

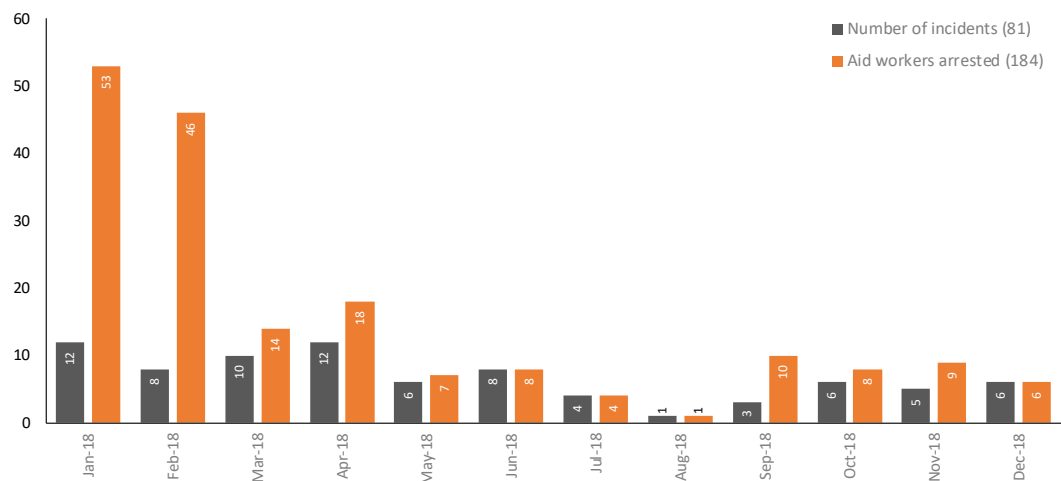
# Aid Workers Arrested

# 2018

Based on incidents in which aid workers were reportedly arrested, charged, detained, fined or imprisoned in 2018. The incidents were identified by Insecurity Insight's monitoring of open sources and verified reports submitted by our 28 partner agencies. This data is available on [HDX](#).

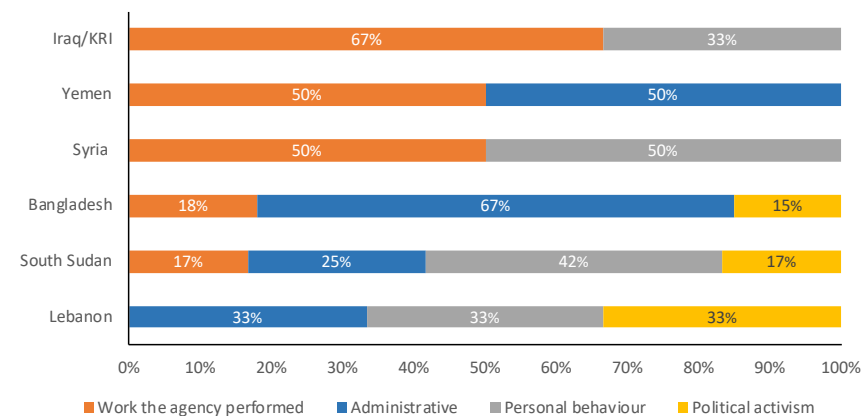
## Reported incidents and number of aid workers affected

This graph shows the number of incidents in which aid workers were arrested<sup>1</sup> and the number of aid workers who were affected between January and December 2018.



## Known circumstances of aid worker arrests<sup>1</sup>

This graph shows the relative proportions of incidents in which aid workers were arrested over the work the agency performed (shown in orange); during administrative procedures (shown in blue); for their personal behaviour (shown in grey); or for political activism (shown in yellow) in countries where five or more arrest events were reported.



## Aid workers arrested<sup>1</sup>: data trends 2018

- In 2018, 184 aid workers were reportedly arrested in 81 incidents across 27 countries. A high number of aid workers were reportedly arrested in Bangladesh (61), South Sudan (53) and Syria (11).
- The number of individual aid workers arrested peaked in the first two months of 2018. The main reason for this was the detention of 49 aid workers in Bangladesh during passport and visa checks at or near IDP camps in Chittagong division.
- Most aid worker arrests or detentions lasted on average 8-12 hours; however, there were reports of aid workers being held for longer. In Lau State, South Sudan, a convoy of 29 aid workers were detained and repeatedly questioned by SPLA-IO forces about permission to perform NGO activities in the region. They were held overnight and released following engagement with the local district council member.
- In over a third of reported aid worker arrests there was no indication that the arrest or detention was directly related to the agency, its identity or its primary activity of aid delivery. Instead, the detention or arrest of 86 aid workers was related to personal behaviour, including accusations of the theft of or fraud related to aid supplies, the sexual abuse of minors, and personal disputes or general administrative procedures, including documentation checks at airport immigration, during random stops and searches at checkpoints, and at hotels.
- However, at least 51 aid workers were reportedly arrested for the work the agency performed, their presence in the community or for violating NGO-related laws. Incidents include the following:
  - In the Andean region, Colombia, five national INGO aid workers were detained by indigenous authorities, and released after being instructed not to return to the northern part of the territory.
  - In Greece, an international LNGO aid worker was charged with people-trafficking after having been accused of crimes relating to the LNGO's provision of aid to migrants who had crossed the Mediterranean from the Middle East.
  - In Burundi, at least four aid workers were arrested for allegedly violating a law imposing ethnic staff quotas on INGOs. The law requires all foreign aid groups to commit to employing 60 per cent of their local employees from the Hutu ethnic group and 40 per cent from the Tutsi group.
  - In China, an international aid worker was detained by state security officers for possible violation of the Foreign NGO Law, on the basis that the organisation he worked for was not legally registered in China.

## Key data for 2018

184 aid workers were arrested<sup>1</sup> in:

- **Bangladesh: 61**
- **South Sudan: 53**
- **Syria: 11**
- **Iraq/KRI: 9**
- **Burundi: 6**
- **Colombia: 5**
- **Lebanon: 5**
- **Yemen: 5**
- **Kenya: 4**
- **Afghanistan: 3**
- **Ethiopia: 3**
- **Uganda: 3**
- **Somalia: 2**
- **Cambodia, Chad, China, the DRC, El Salvador, Greece, Guatemala, Jordan, Mali, Nepal, the Philippines, Rwanda, Turkey, Ukraine: 1 each**