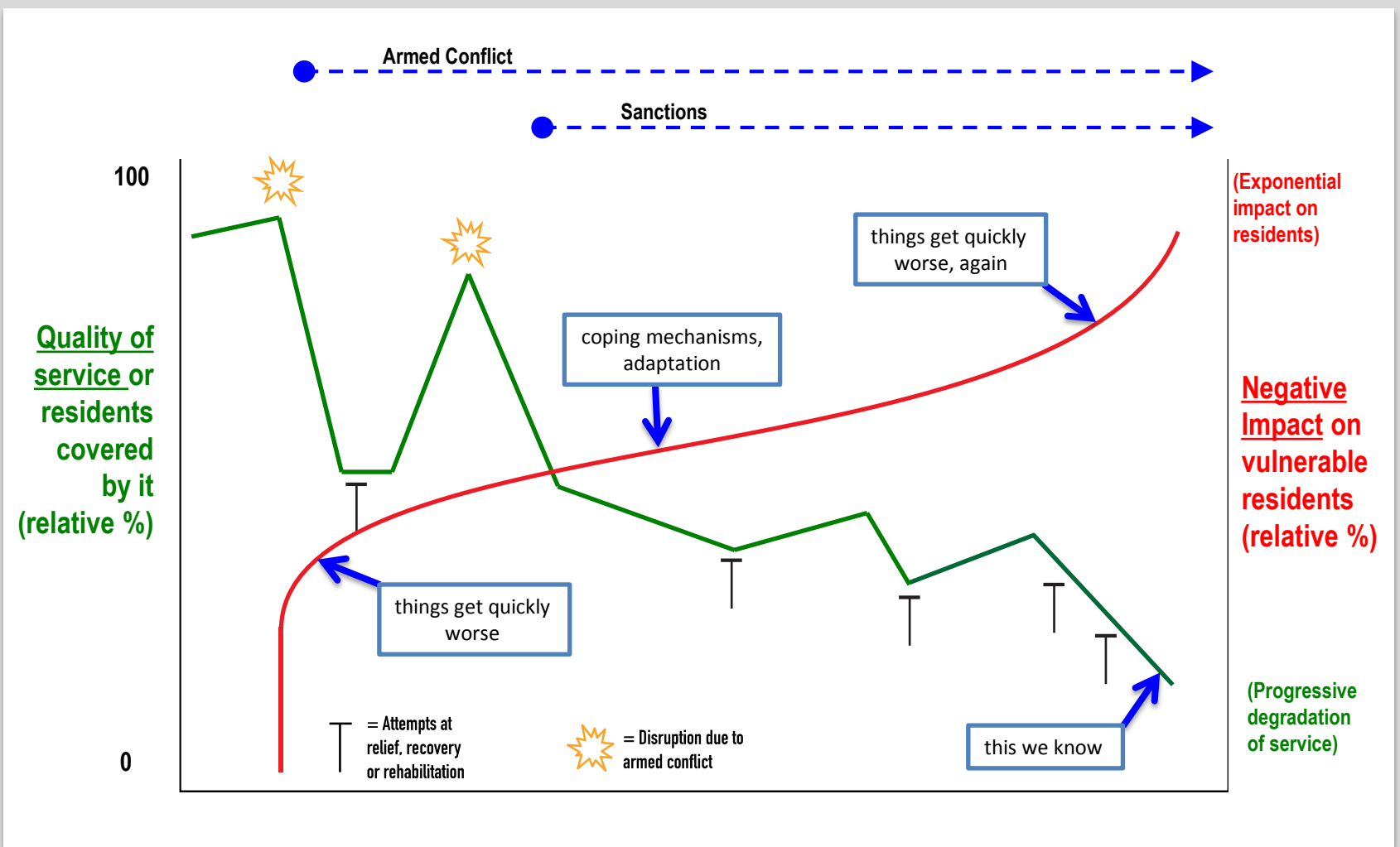
interconnected services

- 'urban' extends beyond the city
- urban services are interconnected



Urban context : the area within which civilians vulnerable to disruptions in essential services reside, and the network of components supporting those services.

B3. Quality of Service, and Impact



[spoken only]

Impact curve: - depends how you measure 'impact' (livelihoods, wellbeing, public health)

C. Evidence to support the call

Information required early on, to support long-term:

Programming (Operations)

- staff absences, water disruptions, hospital records, electricity disruptions
- critical weaknesses in cross-service linkages / building resilience

→ risk analysis to define breadth and depth of programmes

Decisions (Policy)

- auditing of knock-on effects of direct damages
- *how* to gauge impact of single or repeated *disruptions* (not just degradation) of a service
- *how* (and for whom) do *coping mechanisms* reduce impact

→ support case for flexible funding and increased capacity

.... and several others detailed in the report.



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URBAN SERVICES DURING PROTRACTED ARMED CONFLICT

**A CALL FOR A BETTER APPROACH
TO ASSISTING AFFECTED PEOPLE**

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The path to a better approach

To start with, the magnitude of the challenge must be allowed to induce a shift in our thinking. This requires acknowledgment of:

- (a) the sheer scale of the challenge;
- (b) the duration of the challenge;
- (c) the multifaceted interconnectivity of essential services;
- (d) cumulative and indirect impacts as well as direct impacts;
- (e) the politics of a highly securitized operating environment;
- (f) the significant shortcomings resulting from gaps in evidence and analysis;
- (g) challenges faced as a result of lack of respect for the rules of IHL;
- (h) the need to rethink the relief-rehabilitation-development spectrum; and
- (i) funding that does not match the duration or scale of the needs.



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Cumulative Impact Infographic

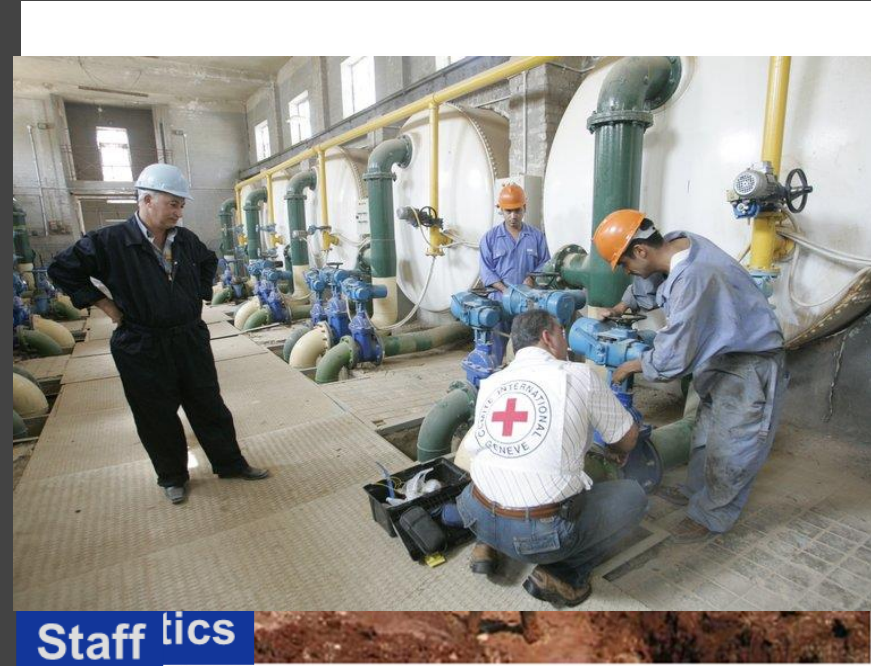


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Scale of the challenge

Scale

- Hardware: Infrastructure and machinery
- Consumables: Quantity, transport and delivery
- People: operators, technicians, repair crews and other support staff



Staff

Machinery sub-Station



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Duration of the challenge

Some protracted humanitarian interventions in urban areas:

- Afghanistan - 30 years
- Iraq - 25 years
- Gaza Strip - 9 years
- Syria - 5 years
- Yemen - 5 years
- Ukraine - 2 years

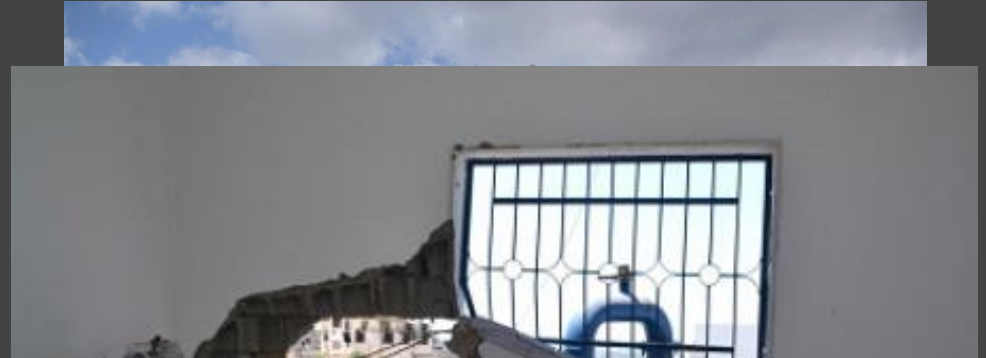


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Direct Impact

Damages to:

- Infrastructure
- Consumables
- People





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Other direct impacts

Damages to:

- Hospitals
- Transportation
- Service Provider Control Room
- Service Provider Warehouse





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Indirect Impact

- Infrastructure
- Consumables
- People



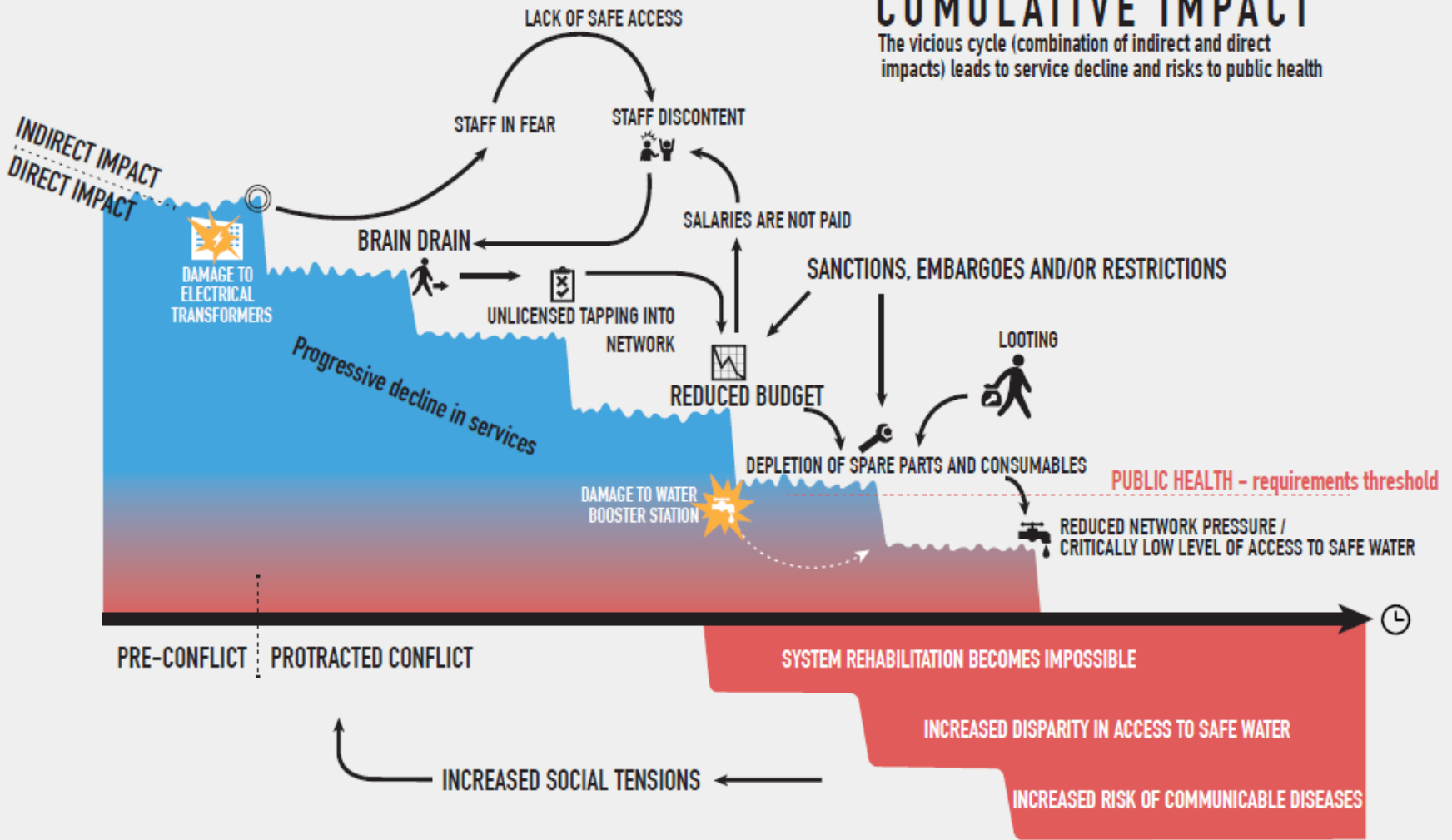


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Cumulative Impact

CUMULATIVE IMPACT

The vicious cycle (combination of indirect and direct impacts) leads to service decline and risks to public health





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Politics of a highly securitized operating environment

- Shrinking humanitarian space – lack of safe access
- Security constraints require most humanitarian actors to work a step removed from the actual armed conflict.

Challenges faced as a result of lack of respect for the rules of IHL

- IHL provides protection for civilian objects
- Several key challenges still arise in part from the lack of respect for IHL and the weaponry used in urban areas
- “Explosive weapons in populated areas” shows that some weapons can have humanitarian consequences far beyond their impact zone



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