Humanitarian Negotiations with Armed Groups

By
Bushra Ebadi, Ted Mateoc, Tiphaine Monroe, and Taylor Steele
POLI 450: Peacebuilding (2013)
Professor Rex Brynen
TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1 — PREPARATION

SECTION 1.1 — PURPOSE
SECTION 1.2 — STORYBOARDING

CHAPTER 2 — IMPLEMENTATION

SECTION 2.1 - INKLEWRITER

CHAPTER 3 — RECOMMENDATIONS

SECTION 3.1 - INKLEWRITER
SECTION 3.2 — EXPANDING THE PROJECT
CHAPTER 1: PREPARATION

As part of the final project, for the POLI 450: Peacebuilding course, students were given the option of creating a “choose your ending” simulation online. The software, titled “Inklewriter” had not been previously used; the project would allow for students to test the software while engaging with the course material in an interesting and comprehensive manner. Many ideas were presented and discussed, with regards to the specific subject area of the project. After discussions with the professor, the group came to a consensus on focusing on *Humanitarian Negotiations* and more specifically the *OCHA’s Guidelines on Humanitarian Negotiations with Armed Groups*.

The group established meetings, both online and in person, in order to coordinate the project, assign roles and plan how each aspect was to be
completed. Deadlines were established during the second meeting. While a week was allotted to each portion of the project, it later became clear that some portions required more than the allotted time and therefore the timeframe was adjusted accordingly.
SECTION 1.1 - PURPOSE

The purpose of the project was to use a new, untested, platform as an innovative and engaging pedagogical tool that can help shed insight into the procedural and practical aspects of humanitarian negotiations with armed groups. It is often the case that manuals and best practices handbooks are not read thoroughly. One of the reasons for this may be because of the tediousness of going through a lengthy guide, or it may be as a result of the flat tone of the text. Regardless, the information found in OCHA’s Guidelines on Humanitarian Negotiations with Armed Groups is useful, in so far as it provides crucial guidance for actors involved in such tricky situations. As part of the increasing professionalization of humanitarian aid, standardization of operating procedures and the creation of core competencies requires the use of such manuals. That said, the fact nevertheless remains that, much like the in-class simulation we underwent, sometimes lessons are best learned via a hands-on experience; this can be especially true for other students seeking to study the issue of peacekeeping in a more dynamic environment than a staid manual can provide.
SECTION 1.2 – STORYBOARDING

We started off this project by assuming that the bulk of our resources would be occupied in research; the technical implementation seemed to be fairly straightforward, while the storyboard simply needed to provide the skeleton of the story that the research would then flesh out. After all, we had all completed a thorough reading of the *OCHA Guidelines for Humanitarian Negotiations with Armed Groups*, and although we had some disagreements on which areas of peacebuilding we cared to emphasize, we figured that the existence of a manual at the foundation of our efforts would point us in the right direction. As it turns out, this assumption was quite mistaken, and our group paid the penalty by suffering from a disjointed starting point.

Once the initial storyboard, attached below, was completed it became very clear that a lot of research needed to be done in order to supplement the contents of the guide itself. While the guide provided “guidelines” it failed to provide many concrete examples of actions that could be taken to resolve an issue. Instead, only general recommendations were made. This issue became especially apparent when it came to scenario-building for the storyboard. It was difficult to create a world in which every factor discussed in the *OCHA Guide* could be incorporated.
into the storyboard, without the story taking on an unrealistic structure.

Creating an entirely new world from scratch was a daunting task.

Ultimately, the process was structured in a way that put undue requirements on the group members who were responsible for research. Because their role had primarily been looking at various case studies of humanitarian negotiations with armed groups, they actually found it a bit easier to come up with a cohesive universe in which to place the story. For example, the rebel group would be loosely based on the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam (LTTE) insofar as they had both ethnic grievances and religious differences, though the religious differences were not the center of the conflict. The militia group was influenced by the Colombian paramilitaries – specifically, the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC), which evolved in response to existing armed conflict. We essentially plotted out more information about these actors – their motivations, areas of control, structures, funding, etc – than we could ever put into a choose-your-own adventure story. A more realistic breakdown would have everyone storyboarding together (coming up with incorrect scenarios is as tough as the correct ones). This would allow for more efficient use of time near the beginning, and a more cohesive story, instead of the segmented approach that way used.

It was only after we had a rough idea of the universe that our story took place in that we could even begin the process of actually writing a cohesive narrative. In this sense, research unexpectedly pre-empted
storyboarding. At the same time, this particular sequence of events also meant that our stories would be geared towards realism; many of the actions and responses within our adventure did not require footnotes or specific research as they were not particularly unusual or noteworthy experiences (eg, the main character has a discussion with the security guard). We saved our more specific research for incidents such as radical clerics instilling fear of vaccination among rural populations, which we do have specific sources for.

Participating in the simulation for POLI 450 served as inspiration, providing ideas as to what a simulation should be like. A few strategies were borrowed from the simulation. For example, entirely new countries were created within the real world to avoid creating tension for potential participants. Although religion is referenced in the simulation, care was taken not to assign a particular name or identifier. Instead, it was decided that the main issue would be one involving ethnic tensions.

As for the actors, Minabwa rebel group was based loosely on the LTTE of Sri Lanka. The word Minabwa was derived from various languages (Min means my in Arabic, ab means water in Farsi, and wa is a term that denotes the subject of a sentence in Japanese). In this sense the rebel group’s name reflected potential problems involving access to water or land resources. While the emphasis was on ethnic divisions and intermittent violence, the issue of contention for the rebels was not one of
independence. Rather, the issue was to gain increased political participation and economic power (much like Malaysia’s National Front).

Furthermore, inspiration was drawn from the HALO Trust’s work with the LTTE in 2002 to include demining in the simulation. At least one other UN actor was introduced into the storyboard: UNICEF. The idea for the tranquility days for immunization campaigns was taken from UNICEF’s work in Afghanistan (p. 124 of “Searching for Peace in Central and South Asia”). The ICRC was included in order to serve as an example of a third, well-known organization. It was also chosen for its discretion and professionalism.

Finally, PUNK, the militia group working outside of government control was based off of Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia (AUC). As per the OCHA Guidelines, PUNK was made to be well-versed in international law and aware of humanitarian negotiation processes. However, AUC was still going against these laws and processes, despite being aware of them. Furthermore, The Deed of Commitment was inspired from page 56 of the handbook with Geneva Call NGO’s initiative.

Many ideas and concepts were drawn directly from the OCHA Guidelines’ examples and case studies of humanitarian negotiations in Bosnia, Angola, and Sudan. Many scenarios were created using common sense decision-making or what were thought to be realistic possibilities.
As we began creating the story, our main issue was creating a tale that still left some agency to the individual reader while not totally overwhelming us with various derivative paths. We decided to approach the issue by creating a best-possible-path route – one where, if the reader performed every action exactly according to the handbook, they would have the best chance of a good outcome. After that, we went back to every step and asked ourselves what poor choices the main character could have made at that junction. We tried to give the reader multiple options to choose from in addition to the right one; for the most part, the decisions ranged from the best possible answer to one that would eventually lead you back to the best possible answer (after a detour, often prodded by a helper) to one that would lead you to failure. This way, we minimized extraneous choices; as it is, we still have a fairly long and involved story. That said, the truth is, we focused much more strongly on the choice part of the choose-your-own-adventure story; we felt that the great advantage (and stress) of inklewriter is that it can be a powerful pedagogical tool by allowing people to learn the consequences of their actions in a very immediate way, much like the simulation – though obviously, we had much less of a clue of what we were doing. We also tried to be quite clear, whenever people made a wrong choice, why and how their choice was wrong – we especially didn't want an initial mistake to spark a long line of scenarios, as we felt that could confuse people as to where they made that mistake in the first place.
The group divided responsibility for the various portions of the story amongst itself – so one person wrote scenarios one through ten, another wrote eleven through fourteen, and so on and so forth. Although we had ideas in mind concerning our actors, we tried to keep much of the information deliberately vague in the interest of making the simulation as inclusive as possible. For example, the two ethnic groups are simply referred to as ‘the majority ethnic group’ and ‘the minority ethnic group’. Although in a real negotiation process it would be critical to know the detailed history of these ethnic differences, we felt that for the purpose of our simulation it was more beneficial to focus on the negotiation process and the kinds of decisions an OCHA employee would need to make to follow the steps of the handbook.

Decisions were made to not to continue the scenarios up to the follow-up stage because this would require a large number of new scenarios. Instead the future was left open-ended. Although in a real life negotiation, reaching an agreement would involve a lot more back and forth and many meetings, it simply was not possible to format the game in such a way, without creating an overwhelming number of storylines. Since the OCHA Guidelines focus mostly on setting up negotiations and securing their results, the emphasis on the game is in making the right decisions for negotiations to go smoothly. In order to prevent the software from crashing with too many options, it was necessary to simplify the
Storyboard. Overall, this did not hinder the learning objectives of the project. In fact, it made it more tangible to participants, who may become disengaged with lengthy scenarios.

While the original plan entailed creating the “choose your own ending” online simulation through the perspective of humanitarian aid workers, OCHA and a member of an armed group, this proved to be far too tedious. The amount of research required, not to mention the extensive branches that resulted from having one actor to play the game as, made it so that it was impossible to do so for the remaining actors. As a result of this, it was decided that the other actors would be eliminated and that the guide would serve as a sort of training module for OCHA personnel.

Additional versions can be made in order to deal with each respective component of the negotiation process. A more realistic breakdown would have everyone storyboarding together (coming up with incorrect scenarios is as tough as the correct ones). Research along with implementation could all be split up among everyone for individual duties. This would allow for more efficient use of time near the beginning, and a more cohesive story, instead of the segmented approach that way used.

We tried to introduce some levity as well, so it didn't feel like a slog for either the writers or the readers. The OCHA handbook, although very clear, is not particularly gripping; one of the unique advantages of this format is that it has the potential to be much more engaging. As we
still have to follow the rough outline of the handbook, our ability to
improvise and freewheel is rather limited – but we feel not taking
advantage of this arrangement would be a waste. Lastly, through the use of
dice, we tried to emphasize that despite your best efforts, failure is still a
very real possibility. Just as in the real world, we have limited control over
other actors, even when following the OCHA handbook to a tee.
Below are the notes and different drafts of all of work and storyboards. They do not necessarily match up as each person worked on different sections at different times.

**STORYBOARD 1 – THE SKELETON**

**Intro:**

You wake up one morning in the middle of (Insert Country Name – McGillistania?). You hear a gun shot in the distance. You proceed to:

a) Gather your team of fellow NGO workers and decide what to do next from there.

b) Let out a battle cry, indicating that you are ready to attack approaching government officials.

c) Consult the *Humanitarian Negotiations with Armed Groups: A Manual for Practitioners* to figure out what to do in this situation.

**Background/Things to Keep in Mind:**

- Situations when negotiation should be avoided:
  - When there is a chance that negotiations could negatively impact humanitarian conditions or jeopardize the security of the beneficiaries:
    - Armed groups may sometimes use their ability to exert force against civilian populations as a bargaining tool during negotiations. Humanitarian negotiators must be aware of this potential from the outset.
  - In addition, negotiations that are undertaken poorly, especially multi-party negotiations, can in some cases actually exacerbate disputes between opposing armed groups, and may therefore lead to a worsening of humanitarian and security conditions.
  - When the humanitarian negotiations can put the lives of the armed group interlocutors at risk:
    - Identification of the armed group’s negotiators can in some instances place them at risk of being targeted (physically or by indirect sanctions on a particular population group, e.g. the village home to the armed group representative(s)) by the group’s adversaries.
    - Targeting of armed group interlocutors as a result of their participation in humanitarian negotiations can in turn result in increased security risks for the humanitarian negotiators themselves, and possible termination of the negotiations.
When armed groups attempt to use humanitarian negotiations to enhance their perceived legitimacy:

- Armed groups may seek to use humanitarian negotiations to enhance their positioning in other interactions (e.g. with political actors), and to misuse these negotiations as a vehicle for supporting their claims of legitimacy.

- In case of doubts in this regard, humanitarian negotiators should request a demonstration of commitment from the armed group before or during negotiations.

When armed groups are believed to be playing several humanitarian actors off against each other for their own gain:

- Armed groups may attempt to enter into separate negotiations with different humanitarian agencies, in an effort to leverage their position and fragment the humanitarian community.

- This reinforces the need for humanitarian agencies to adopt a coordinated or collective approach to humanitarian negotiations (see Section 2.5 of Guide).

When the armed group attaches conditions for the implementation of an agreement that could adversely affect the civilian population:

- Humanitarian negotiators should not enter into negotiations or agreements with armed groups when there are conditions attached that may adversely affect the humanitarian circumstances of others.

Storyline from OCHA Personnel Perspective:

1. You’re in New York, sitting at your desk in the corner office of some high rise building. The air conditioning has been broken in your office for 2 days now, and with the temperature sitting at a humid 35 degrees Celsius, you fan yourself with a file you’ve grabbed among a stack. Suddenly your phone rings and you receive a call informing you that you are needed in McGillistania. You:

   a. Agree immediately, calling the travel agency so you can book the earliest flight out. Your informant has told you that the situation is dire and you do not want to waste any more time. (Go to question 2)

   b. Thank the person on the other end of the phone and let them know you will consider what they have just told you. Once you hang up the phone you decide to do some research about the situation, before deciding what to do. (Go to question 8)

   c. Thank the person on the other end of the phone and you jot down what they have just told you on a piece of paper and add it to the pile of ‘urgent’ situations you need to look at. (Go to question 50)
2. The travel agency informs you that your flight to McGillistanian was overbooked and there is no room for you on the plane. You:
   a. Proceed to yell at the person behind the ticket and demand that they find you a spot on the plane. (Go to question 3)
   b. Thank the person behind the counter for their time and ask them to book you on the next available flight to McGillistania. (Go to question 5)
   c. Inform the person behind the ticket counter that you work for (pick a UN agency) and need to leave immediately. (Go to question 6)

3. As a result of your tyrant behaviour, you have left the woman behind the counter crying. Security has escorted you out of the airport and asked you not to return until a representative has called you with information regarding your next flight. You:
   a. Decide that this is a sign that you should not get involved in politics and resign. (Go to question 4)
   b. Take this time to gather yourself together and collect background information on the conflict. (Go to question 8)
   c. Remember that you have a liaison you have been working with in McGillistania and proceed to call him and ask for an update on the situation.
   d. Wait for the airport representative to call you.

4. After having retired from politics, you learn that the conflict in McGillistania has escalated and that humanitarian agencies are still unable to get access to the country. You then become increasingly depressed and guilty. Try again.

5. Your stellar interpersonal skills have paid off. The person at the counter finds a last minute cancellation on the flight you were originally booked on and you are able to proceed to McGillistania as planned. After a 13 hour direct flight to McGillistania you arrive at the airport and:
   a. Go directly to the temporary offices set up by (insert agency name) (Go to question 7)
   b. Take a detour to your final destination. (Go to question 8)
   c. On your way to the offices there is a pot hole in the road, so you decide to drive around it. (Go to question 49)

6. You are told to wait your turn. Once you have waited for about an hour, you proceed to return to the counter and smooth talk your way to a spot on the plane. (Go to question 5)
7. On your way to the offices, a group of insurgents intercept your vehicle and demand that you provide them with food aid relief. You:

   a. “Our organization cannot agree to distribute food only to camps under your control, because, as you know, we provide assistance wherever there is a need” (pg. 29)

   b. “Our organization cannot agree to distribute food only to camps under your control, because, as you know, we provide assistance wherever there is a need [USE PRINCIPLE TO DEFINE BOUNDARY]. What we can do, however, is to include the civilians in those camps in our needs assessment … and that will ensure that those most in need in the camps also can be helped.”

   c. Explain the mandate of mission and your role, so that the insurgent group has a better understanding of the role of humanitarian activities in the McGillistania mission.

8. --- something that would result from doing extensive research

9. (RESEARCH OPTION)

10. (RESEARCH OPTION)

11. (RESEARCH OPTION)

12. (RESEARCH OPTION)

13. A local group calls for the prosecution of a war lord, who they have accused of human rights abuses. However, they would like this person to be tried based on local customs and traditions. Some of these customs and traditions conflict with already established international laws and norms. You:

    a. Agree to try the war lord based on the local customs and traditions, however add a caveat that they must be in accordance with international laws.

    b. Refuse to prosecute the war lord using the local customs and traditions.

    c. Refuse to prosecute the war lord using local customs and traditions and propose that he/she be tried using the international court system.

    d. Propose a hybrid of local and international judicial systems in dealing with all complaints involving human rights abuses and war crimes, in regards to the conflict at hand.

14. A local radio group is accused of inciting hatred towards a specific ethnic group within McGillistania. You:

    a. Inform the group that such acts are prohibited by international law.

    b. Investigate into the matter, before approaching the group.
c. Write a letter to someone higher up in the chain of command, asking if it is possible that the radio signals be jammed.

d. Are not responsible for this specific aspect of peacekeeping and therefore inform those who it concerns and continue working on your own tasks.

15. You are informed that human trafficking may be taking place in McGillistania. You:

   a. (RESEARCH OPTIONS)

16. During negotiations, the leader of an armed rebel group refuses to compromise on the terms of the negotiation. (pg. 44-45) You:

   a. Inform them that the international community is aware of its violations of The Rome Statute. (Go to question #)

   b. Ask the leader what they expect the outcome of the negotiations to be. (Go to question 17)

   c. End the meeting and ask parties to return to the table when they have sufficient proposals. (Go to question 19)

   d. Make everyone aware that if they continue to violate the terms of the Rome Statute they will likely be tried by the ICC. (Go to question #)

   e. Offer amnesty to the leader of the armed rebel group, if he/she is willing to compromise and take part in negotiations. (Go to question #)

17. The armed rebel groups seem more interested in discussing certain issues over others, you:

   a. Focus on these issues, hoping to deal with other issues at a later date. (Go to question 18)

   b. Focus on these issues, believing that any progress is positive in terms of the peace process. (Go to question #)

   c. Use these issues in order to transition to other issues during the same meeting. (Go to question 21)

   d. Reiterate the importance of discussing certain issues relevant to the peace process, over others. (Go to question #)

18. You become aware that the armed rebel group is fighting for territorial autonomy, with the hopes of establishing a State in the future. You:

   a. Emphasize respect for international human rights law in the negotiation process. (Go to question #)
b. Attempt to avoid this issue during negotiations, as it is a point of conflict between the warring parties. (Go to question #)

c. Discuss how the international community and other local groups view the armed rebel group, in hope of getting them to realize that war only serves to delegitimize it. (Go to question #)

d. Emphasize that any violation in human rights and international law could result in a decline in aid money for the armed group. (Go to question #)

19. You need to get in touch with the rebel group. You:

a. Use an intermediary that has recently been in touch with the rebel group. The intermediary works to initiate contact between your organization and the rebel group. (Go to question #)

b. Use existing channels of communication. (Go to question #)

c. Use an intermediary who has had a long standing relation with the rebel group, but has not been in recent contact with it. (Go to question #)

d. Use a local religious group as an intermediary, in order to facilitate contact with the rebel group. (Go to question #)

20. There is a dispute among the humanitarian actors as to who should lead the negotiations. You decide:

a. To not have a leader and ensure that all humanitarian actors have a chance to provide input into the project. (Go to question #)

b. To appoint one person as the senior lead negotiator based on a consensus among the group. (Go to question #)

c. Vote on who should be appointed the lead negotiator. (Go to question #)

d. Take charge of the situation yourself. (Go to question #)

21. There are 2 feasible options that emerge during the negotiation process. The first allows for both parties in the negotiations to benefit, while the second provides a better humanitarian approach. You:

a. Decide to go with the first option. If the armed groups are not satisfied with the outcome of the negotiations they are less likely to support it. (Go to question #)

b. Hold off on coming to a decision and instead try to come up with another option. (Go to question #)

c. Favour the second option, as it best supports the humanitarian mission (Go to question 22)
d. Decide to evaluate the humanitarian impact of each option and acquire input from impacted groups before coming to a decision. (Go to question #)

22. One of the parties in the negotiation complains that the terms which were verbally agreed upon during negotiations were not included in the written agreement. You:

   a. (RESEARCH OPTION)

23. The representatives of the armed rebel group arrive an hour late to negotiations. You:

   a. Make it very clear that punctuality is important in negotiations. (Go to question #)
   b. Act as if nothing is amiss and begin the discussion. (Go to question #)
   c. Pull the representatives aside and ask them why they were late to the negotiations. (Go to question #)
   d. Have ended the meeting already. (Go to question #)

24. The armed group refuses to allow you to access areas of McGillistania where citizens are in desperate need of humanitarian assistance. You:

   a. Emphasize that you are only trying to help the people in need of assistance. (Go to question #)
   b. Refuse to recognize the armed group and disregard their refusal to allow for humanitarian aid projects to occur in certain areas. (Go to question #)
   c. Let the armed group know that they are obliged to allow access to people in need of humanitarian assistance under international law. (Go to question #)

25. You have been accused of bias by states in the international community in regards to how your interactions with the armed rebel group. You:

   a. Deny this outright. (Go to question #)
   b. Say nothing. (Go to question #)
   c. Explain why you are negotiating with the armed groups. (Go to question #)
   d. Maintain that you do not recognize the armed group as legitimate and emphasize that the purpose of your mission is humanitarian in nature. (Go to question #)
26. Members of your negotiating team fear for their safety and are uncertain about entering into negotiations with the armed group. You:

   a. Ask the armed group to meet in a neutral location. (Go to question #)

   b. Request security guarantees from the armed group prior to meeting with them. (Go to question #)

   c. Inform all parties that negotiations are taking place in order to make all parties aware of what is happening. (Go to question #)

   d. Leave members who are uneasy behind and give them other tasks relevant to the humanitarian project. (Go to question #)

27. The government of McGillistania is worried about the presence of negotiations with the armed group, believing that it is legitimizing them. You:

   a. Engage in advocacy efforts with regional organizations, the government of McGillistania and the neighbouring countries of Concordance, The Royal Mont Empire, and Uqamistan to gain support for the humanitarian negotiations. (Go to question #)

   b. Communicate the process and objectives of negotiating to concerned parties in order to alleviate their concerns. (Go to question #)

   c. Present the humanitarian negotiations as a necessary component of humanitarian action. (Go to question #)

   d. Build consensus and support among other humanitarian organizations in order to present a strong case for negotiation to the government. (Go to question #)

28. You are having difficulty getting all groups to commit to the agreement which has resulted from the negotiations. You:

   a. Ensure all parties feel a sense of ownership of the final agreement. (Go to question #)

   b. Ensure that everything is clearly set out in the agreement and that all aspects of the agreement are monitored. (Go to question #)

   c. Reiterate each party’s roles in the agreement, restating the commitments they had made during the negotiating process. (Go to question #)

   d. Emphasize the legal duties and obligations of the armed group. Remind them that they are under the scrutiny of the international community and that they will be held accountable for their actions. (Go to question #)

29. (NEEDS RESEARCH)
30. (NEEDS RESEARCH)

31. (NEEDS RESEARCH)

32. (NEEDS RESEARCH)

33. (NEEDS RESEARCH)

34. (NEEDS RESEARCH)

35. (NEEDS RESEARCH)

36. (NEEDS RESEARCH)

37. (NEEDS RESEARCH)

38. (NEEDS RESEARCH)

39. (NEEDS RESEARCH)

40. (NEEDS RESEARCH)

41. (NEEDS RESEARCH)

42. (NEEDS RESEARCH)

43. (NEEDS RESEARCH)

44. (NEEDS RESEARCH)

45. (NEEDS RESEARCH)

46. (NEEDS RESEARCH)

47. The pot hole was a diversion that has caused you to inevitably drive into a mine field. (Add a little more detail; either we injure them/kill someone in the group/have another question about how they get out of the mine field)

   a. (RESEARCH OPTIONS)

48. You have been unable to look at the case involving the conflict in McGillistania. As a result of this your offices have been inundated by complaints from NGOs and interest groups. These groups have accused you of selection bias in the cases that you deal with. As a result, your offices have had to do damage control, as donors have begun to question the efficacy of the organization.

   a. (RESEARCH OPTIONS)

49. (Consequence of informing supervisor of situation – RESEARCH THIS)

***need to somehow incorporate section on customary laws, etc. but not sure how to do this in the form of a tangible situation on the ground.
STORYBOARD 2 – GROSSLY DIFFERENT

Background:

Welcome to the Negotiate a Humanitarian Agreement Training Program for the United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs! In this simulation, you are a senior member of the OCHA, and you have the task of developing and implementing a proposal to ameliorate the humanitarian crisis in the United Federation of Petrichor, a nation riven by civil discord on the continent of Northern Tiffliton. Petrichor is a former Western colony that has enjoyed independence since 1956, but due to simmering ethnic tensions stemming from colonial times, the country has fallen into periodic chaos. Currently, the country is suffering from episodic fighting with occasional breaks in the violence, mostly between the government led by President Martin Steed-Asprey, leading industrialist, and the rebel group Minabwa led by Damocles Lafleur, son of a farming family that had their land confiscated by the government in an earlier episode of ethnic tension. The colonial power only dealt with the President's rebel group; as such, the rebels' original motivations were to have increased political representation and to have more equitably distributed economic growth, but the conflict itself has led to further deep-seated racism and enmity between the two groups. Further adding to complications, the two groups are also divided by separate religions, though this does not form the basis of the conflict. You will discover more information after you make contact with your intermediary throughout the following adventure.

Before you begin, we recommend that you have on hand both the OCHA manual on humanitarian negotiations with armed groups https://ochanet.unocha.org/p/Documents/HumanitarianNegotiationswArmedGroupsManual.pdf, specifically the worksheet for mapping characteristics of armed groups, as well as one six-sided die.

At certain points in this game, despite your best efforts, the result will be at least partially up to chance, much like real life.

We wish you patience and success as you navigate the complex field of humanitarian negotiations!

Storyboard as played by OCHA personnel:

1.) After a recent debacle involving the ambassador's daughter in a conservative nation best not mentioned, your bosses have seen fit to send you to a location where you will have no choice but to keep busy. You have received minimal information on Petrichor as you were hustled to the airport, but you know you have to coordinate an agreement between humanitarian organizations (specifically United Nations Children's Fund [UNICEF], the International Committee of the Red Cross [ICRC], and the HALO Trust)
on the ground and the rebel group to ensure the safe provision of humanitarian assistance to the civilians most in need.

Headquarters has provided you with a list of preliminary contacts in Petrichor, ranging from local tribal leaders to businessmen to missionaries to other NGOs. When you reach the Wakashili Hotel (formerly the Prince Albert), what is your first decision?

A) Meet with the government spokesperson. (Go to 1A)

B) Get in touch with the local NGO offices. (Go to 2)

C) Make contact with a local journalist. (Go to 1C)

1A) You arrive at the government-run radio station's office. After reading an in-depth 1980s magazine article hotly debating the possible extinction of Petrichor's mythical national animal, the Brynanidor, you are called into the main studio to meet the government spokesperson.

“Great, you're here! Now we can go on air and discuss our plans to help rebuild Petrichor.”

You're taken by surprise. Do you:

A) Agree to go with her and make something up on the spot. (Go to 2A)

B) Politely notify her that you were misinformed about the role the meeting was supposed to play. (Go to 2B)

C) Excuse yourself to go to the bathroom and try to sneak out the window. (Go to 2C)

2A) You return to your hotel after a long and exhausting radio session. At least the government spokesperson was quite pleased with you – she let you know the government of Petrichor was looking forward to working with you in the future, and you seemed to get your message out to a wide audience of people.

The next morning, you wake up to a newspaper headline proudly declaring, “The United Nations Proudly Supports the Petrichorian Government in Their Struggle.” You start typing up your cover letter, as you know there's no way other factions will be willing to trust you as a neutral actor. Try again.

2B) Her face creases. “So you're saying you don't want to work with the government?”

After you assure her that you represent a neutral organization whose utmost concern is ensuring that the people are well-cared for, you ask her if it'd be possible just to get some information about the situation on the ground, she harrumphs, but seems to relent. She
gets the secretary to hail you a cab and instructs it to take you to the isolated state-run
development offices, located in the countryside. (Go to 3B.)

3B) You are made to wait in an uncomfortable chair for hours. You're the only person in
the room, besides the visibly bored security guard. You're wary of raising unnecessary
attention, but feel this might be a good way to get some unofficial information. Do you:

A) Talk to him. (Go to 4A)

B) Keep waiting quietly. (Go to 4B)

4A) The security guard warily watches as you approach, and cautiously greets you. After
you chat with him for a little bit and decide to offer him some cigarettes, he opens up and
introduces himself as Abdul. Abdul let you know that should you continue waiting, you'll
never meet anybody important as this particular office is simply designed to waste overly
inquisitive visitors' time. He is confused as to why a UN representative seeking to
coordinate humanitarian aid would not seek out the non-partisan NGOs first, and tells
you that the local offices of international NGOs might be more open to a nosy foreigner.
He even helpfully swings you a ride on the next vehicle into the city after you promise
him your eternal gratitude, and the rest of your cigarettes. (Go to 2.)

4B) The sun sets as the receptionist appears and calls you to the window. “The Minister
of Social Affairs is terribly sorry, but she was unable to make today's meeting. Please
return again tomorrow.” Discouraged and disappointed by your failures to make contact
with a government spokesperson, even though you should know better than to try to skip
the approach coordination step, you decide to meet with the NGOs. (Go to 2)

2C) A Petrichorian security guard mistakes you for a Brynanidor and shoots you as you
clamber over the wall, eager to supplement his meager wages with the tea made from the
Brynanidor's fabled bones. Officially, nobody knows what becomes of you; the
government blames your disappearance on the rebels, the rebels have never heard of you,
and thousands suffer without any humanitarian assistance.

Take your job more seriously! Try again.

2C) You make contact with a local journalist known for his outspoken and anti-
government views, recently released from house arrest, and try to ascertain his views of
the situation the ground. He explains the difficulties in getting accurate information from
the government on occasion: not only are they reluctant to admit how bad the situation is
in certain areas, but they also don't want to admit they can't gather accurate information
in non-government held areas. He tells you he has certain contacts with the rebel forces
should you be interested in their knowledge. Otherwise, he recommends you go talk to
the NGOs to coordinate some type of strategy and use their contacts and information.
A) Take up his offer of meeting with the rebels. (Go to 2C)

B) Meet the NGOs. (Go to 2)

2C) You're told to be in the hotel's restaurant at noon the next day wearing a blue fedora, and somebody will be in touch with you. However, the next morning at dawn, you're awakened by a group of very heavily armed men busting down your door and invading your room. You're promptly escorted to the airport with your passport and given a ticket on the first plane out of Petrichor: as it turns out, the journalist was released from house arrest on condition of cooperation with the government, and they don't take kindly to foreigners landing in their country and immediately arranging contacts with rebel groups.

Try again!

2) You've gathered senior representatives from the ICRC, HALO, and UNICEF in the hotel’s conference room. After pausing to admire the 1950s décor, you learn that the various NGOs have not made much individual progress. You agree to work together and:

A) Start up a social-media based fundraising campaign. (Go to 2A)

B) Designate lead negotiators and alternates. (Go to 3)

C) Begin to outline your objectives for negotiations. (middle ground: leads to a mess when you meet the government, Go to 2C)

2A) You let all your Facebook friends know about the sensitive, highly nuanced work you're performing with a nifty info graphic! At first, you feel quite pleased, but you are increasingly disturbed as people you don't know keep adding their own bits of (totally unwarranted) information to the info graphic. Headquarters calls and demands to know when the United Nations became affiliated with the “Steed-Asprey Away, Tyranny Avast Now” (SATAN) movement; the government hears of your initiatives, and is quite displeased. Your mom posts on her Facebook feed about the success of her only child, boasting that this campaign is a new “KONY 2012!”

Unfortunately for you, your career, and the people of Petrichor awaiting critical care, it is; Petrichor decides to not work with any OCHA-affiliated efforts as it feels it cannot trust you, and so the NGOs shun you, too. Try again!

2C) The HALO Trust’s [note to Taylor: hyperlink HALO Trust here] main concerns involve demining farmland and working with all armed factions to prevent the further use of land mines (and other weapons that result in unexploded ordinance, such as cluster bombs). UNICEF [hyperlink] is more worried about preventing child soldiers, setting up
tranquility days for immunization campaigns, providing food, and respecting the rights of the child. The ICRC [hyperlink] prioritizes safe access for medical aid provision and respect for human rights and international law.

With the help of the NGOs' contacts, you can now set up a meeting with high-level representatives from the government, rebels, and militia.

Do you meet with?

A) the government and NGOs

B) the rebels and NGOs

C) the militia and NGOs

D) all of the above

3) (All the choices lead to this scenario) The meeting starts off well, but starts to degenerate as each individual NGO starts pushing for their own cause; without a lead negotiator, it proves impossible to set ground rules for a discussion and to balance the security and humanitarian concerns of all parties involved in the talks.

You step outside to take a break from the shouting, and in a desperate act, pull the fire alarm to end the meeting early. You decide to work on appointing a lead negotiator (along with alternates) before approaching another negotiating session.

(Go to 3, the best branch)

3) Desperate to regain your former glory, you propose yourself as the chief negotiator for the various NGO groups, backed up by the ICRC, as you know they have a penchant for discretion when necessary. The NGOs, exhausted by their lack of progress, agree to follow your lead.

In order to best deal with the various armed groups, you:

A) Talk to local journalists to figure out what the main issues are. (Go to 3A)

B) Ask the NGOs what their goals are, and try to form a common strategy. (Go to 4)

C) Ask the various armed groups what their desires are. (Go to 3C)

3A) The local journalists are quite happy to attempt to help you in your task, but they helpfully point out that you should probably talk to your NGO partners first before attempting to form community partnerships. After all, not only do they probably have some idea of the conditions on the ground, but you also need to play to their strengths to be able to achieve anything of note.
Ask the NGOs what their goals are, and try to form a common strategy. (Go to 4)

3C) Each group attempts to sell you on the benefits of working with their preferred local aid partners, preferably just giving them money. You thank them all for their hastily-scrawled project proposals and head back to the hotel with your NGO partners; you realize that you still need to figure out a common strategy with your NGO partners before you can proceed.

Ask the NGOs what their goals are (Go to 4).

4) The HALO Trust’s main concerns involve demining farmland and working with all armed factions to prevent the further use of land mines (and other weapons that result in unexploded ordinance, such as cluster bombs). UNICEF is more worried about preventing child soldiers, setting up tranquility days for immunization campaigns, providing food, and respecting the rights of the child. The ICRC prioritizes safe access for medical aid provision and respect for human rights and international law.

You agree that the top priorities should be demining, respecting international law, and tranquility days for immunization. However, you need to learn a bit about your negotiating partners before sitting down with them. You ask your new NGO partners for any intermediaries they could put you in touch with that have interacted with all parties involved in previous negotiations. Keeping in mind that you will not have time to talk to all contacts before negotiations start, whom do you speak to?

A) Local Tribal Leaders (Go to next, question 5)

B) Local politicians (Go to 4B)

C) Missionaries (Go to next, question 5)

D) Businessmen (Go to next, question 5)

4B) The capital city is dominated by the ruling party; opposition candidates have a mysteriously hard time meeting the registration requirements.

“Greetings,” says City Alderman Joseph Mbwazi with a wide smile. The photoflash dazzles you the moment you step into his office. He offers you a cigar and an alcoholic drink. You explain that you're here on a matter of some urgency, but he waves you off, and informs you that's a matter for the next meeting.
You wake up the next morning to a newspaper with your awkward photo splashed all over the front page, and a vague sense of déjà vu as Joseph Mbwazi claims UN endorsement for the ruling party, and a personal ability to bring aid money into the country.

The other armed groups decide to call off the meeting, as they feel you are no longer an impartial negotiator; it is important to form independent links to the community! Try again.

5) After your discussion with local notables, you have discovered that the rebel group is led by the charismatic Damocles Lefleur and a group of loyal sub-commanders. He displaced prior rebel groups’ support by focusing on provision of social goods to his people, but as war has returned to Petrichor, he has relied more heavily on the conservative, religious, and anti-Western leadership provided by the famed shaman, Matabuki Susuku.

You use your worksheet for mapping characteristics of armed groups to note the information you receive and feel better prepared to begin negotiations. What do you do next?

[A] Meet with government representatives to inform them of your goals (Go to a copy of 7) [NOTE: in this scenario, negotiations fall apart as the rebels don't have a legitimate constituency, so don't actually direct them onto the best path – direct them onto a path that is much like the best path until negotiations fall apart]

NOTE: it's a bit unclear where we can fit this in – I'm guessing that if we follow this path, it should go something like this, probably, around step 12 or 13 :)

While meeting with General Lafleur, you begin hearing loud noises outside. “I thought your group maintained order in this area,” you said. He was nonplussed at your reaction, and ordered you to stay in the room while he left to go to deal with the situation. From your seat near the window, you see a massive ethnic [minority name] demonstration round the corner. You realize that now might be a good time to independently verify the Minabwa's popularity, but as you pick up your phone; you remember that you never actually bothered to establish independent lines of communication.

As it turns out, the Minabwa are internally collapsing amidst a loss of civilian support, and cannot possibly hope to uphold their portion of any agreement or guarantee security for aid workers. Had you known this ahead of time, you could have planned for such a contingency, but unfortunately, you skipped that step. Try again!

B) Establish separate lines of communication with civil society leaders. (Go to 6)
C) Request an audience with the shaman

5C) [extend this for another scenario, but essentially: Lafleur feels like you're undercutting him by going to the shaman first and refuses to meet you, the shaman uses your visit to increase his control over the group at the expense of moderate voices that would work with you]

Through an intermediary, you arrange a meeting with Matubuki Susuku at his pleasant villa in the city suburbs. Although the meeting is a bit rocky at first, you make progress by agreeing to work together on your areas of common interest. His reputation as an anti-Western conservative does worry you, but you figure that it's better to bring him into the fold by engaging with him than not, where he risks working against your project proposals.

A few days later, you receive word that General Lafleur, commander of Minabwa, is rather upset with you. You're fairly tired as you return to the hotel, but recognize this could be important; do you

A) Call him immediately

B) Go to sleep and deal with the problem later

5A) “What do you think you're doing?!!” You hold the phone a short distance away from your ear as the general works himself into a tirade. After he calms down a bit, you gather that he is very upset that you undercut his authority by making contact with the shaman directly. He cannot afford to have the shaman enhance his reputation too much lest he lose control over the Minabwan rebels, and he worries that by having the United Nations representative contact him directly, the shaman will be legitimized and empowered in the eyes of the rebels.

You assure him that you meant no harm, and plan to meet with him soon. Satisfied that you've dealt with the issue, you go to bed.

(Go to 5B)

5B) The mood when you walk into the conference room the next morning is grim. You find out that Matubuki Susuku has taken advantage of your meeting to proclaim that he is internationally respected as the legitimate representative of the Minabwan rebels, and that only by following him can the rebels achieve some type of lasting power. The government feels intensely uncomfortable with this shift in rebel sensibilities and declares it will refuse to talk to the rebels as long as they're led by Susuku. Hope for any type of meeting has broken down. Your mission continues for a few months, but to no constructive end.
Perhaps sending out feelers into the community before reaching out to the rebels directly would be more constructive next time. Try again!

6) Thanks to your thoughtful strategy, you are able to determine that Minabwa has a legitimate constituency within its community for now and the populace would respect a signed agreement. Nonetheless, there is continued wariness over the growing influence of Susuku and you will need to remain watchful over public opinion.

The humanitarian situation remains dire and your NGO partners are anxious to begin negotiations. What do you do?

A) Set up a meeting with the NGOs, the government, and Minabwa. [government surprised you have the ability to meet with Minabwa, unpleasantly]

B) Meet with government representatives to inform them of your goals. (Go to 7)

C) Begin fundraising from the international community [does not work as you do not have contacts/plans, also not your role]

6A) The government representative walks into your conference room apologizing for her lateness. You assure her it's no worry and introduce her to the other parties at the talks. When you reach the Minabwan delegation, she stops short and raises an eyebrow. “I was not informed you were in contact with the rebels; President Steed-Asprey would be rather concerned with this potential assault upon our sovereignty.” You assure her you meant no disrespect, but she nevertheless excuses herself from the talks.

You spend the next few days frantically trying to apologize to the government for catching them unawares, and trying to give them all possible information regarding your goals. Eventually, the word comes down that the government no longer trusts OCHA or its humanitarian partners as it wasn't properly informed ahead of time of the situation.

Try again!

6C) Your efforts to raise funds are marginally successful, but are cut short when your boss calls you and angrily demands to know why you aren't focusing on your crucial task of ensuring that all parties sit at the negotiating table to allow humanitarian aid through. In this case, OCHA is supposed to spearhead the creation of some kind of agreement on helping the aid get where it is needed most, not focus on fundraising; leave that to the individual NGOs, or help them out with that after you've created an agreement.

Go back to 6.
7) Although the government is grateful for your consideration and interested in improving the humanitarian situation (mostly to please foreign investors), they remain deeply suspicious of the Minabwa and worry that your negotiations will add legitimacy to the rebel cause.

A) You let the government know that you will put in a good word on their behalf to the international community if they cooperate

B) You assure the government officials that humanitarian negotiations are a necessary component of humanitarian action, but that you remain neutral in the conflict. (Go to 8)

C) You chide the government for their unwillingness to put their people first.

7A) Your old colleagues from university are pleased but rather surprised to hear from you as you try to tout the abundant investment opportunities in Petrichor. Now that they are successfully ensconced in positions of power in various multinational corporations and governments, they certainly have the power to direct significant international investment towards Petrichor. Nevertheless, they remain rather confused as to why a representative of OCHA would undertake such a task, and are in fact rather suspicious as to why you would try to get them to invest in what is currently still a highly unstable country. One energy firm you contact becomes particularly curious and an internal investigation into a recently acquired local subsidiary reveals widespread corruption, scaring off any further investment. The government is most displeased.

Perhaps you should try a different method of convincing them that you mean no harm.

Go back to 6.

7C) Months later, your boss is still incredulous you thought telling the government off would be the best way to get them to cooperate with you. Of course, it makes for a great story to tell all the other workers in the mail room, where you've now been placed.

Try again.

8) The government officials agree to be a part of your negotiations, but retain the right to leave at any time and request that OCHA highlight their cooperative efforts in future press releases.
[NOTE: CONSIDER COMBINING WITH 9, as well, it's really hard to come up with scenarios that result from the government saying, “yes.”]

A) You refuse their terms.

B) You agree to the terms and request additional information about other significant political actors within McGilla. (Go to 9)

8A) The government refuses to cooperate with you unless you meet their relatively simple terms. As you're pressed for time anyway, you decide to stop being stubborn and accept them. (Go to 9)

9) The government officials inform you of the militia that has formed outside of government control (add more once we do research on Colombia). You are pressed for time. What is your next move?

A) You decide to leave the militia out of talks.

B) You send the ICRC lead negotiator with your OCHA alternate to establish contact with the militia leaders while you meet with your intermediary to coordinate meeting with Minabwa. (Go to 10)

9A) Talks with the rebels and government proceed well at first. You make some progress on most of the issues, but realize the militia group is required before you can finalize any type of agreement as they're a fair bit of the problem themselves. Meanwhile, word on the street is that they're getting quite antsy at being left out of high-level talks mediated by the United Nations; you receive reports of growing unrest in militia-influenced areas.

Do you:

A) Decide to push through and present them with a finished product that they can sign on to (go to 10A)

B) Send the ICRC lead negotiator along with your OCHA alternate to the militia (go to 10)

10A) You push on with talks that grow more tenuous by the day. As the militia's input is required before several of the most tendentious issues can be resolved, there can be no final agreement without them. Consensus grows harder to achieve as the militia makes more and more brazen attacks against [minority ethnic group] every day in an attempt to gain official notice. Heavy fighting resumes between the rebels and militia as talks collapse.
As you've painfully learned, you need to build an “inclusive enough” group of actors in order to find a stable agreement. Try again!

10) Your intermediary is well acquainted with some of General Lefleur’s sub-commanders and offers to introduce you personally. Do you take the direct or indirect approach?

A) Indirect, oral approach. You send one of your sub-coordinators to save time.

B) Direct, oral approach. You want to establish personal communication and accord with the sub-commanders. (Go to 11)

C) Indirect, written approach. You want to have written communication to point back to during negotiations.

10A) Discussions proceed fairly smoothly. That said, you start to grow concerned over the list of issues being discussed considering that Lafleur seems to be giving slightly different answers on the issues each time he's pressed. Rumors start leaking that the United Nations is talking to the rebels directly, and the government starts growing unhappy.

Do you:

A) Switch to a direct, oral approach to see what's going on for yourself (go to 11)

B) Decide to trust your intermediary (11A, failure)

11A) You decide to ease the government's concerns by inviting them to get in touch with Lafleur themselves to see how that the conversation has been steadfastly neutral.

You confidently await the results of their meeting, only to be very confused when an irate government official calls you and accuses you of conspiring with the enemy. You protest that you have no clue what he's talking about, and you would be happy to explain the misunderstanding. The government informs you that they are open to listening to your explanations, but apparently, you weren't even in the room while discussions were ongoing – making you at best guilty of lax oversight. The government has lost faith in you, while the rebels have gotten about as much use out of you as they care to.

Try again
10C) You impatiently await news from your intermediary while you review plans and discussions with colleagues. Progress is slow and halting. While your intermediary tries to work his way up to meeting General Lafleur himself, precious time is passing.

Do you:

A) Give more time to let the indirect, written approach continue (Go to 11C)

B) Take matters into your own hands with a direct, oral approach (Go to 11, best path)

C) Try to switch to an indirect, oral approach to speed matters up. (Go to 10A, above)

11C) You spend your free time flipping between television channels back at your hotel. You place a very expensive phone call to your grandmother as you haven't spoken to her in months. You beat Tetris.

Eventually, you write a letter to Lafleur himself, asking what the hold-up is. He replies that he cannot trust a man who won't even give him the time of day.

Realizing you need his personal cooperation, you decide to move to a direct, oral approach.

Go to 11.

**STORYBOARD 3: ADOPTING BEST PRACTICES**

Welcome to the Negotiate a Humanitarian Agreement Training Program for the United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs! In this simulation, you are a senior member of the OCHA, and you have the task of developing and implementing a proposal to ameliorate the humanitarian crisis in the United Federation of Petrichor, a nation riven by civil discord on the continent of Northern Tiffleton. Petrichor is a former Western colony that has enjoyed independence since 1956, but due to simmering ethnic tensions stemming from colonial times, the country has fallen into periodic chaos. Currently, the country is suffering from episodic fighting with occasional breaks in the violence, mostly between the government led by President Martin Steed-Asprey, leading industrialist, and the rebel group Minabwa led by Damocles Lafleur, son of a farming family that had their land confiscated by the government in an earlier episode of ethnic tension. The colonial power only dealt with the President's rebel group; as such, the rebels' original motivations were to have increased political representation and to have more equitably distributed economic growth, but the conflict itself has led to further deep-seated racism and enmity between the two groups. Further adding to complications, the two groups are also divided by separate religions, though this does not form the basis
of the conflict. You will discover more information after you make contact with your intermediary throughout the following adventure.

Before you begin, we recommend that you have on hand both the OCHA manual on humanitarian negotiations with armed groups
https://ochanet.unocha.org/p/Documents/HumanitarianNegotiationswArmedGroupsManual.pdf, specifically the worksheet for mapping characteristics of armed groups, as well as one six-sided die.

At certain points in this game, despite your best efforts, the result will be at least partially up to chance, much like real life.

We wish you patience and success as you navigate the complex field of humanitarian negotiations!

Begin:

1.) After a recent debacle involving the ambassador's daughter in a conservative nation best not mentioned, your bosses have seen fit to send you to a location where you will have no choice but to keep busy. You have received minimal information on Petrichor as you were hustled to the airport, but you know you have to coordinate an agreement between humanitarian organizations (specifically United Nations Children's Fund [UNICEF], the International Committee of the Red Cross [ICRC], and the HALO Trust) on the ground and the rebel group to ensure the safe provision of humanitarian assistance to the civilians most in need.

Headquarters has provided you with a list of preliminary contacts in Petrichor, ranging from local tribal leaders to businessmen to missionaries to other NGOs. When you reach the Wakashili Hotel (formerly the Prince Albert), what is your first decision?

A) Meet with the government spokesperson

B) Get in touch with the local NGO offices (Go to 2)

C) Make contact with (should lead to rebels in some way); rebels will attempt to play off each other, assert legitimacy

D) Tour the city to assess local needs and desires (can cut out if desired)

2) You’ve gathered senior representatives from the ICRC, HALO, and UNICEF in the hotel’s conference room. After pausing to admire the 1950s décor, you learn that the various NGOs have not made much individual progress. You agree to work together and:
A) Start up a social-media based fundraising campaign (KONY 2012 – note: this option fails)

B) Designate lead negotiators and alternates (Go to 3)

C) Begin to outline your objectives for negotiations (middle ground: leads to a mess when you meet the government)

3) Desperate to regain your former glory, you propose yourself as the chief negotiator for the various NGO groups, backed up by the ICRC, as you know they have a penchant for discretion when necessary. The NGOs, exhausted by their lack of progress, agree to follow your lead.

In order to best serve the humanitarian needs of the population, you:

A) Talk

B) Ask the NGOs what their goals are, and try to form a common strategy (Go to 4)

C)

4) The HALO Trust’s [note to Taylor: hyperlink HALO Trust here] main concerns involve demining farmland and working with all armed factions to prevent the further use of land mines (and other weapons that result in unexploded ordinance, such as cluster bombs). UNICEF [hyperlink] is more worried about preventing child soldiers, setting up tranquility days for immunization campaigns, providing food, and respecting the rights of the child. The ICRC [hyperlink] prioritizes safe access for medical aid provision and respect for human rights and international law.

You agree that the top priorities should be demining, respecting international law, and tranquility days for immunization. However, you need to learn a bit about your negotiating partners before sitting down with them. You ask your new NGO partners for any intermediaries they could put you in touch with that have interacted with all parties involved in previous negotiations. Keeping in mind that you will not have time to talk to all contacts before negotiations start, whom do you speak to?

A) Local Tribal Leaders (Go to next, question 5)

B) Local political activists (Go to fail)

C) Missionaries (Go to next, question 5)
5) After your discussion with local notables, you have discovered that the rebel group, Minabwa, is led by the charismatic Damocles Lefleur and a group of loyal sub-commanders. He displaced prior rebel groups’ support by focusing on provision of social goods to his people, but as war has returned to Petrichor, he has relied more heavily on the conservative, religious, and anti-Western leadership provided by the famed shaman, Matabuki Susuku. Minabwa is largely supported by a Diaspora from the same ethnic group living in Europe.

You use your worksheet for mapping characteristics of armed groups to note the information you receive and feel better prepared to begin negotiations. What do you do next?

A)

B) Establish separate lines of communication with civil society leaders. (Go to 6)

C)

6) Thanks to your thoughtful strategy, you are able to determine that Minabwa has a legitimate constituency within its community for now and the populace would respect a signed agreement. Nonetheless, there is continued weariness over the growing influence of Susuku and you will need to remain watchful over public opinion.

The humanitarian situation remains dire and your NGO partners are anxious to begin negotiations. What do you do?

A) Set up a meeting with the NGOs, the government, and Minabwa.

B) Meet with government representatives to inform them of your goals. (Go to 7)

C)

7) Although the government is grateful for your consideration and interested in improving the humanitarian situation (mostly to please foreign investors), they remain deeply suspicious of the Minabwa and worry that your negotiations will add legitimacy to the rebel cause.

A)

B) You assure the government officials that humanitarian negotiations are a necessary component of humanitarian action, but that you remain neutral in the conflict. (Go to 8)
8) The government officials agree to be a part your negotiations, but retain the right to leave at any time and request that OCHA highlight their cooperative efforts in future press releases.

A) 

B) You agree to the terms and request additional information about other significant political actors within McGill. (Go to 9) 

C) 

9) The government officials inform you of a militia, Patriots United in National Kinship (PUNK) that has formed outside of government control. PUNK is made up of the majority ethnic group; they control the land that formerly belonged to the minority rebels before they were expelled during previous government takeovers. There is serious ethnic and political tension among all groups involved. You are pressed for time. What is your next move?

A) 

B) You send the ICRC lead negotiator with your OCHA alternate to establish contact with the militia leaders while you meet with your intermediary to coordinate a meeting with Minabwa. (Go to 10) 

C) 

10) Your intermediary is well acquainted with some of General Lafleur’s sub-commanders and offers to introduce you personally. Do you take the direct or indirect approach?

A) Indirect, oral approach. You send one of your sub-coordinators to save time. 

B) Direct, oral approach. You want to establish personal communication and accord with the sub-commanders. (Go to 11) 

C) Indirect, written approach. You want to have written communication to point back to during negotiations. 

11) The sub-commanders are pleased to make your acquaintance and are very interested in your humanitarian projects. Due to their increased conservatism, General Lefleur sees improving public living standards as a key method of maintaining his legitimate constituency. Nonetheless, the sub-commanders inform you that Lefleur considers
negotiations involving the official government and the militia as recognition of Minabwa’s legitimacy in the eyes of the international community.

A)

B) Thank the Minabwa commanders for their enthusiasm and assert that OCHA and the participating NGOs are in no way political and will remain neutral during the entirety of the negotiation process. Request an official meeting with Lafleur himself to clarify the situation. (Go to 12)

C)

12) While waiting for your meeting with Lafleur, you receive a phone call from your OCHA alternate. His meeting with the militia was successful and he informs you that the organization is well versed in humanitarian principles. They will only work with OCHA if your organization upholds its criteria of impartiality and neutrality, which your alternate assured, was a top OCHA priority. Armed with this information, you pass the armed guards and enter General Lafleur’s office.

A)

B) You greet Lafleur warmly and attempt to build a rapport with him while remaining clear that your work is strictly humanitarian. Warn him that any discussion of politics and legitimacy will only strain the negotiation process. Remind him that successful negotiations could lead to the demining of neighboring farmland, among others, that would greatly benefit the economic standing of his constituency. Thank him for seeing you and let him know that should he agree, negotiations would begin within the week. (Go to 13)

C)

13) General Lafleur finds your honesty refreshing and bold. He tells you stories of the frustrating negotiation experiences of the past and the confusing interlocutors he had to deal with. However, he insists that the Minabwa are legitimate and will take part in the negotiations for the good of their people. Lafleur is extremely distrustful of the government and the paramilitary and expects OCHA to give him an equal voice.

As you leave the Minabwa headquarters, you pull out your cell phone to make your next call:

A)

B) You call your OCHA assistants to draft and send out a message to the NGOs, Minabwa, the government, and the militia with the time and location of your first meeting
tomorrow. Emphasize the need for discretion and ask for the media not to be involved. This will be your meeting to define the boundaries of negotiation. (Go to 14)

C)

14) The very next evening:

All of the designated parties have arrived! It took some waiting and calling (several representatives were an hour late), but you and your team of NGOs are ready and eager to begin. What is your first priority?

A)

B) Establish boundaries and ground rules for negotiations. (Go to 15)

C)

15) With the help of your ICRC second lead negotiator, you define the boundaries of all future negotiations as follows:

- Meetings are to be held regularly and with the utmost discretion.
- Each member will be given equal opportunity to speak and express opinions.
- Everyone must acknowledge that these negotiations are strictly humanitarian, do not provide any political legitimacy, and all agreed upon outcomes must abide by the standards of international law.

Use your die to determine the success of this proposal. If you roll 1 to 5, your proposal is accepted unanimously and you can begin negotiations (Go to 16). However, if you roll a 6, you must deal with a few (Go to 15.2)

15.2) Both PUNK and the Minabwa would like to add an agreement for publicity or at least a press statement. They believe that their presence at the negotiating table is a signal of their political importance in the great nation of Petrichor and would like to receive some recognition.

A) To start negotiations off on a positive note, you inform the two groups that you will consider releasing a statement, but that now is the time to focus on making positive changes for the good of the people. (Go to 15.3)

B) You inform the two groups that, unfortunately, UN OCHA is in no way related to political negotiations and that your only mandate is to secure agreed outcomes that improve humanitarian conditions. Declaring or reflecting legitimacy for either of the
organizations would be breaching OCHA policy and would be detrimental to the humanitarian process. (Go to 16)

15.3) Under no circumstances are you to be unclear or vague in your negotiations, especially with statements that go against OCHA and humanitarian regulations. You are immediately replaced by another OCHA negotiator and are sent home.

16) Now that everyone has agreed and a consensus has been built, you are ready to begin negotiations. Your first step is to identify the issues based on testimony from the leaders of each group. Who do you ask to hear from first?

A) The political representative of Minabwa.

‘The glorious rebel fighters of Minabwa, the true defenders of our ignored ethnic group, cannot function while the government continually uses cluster bombs to attack our civilians. Furthermore, we request that PUNK cease its appalling use of child soldiers that is corrupting the innocence of our great nation’s youth. Minabwa would like to grant access and protection to humanitarian organizations that will provide us with the medical supplies and food aid we desperately need.’ (Go to 17)

B) The political representative of PUNK.

17) After these inflammatory remarks, the mood in the room is tense. Who do you ask to hear from next?

A) The political representative of the Petrichor government.

B) The political representative of PUNK.

‘The PUNK rejects outright Minabwa’s accusations of ‘corrupting the innocence of our youth!’ The crippling effects of the land mines in our farmland and recurring attacks from Minabwa are severely limiting our resources and fighters. The government has not done enough to fight off your miserable campaign and we were forced to take matters into our own hands. We do not trust any declaration made by the treacherous Minabwa. We are the ones looking after the good of the people and are more than happy to coordinate with these humanitarian organizations.

18) The government representative of Petrichor rises to counter allegations and declares:

‘The government of Petrichor is the one true representative of our land, our people, and our best interests. Our participation in these negotiations is solely for the benefit of the people and the hopes that the Minabwa will cease their foolish rebellion to allow for
humanitarian support. The government condemns Minabwa’s use of landmines to attack the hardworking landowners. Furthermore, the government demands that the PUNKs cease their recruitment of child soldiers; such a strategy is cowardly and brings international scrutiny to an already complex situation. The government, while proud of its citizens’ passion, rejects the unilateral movements of PUNK without government consultation and rebuffs any notion that the government is not active enough in its quest for stability.

At this point, the orderly talks break out into heated arguments and your negotiation process is on the verge of collapse. What do you do?

A) Press on with talks so that all parties can properly air their grievances. Have your OCHA employees take extensive notes on each organization’s most pressing needs and potential negotiating points. Make sure UNICEF, the HALO Trust, and the ICRC are on hand to describe their humanitarian priorities. (Go to 18.2)

B) Request that each negotiation party take an hour-long dinner break with OCHA employees (in separate rooms) and enjoy the hotel accommodations to cool off. Meanwhile, regroup with UNICEF, the HALO Trust, and the ICRC to develop options for a potential agreement plan. (Go to 19)

18.2) Conversations become more heated and racial slurs are tossed around. Your humanitarian partners are becoming more nervous that your potential for agreement will completely disintegrate; you need to ease tensions before tempers reach a boiling point. What is your next move?

A) You demand silence as diplomatically as possible and remind all members that the goal of these negotiations is to improve humanitarian conditions for civilians and not partake in political discourse. You remind them all that the wellbeing of their constituents is at stake and that time is running out. (Go to 18.3)

B) Request that each negotiation party take an hour-long after-dinner break with OCHA employees (in separate rooms) and enjoy the hotel accommodations to cool off. Meanwhile, regroup with UNICEF, the HALO Trust, and the ICRC to develop options for a potential agreement plan. (Go to 19)

18.3) The political representative of Minabwa is extremely offended by your insinuation that the rebel group’s first priority is not the well-being of its people. After reminding you that Minabwa’s fundamental purpose is to increase representation and rights for their marginalized ethnic group, the representative storms out of the meeting and refuses to work with you again. You are forced to report the incident to your OCHA superiors. In
the interest of saving the humanitarian negotiations, you are removed from the case to be formally reprimanded and are forced to return home to go through humanitarian policy training again.

19) The HALO Trust, UNICEF, and the ICRC are overwhelmed by the conflicting ideas and hostilities that were thrown around the negotiating table. They remind you that all options and deals MUST reflect the principles of UN OCHA and no agreement can be made that restrict beneficiaries of assistance to certain ethnic, political, or religious groups.

After brainstorming for two hours, your team uses the combined ‘carrots’ each humanitarian organization has to offer to create options that will be appealing enough to get all three groups to cooperate. These are the options:

A) **Option 1**: The Minabwa, PUNKs, and Petrichor government will recognize the priority of human rights as dictated by International Law. Vaccination campaigns and aid will be provided if the government works with the HALO Trust to remove Minabwa mines from PUNK soil. The PUNKs in return will respect the rights of the child and discontinue any recruitment or training of child soldiers. All parties will allow the ICRC protected access to civilians, prisoners of war, and refugee camps. (Go to 19.2)

B) **Option 2**: The Minabwa will work with the HALO Trust to demine the fields of the PUNKs (with government supervision) if the government agrees to stop using cluster bombs. The government will only hold up this agreement if the PUNKs agree to abide by IHRL and cease all recruitment and training of child soldiers as mandate by UNICEF. As a method of solidifying agreement ties, all groups will allow the ICRC safe access to political prisoners, civilians, and refugee camps as long as a code of silence is respected. Finally, all groups will agree to tranquility days for immunization campaigns in a joint effort by UNICEF and the ICRC to prevent outbreaks of preventable diseases such as polio. (Go to 20)

19.2) Before you walk out the door, agreement proposal in hand, the ICRC lead negotiator points out to you that the Minabwa are unlikely to accept a demining process carried out under government authority when the government is not being forced to remove cluster bombs from their line of artillery. To avoid a potentially embarrassing agreement collapse, do you decide to agree with the ICRC and use option 2?

A) No. (Go to 19.3)
B) Yes. (Go to 20)

19.3) The ICRC leader is incapable of working under such un-unified conditions and refuses to be embarrassed by associations with yet another failed agreement negotiation. The ICRC leaves the negotiations behind and your endeavor crumbles. Try again.

20) After you re-assemble the calmer, but still tense group of representatives, you unveil their plan of options with as much unity and clarity as possible. The group reaction is cautiously positive, but exhausted. You hand out printed versions of the option plan for each organization to review at their respective headquarters and set a meeting time to reconvene in a week.

*Although you followed UN OCHA protocol perfectly, there is no real way to predict the outcome of individual choice. Roll your die to find out what the reaction is a week later. If you roll a 1 or a 4, select A. If you roll a 2, 3, 5, or 6, select B.*

A) Go to 20.2
B) Go to 21.

20.2) Information was leaked! The Minabwa were feeling threatened by government and PUNK accusations and leaked the document proposal to the famed shaman, Matabuki Susuku. He, in turn, is deeply suspicious of the immunization campaigns by UNICEF and held a rally claiming that the vaccines are a government plot to sterilize the children of their minority ethnic group. Journalists are on the scene and now third party states are weighing in on your negotiations. Western states worry that you are legitimizing the rebel group and interfering with political negotiations.

What do you do?

A) Declare to both Matabuki Susuku and third parties that these negotiations are solely humanitarian and are in accordance with UN General Assembly views on inclusive humanitarian talks. Release a statement chastising conspiracy theories and asserting the life-saving advantages of carrying out vaccination campaigns against crippling diseases such as polio or measles. (Go to 20.3)

B) Publish an official press release making it clear that the negotiations are solely humanitarian. Declare the UN OCHA and the participating humanitarian organizations completely neutral within the conflict and point out that the UN General Assembly has recognized the need to enter negotiations with all parties to a conflict to facilitate humanitarian action. Finally, start an awareness campaign with local medical practitioners asserting the life-saving, safe advantages of carrying out vaccination campaigns against crippling diseases such as polio or measles. (Go to 21)
20.3) The local community does not take kindly to your lack of cultural sensitivity or your accusations of ‘conspiracy theories’ and considers your statements to be patronizing. Matabuki Susuku continues his arguments against immunization campaigns and the Minabwa feel unable to return to the negotiation tables without the approval of their constituency. How do you try to rectify the situation?

A) Issue an apology to Matabuki Susuku, assert that you meant no disrespect, but maintain that immunization campaigns are in no way ‘harmful’ and that as a humanitarian organization, OCHA is only trying to improve conditions for his community. (Go to 20.4)

B) Issue a formal apology to the local community and meet with Matabuki Susuku to assure him of the safety of these immunization campaigns. Introduce him to the lead negotiators of the ICRC and UNICEF to provide more transparency about their humanitarian goals. Offer to implement a special traditional program along with the medical aid that would provide traditional medicines and practices for those who request them instead. (Go to 21) (For Taylor, this situation should impact the player negatively later as they have damaged trust)

20.4) You have offended Matabuki Susuku and the Minabwa further and General Lafleur feels he cannot continue to be associated with your negotiations if he is to remain strong and legitimate in the eyes of his constituency. You are left with a negotiation proposal that is missing one of its most crucial actors. You were warned and failed to meet the departing train, an occasional hazard in negotiation strategies. Better luck next time.

21) The Minabwa representatives have returned to the negotiating table with one of Lafleur’s most loyal sub-commanders who finds your options interesting, but would like to be present for further negotiations. All parties are pleased with the options your team has outlined, but still hold some reservations. The government representatives want written assurances that the Minabwa will allow government oversight during the demining process and full cooperation with the HALO Trust. The situation remains tense and none of the parties involved trust each other to respect and abide by any agreement made. How do you proceed?

A) Welcome the sub-commander and apologize again for the mix-up over the immunization campaigns. Assure the Petrichor representatives that the Minabwa will be watched carefully by the HALO Trust and that there will be a rigorous implementation program after an agreement is reached that will involve all negotiation partners. Make it clear that every member of the process will have a part in the implementation process. Remind the representatives that for this agreement to be a success, you will need an assurance of the safety of all UNICEF, OCHA, ICRC, and HALO Trust employees operating within agreed upon humanitarian zones. (Go to 21.2)
B) Welcome the sub-commander and thank all parties for their patience and commitment to humanitarian aid. Assure all of them that all the commitments outlined in the option plan they received will be upheld. Inform them that the HALO Trust will monitor every step of implementation process and regular progress reports will be sent. Make it clear that every member of the process is seen as a partner in these negotiations and will have a part in the implementation process. Remind the representatives that for this agreement to be a success, you will need an assurance of the safety of all UNICEF, OCHA, ICRC, and HALO Trust employees operating within agreed upon humanitarian zones. (Go to 22)

21.2) Your lack of diplomacy has sent negotiations into disarray! The Minabwa sub-commander declares that he and his compatriots will not be referred to as children in need of watching! He storms out of the hotel to report this humiliation to General Lafleur who in turn cuts all ties with you.

22) You reached an AGREEMENT! Such an outcome would not have been possible without your skillful coordination of bargaining chips from all three humanitarian organizations. Do not let this incredible opportunity go to waste. What is your next decision?

A) To avoid putting added pressure onto what has already been an exhausting negotiation process, content yourself with a verbal agreement to the terms discussed and emphasize that work will continue next week to define the criteria for the implementation process. (Go to 22.2)

B) Have all groups involved sign a written and binding agreement with all of its mandates clearly stated for future reference. Emphasize that you will all continue to work together over the coming months and schedule another meeting next week to begin the defining the criteria for implementation. (Go to 23)

22.2) Although still weary of the strength of each other’s commitment to this humanitarian agreement, the parties shake hands. What do you do next?

A) Thank everyone for their cooperation and commitment and give them a well-deserved break from negotiations and meetings for the next week. (Go to 22.3)

B) Thank everyone for their cooperation and schedule a meeting next week to begin the implementation process. (Go to 23)

22.3) Since you did not follow up your informal agreement with more substantial commitments and future meetings, the Petrichor government did not feel bound by the
agreement yet. Rumors of cluster bombs being used caused the Minabwa to launch a
guerilla attack on one of the Petrichor government buildings causing renewed fighting.
You and your team are evacuated for security purposes and your agreement plan is
suspended until further notice. Try again in a couple of months when the violence dies
down.

23) At your next meeting you have all three parties sign a *Deed of Commitment for
Adherence to a Total Ban on Land Mines and Cluster Bombs* written by the HALO Trust
that creates accountability and is a clear and official record of the new humanitarian
standards for the conflict. You congratulate the government, PUNK, and the Minabwa
and assure them that they were each instrumental to the negotiation process and will all
play a major part in the implementation and monitoring process. What else do you do?

A) Inform OCHA headquarters of your successes. (Go to 23.2)

B) Hand out packets of leaflets that will explain the new humanitarian provisions to
civilians and fighters alike. (Go to 24)

23.2) While your superiors are proud of your success and make a note of it, they remind
you not to become sidetracked and that coordinating an agreement is not the end of your
responsibilities as lead OCHA negotiator. What else do you need to do?

A) Go on the local radio station to announce the new humanitarian provisions and praise
all parties involved for their cooperation. Send OCHA workers with connections to the
Minabwa and PUNK to ensure that lower ranking fighters are aware and respectful of the
changes. (Go to 24)

B) Hand out packets of leaflets that will explain the new humanitarian provisions to
civilians and fighters alike. (Go to 24)

24) That was a wise decision. Keeping the public informed and making sure that rebel
fighters are aware and supportive of the policy changes is instrumental to the success of a
new agreement. Since Minabwa is a unified and hierarchical organization, you do not
encounter any major problems and the new agreements come as a relief to civilians in
need of assistance. It’s a week later and your negotiators from all parties have returned.
What do you do?

A) Thank everyone for their continued commitment to humanitarian assistance and
provide all parties with debriefs and records of developments during negotiations. Assure
all parties that they will be sent regular updates on the demining process, immunization
campaigns, and aid provision. (Go to 24.2)
B) Schedule regular monitoring meetings for the coming months. Plan simultaneous visits on tranquility days for immunization campaigns and bilateral meetings to oversee the demining process. (Go to 25)

24.2) Your failure to keep all parties involved in the implementation process caused a rift to occur between the Petrichor government and the Minabwa. The Minabwa decided to break the Deed of Commitment and are actively placing new mines in the PUNK farmlands in retaliation. It is absolutely essential to maintain connections with all the negotiating parties and to give them a sense of ownership over the changes in the humanitarian process. However, it’s important to keep in mind that these agreements sometimes fall apart even when you follow the handbook down to the very last rule. Better luck next time.

25) **Congratulations!** You have successfully coordinated a humanitarian aid provision agreement with an implementation plan that includes all negotiating partners. Furthermore, you remained true to OCHA’s commitment to humanity, neutrality, and impartiality. You successfully remained apolitical to create the humanitarian space necessary for those most in need. Finally, you demonstrated a full understanding of the UN OCHA Manual for Humanitarian Negotiations with Armed Groups! Thank you for taking part in our simulation, we hope you learned a lot from this interactive method.

---

**STORYBOARD 4: ANOTHER VERSION**

Welcome to the Negotiate a Humanitarian Agreement Training Program for the United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs! In this simulation, you are a senior member of the OCHA, and you have the task of developing and implementing a proposal to ameliorate the humanitarian crisis in the United Federation of Petrichor, a nation riven by civil discord on the continent of Northern Tiffleton. Petrichor is a former Western colony that has enjoyed independence since 1956, but due to simmering ethnic tensions stemming from colonial times, the country has fallen into periodic chaos. Currently, the country is suffering from episodic fighting with occasional breaks in the violence, mostly between the government led by President Martin Steed-Asprey, leading industrialist, and the rebel group Minabwa led by Damocles Lafleur, son of a farming family that had their land confiscated by the government in an earlier episode of ethnic tension. The colonial power only dealt with the President's rebel group; as such, the rebels' original motivations were to have increased political representation and to have more equitably distributed economic growth, but the conflict itself has led to further deep-seated racism and enmity between the two groups. Further adding to complications, the two groups are also divided by separate religions, though this does not form the basis of the conflict. You will discover more information after you make contact with your intermediary throughout the following adventure.
Before you begin, we recommend that you have on hand both the OCHA manual on humanitarian negotiations with armed groups [https://ochanet.unocha.org/p/Documents/HumanitarianNegotiationswArmGroupsManual.pdf](https://ochanet.unocha.org/p/Documents/HumanitarianNegotiationswArmGroupsManual.pdf), specifically the worksheet for mapping characteristics of armed groups, as well as one six-sided die.

At certain points in this game, despite your best efforts, the result will be at least partially up to chance, much like real life.

We wish you patience and success as you navigate the complex field of humanitarian negotiations!

Begin:

1.) After a recent debacle involving the ambassador's daughter in a conservative nation best not mentioned, your bosses have seen fit to send you to a location where you will have no choice but to keep busy. You have received minimal information on Petrichor as you were hustled to the airport, but you know you have to coordinate an agreement between humanitarian organizations (specifically United Nations Children's Fund [UNICEF], the International Committee of the Red Cross [ICRC], and the HALO Trust) on the ground and the rebel group to ensure the safe provision of humanitarian assistance to the civilians most in need.

Headquarters has provided you with a list of preliminary contacts in Petrichor, ranging from local tribal leaders to businessmen to missionaries to other NGOs. When you reach the Wakashili Hotel (formerly the Prince Albert), what is your first decision?

A) Meet with the government spokesperson

B) Get in touch with the local NGO offices (Go to 2)

C) Make contact with (should lead to rebels in some way); rebels will attempt to play off each other, assert legitimacy

D) Tour the city to assess local needs and desires (can cut out if desired)

2) You've gathered senior representatives from the ICRC, HALO, and UNICEF in the hotel’s conference room. After pausing to admire the 1950s décor, you learn that the various NGOs have not made much individual progress. You agree to work together and:

A) Start up a social-media based fundraising campaign (KONY 2012 – note: this option fails)

B) Designate lead negotiators and alternates (Go to 3)
C) Begin to outline your objectives for negotiations (middle ground: leads to a mess when you meet the government)

3) Desperate to regain your former glory, you propose yourself as the chief negotiator for the various NGO groups, backed up by the ICRC, as you know they have a penchant for discretion when necessary. The NGOs, exhausted by their lack of progress, agree to follow your lead.

In order to best serve the humanitarian needs of the population, you:

B) Talk
C) Ask the NGOs what their goals are, and try to form a common strategy (Go to 4)
D) 

4) The HALO Trust’s [note to Taylor: hyperlink HALO Trust here] main concerns involve demining farmland and working with all armed factions to prevent the further use of land mines (and other weapons that result in unexploded ordinance, such as cluster bombs). UNICEF [hyperlink] is more worried about preventing child soldiers, setting up tranquility days for immunization campaigns, providing food, and respecting the rights of the child. The ICRC [hyperlink] prioritizes safe access for medical aid provision and respect for human rights and international law.

You agree that the top priorities should be demining, respecting international law, and tranquility days for immunization. However, you need to learn a bit about your negotiating partners before sitting down with them. You ask your new NGO partners for any intermediaries they could put you in touch with that have interacted with all parties involved in previous negotiations. Keeping in mind that you will not have time to talk to all contacts before negotiations start, whom do you speak to?

A) Local Tribal Leaders (Go to next, question 5)
B) Local political activists (Go to fail)
C) Missionaries (Go to next, question 5)
D) Businessmen (Go to next, question 5)

5) After your discussion with local notables, you have discovered that the rebel group, Minabwa, is led by the charismatic Damocles Lefleur and a group of loyal sub-commanders. He displaced prior rebel groups’ support by focusing on provision of social goods to his people, but as war has returned to Petrichor, he has relied more heavily on the conservative, religious, and anti-Western leadership provided by the famed shaman,
Matabuki Susuku. Minabwa is largely supported by a Diaspora from the same ethnic group living in Europe.

You use your worksheet for mapping characteristics of armed groups to note the information you receive and feel better prepared to begin negotiations. What do you do next?

A)  

B) Establish separate lines of communication with civil society leaders. (Go to 6)  

C)  

6) Thanks to your thoughtful strategy, you are able to determine that Minabwa has a legitimate constituency within its community for now and the populace would respect a signed agreement. Nonetheless, there is continued weariness over the growing influence of Susuku and you will need to remain watchful over public opinion.

The humanitarian situation remains dire and your NGO partners are anxious to begin negotiations. What do you do?

A) Set up a meeting with the NGOs, the government, and Minabwa.  

B) Meet with government representatives to inform them of your goals. (Go to 7)  

C)  

7) Although the government is grateful for your consideration and interested in improving the humanitarian situation (mostly to please foreign investors), they remain deeply suspicious of the Minabwa and worry that your negotiations will add legitimacy to the rebel cause.

A)  

B) You assure the government officials that humanitarian negotiations are a necessary component of humanitarian action, but that you remain neutral in the conflict. (Go to 8)  

C)  

8) The government officials agree to be a part your negotiations, but retain the right to leave at any time and request that OCHA highlight their cooperative efforts in future press releases.

A)
B) You agree to the terms and request additional information about other significant political actors within McGilla. (Go to 9)

C)

9) The government officials inform you of a militia, Patriots United in National Kinship (PUNK) that has formed outside of government control. PUNK is made up of the majority ethnic group; they control the land that formerly belonged to the minority rebels before they were expelled during previous government takeovers. There is serious ethnic and political tension among all groups involved. You are pressed for time. What is your next move?

A)

B) You send the ICRC lead negotiator with your OCHA alternate to establish contact with the militia leaders while you meet with your intermediary to coordinate a meeting with Minabwa. (Go to 10)

C)

10) Your intermediary is well acquainted with some of General Lafleur’s sub-commanders and offers to introduce you personally. Do you take the direct or indirect approach?

A) Indirect, oral approach. You send one of your sub-coordinators to save time.

B) Direct, oral approach. You want to establish personal communication and accord with the sub-commanders. (Go to 11)

C) Indirect, written approach. You want to have written communication to point back to during negotiations.

11) The sub-commanders are pleased to make your acquaintance and are very interested in your humanitarian projects. Due to their increased conservatism, General Lefleur sees improving public living standards as a key method of maintaining his legitimate constituency. Nonetheless, the sub-commanders inform you that Lefleur considers negotiations involving the official government and the militia as recognition of Minabwa’s legitimacy in the eyes of the international community.

A) You ignore the last part for now, making a mental note to bring it up later in the conversation once you have built some goodwill, and begin discussing your humanitarian projects. (11A)
B) Thank the Minabwa commanders for their enthusiasm and assert that OCHA and the participating NGOs are in no way political and will remain neutral during the entirety of the negotiation process. Request an official meeting with Lafleur himself to clarify the situation. (Go to 12)

C) Worried about the effect such a stance may have on your relations with the government; you politely excuse yourself by saying you need to go to the washroom outside with the intention to make a call. (11C)

11A) The sub-commanders talk excitedly to you about the projects, insisting on sharing an oddly strong drink with you throughout the conversation. After about an hour, they mention that they need to be elsewhere, and thank you for meeting with them. You can't place any specifics, but you feel like this has been a very productive meeting, and go home to sleep it off.

In the morning, you awake to your phone, ringing loudly. Minabwa has made a public statement, asserting that you have recognized their legitimacy. Did you completely forget to bring it up? Either way, the government is incredibly displeased, and refuses to work with you any longer.

Try again.

11C) You get on your phone, and fill the government in on the way Minabwa is planning to frame these talks. Best to keep them in the loop. Unfortunately, trying to reassure them, you get a little too much into denouncement of the rebel group just as one of the sub-commanders steps outside to smoke. He overhears you, and walks over, clearly unhappy.

"We cannot work with those who keep secrets."

You are quickly ushered away, and it is obvious you will not be able to establish a rapport with Minabwa any more, severely weakening your role in the process.

Try again.

12) While waiting for your meeting with Lafleur, you receive a phone call from your OCHA alternate. His meeting with the militia was successful and he informs you that the organization is well versed in humanitarian principles. They will only work with OCHA if your organization upholds its criteria of impartiality and neutrality, which your alternate assured, was a top OCHA priority. Armed with this information, you pass the armed guards and enter General Lafleur’s office.

A) Immediately tell Lafleur, politely but firmly, that you must be strictly impartial and neutral and that if he attempts to state otherwise it will lead to your withdrawal from
discussions with Minabwa. He's a general, and will respect only a strong stance. You
follow this by explaining the benefits of your neutrality to his constituency, so that he
understands the importance. 12A

B) You greet Lafleur warmly and attempt to build a rapport with him while remaining
clear that your work is strictly humanitarian. Warn him that any discussion of politics and
legitimacy will only strain the negotiation process. Remind him that successful
negotiations could lead to the demining of neighboring farmland, among others, that
would greatly benefit the economic standing of his constituency. Thank him for seeing
you and let him know that should he agree, negotiations would begin within the week.
(Go to 13)

12A) General Lafleur is clearly put off by your lack of tact, but still appears interested in
working with OCHA. Pointedly, he mentions the frustrations Minabwa have felt in prior
negotiation experiences, and you get the feeling that if you misstep again you may
quickly lose his group's good faith. [link to 133]

CI) General Lafleur finds your honesty refreshing and bold. He tells you stories of the
frustrating negotiation experiences of the past and the confusing interlocutors he had
to deal with. [link to 133]

133: However, he insists that the Minabwa are legitimate and will take part in the
negotiations for the good of their people. Lafleur is extremely distrustful of the
government and the paramilitary and expects OCHA to give him an equal voice.

As you leave the Minabwa headquarters, you pull out your cell phone to make your next
call:

A) ??

B) You call your OCHA assistants to draft and send out a message to the NGOs,
Minabwa, the government, and the militia with the time and location of your first meeting
tomorrow. Emphasize the need for discretion and ask for the media not to be involved.
This will be your meeting to define the boundaries of negotiation. (Go to 14)

C) ??

14) The very next evening:

All of the designated parties have arrived! It took some waiting and calling (several
representatives were an hour late), but you and your team of NGOs are ready and eager to
begin. What is your first priority?
A) Have each of the parties present their stances on key issues, so that everyone has time to think about where each side is coming from. (14A)

B) Establish boundaries and ground rules for negotiations, so that. (Go to 15)

C) Take charge in the negotiations by laying out the comprehensive plan your office has already created, in an attempt to limit any non-constructive discussion. (14C)

14A) The presentations quickly descend into open accusations and insults, with one representative insinuating that the mother of another representative may have the sexual proclivities of a less-respectable woman. Besides reinforcing some questionable gender norms, the parties are clearly not getting anywhere. You apologize for your chosen course of action and ask each group to take a short break, alone. Some are clearly getting ready to leave, frustrated with your progress.

[only option:] Quickly reassure all parties that you will establish boundaries and ground rules for the negotiations before continuing, getting them to agree to return to the discussions.

14C) Though the NGOs present appear to be in agreement with much of what you are presenting, representatives from local actors quickly sour, accusing you of attempting to impose foreign designs on their nation. Funnily enough, and unfortunately for you, the one thing they can agree on is that OCHA cannot possibly be responsible for mediating talks if they have such a clear Western bias.

Try again.

15) With the help of your ICRC second lead negotiator, you define the boundaries of all future negotiations as follows:

- Meetings are to be held regularly and with the utmost discretion.

- Each member will be given equal opportunity to speak and express opinions.

- Everyone must acknowledge that these negotiations are strictly humanitarian, do not provide any political legitimacy, and all agreed upon outcomes must abide by the standards of international law.

Use your die to determine the success of this proposal. If you roll 1 to 5, your proposal is accepted unanimously and you can begin negotiations (Go to 16). However, if you roll a 6, you must deal with a few (Go to 15.2)

15.2) Both the
16) Now that everyone has agreed and a consensus has been built, you are ready to begin negotiations. Your first step is to identify the issues based on testimony from the leaders of each group. Who do you ask to hear from first?

A) The political representative of Minabwa.

‘The glorious rebel fighters of Minabwa, the true defenders of our ignored ethnic group, cannot function while the government continually uses cluster bombs to attack our civilians. Furthermore, we request that PUNK cease its appalling use of child soldiers that is corrupting the innocence of our great nation’s youth. Minabwa would like to grant access and protection to humanitarian organizations that will provide us with the medical supplies and food aid we desperately need.’ (Go to 17)

B) The political representative of PUNK.

17) After these inflammatory remarks, the mood in the room is tense. Who do you ask to hear from next?

A) The political representative of the Petrichor government.

B) The political representative of PUNK.

‘The PUNK rejects outright Minabwa’s accusations of ‘corrupting the innocence of our youth! The crippling effects of the land mines in our farmland and recurring attacks from Minabwa are severely limiting our resources and fighters. The government has not done enough to fight off your miserable campaign and we were forced to take matters into our own hands. We do not trust any declaration made by the treacherous Minabwa. We are the ones looking after the good of the people and are more than happy to coordinate with these humanitarian organizations.

18) The government representative of Petrichor rises to counter allegations and declares:

‘The government of Petrichor is the one true representative of our land, our people, and our best interests. Our participation in these negotiations is solely for the benefit of the people and the hopes that the Minabwa will cease their foolish rebellion to allow for humanitarian support. The government condemns Minabwa’s use of landmines to attack the hardworking landowners. Furthermore, the government demands that the PUNKs cease their recruitment of child soldiers; such a strategy is cowardly and brings international scrutiny to an already complex situation. The government, while proud of its citizens’ passion, rejects the unilateral movements of PUNK without government consultation and rebuffs any notion that the government is not active enough in its quest for stability.'
At this point, the orderly talks break out into heated arguments and your negotiation process is on the verge of collapse. What do you do?

A) Press on with talks so that all parties can properly air their grievances. Have your OCHA employees take extensive notes on each organization’s most pressing needs and potential negotiating points. Make sure UNICEF, the HALO Trust, and the ICRC are on hand to describe their humanitarian priorities. (Go to 18.2)

B) Request that each negotiation party take an hour-long dinner break with OCHA employees (in separate rooms) and enjoy the hotel accommodations to cool off. Meanwhile, regroup with UNICEF, the HALO Trust, and the ICRC to develop options for a potential agreement plan. (Go to 19)

18.2) Conversations become more heated and racial slurs are tossed around. Your humanitarian partners are becoming more nervous that your potential for agreement will completely disintegrate; you need to ease tensions before tempers reach a boiling point. What is your next move?

A) You demand silence as diplomatically as possible and remind all members that the goal of these negotiations is to improve humanitarian conditions for civilians and not partake in political discourse. You remind them all that the wellbeing of their constituents is at stake and that time is running out. (Go to 18.3)

B) Request that each negotiation party take an hour-long after-dinner break with OCHA employees (in separate rooms) and enjoy the hotel accommodations to cool off. Meanwhile, regroup with UNICEF, the HALO Trust, and the ICRC to develop options for a potential agreement plan. (Go to 19)

18.3) The political representative of Minabwa is extremely offended by your insinuation that the rebel group’s first priority is not the well-being of its people. After reminding you that Minabwa’s fundamental purpose is to increase representation and rights for their marginalized ethnic group, the representative storms out of the meeting and refuses to work with you again. You are forced to report the incident to your OCHA superiors. In the interest of saving the humanitarian negotiations, you are removed from the case to be formally reprimanded and are forced to return home to go through humanitarian policy training again.

19) The HALO Trust, UNICEF, and the ICRC are overwhelmed by the conflicting ideas and hostilities that were thrown around the negotiating table. They remind you that all options and deals MUST reflect the principles of UN OCHA and no agreement can be made that restrict beneficiaries of assistance to certain ethnic, political, or religious groups.
After brainstorming for two hours, your team uses the combined ‘carrots’ each humanitarian organization has to offer to create options that will be appealing enough to get all three groups to cooperate. These are the options:

A) **Option 1**: The Minabwa, PUNKs, and Petrichor government will recognize the priority of human rights as dictated by International Law. Vaccination campaigns and aid will be provided if the government works with the HALO Trust to remove Minabwa mines from PUNK soil. The PUNKs in return will respect the rights of the child and discontinue any recruitment or training of child soldiers. All parties will allow the ICRC protected access to civilians, prisoners of war, and refugee camps. (Go to 19.2)

B) **Option 2**: The Minabwa will work with the HALO Trust to demine the fields of the PUNKs (with government supervision) if the government agrees to stop using cluster bombs. The government will only hold up this agreement if the PUNKs agree to abide by IHRL and cease all recruitment and training of child soldiers as mandate by UNICEF. As a method of solidifying agreement ties, all groups will allow the ICRC safe access to political prisoners, civilians, and refugee camps as long as a code of silence is respected. Finally, all groups will agree to tranquility days for immunization campaigns in a joint effort by UNICEF and the ICRC to prevent outbreaks of preventable diseases such as polio. (Go to 20)

19.2) Before you walk out the door, agreement proposal in hand, the ICRC lead negotiator points out to you that the Minabwa are unlikely to accept a demining process carried out under government authority when the government is not being forced to remove cluster bombs from their line of artillery. To avoid a potentially embarrassing agreement collapse, do you decide to agree with the ICRC and use option 2?

A) No. (Go to 19.3)
B) Yes. (Go to 20)

19.3) The ICRC leader is incapable of working under such un-unified conditions and refuses to be embarrassed by associations with yet another failed agreement negotiation. The ICRC leaves the negotiations behind and your endeavor crumbles. Try again.

20) After you re-assemble the calmer, but still tense group of representatives, you unveil their plan of options with as much unity and clarity as possible. The group reaction is cautiously positive, but exhausted. You hand out printed versions of the option plan for each organization to review at their respective headquarters and set a meeting time to reconvene in a week.
Although you followed UN OCHA protocol perfectly, there is no real way to predict the outcome of individual choice. Roll your die to find out what the reaction is a week later. If you roll a 1 or a 4, select A. If you roll a 2, 3, 5, or 6, select B.

A) Go to 20.2
B) Go to 21.

20.2) Information was leaked! The Minabwa were feeling threatened by government and PUNK accusations and leaked the document proposal to the famed shaman, Matabuki Susuku. He, in turn, is deeply suspiscious of the immunization campaigns by UNICEF and held a rally claiming that the vaccines are a government plot to sterilize the children of their minority ethnic group. Journalists are on the scene and now third party states are weighing in on your negotiations. Western states worry that you are legitimizing the rebel group and interfering with political negotiations.

What do you do?

A) Declare to both Matabuki Susuku and third parties that these negotiations are solely humanitarian and are in accordance with UN General Assembly views on inclusive humanitarian talks. Release a statement chastising conspiracy theories and asserting the life-saving advantages of carrying out vaccination campaigns against crippling diseases such as polio or measles. (Go to 20.3)

B) Publish an official press release making it clear that the negotiations are solely humanitarian. Declare the UN OCHA and the participating humanitarian organizations completely neutral within the conflict and point out that the UN General Assembly has recognized the need to enter negotiations with all parties to a conflict to facilitate humanitarian action. Finally, start an awareness campaign with local medical practitioners asserting the life-saving, safe advantages of carrying out vaccination campaigns against crippling diseases such as polio or measles. (Go to 21)

20.3) The local community does not take kindly to your lack of cultural sensitivity or your accusations of ‘conspiracy theories’ and considers your statements to be patronizing. Matabuki Susuku continues his arguments against immunization campaigns and the Minabwa feel unable to return to the negotiation tables without the approval of their constituency. How do you try to rectify the situation?

A) Issue an apology to Matabuki Susuku, assert that you meant no disrespect, but maintain that immunization campaigns are in no way ‘harmful’ and that as a humanitarian organization, OCHA is only trying to improve conditions for his community. (Go to 20.4)
B) Issue a formal apology to the local community and meet with Matabuki Susuku to assure him of the safety of these immunization campaigns. Introduce him to the lead negotiators of the ICRC and UNICEF to provide more transparency about their humanitarian goals. Offer to implement a special traditional program along with the medical aid that would provide traditional medicines and practices for those who request them instead. (Go to 21) *(For Taylor, this situation should impact the player negatively later as they have damaged trust)*

20.4) You have offended Matabuki Susuku and the Minabwa further and General Lafleur feels he cannot continue to be associated with your negotiations if he is to remain strong and legitimate in the eyes of his constituency. You are left with a negotiation proposal that is missing one of its most crucial actors. You were warned and you failed to meet the departing train, an occasional hazard in negotiation strategies. Better luck next time.

21) The Minabwa representatives have returned to the negotiating table with one of Lafleur’s most loyal sub-commanders who finds your options interesting, but would like to be present for further negotiations. The government representatives want written assurances that the Minabwa will allow government oversight during the demining process and full cooperation with the HALO Trust. The situation remains tense and none of the parties involved trust each other to respect and abide by any agreement made. How do you proceed?

A)

B)

C) You reached an AGREEMENT! Such an agreement would not have been possible without your skillful coordination of bargaining chips from all three humanitarian organizations. Do not let this incredible opportunity go to waste. What is your next decision?

A) To avoid putting added pressure onto what has already been an exhausting negotiation process, content yourself with a verbal agreement to the terms discussed and emphasize that work will continue next week to define the criteria for the implementation process. (Go to?)

B) Have all groups involved sign a written and binding agreement with all of its mandates clearly stated for future reference. Emphasize that you will all continue to work together over the coming months and schedule another meeting next week to begin defining the criteria for implementation. (Go to
Congratulations! You have successfully coordinated a humanitarian aid provision agreement with an implementation plan that includes all negotiating partners. Furthermore, you remained true to OCHA’s commitment to humanity, neutrality, and impartiality. You successfully remained apolitical to create the humanitarian space necessary for those most in need. Finally, you demonstrated a full understanding of the UN OCHA Manual for Humanitarian Negotiations with Armed Groups! You are now ready to take these skills and apply them to real life humanitarian crises.
CHAPTER 2 - IMPLEMENTATION

The link to the final project is as follows:  
http://writer.inklestudios.com/stories/dnc8

SECTION 2.1 – INKLEWRITER

Inklewriter, considering the disjointed way in which any choose-your-own story must appear, does a reasonably good job of allowing a user to sort things into a somewhat linear storyline. In that regard, the final implementation of the story was the easiest of the tasks necessary to complete this particular project. At times, the platform is annoying—it has the tendency to sometimes drop a link you have added, it can be somewhat slow, and it can be difficult to keep organized if you are not meticulous about adding section headers as you go. The use of logic, integral to a story that plays in anything but a strictly linear fashion, adds flair and is simple to use, if a bit complex to implement for certain conditions (such as offering choices in a loop contingent on previous choices.)

By playing around with the software and reading through the instructions provided (http://www.inklestudios.com/inklewriter/getting-started), it became easy to learn everything needed to implement the project.
CHAPTER 3 – RECOMMENDATIONS

SECTION 3.1 – INKLEWRITER

One thing that might be interesting to add, would be to build off of the ability to shuffle details—one could perhaps have the weather change, or the names of any given person, allowing for a more replayable game that one does not become quickly habituated to.

Furthermore, because of the added complexity inherent in each "delayed mistake" (where an earlier mistaken action will impact one later rather than end the game right away, using Inklewriter's marker feature) not many were added. However, a significant number of them could be used to make a story which has a greater spectrum from win to loss, which might be cool and more realistic.

SECTION 3.2 – EXPANDING THE PROJECT

The project could be further expanded by involving multiple methods of conflict resolution, such as indirect written, indirect oral, etc. Furthermore, with more time it may be possible to allow one to play the game as a variety of actors involved in the humanitarian negotiations. There is also the possibility of adding more outcomes where one does not lose, but has to deal with the negative impacts of earlier decisions. Finally it may prove worthwhile to follow-through on the agreement, and see how this could possibly play out in the fictitious world created.
Since there are no checkpoints, making the suggested additions to the
storyboard may prove to be frustrating if you died near the end, especially
since the length of the game would be increased. In order to overcome
this, it may be useful to break the game up into discrete sections.


Unknown Author. BBC. 8 February 2013.