

# UN-CMCoord

UNITED NATIONS HUMANITARIAN  
CIVIL-MILITARY COORDINATION

Facilitating the right assistance, to the right people,  
at the right time, in the most appropriate way

# UN-CMCoord Field Handbook

(v1.0)

101 Series



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## Introductory Remarks

Humanitarian civil-military coordination is multi-faceted and evolving. The work ranges from on-site coordination of foreign military assets (FMA) in disaster relief, to access negotiation in conflict.

Since the international disaster response community first created the United Nations **Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination (UN-CMCoord)** function, it has adapted to the changing environment. CMCoord traditionally coordinated the deployment of foreign Military and Civil Defence Assets (MCDA) in disaster response.

Governments increasingly deploy military forces as part of their international assistance to a natural disaster response. In addition, national armed forces are often relied upon as first responders in-country.

With multidimensional and integrated peace operations, CMCoord became an important interface between the humanitarian community and military components of UN and regional peacekeeping operations.

*“Attitudes of humanitarian civil-military coordinators are as important as knowledge and skills.”*

*Josef Reiterer, Chief of OCHA’s Civil-Military Coordination Section (CMCS)*



In different settings, the interaction between humanitarian and military actors ranges from close cooperation to sheer co-existence. **Humanitarian-military dialogue** at all levels is essential – and the basis for effective humanitarian action on the ground.

The **UN-CMCoord Field Handbook** is designed as a guide for CMCoord Officers and focal points in natural disasters and complex emergencies. The 2015 edition includes significant updates in comparison with the 2008 edition. It promotes common understanding and a coherent approach in a changing institutional framework and operational environment.

## What is UN-CMCoord?

**UN-CMCoord** is the essential dialogue and interaction between civilian and military actors in humanitarian emergencies that is necessary to protect and promote humanitarian principles, avoid competition, minimize inconsistency and, when appropriate, pursue common goals. Basic strategies range from **cooperation** to **co-existence**. Coordination is a **shared responsibility** facilitated by liaison and common training.

The key coordination elements in natural disasters and complex emergencies are **information sharing**, **task division** and **planning**. The scope and modus operandi of these key elements will change with the context and with the focus of the **five CMCoord tasks**:

1. Establish and sustain dialogue with military forces.
2. Establish a mechanism for information exchange and humanitarian action with military forces and other armed groups.
3. Assist in negotiations in critical areas of humanitarian-military interaction.
4. Support development and dissemination of context-specific guidance for the interaction of the humanitarian community with the military.
5. Monitor activity of military forces and ensure positive impact on humanitarian communities.

## How to Use this Handbook

The **UN-CMCoord Field Handbook** comprises of six chapters and a toolbox. To make full use of its functions and the toolbox, it is best used online to allow access to linked documents and references. The chapters can be used individually or in conjunction. The sections include links to other relevant chapters, guidelines and more detailed resources in the toolbox.

- **Chapters I and II** summarize key humanitarian concepts and coordination mechanisms and outline their relevance and links to the CMCoord function.
- **Chapter III** gives an overview of military organizations, mandates, concepts and military staff functions that could serve as the CMCoord Officer's counterpart.
- **Chapter IV** is an *aide memoire* for the relevant CMCoord guidelines and principles; it summarizes the key considerations and explains the roles and responsibilities of OCHA and CMCoord Officers in implementing the guidelines.
- **Chapters V and VI** provide guidance on how to implement the CMCoord tasks in natural disasters and complex emergencies, respectively. They can be used separately from the rest of the handbook and serve as a *field manual*.

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The handbook is complemented by a **toolbox**, the most relevant **guidance documents**, including more detailed **step-by-step guides** for specific tasks.

This handbook does not replace CMCoord training courses or guidelines, but is a reference guide to supplement the training programme and an *aide memoire* for the related guidelines.



**Why is this relevant for CMCoord?** The “yellow boxes” highlight some frequently asked questions, issues or top tips.

**Key terms** and **definitions** are included in the chapters in blue boxes. A complete list can be found in the annex.

### Every Context is Different

Active and former CMCoord Officers shared their experiences as examples for this



handbook. These can help to better understand the challenges and develop context-specific solutions.

## Chapter I: Humanitarian Action

Chapter I of the **UN-CMCoord Field Handbook** outlines the basics of humanitarian action and highlights links to military actors and CMCoord. It includes:

- ✓ The most important **definitions** for humanitarian action.
- ✓ The significance of disaster **preparedness**.
- ✓ Differences and linkages between “**civil defence/protection**”, “**disaster management**” and “**humanitarian assistance**”.
- ✓ Civilian and military roles in the **Protection of Civilians (PoC)**.
- ✓ A recap of **humanitarian principles** and some basic definitions of **international law**.
- ✓ Considerations for the creation and sustaining of a conducive **humanitarian operating environment**.
- ✓ The relevance of the “**do no harm**” approach.

This chapter is particularly relevant for CMCoord Officers with a predominantly military background and provides an *aide memoire* for those with a humanitarian background.

### Some Key Terms to Start:

**Humanitarian action** comprises **assistance**, **protection** and **advocacy** activities undertaken on an impartial basis in response to humanitarian needs resulting from **complex emergencies** and/or **natural disasters**. These activities can be responsive to an event that already occurred, or preventive, to mitigate risks and prepare for future events.

A **humanitarian crisis** is a situation in which the health, lives and well-being of people are in danger as a consequence of the disruption of their daily routine and access to basic goods and services. This can be the result of natural disasters, technological or man-made disasters, and situations of violence and conflict.

**Humanitarian actors** are civilians, whether national or international, United Nations (UN) or non-UN, governmental or non-governmental, which have a commitment to humanitarian principles and are engaged

in humanitarian activities.

**Natural disasters** are events caused by natural hazards that seriously affect the society, economy and/or infrastructure of a region. The humanitarian consequences depend on the vulnerability of affected people and their coping and local response capacity.

A **complex emergency** is a humanitarian crisis in a country, region or society where there is total or considerable breakdown of authority resulting from internal or external conflict and which requires an international response that goes beyond the mandate or capacity of any single and/or ongoing UN country programme.

## 1. Disaster Management and Civil Defence/Protection

The affected state has the primary responsibility to provide protection and life-saving assistance to people affected by crises, including preparedness measures for communities. The real **first responders** in emergencies are the affected people and communities themselves. The local response mechanisms might be more or less institutionalized. They comprise local organizations, private health and service providers, and government institutions that provide basic services in peacetime and respond to emergencies and disasters when they occur. National response to disasters can be non-governmental or governmental or both, including **the armed forces and other uniformed services**.

In recent years, the role of government institutions in preparedness and their capacity to coordinate and provide assistance have increased – and with that comes expectations to mitigate or prevent potential disasters and provide assistance where needed. Coordination, interoperability and complementarity with the international humanitarian assistance are crucial.

The activities of **National Disaster Management Authorities (NDMA)** and response systems are usually differentiated from **humanitarian assistance**. NDMA and government response systems have different set-ups, operating standards and actors, than the international humanitarian community. These structures can be partly or even predominantly military or para-military in some countries. The **armed forces** can in fact be the first responders in a country. Non-governmental, private sector and volunteer-based organizations could either be closely integrated in the national system or be distinct from it. Government-owned units under direct command of government institution are often referred to as **civil defence/protection** assets.

**Civil defence** is the performance of humanitarian tasks intended to protect the civilian population against the dangers, and to help it to recover from the immediate effects, of hostilities or disasters and also to provide the conditions necessary for its survival.

*Additional Protocol 1 of the Geneva Conventions*



Today, the terms **civil defence**, **civil protection**, **emergency management** and **disaster management** are used by different governments and regional organizations to refer to the same concept: a structure or state entity established to prevent disasters and mitigate the effects of such disasters on people, property and the environment.

In this handbook, disaster management is used for in-country systems; civil defence/protection for government-owned civilian or para-military assets; and international humanitarian assistance for the response of the international humanitarian community and their operational partners.

**International actors** respond to a crisis only **with the consent** of the affected state; usually **at the request** or upon the acceptance of an offer of assistance. Assisting States provide support in the form of financial contributions and in-kind donations; bilateral deployment of government disaster response and assistance teams, including civil defence/protection, civilian and military units; and by financing humanitarian assistance carried out by government agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGO), the UN or other organizations.

The affected state decides which actors can provide assistance and coordinates the overall response. National armed forces might play an important role in the national coordination efforts, and in particular in the coordination of incoming **FMA**. The affected state may ask the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) to assist in the coordination of international humanitarian efforts.

#### **Military Actors in Disaster Preparedness**

- ☐ Familiarize yourself with the role of the national military in disaster preparedness and response.
- ☐ Enquire about the role of national military and FMA in the national contingency plans.
- ☐ Familiarize yourself with existing agreements with other states and foreign military entities, Status of Forces Agreements (SOFA), etc.
- ☐ The NDMA might have its own civil-military coordination guidelines and arrangements in place.
- ☐ National military forces might be part of national or local disaster management exercises.

## 2. Preparedness and Resilience

The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) in 2014 underlined that *humanitarian action, including preparedness, can be designed and implemented in such a way that it helps systems and people to be more resilient – that is, to be less vulnerable to future shocks.*



**Does CMCoord have a role in preparedness?** OCHA's Policy Instruction identifies specific tasks for CMCoord in preparedness. See Chapter V of this handbook.

The severity of humanitarian consequences of a crisis depends on the **vulnerability** and **coping capacity** of the affected people and societies. A natural disaster does not necessarily turn into a humanitarian crisis. This depends on how **resilient** the affected people are and how well the response works.

[IASC guidance on Emergency Response Preparedness](#)

[IASC Common Framework for Preparedness](#)

[Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030](#)

The United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR)  
[www.unisdr.org](http://www.unisdr.org)

[IASC Priority: Preparedness and Resilience](#)

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**Preparedness:** The knowledge and capacities developed by governments, professional response and recovery organizations, communities and individuals to effectively anticipate, respond to, and recover from, the impacts of likely, imminent or current hazard events or conditions.

**Resilience:** The ability of a system, community or society exposed to hazards to resist, absorb, accommodate and recover from the effects of a hazard in a timely and efficient manner, including through the preservation and restoration of essential basic structures and functions.

**Vulnerability:** The characteristics and circumstances of a community, system or asset that make it susceptible to the damaging effects of a hazard. There are many aspects of vulnerability, arising from various physical, social, economic, and environmental factors.

**Coping capacity:** The ability of people, organizations and systems, using available skills and resources, to face and manage adverse conditions, emergencies or disasters.

UNISDR, 2007

If they are first responders in a country, armed forces should ideally be included in preparedness planning and activities. If national military and FMA are part of the national contingency planning processes, it is important for the humanitarian community to recognize this role in their own preparedness activities.

### 3. Humanitarian Assistance

**Humanitarian assistance** seeks to save lives and alleviate suffering of people-in-need as a result of a humanitarian crisis. It focuses on short-term emergency relief, providing basic life-saving services that are disrupted because of the humanitarian crisis. Humanitarian assistance is needs-based and provided in adherence to **humanitarian principles** of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and operational independence (see Chapter I.5).

The assessment of such needs must be independent and humanitarian assistance, must be given without discrimination of any kind, regardless of race, ethnicity, sex/gender, religion, social status, nationality or political affiliation of the recipients.

**What is a humanitarian actor?** Humanitarian actors are civilians engaged in humanitarian activities with a clear commitment to humanitarian principles. This commitment is usually laid down in their legal mandates, mission statements and statutes.

Military forces that deliver aid – be it fulfilling obligations under international humanitarian law (IHL), offering assistance to affected populations as part of a wider stabilization mandate, *in extremis*, or in support of humanitarian operations – **are not considered humanitarian actors**. They might very well fulfil or support humanitarian tasks, without changing their original *raison d'être*.

The military is a tool of the government's foreign policy. The separation of humanitarian and political objectives is not clear. While this might be true for other government agencies, military units are not primarily perceived as humanitarians by the civilian population, particularly in complex emergency situations. It is likely that they have other military objectives while fulfilling humanitarian tasks, making the latter a means to an end.

Humanitarian assistance must take into account the local capacity already in place to meet those needs. It complements local services and capacity on a short-term basis and aims to enable people to get back to normalcy.



Humanitarian actors have several surge and rapid response mechanisms to ensure that humanitarian assistance is provided as soon as possible. Still, the first 48 to 72 hours after a natural disaster are the most critical in terms of search and rescue operations, medical treatment and/or evacuation and other life-saving measures. The response largely relies on the capacity available on the ground. The ability to respond quickly is crucial. However, it is equally important to have a clear **exit strategy** to end external assistance as soon as the local systems are restored to normalcy.

**What is the role of military actors and within what timeframe?** The relief phase ranges from a couple of weeks to months, depending on the scale of destruction, access, and a variety of other factors. The military can play a crucial role given its ability to **mobilize quickly** – especially in terms of logistics, engineering and transport assets. CMCoord is a requirement at the first minute.



As observed in past, FMA that deploy to a natural disaster tend to **drawdown or re-deploy** from the scene before the relief phase is over, and sometimes on very short notice. In anticipation of this reality, the CMCoord Officer needs to ensure that military commanders clearly communicate the end of their deployment. This is important to make sure that handover plans are in place for the transition from military support to follow-up by civilian capacities.

Humanitarian assistance becomes necessary because of existing vulnerabilities of people and communities. Thus humanitarian organizations aim at **linking relief, rehabilitation and development** to allow transition of short-term humanitarian assistance into long-term development programmes. This promotes the sustainable improvement of the coping capacity of communities. Reconstruction activities follow the “build back better” principle and include prevention and mitigation elements to reduce a community’s vulnerability to future hazards in the long-term.

## 4. Protection

**Protection** encompasses all activities aimed at ensuring full respect for the rights of the individual in accordance with international human rights law, international humanitarian law (which applies in situations of armed conflict) and refugee law. (IASC)



States have the primary responsibility to **protect** people within their jurisdiction. In situations of natural disasters, national authorities are responsible for providing assistance and protection to those affected. In situations of armed conflict, all parties to the conflict, e.g. states and organized armed groups, must respect and protect civilians.

The first rule of IHL is to distinguish between civilians and combatants and to direct attacks only against combatants. Hence, the term **Protection of Civilians (PoC)** is used to describe protection during times of armed conflict and is generally understood by the military to be the application of and respect for IHL and other applicable law. More recently, the term PoC has also been used to describe the specific mandate given by the UN Security Council to many UN peacekeeping forces to *protect civilians under imminent threat of physical violence*. This should not be confused with the much broader protection accorded to civilians under IHL.

**Protection** is a major concern in humanitarian crises, whether in situations of armed conflict, general insecurity or natural disasters. Protection can be seen as a legal responsibility, objective or activity. Humanitarian activities in support of protection fall into three phases:

- **Responsive** activities to prevent, stop, or alleviate the effects of a threat to peoples' rights or safety, e.g. sexual or gender-based violence (SGBV), by advocating with parties to a conflict to refrain from such abuse or by providing basic medical care.
- **Remedial** responses to restore peoples' dignity and ensure adequate living conditions after an abuse, for example legal assistance if a victim of SGBV decides to take legal action.
- **Environment building** aims to build a social, cultural, institutional and legal environment conducive to respect for individual rights. This could include strengthening legislation against SGBV or training police on how to handle SGBV cases appropriately.

An effective humanitarian response to such situations must be informed by an **analysis of the threats and risks** that people face. Appropriate steps should be taken to minimize those threats and risks, and ensure full respect for the rights of all people affected by disaster or armed conflict.



**Is protection a CMCoord task?** Protection requires engagement with a broad range of actors, including civilian and military. It is not a CMCoord task as such; CMCoord is a useful tool for humanitarian protection actors to engage military or other armed actors to support protection. It serves as a bridge between humanitarian organizations with a protection mandate and deployed military forces to ensure adequate dialogue and cooperation where needed and as appropriate.

In armed conflicts, humanitarian protection actors engage with duty bearers (the institutions obligated to fulfil holders' rights) to **promote adherence to IHL** or other applicable legal instruments to reduce risks faced by affected people. Duty bearers may include national or foreign military forces or, in cases of armed conflict, organized armed groups. Their interaction includes information sharing, advocacy, training, awareness-raising and measures to reduce the impact of hostilities on civilians, as well as the promotion of the “do no harm” approach and related methods.

Humanitarian actors will engage UN peacekeepers or other forces **mandated to proactively protect civilians under threat**, by sharing information on what those threats against civilians are. They will advocate with the military to enhance security for civilians in those areas and respond to requests for information on population movements and humanitarian needs.

**What is the difference between PoC and responsibility to protect?** While the two concepts share some common elements, particularly in regard to prevention and support to national authorities in discharging their responsibilities towards civilians, there are fundamental differences.



**PoC** is a legal concept based on IHL, human rights and refugee law, while the **responsibility to protect (R2P)** is a political concept.

PoC relates to violations of IHL and human rights law in situations of armed conflict. R2P is limited to violations that constitute war crimes or crimes against humanity or that would be considered acts of genocide or ethnic cleansing, which may occur in situations that do not meet the threshold of armed conflict.

*Cf. SG Report on PoC (S/2012/376), Para 21*

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[OCHA on Message: Protection of Civilians](#)

[Security Council Aide Memoire on Protection of Civilians \(2014\)](#)

[IASC Statement on the Centrality of Protection in Humanitarian Action  
Protecting Civilians in the Context of UN Peacekeeping Operations](#)

## 5. Humanitarian Principles

HUMANITY	
Human suffering must be addressed wherever it is found. The purpose of humanitarian action is to protect life and health and ensure respect for human beings.	
NEUTRALITY	IMPARTIALITY
Humanitarian actors must not take sides in hostilities or engage in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.	Humanitarian action must be carried out on the basis of need alone, giving priority to the most urgent cases of distress and making no distinctions on the basis of nationality, race, gender, religious belief, class or political opinions.
OPERATIONAL INDEPENDENCE	
Humanitarian action must be autonomous from the political, economic, military or other objectives that any actor may hold with regard to areas where humanitarian action is being implemented.	

Table 1: Humanitarian Principles

One of the core guiding documents for humanitarian assistance is UN [General Assembly \(GA\) resolution 46/182](#) on strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian emergency assistance of the UN. In addition to the principles of [humanity](#), [neutrality](#) and [impartiality](#), the resolution formulates other guiding principles for humanitarian assistance, e.g.:

- Each state has the [responsibility](#) to take care of the victims of natural disasters and other emergencies in its territory.
- In the context of [sovereignty](#), humanitarian assistance should be provided with the consent of the affected country, although such consent may not be withheld *arbitrarily*.
- The affected states are called upon to [facilitate](#) the work of humanitarian organizations.



**What are “arbitrary reasons”?** There is no definition as to what constitutes “arbitrary reasons”. As a minimum, consent must not be withheld in situations which would violate international law, for instance where people face starvation. OCHA is working on a guidance note related to such “arbitrary

reasons”, to be available end of 2015.

The CMCoord function is guided by humanitarian principles and has a crucial role in their promotion and safe-guarding. This includes sensitizing the military community about humanitarian principles and key considerations of humanitarian vis-à-vis military actors, as well as raising awareness and promoting a coherent approach by the humanitarian community in its engagement with the military.

It is crucial for humanitarians to stay independent from political and military objectives. Being perceived as distinct from military actors and objectives might require a certain degree of physical distance in some contexts. At the same time, providing assistance to people-in-need may at times require the support from military actors, without impacting negatively on the **operational independence** of the humanitarian community.



CMCoord facilitates dialogue to find the right balance. The work with the military should contribute to – and not compromise – the neutrality and impartiality of humanitarian operations.

**Humanitarian advocacy:** Advocacy refers in a broad sense to efforts to promote, in the domain of humanitarian aid, respect for humanitarian principles and law with a view to influencing the relevant political authorities, whether recognised governments, insurgent groups or other non-state actors. One could add “international, national and local assistance agencies”. (Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance)

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[OCHA on Message: Humanitarian Principles](#)

[General Assembly resolution 46/182](#) & [General Assembly resolution 58/114](#)

[OCHA on Message: General Assembly resolution 46/182](#)

## 6. Legal Aspects of Humanitarian Action

Ares of international law with particular relevance to humanitarian action are IHL, international human rights law and refugee law.

## 6.1 International Humanitarian Law

IHL regulates situations of **armed conflict**. The most important sources are the Hague Conventions, the **Geneva Conventions** and the Additional Protocols to the Geneva Conventions. The inspiration for this set of rules in armed conflict was humanitarian: *Even in war, rules apply; even war does not justify all means and methods of warfare.*

This also includes the concept of **proportionality**: the impact of military operations on civilians must be balanced with the intended military outcomes. The Geneva Conventions introduced the **distinction** between combatants and non-combatants, promoting the protection of individuals who are not or no longer participating in hostilities; **196 nations** are signatories to the treaties.

The **Fourth Geneva Convention** defines the responsibilities of an **occupying power** vis-à-vis the population, e.g. providing food, medical assistance and other supplies essential to their survival (Art. 55-60). The default option is to provide these services through civilian actors.

The **Additional Protocols** of 1977 relating to the Protection of Victims of International (Protocol I) and Non-International (Protocol II) Armed Conflicts contain regulations for PoC, as well as the status, protection and access of relief actors. While a large majority of states have ratified Protocols I and II, these instruments have not yet gained universal adherence. Several states in which non-international armed conflicts are taking place have not ratified Protocol II. In these non-international armed conflicts, **Common Article 3** of the four Geneva Conventions is often the only applicable treaty provision.



The four Geneva Conventions and Protocol I (if ratified) apply only in cases of **international armed conflict**. In cases of **non-international** armed conflict, only **Common Article 3** and **Protocol II** (if ratified) apply. All of the rules laid down in the Hague and Geneva Conventions, and many of the rules laid down in the Additional Protocols, are widely recognised as **customary international law** (“the general practice of states and what states have accepted as law”). Hence, the principles of distinction and proportionality, as well as the obligation to not arbitrarily withhold consent to relief operations, will apply in any context of conflict. Be aware of the fact that the classification of a situation of violence as (non-)international armed conflict is often disputed and highly politicized.

LEARN  
MORE![Geneva Conventions of 1949](#)

The **International Committee of the Red Cross**: [What is IHL?](#) gives a good overview of IHL sources and their content.

## 6.2 International Human Rights Law

While IHL is only applicable in situations of armed conflict, **international human rights law** is universal. In a state of emergency, such as an armed conflict, states can suspend certain human rights (under stringent conditions), whereas IHL cannot be suspended. However, certain **fundamental rights** must be respected in all circumstances and cannot be suspended, including the right to life, the prohibition of torture and inhuman punishment or treatment, the outlawing of slavery or servitude, and the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

During armed conflict, human rights law complements and reinforces the protections provided by IHL. However, in some cases IHL and human rights law provide contradictory rules, e.g. regarding the **right to life**. As IHL was specially designed to apply in armed conflicts, its specific rules will prevail over the general rules of human rights law in relation to the conduct of hostilities and other situations closely linked to the battlefield. On the other hand, in situations that more closely resemble ordinary life (e.g. law enforcement by state authorities), the rules of human rights law will generally prevail over IHL notwithstanding the existence of an armed conflict in the country.

The basis for most binding legal instruments referring to human rights is the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** (UN General Assembly 1948). Many humanitarian actors base their work on a broader human rights approach and NGOs often act as humanitarian relief organizations and advocates for human rights.



The UN **Rights Up Front** Plan of Action emphasizes the imperative for the UN to protect people, wherever they may be, in accordance with their human rights and in a manner that prevents and responds to violations of international human rights and humanitarian law (IASC, Centrality of Protection).

## 6.3 Refugee Law

**Refugee law** is the branch of international law that deals with the rights and protection of refugees. It is related to, but distinct from, international human rights law and IHL.

The **Convention relating to the Status of Refugees from 1951** and its Protocol from 1967 to this day set the standards for the treatment of refugees. It serves to safeguard the fundamental rights of refugees and the regulation of their status in the countries of asylum.

**Refugee** is a legal term only applicable if a person has crossed an internationally recognized state border. When people have to leave their homes but remain within their own country, they are known as **Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)**; this can be as a consequence of armed conflicts, situations of generalized violence, violation of human rights or natural disasters.

### LEARN MORE!

[OCHA on Message: Internal Displacement](#)

[UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement \(OCHA 2004\)](#)

[1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol](#)

## 6.4 Disaster Response Laws, Rules and Principles

For natural disasters, there are a number of global and local laws, treaties, and regulations. The **IDRL Guidelines** (international disaster response laws, rules and principles) – for the national facilitation and regulation of international disaster relief and initial recovery assistance – are meant to assist governments to improve their own disaster laws with respect to incoming international relief, ensuring better coordination and quality.

### LEARN MORE!

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) has established a [disaster law database](#), a collection of **international disaster response laws, rules and principles (IDRL)**.

The **World Customs Organization** has compiled a [customs directory](#) with national focal points and legislation, instruments and tools related to the movement of emergency relief aid, as well as international resolutions.

## 7. Humanitarian Operating Environment

A key element for humanitarian agencies and organizations when they deploy, consists of establishing and maintaining a **conductive humanitarian operating environment**, sometimes referred to as **humanitarian space**.

Adhering to the principles of neutrality and impartiality in humanitarian operations – and being *perceived* as doing so – is critical to ensuring **access to affected people**. It can also make a significant difference to the **security** of humanitarian personnel and the people they assist. Maintaining a **clear distinction** between the role and function of humanitarian actors from that of the military is the determining factor in creating an operating environment in which humanitarian organizations can carry out their responsibilities effectively and safely.



**Civil-military distinction:** A main aspect for context-specific consideration is whether being associated with the military affects the operating space and has detrimental and unacceptable effects on humanitarian operations.

### 7.1 Humanitarian Access

**Humanitarian access** concerns humanitarian actors' ability to reach people affected by crisis, as well as affected people's ability to access humanitarian assistance and services. Sustained and effective humanitarian access to the affected people implies that all affected people can be reached and that the receipt of humanitarian assistance is not conditional upon the allegiance or support to parties involved in a conflict, but independent of political, military and other action.

#### LEARN MORE!

[OCHA on Message: Humanitarian Access](#)

[IASC Guidelines on Humanitarian Negotiations with Armed Groups](#)

To have access to all affected people and areas requires engagement and **negotiation** of such access with all relevant parties. Particular care must also be taken to ensure the sustainability of access. Ability of humanitarian actors to establish and maintain humanitarian access is related to adherence to humanitarian principles. **Humanitarian access** is an important part of humanitarian advocacy. It can become an



important task of, but is not limited to, civil-military coordination. Upon request by humanitarian actors, it also may require political support to create/reinforce conditions conducive to humanitarian action.

**Coordination with the military** should be considered to the extent that it facilitates and sustains – and not hinders – humanitarian access. **Humanitarian access negotiations** seek to ensure provision of assistance and protection to affected people; to safeguard the humanitarian operating environment; and to improve respect for international law. To do so, establishing specific arrangements with relevant parties may be necessary. Such measures can include **de-confliction** of military and humanitarian activities in an area, the provision of **area security** by security actors, the establishment of humanitarian “pauses”, “days of tranquillity” and modalities for unhindered passage at checkpoints.

In high risk environments, necessary security measures such as controls at airports or en route checkpoints, can slow down humanitarian convoys and impede the rapid delivery of humanitarian assistance. **Restrictions and impediments to humanitarian access** can be minimized or avoided without compromising the security efforts.

- Security forces inform humanitarians on procedures and expected waiting times.
- If necessary, humanitarians may notify security forces of an intended movement on specific routes, to allow quick passage.
- Establish de-confliction mechanisms for notification, if there is no alternative.

**De-confliction arrangements:** Established liaison between humanitarian actors and parties to the conflict to communicate the time and location of humanitarian activities and humanitarian convoys. This should only be applied in exceptional cases, in order to ensure that military operations do not jeopardize the lives of humanitarian personnel, impede the passage of relief supplies or implementation of humanitarian activities, or put recipients of humanitarian assistance at risk.



**Negotiating access:** Humanitarian access to affected people can be constrained for instance by general insecurity or ongoing hostilities, by

lack of infrastructure, or through restrictions imposed by actors controlling an area. The humanitarian community needs to be able and seeks to communicate as necessary with all actors that can provide, restrict or influence access, e.g. all parties to a conflict, the government, national/local authorities and security actors (civilian and military), communities, non-state armed actors.

### CMCoord's Role in Access – an example from South Sudan in 2014



In December 2013, the recently founded Republic of South Sudan faced an outbreak of violence throughout the country, resulting in high numbers of IDPs (1.5 million in November 2014). In the first weeks, tens of thousands of people fled the violence to seek refuge within the compounds of the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS).

People came there to seek physical protection, but obviously needed humanitarian assistance while they were there. This was provided by humanitarian partners within the UN Missions' compounds, which are referred to as Protection Sites. Meanwhile, humanitarian organizations provided assistance to IDPs in six of the ten districts.

There were a number of issues pertaining to humanitarian access, of which not all were civil-military related. This was addressed with a unique set-up: **a policy, access and civil-military coordination team** was established prior to the conflict, and surged up to six people.

The civil-military coordination had two sides: coordination with the military part of UNMISS, and the coordination and information sharing with the governmental armed forces and other armed groups.

The liaison with UNMISS included the conditions of people who had taken refuge in UNMISS compounds, situation analysis and contingency planning. In addition, given the security situation, the liaison included the provision of armed escorts and static guards, as needed.

Another aspect was the coordination with all parties: e.g. with the Government in terms of clearance for aircraft and convoys to leave the capital, and with military and/or armed groups at destination. It also included providing information on humanitarian activities to all parties in their



respective area of operation. All of the zonal commanders of the armed groups fighting government forces signed off on **humanitarian ground rules**. These laid down what they could expect from humanitarian actors in terms of their activities and also what was expected from them in terms of access to people-in-need and respect for IHL.

## 7.2 Perception of Humanitarian Action

The perception that humanitarian actors are affiliated with military forces could impact negatively on the security of humanitarian staff, their ability to access and thus to rapidly and effectively provide assistance and protection to affected people.

To be impartial, and to be *perceived* as impartial, first and foremost the delivery of humanitarian assistance must come without political or military conditions. Humanitarian organizations must not take sides in conflicts and remain independent from political or military objectives. This would otherwise affect their ability to provide assistance and protection to all affected people in an impartial manner, and erode their credibility and acceptance.

Perceptions could exist even before humanitarians have started projects: From the perspective of the local population, the different objectives/nature/principles of action between military and humanitarian operations might not be obvious. The distinction between military and humanitarian actors could be blurred. An operation in one region or country can very well affect the perception in another. Blurring of lines may have some positive effects from the military point of view, as it could enhance their own acceptance, but it is clearly undesirable for humanitarians. It can put in danger the people assisted and humanitarian personnel, negatively impact the humanitarian operating environment and subsequently lead to suspensions of humanitarian operations.



**Any civil-military coordination and interaction** must not jeopardize the principles guiding humanitarian actors, local networks and trust that humanitarian agencies have created and maintained with communities and relevant actors.

### 7.3 Distinction Between Civilian and Military Actors

Humanitarian workers and organizations are protected by IHL, and this protection is reflected in the national laws of many states. Humanitarian organizations are civilian organizations and unarmed. They rely on the protection provided by IHL and the acceptance of their humanitarian mandate by all parties. The Geneva Conventions introduced the principle of **distinction** between combatants and non-combatants. It promotes the protection of individuals who are not or no longer participating in hostilities.

The key concept of **civilian-military distinction** used in CMCoord guidelines is derived from that principle; it specifically refers to the distinction between military and humanitarian actors. If they carry out similar activities, the distinction between them and their mandates becomes very difficult to maintain, even if humanitarians are not cooperating directly with the military. It is the responsibility of both communities to maintain a clear distinction between them, particularly in complex emergencies. Military personnel must refrain from presenting themselves as humanitarian workers and must clearly state who they are, and vice versa.

CMCoord has a crucial role in promoting the civilian-military distinction among **military and humanitarian actors**. Acknowledging this, civic action, civil affairs, Quick Impact Projects (QIPs), reconstruction, and other military activities can be an integral part of military strategy. Similarly, military support might be indispensable in some situations to deliver life-saving assistance. It is one of the most difficult tasks to promote; an approach that takes into account these realities and safeguards distinction at the same time.



The approaches of humanitarian actors and their willingness to accept military assistance vary significantly. It is the role of the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) and Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) to seek a common approach, in which all actors can operate without compromising humanitarian principles guiding their action and the perception of the whole humanitarian community. The CMCoord Officer or focal point supports them in that role. See Chapters IV-VI.

### 7.4 Security of Humanitarian Personnel

In recent years, humanitarian workers have been routinely required to operate in complex security environments that require a more robust **security risk management** regime and the acceptance of higher risk. Humanitarian actors operating within an emergency situation must

identify the most expeditious, effective and secure approach to ensure the delivery of vital assistance to people-in-need. This approach must be balanced against the need to ensure staff safety, and therein a consideration of any real or perceived affiliation with the military.

Security risks may be caused by the lack of knowledge of IHL among armed actors; not being perceived as neutral and impartial and aligned with parties to the conflict; criminal activities; and, simply associated with the complexity of the operational environment. **Humanitarian principles** remain the key to gain all parties' **acceptance** of humanitarian action and actors and to establish a **conductive operating environment**. At the same time, many risks can be reduced by good security risk management.

There are many steps to create a **conductive humanitarian operating environment** and access and ensure an acceptable level of safety and security of aid workers. This includes a comprehensive **risk assessment** based on thorough **local knowledge**. The process to weigh the security risks with the criticality of life-saving programmes is called **programme criticality**.

Many risks can be reduced by **trust and acceptance**, if humanitarian actors are widely perceived as neutral and impartial, their humanitarian mission is understood, and their presence and work do not have negative effects or offend local customs and culture. The more humanitarian action is perceived as actually changing the situation for the better, the higher the acceptance among the local communities will be. And with that the extent to which they actively contribute to the safety and security of humanitarian workers.

**Acceptance-based approaches** depend on long-term and continuous dialogue and partnerships. They include knowledge of and adaptation to the local environment; communication, consultation with and involvement of communities; and close monitoring of potential negative perceptions and threats. Local actors, partners and staff play a crucial role in understanding the environment, threats and possible perceptions; and in communicating humanitarian messages. "Do no harm" approaches also play a crucial role in avoiding local tensions resulting from humanitarian programming.

Examples of good practices are **local co-ownership** of programmes and the involvement of all groups in programming, e.g. including the needs of host communities in humanitarian assistance to people living in IDP or refugee camps, and including local labour and livelihoods in components.

In high-risk situations, gaining acceptance may be extremely challenging and may need to be accompanied by other appropriate risk management measures. For instance, where some groups or organizations are ideologically opposed to parts of the international humanitarian response, humanitarian workers might be directly targeted. In these cases, **low-profile approaches** can include the de-branding of vehicles, staff not wearing organization emblems, the use of local vehicles and un-marked offices, or not gathering in groups or offices identifiable as belonging to the organization. While these measures will reduce the likelihood of incidents they tend to increase the impact if they do happen.

In certain situations, the risks may be higher for international staff, staff from other parts of the country, or staff from certain nationalities. In these cases, **remote programming**, static localized staffing and local capacity building for community-based organizations and volunteers can be considered. If the risk is equally high for all staff, complete remote programming – carried out by the community itself and monitored via visits and the internet – as well as providing **cash and vouchers** rather than goods, can be options for consideration.

### LEARN MORE!

Good practices are described in detail in [To Stay and Deliver: Good practice for humanitarian in complex security environments, OCHA 2011](#).

If security risk management measures are not creating an acceptable level of safety and security for aid workers, the **provision of security conditions conducive to humanitarian activities** is one of the main expectations of humanitarian actors from military components in peacekeeping operations. **Deterrent measures**, defined as those that pose a counter-threat in order to deter a threat, and **armed protection** are the **last resort** considered before **suspending programmes** and ceasing life-saving assistance. As a general rule, humanitarian actors will **not use armed escorts**. The minimum requirements to deviate

from this general rule are laid out in the IASC [non-binding Guidelines on the Use of Armed Escorts for Humanitarian Convoys](#) (see Chapter IV.2.4).

An alternative and good practice to deterrence measures and armed protection is to request [area security](#). This may involve “clearing” and patrolling key road networks, maintaining a presence in the area but not being visible or accompanying the convoy, or providing aerial flyovers.



**What is the CMCoord role in security management?** Understanding the described security management approaches is particularly relevant when determining the necessity or alternatives for the use of armed escorts. Some of the tasks of CMCoord Officers may be related to or overlapping with security management. See Chapter VI for further details.

## 8. Do No Harm

Any humanitarian assistance, e.g. food distribution or provision of health care, is a [significant external intervention](#) in a local system and can considerably affect the local economy, power balance, and population movements. It can also contribute adversely to crime or misuse of power. The “[do no harm](#)” concept is ascribed to the “Hippocratic Oath” in the medical practice. It posits that any potential unintentional consequences of humanitarian assistance should be critically examined and any negative consequences avoided.

This has relevance to CMCoord in two ways: to avoid negative consequences of civil-military dialogue and interaction, and to promote the “do no harm” concept to military actors involved in humanitarian assistance.



**This is not the same as malpractice or collateral damage.** Negative consequences can be adverse, side-, or second- and third-order effects of humanitarian activities.

Any actor involved in humanitarian response has to weigh the possible consequences, impacts and effects of his/her activities. Cultural, economic, societal considerations need to be borne in mind. Each response needs to be based on humanitarian standards (e.g. SPHERE Standards, codes of conduct, good practices) and adapted to the

context after a thorough assessment. This assessment needs to cover affected people and other peripheral stakeholders that may help, hinder or be affected by the humanitarian activities.

Examples can be food distributions that destroy local markets; female beneficiaries that are assaulted and robbed when picking up relief items; or creating local conflicts if the local host population in an area where a refugee or IDP camp is established is not included in relief distributions. If the military is visibly involved in relief activities, beneficiaries of this assistance might be put at risk to become targets.

A practical use of the “do no harm” concept is to “examine the solutions being offered today for they might be the cause of problems tomorrow”. Some militaries have applied the “do no harm” analysis in their planning processes – i.e. analyzing the second- and third-order consequences of a proposed course of action.

#### Example: Helicopter Distribution of Food and Non-Food Items (NFI)

The only way to reach inaccessible affected areas after a major natural disaster is often by helicopter. Airlift capacity is one of the most important, but also most limited resources during the first days of a disaster. In previous relief operations, military actors have provided direct assistance and delivered relief items and food. These deliveries can be critical in the early stages of the response as the humanitarian community gets organized and deployed to the affected area.

The local and assisting governments, as well as media, are often very supportive of these measures, as they provide quick and highly visible results. Although helicopter distributions seemed to be the only way to get immediate help into the worst affected areas, they can have some negative effects that the CMCoord Officer may have to address. The following are examples from recent disasters:

- Helicopters identified devastated areas from the air and landed or hovered over open spots to drop or unload relief items from two to five metres.
- Local people heard of help arriving either by actually hearing the sound of the helicopters or learned via word of mouth, and flocked to the landing zone. The helicopters threw up debris which injured many people who rushed in to get help – and who had no access to health care.
- The helicopter crew did not stay and did not manage the distribution. This resulted in the local residents who were the most able claiming relief items, while many others – usually women, children; sick, disabled or elderly people – were left with nothing.
- The people did not know if and when the helicopters would return, so they camped in the open field to wait for the next distribution. This could make the



landing spots dangerous areas and subject to all kinds of crime, including rape and abduction.

- When the helicopters returned, people tried to enter the helicopter, threatened the crew, and in worst cases, the situation ended up in riots – with people killed by security forces or helicopter crew in self-defence.
- The helicopters brought random items which were not necessarily needed, e.g. if the water supply was not affected and food was scarce, the helicopters came with bottled water, rather than food. Empty bottles cause a waste problem.
- In cases where local markets did offer sufficient wares, local sellers suffered significant losses as a result of the “free” competition.
- Operations were suspended without notification, leaving no time to find alternative supply routes – and leaving people behind still in need, and upset.



**The CMCoord Officer has a crucial role in sharing assessment data, ensuring military relief activities are coordinated with humanitarian actors, and promoting humanitarian principles, standards and codes of conduct.**

## Chapter II: Humanitarian Coordination

Humanitarian coordination includes coordination between a multitude of humanitarian actors and other external partners. Chapter II explains the most important **coordination tools**:

- ✓ Within the humanitarian community.
- ✓ Within the UN system in different scenarios, including **security management**, **development**, **peacekeeping operations** and **political missions**.
- ✓ Between the humanitarian community and other parts of the UN system, including situations in which an **integrated UN mission** exists.
- ✓ **Ad hoc**, in case of sudden-onset natural disasters or the rapid deterioration of a humanitarian crisis.

The chapter also includes **specific mandates of humanitarian actors** which might be relevant to civil-military coordination.

**Humanitarian coordination** is the systematic utilization of policy instruments to deliver humanitarian assistance in a cohesive and effective manner. Such instruments include:

- Strategic planning.
- Gathering data and managing information.
- Mobilizing resources and ensuring accountability.
- Orchestrating a functional division of labour.
- Negotiating and maintaining a serviceable framework with host political authorities.
- Providing leadership.

Sensibly and sensitively employed, such instruments inject an element of discipline without unduly constraining action.

## 1. Humanitarian Inter-Agency Coordination

UN humanitarian agencies, international organizations and many of the large NGOs work at different coordination levels, including a global **headquarter** and a number of **regional**, **country** and **local/sub-national offices**. Humanitarian coordination, including CMCoord, takes place at all levels.







Unlike in military or UN peacekeeping operations, there is no strict separation between **strategic** and **operational functions** in humanitarian coordination. Country offices and in-country coordination tools can have strategic functions, while regional offices and headquarters can have operational components. **Humanitarian leadership** is consensus-based; there are no command and control structures.

## 2. Humanitarian Coordination: Global Level

The Under-Secretary-General (USG) for Humanitarian Affairs and head of OCHA is also the **Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC)** and in that role coordinates and speaks for the humanitarian community beyond the UN system.

The ERC chairs the **IASC**. Most **humanitarian coordination tools** and many humanitarian guidelines are developed at the global level through the IASC.

The **humanitarian community** comprises many actors with different legal mandates, including those that are not UN entities. Humanitarian coordination mechanisms are therefore voluntary agreements, based on the conviction that coordination is crucial so as to be predictable and reliable partners, to avoid gaps and duplications, to improve quality and speed of the response, and to link resources.

Members		Standing Invitees	
	UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)		American Council for Voluntary International Action (InterAction)
	UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)		International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)
	UN Children's Fund (UNICEF)		International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA)













 UN Development Programme (UNDP)	 International Federation of the Red Cross & Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)
 Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)	 International Organization for Migration (IOM)
 UN Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT)	 Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)
 UN Population Fund (UNFPA)	 Office of the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of IDPs
 World Food Programme (WFP)	 Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response (SCHR)
 World Health Organization (WHO)	 World Bank

Table 2: The Composition of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee

### 3. Humanitarian Coordination: Country Level

#### 3.1 The Humanitarian Coordinator

If international humanitarian assistance is required, the ERC, in consultation with the IASC, appoints a **Humanitarian Coordinator (HC)** for a country. HCs are accountable to the ERC for all humanitarian affairs. They are the link between the operational and the global level and chair the **Humanitarian Country Team (HCT)**. With regards to CMCoord responsibilities:

- The HC is responsible for **initiating requests for and approving the use of MCDA**, with consent of the affected state.
- The HC ensures that **country-specific civil-military coordination mechanisms and guidelines are in place**, for a coherent approach and effective use of MCDA.
- The HC will also regularly review, with MCDA commanders, the **modus operandi** of forces providing support to humanitarian operations, and will offer advice and guidance in this regard.

The HC function is, in most cases, assumed by the **Resident Coordinator (RC)**, who then becomes an **RC/HC**. The **RC** is the designated representative of the UN Secretary-General and, if there is no UN mission, the highest UN representative in a country. The RC represents the UN vis-à-vis the national government and, together

with the **United Nations Country Team (UNCT)**, coordinates and advocates for development issues and mandates. The RC is the link to the global level, and reports to the UN Secretary-General through the head of the **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)**. The Head of UNDP also chairs the **United Nations Development Group (UNDG)**, which brings together all UN entities working in development at the global level (see Chapter II.6). An RC/HC chairs both UNCT and HCT and can be the highest representative of the UN and the representative of the humanitarian community at the same time.

**LEARN  
MORE!**

[Handbook for RCs and HCs on Emergency Preparedness and Response](#)

If a UN mission is deployed to a country, the highest representative of the UN is the **Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG)**. The RC in that case is often the **Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General (DSRSG)** and reports to both the Head of UNDP and the SRSG. Apart from being the DSRSG and RC, the same official is also often designated as the HC, thereby creating a **triple-hatted DSRSG/RC/HC** function. This has been the policy post-2008 when integration of UN missions was established. This organizational set-up can have its own challenges. The DSRSG reports to the SRSG who is responsible to the UN Secretary-General for all UN activities, including peacekeeping. The HC chairs the HCT, in which many NGOs participate, and reports to the ERC, while the RC chairs the UNCT and reports to the Head of UNDP. The HCT and the NGOs often operate independently and distinctly from the mandate of the UN mission. Depending on the context, it may be decided to maintain a separate HC function, and not integrate it into the UN mission.

In a **Level-3 Humanitarian System-Wide Emergency (L3)** humanitarian leadership may be strengthened by appointing an additional person to support the HC. This might be a **Deputy Humanitarian Coordinator** for a specific region or topic or a **Senior Humanitarian Coordinator** where the magnitude of the disaster and the level of interaction so requires it. If the emergency affects more than one country, a **Regional Humanitarian Coordinator** and a **Deputy** may be appointed.



In L3 emergencies, the IASC organizations can give the HC **empowered leadership**, with a strengthened leadership role in planning, priority setting, resource allocation, cluster activation and advocacy. (See Chapter II.8.3)

## 3.2 The Humanitarian Country Team

The **HCT**, under the leadership of the HC, is the centre-piece of humanitarian coordination in a country. It is composed of organizations that undertake humanitarian action in-country that commit to humanitarian principles and to participate in coordination arrangements. These may include UN agencies, IOM, NGOs and, subject to their individual mandates, components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (see figure 1). The size of the HCT is limited, to allow for effective decision-making. The main membership criterion is operational relevance. Members represent their respective agency at the highest level (country representative or equivalent), as well as the thematic clusters their agency may be leading (see Chapter II.4).



**Is the military represented in the HCT?** The HCT membership is usually humanitarian. The civilian leaders of UN peacekeeping operations, the heads of military components or commanders of FMA might be invited to brief the HCT on ad hoc basis and depending on the context.

The HCT ensures that humanitarian action is coordinated, principled, timely, effective, efficient, and contributes to longer-term recovery. The HCT might also steer preparedness activities. The HCT holds itself ultimately accountable to the people-in-need. Whenever possible, the HCT operates in support of and in coordination with national and local authorities. The HCT's main responsibilities are:

- Agreeing on common strategic issues, setting common objectives and priorities and developing **strategic plans**.
- Proposing a **cluster system** and cluster lead agencies.
- Providing guidance to cluster lead agencies, activating **resource mobilization** mechanisms, and advising the HC on the allocation of resources from in-country humanitarian pooled funds.
- Agreeing on common policies (including **country-specific guidance** for the **use of armed escorts** and **engagement with armed actors**).
- Promoting adherence to humanitarian principles and adopting **joint policies and strategies**.

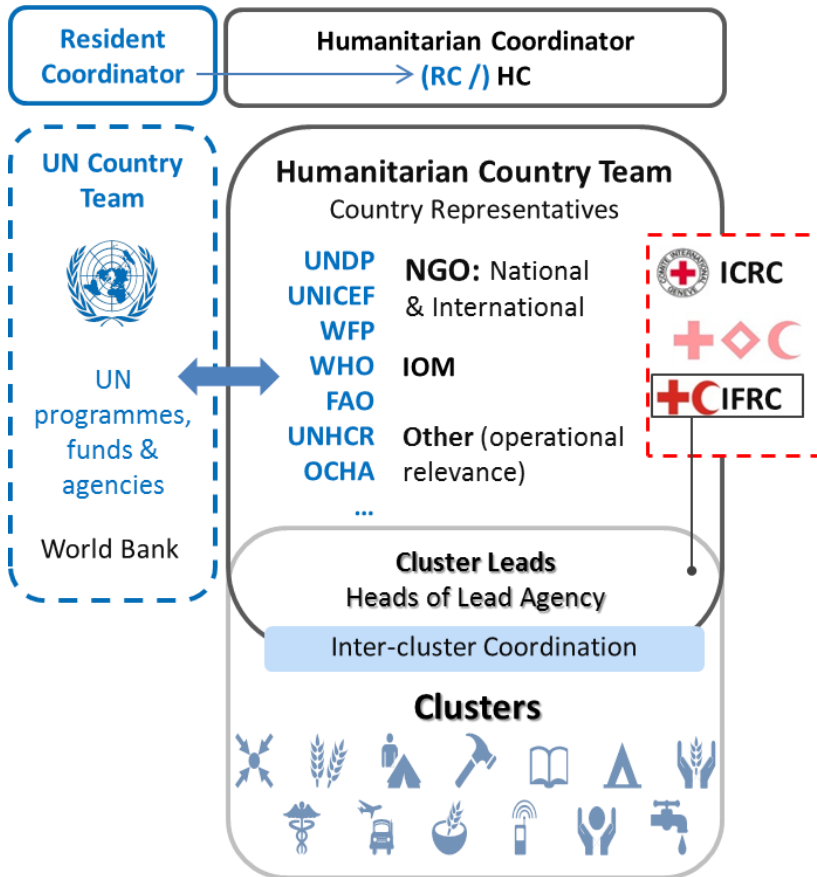


Figure 1: The Composition of Humanitarian Country Teams

## 4. Cluster Coordination

The **cluster system** is the main functional coordination mechanism of the humanitarian community. It works around humanitarian areas (sectors) to prevent gaps in humanitarian response and ensure a coherent approach. A **cluster** is a grouping of humanitarian organizations that work in a specific sector.



What is the relation between CMCoord and the cluster system? CMCoord should be a resource and service available to cluster lead agencies, cluster members, inter-cluster coordinators and the HC and HCT, to decide how to coordinate and work with the military.

### 4.1 Global Clusters and Adaptation at the Country Level

There are **11 global clusters** (see figure 2). At the **operational level**, clusters are **activated** according to need. The global level clusters can be merged or further sub-divided to address specific needs in a country and are established from the national to the sub-national levels, as required.

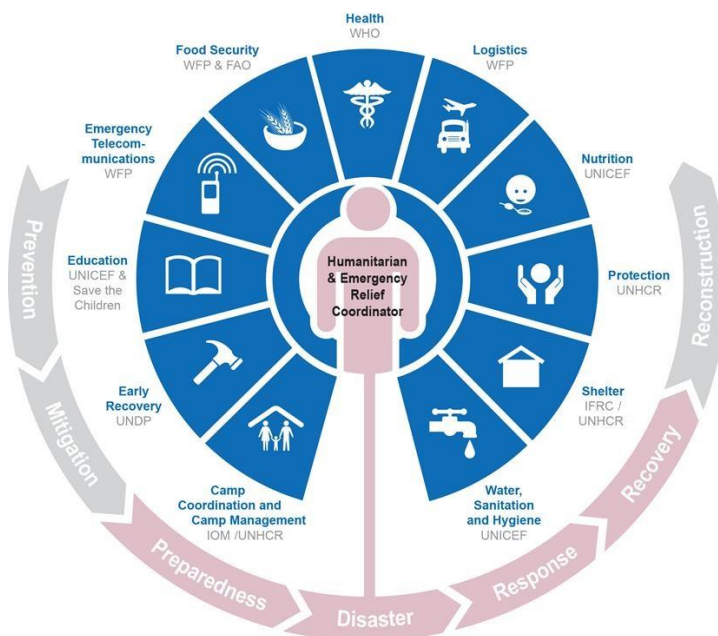




Figure 2: The 11 Global Clusters and the Global Cluster Lead Agencies

The **cluster activation** is time-limited and is agreed by the HC and HCT, in coordination with the national government, and approved at the global level through the ERC and IASC.

**LEARN  
MORE!**

[Reference Module for Cluster Coordination at the Country Level](#)

The cluster system in specific countries and related information can be found on <http://www.humanitarianresponse.info>.

### Clusters that will Likely Interact with Military Actors

#### Logistics Cluster – global cluster lead: WFP

The Logistics Cluster shares and manages logistics information, coordinates logistics services and, where necessary, fills gaps in logistics capacity. The Logistics Cluster is led by WFP, which has extensive experience in implementing and managing large-scale logistics operations worldwide, and draws on logistics expertise from the entire humanitarian community.

<http://www.logcluster.org>

#### Protection Cluster – global cluster lead: UNHCR

Protection encompasses all activities aimed at obtaining full respect for the rights of the individual in accordance with the relevant bodies of IHL, human rights and refugee law. Therefore, the protection activities of humanitarians coordinated through the Protection Cluster are diverse and depend on the context. Topics include child protection, gender-based violence, human rights, mine action and many cross-cutting issues.

The Global Protection Cluster (GPC) has developed draft guidance note on the interaction between field-based protection clusters and UN peace operations, including with military peacekeepers on protection issues. Further guidance on interaction between humanitarian actors and international military actors is also available in the revised ICRC Professional Standards for Protection Work.

<http://www.globalprotectioncluster.org>

#### Health Cluster – global cluster lead: WHO

The Health Cluster provides a coordination platform for organizations working in the health sector. It aims to ensure that the health response is coherent and aligned with national structures. The cluster provides a link to national actors. This may include coordinating foreign medical teams. Where Member States send military medical teams to assist response to natural disasters, the coordination with the Health Cluster is encouraged to ensure complementarity with the general health response.

In complex emergencies the coordination with the military and government-owned medical structures might be more distant. Health activities have historically been part of counterinsurgency military strategies. More importantly,

rehabilitating the health sector is increasingly seen as key to ensuring the country's stability and might in some cases be motivated by political considerations.

The GPC has therefore [developed a position paper on Health Cluster interaction with the military](#).

[http://www.who.int/hac/global\\_health\\_cluster/](http://www.who.int/hac/global_health_cluster/)

#### **Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Cluster (WASH) – global cluster lead: UNICEF**

The WASH Cluster promotes predictability, accountability and partnership to achieve a more strategic response to WASH in emergencies and better prioritization of available resources.

In general, the WASH Cluster expects that coordination with the military or peacekeeping forces is undertaken through OCHA and the inter-cluster coordination mechanism. Where military or peacekeeping actors can provide critical additional capacity which cannot be drawn from civilian sources, the WASH Cluster coordination platforms in-country might include additional military liaison capacity. Source <http://www.washcluster.net>

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## **4.2 Working Modalities of Clusters**

Clusters mainly work through **regular meetings** and **working groups** and each has a **lead agency** (or option of two). Figure 2 shows the lead agencies at the global level – these might be different at the country level.

Clusters support the delivery of humanitarian assistance by coordinating, implementing and monitoring projects, and conducting joint **needs assessments** and **gap analyses** in the field. They also inform strategic decision-making of the HC/HCT, through sectorial planning and strategy development. Each cluster is represented at **inter-cluster meetings**. Cross-cutting topics such as gender, psycho-social support and mental health, HIV/AIDS, early recovery and other relevant issues are addressed in **inter-cluster coordination processes**.

**How does the military link to the cluster system?** The **military** may be invited to attend cluster coordination meetings, if appropriate, as observers, or to provide specific briefings. Coordination can be conducted bilaterally with the **cluster coordinator** (situated in the cluster lead agency) or the **inter-cluster coordination**, which is facilitated through OCHA, or in a specific working group to discuss operational civil-military issues.



### 4.3 Inter-Cluster Coordination

Effective **inter-cluster coordination** is necessary to ensure that multidisciplinary and cross-cutting issues are addressed appropriately and that duplications and gaps in the work of individual clusters are eliminated.

*Inter-cluster coordination is a cooperative effort among clusters and between clusters and the HCT to assure coherence in achieving common objectives, avoiding duplication and ensuring all areas of need are prioritized.*

The HCT provides the overall strategic direction for the response. The HC and HCT establish groups of clusters to coordinate the implementation of specific objectives in the **strategic response plan** and to ensure complementarity and coherence.

An **inter-cluster coordination forum** brings together all clusters to cross-reference cluster analysis, identify inter-cluster synergies and coverage gaps, address cross-cutting issues and prepare strategic options and advocacy points for the HCT.

OCHA facilitates inter-cluster coordination. The meetings provide an excellent platform for the CMCoord Officer to:

- Introduce themselves to key coordination stakeholders.
- Advocate for the proper use and effective coordination of FMA, including prioritization.
- Clarify critical CMCoord aspects as they arise.
- Reinforce OCHA's lead role in CMCoord.
- Receive direct advice from UN agencies and NGOs.
- Disseminate guidance and policies.
- Receive information from clusters about access constraints, logistic requirements, or other issues that have civil-military coordination implications.

Inter-cluster coordination includes the coordination and mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues with relevance to CMCoord, like gender and early recovery.

#### LEARN MORE!

See the [Inter-Cluster Coordination Module](#) of the Reference Module for Cluster Coordination at the Country Level.

## 5. Specific Mandates of Humanitarian Actors

Some humanitarian actors have specific mandates that require civil-military interaction or might be of special interest for CMCoord.

### 5.1 WFP and Logistics

The **World Food Programme (WFP)**, in its capacity as Logistics Cluster lead agency, coordinates the logistic aspects of humanitarian response. If required, dedicated **civil-military** logistics **liaison officers** can be deployed to assist coordination and the de-confliction of movement of humanitarian items and military operations by advising relevant military actors (e.g. the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in Afghanistan or United States Armed Forces in Haiti). Contact between WFP, the Global Logistics Cluster and the military tends to focus on the following key areas:

- Use of military assets to assist in relief delivery.
- Use of transport assets (aircraft, helicopters, trucks, rail).
- Provision of common logistics services, particularly transport and temporary warehousing.
- Infrastructure rehabilitation (such as roads or bridges).
- Participation in training events and exercises.

### 5.2 UNHCR

The **Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)** was created to provide protection and to find durable solutions for refugees. In humanitarian crises, UNHCR also provides humanitarian assistance to other groups of people in refugee-like situations, including IDPs, asylum-seekers and returnees. UNHCR is the **global cluster lead agency** for protection, shelter (with IFRC) and, together with IOM, Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM).

#### LEARN MORE!

The basis for UNHCR's work is the [UNHCR Statute](#) and the [1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol](#).

Military forces might be involved in providing security for refugees and IDPs, e.g. through providing security of refugee and IDP camps and settlements, identifying, disarming and separating armed

elements from refugee communities, and demobilizing combatants, ensuring weapons-free zones and/or weapons confiscation.

UNHCR seeks to ensure the physical security of refugees and other vulnerable people, including the assessment of threats. Therefore, UNHCR will coordinate with military actors as appropriate and expects international military forces to consult national authorities and UNHCR in any refugee and IDP matters.

### 5.3 The Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

The **Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (RCRC)** has its own legal foundation and role based on the Geneva Conventions, the Statutes of the RCRC Movement and the national law of the 196 states that are party to the Geneva Conventions.

The exclusively humanitarian mission of the **International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)** is to protect the lives and dignity of victims of armed conflict and other situations of violence and to provide them with assistance. The ICRC also endeavours to prevent suffering by promoting and strengthening IHL and universal humanitarian principles and therefore deals directly with governments and armed forces, as well as armed opposition groups, to promote compliance with and respect for IHL. The special mandate and humanitarian mission of the ICRC requires its strict neutrality, impartiality and independence, to have access to all parties to a conflict and people-in-need of assistance. The activities of the ICRC include the restoration of family links disrupted by armed conflict and other situations of violence, visiting prisoners of war and civilians interned during conflict, and providing humanitarian assistance.

The 189 **Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies** act as “auxiliary to the public authorities” (Statutes of the RCRC Movement, Art. 4) of their own countries in the humanitarian field, and provide a range of services including disaster relief, health and social programmes. During wartime, National Societies also assist the affected civilian population and **support the medical services of the armed forces** where appropriate. National Societies maintain a dialogue and interact with military bodies in their countries, including disseminating knowledge on humanitarian principles, IHL, as well as the mandates and the activities of the RCRC Movement.

The **IFRC** represent the National Societies at the international level and may assume a lead role in the RCRC Movement's response to natural disasters in peacetime. In this capacity, it coordinates and mobilizes relief assistance for disaster situations. The IFRC observes and contributes to the humanitarian coordination mechanisms (e.g. by co-leading the Emergency Shelter Cluster).

The IFRC and RCRC National Societies have their own rules for the acceptance of military armed protection, defined by the **Council of Delegates**. The general rule is that the RCRC Movement will not use armed escorts.

## 5.4 NGOs

Many **NGOs** coordinate with the international humanitarian community through the cluster system and other coordination mechanisms. At the national level, they are often represented by national or international **NGO consortia**. Some of the large NGOs and the NGO consortia have their own guidelines and policies on whether and how to engage with the military.

LEARN  
MORE!

World Vision – [Principled Pragmatism: NGO cooperation with armed actors](#)

Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response – [Position Paper on Humanitarian-Military Relations](#)

Other organization specific policies can be found on [OCHA's website](#).

Emergency Rescue Team Search and Rescue (ERT-SAR) is an international disaster response NGO with bases in the UK and Canada. ERT-SAR deployed to the Philippines in response to Typhoon Haiyan in November 2013. Prior to the mission, ERT-SAR had been in contact with the UN and CMCS, as the Chief of ERT-SAR had been trained in CMCoord/CIMIC Operations and knew that effective CMCoord would be important to the success of their mission.

Upon arrival at the Mactan Airbase in Cebu, the Chief of ERT-SAR liaised with the OCHA CMCoord Officer and the team that was dealing with NGOs and other members of the CMCoord structure, including the Philippines military. ERT-SAR was urgently required to conduct assessments and subsequent rescue missions in remote districts of the smaller islands.

ERT-SAR was also given access to the coordination structures which allowed them to find contacts working in the same thematic areas, download meeting schedules, upload its own assessment reports, prioritize its work based on gaps, and to decide specifically where to deploy themselves.






Using the CMCoord structure, ERT-SAR was given access to military helicopters to support assessments thus enabling them to report on the essential needs of



the affected population, as well as to perform urgent rescue and medical work.

## 5.5 OCHA's Role in Humanitarian Coordination

OCHA is part of the UN Secretariat and assists governments in mobilizing international assistance when the scale of the disaster exceeds the national capacity. OCHA's five core functions are:

-  **Coordination:** OCHA supports the various coordination mechanisms, including the HC, HCT, cluster meetings, inter-cluster coordination and other tools, as well as all steps of the Humanitarian Programme Cycle.
-  **Policy:** OCHA drafts (country-specific) policy to ensure a uniform and collaborative approach on key humanitarian issues.
-  **Advocacy:** OCHA issues key messages on behalf of the affected people to ensure respect for humanitarian principles and support – in public, via “quiet diplomacy” with governments, or through negotiations with armed groups.
-  **Information Management:** OCHA collects, analyses, and shares information about the situation among the various organizations involved, and provides visual information material and situation reports.
-  **Humanitarian Financing:** OCHA manages joint resource mobilization mechanisms and pooled funds.



**OCHA Country Offices** are hubs for information sharing and analysis. CMCoord is an integral part of OCHA's suite of coordination services. See also **Chapter IV.7**.

## 6. UN Development Coordination

A number of **UN programmes, funds** and **agencies**, which have their own legal mandate and report to their respective headquarters/mandating entities, carry out development activities in a country. To ensure unity and coherence of all UN development efforts, similar to humanitarian coordination, there are coordination forums for UN development activities at the country and global levels.

The global coordination forum for development-related work is the **UNDG**, comprising of 32 funds, programmes, agencies, and offices, in addition to five observers, that play a role in development. The UNDG is one pillar of the **UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB)**.

The UNDG deals with operational activities for development with a focus on country-level work. It takes joint decisions on development country-level coordination, including the **UNCT** and the **RC system**, to achieve internationally agreed development goals, including the **Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)**.

The mandates of the UNDG are provided by the **GA** and the **Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)**. The UNDG is chaired by the **Administrator of UNDP** who reports to the UN Secretary-General and the **CEB**. The **UN Development Operations Coordination Office (DOCO)** is the technical support unit for the UNDG.

At country-level, the development actors form a **UNCT**, chaired by the **RC**. The RC is the designated representative of the UN Secretary-General for development operations and is, if there is no SRSG, the highest UN official in a country.

The **UNCT** is the inter-agency coordination forum at country-level, with the main purpose of planning and working together towards achieving development results. The UNCT members are all UN agencies that carry out operational activities for development, recovery and transition, in addition to emergency operation. Hence, the UN agencies that are HCT members are also UNCT members.

The **United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF)** is the strategic programme framework for the UNCT. It describes the collective response of the UNCT to the priorities in the national development framework. In addition, the UNDG recently endorsed Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for countries adopting the **Delivering as One Approach**; a set of flexible guidance and tools to support the work of RCs and UNCTs in the areas of joint programming, implementation and reporting, budgeting, leadership, business operations and communications.



See a [complete list of Resident Coordinators](#).

[RC System Policies and Guidelines](#)

[Standard Operating Procedures for “Delivering as one” and integrated package](#)



[of support](#)

## 7. UN Missions

*In order to ensure prompt and effective action by the United Nations, its Members confer on the Security Council **primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security**, and agree that in carrying out its duties under this responsibility the Security Council acts on their behalf.*

UN Charter, Article 24

In fulfilling its responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, the Security Council may establish a **UN mission**. The legal basis is established in **Chapters VI, VII and VIII of the UN Charter**. All pacific measures to settle international dispute are derived from Chapter VI, while Chapter VII contains provisions related to *Action with Respect to the Peace, Breaches of the Peace and Acts of Aggression*. Chapter VIII includes regional arrangements and agencies in the maintenance of international peace and security.

In addition, the UN Secretary-General has a number of **good offices**, i.e. **envoys** and **special advisers** for the resolution of conflicts or the implementation of other UN mandates. Their mandate might concern a specific country or a specific topic. Political missions, peacebuilding offices, envoys and advisers are authorized by the Security Council or the GA.

### 7.1 UN Political Missions

The UN Secretariat's **Department of Political Affairs (DPA)** manages **political missions** and **peacebuilding support offices** engaged in conflict prevention, peace-making and post-conflict peacebuilding.

**UN political missions** would e.g. support peace negotiations or oversee longer-term peacebuilding activities. **Peacebuilding offices** aim to help nations consolidate peace, in coordination with national actors and UN development and humanitarian entities on the ground. **Political missions** (DPA-led) might thus be replaced by **peacekeeping operations** (led by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO)), after a peace treaty has been signed, or the other way

around, UN peacekeeping operations have given way to special political missions.

DPA-led field operations are headed by **senior representatives of the UN Secretary-General**. Some examples of political missions are the UN Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM), the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), and the Office of the UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process (UNSCO).

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MORE!**

[Fact sheet on current UN Political and Peacebuilding Missions.](#)

See the [Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council website](#) for information on the mandates of *current and previous* missions.

Not all specialized political missions are DPA-led. There might be different arrangements for **highly specialized mandates**, such as the Joint Mission of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and the UN for the Elimination of the Chemical Weapons Programme of the Syrian Arab Republic and the UN Mission for Ebola Emergency Response (UNMEER). **Field support missions** are led by the UN Department of Field Support (DFS).

Political missions might include military personnel, e.g. military observers or static guard units.

## 7.2 UN Peacekeeping Operations

While their mandates may also have political elements, **UN peacekeeping operations** have a military and, sometimes police component, or carry out their mandates alongside a regional or multinational peacekeeping force. They are deployed on the basis of a **Security Council mandate**. A **Chapter VII resolution** determines that there is a threat to peace or an act of aggression according to the UN Charter and defines measures to be taken.

*UN peacekeeping is based on the principle that an impartial presence on the ground can ease tensions between hostile parties and create space for political negotiations.*

The mandates (defined in Security Council resolutions) and therein defined tasks are situation-specific, depending on the nature of the conflict. **Traditionally**, UN peacekeeping operations were deployed in support of a political process, such as the implementation of a

ceasefire or peace agreement. Over the past decades the range of tasks has expanded significantly in response to changing natures and patterns of conflict. Peacekeeping has increasingly been used in non-international armed conflicts and civil wars, which are often characterized by a multitude of (armed) actors and political objectives.

The structure of many peacekeeping operations has become **multidimensional**, including inter alia military, civilian police, political, civil affairs, rule of law, human rights, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR), security sector reform, reconstruction, public information and gender components.

**LEARN  
MORE!**

[“United Nations Peacekeeping Operations: Principles and Guidelines”, 2008 Handbook on UN Multidimensional Peacekeeping Operations](#)



The peacekeeping Community of Practice (<http://www.peacekeepingbestpractices.unlb.org/>) offers all official guidance as well as “After action reviews”, “End of assignment reports” and other references.

Typical mandates may include, among others:

- Providing a secure environment.
- Helping to implement complex peace agreements.
- Facilitating the delivery of humanitarian assistance through the creation of conducive security conditions.
- Assisting with the **DDR** of former combatants.
- Supervising and conducting elections.
- Strengthening the rule of law, including judicial reform and training of civilian police.
- Promoting respect for human rights and investigating violations.
- Assisting with post-conflict recovery and rehabilitation.

Starting from the Security Council mandate, the “**mission**” and its responsibilities are defined. The **UN Secretary-General** has the command of peacekeeping operations, under the authority of the Security Council. The UN Secretary-General delegates the overall responsibility for these missions to the **Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping** and for multidimensional peacekeeping operations appoints an **SRSG**, who serves as **Head of Mission** and is responsible

for implementing the mission's mandate. For traditional peacekeeping operations, the UN Secretary-General may appoint a **Force Commander (FC)** or **Chief Military Observer** as Head of Mission.

The SRSB can have one or more deputies (DSRSB) with different thematic tasks. One of them is potentially the RC (DSRSB/RC), who might become a triple-hatted DSRSB/RC/HC if the humanitarian leadership is assumed by the RC.



Figure 3: Leadership of UN Peacekeeping Operations

**LEARN  
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[Fact and figures about current peacekeeping operations](#)

**UN Civil Affairs:** Civil Affairs Officers are civilian peacekeepers, usually deployed at sub-national level, where they serve as the link between the UN mission and local authorities and communities. Civil Affairs aim to strengthen the social and civic conditions necessary to consolidate peace processes. This might have significant overlap with humanitarian and development activities, though the overall objective is always contributing to the peace process and activities are linked to the mission's mandate. Civil Affairs are part of most DPKO-led peacekeeping operations, but are also regularly deployed in DPA-led political operations.



**UN Civil Affairs** is not the same as the Civil Affairs units of the US Armed Forces, which are purely military units and whose capabilities are similar to UN CIMIC.

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[Civil Affairs Handbook](#)

### 7.3 UN Integration

With the increasingly complex mandates of peacekeeping operations, in environments where other UN and non-UN actors are also operational, the concept of **UN integration** emerged. It applies in all conflict and post-conflict situations where the UN has a **UNCT** (development) and a **multidimensional peacekeeping operation** or **political mission/office**, with the objective to *maximize the individual and collective impact of UN efforts in support of peace consolidation*.

As is stated in the respective UN policy, integration arrangements should take full account of humanitarian principles, protect humanitarian space and facilitate effective humanitarian coordination with all humanitarian actors. While humanitarian action can support peace consolidation, its main purpose remains to address life-saving needs and to alleviate suffering. Therefore humanitarian activities are understood to fall largely **outside the scope of integration**.

This being said, humanitarians need to be at the table for all strategic and operational discussions on a systematic basis. When the deployment of a UN mission is being considered, the UN system must conduct an **integrated strategic assessment**. The UN political, security, development, humanitarian and human rights entities together analyse the situation and propose options for UN engagement. This includes to:

- Develop a common understanding of the situation.
- Agree on when, where, and how to respond.
- Establish coordination mechanisms at the senior and working levels in the field and at HQ.
- Monitor and report jointly.

#### LEARN MORE!

[UN Policy on Integrated Assessment and Planning \(IAP\)](#) and the [IAP Handbook](#).

OCHA participates in the **planning and assessment processes** on its own behalf and as a representative of the humanitarian community. OCHA must therefore ensure that other humanitarian actors, in particular NGOs, are informed and given an opportunity to feed into these processes. OCHA supports coordinated HCT engagement in IAP processes, and liaises with humanitarian NGOs who are not in the HCT so that their views are taken into consideration.

*In situations where there is little or no peace to keep, integration may create difficulties for humanitarian and development partners, particularly if they are perceived to be too closely linked to the political and security objectives of the peacekeeping mission. In the worst case, **integration may endanger their operations** and the lives of their personnel.*

The HC, the HCT and the broader humanitarian community, should identify any potential adverse consequences (or benefits) to the UN and NGO humanitarian coordination and response, including possible mitigation measures.

**Risks of integration** might include situations in which humanitarian programmes are carried out in areas that are not under control of the government. The broader UN political or security agenda might be (perceived as) supporting the government, which would affect the profile, public messaging and, potentially, security of humanitarian actors. This is especially true if there are indications that government, local populations and/or armed groups can and do make a distinction between UN humanitarian agencies, non-UN international humanitarian actors and political/peacekeeping actors.

While these factors could shrink humanitarian space and impede access, there are situations in which humanitarian operations and access could **benefit from using mission assets** without affecting the perception of the humanitarian community. From a humanitarian perspective, UN peacekeeping and political work can support the delivery of humanitarian assistance and promote PoC.



UN integration is an important aspect to consider when drafting **country-specific civil-military coordination guidelines**. The CMCoord Officer should advise the HC and HCT on the drafting of such guidelines describing the use of FMA and the interaction between the UN and NGO humanitarian actors and the military (including UN military components) in-country, and monitor adherence thereto.

The IAP process should identify the most appropriate **structural integration arrangements**, bearing in mind the risks for humanitarian actors. To what extent the mission and the UNCT and/or HCT should be visibly linked depends on a variety of factors, including the operational needs, the security contexts, the existence of non-state groups, and the role of the mission in possibly supporting a party to a conflict and/or participating in combat.

The humanitarian community must balance the benefits and risks to humanitarian access and perception by local communities and non-state armed actors to determine how close they will link structurally.



**Does the CMCoord Officer have a role in the IAP?** The IAP Handbook states that “reference should also be made to any existing country-specific civil-military coordination guidance, as these would provide useful reflections on issues such as co-location, use of United Nations logos and mission assets, which are salient to possible integration levels and structures.” The CMCoord Officer should make sure that the **Planning Teams** are aware of any existing guidance.

What is called **structural integration** generally refers to the leadership configuration of the mission. There are multiple models and options, the leadership options – RC and/or HC separate or triple-hatted DSRSG/RC/HC – are explained in Chapter II.3.1. The OCHA office supporting the HC would usually remain outside the mission structure and maintain separate offices. Arrangements should be subject to constant review and might shift over time, with changing context or mandates.

*In keeping with the principle of “form follows function”, the number, configuration and composition of integrated field coordination structures will vary from country to country based on the scale of the United Nations operations and the level of strategic and programmatic coordination required. (IAP Handbook)*

Each UN field presence should have **standing coordination bodies** to provide strategic direction, planning oversight, information-sharing, analysis, coordination and monitoring.

A **senior leadership forum** for decision-making on joint strategic and operational issues should include the key in-country decision-makers, such as the SRSG, DSRSG, RC/HC, the civilian Chief of Staff, as well as the heads of mission components and relevant UN agencies. External partners should be invited to participate when appropriate.

This forum determines a joint vision, is responsible for implementing and strategically reviewing the **Integrated Strategic Framework (ISF)**, interacts with non-UN actors and determines roles and responsibilities, to ensure complementarity. The senior leadership forum also agrees on joint SOPs for interdisciplinary topics, like SGBV, Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, early warning and others.

Each integrated presence should have a **joint analytical and planning capacity** to share assessments and analyses and develop, update, and monitor **integrated planning frameworks**. OCHA and other humanitarian actors should either be represented in or seek to otherwise contribute to the joint analytical and planning capacity. This capacity takes the form of dedicated strategic planning resources in missions and UNCTs.

The mission and the UNCT may also decide to develop and/or monitor implementation of joint strategies through **thematic working groups**. They are encouraged to involve non-UN actors (for example NGOs) in thematic working groups on a case-by-case basis.

UN Secretary-General decisions on Integration: [2008/24](#) & 2011/10 that “strongly reaffirm[ed] the principle of integration”.

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[ISG-commissioned study on Integration and Humanitarian Space](#)

[IASC paper on UN Integration and Humanitarian Space](#)

[OCHA Policy Instruction on Structural Relationships within an Integrated UN Presence](#)

## 7.4 UN Security Management

The primary responsibility for the security of humanitarians in a country of operation lies with the **host government**. Internal to the UN, the **Designated Official (DO)** is accountable and responsible for the safety and security of UN staff. This is another appointment held by the highest-ranking UN official, i.e. **the RC/(HC) or the SRSG**. The DO is supported by the **Security Management Team (SMT)**, a forum which includes the Security Advisor/Officer and heads of offices from all UN agencies and, where there is a peacekeeping operation, the heads of its military and police components.

The **United Nations Department for Safety and Security (DSS)** provides leadership, operational support and oversight of the security management system, and ensures the maximum security for staff, while enabling the safest and most efficient conduct of the UN programmes and activities. DSS facilitates the SMT meetings.

The SMT meets regularly to exchange information pertaining to the security of UN (and associated) personnel in the field and supports the DO’s security decision-making. It is run by DSS and chaired by the DO. Key discussions include any issues relevant to the safety and security of UN personnel and operations. A **Security Cell** is a working group of



security officers from various UN agencies and NGOs that gathers prior to the SMT meetings. Liaison officers from international security forces (CIMIC and police) may be invited to contribute to the Security Cell planning or to brief the SMT. Usually, national security actors are not invited to security meetings, as information discussed may be sensitive or related to their activities.

The **Saving Lives Together framework** is the basis for collaboration between international NGOs and the UN security management system. It requires the sharing of information and/or assets and allows a representative of the international NGOs to attend the SMT meetings. NGOs have their own accountability and responsibility for the safety and security of their staff and their own security management regulations, systems and focal points. The same applies to the different components of the RCRC Movement: the ICRC has its own security system and the IFRC provides a security umbrella for all RCRC National Societies operating in a country.



**Is security management a CMCoord task?** Security management is not a CMCoord task per se. Security information is an important type of information to be shared between military and humanitarian actors through appropriate information sharing platforms. Compare with Chapters IV and VI.

## 8. The First Days of a Crisis: Surge Capacity

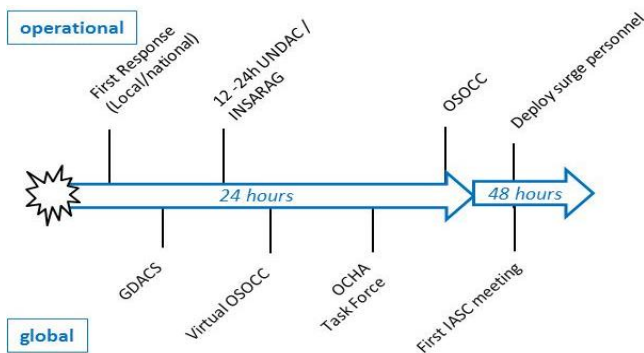


Figure 4: OCHA activities within the first 48 hours of an emergency

## 8.1 UNDAC

The RC and the affected state's government may request deployment of a **United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC)** team to assess the humanitarian consequences of a disaster in its first phase and to assist in the coordination of incoming international relief. UNDAC teams can deploy at short notice (12-48 hours) anywhere in the world.

When the UNDAC team deploys to an operational environment where there is a pre-existing relationship, engagement and/or coordination with national, foreign or UN mission military forces, they adhere to the humanitarian guidance in place.

If a CMCoord Officer is already on the ground before the UNDAC team arrives, they should initiate contact, preferably prior to deployment, with the CMCoord focal point within the UNDAC team. As part of the roles within an UNDAC team, one member will take on this responsibility. Even if military forces are not involved in the relief operation, they may have a significant impact on such operations.

If there is military involvement in the disaster response, a CMCoord specialist must be integrated in the UNDAC team. This is especially the case where there is no pre-existing OCHA presence.

All UNDAC team members should be aware of how to appropriately and effectively interact with military forces on the ground. Part of the UNDAC Induction Course focuses on this engagement, including the basics of facilitating the essential dialogue between humanitarian and military actors, and establishing a civil-military coordination mechanism that enhances the disaster response by facilitating information sharing, task division and, when appropriate, joint planning. FMA should be utilized and/or coordinated to allow optimal use of resources to meet the humanitarian priorities of people-in-need.

## 8.2 On-Site Operations Coordination Centre (OSOCC)

As soon as an UNDAC team deploys to a country following a natural disaster, the team establishes an **On-Site Operations Coordination Centre (OSOCC)** and sub-OSOCCs at the sub-national level, as needed. This is done in consultation with the affected state's disaster management authority and the HCT. The OSOCC serves as a link

between international responders and the government of the affected country and offers the following in the days after a disaster:

- To be a link between international responders and the government of the affected country.
- To provide a system for coordinating and facilitating the activities of international relief efforts at a disaster site, notably following an earthquake, where the coordination of many international USAR teams is critical to ensure optimal rescue efforts.
- To provide a platform for cooperation, coordination and information management among international humanitarian agencies.

At the same time, information about the disaster is exchanged among disaster managers worldwide in real-time on the web-based **virtual OSOCC**. First information exchanges typically include initial assessment results, contact details of (potential) responders, satellite images, and situation updates.

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Sign up for GDACS disaster alerts at <http://www.gdacs.org/> (open service) and obtain an account on the virtual OSOCC at <http://vosocc.unocha.org/> (restricted to disaster managers in governments and response organizations).

Within minutes after the occurrence of major natural disasters that might require international assistance, automatic alerts are sent out to subscribers of the **Global Disaster Alert and Coordination System (GDACS)**. A red earthquake alert automatically alerts the **International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG)** network that has international USAR teams worldwide as members.

### 8.3 System-wide Level-3 Emergencies

In case of a major humanitarian crisis, the IASC Principals may activate a **Humanitarian System-Wide Emergency (L3)** to ensure a more effective response to the humanitarian needs of affected people. The decision about an **L3 activation** is taken on the basis of five criteria: scale, complexity, urgency, capacity, and reputational risk.

The L3 activation commits IASC members to ensure that they put in place the right systems and mobilize resources to contribute to the response as per their mandates, cluster lead agency responsibilities, and commitments made in a **strategic statement**.

An L3 declaration automatically triggers some measures:

**Leadership:** The establishment of an HCT, the deployment of an HC (different models as described above), the activation of “empowered leadership”, cluster activation.

**Surge Capacity:** Deployment of the core team on a “no regrets” basis, and possibly other context-specific capacities, including CMCoord.

**Programme Cycle:** Immediate implementation of a Multi-Sector Initial Rapid Assessment (MIRA), particularly a preliminary scenario definition, and elaboration of a strategic statement within five days of the crisis onset by the HC/HCT; a Flash Appeal (to be developed within 7-10 days) and individual cluster response plans; and an immediate initial allocation of US\$10-20 million from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF).

The [IASC Transformative Agenda](#) is transforming the way in which the humanitarian community responds to emergencies:

- [Concept Paper on “Empowered Leadership” – revised March 2014](#)
- [Humanitarian System-Wide Emergency Activation: definition and procedures](#)
- [Responding to Level 3 Emergencies: What “Empowered Leadership” looks like in practice](#)
- [Reference Module for Cluster Coordination at the Country Level](#)
- [Humanitarian Programme Cycle Reference Module Version 1.0](#)
- [Accountability to Affected Populations Operational Framework](#)
- [Inter-Agency Rapid Response Mechanism \(IARRM\) Concept Note](#)
- [Common Framework for Preparedness](#)

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## 8.4 Surge Pools

In a sudden-onset natural disaster or a breaking or rapidly deteriorating complex emergency, OCHA and its humanitarian partners have several tools to quickly enhance the response and coordination capacity in a country. It has various **surge rosters** to deploy additional staff for the first weeks of an emergency, who may then be replaced by longer-term personnel.

**Emergency Response Roster (ERR):** OCHA staff members who are deployed from other OCHA offices or headquarters within 72 hours, to support the country office in an affected country for six weeks to three months in L3 emergencies. On each ERR rotation one or two

CMCoord Officers from CMCS are available for missions. CMCS staff might also deploy on shorter term on “special surge” mission to support the CMCoord Focal Points with tasks such as a CMCoord assessment. The ERR includes the **Senior Surge Roster (SSR)**, which is made up of OCHA staff who can provide field leadership in key management positions.

**Associate Surge Pool (ASP):** The ASP includes CMCoord Officers at the P-3 (entry-level professionals) and P-4 levels (mid-level professionals) who are currently not working for the UN. These are “rostered”, i.e. pre-approved by the Human Resource Section, and thus can be deployed on shorter notice, i.e. within one month, for a period of an average three to six months.

**Stand-by Partnership Programme (SBPP):** On request from a country office, OCHA’s Surge Capacity Section contacts partner organizations to request the deployment of subject matter experts, free of charge to the UN, for a period of three to six months. Several partner organizations have a number of experienced CMCoord Officers.

**Inter-Agency Rapid Response Mechanism (IARRM):** In case of an L3 emergency, the IASC Principals and Emergency Directors identify additional priority positions to be filled ad hoc to enhance in-country coordination, including cluster coordination, support to the HC, cross-cutting issues and others. The agencies fill these posts through their own surge mechanisms, in OCHA’s case the above-mentioned mechanisms, in addition to the Inter-Agency Standby Capacity rosters on Gender (GenCap) and Protection (ProCap).

**GenCap** and **ProCap** consist of two pools of 30 Gender Advisers and 30 Senior Protection Officers at the P-4/P-5 level (mid-level professionals) that can be deployed at short notice as an inter-agency resource to support the HC, HCT and cluster leads to mainstream gender respective protection and build capacity of local actors.



For more information on OCHA Surge Capacity: <http://www.unocha.org/what-we-do/coordination-tools/surge-capacity/overview>  
Contact: [OCHA-SCS-DeploymentsTeam@un.org](mailto:OCHA-SCS-DeploymentsTeam@un.org)

## Chapter III: Understanding the Military

Chapter III is intended to assist CMCoord and Humanitarian Affairs Officers (HAO) in gaining an understanding of key military actors for CMCoord, general military organization, and introducing military missions and planning. It will also discuss some key concepts and terms.

This chapter looks at the commonalities among military organizations and does not cover the differences among and within them. It is important to keep in mind that **each Member States' military** is organized, equipped and tasked in **unique ways**. Indeed, even individual services within a Member State's military have organizational and cultural differences.

Having a general understanding of military actors' organization, capabilities, and roles is crucial for establishing liaison and dialogue, and identifying the appropriate interface and coordination mechanisms. The chapter includes:

- ✓ An overview of military organizations' generic **command and control** structures, **military planning** and **headquarters, ranks, responsibilities and unit sizes**.
- ✓ The organization of the military component of UN peacekeeping operations (**blue helmets**).
- ✓ Different types of **mandates of military forces**, their legal bases and implications.
- ✓ Roles that military forces may play in disaster response or humanitarian assistance operations, including national forces as first responders, foreign military actors in support of bilateral or UN assistance, occupying powers and forces under an international mandate.
- ✓ Examples of **military concepts for engagement with civilian and humanitarian actors**.

## 1. Military Organization

Regardless of nationality, militaries are often organized in similar ways and often share many common aspects, whether they are army, navy, air force or marine/amphibious forces. Militaries are organized in a clear **hierarchical structure** with **clear lines of command, control and communication**.

**Army** is the land component which is normally tasked with taking and holding specific objectives or geographical areas. Member State armies are generally the largest service in terms of personnel and equipment. The army is the most likely service to be found in peacekeeping operations, complex emergencies, and natural disaster responses. In addition to ground equipment, armies may also have some rotary wing (helicopter) capabilities.

**Navy** is the sea or naval component and is normally tasked with maintaining the security of the nation's territorial waters and sea lanes, sea lines of communication, counter piracy and transport/logistics missions. Humanitarians are likely to engage with naval personnel in natural disaster response. In addition to ships, navies may have air assets.

**Air Force** is the air component and provides strategic and tactical air lift for the other services, as well as aerial warfare. Air forces generally have fixed- and rotary-wing assets. Humanitarians are most likely to engage with air force personnel in natural disaster response, but they may be present also in peacekeeping missions and complex emergencies.

**Marines or Amphibious Forces** are generally the smallest service within a Member States' armed forces. They are task-organized to perform immediate and higher-risk missions and are mobile by sea, land and air. They are usually structured to include a combination of land, sea, and air assets.

The **hierarchy of military activity** is described as **strategic, operational** and **tactical**. The **strategic** is the highest level and includes political, national or coalition direction. The **operational** level is the level at which operations are planned and supported. Activities at the **tactical** level are the ground or "field" level.

## 1.1 Military Mission or Operation

A **military mission** or **operation** (depending on size) is an activity or task assigned to a unit or formation. A unit or formation is the size of the military footprint (number of personnel and equipment). A campaign is a series of operations and/or missions. Operational necessity is likely to drive multinational involvement. Consequently, many military operations are invariably **joint** and **multi-national**. **Joint operations** involve contributions from two or more services (land, air, sea) under a unified command structure.

An operation follows a **mission statement** which defines the **desired end state** and who, how, and when that will be accomplished. Each military has a generic format for their mission statement which contains the following elements:

- **End state:** Providing information on the desired end state, extraction, withdrawal and handover. This is a legal term, with which the political entity tasking the military defines the end of the mission.
- **Who:** Identifying the force; friendly, neutral and enemy forces.
- **What:** Essential tasks derived from either a higher headquarters or national authority (secures, protects, etc.).
- **Where/when:** Geographical and time constraints.
- **How:** A statement of methodology, e.g. “provide visible deterrence”, “contributing to security”, or “undertake non-combatant extraction operation”.

## 1.2 The Commanding Officer

**Command** is a position of authority and responsibility to which officers are legally appointed. The **Commanding Officer** will be the most senior-ranking officer in the unit. The Commanding Officer can be held legally responsible for the actions of the personnel under his/her command under international law, the International Criminal Court and sovereign law.

Many commands will have a **Chief of Staff** who wields significant influence on behalf of and with the authority of the Commander and the unit. The Chief of Staff is tasked with coordinating and managing



the activities of the unit's or formation's staff sections and generally has routine access to the Commander.



**Engagement with the Commander:** Establishing communication and coordination with the **Commanding Officer** is critical for CMCoord and Humanitarian Affairs Officers, as he or she has the largest degree of authority over the personnel and operations of the command. While it is unlikely that humanitarian personnel will have daily access to the Commander, all efforts should be made to establish constructive dialogue and rapport. Effort should be made by CMCoord and Humanitarian Affairs Officers to establish a constructive relationship with the **Chief of Staff**. It is also a good practice to schedule a "courtesy call" to the Commander at an opportune time. The Chief of Staff can surely make this happen.

### 1.3 Headquarters and Staff Responsibilities

Within each headquarters, there are **planning staff** that administer, organize and manage various functions for the Commanding Officer. Headquarters planning staff are broken down into nine categories – referred to as **1 to 9** and preceded with a letter designating the level of the command. The letter **S** is generally for staff at brigade and battalion levels. The letter **G** (or **N**, if navy) is generally for commands higher than brigade (division or corps). The letter **J** is used if the command is designated as a **Joint Headquarters** (more than one service in the command); the letter **C** is used if the command is designated as a **Combined Headquarters**, more than one nation or a Coalition of nations. The UN uses the letter **U** to designate its staff sections in the military component of peacekeeping missions. To an outsider the structure may not be obvious and a military headquarters may appear large and chaotic.

Current and future planning is part of the daily process in a headquarters to reduce unpredictability as much as possible, while plans remain under constant scrutiny. To that end **military planning teams** are well-staffed and dynamic. Handling military operations requires constant planning and updating, incorporating current planning, contingency planning, and lessons identified, to reacting to changing contexts and ground realities.

In addition to the more standardized staff sections, many commands will have **specialized** or **special staff** functions which may assist in establishing an effective and sustained dialogue between

humanitarian and military actors. These special staff functions include: Civilian Personnel Officer, Command Surgeon, Aviation Coordinator, Command Engineer, Command Chaplain, Liaison Officer, Psychological Operations Officer, Transportation or Logistics Officer, or Public Affairs Officer.

Personnel	1	Personnel and Administration are responsible for manpower, reporting, casualty tracking, welfare, discipline, honours and awards, responsible for prisoners of war, internees and detainees.
Intelligence	2	Intelligence or Information collected in a variety of ways focussing on security of personnel and information to gain military advantage over adversary.
Operations	3	Operations cover current (J33) and Future (J35) along with operational support, such as force protection, engineers, and influence activities.
Logistics	4	Logistics which includes supply, movement, transportation, equipment support and any external input such a contractors and medical support.
Plans	5	“Plans” is the team who write the Campaign Directive and all underpinning operational guidance.
Communications (Radio & IT)	6	Communications and Information encompasses all technical systems related to information exchange and surveillance.
(Doctrine), Training (or Engineering)	7	Doctrine and Training writes policy and incorporates after action reviews contributing to lessons identified process and post operational reporting. It also advises on future training requirements.
Resource management	8	Responsible for contracts, budgets and financing.
Civil-Military Interface/CIMIC	9	Civil-Military Interface, Political Advisors, Legal Support and Media (who can be embedded in other functions).

**Table 3: Military Headquarters Staff Functions 1-9**

## 1.4 Military Planning

Substantial planning is necessary to undertake even small operations and missions and a series of detailed administration takes place in order to reduce risk to the absolute minimum and provide the Commander, who ultimately signs off all military activity, with assurance that he or she is acting lawfully.

The **Concept of Operations (or ConOps)** defines the **Commander's intent for a mission or operation**, as well as the detailed planning on how to achieve this. The ConOps is a description of how a unit's capabilities may be employed to achieve desired objectives or particular end state for a specific scenario. It also describes how discrete, collective, or combined capabilities will be managed and employed. It can, and may be expected to, address issues pertaining to manning, equipping, training, maintenance, and administration.

The ConOps has several components. The **Mission or Operation Plan (Oplan)** details the task, purpose and how to achieve success. Once the Oplan has been approved for execution, it becomes an operational order (Opord) that becomes the basis for action of units involved in the operation. **Contingency plans** fall out of the document and provide clear segmented information to each contributor for every consideration. **Warning Orders** are issued to communicate information to subordinate units to alert them on forthcoming tasks or modifications in ongoing tasks.

The **Operational Estimate** is part of the planning process and structures and defines the **Course of Action** by detailing the Commander's vision of how a situation will be handled. All Staff Sections within a command will provide input to the operational estimate, based on their areas of expertise (see Section III.1.6).

**Battlespace** includes the geographic area of operations or responsibility and the supportive human and geographic elements that contribute to it. Battlespace Management is the dynamic synchronization of activities within a battlespace. Combat identification is a vital part of Battlespace Management which combines situational awareness and positive identification of targets and non-targets at the same pace as the operation. Identification of non-targets results from a de-confliction process and/or coordination between humanitarians and military actors.

**Campaign Continuity:** In protracted operations, there may be a high turnover of military personnel and manpower, and continuity of dialogue and engagement with military actors may be difficult to achieve or sustain. Continuity of command, a consistent approach to operations and significant understanding of operational space is difficult but essential. Troops, depending on the contributing nation,

will have pre-deployment training and handover/takeover periods of time, which aim to reduce the impact on operational effectiveness. It is likely that there will be an impact on operations and coordination during this transition.

**Reception, Staging, Onward Movement and Integration** is the logistics process that transitions personnel and equipment arriving in a theatre into operationally viable forces. It describes the activities that enable force elements to attain Full Operating Capability once in theatre of operations. A declaration of Full Operating Capability will be made and a formation will be ready to act from then on.

**Operational Security (OpSec):** Certain elements of military information may be withheld from humanitarian and other external actors, according to its OpSec level. This may prove frustrating to humanitarian counterparts when exchanging information. It is based on the militaries' perceived need to protect information that may put its personnel's lives at risk or provide an advantage to opponents.

## 1.5 Use of Force

The **Law of Armed Conflict** (also see Chapter I) defines the principles that govern the lawful **use of force**. These principles include necessity, proportionality and distinction:

- The use of force must be **necessary** from a military perspective to fulfil a lawful military objective.
- Parties to conflict must **distinguish** at all times between combatants and military objectives, on the one hand, and civilians and civilian objects, on the other – and they must only target the former.
- Parties to conflict must not launch attacks which are **disproportionate** – i.e. attacks which may be expected to cause incidental death or injury to civilians or damage to civilian objects which would be excessive in relation to the concrete and direct military advantage anticipated.
- Parties to conflicts must refrain from launching **indiscriminate** attacks – i.e. attacks which are not or cannot be directed against a specific military objective, or which are disproportionate.

- Parties to conflict must take all feasible **precautions** to avoid, and in any event to minimize, incidental death and injury to civilians and damage to civilian objects.

To adapt these principles, competent authorities (states or multi-national actors) issue **Rules of Engagement** that outline the circumstances under which their armed forces may use force to achieve their objectives. Rules of Engagement reflect the rules and principles of the Law of Armed Conflict, in addition to relevant national laws and policies, to facilitate their understanding and implementation in military operations.

Rules of Engagement are often accompanied by operational guidance and training manuals, and are an integral part of military training. Rules of Engagement appear in various forms in national military doctrines, including execution orders, deployment orders, operational plans/orders, or standing directives/SOPs. They provide authorization for, and limits on, the use of force, the positioning and posturing of forces, and the employment of certain specific military capabilities and weapons.

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[Sanremo Handbook On Rules Of Engagement](#)



In the context of UN peacekeeping, the Rules of Engagement are tailored to the specific mandate of the UN mission and the situation on the ground. Contingent Commanders are responsible for ensuring that all troops comply with the **mission-specific Rules of Engagement**, applicable for any member of a peacekeeping contingent

## 1.6 Military Ranks

A key element to effective interaction with military actors is to understand the **rank structure** and the flow of authority and responsibility commensurate with rank. The individual may change – the role does not.

The rank system forms the military structure and defines a soldier, sailor, airman's or marine's degree of responsibility, and may detail his/her professional role. The **military rank** indicates responsibility, seniority and **authority to command**. Officers have a higher degree of responsibility than Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs) and junior

ranks. Responsibility for personnel, equipment, safety and security grows with each rank. Generally, Officers are responsible for the planning, management, and oversight of operations; NCOs are responsible for operationally accomplishing the task; and enlisted personnel are carrying out the task and/or performing the work designated by the NCOs.

Regardless of the nation, the military is hierarchical in structure and the structure provides a clear **chain-of-command**. There are some similarities, but each national military has its peculiarities in rank structure, as well as its own **insignia** and **uniforms**, which mark the rank and the military branch/unit/specialization. Four generic rank classifications of military personnel exist in most military organizations:

- **Commissioned Officers:** Those who hold a legal commission and position of authority, and exercise command and control over subordinates. They derive their authority directly from a sovereign power and hold a position charging them with the duties and responsibilities of a specific office or position.
- **Warrant Officers:** Some armed forces have an additional rank between the commissioned and enlisted ranks. Warrant Officers do not hold a legal commission and do not have command authority, but are usually experts in their field and have significant seniority.
- **NCOs:** Enlisted personnel who have been promoted to enlisted higher rank (e.g. corporal or sergeant) and have functional authority over those below them.
- **Enlisted personnel:** Form the majority of all military personnel and perform tasks and duties according to their specialization.

Many different military forces may be encountered in humanitarian operations to detail rank, insignia and uniform. The CMCoord Officer should take the time to understand the rank structure of the military he or she is liaising with and learn to identify the rank of military counterparts through their uniform and insignia.

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Visit the homepage of your host country or troop contributing nations – e.g. [http://www.nepalarmy.mil.np/na\\_un.php](http://www.nepalarmy.mil.np/na_un.php).

International alliances and coalitions have the same challenge when operating together: they need to harmonize rank structures and

understand each other's ranks and insignia, to establish a joint chain of command. NATO uses the **NATO code** to make ranks comparable.

Classification	NATO code
Officers (Commissioned)	O/OF 1- 10
Warrant Officers	WO 1-4
Non-Commissioned Officers	E/OR 5-9
Enlisted Personnel	E/OR 1-4

**Table 4: NATO Codes**

The following is a list of officer ranks common in anglophone countries. Other nations might e.g. have less General Officer (and admiral/marshal) ranks, an additional rank at the O/OF2-level, or additional Junior Officer ranks, and many other variations. Although there will be many variations within different militaries, the general framework will apply to most militaries that are based on European and US military structures.

O-	Navies	Armies	Air Forces
10	Admiral/Admiral of the Fleet	Marshal/Field Marshal	Marshal of the Air Force
9	Admiral	General	Air Chief Marshal
8	Vice Admiral	Lieutenant General	Air Marshal
7	Rear Admiral	Major General	Air Vice Marshal
6	Commodore	Brigadier/Brigadier General	Air Commodore
5	Captain	Colonel	Group Captain
4	Commander	Lieutenant Colonel	Wing Commander
3	Lieutenant	Major/Commandant	Squadron Leader
2	Lieutenant	Captain	Flight Lieutenant
1	Sub-Lieutenant/Ensign	Lieutenant/First Lieutenant/Second Lieutenant	Flying Officer/Pilot Officer

**Table 5: Common Anglophone Officer Ranks**



**How to address military personnel:** It is appropriate to address military personnel by their rank. Individuals might lay different weight on being addressed by rank.

1.7 Military Structure

Military structure is hierarchal by nature, with clearly defined command and control. A military force regardless of size can be broken down into several sub-units. Every national force will be deployed as variations of different military units. Generally, militaries are organized based on the rule of three – three subordinate units make up the superior unit (three companies in a battalion, three battalions in a brigade/regiment, etc.).

Unit/Formation	Size	Commanders Rank
Division	4,00-10,000	Major General (2* or higher)
Brigade/Regiment	2,000-3,000	Brigadier General/General 1*/Colonel
Battalion	400-600	Lieutenant Colonel
Company	100-150	Major/Commandant-Captain
Platoon	30	Lieutenant
Section/Squad	6-10	Sergeant-Corporal

Table 6: Military Unit Sizes/Formations



**How to request military assistance?** If requesting assistance, military counterparts prefer the request of a certain **capability** and letting them decide which **assets** to use.

**Capability** is the ability to achieve military objectives or tasks in relation to the overall mission. A military capability is made up of several resources, such as assets, personnel, and knowledge.

2. Military Components in UN Peace Operations

***Peacekeeping** is a technique designed to preserve the peace where fighting has ended, and to assist in implementing agreements achieved by peacemakers. Over the years, peacekeeping operations have evolved from a traditional, primarily military, model of observing a ceasefire and the separation of forces after interstate wars, to incorporate a complex multidimensional model involving military, civilian and police components.*

UN Peacekeeping Operations: Principles and Guidelines, 2008





This chapter deals with the organization of **military components** of UN peace operations. See Chapter II.6.3 for the mandate and political background.

A UN peacekeeping operation is generally composed of civilians (national and international staff) and **uniformed personnel** (military and/or police). The military component forms the largest part of many peacekeeping operations. Military forces serving in UN peacekeeping operations are called **blue helmets** or **blue berets** because of their distinctive headgear.

The primary function of the military component is usually to provide a secure environment so that other elements of the peace process can be implemented, including the monitoring of human rights, national reconciliation and institution building, and the distribution of humanitarian assistance. The **military component** will depend on the type of the peacekeeping operation and its mandate.

The training of foreign military forces is the responsibility of each individual Member State. Pre-deployment and in-mission training is also common; however, this differs per national military and per mission depending on its mandate.

**Traditional peacekeeping:** This is the “classic” peacekeeping and essentially military in character, with a military Head of Mission, double-hatted as **Force Commander** or **Chief Military Observer**. The tasks assigned may involve, inter alia, observation, monitoring, reporting, supervision of ceasefire agreement and support to verification mechanisms (e.g. UNMOGIP, UNFICYP, MINUSRO, and UNDOF).

**Multidimensional peacekeeping** is typically deployed in the aftermath of a violent internal conflict and may employ a mix of military, police and civilian capabilities to support the implementation of a comprehensive peace agreement. This is normally headed by the civilian SRSG as **Head of Mission** with a **Force Commander** as **Head of the Military Component (HoMC)**. Recently, the majority of UN peacekeeping operations have been multidimensional.

In recent years, UN peace operations have also been deployed as **hybrid operations**, involving military, police and civilian personnel from two or more entities under a single structure, like e.g. the

**African Union/United Nations Hybrid Mission in Darfur (UNAMID).** Other types of peacekeeping operations include **integrated missions** (see Chapter II), **robust mandates** (see Chapter III.2.5), and **transitional administration** of a country. The latter was implemented in East Timor, Cambodia and Kosovo.

2.1 Types of Military Personnel

Formed Military Units (Contingents)	Military Experts on Missions	Staff Officers
e.g. Companies, Battalions, Brigades.	e.g. Military Observers, Military Liaison Officers, Military Advisors.	Specialized functions at mission Force Headquarters or in joint mission structures.

Table 7: Types of Militaries in UN Peacekeeping Operations

The military component of a UN peacekeeping operation can include individually deployed **Military Experts on Mission** and/or **Military Staff Officers** assigned to the different staff positions (U1-9) of the **UN Force Headquarters**. Member States also contribute **formed military units**. These are also referred to as troop contributing country (TCC) units or **contingents**.

**Military Experts on Mission** can be as follows:

- **Military Advisers** to advise the civilian leadership on military issues, or provide expertise on security sector reform, DDR of ex-combatants, and other military tasks.
- **Military Liaison Officers** to maintain a link between a UN peacekeeping operation and non-UN military forces and actors.
- **Military Observers** to monitor and report on military arrangements between parties to a conflict, such as ceasefires, armistice, withdrawal of forces, or demilitarized zones. They are unarmed.

**Formed military units** (contingents) correspond to traditional military formations, such as companies, brigades or battalions. The strengths and capabilities vary depending on the mandate.

**Combat forces** generally include the infantry, tank forces, combat aircraft, offensive and defensive naval platforms (ships, boats and submarines) and marines and special forces.

**Combat support forces**, including artillery and engineers, airborne and maritime surveillance platforms and command and control facilities.

**Logistic** and **service support forces** include communications, medical support, air, land and maritime lift and transportation capabilities.

## 2.2 Command and Control

**Command** is the authority vested in a **Military Leader/Police Commander** for the direction, coordination and control of military and police forces/personnel. Command has a legal status and denotes functional and knowledgeable exercise of military/police authority to attain military/police objectives or goals.

The **HoMC**, usually the most senior military officer (e.g. Force Commander, Chief Military Observer) reports to the **Head of Mission/SRSG**. The HoMC exercises **operational control** over all military personnel, including Military Observers, in the mission. The HoMC establishes the **military operational chain of command** in the field. This might include **subordinate Sector Commands**, as appropriate. The chain of command is issued as a **Field Command Framework** and usually is established as follows: HoMC – Division – Brigade/Sector – Battalion – Company – sub-units.

In doing so, the HoMC places military units under the **tactical control** of military commanders in the operational chain of command. The HoMC maintains a technical reporting and communication link with the **DPKO Military Adviser in UN Headquarters**. This technical reporting link must not circumvent or substitute the command chain between the USG DPKO and the Head of Mission, nor should it interfere with decisions taken by the Head of Mission in accordance with this policy directive.



Figure 5: Levels of Authority – Command and Control in UN Peacekeeping Operations

The **operational authority** over these forces and personnel is transferred to the **unified UN command and control**. UN operational authority includes the authority to issue operational directives within the limits of a specific mandate, the mission area and for an agreed period of time.

Military personnel contributed by Member States to a UN peacekeeping operation remain under the **jurisdiction** of their national armed forces, while the UN Operational Authority does not include any responsibility for certain personnel matters of individual members of military contingents. The **discipline** of military personnel remains the responsibility of the troop contributing countries.

The UN may take administrative steps in case of misconduct, including repatriation of military contingent members and Staff Officers. The prosecution of criminal conduct remains with the TCC.



**Keep in mind** that the Commanders of each TCC unit have a reporting line to their national government. A TCC might have reservations, meaning that their military contingent will or will not perform tasks in a certain way, e.g. patrols, QIPs, or others.

The Force Commander/HoMC heads the mission's **Force Headquarters**. **Staff functions** are similar to those described in part 1 of this chapter and numbered **U1-U9**. The **U9**, UN Civil-Military Coordination (**UN-CIMIC**), is a military staff function in a UN integrated missions that facilitates the interface between the military and civilian components of the mission, as well as with the humanitarian, development actors in the mission area, in order to support UN mission's objectives.



**U-9 CIMIC function and responsibility:** UN-CIMIC is a **military staff function** in a UN integrated missions that facilitates the interface between the military and civilian components of the mission, as well as with the humanitarian, development actors in the mission area, in order to support UN mission objectives.

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[UN Policy on “Authority, Command and Control in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations”, February 2008 \(DPKO/DFS\)](#)  
[Handbook on UN Multidimensional Peacekeeping Operations, United Nations 2003, Chapter V: Military Command and Control](#)

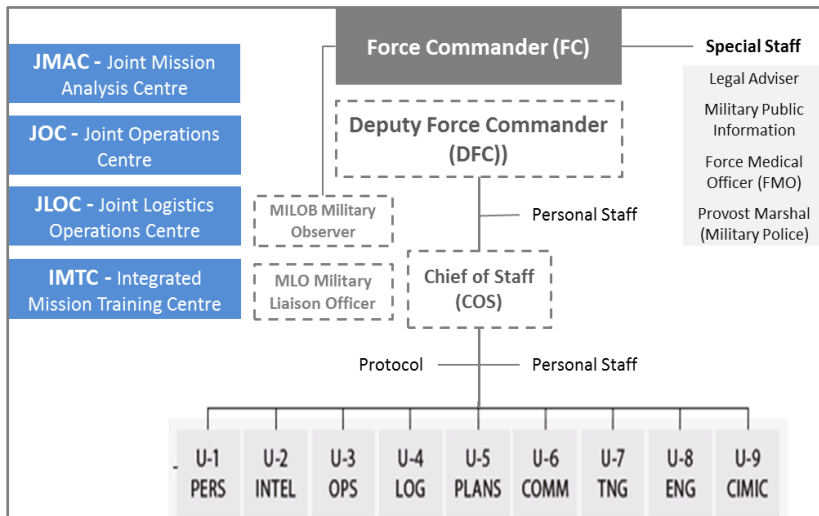


Figure 6: Sample UN PKO Force Headquarters Structure in an Integrated Mission

## 2.3 Principles of UN Peacekeeping

UN peacekeeping is guided by **three basic principles**: Consent of the parties, impartiality and the non-use of force except in self-defence and defence of the mandate.

**Impartiality** is understood as an objective and consistent execution of the mandate, regardless of provocation or challenge. Impartiality does not mean inaction or overlooking violations. UN peacekeepers should be impartial in their dealings with the parties to the conflict, **but not neutral** in the execution of their mandate, i.e. they must actively pursue the implementation of their mandate even if doing so goes against the interests of one or more of the parties.



The terms **neutrality** and **impartiality** are used differently in peacekeeping and humanitarian action. In peacekeeping, neutrality means non-intervention, or not taking action, while impartiality means non-allegiance. In the humanitarian context, impartiality means non-discrimination on the basis of race, sex, creed, religion, etc., while neutrality means not taking sides in the conflict.

	Neutrality	Impartiality
Peacekeeping	Non-intervention	Non-allegiance
Humanitarian Action	Non-allegiance	Non-discrimination

Table 8: Neutrality and Impartiality in Peacekeeping and Humanitarian Action

## 2.4 Military Tasks in Peacekeeping

The tasks of the military component of a UN peacekeeping operation can vary from technical advice on military issues to a political negotiation or peace process to robust military action and complex activities:

- Support to peace-making and political negotiations.
- Providing a **secure environment**.
- Observation and monitoring.
- Interposition.
- Preventive deployment.
- DDR.
- **De-mining**.
- Enforcement of sanctions.
- Security sector reform and training.

- Restoration and maintenance of law and order.
- Human rights monitoring.
- **Support to humanitarian activities.**
- **Protection of civilians under (imminent) threat of violence.**

## 2.5 Support to Humanitarian Activities

The military component will normally *not* be structured, trained or funded for the direct delivery of humanitarian assistance, which is a civilian task. The military is more likely to be asked to **provide a secure environment** in which humanitarian assistance can be delivered successfully or to **provide security, protection** or **armed escort** for humanitarian relief operations.

The military component often, however, has **assets and capabilities**, such as transport and other logistical support, which can be useful to support humanitarian activities. While the HC and the HCT decide on the use of military assets in humanitarian assistance, it is the task of the CMCoord Officer to advise them on how to make informed decisions and to facilitate requests for military assets.

### LEARN MORE!

[Ten Rules for the Personal Conduct of Blue Helmets](#)

## 2.6 Use of Force

One of the basic principles of peacekeeping is the **non-use of force** except in self-defence and defence of the mandate. This includes use of force being a measure of last resort, used in a precise, proportional and appropriate manner, with the minimum force necessary to achieve the desired effect.

Some Security Council mandates are **robust**, authorizing UN peacekeeping operations *to use all necessary means to deter forceful attempts to disrupt the political process, protect civilians under imminent threat of physical attack, and/or assist the national authorities in maintaining law and order.*

Mission-specific Rules of Engagement, tailored to the specific mandate of the mission and the situation on the ground, are issued for each peacekeeping operation.

**Robust peacekeeping** involves the use of force at the tactical level with the authorization of the Security Council and consent of the host nation and/or the main parties to the conflict, to defend its mandate against spoilers whose activities pose a threat to civilians or risk undermining the peace process. An example is the Force Intervention Brigade deployed as part of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO).

By contrast, **peace enforcement** does not require the consent of the main parties and may involve the use of military force at the strategic or international level, which is normally prohibited for Member States under Article 2(4) of the UN Charter, unless authorized by the Security Council.

### 3. Types of Military Missions

#### 3.1 National Military Forces

Affected states have the responsibility to use whatever means at their disposal to respond to the humanitarian needs of people affected by disaster on their territory. In many states, the **national military** or **civil defence/protection units** are part of, or even leading, national responses to disasters and crises.

At the same time, host countries are responsible for the **security of international humanitarian workers** on their territory and might use military or para-military units for this protection.

The role of the national military is defined in national legislation and national disaster management and contingency plans. In the past years many countries have developed an approach to disaster management which is more holistic and comprises disaster preparedness and prevention rather than focussing on reactive measures. This often was inherent with a shift from military to civilian authority.

Whether the military as a major reactive or response actor is guided by the civilian authorities or has a leading role in the response is different in each country. Military actors might be more or less involved in



disaster preparedness and risk reduction activities. Joint training and liaison in the **preparedness phase** are crucial to ensure a smooth coordination in disaster response.

Is the CMCoord function applicable for the interaction with national armed forces? Humanitarian actors face a dilemma if the **national armed actors** are a disaster responder on the one hand, while active in military operations on their territory at the same time. While they would probably establish more distant coordination structures during a complex emergency, they would coordinate and cooperate closely in a natural disaster in peacetime.



To de-conflict situations in which a **natural disaster occurs in a complex emergency** setting, it is crucial to establish dialogue and coordination structures in the preparedness phase – and sensitize military actors on humanitarian principles.

### 3.2 Foreign Forces with Bilateral Agreements

Foreign military forces may operate or be stationed in another sovereign country (in that context referred to as **host nation**) for different reasons, on the basis of bilateral or multilateral agreements in **peacetime**, in **peace (support) operations**, or **combat**.

**Peacetime missions** include training and exercises in the region with no hostile intent. Other examples include missions in the context of defence alliances (e.g. NATO), in case one nation supports the host nation to maintain safety and security on its territory or fight armed groups (French deployment to Central African Republic (CAR) or Mali) or based on a bilateral agreement for troop support. In any case, the conditions, as well as the legal status and support arrangements will be laid out in a **SOFA**. SOFAs can include provisions to **Host Nation Support (HNS)** in peacetime and in case of natural disasters. Having a pre-existing SOFA between Member States can greatly assist the speed of the deployment of FMA in natural disaster response operations.

If military forces, already deployed to the region for other purposes, undertake bilateral support to disaster assistance, the CMCoord guidelines refer to them as **other deployed forces**.

Personnel, equipment, supplies and services provided by foreign military and civil defence/protection organizations to support international humanitarian assistance are referred to as **MCDA**. If no

SOFA exists, the Guidelines on the Use of Foreign Military and Civil Defence Assets in Disaster Relief (**Oslo Guidelines**) provide a sample agreement which can guide the drafting of individual agreements.

In most cases though, MCDA are provided on a bilateral basis. The role of a CMCoord Officer has shifted from coordinating UN-MCDA to taking stock of MCDA and other deployed forces and establishing dialogue and coordination mechanisms to coordinate their activities with the humanitarian response.

### 3.3 Occupying Power

*A territory is considered occupied when it is actually placed under the authority of the hostile army. The occupation extends only to the territory where such authority has been established and can be exercised.*

*Article 42, Hague Regulations 1907*

According to their common Article 2, the four Geneva Conventions of 1949 apply to all cases of partial or total occupation of a state's territory, even if the occupation meets with no armed resistance.

The legality of any particular occupation is regulated by the UN Charter and the law known as the *jus ad bellum*. Once a situation exists that factually amounts to an occupation, the law of occupation will apply regardless of whether the occupation is considered lawful. Therefore, the law of occupation will apply regardless of the aims of the occupation or whether it has received Security Council approval.

The **occupying power** has certain duties which are spelled out primarily in the 1907 Hague Regulations (Arts. 42-56) and the Fourth Geneva Convention (GC IV, Arts. 27-34 and 47-78), as well as in certain provisions of Additional Protocol I and customary IHL.

These **duties** of the occupying power include humanitarian responsibilities, such as ensuring sufficient hygiene and public health standards and the provision of food and medical care to the population under occupation. The occupying power must respect the national law in force and take measures to restore and ensure, as far as possible, public order and safety.

Humanitarian organizations cannot be impeded in their humanitarian activities for arbitrary reasons. The **ICRC** must be given access to all protected persons.

### 3.4 Military Missions based on International Mandates

Foreign military forces and contingents can be operating in a territory based upon an invitation of its sovereign government or based on an **international mandate**, in most cases a **Security Council resolution** or **regional organization mandate**.

Security Council resolutions might be implemented by the following:

- UN-led peacekeeping operations (blue helmets).
- Regional-led peace operations (e.g. African Union (AU), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)).
- A hybrid mission comprising of two or more entities (e.g. UN and AU).
- Individual or coalitions of national armed forces.
- Other military alliances (e.g. NATO) or coalitions.

The **European Union (EU)** and Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (**OSCE**) frequently provide training and observer missions upon bilateral invitation (e.g. the EU Training Missions to Mali and Somalia).

Operating under a Security Council resolution or mandate from a Regional Organization (AU, EU, etc.) increases the legitimacy of the operation and provides a legal framework in which to engage the military actors. Understanding the mandate provides a basis to engage with military actors on what they should or should not be doing, as well as defining any support relationships necessary to achieve humanitarian objectives.

## 4. Civilian Assistance Tasks of the Military

### 4.1 In Extremis

In some situations, military forces may be the only actor in a position to provide humanitarian assistance to a population, either because of

security concerns or access restrictions. This includes indirect assistance, infrastructure support, as well as direct assistance.

While direct assistance operations should only be conducted by military actors as a last resort, and only **in extremis**, humanitarian actors must be aware that military actors have a **legal obligation** to provide life-saving supplies if no other political authority or humanitarian actor has the access or ability to do so.

Humanitarian plans for this contingency, including coordination with the relevant military actors, guidance on what the military forces should and should not do, as well as the development of a rapid transition plan is critical to re-establishing principled humanitarian action.

#### Battle of Fallujah, Iraq in 2004

During the Battle of Fallujah, a combined military offensive conducted by the United States, United Kingdom and Iraqi forces, no humanitarian actors were able to gain access to the civilian population that remained in the city or provide lifesaving assistance in the early stages of the operation.

Therefore, the coalition military forces delivered humanitarian supplies (provided by humanitarian and donor agencies) directly to the population, to meet minimum needs. Once the situation had stabilized sufficiently to allow for humanitarian access, humanitarian actors took over the delivery of relief supplies.

## 4.2 Civil-Military Operations

Military forces and units do interact and provide assistance to local communities. They may carry out reconstruction activities, in support of the mission, as part of a stabilization mandate or counter-insurgency strategy.

Military forces may use psychological operations or “winning hearts and minds” actions to influence the local populations and ensure their allegiance. This can serve the purpose of force protection by enhancing acceptance, gathering information, or generate support. Activities may include “humanitarian type” activities, but should not be confused with actual humanitarian action.

Humanitarian assistance follows **the sole purpose to save lives**, while military forces usually carry out **civil-military operations** (be it civic action, civil affairs, CIMIC, civil-military operations, or others) based on

the needs of the force and the mission (acceptance, security, intelligence, etc.).

**Civil-military operations** are often conditional and may cease when the mission changes or the unit moves. The selection of recipients is based on military considerations in one and on humanitarian needs in the other case. Humanitarian assistance is provided to families and supporters of all parties, including those that a military actor may see as affiliated to enemy belligerents or as collaborators.

Even if the military delivers assistance, the aid operation still is a military activity and hence may become a military target. Non-military aid providers can also become targets – either because they directly collaborate with the counter-insurgency campaign or simply because they are perceived to be in association with it. The same goes for affected people: Their lives could also be endangered and their villages attacked in retaliation for perceptions that aid is accepted in return for “collaborating” with a belligerent force.

Depending on the mission and mandate, military motives to provide aid may be very close or similar to the humanitarian ultimate goal to alleviate suffering and save lives. Still, this is a very sensitive issue for humanitarian actors: If military and humanitarian actors carry out similar activities, **distinction** becomes very difficult to maintain, even if humanitarians are not cooperating directly with the military.

#### UN Quick Impact Projects (QIPs)

QIPs are small-scale, low-cost projects that are planned and implemented within a short timeframe. QIPs are funded through the UN peacekeeping operations' budget as a tool for confidence building. Other (military) actors beyond peacekeeping may also fund or implement QIPs.

The objective of QIPs is to build confidence in the mission, the mandate or the peace process. This can include the involvement of uniformed personnel or components to help them to engage with local communities, but usually they are carried out by implementing partners in the community, which might be the same implementing partners as chosen by humanitarian and development actors. Although the activities do benefit the population, they are not humanitarian or development support. QIPs can include smaller infrastructure support, the provision of equipment, short-term employment-generating projects, non-recurrent training activities and workshops.

While close coordination is necessary, where the project have humanitarian or developmental elements, a clear distinction is also necessary. In particular in

integrated mission contexts, QIPs that relate to development and humanitarian assistance cannot be carried out without the consent of the RC/HC. It is crucial for the CMCoord Officer to maintain a close dialogue with Civil Affairs Officers and the RC/HC, to ensure that QIPs complement and do not undermine humanitarian efforts.

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[See the UN DPKO Policy on QIPs for additional guidance on the effective coordination of QIPs.](#)

## 5. Military Coordination with Civilian Actors

As described above, military forces will have different reasons to coordinate with civilian actors. There are different concepts, such as Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC), Civil-Military Cooperation and Coordination (CMCO (EU)), Civil-Military Interaction (CMI (NATO)), Civil-Military Operations (CMO), Civil Affairs etc.

In the UN, NATO and many national militaries, CIMIC describes the **military staff function** and capabilities that facilitate the dialogue and cooperation with civilian actors. This function is conducted **in the support of the military mission**. The **capabilities** to conduct actual assistance operations (CIMIC or Civil-Military Operations) can be based in other components of the military force, or be encompassed in the CIMIC unit, like engineers or other specialists.

**NATO Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC)** is a joint function comprising a set of capabilities integral to supporting the achievement of mission objectives and enabling NATO commands to participate effectively in a broad spectrum of Civil-Military Interaction with diverse non-military actors. (MC411/2)

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[NATO CIMIC Doctrine](#)

**Civil-Military Cooperation and Coordination (EU)** is the coordination and cooperation, in support of the mission, between military components of EU-led Crisis Management Operations and civil role-players (external to the EU), including national population and local authorities, as well as international, national and NGOs and agencies.

**AU CIMIC Doctrine:** The AU has adopted the principle that where no specific AU doctrine or policy exists, it will make use of the applicable

## UN policies.



**Coordination and cooperation:** In humanitarian terminology, coordination refers to exchanging information, agreeing on joint policies and actions and harmonizing individual activities, whereas cooperation is a concept of closer interaction, in which activities and planning are carried out jointly and/or in support of each other. This might be different of military understanding in some contexts, where coordination would describe the approach of closer interaction.

**UN-CIMIC** describes a military staff function in a UN peacekeeping operation. It facilitates the interface between the military and police and civilian components of a UN mission, as well as between the military force and all other civilians in the mission area, including humanitarian and development actors, local authorities, donor agencies, etc. In contrast to most military CIMIC concepts, it supports the wider peace process and not solely the military commander's intent.

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[UN-CIMIC policy](#)

**CMCoord** is a wider concept, describing how the humanitarian community should interact with military actors to safeguard **humanitarian principles**. To acknowledge the fact that civil-military dialogue and interaction are not limited to the CIMIC-function and to activities carried out “in support of the military mission”, some militaries use the concepts of **Civil-Military Interaction**.

**NATO** uses CIMIC and Civil-Military Interaction, the latter defined as “*a group of activities, founded on communication, planning and coordination, that all NATO military bodies share and conduct with international and local non-military actors, both during NATO operations and in preparation for them, which mutually increases the effectiveness and efficiency of their respective actions in response to crises.*”

## Chapter IV: Key Concepts of UN-CMCoord

Where humanitarian and military actors are present at the same time, they will inherently be exposed to some kind of boundary and contact points. The scope and character of the overlap are partly determined by the context, but more importantly by the strategy adopted by actors. Military and humanitarian actors have their own strategies to perform the necessary dialogue to avoid interferences and create synergies.

This ranges from **cooperation** to provide each other with mutual support, to generous sharing of information to **coordinate** activities, to a minimum of dialogue critical to de-conflict the **co-existence** of humanitarian and military actors during hostilities.

Some military concepts have been discussed in Chapter III. Chapter IV describes the general UN approach to CMCoord. This is mainly a review of the key guidelines and training courses, while specific guidance on how to perform the CMCoord function is detailed in Chapters V and VI.

- ✓ **Definition** and evolution of CMCoord.
- ✓ **Key considerations** and main **guidelines**, including the Oslo Guidelines and the Guidelines on the Use of Military and Civil Defence Assets to Support United Nations Humanitarian Activities in Complex Emergencies (**MCDA Guidelines**), armed escort and country-specific guidance.
- ✓ How to **assess** the context to make an informed decision about the **basic strategy** (from cooperation to co-existence) and corresponding **liaison arrangements**.
- ✓ The **key CMCoord elements**: Information sharing, planning and task division.
- ✓ The **five main CMCoord tasks**.
- ✓ The roles of different actors to perform CMCoord as a **shared responsibility**.



## 1. Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination

The CMCoord concept as it is understood today deals with all aspects of civil-military dialogue and interaction necessary to harmonize activities and promote humanitarian principles. The emphasis lies on **support that the military can provide to humanitarian actors** to pursue their humanitarian mission, in particular as regards security.

**CMCoord** is the essential dialogue and interaction between civilian and military actors in humanitarian emergencies that is necessary to protect and promote humanitarian principles, avoid competition, minimize inconsistency and, when appropriate, pursue common goals.

Basic strategies range from **cooperation to co-existence**.

Coordination is a **shared responsibility** facilitated by liaison and common training.

Coordination and **negotiations with armed groups** and actors, for instance regarding humanitarian access or promoting humanitarian principles, are understood as tasks related, but not limited to, civil-military coordination.

Military actors may seek to establish relationships with civilian actors and the civilian population to support **military objectives**, e.g. enhance the acceptance and image of troops, seek intelligence or ensure support of local communities. Humanitarian actors will acknowledge these activities to avoid duplication with their own, but would provide support or information that supports the activities of military actors *exclusively* if these are based on humanitarian need, for instance aimed at **PoC** or concerning the **security** of humanitarian operations.

Triggered by the Balkans operation, some EU and NATO members developed the concept of a **comprehensive approach**. The concept aims to achieve sustainable peace by providing security, humanitarian assistance, reconstruction and development, governance and the rule of law, “in a concerted and coordinated manner”. Some nations have adopted this as **whole-of-government approaches** at the national level.



The overall coordination of peace efforts should be left to civilian entities; be it national governments, UN or regional organizations.

The CMCoord Officer has a crucial role to play in explaining the humanitarian position to military commanders, but also to explain the

mandate of military actors – and its overlap with humanitarian mandates – to the humanitarian community.

## 2. Guidelines and Key Considerations

### 2.1 Oslo Guidelines

The **Oslo Guidelines** were endorsed by IASC and the UN organizations. A number of Member States were actively engaged in the drafting of the guidelines, and even if they remain non-binding, they are widely accepted and have been included in many national concepts and policies. The Oslo Guidelines deal with the **deployment of MCDA** in response to natural, technological or environmental disasters in peacetime. They are based on the assumption that there is a functioning government in place and make no provisions on how the affected state makes use of its national military and civil defence/protection resources.

MCDA should only be deployed at **the request or with consent of the affected state** and should be provided **free of charge**. Requests for MCDA are made by the HCT, through the HC. The Oslo Guidelines can be used by states that have requested or decided to accept foreign MCDA to establish an **interim SOFA** for the emergency, if no bilateral or multilateral agreements exist.

MCDA should **complement** existing relief mechanisms to provide specific support to fill a gap between the humanitarian needs and the resources available. In other words, MCDA should be requested only where they can satisfy a **critical humanitarian need** where there is **no comparable civilian alternative**, i.e. they are **unique in capability and availability**. A humanitarian operation using military assets must retain its **civilian nature and character**. While military assets will remain under military control, the operation as a whole must maintain a **civilian character** under the overall authority of the responsible humanitarian organization. This does not infer any civilian command and control status over military assets.

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#### Key Concepts of the Oslo Guidelines

- ☐ **Last resort:** Foreign MCDA should be utilised where there is no comparable civilian alternative, in terms of time and/or capability, to meet a critical humanitarian need.
  - ☐ **Complementarity:** MCDA should complement existing relief mechanisms in response to an acknowledged gap between the needs of affected people and the resources available to meet those needs.
-

- ☐ **At no cost:** Foreign MCDA assistance should be provided at no cost to the receiving nation.
- ☐ **Unarmed:** Military personnel in MCDA units should come unarmed and in national military uniform, and abide by the humanitarian Codes of Conduct.
- ☐ **Distinction:** MCDA supporting humanitarian action should be clearly distinguished from those engaged in other military missions.
- ☐ **Avoiding dependence on MCDA:** Humanitarian agencies must avoid becoming dependent on military resources and Member States are encouraged to invest in increased civilian capabilities.
- ☐ **Limited in time and scale:** The use of MCDA should be clearly limited in time and scale and present an exit strategy
- ☐ **Civilian control** of the operation.

Table 9: Key Concepts of the Oslo Guidelines

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[The Oslo Guidelines](#)

## 2.2 MCDA Guidelines (Complex Emergencies)

The **MCDA Guidelines** were endorsed by the IASC in 2003 and revised in January 2006. This document provides guidelines for the use of **FMA** in **complex emergencies**.

The MCDA Guidelines discuss the impacts of the use of FMA on the humanitarian operating environment in complex emergency situations. They underline that any support by military forces must not compromise humanitarian principles and must come **unconditional**, on the basis of need alone. Developed for the humanitarian community, they include some key considerations that military commanders should be aware of and that can help decision-makers in Member States and regional organizations to decide about the deployment of MCDA to complex emergencies.

### The Key Concepts are Similar to those in the Oslo Guidelines, but Contain Some Additional Considerations

- ☐ **Hierarchy of tasks:** Military support should focus on indirect assistance and infrastructure support. Direct assistance should only be provided as a last resort, to not compromise the distinction between military and humanitarian actors. This principle is also mentioned in the Oslo Guidelines, the MCDA Guidelines explore it further for different non-peaceful environments.
- ☐ **Information sharing:** In any emergency, regardless of the military forces'

mandate, a mechanism should be put in place for mutual sharing of appropriate information, as far as possible.

- ❑ **Requirement for liaison:** Regardless of the level of interaction between humanitarian and military actors, a minimum level of liaison is required.

**Last resort:** Military assets and escorts should only be used if they are the only option to respond to a critical life-threatening situation, i.e. the need cannot be met with available civilian assets, and there are no alternatives to the activity. In complex emergencies, the risks to perception of humanitarian assistance, access and acceptance, as well as security of affected people and humanitarian workers must be examined thoroughly.

- ❑ **Do no harm:** FMA can provide unique advantages in terms of capability, availability, and timeliness; in this case they should complement (not replace) civilian capabilities on a temporary and time-limited basis. The immediate positive effects must be carefully balanced with long-term negative effects. See also “do no harm” in Chapter I.

Table 10: Additional Concepts of the MCDA Guidelines

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#### [MCDA Guidelines](#)

Foreign military and civil defence assets in support of humanitarian emergency operations: [What is Last Resort?](#)

## 2.3 IASC Reference Paper (Complex Emergencies)

While the Oslo and MCDA Guidelines focus on the use of MCDA and other deployed forces, the IASC produced a broader [Reference Paper on Civil-Military Relationships in Complex Emergencies](#) in June 2004. The paper reviews coordinating with the military with regards to humanitarian principles and includes key considerations for civil-military coordination in complex emergencies. The key concepts are summarized below. This does not replace in-depth lecture of the reference paper, which is one of the most important references for the CMCoord Officer to determine appropriate liaison and coordination mechanisms in complex emergencies, and for the development of country-specific guidance.

### Key Considerations for Civil-Military Relations in Complex Emergencies

- ❑ **Humanity, Neutrality and Impartiality.**

**Needs-based assistance free of discrimination:** Humanitarian assistance must be provided on the basis of needs alone. The assessment of such needs must be independent from any other considerations than humanitarian ones.

- ❑ **Humanitarian access to vulnerable populations:** Humanitarian agencies must maintain their ability to obtain access to all vulnerable populations in all areas and to negotiate such access with all parties to the conflict. Coordination with the

military should facilitate, secure and sustain – not hinder – humanitarian access.

**Perception of humanitarian action:** Humanitarian assistance must come without

- ☐ political or military conditions. Civil-military coordination must not jeopardize the local network and trust that humanitarian agencies have created.

**Civilian-military distinction in humanitarian action:** At all times, a clear distinction must be maintained between combatants and non-combatants, who are granted

- ☐ immunity from attack by IHL. Military personnel must refrain from presenting themselves as civilian/humanitarian workers, and vice versa.

**Operational independence of humanitarian action:** Humanitarian actors must retain the lead role in undertaking and directing humanitarian activities. They must not

- ☐ implement tasks on behalf of the military or military policies. They must be free in movement, conducting independent assessments, selecting of staff, and identifying recipients of assistance based on their needs.

**Security of humanitarian personnel:** Any perception that humanitarian

- ☐ organizations may have become affiliated with the military could impact negatively on the security of their staff and on humanitarian access.

**Do no harm:** Humanitarian action, including CMCoord, must not have negative

- ☐ impacts on the people it seeks to help – physical proximity to or association with military involved in relief operations could put the recipients of humanitarian assistance at risk.

☐ **Respect for international legal instruments and culture and customs.**

**Consent of parties to the conflict:** The risk of compromising humanitarian operations by cooperating with the military may be reduced if all parties to the

- ☐ conflict recognize, agree or acknowledge in advance that civil-military coordination might be necessary for certain humanitarian activities.

☐ **Avoid reliance on military** resources or support.

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[IASC Civil-Military Guidelines and Reference for Complex Emergencies](#)

## 2.4 Use of Armed Escorts (Complex Emergencies)

**Armed escort:** A security measure that serves as a visible deterrent to a potential attack and, if necessary, acts in self-defence against an attack. Armed escorts can be provided by military as well as non-military actors, such as police, private security companies or non-state actors.

### The Use of Armed Escorts in Mali



Hi, my name is Sophie Solomon and I'm working for OCHA Mali as a CMCoord Officer. Mali is a complex and challenging CMCoord environment with the presence of a multiplicity of military actors: The French Armed Forces with a counter-terrorism mandate, a peacekeeping operation (MINUSMA) acting under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, a European Union Training Mission (EUTM) and the Malian Security and Defence Forces.

The humanitarian community in Mali established clearly in its Position Paper, endorsed in 2013 that, in line with the IASC Guidelines on the Use of Armed Escorts, humanitarian actors would not use armed escorts and would base their "security strategy on acceptance, respect for and clear adherence to the humanitarian principles".

Since the endorsement of this position paper, several serious incidents involving humanitarian actors were reported. In one case, two humanitarian workers were killed when their vehicle struck a remote-controlled IED near the city of Timbuktu. Humanitarian access is currently constrained by security considerations. While humanitarian negotiation can be done with some armed groups, some others are out of reach. In a context where banditry and terrorism are the main threats for humanitarian workers, the acceptance strategy reaches its limits.

So what are the options? What are the alternatives? In Mali, we are now trying to inform and influence MINUSMA deployment and patrols in areas defined as a priority by humanitarian actors; use alternative transportation means (as the main risks are on the roads, humanitarian actors are using local boats or humanitarian air services to secure their movements); and proposed, in partnership with the mission, a system of notification of movements to facilitate the request for advance patrols or area security for humanitarian movements.

However, maintaining a common humanitarian position on this issue is a challenge. Some actors started to use armed escorts as they consider them the last available option, while others consider the criteria for using armed escorts as "last resort" as not given yet. The principles mentioned in the IASC Guidelines are the main reference for humanitarian actors in Mali. Their operationalization remains challenging.

### **As a general rule, humanitarian convoys will not use armed escorts.**

However, there may be exceptional circumstances in which the use of armed escorts is necessary as a **last resort** to enable humanitarian action. Before deciding on such exceptions, the **consequences** and **possible alternatives** to the use of armed escorts shall be considered.

The IASC non-binding Guidelines on the Use of Armed Escorts for Humanitarian Convoys underline the general rule that humanitarian actors will not use armed escorts. They lay out the minimum requirements for the

exceptional deviation from this general rule, alternatives to consider, and the process to request and prepare for their exceptional use.

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[IASC non-binding Guidelines on the Use of Armed Escorts for Humanitarian Convoys](#)

## 2.5 Interaction with National Armed Forces

Some of the general considerations discussed in the above mentioned guidelines are applicable to the **interaction with national armed forces**, while others are not. The affected state has the primary responsibility to provide humanitarian assistance to people-in-need, in addition to ensuring the security of humanitarian organizations while in their territory, on their territory. The armed forces might be responsible for both and also play a major role in the coordination of relief efforts, especially in logistics and **mil-mil coordination** with incoming FMA.

Existing guidelines would rather suggest a co-existence strategy with armed forces in complex emergencies, or in natural disasters that occur in countries where the military is also involved in national counter-terrorism campaigns or conflicts. This might not be applicable or achievable for the interaction with national armed forces, given their legal role in disaster relief and security of international humanitarian actors.

It is essential to understand CMCoord as a **preparedness task** and establish CMCoord resources, relationships, dialogue, and coordination mechanisms in advance of humanitarian crises. This includes sensitization of national actors on humanitarian principles, as well as **contingency planning** to avoid operational dependency on the military in terms of security, logistics, telecommunication, data and others.

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CMCS, in collaboration with the IASC, has examined good practices from Colombia, the Philippines and Pakistan, and it will be annexed to the Discussion Paper on Humanitarian Interaction with National Militaries of November 2014.

## 2.6 Country-Specific Guidance

Humanitarian actors operate in increasingly complex environments with unique circumstances and constellations of actors, with a multitude of military actors in different capacities. This called for better adapting and tailoring CMCoord policy and guidance to the context.

**Country-specific guidance** operationalize existing global guidelines, to ensure a consistent and coherent approach to interaction of the

humanitarian community with military actors. These guidelines should be developed in an inclusive process by the HCT to

- Reiterate humanitarian principles.
- Highlight that CMCoord is a shared responsibility.
- Emphasize benefits for civilian, humanitarian and military actors in the course of their work, as well as for the affected people.

The final decision on whether or not to issue guidelines normally rests with the HC. The OCHA office and CMCoord Officer advise the HC on the need to issue country-specific guidance, facilitate the consultation and drafting process, and help disseminating the product.

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#### Tip Tips for Country-Specific Guidance

- ☐ Make a recommendation to the OCHA Head of Office, HC and HCT on whether country-specific CMCoord guidance is required as soon as possible.
  - ☐ The CMCoord assessment informs this recommendation, as it establishes the operational context, what CMCoord strategy to apply, and what needs to be addressed in guidance or SOPs.
  - ☐ Equally important to drafting and endorsing the guidance is establishing a system that ensures continued referencing to, promotion of and advocacy for their use, as well as the monitoring the implementation and compliance.
  - ☐ Ensure engagement and buy-in from the RC/HC and HCT from the start of the process and enlist HCT representatives in the guidance-drafting task force. A participatory process will facilitate adherence to the guidance.
  - ☐ Explain the added value of the guidance in promoting CMCoord as a shared responsibility and promoting humanitarian principles, ultimately resulting in a better provision of aid and services to the affected people.
  - ☐ Ensure consultations with national and military actors.
- 

#### LEARN MORE!

See Chapters V and VI and [this step-by-step guide](#).

### 3. Assessing the Civil-Military Environment

OCHA offices should support the humanitarian community in understanding the civil-military situation in the country of operation. A **CMCoord assessment** can either be carried out by a dedicated CMCoord Officer or focal point, or with support or surge capacity from regional offices or CMCS.



It is advisable to start the assessment as early as possible. It is an on-going process, not a one-time event. Continuous monitoring and analysis of the situation are required, more so in dynamic and volatile environments, in order to keep the assessment up-to-date and relevant. It is critical to establish an understanding of the civil-military operating environment immediately from the time of deployment and that this is followed by timely updates and reviews of the assessment, in line with changes identified in the context.

The assessment is part of a structured process that provides the foundation for three distinct CMCoord products:

- CMCoord Strategy and Action Plan.
- CMCoord Structure and Mechanisms.
- Country-specific CMCoord guidance.

The assessment process is designed to equip the CMCoord Officer or Focal Point with the ability to make informed decisions and provide substantive and knowledgeable advice to the humanitarian community on how to relate with military actors without compromising humanitarian principles.

See also Chapters V and VI.

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The full [guidance note for the conduct of CMCoord assessments](#) details data collection, action plan development, assessing the environment in context and how CMCoord structures and mechanisms can be planned.

### Assessment Outputs Central to Performing the CMCoord Function

- ☐ A comprehensive understanding and situational awareness of the operating environment from a CMCoord perspective – through the collection of valuable data, mapping of relevant actors, conducting a CMCoord Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis, and definition of the CMCoord operating environment.
- ☐ A detailed estimation of required CMCoord resources (personnel, material and financial) that assists the RC/HC, HCT and OCHA Head of Office with determining civil-military coordination requirements.
- ☐ A CMCoord information-sharing, dissemination and reporting strategy.
- ☐ The ability to support the upholding of humanitarian principles when engaging with the military.
- ☐ The preservation of humanitarian space – through training on existing CMCoord policy and guidelines and the issuance of country-specific guidance that are agreed on by both humanitarian and military actors.
- ☐ A CMCoord stakeholder contact database.

- ☐ A CMCoord stakeholder engagement matrix.
- ☐ A CMCoord strategy and action plan.

It is necessary to be systematic in gathering, analyzing and synthesizing information and data. This process assists with laying the ground to define the operating context and strategy. Mapping actors and their relations to each other will help determine what impacts there may be on activity (of each other). Humanitarian access, security, logistics or the ability to safeguard humanitarian principles may impact on how effectively the humanitarian actors would be able to deliver assistance.

#### 4. Basic Strategies: From Cooperation to Co-Existence

In **complex emergencies** and environments characterized by high security risks, military actors are inherently present and share an operational environment with humanitarians, but might have very different mandates and missions. In **natural disasters**, both might have the mandate to save lives and support relief efforts. The scope and kind of information to be shared, as well as the intensity of coordination and cooperation, is determined by the environment and the character of missions and mandates.

Interaction with military actors can **significantly improve humanitarian access** and **aid effectiveness**, by avoiding competition, facilitating access and security, and providing unique capacities and capabilities. On the other hand it bears the risk to blur civil-military distinction and thus compromise the perception of humanitarian assistance as “principled” – with serious implications for humanitarian access and security. CMCoord aims to maximize positive effects while reducing and minimizing negative effects.

To this end, the humanitarian community adopts its strategy to each context, ranging from close **cooperation** to sheer **co-existence**.



Figure 7: The Operational Spectrum

## 5. Liaison Arrangements

The strategy adopted, in addition to the results of the assessment, determines the liaison arrangements to be established.

**Co-location:** In response to natural disasters in peacetime, or any other context in which a cooperation strategy is adopted, it is most efficient to co-locate humanitarian and military actors in one operational coordination facility. This allows for real-time interaction and communication with low organizational and technical impacts. Traditionally, military forces prefer this type of interaction with humanitarian actors.

**Exchange of Liaison Officers:** Co-location might not be possible for logistical reasons (e.g. limited facilities or geographic locations) or security considerations (e.g. where military actors are more likely to become targets or use deterrence measures for self-protection). It might also not be desired in order to maintain a visible civil-military distinction. In these cases, the exchange of liaison officers might be more feasible. This is a common practice at the global level, e.g. UNHCR and DPKO exchanging staff, or military advisors within embassies and political missions.

In operational contexts a permanent or temporary assignment of liaison officers might be difficult and, depending on the scope of interaction, not required. In this case, the exchange of liaison officers can be on an ad hoc basis.

**Liaison visits:** In complex emergencies, where military actors are party to the conflict or (perceived as) siding with armed actors, humanitarian actors might not want to be associated with the mandate of military actors and prefer to have as little visible interaction as possible. Liaison Officers will attend relevant meetings and activities as needed, e.g. cluster meetings on invitation.

**Interlocutor:** Working with a third party is another way of interaction between military and humanitarian actors. From the military point of view, direct dialogue would be the preferable option. Most humanitarian actors would prefer direct dialogue, too, but in some cases see an interlocutor as the only way to ensure visible civil-military distinction.

The CMCoord Officer can function as an interlocutor. This is especially relevant in high risk environments, where military actors apply highly visible deterrence measures while humanitarian actors base their security management on acceptance and low profile approaches. Visits to humanitarian facilities would not be favoured to not endanger

humanitarian personnel and because arms are banned from most humanitarian sites. Military facilities might face higher risk of attack, posing threats to unarmed humanitarian personnel approaching. In addition to security considerations, humanitarian organizations risk to be seen as not neutral and impartial, if associated with a military actor, all the more that actor is involved in hostilities and combat.

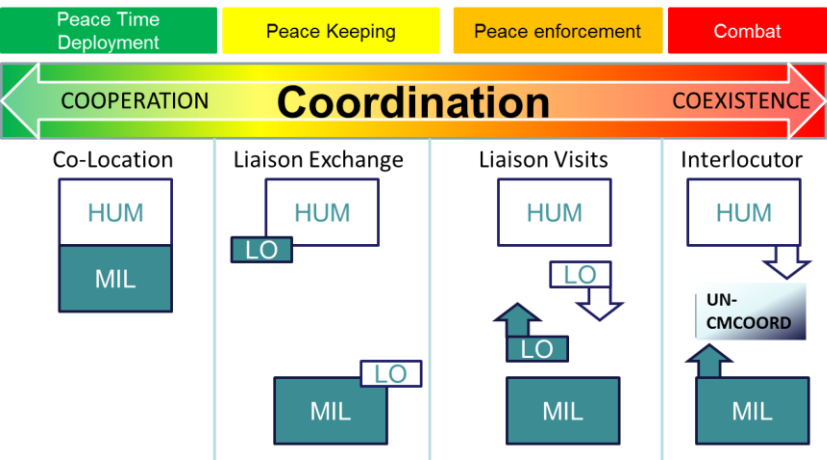


Figure 8: Possible Civil-Military Liaison Arrangements

## 6. Key Coordination Elements

The three **key coordination elements** of CMCoord:

- **Information sharing.**
- **Task division.**
- **Planning.**

Each element is present in each context, while the emphasis shifts from information sharing in co-existence settings to task division in cooperation.

### 6.1 Information Sharing

**Information** is exchanged in any case, be it the minimum necessary to de-conflict operations, or situational information and analysis required to fulfil each actor’s respective tasks, including security information, or information on threats and population movements relevant for humanitarian assistance and PoC. Humanitarian and military actors have

different reasons and ways to collect, analyse and share information. CMCoord practitioners must understand military and humanitarian jargon, communication and information management practices.

**Humanitarian organizations** follow a policy of **transparency** regarding their actions. Transparency is vital to establishing trust and confidence with the local population. Under *no circumstances* will humanitarians share information that provides a tactical advantage to an armed actor engaged in hostilities. All information will be available to all actors. While humanitarian actors tend to share all information publicly, many military actors might withhold specific information to ensure **OpSec**.

For military actors, **OpSec** considerations will primarily determine which information is shared. Access to information is managed through a system of **classification**. All military personnel have security clearances, which determine the level of information to which they have access. Additionally, they are only given access to the sensitive information that they **need-to-know** to perform their jobs.

As a result, military personnel may not have access to or may be prohibited from sharing certain information. Even military commanders, up to the highest level, can have limited authority to share information with external actors, based on the classification level.

If the decision about information sharing is at the discretion of the military commander, the primary criteria will be OpSec and military considerations, in particular in hostile environments or where the mandate includes the use of force. The willingness to share information will be based on trust and on clear communication by humanitarian actors what information they need and for which purpose, and how it will be used. Try to avoid depending on the military for data that is time sensitive and has not been shared before.

When requesting data or information, articulate the desired outcome instead of requesting raw data. For example, imagery of mountain passes is of use to humanitarians in determining when passes might close. Instead of asking for imagery, ask for a forecast of when the passes will close or no longer be accessible by a particular mode of transportation. In some cases, raw data is required for humanitarian analysis. For example, data analysis performed by the military concerning health conditions may aggregate factors and omit details that would be valuable to humanitarian needs assessments. Seek to routinely gain access to both raw data and analyzed data reports.

**How to avoid miscommunication?** As CMCoord Officer, it is crucial to understand the language and reference systems of civilian and military, international and local actors to ensure counterparts communicate effectively.



One example is the use of geographical references: Most military organizations use the Universal Transverse Mercator (UTM) grid system while most commercial GPS work in longitude and latitude. Also, military forces might define “sectors” as their own geographical reference, while humanitarian actors use the national administrative units. Places may have many names and spellings in the different native languages. Keep a list, as most incident information received from local sources will reference local names.

### Communication Tools

A good practice developed by CMCoord Officers over the past years is the development and distribution of **top tip cards**. While the resources for training in-country might be limited and pre-deployment training does not always include humanitarian considerations, it might be helpful to distribute the key humanitarian messages on short and comprehensible cards. These may include:

- Humanitarian principles.
- Context-specific key considerations for civil-military interaction.
- Key messages to “do no harm” in the communities.
- The points of the mandate relevant to engagement with humanitarian assistance (area security, PoC, assistance tasks).
- Some ground rules of dialogue with humanitarian actors.
- Information requirements and what information is available from humanitarians.
- Contact details.

For most humanitarian emergencies a webspace is created on the <http://www.humanitarianresponse.info/home> website. This website is dedicated to the exchange of operational information for the response community. Here, all SitReps, maps, assessment data, reports, meeting minutes, dates and location of meetings, as well as contact data for organizations and staff members, such as cluster coordinators, can be found. Military officers are often not aware of these open sources. It is crucial for the CMCoord Officer to use this resource: The CMCoord Officer has the authority to create a space where relevant information can be shared, such as: contact information; guidelines; coordination meetings and other operational information.

**The Virtual OSOCC (V-OSOCC):** The V-OSOCC is particularly important in the first hours/days of a response operation. The UNDAC system exchanges information here and all contact data are automatically displayed. An account is required.

**ReliefWeb.int:** The site has reports and research from the global response community.

**Humanitarian Kiosk app:** This app for phones or tablets keeps the user updated with the latest key documents for selected emergencies. Documents are then available offline.

**Humanitarian ID** is a single contact management app for everyone working in

humanitarian crises and disasters. Responders can “check-in” to any crisis and provide locally relevant contact details and check-out thereby removing all details. This gives responders access to the contact information of other responding entities to facilitate coordination. Be sure to check-in and encourage **key military counter-parts** to check in. Upon departure users can check-out and be removed from the active contact lists for that disaster.

## 6.2 Task Division

If the strategy is cooperation, there might be **joint planning** processes, e.g. in some integrated missions or through invitation of military actors in the humanitarian coordination forum to inform **task division** and ensure consistency of efforts. Even in situations where a co-existence strategy is adopted, humanitarian actors might have to discuss task division with military actors who have a protection mandate.

Assistance can be divided into three categories based on the degree of contact with the affected population. These categories are important because they help define which types of humanitarian activities might be appropriate to support with foreign military resources under different conditions, given that ample consultation has been conducted with all concerned parties to explain the nature and necessity of the assistance.

- **Direct assistance** is the face-to-face distribution of goods and services.
- **Indirect assistance** is at least one step removed from the population and involves such activities as transporting relief goods or humanitarian personnel.
- **Infrastructure support** involves providing general services, such as road repair, airspace management and power generation that facilitate relief, but are not necessarily visible to or solely for the benefit of the affected population.

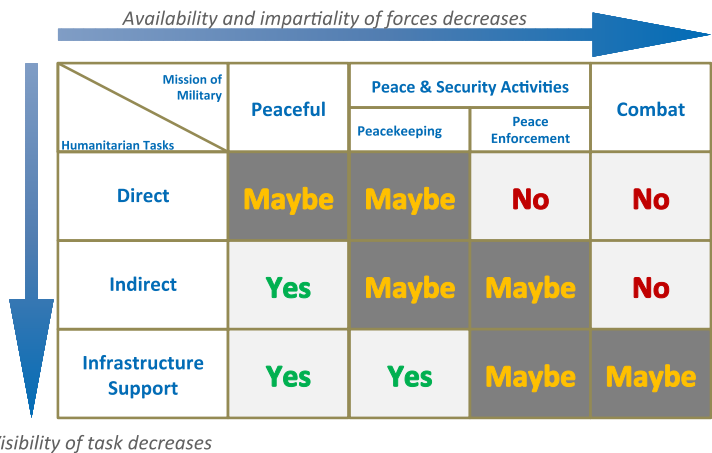


Figure 9: Appropriate Relief Tasks of Military Actors

This matrix depicts the appropriate use of MCDA drawn from other deployed forces to support UN humanitarian activities under most conditions. UN-MCDA that has been brought under UN control and is properly marked may be used more freely, in most situations.

### 6.3 Planning

Military and humanitarian **planning** processes are very different in nature and timeframe. Humanitarian planning varies according to the phase of an emergency. CMCoord needs to identify the information required to inform the respective planning processes – ideally well in advance – and establish the preconditions and mechanisms to exchange this information. A common operational picture – *who does what, where, and until when* – is crucial to avoid duplication and maximize aid effectiveness.

The coordination mechanisms must establish how military actors and information retrieved from military sources are included in the humanitarian planning process, i.e. the Multi-Sector Inter-Agency Rapid Assessment (MIRA), drafting of strategic statements, cluster and inter-cluster coordination and further steps of the Humanitarian Programme Cycle.





**Cost planning:** Appeals should be drafted without taking into account potential FMA deployment, to avoid dependence on FMA. FMA should be provided at no cost. Armed escorts and protection activities that are within the mandate of a peacekeeping operation must be budgeted under the regular UN budget. There is no possibility to refinance military activities through humanitarian financing sources.

The main areas in which planning overlaps are different in natural disasters and complex emergencies, but may include security management, medical evacuation, logistics, transport, infrastructure and engineering, communications, information management, and PoC. CMCoord mechanisms should include coordination arrangements with regards to logistics, security management and protection.

Information required for military planning includes the location of humanitarian actors to de-conflict military campaigns and humanitarian movements, population movements and location of vulnerable people to avoid collateral damage and support PoC, humanitarian requirements for infrastructure support or indirect assistance and, first and foremost, security information.

## 7. Shared Responsibility: Roles and Tasks

CMCoord facilitates a **coherent** and **consistent humanitarian approach** to civil-military interaction, enhancing a broad understanding of humanitarian action, and guiding political and military actors on how best to support it. CMCoord has **five main tasks**, which are carried out by different actors as a **shared responsibility**. The specific activities that fall under each task depend on the context. Chapters V and VI give detailed guidance on the activities in natural disasters and complex emergencies.

### 1. Establish and sustain dialogue with military forces.

The first step is to **assess** the environment in which humanitarians operate: map actors, identify overlap and possible areas of cooperation, as well as risks, and ultimately define **CMCoord objectives** and related activities. The second step is to build networks, connect actors and sensitize them to mutual mandates, principles, activities and capabilities. Conducting **CMCoord training** for government, military and humanitarian actors is crucial to this end.

### 2. Establish a mechanism for information exchange and humanitarian action with military forces and other armed groups.

The humanitarian community must determine the basic strategy and a coherent and consistent approach towards interaction with military actors and the use of foreign and/or national military assets. The OCHA office and CMCoord personnel establish an appropriate **CMCoord mechanism**, liaison and/or **de-confliction arrangements** with national and/or foreign military actors, as necessary. This includes establishing links to all humanitarian actors and coordination bodies, as well as appropriate staffing and training within all organizations involved.

### *3. Critical areas of negotiation.*

The humanitarian community advocates for humanitarian principles vis-à-vis government and military actors. CMCoord aspects are relevant with regards to the use of (foreign) military assets in support of humanitarian operations, respect for humanitarian principles and mandates while coordinating with military actors, and humanitarian access.

### *4. Development and dissemination of context-specific guidance for the interaction of the humanitarian community with the military.*

The development of country-specific guidance on humanitarian civil-military interaction is crucial to ensure a **coherent** and **consistent humanitarian approach** to civil-military interaction within the humanitarian community. This includes providing timely guidance on the use of foreign and/or national military assets to support humanitarian operations.

### *5. Monitor activity of military forces and ensure no negative impact on humanitarian community.*

This might include training and sensitization activities for armed forces and actors, raising awareness for humanitarian standards, principles and the “do no harm” concept, influencing military SOPs, and lobbying for a civil-military distinction.

## **7.1 OCHA**

CMCoord is an integral component of OCHA’s coordination function. The respective **OCHA Policy Instruction** underlines that all OCHA staff have a role to play in and a responsibility to be conversant with CMCoord. Activities should be conducted by trained and competent staff, meaning each country or regional office should name a CMCoord focal point. This can be a dedicated **CMCoord Officer**, or, where appropriate, a designated and properly trained, generalist Humanitarian Affairs Officer.

**CMCS** offers training at the regional and country level, **field support** through technical advice and capacity, and field missions. CMCoord Officers are also available through the different surge mechanisms of UNDAC, ERR, ASP and SBPP. CMCS carries out the CMCoord function at the global level:

- **Policy:** As custodian of CMCoord-related guidelines, CMCS brings together Member States, humanitarian and military actors to develop and implement guidance. It also supports humanitarian actors to develop context-specific guidance tailored to a particular emergency.
- **Partnerships:** CMCS has a worldwide partnership network and Community of Practice, maintains dialogue with headquarters and Member States and represents CMCoord in global fora.
- **Training:** CMCS runs a global training programme that equips humanitarian and military actors with the skills and knowledge necessary to communicate and, where appropriate, effectively interact with each other.
- **Advocacy:** CMCS advises the international community on humanitarian needs related to deploying foreign MCDA in support of relief operations or humanitarian assistance. This takes place through an advocacy strategy that complements and supports discussions up to the USG/ERC level, coupled with the publication of operational guidance to the international community.

**OCHA Country and Regional Offices** support the HC to establish and maintain a common, coherent and consistent approach within the humanitarian community in its interaction with military actors and use of foreign and/or national military assets. This should be adequately reflected in terms of staffing, performance frameworks and cost plans.

The role of country and regional offices is not limited to coordination in an actual emergency situation, but starts in preparedness:

- **Liaise** with the headquarters of regional organizations (not covered by OCHA Liaison Offices) at the strategic and policy level, to promote adherence to existing guidelines, and contribute to building capacity for civil-military relations.
- As appropriate, participate in **military exercises** and **pre-deployment training** of national and regional military forces.
- Ensure that civil-military coordination information is included in **information products** (maps, SitReps, etc.)

- Ensure that the necessary **CMCoord human resources** are available to implement the above-mentioned tasks.
- Conduct a **CMCoord assessment** and analysis of the civil-military environment (through CMCoord focal point or with support from CMCS or OCHA's Surge Capacity Section).

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[OCHA Policy Instruction on UN-CMCoord](#)

[OCHA Policy Instruction for Country Offices](#)

Each OCHA office should identify a **CMCoord Officer** or **Focal Point** as adviser on to the HC civil-military relations. The OCHA office/CMCoord Officer is the focal point for all matters related to civil-military coordination, including policy and guidelines, in close consultation with the HC. The CMCoord Officer will support all functions as mentioned above and in particular

- **Connect** with senior military officers in international and national military forces, military liaison officers, relevant government institutions and local authorities, security forces, UN agencies, civilian UN mission staff, and NGOs in the area of responsibility.
- **Sensitize** military commanders and forces on humanitarian principles and coordination mechanisms.
- Establish and maintain **dialogue with humanitarian actors and clusters** in the area of responsibility to provide information channels, and raise issues and concerns with relevant military/paramilitary organizations.
- Connect and bring together the right military and humanitarian actors and **facilitate their dialogue**.
- Establish **CMCoord mechanisms** and **tools** for information exchange as required, e.g. CMCoord cells, internet platforms, FMA request and tracking mechanisms.
- Lead the development of **country-specific guidance** and ensure that they are properly disseminated and understood by humanitarian actors and military forces, as well as local actors.
- Identify **CMCoord training** needs of humanitarian actors and military forces, design a training strategy and materials, and organize and conduct training events.

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Terms of Reference for [P-3](#) and [P-4](#) CMCoord Officers.

## 7.2 HC and HCT

It is the responsibility of the HC to identify a **coherent** and **consistent humanitarian approach** to civil-military interaction. To this end, the HC will work closely with the HCT, with support from the OCHA office. As representative of the humanitarian community vis-à-vis the national government and UN political or peacekeeping missions, the HC advocates for humanitarian principles and guides political and military actors on how best to support – or not compromise – that action. The HC does the following:

- Decides on the use of MCDA and armed escorts.
- Leads the development of related guidelines and promotes them vis-à-vis political and military actors.

A triple-hatted DSRSG/RC/HC in an integrated UN mission ensures that UN integration supports aid effectiveness without compromising principled humanitarian action.

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[Handbook for RCs and HCs on Emergency Preparedness and Response](#)

## 7.3 Clusters and Humanitarian Organizations

CMCoord is understood as a shared responsibility within the humanitarian community. UN agencies, cluster lead agencies, NGO and NGO consortia might establish direct liaison with military counterparts relevant to their mandate and activities. CMCoord facilitates these activities as required by connecting focal points, providing platforms for information sharing, helping to validate and prioritize requests and match them with available resources. The CMCoord approach aims at finding a common and coherent approach to civil-military coordination and interaction, through the HCT. Humanitarian actors are responsible for the implementation of this approach in their own activities or as cluster leads.

- The **Logistics Cluster** coordinates closely with military units, particularly transport assets, to support humanitarian logistics operations.
- **WFP** as Logistics Cluster lead and main logistics actor may also deploy their own civil-military logistics liaison personnel, often with a strong technical background, to coordinate with military and civil defence/protection personnel on specific logistics related activities.
- The **Protection Cluster** plays an important role to coordinate protection activities of military and humanitarian actors. It can validate and

channel reports about threats to civilians and ensure that appropriate action is taken.

- **UNHCR** as Protection Cluster lead maintains close dialogue with military actors when it comes to camp management, IDP movements and refugee registration and movements.
- Other **clusters** and **humanitarian organizations**, might need to coordinate with military actors carrying out their own civil affairs activities or to seek support from military units. **Inter-cluster coordination** ensures prioritization and coordination of requests, to ensure that the limited military capabilities are used most effectively.
- **NGOs** often maintain their own relations with military forces and might have their own approach. **NGO consortia** can play an important role to ensure that the approach of the humanitarian community reflects NGOs needs and opinions and to promote adherence to the common approach by individual NGOs.

## 8. Global Training Programme and Resources

CMCS runs a **global training programme** for humanitarian and military actors, to equip them with the skills and knowledge to communicate and, where appropriate, effectively interact with each other. It also offers preparation trainings and briefings for CMCoord Officers and focal points in the field. CMCS also has as a **reach-back** function for OCHA offices and CMCoord Officers.

UN-CMCoord Global Training Programme
<b>IMPACT:</b> An eLearning tool on the basic concepts of CMCoord.
<b>Familiarization courses:</b> A short familiarization measure tailored to a country or context. This does not replace the CMCoord Course.
<b>CMCoord Course:</b> These one-week basic courses are offered for humanitarian and military staff. They often have a regional focus to bring together participants from one region, or can be delivered as <b>in-country courses</b> tailored to the context.
<b>CMCoord eLearning Course (USIP):</b> This course is designed in conjunction with this handbook and aimed at CMCoord practitioners. It has a more practical focus and adds on to the CMCoord course, in preparation for the CMCoord Field Course.
<b>CMCoord Field Course:</b> Aims to prepare practitioners, including CMCoord Officers and focal points, to directly or indirectly support the CMCoord effort and be prepared for possible deployments, which include establishing the function from scratch.
<b>SHARED Course:</b> The SHARED course is designed for military forces to provide them with an understanding of humanitarian action and CMCoord.

**Global UN-CMCoord Skills Workshop (by invitation only):** An annual workshop for active CMCoord practitioners to exchange experiences and best practices.

The **CMCoord training calendar** is frequently updated and can be found at <http://www.unocha.org/what-we-do/coordination-tools/UN-CMCoord/training-partnerships>

### UN-CMCoord Global Resources

CMCS maintains a virtual dialogue platform for humanitarian civil-military issues, with up-to-date information, training material and events: <https://tinyurl.com/HMDDialogue>

OCHA information on CMCoord, including links to global, and country and organization-specific guidance: <http://www.unocha.org/uncmcoord/>

Pre-/post-deployment briefings, reach-back function, technical support: [cmcs@un.org](mailto:cmcs@un.org)

Surge capacity: E.g. for assessments, after action reviews and lessons learnt or specific CMCoord tasks. See Chapter II.8.4 for the different surge pools available.

All guidelines and sources linked in this handbook are available via the hyperlinks in the text.

## Chapter V: UN-CMCoord in Natural Disasters

Building on the concepts described in Chapter IV, Chapter V describes **how** to share information, plan and divide tasks in a natural disaster context. It provides detailed guidance for the implementation the **five CMCoord tasks**.

- ✓ How to **assess** the civil-military environment in a natural disaster, identify a **strategy** and establish and sustain **dialogue** with military forces.
- ✓ How to establish **mechanisms for information exchange**, including requests for assistance (RFA), with military forces in natural disaster contexts and how to design **coordination arrangements**.
- ✓ How to link into **humanitarian coordination**, e.g. **clusters** and **inter-cluster coordination**.
- ✓ What **tools** and examples are available for coordination and information management.
- ✓ What are critical areas of **negotiation** and **advocacy**.
- ✓ How to draft **country-specific guidance** in natural disaster contexts.
- ✓ Other potential CMCoord tasks include in-country and pre-deployment **training** and **preparedness** activities.
- ✓ How to coordinate the use of **UN-MCDA** and **FMA**.
- ✓ What are the linkages to **logistics**.

The last part of the chapter includes considerations on how to adapt the approach in a natural disaster that occurs in a complex emergency setting.

**C**onduct a rapid and continuing assessment of military actors who are already involved/deployed/about to deploy to the affected areas/country. Ensure that their mandate, mission and lines of command and control are known and the implications are understood by the HCT.

**M**onitor the civil-military environment in terms of the mission, size and capability of military actors, geographic areas they cover, the likely duration of their operation, liaison arrangements and key contacts and be ready to advise.

**C**reate a civil-military coordination mechanism that is appropriate to the operational environment if not yet in existence. Ensure that humanitarian organizations and



military can share information, agree on tasks and, as appropriate, plan jointly. If required, this mechanism can include an RFA process to prioritize FMA requests to support humanitarian priorities as certified by cluster leads.

**O**bserve and analyse the need for longer-term CMCoord capacity. Validate the key tasks and deliverables with the other Humanitarian Affairs/CMCoord Officers.

**O**rganize key military contacts identifying who is doing what, where and (until) when (4W). This includes key contacts like liaison officers, Commanders, Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) Officers, etc. Update regularly. Share with relevant actors (e.g. cluster coordinators) and, as appropriate, with government entities (e.g. disaster/emergency management authorities, ministries and armed forces).

**R**emember that the overarching deliverable of the CMCoord function is to facilitate the right assistance to the right people at the right time in the most appropriate way.

**D**evelop a CMCoord strategy in conjunction with the broader humanitarian coordination strategy. CMCoord is and will always be a subset of the broader humanitarian coordination in an emergency.

**T**ake the initiative in identifying and monitoring on-going and potential critical issues in terms of the use of FMA and participation of military representatives in relevant clusters. Proactively advice clusters on CMCoord-related issues.

**I**nformation sharing between humanitarian and military actors should contribute to having a common situational awareness as the response operation progresses.

**P**repare a prioritized list of operational CMCoord issues, including resolved, outstanding, and anticipated issues. Indicate factors that helped or hindered in resolving these issues and/or factors that might trigger future issues. Ensure that CMCS is informed of these issues.

**S**et up a handover with the longer-term OCHA presence or the HC office to ensure continuity of the CMCoord function.

**Table 11: UN-CMCoord Tips**

## 1. UN-CMCoord Assessment in Natural Disasters

The CMCoord deployment or assignment starts with an **assessment** and **definition** of the **operational environment**. If OCHA is present in-country, this is ideally conducted in the preparedness phase and regularly updated. If deploying to a context where there is no CMCoord assessment available, the assessment starts at pre-deployment with the establishment of contacts at the global level and analysis of secondary data.



Seek assistance from CMCS.

A comprehensive understanding and situational awareness of the operating environment helps to identify common priorities, opportunities, and challenges of civil-military relations in natural disaster contexts.

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[Guidance note for conducting UN-CMCoord assessments](#)

As a **first step**, identify relevant actors and stakeholders and determine their missions, mandates and capacity. This includes national civilian and military as well as foreign civilian and military actors.

	National	Foreign
Civilian	Ministries and governments agencies, national and local Disaster Management Authorities, local authorities, national and local NGOs, community-based groups, National Red Cross or Red Crescent Society, religious organizations, private sector, health & service providers.	UN agencies, UN mission, representatives of partner countries, as donors and their agencies, international and regional organizations, components of the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, international NGOs, private sector.
Military	National armed forces and paramilitary structures, border and customs, security forces.	Foreign forces stationed in the country or region or with bilateral military agreements, UN or regional peacekeeping operations.
+	National, regional and local police and armed groups.	UN Police, private security companies, others.

Table 12: Map of Potential Civil-Military Actors

As a **second step**, analyse their relations to each other and existing liaison and coordination tools. This includes national civil-military coordination,

“mil-mil” coordination between the host nation military and foreign military forces, among eight other possible types of interaction:

#### Priority Mapping of Relationships

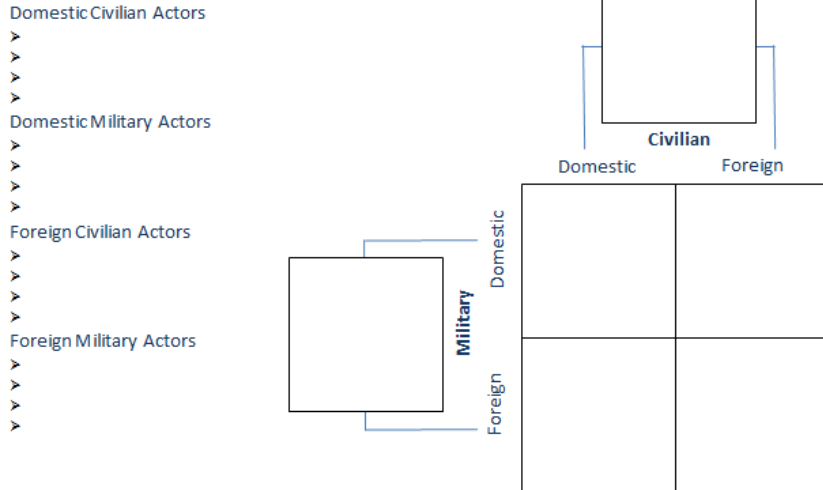


Figure 10: Analyse Civil-Military Relations

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When an UNDAC team deploys in an environment where interaction with military forces is imminent, it should include a CMCoord Officer or focal point. The [UNDAC Handbook step-by-step assessment](#) is a helpful reference in situations where there is no OCHA office.

Identify focal points for CMCoord within the civilian and military communities. To ensure that you take stock of all actors, a good practice is to maintain a **CMCoord stakeholders contact database (3Ws/4Ws)**.

#### CMCoord Stakeholders Contact Database

- ☐ List the contacts of focal points in local authorities, disaster responders and humanitarian organizations, including NGOs, embassies, and the military.
- ☐ Use an Excel Sheet template.
- ☐ Staff turnover is usually high in emergency contexts. Keep the database up-to-date and documented for handover.
- ☐ Ask support from **OCHA Information Management** colleagues to provide

contacts and developing and/or maintaining the database.

- ☐ Use available tools like the **Humanitarian ID** app (see Chapter IV). Encourage all contacts to check in and out the Humanitarian ID contact list.
  - ☐ Create a space in the [humanitarianinfo.org](https://humanitarianinfo.org) domain and include key contacts.
  - ☐ Create participants lists at relevant meetings.
- Seek the possibility to brief coordination platforms, including the HCT, inter-cluster coordination and relevant cluster meetings. Collect key contacts and leave your contact details.
- ☐ Actively maintain contacts through attendance at meetings, bilateral meetings and informal channels.

## 2. Coordination Arrangements in Natural Disasters

The CMCoord assessment helps to determine the basic strategy and coordination agreement. In a natural disaster in peacetime, **cooperation** is the default CMCoord strategy and **coordination** in terms of information sharing, task division and planning are required for effective and efficient response. “Co-location” is the default liaison arrangement to support a “cooperation strategy.”

National armed forces are often the first responders to natural disasters, in particular in remote and hard-to-reach areas. In recent large-scale natural disasters, foreign military forces have been increasingly involved in response operations. Where affected states requested, welcomed or accepted international assistance, including FMA, humanitarian organizations inevitably interacted with them.

This trend creates significant need for coordination, particularly in optimizing the use of FMA. These FMA are mostly deployed bilaterally and not on a specific request for UN-MCDA. CMCoord is crucial to communicate humanitarian priorities and ensure that FMA meet actual humanitarian gaps. Military capacities can bridge response gaps, in particular within the first days of a disaster, in terms of:

- **Logistics** (transport, air and seaport management, warehousing, commercial transport information, etc.)
- **Engineering** to restore critical infrastructure and clear main supply routes.
- **Telecommunications** (e.g. satellite-based voice and data).

- **Information exchange** (assessment information, priorities in terms of services and locations, potential gaps within estimated timeframes).
- **Health** (MedEvac, specific capacity).

Despite the requirement of coordination, CMCoord must ensure that the interaction with military actors does not compromise humanitarian principles of neutrality, impartiality and operational independence. Military actors should also be made aware that humanitarian assistance must be civilian in character and be provided on the basis of needs alone. It does not harm to remind responding military actors that needs are assessed based on humanitarian criteria and should not be based on political considerations or media attention.

While FMA can fill a critical gap at the onset of a natural disaster, they might drawdown long before the humanitarian response ends. While the usual end state of the military mission is a situation in which civilian capacities can take over, the aim of humanitarian assistance is to restore normalcy within affected communities. This could come in the form of pre-disaster standards or more resilient communities. Humanitarians must plan for the projected timeframe of the relief operations independent of military support, which is temporary in nature and serves only as a stop-gap measure.



**Immediately develop an exit and transition strategy:** Ask FMA commanders to clearly communicate the end of their deployment (this might require de-classification from their side) to ensure humanitarian assistance can be carried out without military support and military relief activities are taken over by civilian actors. Humanitarians, through the clusters, must develop their transition plans for the eventual re-deployment or drawdown of military forces.

Involvement of armed forces in counter-insurgency or other military operations can affect their acceptance within the civilian population, even if those operations take place in non-affected areas or neighbouring countries. If this is not the case or the risk for humanitarians to be associated with military objectives is rated as very low, humanitarian actors will likely adopt a **co-location strategy**.

## 2.1 Humanitarian-Military Operations Coordination Centre

The **Humanitarian-Military Operations Coordination Centre (HuMOCC)** provides a predictable humanitarian-military coordination platform in large-scale natural disasters. It is a rapid response coordination tool to

complement existing coordination arrangements. It should be established in the immediate aftermath of large-scale natural disasters, ideally before the arrival of FMA. It provides a physical space dedicated to facilitating the interface between humanitarian and military actors, complementing the OSOCC and the national/sub-national level disaster management authority operations centres.

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#### The HuMOCC Aims to Deliver the Following Services

- ☐ Provide a predictable and effective coordination mechanism on the ground.
  - ☐ Avoid the establishment of ad-hoc and/or intermediate civil-military coordination platforms that create duplication and confusion.
  - ☐ Facilitate access to assessment results, including priorities, needs, and requirements, including the use of military assets.
  - ☐ Contribute to establishing a needs-based system to match the requirements with appropriate military assets.
  - ☐ Advise, as timely as possible, on appropriate FMA to be deployed into the affected state and priority locations.
  - ☐ Contribute to creating a common situational awareness among all actors responding to the disaster in a coherent and systematic manner.
  - ☐ Facilitate effective and consistent sharing of information between humanitarian and military actors.
  - ☐ Raise awareness among humanitarian organizations and military actors of the CMCoord function.
  - ☐ Enhance mutual understanding of operations and requirements.
  - ☐ Develop an exit strategy for drawdown of military assets. This includes planning for the transition from military to civilian assets and realistic indicators and benchmarks, including evaluation criteria.
  - ☐ Provide an adequate number and geographic coverage of trained CMCoord Officers. (This includes adequate language and technical knowledge.)
  - ☐ Advocate for institutionalised pre-disaster training and doctrine development among military forces deployed in disaster response. If time permits, this can include orientations and briefings on CMCoord.
- 

HuMOCC will serve as a one-stop shop for information sharing, task division and planning between military and humanitarian actors, particularly the clusters. Its main purpose is to help fill the gaps in humanitarian capacity identified and prioritized by the OSOCC, HCT or clusters, with military capabilities.

It is best led by the affected state's NDMA, with the support of CMCoord Officers. The scope of CMCoord involvement will depend on the capacity of the NDMA. Sub-national DMAs might require more support. However, in the event of lack or absence of capacity on the side of the NDMA or sub-national DMAs, CMCoord Officers stand ready to run the HuMOCC in support of the government with the latter's consent. The HuMOCC should operate while foreign military forces are present and scale-down upon drawdown and redeployment of foreign military forces. Outstanding tasks should be handed over to national and sub-national DMAs.

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[HuMOCC for natural disasters](#)

## 2.2 Evolution of the HuMOCC

A **Joint Operations and Tasking Centre (JOTC)** was established in Haiti 12 days after the earthquake in January 2010 to streamline requests for (military) assistance (RFA). All RFA had to be channelled through the JOTC and cluster leads were responsible for certifying them and to ensure that available FMA were used to support humanitarian priorities. Planning was strengthened by encouraging a 72-hours lead time for RFA.

The JOTC concept was further refined into a coordination platform that can be rolled out in natural disaster response operations, flexible enough to be modified to suit the context. It has been referred to generically as the Civil-Military Coordination Centre (CMCC) and later re-named the Humanitarian-Military Operations Coordination Centre (HuMOCC) to highlight the humanitarian character of the coordination platform.

### Link into Humanitarian Coordination

- ☐ Regular meetings with the HC (adapt frequency depending on the context).  
Seek invitation to and the opportunity to brief the HCT and meet Heads of
- ☐ Agencies, international organizations and international NGOs bilaterally, as required.
- ☐ Attend inter-cluster coordination meeting.
- ☐ Attend specific cluster meetings (e.g. logistics, protection) based on CMCoord priorities. See Chapter II for cluster system.
- ☐ Meet cluster coordinators to exchange CMCoord practices.
- ☐ Establish early contact with national and international NGOs and NGO consortia,

including those outside the cluster system.

- ☐ Offer one-on-one briefs, group briefs and workshops.
- ☐ Actively explore informal networks of humanitarian actors.
- ☐ Contact other relevant stakeholders – e.g. Human Rights, Gender Advisors.

### Co-Location Strategy: Typhoon Haiyan, Philippines, 2013



My name is Major Michael Percy; I am an officer in the Canadian Armed Forces. I am posted to the 1st Canadian Division Headquarters and one of my duties is Deputy Commander of Canada's Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART). That is a group that the Government of Canada maintains for responding to natural disasters. It's drawn from military units across the country with 12 to 48 hour notice. Our most recent deployment was to Typhoon Haiyan, or Yolanda, as locals called it, in the Philippines.

We were ordered out by the Government of Canada on 10 November 2013 and our first people arrived in the Philippines two days later, with full operational capability of approximately 320 personnel reached on 18 November. The DART encompasses an engineering platoon, a medical platoon, defence and security platoon, plus a small cadre to support ourselves and an aviation element (in this case three helicopters).

Our main focus was on Tacloban and we deployed to Panay Island. No external assistance had yet arrived in Panay, we were actually in there before most of the NGOs. The UNDAC team had arrived and coordinated the use of the provincial capitol's legislative hall in Roxas, Capiz Province, offered by the provincial government. Once we would hit our full stride we had the DART headquarters at one end and OCHA set up at the other end with the NGOs in between us which facilitated coordination quite well. Initially, we were taking requests for assistance (RFA) directly from NGOs. Most requests were about helicopter support. Eventually, requests for military assistance got channelled through OCHA, for proper coordination.

Overall I think it worked very well, it was a good example of how military and civilian actors can coordinate in a natural disaster situation. Military's mandate, at least the Canadian's military mandate, is specifically to get in quickly and fill the gap between the affected nation's first response and when the civilian humanitarian agencies can take over completely. For us that means anywhere from approximately 30 to 40 days – about six weeks in the Philippines.

Through the time that we were there, the coordination went very well, more or less with different agencies. We delivered considerable amounts of food and construction materials for WFP, IOM and a number of NGOs, and as we reached near the end of our mandate we were able to provide them with information on what we had done, as well as areas that still might need help. In the last week we surged up supplies to remote areas in which it would take longer to get into without air lift capacity, to ensure they



were covered with food and materials until NGOs could push their way there via roads. When we pulled out, my understanding is that things continued to work well and that the NGOs have a good handle on it. The ERC has mentioned that in her view Panay Island was a good example of how to do UN Civilian-Military Cooperation – so we are quite proud of that! We don't know when the DART would go again, as that is up to the Government of Canada, but we look forward to helping out in the future. Thank you!

### 3. Information Management in Natural Disasters

In natural disasters, the following are the most relevant types of information that may, at the discretion of the relevant organization or cluster, be shared between humanitarian and military actors:

- Presence, capabilities and assets of military forces, including the time and scale of their Full Operating Capability and the end of deployment.
- Requirements of military support for humanitarian assistance.
- Relief activities undertaken by the military and assessment results.
- Humanitarian assessment data, strategic response plans and gaps, ongoing humanitarian activities and coordination structures.
- Status of main supply routes and key infrastructures.
- Population movements or potential security threats resulting from the natural disaster.

#### Information Sharing Tools

- ☐ Humanitarian operational information is shared openly online. Make military counterparts aware of the open sources (mainly humanitarianinfo.org; others like [reliefweb.int](http://reliefweb.int), the Humanitarian Kiosk app, Humanitarian ID app might be also useful to them) and encourage them to share their own data.
- ☐ Keep the humanitarian community up to date: provide short CMCoord briefings in HCT, inter-cluster coordination meetings, relevant cluster coordination meetings, and convene regular “open-door” CMCoord network meetings.
- ☐ Create CMCoord page on the humanitarianinfo.org domain. Share contact details and the time, place and minutes of meetings.
- ☐ Keep contacts up to date. Brief bilaterally as required.
- ☐ Map available FMA; seek the assistance of IM colleagues in the country or regional offices.

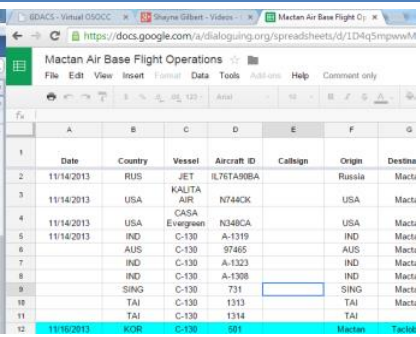
- Make agreements for unclassified e-mail communication, 24/7 availability and standard communication with military counterparts.

The role of the CMCoord Officer is to facilitate civil-military interaction. This includes support to cluster leads and the HCT to validating and analysing information and prioritizing RFAs. One of the key information management tasks is filtering, screening and following up on civilian/humanitarian requests for MCDA.

The CMCoord Officer can establish an **RFA** process flow to help humanitarian actors prioritize requests for military assets and allow military forces to plan accordingly. In this process, requests for military assets by NGOs and other humanitarian organizations are gathered. This allows prioritization by clusters and inter-cluster coordination against humanitarian priorities and facilitates the matching of needs with available resources. Humanitarian and military actors should be encouraged to channel all requests for and provision of military support through this system.

Some thematic clusters, if activated, for example the Logistics Cluster or Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) may also establish dedicated specific coordination mechanisms for specialized MCDA, i.e. an Aviation Coordination Cell to coordinate military air assets as part of a wider pool of available air assets, commercial or humanitarian.

Good Practice: A Tool for Tracking FMA



	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1	Date	Country	Vessel	Aircraft ID	Callign	Origin	Destination
2	11/14/2013	RUS	JET	IL76TA908A		Russia	Mact
3	11/14/2013	USA	KALITA	N744CK		USA	Mact
4	11/14/2013	USA	CASA	Evergreen N340CA		USA	Mact
5	11/14/2013	IND	C-130	A-1319		IND	Mact
6		AUS	C-130	97465		AUS	Mact
7		IND	C-130	A-1323		IND	Mact
8		IND	C-130	A-1308		IND	Mact
9		SING	C-130	731		SING	Mact
10		TAI	C-130	1313		TAI	Mact
11		TAI	C-130	1314		TAI	Mact
12	11/16/2013	KOR	C-130	501		Mact	Mact

In response to Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines, 2013, the Armed Forces of the Philippines used a simple Google Sheet to plan, organize and track relief flights into disaster-affected areas. The virtual collaboration on flight data was extended to sea assets at a later stage.

The data was shared publicly online and thus could be used by all stakeholders. The matrix was displayed on a screen in the sub-national operations centres.

CMCoord Officers followed this example of sharing information on a collaborative platform to share and collect data on the use of FMA. This allowed real-time communication, ensuring all stakeholders had access, and significantly reduced e-mail communication. In addition, this tool is highly transparent and contributes to accountability.

The procedure can easily be put in place from anywhere in the world, using a Gmail account. It can be put at the disposal of the field operation or managed from the headquarters for collecting, reviewing, updating FMA data. Ask CMCS for support. With consent of the host nation, a virtual tracking system can be expanded to national military forces.

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<http://tinyurl.com/philippinesfmatracking>

<http://tinyurl.com/mactanairbaseflighttracking>

### 3.1 Information Management Products

Liaise with the **Information Management Unit** in the OCHA office or OSOCC to determine the available and appropriate tools for information sharing. There are several standard information products, such as SitReps, maps and visuals. Make use of these products to share relevant CMCoord information and ensure that relevant military activities and locations are documented or reported.

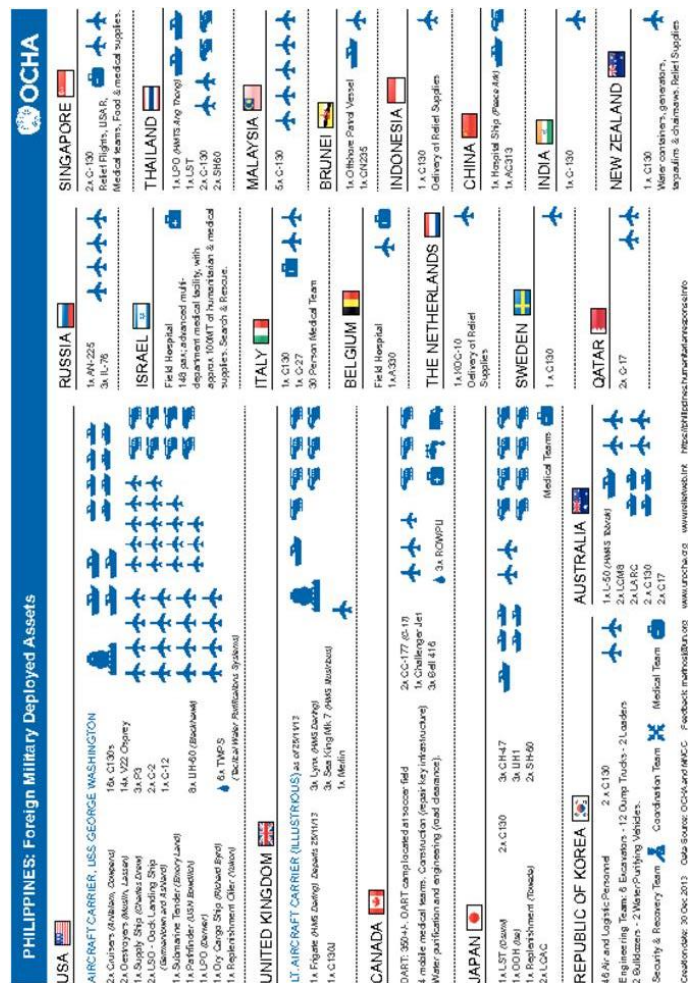


Figure 11: An Example of an OCHA Visual on FMA in the Philippines in 2013

### Top Tips: Briefing the Military

- ☐ Identify the right level and contact for the briefing. For specific humanitarian topics, seek support from technical experts and cluster coordinators/leads, as needed.
- ☐ Are decisions required? If so, it might be required to address the Commander directly. Seek support from the OCHA Head of Office, if necessary.
- ☐ Define expected outcomes of the meeting and key messages.
- ☐ Keep it short, simple and direct to the point.
- ☐ Be specific and clear about terms and language. Keep watch for misconceptions that may arise from use of specialized vocabulary and acronyms. Common terms used by the military and civilians often have different meanings.
- ☐ Expect more informal questions in the margins/after the briefing.
- ☐ Provide reference document, such as Oslo Guidelines or country-specific guidance, the Guide for the Military, or operational information (SitReps, maps, response plans).
- ☐ Explain what resources, information and training opportunities are available from CMCoord and humanitarian actors.
- ☐ Be clear about when and why certain information is needed. Required information might be available, but not shared because of classification/OpSec. Arrange a follow-up meeting to allow military counterparts to seek declassification.
- ☐ Clearly communicate that humanitarian actors under no circumstances will share information that provides a tactical advantage to one armed actor.
- ☐ If briefing counterparts for the first time, use the opportunity to briefly introduce the humanitarian community, their principles, relevant guidelines, etc.
- ☐ Promote CMCoord as information gateway or the entry point to the international humanitarian community.
- ☐ Leave key contacts and other relevant IM products.

## 4. Advocacy and Advisory Role in Natural Disasters

It is the responsibility of the HC to identify a **coherent** and **consistent humanitarian approach** to civil-military interaction and the use of FMA to support humanitarian priorities. The OCHA office and CMCoord Officer support the HC and HCT to identify opportunities and challenges and develop a common strategy and position.

The Oslo Guidelines, as well as the 2008 version of the UN-CMCoord Field Officer Handbook, were developed assuming that the HC and HCT would

identify needs for military support and initiate an **MCDA request** through CMCS. This practice is still existent (see section 7 of Chapter V for details) but has become very rare.

The operational reality is that military assets are deployed by their governments directly upon request or acceptance of international assistance by the affected state. Given this trend, the advocacy and advisory role of CMCoord will focus on the following elements:

- **“Pull” rather than “push” in FMA:** To advocate with the governments that deploy FMA to ensure that they are used in the most appropriate and efficient way, i.e. to deploy the capabilities that are most needed and actually requested. This advocacy should happen at the global, regional and country levels, ideally done in the preparedness phase.
- **Aid effectiveness:** To liaise with Commanders of deployed FMA and advocate for their participation in humanitarian coordination, to ensure military actors complement the civilian effort and support humanitarian priorities. This could be done through the HuMOCC processes or by invitation to HCT or inter-cluster coordination meetings.
- **Principled humanitarian action:** To monitor military activities and provide advice on humanitarian principles, priorities and standards, including the “do no harm” concept.
- **Coherency:** To promote a coherent and consistent approach within the humanitarian community as regards interaction with the military and the use of FMA.

## 4.1 The Gap-fit Analysis

The **Consultative Group on UN-CMCoord** had asked a working group to examine and improve the predictability and appropriate use of military logistics assets as an enabling capacity on behalf of the humanitarian community. Under the lead of WFP and IFRC, the working group assessed the current practice in sudden-onset disasters.

A result of this process is the **gap-fit analysis tool** for logistic capacities. It identifies a number of potential logistics tasks to fill gaps in the humanitarian response and indicates how likely it is that these will be required. The generic **gap-fit analysis matrix** details logistics tasks, desired effects and scenarios in which these tasks would be relevant. It also

indicates the probability of this being required and potentially available capacities.



**What is required?** E.g. the probability that engineering capacity to restore infrastructure and clear main supply routes is required after large-scale earthquakes is moderate to high, especially as there is no humanitarian capacity available to do so and this is crucial for all following relief activities. Meanwhile the probability that military field hospitals are required is low to moderate, although a very popular measure. Strong civilian and humanitarian medical capacities exist.

Together with the **Logistics Capacity Assessments** for specific countries, this is a powerful tool to advise governments on which FMA to deploy and potentially where. The working group also developed guidance on “how to” deploy these tasks – see Chapter V.7

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<http://dlca.logcluster.org>

## 4.2 Country-Specific Guidance in Natural Disasters

Where natural disasters occur in peacetime, the Oslo Guidelines provide guidance on the proper deployment and use of foreign MCDA. Country-specific guidance might **not be required**. In this case, CMCoord Officers should focus on the dissemination of the Oslo Guidelines, advocate for compliance and offer respective training.

However, in most situations, country-specific guidance from the HC or the OCHA Head of Office will be provided to the CMCoord Officer. Reasons to provide such guidance in natural disasters may include:

- UN agencies and implementing partners on the ground have requested, or are likely to request, UN-MCDA.
- The affected state has requested assistance from the UN to coordinate international response and there are FMA deployments.
- The use of FMA by humanitarian actors could impact their neutrality and impartiality (or perception) in other countries or emergencies.

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The [guidance note on developing country-specific guidance](#) provides comprehensive assistance regarding their formulation and suggested structure.

**Step-by-Step Process for Developing Country-Specific CMCoord Guidance**

- ☐ Determine the need for country-specific guidance through the CMCoord assessment.
- ☐ Consult key humanitarian CMCoord stakeholders on a potential guidance note.
- ☐ Develop a draft guidance note, including awareness raising and a dissemination strategy, to ensure that the country-specific CMCoord guidance is widely circulated within the relevant civilian, humanitarian and military communities.
- ☐ Seek consensus on the draft guidance from relevant stakeholders.
- ☐ Make recommendations to the OCHA Head of Office, HC and HCT.
- ☐ Monitor awareness of and adherence to the guidance by all stakeholders, as well as the validity of the document.

**4.3 Monitor Activities Undertaken by the Military**

CMCoord should monitor military relief activities from two angles: **aid effectiveness** and **principled humanitarian action**. CMCoord promotes the complementarity of military activities with the overall humanitarian response, avoiding duplication and competition. Particular attention should be paid to the draw-down of FMA, to ensure a smooth transition from military support and direct assistance activities to civilian actors. Military actors involved in direct and indirect assistance may benefit from advice regarding humanitarian principles, standards and priorities.



**Identify issues and use available resources:** The humanitarian community can provide practical advice on the “do no harm” approach and exit strategies, including potentially negative, long-term and second and third order effects. Link military units to the right actors like Gender and Protection advisors.

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[SPHERE Standards](#)

[Code of Conduct for the ICRC and NGOs in Disaster Relief](#)

[UN-CMCoord Guide for the Military](#)

[Protection in Practice: Food Assistance with Safety and Dignity](#) (WFP)

**5. UN-CMCoord and Preparedness Planning**

Evaluations of recent operations have outlined the importance of CMCoord in the preparedness phase. Preparedness planning processes



may require inputs from CMCoord Officers, especially in identifying potential capacity gaps and available military capabilities and assets.

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#### **If there is an OCHA Regional or Country Office**

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- ☐ Establish civil-military dialogue in the preparedness phase.
  - ☐ Establish a working group within the humanitarian community (e.g. HCT).
  - ☐ Establish coordination platforms with military and national actors for joint preparedness activities and rapid activation in case of disasters.
  - ☐ Determine need for training and sensitization for humanitarians and military actors.
  - ☐ Include the interaction with national military actors in the country-specific CMCoord guidance.
  - ☐ Facilitate the participation of military actors in response exercises, if appropriate. If possible, inform the scenario development already.
  - ☐ Familiarize yourself with existing agreements with other states and foreign military entities, Status of Forces Agreements (SOFA), and such like.
- 

## **5.1 National Preparedness Activities**

If the national military has a role in disaster preparedness and response, dialogue needs to be established in the preparedness phase. The NDMA might have its own civil-military coordination guidelines and arrangements in place.

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#### **OCHA can Offer Different Services and Advice to National Governments**

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- ☐ Training for national civilian and military actors.
  - ☐ Participation in the planning and conducting of exercises.
  - ☐ Advice on the drafting civil-military guidelines and translation of policy in military doctrines.
  - ☐ Assistance with the coordination of incoming FMA.
  - ☐ Contingency planning to identify the most needed FMA for certain scenarios that allow national governments to request specific types of assistance in case of disasters.
  - ☐ Sensitization of the HuMOCC concept and how it can be rolled-out at the national and sub-national level.
- 



The [After Action Review of CMCoord in the response to Typhoon Haiyan](#) in the Philippines identifies certain steps for CMCoord preparedness.

## 5.2 Participation in Military Events

Military training courses, and exercises and other events provide an opportunity to enhance mutual understanding of mandates, approaches and working cultures in an environment that is free from operational pressure. Exposure to humanitarian actors helps military commanders and staff to understand humanitarian action and factor this understanding into military planning.

Civilian participation in **military training courses** contributes to effective civil-military dialogue and networks. It allows for sensitizing military personnel on humanitarian principles. In natural disaster preparedness it is recommended to ensure humanitarian participation in those events.

Military forces, coalitions and alliances use **exercises** to “play” certain scenarios. Lacking humanitarian participants, the organizers make assumptions on how those would interact and coordinate. This might result in less accurate scenarios. In the worst case this would have negative impacts on the understanding of humanitarian action. Military personnel may also not evaluate the impact of their actions on humanitarian operations correctly. When deciding to attend military exercises, it is important to analyze the impact of participation and to develop clear objectives and terms.

CMCS, in close collaboration with the IASC Task Team on Revitalizing Principled Humanitarian Action, has developed Guidance on Humanitarian Organizations’ Participation in Military Events. It aims to assist humanitarian actors in determining which military events to participate in. It sets out the type of events humanitarian actors are often invited to, the potential benefits and challenges of participation, and suggests criteria for assessing when and under what conditions to attend.

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### Some Key Points to Consider

- ☐ What is the likelihood that the military actor/s will be deployed to a theatre where humanitarian organizations might interact with them?
  - ☐ Is the event likely to promote improved civil-military coordination?
  - ☐ Is the event conducive to adequate representation by humanitarian organizations?
  - ☐ Could participation negatively impact the humanitarian organisation’s neutrality, actual or perceived?
  - ☐ Are sufficient resources available for effective participation in the event?
-

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OCHA country and regional offices should post military preparedness events in the Community of Practice on <http://tinyurl.com/HMDialogue>. Other Humanitarian organizations are encouraged to do likewise.

## 6. UN-CMCoord Training in Natural Disasters

Training, together with advocacy, is central to how OCHA supports humanitarian and military actors to understand and work with the agreed guidelines on timely and appropriate use of FMA. As many training activities as possible should take place at country and regional level, tailored to the context. CMCS will support OCHA offices and CMCoord Officers in preparing and conducting these trainings.

Training workshops bring together people from different backgrounds and enhance civil-military dialogue in a conducive environment. They are thus an important tool for effective dialogue, awareness raising, dissemination of guidelines and networking. Identifying the right mix of humanitarian and military organizations in training events is crucial.

### In-Country Training in Natural Disaster Contexts

- ☐ Disseminate the Oslo Guidelines and any country-specific position papers.
- ☐ Develop top tip cards and summaries (visuals) on CMCoord.
- ☐ Conduct regular CMCoord meetings and offer short briefings in other meetings (e.g. clusters, HCT).
- ☐ Offer half-day or one-day workshops on CMCoord or in-country familiarization courses. Seek to ensure participation of both humanitarian and military actors.
- ☐ In cooperation with CMCS and national authorities, conduct a UN-CMCoord Course in your country/region.
- ☐ Encourage stakeholders to visit the global training programmes (see Chapter IV.8).
- ☐ Offer short session in support of other topic-specific training events and workshops, e.g. on logistics, protection or humanitarian principles.
- ☐ If desired by organizers, encourage military participation in those training events.
- ☐ Determine training and sensitization needs of military personnel together with the Commander and Staff Officers. Offer to conduct sessions on CMCoord in CIMIC and other military trainings, or conduct workshops and sensitization measures for military participants in collaboration with other humanitarian actors.
- ☐ Sensitize participants on the HuMOCC concept and how it can be applied given the national context.

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[Visuals on UN-CMCoord](#) and [training materials](#).  
[UN-CMCoord Guide for the Military](#)

## 7. Logistics and Foreign Military Assets

Most requests for FMA are for indirect assistance and infrastructure support, including engineering, transport and air lift capacity. The technical coordination may take place through the Logistics Cluster or between the WFP-led UNHAS and respective military counterparts.

Whether the logistic coordination is included in the regular CMCoord mechanism, established as a part or sub-unit thereof, or is maintained separately depends on the context and scope of the military support.

### Main tasks of the CMCoord Officer

- ☐ Maintain close contact with WFP and Logistics Cluster coordinators.
- ☐ Agree on a RFA request flow and validation process (e.g. HuMOCC offers two options).
- ☐ Ensure coherency in the interaction with the military and abide by agreed guidelines.
- ☐ Maintain an overview of all RFAs and identify conflicting requests, in order to assist prioritization.
- ☐ Monitor civil-military interaction in order to identify general issues and trends.
- ☐ Assist in the planning efforts of individual clusters that request military assistance and ensure coherence of overall planning.
- ☐ Advise on the availability and limitations of military assets.
- ☐ Work with WFP and the Logistics Cluster to develop an exit strategy and transition from military assistance to civilian means and assets.

In close cooperation with OCHA and the NDMA, contact between WFP, the Global Logistics Cluster and the military will focus on the following key areas:

- Use of military assets to assist in relief delivery.
- Use/exchange of transport assets (aircraft/helicopters, trucks, rail).
- Provision of services and equipment (fuel for aircraft, vehicles or bulldozers, maintenance of assets and equipment).
- Infrastructure rehabilitation Quick Impact Projects (QIPs), such as roads or bridges.

- Safety and evacuation (security evacuation, medical evacuation, shared medical facilities and services).
- Trainings and exercises prior to a humanitarian emergency.
- Contingency planning efforts for military response activities.

Along with the gap-fit analysis matrix, the MCDA Logistics Working Group developed operational guidance on how to implement these tasks.

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**Operational Guidance on Logistics Assistance Tasks: The Foreign MCDA Logistics Operations Guide** is being developed by the Logistics Cluster and supports humanitarian logisticians in working with foreign MCDA as part of the emergency response. The guidance and suggestions will draw upon agreed good practices, lessons learned and institutional experience of previous emergencies.

## 7.1 MCDA Requests

It has become a rare practice, but is still relevant: The humanitarian community might identify certain capabilities that cannot be provided by governmental, humanitarian, private sector or any other civilian actor. This might be a specific capability that only the military has or additional capacity where civilian sources reached their limits.

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[The process and template to request MCDA are detailed in the Oslo Guidelines.](#)

### Standards

- ☐ Request based on **humanitarian criteria** (made by the RC/HC, with consent of the affected state).
- ☐ Use of MCDA as a **last resort** (only in the absence of other available civilian alternative to support urgent humanitarian needs in the timeframe required).
- ☐ **Civilian nature and character of humanitarian operations:** MCDA remain under military control; while the operation is under the overall control and authority of humanitarian organizations.
- ☐ Use of MCDA **limited in time and scale** with an **exit strategy**.
- ☐ Use of MCDA **respects UN Codes of conduct** and **humanitarian principles**.

## 8. Natural Disasters in a Complex Emergency

The approaches presented in Chapters V and VI of this handbook, for **natural disasters** and **complex emergencies** respectively, are **default cases**

at both ends of a broad CMCoord operational spectrum. Each context is different – and requires a unique approach using elements from both approaches. The approach must also be flexible enough to be adapted to changing environments.

There are several scenarios in which a natural disaster could happen in a complex emergency environment. This is a situation where the CMCoord strategy should lean more towards the complex emergency approach. This applies where national or international military forces are involved in combat, counter-insurgency, or other mandates (in the affected country or region) that might affect the perception of their assistance activities as impartial.

Infrastructure damage, population movements and other consequences of natural disasters, in addition to frustration with the crisis management, might result in a deterioration of the security situation, increase in crime, civil unrest or conflict. Existing conflict-drivers might be fuelled or re-enforced and turn violent. Military forces might take over security tasks.

#### Pakistan Flood Response, 2010

The Government of Pakistan accepted international assistance to the flood response in 2010. In the initial stages, access was a major concern, as the devastating flooding that covered up to one fifth of the country had destroyed bridges and roads. Various nations offered military airlift capacity and re-deployed FMA from the neighbouring Afghanistan. The Pakistan Armed Forces established an aviation coordination cell, with support from WFP.

While highly increasing the effectiveness of the response to the natural disaster, humanitarian actors had concerns about being associated with the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) that was operating in Afghanistan. The humanitarian's concerns included negative impacts on their security, and humanitarian access in Afghanistan and the border regions, in particular in their on-going humanitarian assistance to Afghan refugees in Pakistan.

The country-specific guidance included provisions on how to ensure principled humanitarian action while using FMA. The Pakistan Red Crescent and other humanitarian actors quickly established alternative transport routes to those used by the military, using local suppliers, private contractors, fisher boats and donkeys for the transport of relief items.

## Chapter VI: UN-CMCoord in Complex Emergencies

Chapter VI includes examples and considerations on how to perform information sharing, task division and planning in complex emergencies.

- ✓ Key considerations for CMCoord in complex emergencies.
- ✓ Specific considerations for CMCoord assessments in complex emergencies.
- ✓ Establish and sustain dialogue with different types of military forces.
- ✓ Establish a mechanism for information exchange and coordination with military forces in co-existence settings, complex emergencies with limited liaison, as an interlocutor on behalf of the humanitarian community and in UN peacekeeping operations.
- ✓ Critical areas of negotiation.
- ✓ Support development and dissemination of context-specific guidance for the interaction of the humanitarian community with the military and the use of UN mission assets or armed escorts.
- ✓ Monitor activity of military forces and avoid negative impact.
- ✓ Training measures in complex emergency settings.
- ✓ CMCoord involvement in security management, humanitarian access negotiations and protection.

### 1. Humanity, Neutrality and Impartiality.

**2. Needs-based assistance free of discrimination:** Humanitarian assistance must be provided on the basis of needs alone. The assessment of such needs must be independent from any other considerations than humanitarian ones.

**3. Humanitarian access to vulnerable populations:** Humanitarian agencies must maintain their ability to obtain access to all vulnerable populations in all areas and to negotiate such access with all parties to the conflict. Coordination with the military should facilitate, secure and sustain – not hinder – humanitarian access.

**4. Perception of humanitarian action:** Humanitarian assistance must come without political or military conditions. Civil-military coordination must not jeopardize the local network and trust that humanitarian agencies have created.

**5. Civilian-military distinction in humanitarian action:** At all times, a clear distinction must be maintained between combatants and non-combatants, who

are granted immunity from attack by IHL. Military personnel must refrain from presenting themselves as civilian/humanitarian workers, and vice versa.

**6. Operational independence of humanitarian action:** Humanitarian actors must retain the lead role in undertaking and directing humanitarian activities. They must not implement tasks on behalf of the military or military policies. They must be free in movement, conducting independent assessments, selecting of staff, and identifying recipients of assistance based on their needs.

**7. Security of humanitarian personnel:** Any perception that humanitarian organizations may have become affiliated with the military could impact negatively on the security of their staff and on humanitarian access.

**8. Do no harm:** Humanitarian action, including CMCoord, must not have negative impacts on the people it seeks to help – physical proximity to or association with military involved in relief operations could put the recipients of humanitarian assistance at risk.

**9. Respect for international legal instruments and culture and customs.**

**10. Consent of parties to the conflict:** The risk of compromising humanitarian operations by cooperating with the military may be reduced if all parties to the conflict recognize, agree or acknowledge in advance that civil-military coordination might be necessary for certain humanitarian activities.

**11. Avoid reliance on military** resources or support.



## 1. UN-CMCoord Assessment in Complex Emergencies

The CMCoord deployment or assignment starts with an **assessment** and **definition** of the **operational environment**. If deploying to a context where there is no CMCoord assessment available, the assessment starts at pre-deployment with the establishment of contacts at the global level and analysis of secondary data.



Seek assistance from CMCS.

A comprehensive understanding and situational awareness of the operating environment helps to identify opportunities, challenges and risks of civil-military relations. This helps to identify the basic strategy and appropriate coordination structures.

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[Guidance note for the conduct of UN-CMCoord assessments](#)

As a **first step**, identify relevant actors and stakeholders and determine their missions and mandates. This includes national civilian and military as well as foreign civilian and military actors.

	National	Foreign
Civilian	Ministries and governments agencies, national and local Disaster Management Authorities, local authorities, national and local NGOs, community-based groups, National Red Cross or Red Crescent Society, religious organizations, private sector, health & service providers.	UN agencies, UN mission, representatives of partner countries, as donors and their agencies, international and regional organizations, components of the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, international NGOs, private sector.
Military	National armed forces and paramilitary structures, border and customs, security forces.	Foreign forces stationed in the country or region or with bilateral military agreements, UN or regional peacekeeping operations.
+	National, regional and local police and armed groups.	UN Police, private security companies, others.

Table 13: Map of Potential Civil-Military Actors

As a **second step**, analyse their relations to each other. Map different types of military actors, their mandate and rules of engagement, specific doctrines and SOPs, and identify individual liaison requirements.

- National forces, paramilitary and armed groups.
- Military missions on the basis of an international mandate, e.g. Security Council resolutions: UN or regional peacekeeping operations, e.g. under the AU or EU, hybrid missions consisting of several elements, coalitions (e.g. NATO).
- Bilateral agreements: Foreign armed forces or coalitions on invitation of or agreement with the host nation, e.g. the French military to support the Malian Government.

See Chapter III for details on the different types of military actors.

---

#### UN-CMCoord Stakeholders Contact Database

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- |                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Mandate and mission, including the desired end state.                                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Rules of Engagement.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Specific doctrines and SOPs.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Military objectives, duration, geographical presence.                                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Are the military actors <b>involved in combat operations</b> ?                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Relation to the government? <b>Perception by population?</b>                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Hostile towards the UN and humanitarian assistance?   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Level of training and awareness or humanitarian action and combat?                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Existing capabilities, capacities and civil-military interaction resources (CIMIC)?         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Do military actors carry out assistance activities, CIMIC, Civil-Military Operations, QIPs. |
- 

Regarding mandates, it is particularly important to determine whether there are any overlaps, e.g. in terms of protection, support to humanitarian action, or security, and assess whether there are existing coordination mechanisms with respective civilian actors.

Analyse how military activities could impact, facilitate or impede humanitarian access and security of humanitarian personnel. Military actors might have important information on population movements, security threats, infrastructure and humanitarian needs.

Map the different humanitarian actors and their involvement in humanitarian coordination mechanisms. Particularly relevant are individual civil-military interaction policies, security strategies and protection mandates. Identify potential interferences or overlaps with military operations.

Identify focal points for CMCoord within the civilian and military communities. To ensure that you take stock of all actors, a good practice is to maintain a **contact database of CMCoord stakeholders**.

#### UN-CMCoord Stakeholders Contact Database

- ☐ List the contacts of focal points in local authorities and humanitarian organizations, including NGOs, embassies, and the different military organizations and relevant units.
- ☐ Use an Excel Sheet template.
- ☐ Staff turnover is usually high. For military battalions and contingents, the turnover is usually well known in advance. Keep the database up-to-date and documented for handover.
- ☐ Ask support from **OCHA Information Management** colleagues to provide contacts and developing and/or maintaining the database.
- ☐ Use available tools like the **Humanitarian ID** app (see Chapter IV). Encourage all contacts to check in and out the Humanitarian ID contact list.
- ☐ Create a space in the [humanitarianinfo.org](https://humanitarianinfo.org) domain including key contacts.
- ☐ Create participants lists at relevant meetings.
- ☐ Seek the possibility to brief coordination platforms, including the HCT, inter-cluster coordination and relevant cluster meetings. Collect key contacts and leave your contact details.
- ☐ Liaise with security focal points of UN and NGOs, in addition to local, national and private security actors.
- ☐ Actively maintain contacts through attendance at meetings, bilateral meetings and informal channels.
- ☐ Analyse the existing coordination mechanisms within UN missions and between the humanitarian community and UN missions.

#### Chiara Capozio, Humanitarian Affairs Officer, OCHA Colombia

I'm Chiara, I work as Humanitarian Affairs Officer in OCHA Colombia and I also have CMCoord responsibilities.

Colombia has very strong government and civilian bodies in charge of responding to disasters and humanitarian needs resulting from conflict. There is also a strong legal



framework to define the responsibilities in disaster response. The challenge is the presence at the local level; local authorities often have very limited capacity and resources to respond in remote areas. Often, the most affected communities are those in remote areas.

That is why the national military is often the first responder, because they have the manpower and capacity. This is a challenge for the humanitarian community – to stay impartial and neutral to avoid any affiliation with parties to the conflict and be perceived as taking sides.

So the strategy that the humanitarian community uses to deal with the military in Colombia is “co-existence”. OCHA has a role in explaining humanitarian principles to the military, to let them understand why we need to keep civil and military distinction, impartiality and neutrality. OCHA also works with the humanitarian community to promote a coherent approach and to disseminate the country-specific CMCoord guidelines for Colombia. These guidelines can also be used as a tool to establish a more productive dialogue given the co-existence strategy. Thus, avoiding conflict where messages are clearly conveyed and understood.

## 2. Coordination Arrangements in Complex Emergencies

In complex emergencies, the space for coordination is smaller than in natural disaster settings. The appropriate scope and kind of interface will depend on the military actors deployed, their mandate and the conflict itself. If being seen as associated with or perceived as working with the military impedes humanitarian access or puts aid workers at risk, direct contact should be kept to a minimum. In these cases, liaison officers maintain a low profile and meet in a “neutral” place.

Regular liaison visits might be difficult for different reasons, e.g. armed military officers cannot enter weapon-free facilities, humanitarian personnel might face increased risks if approaching military facilities, humanitarian actors do not want to be seen with military actors.

In such complex emergency situations, the default interface is to use an interlocutor, e.g. a CMCoord Officer, or third party liaison officer. This significantly reduces the risk of humanitarians being perceived as working with the military. This interlocutor must ensure links into the humanitarian coordination platforms, such as:

- HC and HCT.
- **Clusters**, e.g. health, protection or logistics.
- Inter-cluster coordination.
- Thematic advisors, e.g. on gender or early recovery.
- Security cells, focal points, and/or SMT.
- Individual humanitarian agencies and NGOs.

CMCoord officers can act as a **one-entry point** for military actors to the humanitarian community, to prioritize and validate RFAs and ensure their alignment with country-specific guidance. Where RFAs are mostly security-related, there is a strong link to security functions beyond the CMCoord function.

## 2.1 Information Sharing

Even in settings in which humanitarian actors apply a co-existence strategy, a critical minimum of dialogue is required and should be established.

- Information to de-conflict humanitarian and military operations.
- General security information, as long as information provided by humanitarian actors does not grant any armed actor a tactical advantage.
- Military actors might have information on infrastructure, population movements and humanitarian needs.
- Relief activities of military actors, such as Civic Action, CIMIC, Civil Affairs or QIPs, to avoid duplication with humanitarian activities.
- If military actors have a protection mandate, information on threats to civilians, population movements and other relevant information.
- Information on humanitarian principles and humanitarian action.



**How to avoid miscommunication?** Military actors have different reasons and ways to collect, analyse and share information. CMCoord practitioners must understand military and humanitarian jargon, communication and information management practices. As CMCoord Officer, it is crucial to understand the language and reference systems of civilian and military, international and local actors to ensure counterparts effectively communicate.

**Humanitarian information** is mostly shared publicly and is available to all actors. Military actors might withhold specific information to ensure **OpSec** (see Chapter IV). As a result, military personnel may not have access to or may be prohibited from sharing certain information. Even military commanders, up to the highest level, can have limited authority to share information with external actors, based on the classification level.

#### Effective CMCoord Liaison with Military Actors

- ☐ Study the organization, ranks and insignia before the first meeting.
- ☐ Request an appointment with the Commander and a meeting/courtesy call with the Chief of Staff.
- ☐ Seek invitations to morning briefs and weekly conferences/meetings.
- ☐ Identify military Staff Officers to be briefed one-on-one, e.g. logistics, security, and ask humanitarian counterparts to join you, if relevant.
- ☐ Establish firm relations with CIMIC staff (often referred to as G/U/J9).
- ☐ Determine if there is an on-going planning effort and seek to attend if not invited. If a JOC exists (integrated mission), attend.
- ☐ Establish and share contact details with CIMIC personnel in the field.
- ☐ Provide for widest possible distribution of your contact details.
- ☐ Confirm procedures for emergency evacuation (Country Security Plan).
- ☐ Establish procedures for requesting MCDA if not already in place.
- ☐ Raise joint training initiatives for future discussion.
- ☐ Are there donor or humanitarian military liaison officers deployed?
- ☐ Is the military headquarters aware of the various humanitarian open sources available to them; for example V-OSOCC, reliefweb.int, IRIN, Humanitarianresponse.info, GDACS, Humanitarian Kiosk app?
- ☐ Explain what resources, information and training opportunities are available from CMCoord and humanitarian actors.
- ☐ Be clear about when and why certain information is needed. Required information might be available, but not shared because of classification/OpSec. Arrange a follow-up meeting to allow military counterparts to seek declassification.
- ☐ Clearly communicate that humanitarian actors **under no circumstances will share information that provides a tactical advantage to one armed actor**.
- ☐ If briefing counterparts for the first time, use the opportunity to briefly introduce the humanitarian community, their principles, relevant guidelines, etc.
- ☐ Promote CMCoord as information gateway.
- ☐ Leave key contacts.

## 2.2 De-Confliction Mechanisms

In several cases in which military forces conducted kinetic operations, OCHA facilitated a notification system to identify and protect humanitarian staff, offices, facilities, sites, and missions to the extent possible. These **de-confliction mechanisms** are designed to notify the relevant military entities about humanitarian sites in the area of operation that should be protected from kinetic action, like stationary humanitarian sites and, if kinetic action begins, the movements of personnel on humanitarian missions.

Stationary locations may include offices, warehouses, lodgings, hospitals, clinics, distribution sites, and other sites that serve a humanitarian purpose, e.g., public buildings, abandoned buildings, informal tent settlements, or other non-residential locations where displaced persons have settled. Information to de-conflict **movements of humanitarian missions** includes air, sea and land movements involving humanitarian personnel or relief items.

The mechanism is for use by all humanitarian organizations present in the area of operation. Participation is **voluntary**. It is in the interest of all parties not to publicize this mechanism outside the humanitarian community because of the sensitive nature of humanitarian locations and missions in a complex emergency. Military entities with whom this data is shared will not publicize this data, nor will the organizations that are sharing data.

Data should be submitted on a form and within a deadline agreed with the military forces involved, to ensure that all data relevant for operation planning is available. UN agencies normally submit this information to DSS, and OCHA provides a conduit for NGOs to forward data to relevant military entities, or directly to the military headquarters through agreed contact points.



**What is the legal status of these mechanisms?** Submitting data does not constitute a legal binding agreement between any of the involved parties nor does it guarantee the safety of personnel, facilities, or sites. *OCHA does not validate or vet any of the information provided by humanitarian actors.*

## 2.3 CMCoord Cell

An option, depending on the operational environment and risk of association, is a dedicated **CMCoord Cell** to exchange information and

discuss key issues on a regular basis. If it is not decided to exclusively liaise through an interlocutor, participants should include the following military and civilian participants, as appropriate:

- CMCoord Officer as chair.
- Representatives from the Logistics Cluster.
- Representatives from DSS.
- OCHA HAO for specific topics and inter-cluster coordination.
- Representatives from the RC/HC Office.
- Clusters, thematic advisors and humanitarian organizations as thematically required.
- NGO representatives.
- Representatives from UN or regional missions, including civilian and military components.
- CIMIC Officers of international forces present.
- Military Staff Officers for specific topics, e.g. logistics, training, operations.
- Representatives of specific military units.
- Ideally, the CMCoord cell should include national actors. In certain conflict settings with several political and armed actors, this might be sensitive.
- CIMIC Officers of national armed forces.
- Civilian representatives from national authorities, e.g. security, emergency management, specific topics.



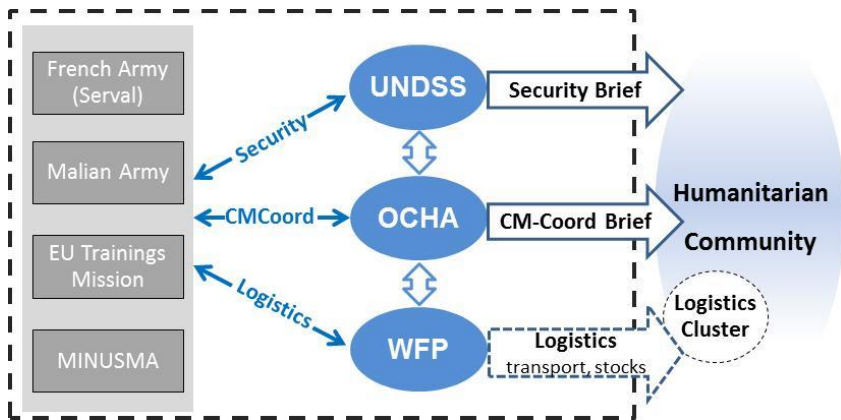


Figure 12: Example of a Civil-Military Coordination Cell in Mali, 2013

### CMCoord Meetings

- ☐ Establish a routine and meet regularly at the same time in the same location.
- ☐ Punctuality and brevity, with meetings lasting 45-60mins
- ☐ Announce meetings and agenda on humanitarianinfo.org and – with consent of participants – publish minutes. Keep participants lists and contacts.
- ☐ Keep meetings with the military to key personnel who will actively contribute to the sharing of information.
- ☐ Participants should be encouraged to propose topics for discussion so all members are familiar with the subject in advance.
- ☐ Humanitarian information should be summarised and circulated in advance, to allow for elaboration on certain items as required.
- ☐ Ask about the specific types of information required from the military counterparts and vice versa in advance. Military counterparts may need to seek declassification. Examples commonly requested are: Population movements, attendance of children in schools, local commerce and trade (small shops, market, etc.), humanitarian activity.
- ☐ Document all minutes for reference and send to all members with follow-up information and action points as requested after the meeting. If you chair the meeting, ask OCHA colleagues to assist with note taking.

Some military officers insist on remaining armed for their own security regulations, while humanitarian facilities are weapon-free. This will need to be addressed.

## 2.4 De-centralizing the CMCoord Function

If OCHA sub-offices have been established, use staff in sub-offices to fulfil a CMCoord role in the absence of a dedicated CMCoord Officer. This will have the following advantages:

- Good Civil-Military relations at a local level are essential for effective coordination.
- Local issues can be resolved quickly.
- Better and more detailed information to analyse trends and get a better overall picture of the situation on the ground.
- Humanitarian awareness training needs can be identified and implemented more effectively.
- Training for military counterparts can be tailored and conducted locally.
- Sub-Offices might have closer contact with communities and have a better picture of local perceptions.
- Sub-Offices can monitor military activities.

This requires briefing, sensitization and supervision by the CMCoord Officer. Ideally the CMCoord Officer would conduct a one- or half-day briefing for OCHA staff, or an in-country sensitization course. This should cover the basics of CMCoord guidelines and the CMCoord strategy and organization in-country.

---

### Reference Material

- |                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | IMPACT course and USIP eLearning Tool.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | CMCoord handbook.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Global and country-specific guidance.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Global training programme Identify key staff to attend CMCoord training courses. Consider an in-country training course or familiarization event. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Develop CMCoord top tip cards for the military and for humanitarian colleagues.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Develop a CMCoord brief and standard presentation (Information Management colleagues can help).   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <a href="http://Humanitarianinfo.org">Humanitarianinfo.org</a> .  |
-

## 2.5 Establishing a CMCoord Network

A CMCoord network brings together established points of contact with other humanitarian organizations, UN and NGOs, and provide continuous liaison on CMCoord matters. The purpose is to provide clear lines of communication to facilitate:

- Awareness of key CMCoord issues.
- Adoption of various policies.
- Identification and resolution of any potential humanitarian issues.
- Specific points of contact to the military, as requested.

If individual organizations do not have a CMCoord focal point, focal points might be, depending on the context, humanitarian, security, logistics or protection officers. In complex emergencies and high-risk environments, this often includes security officers.

The CMCoord Officer should run a one-day training event or briefing for liaison officers and focal points. Issues arising from this can inform the CMCoord strategy and action plan. The briefing should include

- Global and country-specific guidance.
- In-country CMCoord mechanisms.
- Available FMA and request mechanisms.
- Challenges identified when dealing with the military.
- Key points of contact in the field, military and CMCoord.

## 2.6 Coordination in a UN Mission



**Are you working in a context where a UN mission is deployed?** See **Chapter II** on UN missions, UN integration and UN Security Management. For the structure of military components of peacekeeping operations, see **Chapter III**.

The humanitarian community and OCHA will have multiple interactions and coordination tools with UN missions, depending on its mandate and structure. The role and interface of CMCoord needs to be determined in the assessment. A few points to consider and link into:

### Coordination with UN Missions



Is there a Civil Affairs officer/unit? (This is almost always the case.) Does Civil Affairs implement QIPs?

- 
- ☐ Is the UN mission multidimensional and/or integrated?
  - ☐ Is the HC a triple-hatted DSRSG/RC/HC? What is the relation to the HoMC/Force Commander?
  - ☐ Are there components of the mandate (Security Council resolution) with importance to humanitarian assistance, e.g. PoC, support to humanitarian assistance, security for humanitarian actors?
  - ☐ What is the security management structure? Who is the DO? Is there a security cell or working group under the SMT? How is the DSS presence structured? What are the security regulations for UN organizations?
  - ☐ Does the UN mission have assets and capacity to protect or provide armed escorts for humanitarian actors, e.g. Guard Units, military components?
  - ☐ Is there an IAP process on-going? Link into the process and related coordination structures, such as the JOTC. (See Chapter II)
  - ☐ Identify the CIMIC capacity in the mission headquarters (U9) and in individual military components.
  - ☐ Do individual military components have capabilities and resources that may be/are useful for humanitarian assistance? Do they carry out their own QIPs?
  - ☐ Is any interaction with specific military components required? E.g. aviation, engineering, etc.?
- 

A Civil-Military Working/Advisory Group can be formed to interface with the mission.

### 3. Advisory and Advocacy Role in Complex Emergencies

The advisory and advocacy role of CMCoord covers several aspects in complex emergencies:

- Advice to the HC and HCT on civil-military interaction and the use of military assets to support humanitarian activities and armed escorts.
- The sensitization of the humanitarian community on CMCoord principles and dissemination of country-specific guidance.
- Raising awareness of military actors for humanitarian principles, civil-military distinction and “do no harm” approaches.
- Support the coordination with UN peacekeeping operations and inform eventual IAP processes with humanitarian considerations.
- It may include the interaction with national armed forces and armed actors on humanitarian access.

It is the responsibility of the HC to identify a **coherent** and **consistent humanitarian approach** to civil-military interaction and the use of MCDA/military and mission assets in support of humanitarian activities. The OCHA office and CMCoord Officer support the HC and HCT in identifying risks and challenges and developing a common civil-military engagement strategy and position.

The MCDA Guidelines, as well as the 2008 version of the UN-CMCoord Officer Field Handbook, were developed assuming that the HC and HCT would identify needs for military support and initiate an **MCDA request** through CMCS. This practice still exists (see section 7 of Chapter V for details) but has become very rare.

The operational reality is that military units and assets are deployed by their governments directly upon request or acceptance of international assistance by the affected state and/or through a UN mission or a regional organization led force (NATO, AU). The advocacy and advisory role of CMCoord will focus on the following elements:

- **“Pull” rather than “push” in military and mission assets:** To advocate with governments and UN DPKO to deploy military assets that meet actual needs so that they are used in the most appropriate and efficient way, i.e. to deploy the capabilities that are most needed and actually requested. This advocacy should happen at the global, regional and country levels, ideally in the mission planning and pre-deployment phases.
- **Distinction and “do no harm”:** To liaise with commanders of deployed military/mission assets and advocate for liaison and information-sharing on humanitarian assistance related activities, to ensure military actors understand the importance of civil-military distinction in such contexts and that neither local populations nor humanitarian organizations are put in harms' way because of perception issues.
- **Principled humanitarian action:** To monitor military activities and provide advice on humanitarian principles, priorities and standards.
- **Coherence:** To promote a coherent and consistent approach within the humanitarian community.

Top Tip Cards

A good practice developed by CMCoord Officers over the past years is the development and distribution of **top tip cards**. While the resources for training in-country might be limited and pre-deployment training does not always include humanitarian considerations, it might be helpful to distribute the key humanitarian messages on short and comprehensible cards. These may include:

- Humanitarian principles.
- Context-specific key considerations for civil-military interaction.
- Key messages to “do no harm” in the communities.
- The points of the mandate relevant to engagement with humanitarian assistance (area security, PoC, assistance tasks).
- Some ground rules of dialogue with humanitarian actors.
- Information requirements and what information is available from humanitarians.
- Contact details.

3.1 Country-Specific Guidance in Complex Emergencies

In complex emergencies, country-specific CMCoord guidance will normally be required if a foreign military force is present or if the actions of national armed forces will have a significant impact on the work of international humanitarian actors. This can also be the case for the coordination with military components of peacekeeping operations.

LEARN  
MORE!

The [guidance note on developing country-specific guidance](#) is a comprehensive guide to their formulation, including a suggested template and content.

Step-by-Step Process for Developing Country-Specific CMCoord Guidance	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Determine the need for country-specific guidance in the CMCoord assessment.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Make a recommendation to the OCHA Head of Office, HC and HCT.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Create a Task Force for the development of the guidance. Consult the <b>Guidance Note</b> on the composition of the Task Force.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Seek endorsement from relevant stakeholders as appropriate.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Develop a dissemination strategy, including training, to ensure that the country specific CMCoord guidance is widely circulated within the relevant civilian, humanitarian and military communities.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Develop a top tip card for military actors.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Monitor the awareness of, and adherence to, the guidance by all stakeholders.

Country-specific guidance should include consensus on the use of armed escorts. This can be part of a general CMCoord guideline, or addressed in

an individual guidance or discussion paper. As a general rule, **humanitarian actors will not use armed escorts**.

**LEARN  
MORE!**

The [IASC non-binding Guidelines on the Use of Armed Escorts for Humanitarian Convoys](#) provides guidance on alternatives for the use of armed escorts, minimum requirements to deviate from this general rule and step-by-step guidance on how to arrange armed escorts. See Chapter IV for general information on the guidelines and VI.5.2 for the implementation in complex emergencies.

### 3.2 Monitoring Military Activities (QIPs etc.)

Humanitarian assistance follows the sole purpose to save lives, while military forces usually carry out **Civil-Military Operations** (be it civic action, civil affairs, CIMIC, civil-military operations, or others) based on the needs of the force and the mission. This can serve the purpose of force protection by enhancing acceptance, gathering information, or generate support. Activities may include “humanitarian type” activities, but should not be confused with actual humanitarian action.

The CMCoord Officer should be aware of and monitor these activities for the following reasons:

- Raise awareness for the importance of **distinction** between humanitarian assistance and military activities.
- **Civil-military operations** are often conditional and may cease when the mission changes or the unit moves. Ensure that no relief gap results from the end of operations.
- **Avoid duplication** with humanitarian activities.
- CMCoord can give useful advice on “**do no harm**” approaches and possible second and third order effects.

The strategy to achieve the greatest extent of civil-military distinction and military actors’ understanding of humanitarian principles and concerns depends on the context. It includes an open and constructive dialogue and training. It might be helpful to bring military actors on board while drafting context-specific guidance. Where this is not possible or appropriate, CMCoord can try to influence military commanders, planning processes and SOP.



The CMCoord Officer, as an interlocutor needs, has to communicate needs, concerns and strategies between civilian and military communities. Successful communication can sometimes just depend on personalities. **Much depends on how the content is communicated.**

#### Denis Killian was a CMCoord Officer in Afghanistan for three years (2010-2013)



In Afghanistan the humanitarian community operated in a very complex environment, with a very significant international military presence and great humanitarian needs arising from multiple recurring natural hazards and the impact of conflict. I think in this context, you would have to judge the success of CMCoord by the degree to which the international military and humanitarian community have been able to share an operating environment, or co-exist, without doing each other any harm. This is a very significant challenge in Afghanistan.

I have found that among the success factors were the following:

- Ensuring that international military forces are aware of the scale of the humanitarian community and architecture in country and its significant capacity to support the Afghan authorities in responding to humanitarian needs
- Advocacy with the international military forces to ensure that they develop SOPs committing themselves to abiding by the principles of the MCDA and the Oslo Guidelines and ensuring that they defer to OCHA and the HC in terms of deciding the appropriateness of any potential interventions on their part; and
- Working with the HCT to produce country-specific guidance for the humanitarian community on e.g. appropriate interaction by the cluster system with the international military and Provincial Reconstruction Teams.

With an entity such as the NATO-led ISAF, I found that you didn't have to concentrate as much on educating them about humanitarian principles, as on ensuring that they had a certain comfort that any assessed needs which arose fell well within the capacity of the Afghan authorities, supported by the international humanitarian community, to respond. Once they saw that this was the case, it reduced the impetus to inappropriately intervene.

## 4. Training



See Chapter IV.8 for global training opportunities.



When establishing a CMCoord cell and a working group to draft country-specific guidance and armed escort guidelines, it might be useful to conduct a familiarization course or in-country training event to promote CMCoord principles and strategies. Training is also an important part of the dissemination strategy of adopted guidelines. It is advised to develop an in-country **training strategy**.

Determine need for training for military forces in collaboration with military counterparts. This can be in collaboration with existing training courses and institutes, e.g. CIMIC or peacekeeping induction trainings. The knowledge about humanitarian principles and CMCoord will depend on the military actor or troop contributor.

#### Sophie Solomon and Boly Diene, CMCoord Training in Mali



Mali is a complex and challenging CMCoord environment with the presence of a multiplicity of military actors: The French Armed Forces with a counter-terrorist mandate, a UN peacekeeping operation (MINUSMA) acting under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, a European

Union Training Mission (EUTM) and the Malian and Security and Defence Forces.

Training is a key component of the CMCoord function in Mali. An in-country training strategy has been established to favourably impact civil-military interaction in the field. CMCoord is now part of the induction training of MINUSMA. We are working with the peacekeeping school of Bamako, we deliver tailor-made training courses to NGOs and military actors and, as we arrived first on the ground, we managed to influence EUTM curriculum and included elements of CMCoord, child protection, gender-based violence and human rights in their training courses.

Our main challenges are the frequent rotation of the troops which requires constant training and the diversity of these troops. Some troops benefit from a solid pre-deployment training and have a strong CIMIC culture while some others have a very poor understanding of humanitarian assistance and principles which complicated interaction with humanitarian actors.

Ensuring that all troops arrive on the ground with a minimum knowledge in civil-military coordination would definitely help interaction in the field. Pre-deployment training is therefore essential and should be our main focus. To help the induction of newly

arrived staff, OCHA also developed a briefing kit available for both humanitarian and military actors which include the key documents to be aware of when deployed on the ground.

## 5. Other Potential UN-CMCoord Tasks

The following are tasks and topics that the CMCoord Officer will most likely get involved in, though they are not primary CMCoord tasks.

### 5.1 Humanitarian Access

#### LEARN MORE!

See the background on humanitarian access in Chapter I.7, and security in I.7 and IV.2.5.

Chapter I discusses different impediments and enabling factors for **humanitarian access**. Among these **impediments** are damaged infrastructure, lack of transportation, the security situation, bureaucratic hurdles and a lack of acceptance. Military actors can be the cause of some of these impediments – or may help to overcome them.

OCHA offices and humanitarian actors will often have designated **humanitarian access officers** or units who negotiate for example with civilian authorities or armed groups. Negotiations with military actors is one significant part of access work that the CMCoord Officer might be involved in.

**Bureaucratic impediments:** Seek to ensure that entry procedures for humanitarian personnel, equipment and goods into the country and their deployment to the field are streamlined. The host government has an obligation to facilitate humanitarian assistance and at the same time the responsibility for the security of humanitarian actors. The passage of humanitarian assistance might be slowed down by security measures like airport controls and check-points. In coordination with the civilian authorities, security and military forces, agreements for the quick passage of relief can be made.

**On-going hostilities:** In consultation with the HCT, assess the feasibility of de-confliction arrangements, humanitarian pauses (temporary cessation of hostilities to enable the delivery of assistance), and area security. If warranted, ensure robust civil-military capacity within the HCT to support

the implementation of these access strategies and coordinate with the relevant parties.

**Attacks on humanitarian personnel, facilities and/or assets:** In consultation with the HCT, assess the motivating factors driving attacks. Consult with DSS and humanitarian actors on possible solutions to mitigate risks, including efforts to increase acceptance of humanitarian action and undertake negotiations with the relevant parties.

Thorough needs and risk assessments, close **communication with communities** and good humanitarian programming that actually changes peoples' lives for the better without causing adverse effects remain the main strategy to enhance acceptance and secure humanitarian access.

## 5.2 Security and Armed Escorts

CMCoord Officers are not security officers. They do not have any authority or liability in security matters. However, CMCoord officers can facilitate information sharing in this regard, because they have access to such information from military actors and established networks. CMCoord and security management also go hand in hand if it is decided to use armed escorts.

If security risk management measures as described in Chapters I and II are not creating an acceptable level of safety and security for aid workers, the **provision of security conditions conducive to humanitarian activities** is one of the main expectations from humanitarian actors towards military components in peacekeeping operations.

However, deterrent measures and armed protection are a **last resort** before having to cease life-saving assistance. As a general rule, humanitarian convoys will **not use armed escorts**. If the HC and HCT have decided to deviate from this general rule, the CMCoord Officer plays a crucial role in establishing guidance, protocols and mechanisms for the use of armed escort.

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### Minimum Requirements to Deviate from the General Rule Not to Use Armed Escorts

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- ☐ Make decisions on the basis of a thorough risk assessment, considering consequences of the use of armed escorts.
  - ☐ There is a critical humanitarian need and there is no alternative to the humanitarian activity.
  - ☐ The responsible authorities are not in a position to provide security.
-

- ☐ Safety and Security: The deterrence measures are deemed a capable – and the only – solution to enhance security of humanitarian personnel.
  - ☐ This means that **all** alternatives have been considered and none of them works.
  - ☐ The armed escort will not irreversibly compromise the humanitarian operating environment in the longer-term.
  - ☐ All decisions should be made on a case by case basis, i.e. country-specific armed escort guidance should not be a cart blanche for armed escorts in general.
  - ☐ The guidance should include an exit strategy to establish alternatives to armed escorts in the meantime.
- 

If the use of armed escorts is considered to have negative impacts on the perception of humanitarian actors as impartial, the behaviour of each individual humanitarian actor will affect the perception of the whole humanitarian community. The capacity of military actors to provide armed assistance is limited. Requests for armed escorts should thus ideally be channelled through the CMCoord Officer, for prioritization and validation against the guidance established by the HC/HCT.

The use of armed escorts can even further weaken the perception of humanitarian actors, and threaten the operational independence of humanitarian action. Therefore, if all alternatives to deterrence measures have failed, the humanitarian community needs to work on creating alternatives to an armed escort.

If **acceptance-based approaches** failed to protect humanitarian actors, they need to do everything possible to regain that acceptance. This requires knowledge of and adaptation to the local environment.

- Communication, consultation with and involvement of communities.
- Close monitoring of potential negative perceptions and threats.
- “Do no harm” strategies.
- Avoid local tensions resulting from humanitarian programming.

Examples of good practices are **local co-ownership** of programmes and the involvement of all groups in programming.

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#### Alternatives to Armed Escorts

- ☐ **Low-profile approach:** De-branding of vehicles, staff not wearing organization emblems, the use of local vehicles and un-marked offices, or not gathering in groups or offices identifiable as belonging to the organization.
  - ☐ Remote programming.
-

☐ **Negotiating access.**

- ☐
- Raise awareness of IHL among armed groups.

- ☐
- Request
- area security**
- , e.g. “clearing” and patrolling roads, maintaining a presence in the area but not being visible or accompanying the convoy, providing aerial flyovers.

- ☐
- De-confliction**
- of military and humanitarian activities.

- ☐
- “Days of tranquillity”.

- ☐
- Humanitarian “pauses” or “corridors”. This is not a favoured option.

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MORE!**

The [IASC non-binding Guidelines on the Use of Armed Escorts](#) detail **how to organize** and implement armed escorts, including who can provide armed escorts, how to negotiate the procedures, how to maintain a humanitarian identity and how not to compromise operational independence.

### 5.3 Protection of Civilians

The Protection Cluster will establish a system to report threats against civilians and will lead on verifying, prioritizing and validating reports. The CMCoord Officer supports the cluster in establishing links to military actors involved in protection and communicates his/her findings to them.

At the same time, the CMCoord Officer will be coordinating and exchanging information with the military with regards to threats against humanitarian activities, de-confliction and use of military assets. It is important to reconcile and prioritize the two streams in anticipation of subsequent requests for military assistance.

#### Sergio Da Silva, Central African Republic, 2013/14



My name is Sergio Da Silva and I work in CMCS in OCHA Geneva. In November 2013, I was deployed to CAR to develop a strategy and establish humanitarian CMCoord mechanisms. I was deployed three weeks before the situation in CAR deteriorated with the attack of Bangui in December 2013 and additional French troops were deployed. At that time, I already had the possibility to establish contacts and networks with military and humanitarian actors, which was very helpful when the situation escalated.

A major concern in CAR was the security of civilians, who were directly targeted by armed actors throughout the country. Foreign military were

the only actors capable to provide physical security and armed protection to communities and IDPs at risk. With the working relationships I had already established, CMCoord became essential for exchanging information on security issues and threats, both to civilians and to humanitarian activities, and subsequent requests for physical protection.

I worked closely with the Protection Cluster coordinator and the military to verify, prioritize, and validate alerts regarding security and protection threats reported by humanitarian actors so as to make optimal use of the few military capacities available. I also had a role in coordinating the response between military and NGOs. I found it very important to report back to the humanitarian organizations that initiated the alert in case they were not involved in the response.

A CMCoord Officer does not have a protection role as such, but can – depending on the situation – play a crucial role in exchanging information, bringing military and humanitarian protection actors together to save lives. The Protection Cluster was in charge of verifying, prioritizing and validating the threats against civilians with CMCoord ensuring the efficient sharing of the information and appropriate coordination with the military.

## Abbreviations

<b>AU</b>	African Union
<b>ASP</b>	Associate Surge Pool (OCHA)
<b>CAR</b>	Central African Republic
<b>CCCM</b>	Camp Coordination and Camp Management cluster
<b>CEB</b>	United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination
<b>CERF</b>	Central Emergency Response Fund (OCHA)
<b>CMCO</b>	Civil-Military Coordination (EU)
<b>CMCOORD</b>	Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination (UN)
<b>CMCS</b>	Civil-Military Coordination Section (OCHA)
<b>CMI</b>	Civil-Military Interaction (NATO)
<b>CMO</b>	Civil-Military Operations
<b>CONOPS</b>	Concept of Operations
<b>DART</b>	Disaster Assistance Response Team
<b>DDR</b>	Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration
<b>DFS</b>	United Nations Department of Field Support
<b>DO</b>	Designated Official (UN)
<b>DPA</b>	United Nations Department for Political Affairs
<b>DPKO</b>	United Nations Department for Peacekeeping Operations
<b>DSRSG</b>	Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General
<b>DSS</b>	United Nations Department of Safety and Security
<b>E/OR</b>	Enlisted/Other Ranks (NATO)
<b>ECOSOC</b>	United Nations Economic and Social Council
<b>ECOWAS</b>	United Nations Economic Community of West African States
<b>ERC</b>	Emergency Relief Coordinator (head of OCHA)
<b>ERR</b>	Emergency Response Roster (OCHA)
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>EUTM</b>	European Union Training Mission
<b>FAO</b>	Food and Agriculture Organization (UN)
<b>FC</b>	Force Commander (UN peacekeeping)
<b>FMA</b>	Foreign military asset(s)
<b>G1-9</b>	Staff Officer functions in commands higher than brigade level [ <i>mil</i> ]
<b>GA</b>	United Nations General Assembly
<b>GC</b>	Geneva Conventions
<b>GDACS</b>	Global Disaster Alert and Coordination System
<b>GENCAP</b>	IASC Gender Standby Capacity Project
<b>GPC</b>	Global Protection Cluster
<b>HAO</b>	Humanitarian Affairs Officer
<b>HC</b>	Humanitarian Coordinator (UN)
<b>HCP</b>	Humanitarian Programme Cycle (OCHA)
<b>HCT</b>	Humanitarian Country Team

<b>HNS</b>	Host Nation Support
<b>HOMC</b>	Head of the Military Component (UN missions)
<b>HUMOCC</b>	Humanitarian-Military Operations Coordination Centre
<b>IAP</b>	Integrated Assessment and Planning (UN)
<b>IARRM</b>	Inter-Agency Rapid Response Mechanism (IASC)
<b>IASC</b>	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
<b>ICRC</b>	International Committee of the Red Cross
<b>ICVA</b>	International Council of Voluntary Agencies
<b>IDP</b>	Internally Displaced Person(s)
<b>IED</b>	Improvised Explosive Device
<b>IFRC</b>	International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
<b>IHL</b>	International humanitarian law
<b>IMTC</b>	Integrated Mission Task Force (UN missions)
<b>INSARAG</b>	International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (OCHA)
<b>IOM</b>	International Organization for Migration
<b>UNISDR</b>	United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
<b>ISF</b>	Integrated Strategic Framework (UN missions)
<b>J1-9</b>	Staff Officer functions in Joint Commands [ <i>mil</i> ]
<b>JLOC</b>	Joint Logistics Operations Centre (UN missions)
<b>JMAC</b>	Joint Mission Analysis Centre (UN mission)
<b>JOC</b>	Joint Operations Centre (UN missions)
<b>JOTC</b>	Joint Operations and Tasking Centre (UN missions)
<b>KOICA</b>	Korea International Cooperation Agency
<b>L3</b>	IASC System-Wide Level-3 Emergency
<b>LOAC</b>	Law of Armed Conflict
<b>LOGIK</b>	Logistic Information about In-Kind Relief Aid
<b>MCDA</b>	Military and Civil Defence Assets
<b>MDG</b>	Millennium Development Goals
<b>MILAD</b>	Military Advisor (UN mission)
<b>MINSUMA</b>	United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali
<b>MINUSRO</b>	United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara
<b>MIRA</b>	Multi-Sector Inter-Agency Rapid Assessment
<b>MLT</b>	Mission Leadership Team (UN missions)
<b>MONUSCO</b>	United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
<b>N1-9</b>	Staff Officer functions in Navy Commands [ <i>mil</i> ]
<b>NATO</b>	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
<b>NCO</b>	Non-Commissioned Officers [ <i>mil</i> ]
<b>NDMA</b>	National Disaster Management Authority
<b>NEO</b>	Non-Combatant Evacuation Operations
<b>NFI</b>	Non-food item(s)
<b>NGO</b>	Non-governmental organization



<b>O/OF</b>	Officer Ranks (NATO)
<b>OCHA</b>	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
<b>OFDA</b>	Office of United States Foreign Disaster Assistance (US)
<b>OHCHR</b>	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
<b>OHRM</b>	United Nations Office for Human Resources Management
<b>OPSEC</b>	Operational Security <i>[mil]</i>
<b>OSCE</b>	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
<b>OSOCC</b>	On-Site Operations Coordination Centre
<b>POC</b>	Protection of Civilians
<b>POW</b>	Prisoner of War
<b>PROCAP</b>	IASC Protection Standby Capacity Project
<b>QIP</b>	Quick Impact Project
<b>R2P</b>	Responsibility to Protect
<b>RC</b>	Resident Coordinator
<b>RCRC</b>	Red Cross/Red Crescent
<b>RFA</b>	Request(s) for assistance
<b>S1-9</b>	Staff Officer functions at brigade or battalion level <i>[mil]</i>
<b>SBPP</b>	Stand-By Partnership Programme
<b>SC</b>	Security Council (UN)
<b>SCHR</b>	Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response
<b>SGBV</b>	Sexual and gender-based violence
<b>SITREP</b>	Situation Report
<b>SMG</b>	Senior Management Group (UN missions)
<b>SMT</b>	Security Management Team (UN)
<b>SO</b>	Security Officer
<b>SOFA</b>	Status of Forces Agreement <i>[mil]</i>
<b>SOP</b>	Standard Operation Procedures
<b>SRSg</b>	Special Representative of the Secretary-General
<b>SSR</b>	Security Sector Reform
<b>SWOT</b>	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
<b>TCC</b>	Troop Contributing Country
<b>U1-9</b>	Military Staff Officer positions in UN missions
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UN CIMIC</b>	United Nations Civil-Military Coordination (in peace operations)
<b>UNAMA</b>	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
<b>UNAMI</b>	United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq
<b>UNAMID</b>	African Union/United Nations Hybrid Mission in Darfur
<b>UNCT</b>	United Nations Country Team
<b>UNDAC</b>	United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination
<b>UNDOF</b>	United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (Syria/Israel)
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNFICYP</b>	United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus

<b>UNHAS</b>	United Nations Humanitarian Air Services
<b>UNHCR</b>	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children's Fund
<b>UNMEM</b>	United Nations Military Experts on Mission
<b>UNMISS</b>	United Nations Mission in South Sudan
<b>UNMO</b>	United Nations Military Observer
<b>UNMOGIP</b>	United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan
<b>UNSCO</b>	Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process
<b>UNSOM</b>	United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia
<b>USAF</b>	United States Armed Forces
<b>USG</b>	Under-Secretary-General (UN Headquarters)
<b>WFP</b>	World Food Programme
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organization
<b>WO</b>	Warrant Officer <i>[mil]</i>