



Scenario: Between a Rock and a Hard Place

Group Size: 4-15

This scenario may contain explicit language and references to harmful situations which may be emotionally activating for some people. If you need support, services are available through the [CAF Member Assistance Program \(CFMAP\)](#) and the [Employee Assistance Program \(EAP\)](#).

Your unit is serving as part of the post-conflict resolution phase designed to encourage civilians to return to their homes. You are the Section Commander for a dismounted patrol in an urban area responsible for “showing a presence.” Your Rules of Engagement (ROEs) allow for the proportional use of force, including deadly force, to protect yourself, other members of your unit or any other United Nations (UN) soldiers or employees. The ROEs do not provide authorization to use force to protect host country civilians.

During one such patrol, you come across a group of host country paramilitaries beating some civilians. You tell them to stop, but they laugh and insult you. They are all armed, but in no way threaten you. As your group approaches, several of them come to block access to the scene of the violence. They do so without weapons or any threatening behaviour since they know that you are not authorized to use force.

You call your company headquarters for permission to intervene or to at least send out the local police force to deal with the situation. They remind you that you must adhere to the ROEs and tell you to “wait out” while they scramble for an answer. In the meantime, the level of violence increases.

Categories

Principles:	Respect the Dignity of all Persons, Obey and Support Lawful Authority
Values:	Integrity, Courage
Cultural Themes:	Service, Identity
Misconduct Types:	Not Specific
GBA Plus Themes:	Culture, Geography, Race/Ethnicity
Audience:	Canadian Armed Forces

Facilitator's Guide

Learning Objectives:

- Discuss the ethical obligations of “Respecting the Dignity of all Persons” and “Obey and Support Lawful Authority” in an operational setting.
- Discuss the ethical values of integrity and courage in addition to responsibility/duty, and courage of the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) Ethos in an operational setting.

Facilitation Questions:

1. What would you do in this situation? What are the considerations?
 - Allow open discussion from the group.
 - Ethical concerns: The ethical concern relates to the way you feel about not being able to provide aid to people who cannot defend themselves. Is it ethical to stand by without intervening while people are being harmed?
 - Personal Factors: The limitations of the ROEs play against your own personal values and morals. The relationship you are supposed to be fostering with these villagers who are being abused is now in jeopardy if you do not act to stop these injustices.
 - Environmental factors: This could be happening all the time. You now must decide what you are going to do about it. You must consider the impact on your mission's integrity if you do not act. You must determine whether the local authorities know that this is happening. You must consider the greater effect on environmental stability if you do not act or bring it to the forefront.
2. What is the ethical dilemma in this situation?
 - This is a competing values dilemma.
 - You are torn between putting your patrol in harm's way for persons that you are not mandated to protect. You know that the right thing to do is to intervene, however, your ROEs are clear when it comes to the use of force, including deadly force.
3. What are some potential courses of action that could be taken in this scenario?
 - Option 1: Move close to where the abuse is happening while waiting for further instructions, but do not use force. Your presence may make the belligerents feel uneasy and make them stop. If the belligerents use force, you are entitled to protect yourself with a proportional use of force. You may, however, lose credibility with the town's population if they see you standing by doing nothing.
 - Option 2: Provide a show of force by attempting to get between the abused and the abusers. While this is happening, have your HQ call the local police/authorities to intervene. If you have imbedded media with you, encourage them to document the belligerent's actions to see if they will back down. Interference could cause an escalation of violence, thus endangering the lives of your section as well as other victims.
 - Option 3: Do not wait for further instructions, disregard the ROEs, and use force to stop the belligerents from committing further harm. Be prepared to be accountable for your decisions.