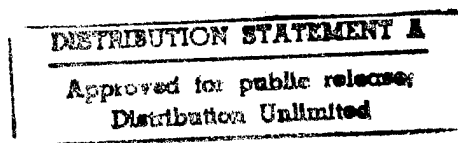


Improving Marine Coordination with Relief Organizations in Humanitarian Assistance Operations

Jonathan T. Dworken



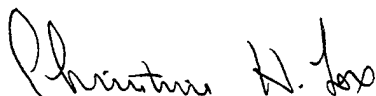
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4401 Ford Avenue • Alexandria, Virginia 22302-1498

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Christine H. Fox". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'C'.

Christine H. Fox, Director
Operational Policy Team
Policy, Strategy, and Forces Division

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Contents

Summary	1
Who are the relief organizations?	1
Why is coordination important?	2
What are the problems in coordination?	2
What options are available to the Marines?	3
Introduction	5
Purpose	6
Scope and limitations	6
Sources	7
Outline	8
Why is coordination important?	9
What is coordination?	9
Military perspective on coordination	10
Relief-organization perspective of coordination	11
Who are the relief organizations?	13
U.S. Government.	13
NGOs/PVOs	15
International organizations	17
International Red Cross and Red Crescent	17
UN agencies.	17
What are the problems in coordination?	19
Military education and training	19
Understanding of OFDA	19
Understanding of NGOs/PVOs/IOs	20
Understanding of relief operations	21
Relief-organization education and training.	23
Lack of coordination during crisis action planning	25
Operational-level coordination structure	27
Other potential problems	29

Strategic airlift	29
Peacetime planning.	29
Strategic-level coordination	30
Tactical-level coordination	30
What options do the Marines have?	31
1. Distribute OFDA Guide	32
2. Deployment briefing	33
3. Written Professional Military Education course	34
4. One-Day PME course	35
5. Week-long PME course	36
6. Relief-organization courses	37
7. OFDA exercise participation	38
8. NGO/PVO/IO exercise participation	39
9. Guide to the military	40
10. Military briefing in the field	41
11. DART training	41
12. OFDA participation in CAP	42
13. NGO/PVO/IO participation in CAP	42
14. JCS liaison	43
15. Advance party liaison	43
16. Generic information requirements	44
17. Institutionalize the CMOC.	45
18. Focus on coordination.	45
19. Increase OFDA roles.	46
20. Memorandums of Understanding.	47
Conclusions	49
Bibliography	51

Summary

The Center for Naval Analyses (CNA) conducted a study for I Marine Expeditionary Force (I MEF) and Marine Corps Combat Development Command (MCCDC), to address the question of how the Marine Corps can improve its ability to conduct humanitarian assistance operations (HAOs). This paper focuses on improving coordination with relief organizations. Other papers from this study are listed on the back cover.

The military must coordinate operations with relief organizations to perform HAOs effectively. But past operations and exercises have had significant problems with such coordination. In fact, most after-action reports cite coordination with relief organizations as one of the main problems. It is also one of the most difficult problems.

In this paper, we examine how the Marines can improve coordination with relief organizations by assessing coordination problems, and identifying a series of practical options to solve those problems. We also assess the effectiveness and costs of each option.

Who are the relief organizations?

Officers must coordinate during HAOs with the following key groups of relief organizations:

- Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and private voluntary organizations (PVOs), such as CARE and OXFAM.
- International organizations (IOs), including the International Red Cross and various United Nations (UN) organizations, such as the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, UN Development Program, and the World Food Program.
- The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) and its Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART), which deploys to disaster areas to coordinate U.S. Government relief efforts.

In most HAOs with military participation, NGOs/PVOs/IOs provide relief, a DART coordinates U.S. relief provision, and a deployed military command supports relief organizations by providing transportation, convoy security, medical assistance, and so forth.

Why is coordination important?

In general, coordination between the military and relief organizations through information exchange and joint planning is important to avoid waste and duplication of effort, harmonize relief efforts and policies, avoid counterproductive efforts, and ensure that military support to relief organizations is effective and efficient.

From a military perspective, it is important to coordinate with relief organizations to identify relief requirements, develop relief strategies and plans, provide support effectively and efficiently, and gather information. From the perspective of relief organizations, it is important to coordinate with the military to ensure that their organizations get the proper support to carry out their relief efforts.

What are the problems in coordination?

We examined a series of past HAO exercises and operations to identify problems in military coordination with relief organizations. Four major problems stand out:

- Most officers have insufficient knowledge of relief organizations and how they operate; this makes it difficult for the military to effectively support the relief effort.
- Most relief organization workers have insufficient knowledge of the military, military operations, and the specific forces and commands deployed; this makes it difficult for them to request appropriate support from the military.
- The military rarely coordinates with relief organizations during crisis action planning (CAP), when it is important that it receive information from relief organizations on the situation at the disaster scene to plan and synchronize military and humanitarian efforts.
- There is no standard operational-level coordination structure, and thus no forum for military-relief organization cooperation.

What options are available to the Marines?

Table 1 outlines the 20 options we examine in this paper. For each option, coverage (the number of officers or relief workers who could benefit from the option) is noted, along with the option's effectiveness (for those covered), the problem addressed, and the costs (both financial and opportunity costs) to the Marines. The table summarizes coverage, effectiveness, and costs using a high (H), medium (M), and low (L) scale. These are not exact measures—only a shorthand way of summarizing the analysis of each option presented in the body of the paper.

As becomes clear from the table, to improve coordination with relief organizations, the Marines will have to implement several options.

Table 1. Summary of options

Option	Coverage	Problem Addressed				Cost
		1	2	3	4	
Distribute OFDA's Field Operations Guide to officers	H	L				L
Develop brief on relief organizations/operations during deployment	H	L				L
Write a USMC PME course on relief organizations/operations	M	M				L
Develop a one-day USMC course on relief organizations/operations	M	M				M
Develop week-long USMC course on relief organizations/operations	L	H				H
Send officers to relief-organization courses	L	M				H
Invite OFDA to participate in military HAO exercises	L/M	M	M			L
Invite NGOs/PVOs/IOs to participate in military HAO exercises	L/L	M	L			M
Develop military guide for relief workers	H		M			L
Prepare military briefing for relief workers to give during deployment	H		M			L
Have the military participate in DART training	L		M			L
Include OFDA participation in CAP	M			M		L
Include NGO/PVO/IO participation in CAP	L			L		M
Request JCS liaison to relief organizations during CAP	H			M		L
Send advance party to coordinate with relief organizations	H			H		M
Develop generic information requirements for HAOs	H			M		L
Institutionalize the Civil-Military Operations Center	H				H	L
Focus on coordination with relief organizations in the field	H				M	L
Increase OFDA roles	H				M	L
Develop Memorandums of Understanding with relief organizations	L				L	M

Introduction

The purpose of military HAOs is to relieve the suffering of populations affected by a natural or man-made disaster. But the military rarely provides relief on its own throughout an operation. Civilian humanitarian relief organizations are often on the ground when the military deploys to an area, or they follow soon after.

These relief organizations, many with significant resources and experienced staffs, specialize in providing relief. Whoever is in charge of an operation as a whole—a host-nation government, the United Nations, or a U.S. military command—the military and relief organizations usually develop the same relationship. The relief organizations provide the actual relief and the military supports their efforts by providing assets and conducting operations (e.g., transportation, convoy security). This relationship makes perfect sense given the expertise of the relief workers and the resources of the military.

To support these relief organizations, the military must coordinate its efforts with them. Past operations and exercises, however, have shown that military coordination with relief organizations has been vital, but difficult.¹

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1. See, for example, Jonathan T. Dworken. *Military Relations with Humanitarian Relief Organizations: Observations from Restore Hope*, Oct 1993 (CNA Research Memorandum 93-140); Balbeer K. Sihra. "Relief Agencies and the U.S. Military: Partners in Humanitarian Operations," *Marine Corps Gazette*, Vol. 78, No. 3 (Mar 1994): 43-44; Capt Gerald F. Nalepa, USMCR. "Marine Corps Humanitarian and Disaster Relief Operations," *Marine Corps Gazette*, Vol. 77, No. 2 (Feb 1993): 23; LtCol Frank Lorenz, USMC. "Law and Anarchy in Somalia," *Parameters*, Vol XXIII, No. 4 (Winter 1993-1994): 38; and LtCol Gary Anderson, USMC, *Operation Sea Angel: A Retrospective of the 1991 Humanitarian Relief Operation in Bangladesh* (Unpublished Paper: 39).

To improve military coordination with relief organizations, it is necessary to examine the topic closely. Past studies and discussions on the topic have usually been cursory or they concentrated on one operation, identified key players, or broadly reviewed several past operations.²

HAOs involving the military are likely to increase in the future. Coordinating with relief agencies is one of the keys to success in these operations. Whether the Marines participate in such operations as the core of a Joint Task Force (JTF) or as a JTF component, they must be prepared to coordinate with relief organizations. Considering ways to improve that coordination is therefore very important.

Purpose

Because the Marine Corps will probably participate in future HAOs, CNA has undertaken a study to examine the requirements for such operations. This paper supports that study by examining one such requirement—coordination with relief organizations. The paper draws on the lessons of past operations and recent humanitarian assistance exercises to identify problems in coordination, present options *the Marine Corps can implement* to address these problems, and evaluate the costs and effectiveness of those options.

Scope and limitations

This paper covers two types of HAOs—those in response to a natural disaster and those that are a result of civil strife. The latter types of HAOs, which often cause, exacerbate, or do not allow the mitigation of starvation—are called complex humanitarian emergencies.

However, the scope of this paper is restricted to *international* HAOs—not domestic ones. Coordination problems are most difficult in international operations because they lack an overall relief coordinating structure. In domestic HAOs, by contrast, such a body exists—the

2. One informative conference was held by OFDA in May 1993. See USAID, *Civilian/Military Involvement in International Humanitarian Interventions*, Conference Proceedings of an Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance Symposium, 26–27 May 1993.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Moreover, there are two specific officers in charge: the Federal Coordinating Officer and the Defense Coordinating Officer, each with defined responsibilities. The types and limitations of military support provided to relief organizations, as well as the command and control organizations and procedures, are spelled out in doctrine, plans, and laws.³ Although some domestic HAOs have had some problems in military coordination with relief organizations, even a cursory review of after-action reports reveals fewer problems than in international HAOs.⁴

Sources

This paper uses several different types of sources to examine the coordination problems between the military and relief organizations:

- Extensive body of literature on subjects relating to military HAOs, including after-action reports, lessons-learned databases, conference proceedings, and academic studies.
- The author's personal experience and that of other CNA analysts deployed to Somalia, Bosnia, and Haiti.
- Lessons learned from past HAO exercises.
- The results of a series of seminars and wargames held at CNA for the HAO study. These games covered the following scenarios: peacekeeping/humanitarian assistance in Angola, volcano relief in the Philippines, and earthquake relief in Peru.⁵
- A series of detailed case studies written especially for the CNA HAO project, including Operation Provide Comfort (refugee

3. Headquarters, U.S. Army and U.S. Marine Corps, *Domestic Support Operations*, FM 100-19 and FMFM 7-10, 1 Jul 1993

4. For a discussion of problems and potential solutions for Domestic Operations, see Adam B. Siegel et al. *The Marine Corps and Domestic Operations: Insights on Requirements*, Apr 1996 (CNA Annotated Briefing 95-86).

5. Katherine A.W. McGrady et al. *CNA's Humanitarian Assistance Operations Game: A Summary Report*, Nov 1995 (CNA Information Memorandum 94-392)

assistance in Turkey and Northern Iraq, 1991–present), Operation Sea Angel (disaster relief in Bangladesh, 1991), and Operation Fiery Vigil (evacuation and disaster relief in the Philippines, 1991).⁶

- Extensive interviews with participants in past HAOs, including government and nongovernment relief organization workers.

Outline

In this paper, we start with a review of why coordination with relief organizations is important and who the relief organizations are. We then consider four major problems in military coordination with relief organizations. Finally, we present and evaluate a series of options the Marine Corps can implement to address the problems, and consider the cost and effectiveness of the options.

6. Adam B. Siegel. *Requirements for Humanitarian Assistance and Peace Operations: Insights from Seven Case Studies*, Mar 1995 (CNA Research Memorandum 94-74). The other case studies in this report were not used because they focused on domestic HAOs or witnessed no significant interaction with relief organizations.

Why is coordination important?

In this section, we review the meaning of coordination and the importance of coordination between the military and relief organizations.

What is coordination?

Coordination in relief operations is the systematic use of resources to deliver humanitarian assistance in a cohesive and effective way.⁷ The purposes of coordination in relief operations are to avoid waste and duplication of effort, harmonize relief efforts and policies, avoid counterproductive efforts, and transition between different phases of relief (i.e., relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction, and development).⁸

Coordination is accomplished through two key mechanisms: information exchange and joint planning. To coordinate effectively, the military and relief organizations should do the following *together*.

- Negotiate and maintain a framework for cooperation (i.e., an organization with rules and procedures, as well as a set of established expectations).
- Perform assessments to determine requirements.
- Exchange information on capabilities and plans.
- Plan operations, including a division of labor and functions.

7. Larry Minear et al. *United Nations Coordination of the International Humanitarian Response to the Gulf Crisis 1990-1992*, Occasional Paper No. 13. Providence, RI: Thomas J. Watson Institute for International Studies, 1992: 3

8. See Alan J. Taylor. *Coordination for Disasters*, Dallas, TX: INTERTECT, 1978; and *Coordination: Issues and Problems In Coordinating Post-Disaster Programs*, Dallas, TX: INTERTECT, 1981.

- Execute operations.
- Continue to gather, analyze, and disseminate information throughout the operation.

Military perspective on coordination

Relief organizations have a great deal of expertise and information, and are likely to provide most of the relief in any situation. From the military perspective, therefore, it is important to coordinate with them to:

- Gain their assistance in performing assessments to identify relief requirements
- Help the military develop appropriate relief strategies and plans
- Decrease the military's level of effort by ensuring that the military does not duplicate the efforts of relief organizations
- Ensure that military support is effective and efficient by gaining a better understanding of the types and quantities of support required by relief organizations
- Gain valuable information from relief workers who have been in an area for a long time
- Help the military assess the effectiveness of the relief operation.⁹

9. See Jonathan Dworken. *Assessing the Effectiveness of Humanitarian Operations*, Draft, 1995 (CNA Field Memorandum) and *Measuring the Effectiveness of Humanitarian Operations: Observations from Restore Hope*, 1993 (Unpublished Paper); I MEF. *Emerald Express 94 After-Action Report*, Jan 1994 (prepared by John Nelson et al., CNA); and Dr. F.M. Burkle, Jr. et al. "Complex Humanitarian Emergencies III: Measures of Effectiveness," *Prehospital and Disaster Medicine*, Vol. 10, No. 1 (Jan-Mar 1995): 48-56.

Relief-organization perspective of coordination

From the relief-organization perspective, coordination with the military is important to gain its support for a wide variety of tasks. Table 2 shows *some* of the requirements facing relief organizations after a disaster or during civil strife (especially if the operation is taking place in a country whose government is no longer functioning and cannot provide essential services). For each requirement, the table shows *some* possible military supporting tasks.

Especially important is support that relief organizations may not be able to get elsewhere (e.g., security) or they may need immediately (the military can deploy logistics equipment to an area rapidly). As for security, relief is often threatened by local forces because they view it as a weapon—they feel their supporters should get supplies, but their opponents should not. As for immediate assistance, relief professionals have been impressed by the ability of military forces to deploy and set up operations quickly.¹⁰

Relief organizations want to coordinate with the military to ensure that such military support is provided efficiently, effectively, when needed, and properly. Relief organizations also want to coordinate with the military to receive information that will help with their relief efforts, ensure that military efforts do not interfere with long-term development, and try to prevent the military from starting projects that cannot be sustained by the follow-on organization (such as the UN, a relief organization(s), or the host nation).

10. Leon Gordenker and Thomas G. Weiss. "Humanitarian Emergencies and Military Help: Some Conceptual Observations," *Disasters*, Vol. 13, No. 2: 129; and Thomas G. Weiss and Kurt Campbell. "Military Humanitarianism"; Larry Minear et al. *Humanitarianism and War: Learning the Lessons of Recent Armed Conflicts*, Occasional Paper No. 8, Providence, RI: Thomas J. Watson Jr. Institute for International Studies, 1991: 51–52

Table 2. Military support to relief efforts^a

Relief efforts	Military supporting task
Perform assessments	Perform assessments
Perform search and rescue	Transport assessors to sites
Provide emergency health services	Assist in search and rescue
	Provide medical supplies and services
	Provide other support to hospitals
	Transport injured to hospitals
Provide supplies to populations	Provide military items
	Provide potable water
Transport supplies to region	Transport supplies into country
Unload supplies at port	Clear debris from port
	Repair port and port facilities
	Provide off-load equipment
	Off-load supplies
	Supervise port facilities
	Provide port security
Unload supplies at airfield	Clear debris from airport
	Rebuild runway and facilities
	Provide airspace and air traffic control
	Off-load supplies
	Supervise airfield facilities
	Provide airfield security
Store supplies	Build/rebuild storage facilities
	Provide warehouse security
Transport supplies to affected area	Clear debris from roads
	Repair roads and bridges
	Clear mines from roads
	Provide fuel
	Transport relief supplies
	Escort convoys
Establish/run relief camps	Transport persons to camps
	Build camps
	Provide external and internal security
	Provide security for relief distribution

a. Sources: CNA, *Assessing the Effectiveness of Humanitarian Operations*; Peter Walker, "Foreign Military Resources for Disaster Relief," *Disasters*, Vol. XVI, No. 2: 154–156; Gordonker and Weiss: 125–129; and CNA's *Humanitarian Assistance Operations Game*

Who are the relief organizations?

In this section, we briefly review several types of relief organizations and their characteristics. Our purpose is not to present a full examination of these organizations—that has been done elsewhere.¹¹ Rather, our goal is to review them in enough detail to allow us to examine the problems of coordination and suggest possible solutions to these problems.

U.S. Government

USAID is the lead agency for U.S. Government relief operations.¹² It works in all four areas of the relief to develop continuum (i.e., relief, rehabilitation, recovery, and development). But in HAOs, the military is most likely to work with USAID's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA).

OFDA deals with disasters in all parts of the world and can respond in many ways. These include deploying an assessment team to the affected area, sending OFDA stockpiles or locally purchased relief supplies, and making grants for NGO/PVO/IO relief activities.

OFDA may also deploy a Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) to the field. From the perspective of the military, coordination with OFDA's deployed DARTs is most important.¹³ DARTs include U.S.

11. See, for example, the appendices of Joint Pub 3-08, *Interagency Coordination During Joint Operations*, Draft, Dec 1994; and F.M. Burkle, "Complex Humanitarian Emergencies I: Concepts and Participants," *Prehospital and Disaster Medicine*, Vol X, No. 1 (Jan-Mar 1995): 55-61.

12. The President appointed the USAID administrator to be the government's Special Coordinator for International Disaster Assistance. See White House Letter, 15 Sep 1993.

13. Information on DARTs is from OFDA, *Field Operations Guide (FOG) for Disaster Assessment and Response*, Version 2.0, Jun 1994.

officials with a wide variety of disaster-relief skills; they help the local U.S. Embassy or USAID mission manage the U.S. Government response to a disaster. A DART's composition and structure will vary depending on the mission. Although the focus of a DART's activities will vary according to the type of disaster, DART objectives may include the following:

- Coordinate the assessment of needs.
- Recommend U.S. Government response actions.
- Manage U.S. Government on site relief activities.
- Manage the receipt, distribution, and monitoring of U.S. Government-provided relief supplies.
- Gather and disseminate information on the general disaster situation.
- Monitor the effectiveness of U.S. Government-funded relief activities.

From the military perspective, the most important work the DARTs can do is in the area of command and control (in the broad sense). DARTs track and evaluate relief efforts; collect, analyze, and disseminate information; and (can try to) coordinate the efforts of NGOs/PVOs. They can also serve the important function of coordinating between the U.S. military and the other groups that may be involved in relief efforts, such as NGOs/PVOs/IOs and a host nation. In this capacity, DARTs may serve as intermediaries. Some DART members may have prior military experience or are in the reserves, giving them the ability to act as "translators" between the military and relief communities.

There are, of course, other U.S. Government agencies involved in relief. Within the State Department, the appropriate regional bureau will always be involved. Probably the Bureau of Refugee Affairs and Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs would also be involved. For the most part, however, these groups would either be involved only in Washington or they would send officials to be part of the State Department team in country. Officers would not extensively interact with them.

The same holds true for the Office of Humanitarian and Refugee Affairs within the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict, and other Department of Defense offices.

NGOs/PVOs

NGOs/PVOs are nonprofit organizations that are not affiliated with governments. (NGO is the term used in Europe and the Developing World; PVO is the term used in the United States.) There are currently more than 1,300 NGOs/PVOs worldwide. Perhaps the best description of the NGO/PVO "community" comes from a recent UN conference.

As a group, NGOs are a diverse and unruly lot. They thrive and grow on a voluntary basis without external constitutional mandate. They survive and prosper if their work is perceived to be of value to those who join and support them. They are effective externally if their work gains credibility and if they are perceived to have broad support.

They range from large well-established, highly respected, and well-funded organizations to ones created or dominated by a single individual with a few dollars and a few friends. Some clearly serve a broad public interest. Others focus on narrow private interests. Describing the NGO community as amorphous is an understatement.¹⁴

NGOs/PVOs range greatly in size, effectiveness, capabilities, mandates, sources of funding, types of relief provided, and feelings about cooperation with the military.¹⁵ Major NGOs/PVOs, including CARE, Doctors Without Borders, OXFAM, and Irish Concern, can be found in many disaster areas and complex humanitarian emergencies.

-
14. *The UN System and NGOs: New Relationships for a New Era?* Report of the Twenty-Fifth United Nations Issues Conference, the Stanley Foundation, New York, Feb 18–20, 1994: 9
 15. For a full listing and description of NGOs/PVOs registered with USAID (and thus eligible for USAID funding) see USAID, *Voluntary Foreign Aid Programs*, 1994.

With regard to coordination, several important facts about NGOs/PVOs should be kept in mind:

- They are aware of the political, administrative, and institutional obstacles to coordination, and some feel that a quick (but uncoordinated) response to crises may, in some cases, be preferable to stifling regulation.¹⁶
- Many NGOs/PVOs receive considerable funds from USAID, which gives the DART some leverage over them in the field.
- Some NGOs/PVOs have a political bias and may be left-leaning (which makes them wary of cooperating with the military).
- Different levels in NGO/PVO chains of command have different priorities: the national headquarters looks to donor and organizational concerns, whereas the field staff is more concerned with the day-to-day difficulties of providing assistance.¹⁷

This discussion of NGOs/PVOs does not include one important organization—the American Council for Voluntary International Aid (InterAction). InterAction, an OFDA-funded association of 152 PVOs, focuses on improving the effectiveness and professionalism of its members.¹⁸ From the military perspective, InterAction's role as a forum for PVO collaboration and information exchanges may be helpful. InterAction holds regular meetings and planning sessions with PVOs, which gives the military a place to communicate with a wide variety of PVOs. InterAction does not send staff to operations, but holds coordination meetings in Washington. Another organization—the Licross/Volags Steering Committee for Disasters—performs a similar function for several European-based NGOs and IOs.

16. Minear et al. *United Nations Coordination of the International Humanitarian Response to the Gulf Crisis 1990-1992*: 3. The argument some relief workers make is similar to those Marine officers who find "synchronization" a detriment to successful maneuver warfare.

17. Andrew Natsios, "The International Humanitarian Response System," *Parameters*, Spring 1995

18. *Civilian/Military Involvement in International Humanitarian Interventions*: A-7 to A-8

International organizations

The military is likely to come into contact with two types of IOs: the International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC) and UN organizations.

International Red Cross and Red Crescent

The Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement is comprised of the ICRC and the Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. The ICRC is an independent humanitarian institution that acts as a neutral intermediary during armed conflicts to assist victims in three ways:

- **Protection activities:** It provides medical, relief, and financial assistance to prisoners of war and “political” detainees; this assistance is frequently extended to their families.
- **Medical activities:** It provides direct care of the wounded, medicine and medical equipment supplies, vaccination campaigns, nutrition programs, water purification, sanitation and public hygiene, and orthopedic work.
- **Relief:** As a bridge to rehabilitation, it provides emergency food aid, shelter material, blankets, clothing, soap, kitchen utensils, seed, agricultural tools, and livestock vaccinations.¹⁹

The Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent societies, which consists mostly of national chapters affiliated with the ICRC, provides relief and medical care. It does *not* have the ICRC’s protection mandate.

UN agencies

A military unit might have to coordinate with several UN agencies. In the future, possibly the most important organization is the UN Department of Humanitarian Affairs (UNDHA), which sends to the field an emergency coordinator and a UN Disaster Management

19. *Civilian/Military Involvement in International Humanitarian Intervention:* A-10 to A-12

Team (UNDMT) during complex humanitarian emergencies. This team (1) handles negotiations to allow for relief delivery, and (2) mobilizes and coordinates international relief efforts. But UNDHA is a new organization that is still developing its capabilities.

Also, officers might have to coordinate with a series of other *operational* UN organizations in the field:

- The UN High Commissioner of Refugees (UNHCR) coordinates the UN response to refugee emergencies. UNHCR may take the lead if refugees are the primary problem.
- The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) focuses on development issues and disaster preparedness. The UNDP representative can coordinate all UN agencies, and provides administrative support to the UNDHA.
- The World Food Program (WFP) coordinates food delivery.
- The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) provides assistance to children, pregnant women, and lactating mothers.
- World Health Organization (WHO) provides health assistance to affected populations.

Thus, many UN organizations may be in the field. This situation is more complex than it appears, however, because (1) several UN agencies have overlapping mandates; (2) it is not clear which UN agency would be "in the lead" in any emergency; and (3) UN headquarters does not always delegate sufficient authority.²⁰

20. Larry Minear et al. *Humanitarian Action in the Former Yugoslavia: The UN's Role 1991-1993*, Occasional Paper No. 18. Providence, RI: Thomas J. Watson Institute for International Studies, 1994; and General Accounting Office, 94-156 BR, *Humanitarian Intervention: Effectiveness of UN Operations in Somalia*, Apr 1994

What are the problems in coordination?

In this section, we discuss a series of problems the military faces in meeting the requirement of coordination with relief organizations. We focus on four large concerns: military understanding of relief organizations, relief organization understanding of the military, coordination during planning, and operational-level coordination structures. For each, we try to be specific about what *exactly* the problem is, which makes it easier to develop and assess possible solutions.

Military education and training

Understanding of OFDA

OFDA's DARTs can play a key role in serving as an interface between officers and NGOs/PVOs/IOs. They can also help officers develop relief strategies and plans, understand how to provide relief, and assess the effectiveness of relief efforts. As U.S. Government officials, many DART members have security clearances (though some augmentees from organizations such as the Center for Disease Control may not) and can be trusted with sensitive information.

But in past operations, many officers have deployed without understanding who the DARTs are and what they can do. This was a large problem in Operation Provide Relief (airlift of relief supplies from Kenya to Somalia).²¹ In that operation, the JTF was overburdened with NGOs/PVOs/IOs until officers understood that the DART could organize requests for support from NGOs/PVOs/IOs. Similar

21. "OFDA Case Review of Operation Provide Relief," in USAID, *Civilian/Military Involvement in International Humanitarian Interventions*, Symposium Binder, Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance Symposium, 26-27 May 1993

problems occurred in Restore Hope, when many officers did not understand DART functions and responsibilities.²²

Specifics. What is it that officers need to know about DARTs? It seems that most officers in an operation require a broad understanding of DART's organization, functions, responsibilities, authority, areas of expertise, and relations with relief organizations. Officers participating on a JTF staff and those on component staffs who deal with relief issues (plans, operations, logistics, liaisons, CA) need to have a deeper understanding.

Understanding of NGOs/PVOs/IOs

After-action reports from past operations have all focused on the officers' lack of knowledge of different aspects of NGOs/PVOs/IOs.

- In Provide Comfort, officers did not understand the charters, doctrine, and resources of relief organizations.²³
- In Provide Relief, officers did not understand their mandates, doctrines, programs, and plans.²⁴
- In Restore Hope, officers had little knowledge of their roles, philosophies, and expertise.²⁵

A lack of understanding of these organizations by many officers seems common in every HAO. The results have been that the military did not usually draw on NGO/PVO/IO expertise to help with the

22. U.S. Army, Marine Corps, Air Force, Navy, Air-Land-Sea-Application (ALSA) Center, *Multi-Service Procedures for Humanitarian Assistance Operations*, 1995: J-5

23. "353rd Civil Affairs Command Case Review for Operation Provide Comfort," in *Civilian/Military Involvement in International Humanitarian Interventions*, Symposium Binder

24. "OFDA Case Review of Operation Provide Relief," in *Civilian/Military Involvement in International Humanitarian Interventions*, Symposium Binder

25. "OFDA Case Review of Operation Restore Hope," in *Civilian/Military Involvement in International Humanitarian Interventions*, Symposium Binder

operation, and they had difficulties coordinating support to such relief organizations. After all, if officers cannot understand a relief organization's mission, how can they support it?

An example is coordination with the ICRC. This is a special organization that takes its neutrality mandate very seriously. The ICRC needs direct orders from its international headquarters to even talk to the military. It almost never uses guards for its convoys and requires that all sides agree before the ICRC works in an area. It also maintains complete transparency (i.e., prior notification of relief transport, including travel routes and times).²⁶ Coordinating with the ICRC is obviously much easier if officers know about these aspects of the organization in advance.

Specifics. Only officers working directly with relief organizations seem to require a detailed knowledge of them. As above, these include liaison and JTF officers, as well as operations, plans, and logistics officers in subordinate commands. But all participants in an operation who might come into contact with relief organizations should have a basic understanding of who these groups are and what roles they play in the larger relief effort.

Understanding of relief operations

Past HAOs have also shown that many officers do not understand relief operations very well. That is, they do not know what relief organizations actually do or why they do it that way. This causes problems for officers when they are working with relief organizations to provide direct relief to the population. For example:

- Not performing assessments correctly, and therefore misunderstanding relief requirements.
- Developing inappropriate relief strategies.
- Giving more relief than needed.
- Not giving relief effectively (the wrong types) or efficiently.

26. Natsios, "The International Humanitarian Response System"

- Providing relief that interferes with long-term development.
- Starting unsustainable relief projects.
- Not knowing when the situation has improved enough to transition the operation.

Although officers can use DARTs to advise them on these issues, to perform HAOs well, officers need a better understanding of relief operations. Greater understanding would make it easier for the military and relief organizations to agree on what types of relief each should provide and where they should do it. Also, if officers have a better understanding of the support that relief organizations require in general for different types of situations, they may be better able to predict needs when information is not available.

But military knowledge in these areas should not be a substitute for relying on relief-organization expertise. Rather, the knowledge base serves to allow for coordination without relief organizations having to teach officers the basics. For example, a continuing theme in HAOs is the military's desire to establish refugee/displaced persons camps to provide relief and ease logistics burdens. But any relief worker knows that such camps are only a last resort because of their numerous negative effects (e.g., removing people from their sources of income and food, having to support them in every way, taking away any incentive for them to return to their homes). If officers understood this, they could move beyond arguing about whether to establish refugee camps and concentrate on helping relief organizations with other matters.

Specifics. What do officers need to know? First they should generally understand the different types of disasters that require a response, such as cyclones, floods, famines, and civil strife. For each of these, they should know the basic principles of assessments, aims, and priorities of relief; possible support requirements; and typical problems. Finally, officers should understand the functional areas of relief, including food and nutrition, health, and water.

Not all officers, however, need this level of understanding. Each command at the level of division or higher that might deploy for an HAO should have at least one officer who has a good knowledge of relief operations. Other liaison or JTF officers, as well as some officers at

subordinate commands, need only a basic understanding of relief operations. Perhaps most important, officers from support commands that might provide relief, such as Fleet Service Support Groups (FSSGs), should understand the issues surrounding relief operations.

Information on relief operations is readily available. NGOs/PVOs have made great strides at “professionalization” over the last decade. There is no standard text on relief operations, though several publications are very useful.²⁷ Much of the information is in the form of checklists, which relief organizations view as a means to ensure that relief workers consider all factors in their planning, use lessons learned from previous operations, develop an appropriate division of labor, discuss coordination effectively, and train properly.²⁸

Relief-organization education and training

Just as officers need to improve their knowledge of relief organizations, relief organizations need to improve their understanding of military organizations and operations. In every recent HAO—from Provide Comfort to Restore Hope—both the military and relief organizations have noted that cooperation was hampered by the relief organizations’ lack of understanding of the military.²⁹

27. For good overviews, see United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *Handbook for Emergencies*. Geneva, Switzerland: UNHCR, 1982; and United Nations Children Fund, *Assisting in Emergencies*. New York: UNICEF, 1992.

28. The checklist approach is advocated for complex humanitarian emergencies in Larry Minear, “Report of a Consultation of Experts,” Brown University, Apr 1991, in Minear, Weiss, and Campbell: 11–16.

29. Various organizations and individuals start with different levels of knowledge. There are really two separate issues—OFDA and NGO/PVO/IOs need a better understanding of the military. Because there are a number of military reservists within OFDA, the need is less there. But DART members can come from any U.S. Government agency (or be contractors), so the need for education is still significant.

Many relief workers know little about the military's organization, ranks, capabilities, operations, and culture.³⁰ To some extent, the lack of knowledge is just annoying to officers, for example, when young relief workers do not distinguish between colonels and corporals. But because the military is usually there to *support* relief organizations, the relief workers' lack of knowledge is not *as* serious a problem as the officers' lack of knowledge of relief work.

But gaps in understanding on the part of relief workers have made coordination more difficult in a subtle but important way—relief workers have not been able to understand how officers see an operation, and where relief workers can fit in. They have not understood the military perspective, such as how officers are constrained both in official ways (e.g., limits on Title X spending) and institutional ones (e.g., fear of mission creep). Relief workers do not understand the reasons behind military regulations and operating procedures, as well as the hierarchical nature of military commands and the differing degrees of freedom given subordinates. The result has been that relief workers have often requested support that officers have viewed as inappropriate.

Specifics. Relief workers need to understand the basic principles behind military operations and the characteristics of the military approach. They should also understand the organizational culture of the military (e.g., discipline, mission-oriented approach, centralized command, and decentralized execution). A broad understanding of military doctrine for HAOs and typical military concerns in such operations is necessary, as well as knowledge of JTF organizations and responsibilities (e.g., staff sections, special staff sections, service components, and functional components), the ranks of officers and enlisted personnel, and an understanding of key military acronyms and terms.

For each operation, relief workers should understand the JTF command and control structure, the capabilities of specific deployed

30. Minear et al. *United Nations Coordination of the International Humanitarian Response to the Gulf Crisis 1990–1992*: 31; and *Civil/Military Involvement in International Humanitarian Interventions*: 19

forces to provide support to relief organizations (e.g., numbers and sizes of helicopters), and procedures for requesting support.

Lack of coordination during crisis action planning

For an HAO, a regional Commander in Chief (CINC) will appoint a JTF to start CAP. During CAP, close coordination with relief organizations is important for three reasons.

First, officers need information about the situation on the ground, including the state of the infrastructure and the identities of local leaders. Relief organizations are often there and have been providing relief before a military command arrives; they possess much of the information officers require during CAP.

Second, officers need information on what relief requirements are and how they can support them. From a broad perspective, key questions include:

- What are the requirements for relief (e.g., food, water, shelter, medical care)?
- Which requirements can relief organizations not fulfill?
- Which of these can the military undertake?

Task identification is very important during CAP because it drives the concept of operations and the numbers and forces deployed. Relief organizations can provide relevant information. As General Stackpole stated about Operation Sea Angel in Bangladesh:

I was to report to the U.S. Ambassador and provide humanitarian assistance to Bangladesh, period. Nobody told me how to do it; no one gave any additional instructions. As a matter of fact, the lack of real-time intelligence was such that they really didn't know what we were standing into.³¹

Third, officers need to coordinate operations with relief organizations. Once officers have some idea of the requirements they will have

31. LtGen H. C. Stackpole III, "Angels from the Sea," *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings*, Naval Review 1992: 112

to fulfill, they need to coordinate with others providing relief. General Stackpole noted this also: "One lesson learned from Sea Angel is that you must bring aid-giving agencies on board early."³² It is most important to coordinate with them to ensure that military and humanitarian efforts are synchronized. It is also important that a deploying military command ensure that the support it will be providing to relief organizations is appropriate and complements what they are providing, but does not substitute for it.

Exchanging information and coordinating plans during CAP have been hampered in the past by a variety of factors, including the following:

- The perception of the military and relief reorganizations that information exchange and coordination were not required before an operation
- Lack of information because a disaster happened quickly and no relief organizations had deployed and completed assessments
- The military's perception that planning for the operation must be kept secret³³
- Lack of a mechanism to coordinate planning.

Even if little information is available, however, many relief workers are experienced enough to know what the relief requirements are likely to be. In a CNA CAP exercise, for example, Marines reacted to an earthquake by planning to transport food. CAP participants from relief organizations pointed out that although there were no reports in from the earthquake site, earthquake victims usually need search and rescue and medical support, not food.

32. Stackpole, "Angels from the Sea"

33. *Peacekeeping: What Works? America's Future Peacekeeping Policy*, Report of a conference sponsored by the Department of State, Bureau of Intelligence and Research, 7 Feb 1994: 2

Operational-level coordination structure

In every single HAO—from Restore Hope to Provide Comfort—after-action reports have noted that operational-level coordination with relief organizations is a major problem and needs to be improved.³⁴ This problem has several dimensions.

First, none of the major parties possibly involved in an HAO—the UN, U.S. and foreign militaries, the host nation, OFDA, NGOs/PVOs/IOs—have any real authority over one another. No one can be “in charge.” Thus, neat command lines do not exist.

Second, relief organizations—both NGOs/PVOs and UN agencies—do not coordinate among themselves very effectively. They tend to be flat organizations with decentralized decision-making authority. As two observers of the relief community noted:

International arrangements to meet humanitarian disasters are characterized by multiple and overlapping mandates as well as extreme decentralization. A host of governmental, intergovernmental, and nongovernmental agencies are actively involved in reacting to natural and man-made disasters. “Coordination” and “comparative advantage” appear frequently in documents and resolutions, but they are lacking in practice for the multitude of international relief organizations.³⁵

Third, differences in military and NGO/PVO/IO organizational culture work against operational-level coordination. The military tends to do more detailed planning, have hierarchical and centralized chains of command, and perform tasks according to doctrine.³⁶ Relief organizations, however, tend to do less planning, have

34. These were the conclusions of an OFDA conference (see *Civil/Military Involvement in International Humanitarian Interventions*: 9, 18–20); developing doctrine (see ALSA: J-5); and a State Department conference (see *Peacekeeping: What Works? America's Future Peacekeeping Policy*).

35. Weiss and Campbell: 59

36. Gordon William Rudd, Unpublished Paper on Operation Provide Comfort: 429–430

decentralized decision-making authority, and are flexible in how they perform tasks. The problem shows up in coordinating plans. In the field, officers must plan operations far in advance to coordinate and synchronize their many units. Relief workers are less constrained. Thus, when joint military-relief organization operations are required, the military becomes the *de facto* lead agency. When this occurs, relief organizations sometimes get upset and charge the military with trying to run the whole relief effort.

Fourth, the solution often given to these problems—establish a center for coordination—remains undeveloped. In Somalia, the JTF established a Civil-Military Operations Center (CMOC) to coordinate with relief organizations. Every HAO has had some group of officers with this role, and such CMOC-type organizations have had varying degrees of success. But full adoption of the CMOC concept is constrained by several factors:

- There are no Marine Corps-wide CMOC standard operating procedures (SOP), so those staffing a CMOC have to rediscover or reinvent all the processes and organizational considerations in each operation.³⁷
- The CMOC described in recently developed doctrine³⁸ is based completely on a Somalia scenario. It assumes that the UN will be in charge of an operation, and that the Somalia CMOC structure and functions are appropriate for all operations.
- Analysis and lessons learned from past CMOCs have rarely moved beyond the obvious and banal; for example, coordination is key or be flexible in dealing with relief workers.

37. III MEF has developed CMOC SOP, see III MEF, *CMOC SOP*.

38. See, for example, ALSA, *Multi-Service Procedures for Humanitarian Assistance Operations*. Oct 1994: 4-24 to 4-28.

Other potential problems

A variety of other issues exist in coordination between the military and relief organizations. But there have been few problems with these issues in the past, so we did not discuss them in detail in this paper.

Strategic airlift

The military does not consider coordination for strategic airlift of supplies from OFDA stockpiles to disaster sites. For many years, U.S. Transportation Command (TRANSCOM) has been tasked to transport OFDA stocks to regions affected by humanitarian emergencies. There have been few reports of coordination problems because these operations are straightforward (TRANSCOM provides one or more aircraft) and coordination is usually required only between OFDA in Washington, the Department of Defense, the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), and TRANSCOM.

Peacetime planning

Although the military considers coordination during CAP, it has not included coordination in peacetime planning because few NGOs/PVOs/IOs do peacetime planning for operations on a scale that even approaches what the military does. Besides, the military itself does little planning for HAOs unless one is on the verge of happening. The planning that does take place centers on generic CONPLANS.³⁹ Coordination with relief organizations would be of little help because these plans are very broad. However, some progress has been made in including NGOs/PVOs/IOs in HAO exercises.⁴⁰ We discuss coordination in peacetime for training and memorandums of understanding in the next section.

39. See, for example, USCINCPAC, *Foreign Humanitarian Assistance Concept Plan*, undated; and III MEF, *Disaster Relief CONPLAN*, Draft, Feb 1995.

40. See, for example, Sandra L. Newett et al. *Emerald Express '95: Analysis Report*, Apr 1996 (CNA Research Memorandum 95-156).

Strategic-level coordination

This paper focuses on problems at the operational (i.e., JTF) level. It does not consider the strategic (i.e., JCS, DOD, OFDA) level because NGOs/PVOs are not significantly involved in planning at that level. Also, channels through which the military deals with OFDA and IOs (such as the UN) are established and well-known by all those participating in Washington (though maybe not by those not given liaison authority with them). OFDA representatives, for example, sit on inter-agency working groups, and coordination with the UN should be accomplished through the State Department and JCS J-5.

Tactical-level coordination

At the tactical level, coordination between officers and local relief workers does not appear to have been contentious in past operations. In interviews with participants in Restore Hope and Provide Comfort, officers and relief workers alike agreed that coordination away from the JTF headquarters was not a significant problem.

A potential explanation is that local military commanders, their staffs, and Marines and soldiers in the field came to know relief workers personally and saw the military and relief missions as complementary. Because they were all there together—actually seeing the problems that needed to be addressed, and being isolated from the politics taking place at the JTF level—they tended to have a common view of what needed to be done and worked out how to do it.

What options do the Marines have?

In this section, we present and evaluate a series of options, most of which the Marine Corps can implement—or work with others to implement—to address the four major problems discussed in the previous section. These options can help the Marine Corps meet the requirement of coordination with relief organizations.

Before proceeding, however, we should consider the issue of “coverage.” Several factors make it difficult to “reach” all potential participants in an HAO—both military and relief organizations—with the options discussed below.

- Any U.S. military command may participate in an HAO. Over the past few years, for example, units from all three MEFs have participated in one HAO (I MEF in Somalia, III MEF in Bangladesh, and 2nd FSSG in Guantanamo).
- All military commands have significant turnover. Many officers at III MEF, for example, go to Okinawa for only one year.
- Any relief worker—or for that matter, anyone participating in development projects in a country struck by a disaster—may be called upon by a relief organization to participate in an HAO.
- Relief organization officials who participate in conferences, workshops, and exercises in the United States may be very different from those who military officers are likely to encounter in the field. The former work at headquarters and tend to be older, more-seasoned managers who are interested in building long-term relationships; the latter tend to be younger field workers, who are more independent and focused on accomplishing the immediate tasks they face.
- No organization has control over all the relief organizations. Even organizations such as InterAction serve only as information clearinghouses for members and cannot coordinate them

or control them. (Remember, InterAction is run by its PVO members—it does not run them.) Thus, it is virtually impossible to completely institutionalize any agreements, education, or training with relief organizations in the same way this can be done with the military through joint doctrine, service schools, and JCS-mandated exercises.

However, this does not mean there are no solutions to the problems discussed in this paper. It means only that each option discussed is limited in its coverage, or must be implemented on a broad scale.

Table 3 summarizes the options we discuss in the following paragraphs to address the four problems. For each option, the table notes the option's (1) coverage, (2) effectiveness for those problems covered by the option, and (3) costs (both financial and opportunity costs) to the Marine Corps. (Costs to OFDA and relief organizations are not considered.) The table summarizes coverage, effectiveness, and costs by using a high (H), medium (M), and low (L) scale. These are not exact measures—and certainly not quantitative measures. They are merely a shorthand way of summarizing our analysis of each option.

The table brings out some interesting points: Several options address more than one problem, in part because interaction between officers and relief workers educates both groups; also, the more effective the option, the less the possible coverage because options that provide intensive training tend to be time consuming, and therefore expensive. They can be implemented only on a small scale.

1. Distribute OFDA Guide

Option. OFDA's Field Operation Guide (FOG) outlines the responsibilities and authority of DARTs. Though meant for DART members, the Marine Corps can—with OFDA's approval—reprint and distribute copies of the FOG to officers in peacetime and during a contingency.

Coverage. The FOG could be distributed widely.

Table 3. Summary of options

Option	Coverage	Military training	Relief organization training	Coordination during CAP	Coordination structure	Cost
1. Distribute OFDA Guide	H	L	-	-	-	L
2. OFDA deployment briefing	H	L	-	-	-	L
3. Written PME course	M	M	-	-	-	L
4. One-day PME course	M	M	-	-	-	M
5. Week-long PME course	L	H	-	-	-	H
6. Relief organization courses	L	M	-	-	-	H
7. OFDA exercise participation	L/M	M	M	-	-	L
8. NGO/PVO/IO exercise participation	L/L	M	L	-	-	M
9. Guide to the military	H	-	M	-	-	L
10. Military briefing to in the field	H	-	M	-	-	L
11. DART training	L	-	M	-	-	L
12. OFDA participation in CAP	M	-	-	M	-	L
13. NGO/PVO/IO participation in CAP	L	-	-	L	-	M
14. JCS liaison during CAP	H	-	-	M	-	L
15. Advance party liaison	H	-	-	H	-	M
16. Generic information requirements	H	-	-	M	-	L
17. Institutionalize CMOC	H	-	-	-	H	L
18. Focus on coordination	H	-	-	-	M	L
19. Increase OFDA roles	H	-	-	-	M	L
20. MOUs with relief organizations	L	-	-	-	L	M

Effectiveness. The FOG gives a complete review of DARTs, but has little on NGOs/PVOs/IOs. Its assessment section gives useful information on that phase of relief operations, as well as on relief organization operations in general.

Costs. The Marine Corps would incur some costs to reprint the FOG, though these costs would be relatively small.

2. Deployment briefing

Option. The Marines could work with OFDA and InterAction to develop a deployment briefing that would cover the three areas in which officers need more training and education—OFDA/DART, NGOs/PVOs/IOs, and relief operations. When military units deploy on an HAO, an officer could give a briefing on these subjects.

Coverage. At the start of an operation, officers probably cannot spare a lot of time to get together for this purpose (unless there is a long predeployment period).

Effectiveness. This option would satisfy requirements for many officers to have a general knowledge of relief organizations and operations, but it would not be detailed enough for the officers who needed a greater understanding of these issues.

Costs. One cost would be an officer—probably at HQMC or MCCDC—who would have to work with OFDA and InterAction personnel to develop the briefing and be prepared to deploy to give the briefing to officers going on an HAO. Another cost would be the time required for officers to attend the briefing while they are just starting an operation.

3. Written Professional Military Education course

Option. The Marines could—with help from OFDA and InterAction—write a Marine Corps Institute Professional Military Education (PME) course on humanitarian operations, describing OFDA, NGOs/PVOs/IOs, and relief operations.⁴¹ Perhaps the Marines could turn to a relief organization contractor with experience writing disaster-relief education courses, such as INTERTECT, to write the PME.

Coverage. The PME could be distributed widely, ensuring high coverage.

Effectiveness. Such a PME could succeed in describing OFDA and NGOs/PVOs/IOs in sufficient detail. With some effort, it could also give a fairly thorough (but brief) general description of relief operations. Without any instruction and with no chance for questions and answers, however, this PME would probably not be well absorbed.

41. For two examples, see the author's *An Overview of Relief Organization Operations*, forthcoming (CNA Briefing); and *An Overview of Relief Organizations in Humanitarian Operations*, forthcoming (CNA Briefing).

Cost. Although this option might take some time from OFDA, Interaction and the Marines—or money for a contractor—the cost of the project would be minimal. And it would be a one-time cost.

4. One-Day PME course

Option. The written PME course described could serve as the basis of a one-day lecture/discussion course to be taught at Amphibious Warfare School (AWS), Command and Staff College, and to each MEF (and the MEF's MSCs and MEUs).⁴² The Marine Corps would set aside one officer whose main job would be to teach the course.

Coverage. In one manner, coverage might be greater than through a written PME because few officers would be likely to make the time to sit and read a thick PME; many would probably put it off indefinitely. But many officers may be able to spare a day—if the Commanding Officer thought it was important—to attend a class, as long as they are available on the day the course is given at each command.

Effectiveness. This option would be more effective than the written PME alone for two reasons:

- It would provide more details about relief operations.
- Discussions would allow participants to learn more than they could by simply reading a book.

Even in one day, however, the course is unlikely to review relief operations in great detail; however, it would provide ample time to discuss OFDA and NGOs/PVOs/IOs.

Cost. The costs of this option would be higher than the written PME alone because of the greater detail required, the full-time commitment of one officer, and the time commitment from many key officers

42. In the long run, teaching the PME at Command and Staff and AWS would make this option more effective because officers going through those courses eventually would come into positions of responsibility in the Fleet Marine Force (FMF) and could be deployed on HAOs.

for one day. Moreover, the costs would be continuing (i.e., they would have to be paid each year) whereas the written PME is a one-time cost.

5. Week-long PME course

Option. To gain a deeper knowledge of OFDA, NGOs/PVOs/IOs, and relief operations, the Marines could hold a one-week course on humanitarian operations. This class would cover the same information as the one-day class, but it would spend much more time on relief operations—the most time-consuming issue to study.

The PME could draw on material used in relief-organization courses and feature representatives from OFDA and NGOs/PVOs/IOs for discussions. The course could include case studies of past operations, a CAP exercise, and a CMOC exercise. In the exercises, officers and representatives of relief organizations could work through typical problems that arise in HAOs.⁴³ The course could be given in Washington several times each year.⁴⁴ Key MEF and MEU officers would attend. In fact, the Amphibious Warfare School at Quantico has developed an eight-day course on operations other than war with an emphasis on HAOs.

Coverage. The coverage of this option would be limited because of the high costs. But only a small number of officers would require this much understanding of relief organizations and operations; most do not need this level of expertise.

Effectiveness. This option would be very effective. Officers would leave the course with a good understanding of OFDA and NGOs/PVOs/IOs and a solid knowledge of relief operations. More important, they would become familiar with working with relief organizations and sharpen their coordination and negotiation skills.

43. One good case study/exercise that uses a Somalia-like situation to teach officers how to work with relief organizations has been developed by Dr. Fredrick M. Burkle, Jr., of the University of Hawaii Medical School.

44. If it were given at each MEF, it would be difficult to get relief organizations to participate.

Cost. Setting up the course would take the time of several officers at HQMC or MCCDC. There would also be significant TAD costs, as well as the time of key officers spent away from their commands.

6. Relief-organization courses

Options. Relief organizations and institutes offer a wide range of courses. Select officers may be able to participate in courses offered by the following organizations:

- UNDP/UNDHA Disaster Management Training Program
- OFDA Assessment Course
- University of Wisconsin (Madison)
- Oxford Centre for Disaster Studies (UK)
- Cranfield Institute (UK)
- Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre (Thailand)
- University of Colorado (Boulder)
- International Red Cross
- Individual NGO/PVO internal training courses (e.g., Doctors Without Borders, CARE, Catholic Relief Services, and World Vision).

Coverage. As is the case with the week-long course, only a few Marines need this type of training.

Effectiveness. Officers would learn a lot about relief operations, or at least those aspects covered in these courses. But they would learn little about most relief organizations (except those in the course).

Costs. Some of these courses are long and would require a significant cost in terms of important officers being away from their commands and TAD expenses.

7. OFDA exercise participation

Option. Marine commands could invite OFDA officials to participate in Marine HAO exercises. The OFDA officials can play the role of the DART or the role of relief organizations.

Coverage. Coverage for Marines would be low because only a few OFDA representatives would go to a few exercises each year, so only a small number of Marines would be exposed to them. Coverage for OFDA, however, would be better because it could send a large percentage of the personnel from its small office to at least one exercise every few years, though it is doubtful that some of their officials residing abroad (e.g., in the Philippines and Ethiopia)—those most likely be present in a HAO—would come to the exercises. Also, many of those on OFDA's DARTs are contractors who would not go to exercises with OFDA officials.

Effectiveness. This option would help Marines gain a better understanding of DARTs, and the OFDA officials could certainly educate Marines during the course of the exercise on relief operations. But Marines would learn little about NGOs/PVOs/IOs, and their knowledge of relief operations would increase only as a result of game play.

From the perspective of educating OFDA, this option would certainly be effective in teaching OFDA officials about the military. The range of issues confronted, however, would be limited by game play, and OFDA officials would not get extensive practice working as intermediaries between the military and NGOs/PVOs/IOs. Learning about how the military works with these groups is key to OFDA education. However, OFDA officials could practice their potential role as advisors to the military.

Costs. This option would cost the Marine Corps very little. At most, the Marines may have to pay for some OFDA travel.

8. NGO/PVO/IO exercise participation

Option. Marine commands could work through OFDA and InterAction to bring NGO/PVO/IO personnel to participate in HAO exercises.

Coverage. Coverage for the Marines would be low because only a few relief workers would find the time to participate; only a limited number of Marines, therefore, would have the opportunity to interact with them in an exercise. Few commanders and staffs from major subordinate commands—not to mention those at the regimental or battalion level—would work with them. From the NGO/PVO/IO perspective, coverage would be much smaller because of the many relief workers and other NGOs/PVOs/IOs that might participate in an HAO (including the thousands of development workers abroad), and the fact that few would come from the field to participate in the exercises.

Effectiveness. For the Marines, this option would have some effectiveness because Marines would be exposed to relief workers. But the effectiveness would be limited because it would depend on how good the relief workers are at being role players for exercises.

From the relief organizations' perspective, the effectiveness of participation in such exercises would be low. Because HAO exercises remain unsophisticated, relief workers have not been a training audience forced to accomplish missions and get military assistance—the training they need. Instead, relief workers are merely role players; Marines are the training audience. That being said, relief workers would be exposed to the military, which has some benefit.

Costs. The Marines would probably have to pay travel costs for participants. Also, when scenarios are sensitive, the Marines would have to risk leaks or change the scenario and balance that risk against the advantages of having NGOs/PVOs/IOs participate.

9. Guide to the military

Option. The military could produce a guide to military organizations and operations, which could be distributed in peacetime to OFDA and NGOs/PVOs/IOs. Two documents cited below come close to filling this role:

- ALSA, *Multi-Service Procedures for Humanitarian Assistance Operations*. This document is too focused on what the *military* needs to know (its purpose) to be sufficiently helpful to relief organizations.
- OFDA, *Guide to U.S. Military Humanitarian Assistance*. This document presents a good overview of HAOs for OFDA personnel in Washington, but it is less focused on operational- and tactical-level military organizations and operations. This document is still in draft form.

In addition, both documents are based primarily on Somalia, and do not take into account as many lessons from other operations.

Coverage. A guide to the military could be distributed widely—in peacetime to relief workers in the field (as opposed to just those at headquarters), and during an operation to those who cannot attend briefings because they are working in distant areas.

Effectiveness. If properly written and based on these two documents, such a guide can be effective because it can be more detailed than a briefing to relief organizations. Furthermore, relief organizations can use the document as a training aid. The one major problem is that, if written in peacetime, the guide cannot include information on the specific JTF (including its mission, organization, capabilities, and procedures for requesting support).

Cost. Writing the document properly would take some effort. Publishing and distribution costs would be minimal.

10. Military briefing in the field

Option. The Marines can prepare a briefing on the military before an operation, and present it to relief organizations at the start of an operation.

Coverage. Most of the key relief workers participating in an operation could be given the briefing. But there are two problems:

- At the start of an operation, both the Marines and relief workers may be too busy to give or receive the briefing.
- Some relief workers may be spread throughout an operating area and not come into contact with the JTF staff. (Instead, they may only work with battalion staffs.)

Effectiveness. If the briefing includes both generalities about the military and is updated to include information specific to the JTF's mission, the briefing would be a good method of educating relief workers. But it could not be as detailed as a written guide.

Cost. The costs of writing the brief would be small. One officer would have to be tasked to update the briefing before the deployment and give it at the start of an operation.

11. DART training

Option. The Marines could teach for one day during OFDA's DART orientation course.

Coverage. This option would reach most potential DART members, though DARTs draw on contractors and officials from other government agencies who would not be in the course. Also, NGOs/PVOs/IOs—which need more education about the military than OFDA—do not participate in DART orientation courses.

Effectiveness. This option would give OFDA officials a good knowledge of the military, but little information about specific missions until they arose.

Costs. This option would take only a limited amount of time for several officers from HQMC or MCCDC.

12. OFDA participation in CAP

Option. OFDA officials can deploy to the headquarters of a JTF performing CAP and participate in the process.

Coverage. OFDA would be able to send representatives to most potential JTF headquarters, except in a situation where there is little notice before deployment and the JTF headquarters is distant.

Effectiveness. If those sent are experienced and senior, they can contribute a great deal by (1) serving as a liaison to OFDA in Washington and any USAID/OFDA/DART officials in the field; and (2) providing input based on the general relief requirements for different situations. But by not being deployed, the officials could not get information from NGOs/PVOs/IOs on the ground, nor could they coordinate with them.

Costs. None.

13. NGO/PVO/IO participation in CAP

Option. NGOs/PVOs/IOs can send officials to the headquarters of a JTF performing CAP, and participate in the process.

Coverage. Coverage would be low because fewer NGOs/PVOs/IOs would send officials to the headquarters than would be in the field.

Effectiveness. If those sent are experienced and senior, they can contribute a great deal by providing input based on the general relief requirements for different situations, and acting as a liaison to relief workers from their organization in the field. But they cannot act as a liaison to other NGOs/PVOs/IOs.

Costs. Classification of plans may make it impossible to have any NGO/PVO/IO personnel participate in CAP. Military commands would also have to pay to bring them in.

14. JCS liaison

Option. A Marine JTF can request, during CAP, that the JCS send a representative (to collect information and coordinate plans) to OFDA, InterAction PVO working groups, and the UN in New York.

Coverage. JCS could do this for any HAO.

Effectiveness. Relief organization headquarters, which are in contact with their workers in the field, sometimes send representatives to OFDA, InterAction, and UN working groups. Having JCS representatives on these groups can be an effective means of exchanging information and coordinating planning. But more information can be collected in the field.

Costs. None.

15. Advance party liaison

Option. A Marine JTF (or its higher headquarters) can send an advance party to the field (before the JTF deploys) to collect information from OFDA and NGOs/PVOs/IOs, and coordinate planning with them. Among the tasks that the advance party would accomplish would be to collect relief-organization assessments and send them to the headquarters that is performing CAP. Several CINCs and MEFs have plans to send such teams out.⁴⁵ However, they have not been sent out in the past.

Coverage. An advance party could be used for any HAO.

Effectiveness. This option would help the Marines get information from the best sources and coordinate with the most important people—relief organizations on the ground.

Costs. SOPs must be written and several officers would have to undergo some training. They would also be unavailable for CAP.

45. See, for example, U.S. Central Command, *Humanitarian Assistance Survey Team (HAST) Standard Operating Procedures*, 13 Sep 1993, and III MEF, *Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Team (HACT) Standard Operating Procedures*, Draft, Feb 1995.

16. Generic information requirements

Option. To direct the collection of information in CAP, the Marines could develop a list of information requirements for HAOs to be used by liaison officers and an advance party. This list could be based on several sources, including the following:

- Marine Corps *Generic Intelligence Requirements Handbook*⁴⁶
- Relief organization manuals that explain how to perform disaster assessments⁴⁷
- Disaster Preparedness Planning Surveys written by the 364th Civil Affairs Brigade.⁴⁸

Coverage. This list of information requirements could be distributed extensively.

Effectiveness. This effort would assist Marines and others collecting information to collect the right types. It would also save time by providing Marines with a list from which they could add or delete information requirements in much the same way that MEUs use intelligence-requirement lists for noncombatant evacuation operations (NEOs).

Costs. It would take very little time and effort to develop the list.

46. U.S. Marine Corps, *Generic Intelligence Requirements Handbook*. See also III MEF, *Civil-Military Operations Center Standard Operating Procedures (CMOC SOP)*, Appendix D: Information Section, Draft, Feb 1995.

47. OFDA, *Disaster Assessment Procedures Manual*; OFDA, *FOG; Establishing Needs After a Disaster*. Dallas, TX: INTERTECT, 1981; Fredrick C. Cuny, *Emergency Operations for Refugees: A Guide to Initial Actions*. Dallas, TX: INTERTECT, 1980; U.S. Department of State, Bureau for Refugee Programs, *Assessment Manual for Refugee Emergencies*, 1985; UNICEF, *Assisting in Emergencies*, UNHCR, *Handbook for Emergencies*

48. See, for example, U.S. Army, 364th Civil Affairs Brigade, *Bangladesh: Disaster Preparedness Planning Survey*, Nov 1992.

17. Institutionalize the CMOC

Options. The Marines could institutionalize the CMOC by writing a standard CMOC SOP and keeping lessons learned from previous HAOs, as well as by cooperating with the U.S. Army—especially civil affairs, whose role it is to coordinate with civilian agencies—to exchange lessons learned from their CMOCs.

Coverage. The SOP and lessons learned could be widely distributed.

Effectiveness. This option would be an effective way to institutionalize the substantive and organizational lessons of past CMOC operations, and could be used for training officers and familiarizing augmentees with the CMOC. The option will be effective, however, only if the SOP is not focused on a Somalia-type scenario.⁴⁹ For example, the UN may not be in charge of an operation (a host-nation government might), and the CMOC may have to coordinate a wide variety of activities with relief organizations, including the direct provision of relief to the population.

Cost. There would be some costs for coordinating and writing the SOP.

18. Focus on coordination

Option. Past HAOs have witnessed commands coordinating with relief organizations, but not *focusing* on coordination. Commanders can define coordination as the friendly center of gravity and make it important in the following ways:

- View the CMOC as an orderly way of bringing relief organizations into the military command's headquarters, instead of viewing the CMOC as a means of keeping relief organizations at arm's length.

49. For an example of a CMOC SOP not focused on a Somalia-type operation, see III MEF, *CMOC SOP*.

- Consider increasing the stature of the CMOC and the visibility of coordination with relief organizations, possibly by giving the CMOC director the position, status, and access of a Special Staff Section officer reporting directly to the JTF commander (as opposed to having the CMOC director report through the Operations director).
- Ensure that the Marines understand how the relief workers operate, and vice versa, by soliciting information from relief organizations and inviting relief workers to the Marine headquarters to brief them on military operations, doctrine, SOPs, and capabilities.
- Involve relief workers in the military decision-making process to make better decisions (using their expertise) and make their acceptance of military policy more likely (convincing them that their views are valued) by holding joint military-relief organization planning sessions.
- Disseminate the view that the commander sees relations with relief organizations as important and that relief organizations are partners and allies.

Coverage. Any commander can take these steps.

Effectiveness. If a commander takes an active role in focusing on coordination, this option will be effective. If he does not, officers will likely continue to view relief workers as a nuisance.

Costs. None.

19. Increase OFDA roles

Option. Because of OFDA's knowledge of relief organizations and operations (as well as their relationships with NGOs/PVOs), Marines can use a DART in the following ways:

- Intermediary in dealing with relief organizations
- Lead agency in assessments
- Liaison to relief organizations during CAP.

Coverage. OFDA's DARTs will deploy for most operations where there is a significant U.S. military deployment.

Effectiveness. As long as Marines realize the DART's possess expertise and rely on them, this option will be very effective.

- DARTs can be an effective intermediary. In Provide Comfort, for example, the JTF did not understand what DARTs did at first, and therefore did not use them. The JTF was overwhelmed trying to deal with relief organizations. Once they understood what a DART could do, they left it to the DART to coordinate with relief organizations and validate their requirements.
- DARTs can also be effective at coordinating assessments. Marines do not have the expertise to conduct HAO assessments by themselves. The new OFDA *FOG* has a section that explains assessments and how to do them in detail. If Marines used the *FOG* and supported DART assessments—and then got the results of those—Marines would find themselves with assessments that were more complete and accurate than if they did them without DART assistance.
- OFDA can be an effective liaison with relief organizations in Washington during CAP. They can send officials to InterAction working groups, as well as host their own.

Costs. None.

20. Memorandums of Understanding

Option. The Marine Corps can work with OFDA and InterAction to develop memorandums of understanding (MOUs) between the Marines and relief organizations on (1) the resources that would be brought to an HAO; (2) the military-relief organization's division of labor, missions and responsibilities; and (3) the coordination of procedures.

Coverage. From the Marine perspective, coverage may be limited because such MOUs would have to involve all MEFs and MEUs. Coverage would be even more limited for relief organizations. It is

extremely difficult to get all relief organizations to agree on even the most basic principles for humanitarian relief. Getting them to agree on a way to coordinate with the military is likely to be *impossible* because there are hundreds of NGOs/PVOs that must be brought in. More important, many relief organizations have greatly disparate views on whether they *should* even cooperate with the military at all. Negotiating the details would be even more difficult. Relief organizations have been trying to coordinate with each other for a long time; the Marines are likely to find it extremely difficult to convince them to do so, and to cooperate with officers.

Effectiveness. Three factors limit the effectiveness of this option.

- Even if all relief organizations signed specific MOUs, relief workers in the field are focused on accomplishing their missions and probably will not allow disaster victims to die because of agreements made long ago in Washington.
- Any MOUs signed are likely to be so general that they would not be of much help.
- Every HAO is different and the resources, missions, and coordinating mechanisms required—and those not available because of other contingencies—will also differ.

Costs. Trying to negotiate MOUs would be very time consuming for the small number of Marines involved.

Conclusions

Two things are clear from this analysis of improving coordination with relief organizations. First, there are no perfect options that will ensure that the Marines meet the requirement of coordination with relief organizations. Few of the options have a high level of effectiveness because of limited coverage, and none can solve all four major problems. Adopting several of the options will be required to solve each problem. Two examples demonstrate this:

- Writing a PME or holding a one-day course would give most officers a sufficient basic knowledge of relief organizations and operations, whereas holding a week-long seminar for a small number of officers would give a limited group (perhaps those who would staff a CMOC) a deeper understanding of these topics.
- Writing a guide about the military can be combined with giving briefings in the field for relief workers. This would give them a general knowledge of the military and a sufficient specific knowledge of the operation being conducted.

Second, most of the options can be better implemented by the joint community. (The JCS liaison option can obviously be implemented only by the joint community.) There is a certain economy of scale to developing courses and written PMEs, writing other guides and SOPs, and arranging exercise participation—and officers from every service would benefit from them. The best way to pursue these options may be through the joint community.

Improving coordination with relief organizations will not be easy. But several recent trends point to a brighter future, including NGO/PVO professionalization, improvements in DART training, new capabilities of UNDHA for coordinating UN agencies, and a willingness of (some) officers to take relief workers seriously after having positive experiences with them in HAOs and exercises.

While these trends are taking place, coordination will be much improved if the Marines can gain a greater understanding of relief organizations and operations, help relief workers gain a better understanding of the military, coordinate during CAP, and develop a coordination structure for use at the operational level. The options presented in this paper—though some are costly and none are a panacea—would help the Marines address these problems.

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