

# Arrest and Detention



**READY to go**  
Mobile Guide

Learn how to identify the differences between arrest and detention as well as how to respond in each situation.



## Arrest vs. Detention

### Note to Learners

The information and guidelines contained in this course are for general information purposes only. Reliance on any information or guidelines is therefore at the user's sole risk. If you rely on any information or apply any guidelines contained in the course, you do so at your own risk and Save the Children will have no responsibility or liability under any circumstances.

## Arrest

Arrest refers to the detention or seizure of a person, with or without physical force, by someone acting under authority (police or military or similar authorities) in connection with a crime or infraction.

### Reasons for Arrest

- Being a suspected supporter of an opposition group
- Failing to possess the correct paperwork (visas or other documentation)
- Being accused of spying/covert operations
- Engaging in suspicious activities
- Committing any offence/breaking the law of the country



## Detention

Detention refers to the seizure of a person or group against their will by an individual or a group (villagers, local authority, or military). There is no intention to cause harm nor is there any clear precondition for release.

### Reasons for Detention

- Discontent with an organisation's programmes
- Influence an organisation's decision making
- Resentment that others are receiving project aid
- Frustration that the authorities are not engaging with the particular group or in a proper manner
- Perceived intent to cause harm by armed groups





## Minimising Risk of Arrest and Detention

### Minimising Risk of Arrest and Detention

Follow these suggestions for minimizing the risk of being arrested or detained.

Develop and maintain good relationships with local authorities, security actors, and the community.

Exhibit appropriate behaviour both on and off duty.

Know and comply with key local laws and customs.

Ensure that all legal documentation such as visas, travel permits, and radio licenses are up to date.

Do not carry any politically sensitive documents or reports especially through customs.

Be conscious of the information conveyed in emails or reports or discussed over the phone as the information shared could be deemed illegal or sensitive by the host country and thus lead to arrest or detention

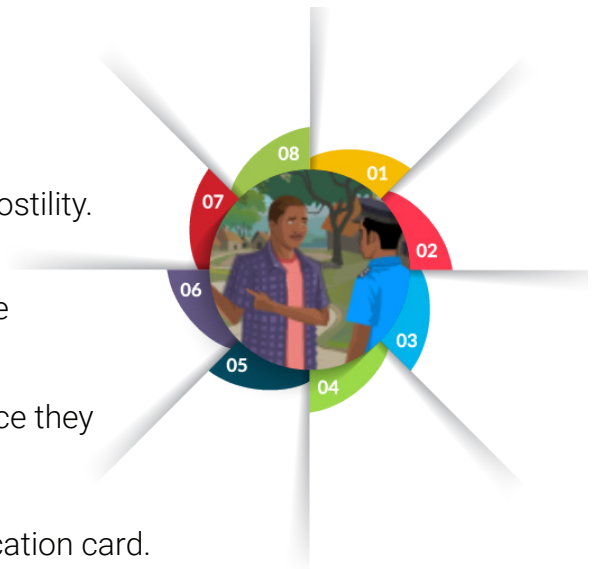


## Responding to Incidents of Arrest and Detention

### Responding to Arrest or Detention by Law Enforcement

Follow these guidelines if you are arrested by the police.

- 01 Do NOT resist. This will only weaken your case.
- 02 Remain calm and avoid showing any signs of anger or hostility.
- 03 Stay with colleagues if possible. Consider appointing one spokesperson among you.
- 04 Determine why you have been arrested and what evidence they have against you.
- 05 Identify yourself as an aid worker by showing an identification card.
- 06 Show your passport if asked.
- 07 Ask for permission to call your office or ask them to call on your behalf.



# Responding to Detention by Non-Law Enforcement Groups

If you are detained by local villagers, local authority, or armed groups at a checkpoint your focus should be on negotiating a safe release. Follow these guidelines if detained.

- 01 Remain calm and cooperative.
- 02 Do NOT speak or act in a manner that provokes those detaining you.
- 03 Seek permission to contact your organisation's office.
- 04 Listen carefully and try to establish what they want and why.
- 05 Make it clear that you will address their concerns/request upon release.
- 06 Focus discussions on gaining permission to leave freely.
- 07 If you cannot negotiate a way out, make it clear that you have no authority to make decisions and must be allowed to share their concerns with your organisation.

