



# Scenario: Confronting Racism in Disaster Relief

Group Size: 4-15

***This scenario contains explicit language related to anti-Indigenous racism, 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 \(EAP\)](#).***

Sergeant (Sgt) Leblanc is part of a military team that is sent to assist an Indigenous community that has been affected by a severe flood. The community is in a remote area and has limited access to resources and services. You are responsible for providing humanitarian aid, such as food, water, medical supplies, and shelter. One of your team members, Corporal (Cpl) Sibikwe, is an Indigenous person who belongs to a different community than the one being helped. The team has been working hard to build trust and rapport with the local people, and to understand their cultural values, needs, and priorities in the relief efforts.

One day, Sgt Leblanc overhears a team member who he supervises, Master Corporal (MCpl) Wilson, making derogatory remarks about the Indigenous community. They say things like "They don't deserve our help", and "They should just assimilate and stop living in the past." They also mock Cpl Sibikwe for being "too native" and "not a real Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) soldier." Sgt Leblanc is shocked and angered by the comments and wonders how MCpl Wilson can be so disrespectful and racist. Sgt Leblanc wonders what they should do about this situation.

## Categories

Principles:	Respect the Dignity of All Persons
Values:	Integrity, Courage, Excellence
Cultural Themes:	Leadership
Misconduct Types:	Hateful Conduct, Racism, Harassment
GBA Plus Themes:	Indigenous, Rank
Audience:	Canadian Armed Forces

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# Facilitator's Guide

## Learning Objectives:

- Discuss the ethical principle of Respect the dignity of all persons this scenario.
- Discuss the ethical values of integrity, courage, and excellence in this scenario.

## Facilitation Questions:

1. What is the ethical dilemma in this scenario?
  - Open group discussion.
  - The ethical dilemma in this scenario is how Sgt Leblanc should address Cpl Wilson's racist and disrespectful remarks about the Indigenous Peoples, and Cpl Sibikwe.
2. What considerations are at play with respect to the Department of National Defence (DND) and CAF Code of Values and Ethics? Open group discussion.
  - Respect the dignity of all persons: The community being helped, as well as Cpl Sibikwe have the right to be treated respectfully.
  - Courage: Sgt Leblanc will require courage to speak up and engage in a likely difficult conversation.
  - How the values of integrity and excellence come to play also in this scenario?
3. Does MCpl Wilson's words constitute hateful conduct in this scenario? Open group discussion.
  - Hateful Conduct definition: An act or conduct, including the display or communication of words, symbols, or images, by a CAF member, that they knew or ought reasonably to have known would constitute, encourage, justify, or promote violence or hatred against a person or persons of an identifiable group. (ref: DAOD 5019-0 linked below)
4. What possible courses of action could Sgt Leblanc take in this scenario? Which is the most appropriate option? Why?
  - Option 1: Act. Sgt Leblanc should speak to MCpl Wilson immediately, as well as the rest of the team. The comments constitute hateful conduct and are unacceptable and must be addressed. DAOD 5019-0 para 4.3 lists some appropriate repercussions e.g., training, administrative or disciplinary actions. There is an opportunity to have a one-on-one discussion to allow the MCpl to express their perspective - to hear what underlying beliefs and biases led to the comments. The Sgt can then provide reasoning and how it relates to the tasking. The Sgt should report the incident to the chain of command to ensure that appropriate action is taken. The Sgt should also offer support and allyship to Cpl Sibikwe, including offering support services and clearly communicating that this behaviour will not be tolerated.
  - Option 2: Ignore the incidents. Sgt Leblanc could act as if they did not hear the comments to avoid any confrontation. This would risk Cpl Sibikwe potentially facing further harm and feeling excluded from the team. Members of the Indigenous community could also hear the comments, and this could contribute to anti-Indigenous racist rhetoric in the CAF, white supremacy, as well as discredit the CAF.
    - Facilitator note: this is NOT an option. This behaviour cannot be ignored at any cost, despite rank, power, hierarchy, intent of the comments, etc. The impact is significant, and serious.
  - Option 3: Seek advice. If Sgt Leblanc is unsure of how to deal with the situation, they could ask for advice from the chain of command, a trusted colleague, or someone who has been trained in dealing with issues of racism and hateful conduct. Once they have received advice, they should ensure the case goes up the chain of command either through them, or a person they disclosed to that has the power to do so.
5. In this scenario, if you were part of this team and overheard the racist comments, how would you try to uphold the values of inclusion, leadership, teamwork, and respecting the dignity of all persons? How would you ensure that commitments of reconciliation are actively worked upon in our day to day activities within the CAF? Open group discussion.
6. In this scenario, there is a possibility members of the Indigenous community heard these comments, or comments made at other times by the MCpl. There is also a chance that there are other members of the unit who are Indigenous but have chosen not to disclose their identity. How can the Sgt ensure that the relationship between the CAF and the Indigenous community is resilient against white supremacy and racism? How can the Sgt ensure the unit is actively anti-Racist? Open group discussion.
  - a. Discuss reconciliation, privilege, bias, etc as it comes up.

**\*\*Note to facilitators:** Please review [DAOD 5019-0, Conduct and Performance Deficiencies](#) and [CF Mil Pers Instruction 01/20](#) (DWAN link) on hateful conduct in preparation for this scenario.