



Scenario: Ordered Not to Share

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 \(EAP\)](#).

You are in command of a United Nations (UN) protection force at a refugee camp in the middle of a war zone. Your mission is to protect the refugees from local bandits, militia, and belligerents. A humanitarian organization runs the camp, while your team provides security. A week ago, fighting blocked your supply route. Despite rationing, your soldiers have had nothing to eat for three days and are on their last bottles of water in a hot, dry, desert climate. Refugees, especially children, are dying at an increasing rate, and the humanitarian worker warns that unless they receive water and food soon, hundreds more will perish. This tragedy has had an adverse impact on the morale of your soldiers, as they are showing the signs of dehydration and weakness from starvation.

You receive word that a convoy will force its way through today with water and food for your troops only. You are told that a humanitarian aid convoy will be deployed, hopefully, in the next couple of days. You will be receiving three days' worth of bottled water and rations for your force. Your Commanding Officer (CO) orders you not to give these supplies away and to ensure that your troops are hydrated and nourished. Further supplies may not be forthcoming, and the route may be blocked again. You consider what you will do with this water and food. A media team (with their own supplies) is in the camp, and they are aware of your dilemma. They are eagerly awaiting your decision.

Categories

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

Facilitator's Guide

Learning Objectives:

- Discuss the ethical obligations to “Respect the Dignity of all Persons” and “Obey and Support Lawful Authority” in an operational setting.
- Discuss the ethical values of responsibility, duty, integrity, and courage as well as duty, a professional expectation from 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 main ethical concern is that the people you have been tasked with protecting are dying because of an insufficient supply of food and water. When you receive supplies for your troops, you are ordered not to share.
 - Personal factors: Your mission is in jeopardy because of a lack of supplies. You may feel morally responsible for the well-being of the refugees and the order not to share may create moral injury because while your troops eat, others die.
 - Environmental factors: The dry, hot weather provides an unbearable climate for the refugees and for your troops. As refugees die, your troops will become agitated with the situation and experience tremendous guilt and anger. There is media present.
2. What is the ethical dilemma in this situation?
 - This is a harm dilemma.
 - There is no clear right and wrong answer. An order of this magnitude, although meant to be followed, would be hard to enforce. Your soldiers would have difficulty in not sharing their rations and water. This is a harm dilemma because no matter what choice you make, someone will suffer. What are the potential moral injuries that could arise from decisions made in this ethical scenario?
3. What are some potential courses of action that could be taken in this scenario?
 - Option 1: Give some or all the water to the non-governmental organization (NGO) for the refugees, especially children who are at greatest risk. You are disobeying a lawful command and risking the lives of your soldiers; however, the refugees may live.
 - Option 2: Allow the company leadership to make the decision for their platoons. This means that some will be sharing while others will not. The decision to divest yourself of this decision will most likely cause divisions amongst the soldiers and be viewed within your chain of command as an abdication of responsibility. This option would generate the greatest degree of adverse consequences.
 - Option 3: Follow the order to the letter, allocate all the water and food to your troops and order them to consume it for their health and operational effectiveness. You explain your actions to the humanitarian worker and the media.