

Generic profile and functions of UN-CMCoord Officers

1. Generic background of a UN-CMCoord Officer

A UN-CMCoord Officer clearly works for on behalf of the humanitarian community and in doing so, he/she must be able to represent the humanitarian community to the military. Additionally, he/she must be able to educate and guide the humanitarian community about their interaction with military forces. In order to bridge the sometimes substantial divide between the military and humanitarian communities, a UN-CMCoord Officer should have a mix of humanitarian and military background/competence and/or understanding. It is recognized that equal experience in both disciplines is difficult to come by and that most officers will have a more substantial professional background in only one of the required areas. However, a UN-CMCoord candidate should have at least a working knowledge of the other and in terms of military knowledge; this must be of the higher echelons. Suitable candidates for UN-CMCoord Officer positions should at least match one of the two profiles:

1.1 A candidate with a strong humanitarian background who has at the same time a good understanding of military structures, acquired either through a military career or by working in close relation with a (preferably international) military force and/or peacekeeping mission in the field.

1.2 A candidate with a strong military background, including staff positions and international service in a peacekeeping mission, preferably but not necessarily in a CIMIC function. Furthermore, this candidate should have a good understanding of humanitarian organizations and preferably has worked for a humanitarian agency or in close cooperation with one or more of them.

In both cases, officers must be able to interact with and influence senior military officers.

2. Generic Terms of References (ToRs) of a UN-CMCoord Officer

The generic TORs are intended to guide the Head of Office requesting support through UN-CMCoord personnel, by providing a broad spectrum of functions within the UN-CMCoord capacity. Based on these generic functions, the Head of Office develops country specific ToRs for a precise deployment, that include designated tasks and time frame of assignment.

In any deployment, a UN-CMCoord Officer must be fully familiar with the existing UN-CMCoord Guidelines; he/she can reasonably expect to develop his/her functions around the key elements of humanitarian civil-military coordination: information sharing, common planning and task division.

In this framework, a UN-CMCoord Officer will interact regularly with humanitarian and military communities at both policy (e.g. development of Country Specific Guidelines) and operational level. This may include setting up a communication strategy to allow vital information flow between the two communities, advocate for the respect of humanitarian principles/humanitarian space on behalf of the humanitarian community towards the military and explain to the humanitarian community what support, including limitations, it can reasonably expect from the military and in what timeframe. In emergency operations, (natural disasters and in complex emergencies), most interaction with the military can be expected (but not limited) in the areas of security, logistics, transportation and communications. Of course, the growing propensity of various military forces to engage in what they would term as Stabilisation and Reconstruction (akin to development) activities as well as their direct and indirect involvement in humanitarian assistance, further requires UN-CMCoord Officers to

advocate for a separation of roles or at the very least, deconfliction and thereby coordination of such activity.

The UN-CMCoord Officer should be able to advise the humanitarian and military communities on a principled use of Military and Civil Defence Assets (MCDA) in support of humanitarian operations. This may include establishing mechanisms to channel requests for assistance as appropriate, maintain contact with civilian humanitarian actors and participate in humanitarian coordination mechanisms, including frequent liaison with the UN Country Team, Humanitarian Cluster system and Humanitarian Information Centre amongst others. The UN-CMCoord Officer will also establish and maintain contacts with appropriate military counterparts and advise the military forces on international humanitarian coordination mechanisms and relevant humanitarian issues. Depending on the context, the UN-CMCoord Officer may facilitate joint civil-military structures to enhance coordination in disaster response; also he/she will act as an information channel and advocate for humanitarian issues with the proper military actor, especially if humanitarian principles and humanitarian space are perceived affected by a too close an association with the military.

In working for the humanitarian community, the UN-CMCoord Officer has to know and understand the community he/she is working with and has to be accepted by its different organizations and agencies. At the same time he/she needs to have the right level of knowledge of military working culture, to enable access to the most appropriate decision maker and raise particular issues at the right level of the military command structure.

To facilitate essential dialogue and coordination between humanitarian and military communities the UN-CMCoord Officer may need to prepare, facilitate or co-facilitate in coordination with relevant OCHA/CMCS staff, workshops and training events targeting both military and humanitarian staff. The UN-CMCoord Officer should promote the dissemination and understanding of MCDA and Country Specific Guidelines (when existing) to both the humanitarian and the military actors.

In some recent emergencies, the OCHA Head of Office has requested support of UN-CMCoord Officers to also carry out more generic Humanitarian Affairs Officer (HAO) functions. When such a request arises, the additional HAO functions will be reflected in the specific ToRs.