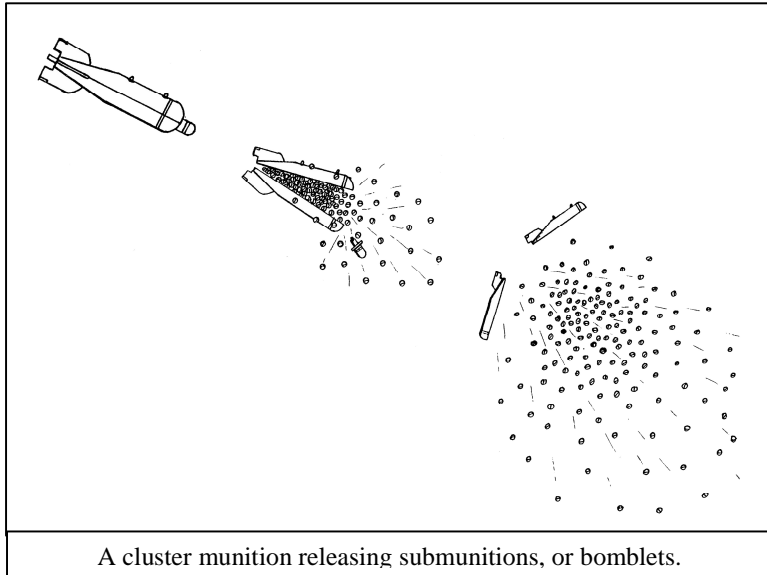




## What is a cluster bomb?



A cluster munition releasing submunitions, or bomblets.

A cluster bomb, or cluster munition, is a weapon containing multiple – often hundreds – of small explosive submunitions, or bomblets.

Cluster bombs are dropped from the air or fired from the ground and designed to break open in mid-air, releasing the submunitions and saturating an area that can be the size of several football fields. This impact area is referred to as the weapon's "footprint".

Cluster bombs are area-effect weapons. This means that their impact is not limited to one precise target, such as an individual tank. Instead, a whole area is scattered with explosives. Across this area there is an indiscriminate risk to civilians and soldiers alike.

As so many of the submunitions fail to explode as they are supposed to, huge quantities are left on the ground and, like landmines, remain a fatal threat to anyone in the area long after a conflict ends. The unexploded submunitions kill and injure people trying to rebuild their lives after conflict. They stop people from being able to use their land and access schools and hospitals. They can remain a threat for decades.



Cluster bomb submunitions. From left to right: M42/M46, MZD2, BLU-63 and M77 (Photo © DanChurchAid/Jawad)