



Scenario: Better Safe Than Sorry

Group Size: 4-15

This scenario may contain explicit language and references to harmful situations which may be emotionally activating for some people. If you need support, services are available through the [CAF Member Assistance Program \(CFMAP\)](#) and the [Employee Assistance Program \(EAP\)](#).

You are a member of a Civilian-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) team conducting a meeting in the rural countryside, while on a deployed mission. This is the first time you have had a formal meeting in this village, which is in one of the most “lawless” regions of the country. When you arrive at the village, the elders welcome you and invite you to sit down to engage in discussions and encourage you to make yourself comfortable. Out of respect and as a show of trust to your hosts, you, as well as your second-in-command (2IC) and your interpreter, remove your helmet and body armour. You keep a security party fully dressed and armed on the periphery to stand guard.

The meeting seems to be going fine. However, you notice that the children have been withdrawn from the outer crowd that had gathered around the meeting circle. You also get the feeling that some of the people gathered around appear nervous. You consider ending the meeting or at least taking up a more defensive posture, but you do not want to offend your hosts as this meeting is critical in showing respect and confidence.

Categories

Principles:	Respect the Dignity of all Persons
Values:	Integrity, Courage
Cultural Themes:	Service, Identity, Leadership
Misconduct Types:	Not Specific
GBA Plus Themes:	Culture
Audience:	Canadian Armed Forces

Facilitator's Guide

Learning Objectives:

- Discuss the ethical principle of “Respect the Dignity of all Persons” in an operational setting.
- Discuss the ethical values of integrity and courage and the expected behaviour of duty in an operational setting.

Facilitation Questions:

1. What would you do in this situation? What are the considerations?
 - Allow open discussion from the group.
 - Ethical concerns: While you are concerned about your safety and that of your team, you do not want to offend the elders by adopting an aggressive posture.
 - Personal factors: You want to be respectful to their customs and you want to be perceived as trusting them.
 - Environmental factors: You are a guest at a village, which is in a “lawless” region. Despite the cordial invitation by the elders, you are concerned about your immediate environment. The children are taken away and people seem nervous.
2. What is the ethical dilemma in this situation?
 - This is not an ethical dilemma. It is a security issue.
 - You must take appropriate action if you feel that safety is in jeopardy. However, you must take into consideration the fact that your actions will impact on the relationship between the village elders and the contingent. Adopting an aggressive or defensive posture might be seen as provocative and disrespectful of local customs.
3. What are some potential courses of action that could be taken in this scenario?
 - Option 1: Ask the elders why the children were removed, explaining that it is making you uncomfortable with the current settings and that you may have to stop the meeting. As a result, this gives the elders the opportunity to explain their actions. The consequence of abruptly stopping the meeting could jeopardize your relationship with the elders and damage the trust that you are trying to build.
 - Option 2: Advise the elders that you will carry on with the meeting with your helmet and body armour back on. The elders might be insulted and view your decision as provocative, and they might stop the meeting.
 - Option 3: Carry on with the meeting but direct your security party to be on the alert as changes have been made to the environment. The elders might feel intimidated by the additional security and refuse to carry on with the meeting.