Practical Tips: Effective Interaction with the Military and other Security Actors in the Field

Remember that the national military:

- Is an arm of the GoB tasked to respond to the impact of the Rohingya Refugee Crisis and has been historically relied upon in responding to disasters and emergencies within the country.
- Has a long and distinguished UN peacekeeping history and has been consistently in the top 10 troop contributing countries globally, lost peacekeepers in the line of duty, and takes pride in having a high standard for pre-deployment training.
- Has shown genuine willingness to work with the international humanitarian community and help in addressing the needs of the refugees.
- Is separate from the Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB), though they have different but complementary responsibilities/missions. Indeed, better known as the "ever vigilant sentinels of the border", BGB is entrusted with the protection of Bangladesh border, anti-smuggling and anti-narcotics operations, prevention of human trafficking, and other security responsibilities. It is worth noting BGB is a paramilitary force under the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Levels of interaction:

- Field level interaction takes place at the coordination cells and/or camps/sites. Each Coordination Cell has a military officer serving as the Cell Coordinator; each of the camps have a designated military officer-in-charge (OIC) who is either a Captain or a Major.
- At the beginning of the response, the military established four coordination cells that correspond to four geographic areas in the CXB District: Ukhia (for Kutupalong and Balukhali1 area), Kerontoli (Balukhali2 to Chakmarkul area), Unchiprang (for Unchiprang and Shamlapur area) and Nhilla1 (for Leda and Nayapara). These cells are the main focal points for specific issues that arise and require bilateral coordination at the area/site level (contacts details below).
- It was recently decided to hold every Thursday at 15:30hrs a Coordination Cells weekly meeting in Ukhia to raise operational issues from the Sectors, follow-up action points agreed from previous meetings, and discuss and analyze potential issues before they emerge. This is not a forum open to all NGOs as all problems which cannot be solved at field/area level should be channeled through the relevant Sector representative who will be raising them in this forum.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coordinator (name/rank)</th>
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1 From the first of December due to a military exercise taking place in the general area, Nhila Coordination Cell is temporary suspended. 10 ART BDE based in Kerontoli will be responsible for the makeshift of Leda, while the 97 INF BDE of Unchiprang for Nayapara (see figure1).
• Sector focal points (FP) for a geographic area will benefit from sustaining dialogue with the military coordinator and his team at the coordination cell; Site Managers and Site Sector FPs will likewise benefit from knowing who the camp OIC is and maintaining dialogue with him/her and his/her team of officers – note that camp OICs will be rotated regularly.

• Remember to adopt a troubleshooter’s and planner’s (what’s happening next) mindset when interacting with military officers – this way, potential problems/issues can be avoided or anticipated and hopefully resolved; it also helps to manage expectations from both sides. Go straight to operational issues – unresolved, current or anticipated; they cannot help if they are not aware of the problems being encountered – troubleshooting and referrals should be the focus of coordination meetings at all levels.

• If a major activity is being planned and organized, it is best to share the information/plan at the coordination cell level, especially if some form of support will be requested from the military.

• In terms of coordination with other Security actors – namely Police and BGB – this will occur on “ad hoc” basis. It is worth noting, UNHCR is the first conduit with BGB when Rohingya refugees are coming into the country; however, the ISCG CMcoord cell is ready to support when needed.

Know the officers:

Bangladesh Army

Bangladesh Border Guard (BGB)
• Officers wear ranks on their shoulders. Enlisted (non-officer) personnel wear different ranks.
• Addressing officers by their rank is the norm; add their name (on their upper right chest) to the rank if you can read it (some name patches are in Bangla only).
• Address “2LT” and “LT” as Lieutenant; “LT COL” and “COL” as Colonel. Address a Brigadier General, who may be chairing a coordination cell meeting as “Brigadier”. If you get to meet one with the rank of Maj or Gen to Gen, call him/her General.
• Army Officers could come from the Infantry, Artillery, Cavalry, Education Corps (AEC) and Medical Corps (AMC) etc. and this is reflected on their shoulder ranks.

Share feedback/observations and actionable information using 5Ws and 1H:
• Make it a point to equally share good and not-so-good observations to officers you talk to.
• When sharing an information that needs action, provide the essential elements of information by using the What (is/was the issue), Who (is/are/were involved), Where (did/will it happen), When (time and day), Why (what was going on at the time/what will happen) and How (did/will it happen) – doing this makes it an actionable information.
• Always add a smile when saying “thank you”. You’ll know what it does once you do it.

Know what the military mean when they say:
• Sector – a geographic area where someone is designated as the responsible officer; an area of responsibility (AoR)
• PoC – Point of Contact, NOT protection of civilians
• Factors – when used, they actually refer to the humanitarian sectors
• Command and control – is their version of coordination within their chain of command; also used sometimes to mean “coordination” in general
• Camp commander – means an officer responsible for ensuring security, order and coordination of activities in camps; does NOT mean the military is going to command organizations working in camp
Referral of information on policing issues (human trafficking, smuggling, extortion, other crimes and violent incidents), where appropriate: Major Ruhul, +8801777710722, Police Rapid Action Battalion (RAB)

**ISCN Civil-Military Coordination (CMCoord) Contacts:**

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