

South Africa Safety, Health, and Security

Be Prepared: Use International ISOS. By now, you have registered with International SOS. Prepare for your visit to South Africa by visiting their website (<http://www.internationalsos.com/>), signing in with Northwestern's group membership number (11BCAS000003), and reading the **Medical Tools** pages as well as the **Security Tools**.

ISOS Travel Security Advice for South Africa:

- Normal travel can continue.
- Avoid travel to low-income residential areas unless with adequate support, due to the significant risks posed by high levels of violent crime.
- High rates of crime pose a significant risk to travelers in South Africa. Exercise heightened caution and stringent security measures at all times and in all areas. Accommodation and transport decisions should be made with attention to the risks posed by crime.
- Crime at ATMs (cash machines) is common. Commonsense precautions, most notably undertaking withdrawals only during daylight hours and from machines within secured shopping centres, can help to reduce the risk. Wherever possible, cash should not be withdrawn at petrol (gasoline) stations, which are often targeted by criminals.
- Criminals are commonly armed; in the event of being accosted do nothing to resist or antagonize assailants.
- Travel on foot is inadvisable in most areas. If you are walking, use only brightly-lit, busy streets in popular tourist areas, and maintain awareness of your surroundings. Avoid all unaccompanied travel on foot.
- Metered taxis, usually referred to as 'cabs' (which have a license triangle on the front) are a suitable means of travel in urban areas. Taxis cannot be hailed in the street; use a taxi rank or ask your hotel to arrange a taxi – ensure that you prearrange transport for your return journey. Sit in the rear of the vehicle and keep windows up and doors locked at all times. Keep valuables out of sight and place bags by your feet. Avoid using minibus taxis, as they are not sufficiently secure.
- Train travel is not recommended. Services are slow and several serious accidents in recent years have raised concerns over safety standards.

ThinkImpact Emergency Contacts

South Africa

- Country Director: Megan Barry: 072 901 4341
- Managing Director: Sarah Whitney: 079 134 9084
- Buffelshoek Trust: 011 783 2852
- Buffelshoek Trust: Campbell Scott: 082 330 9997
- US Embassy: 012 431 4000
- US Consulate After Hours Emergency: 011 290 3000
- Telefriend Johannesburg Hotline: 011 922 9999
- Global On-Call Physician: 001 720 641 3714

United States

- ThinkImpact National Office: 001 202 657 6616
- Chief Executive Officer: Saul Garlick: 001 303 908 6730
- Medical Travel Insurance (24 hours): 001 202 659 7776

Health

Please follow the health and safety precautions in your ThinkImpact training manual. If you are not feeling well, and it is not an emergency, please tell your ThinkImpact advisor. He/she will be able to make any arrangements necessary and will notify a country staff member. In addition, below is a list of medical contacts in South Africa.

Recommended doctors

Dr. CJ Kruger
Phone: 015 793 1905
Physical Address: 167 Moose Road, Hoedspruit

Dr. Mathebula
Phone: 015 793 1458
Physical Address: Unit C, 52 Buffel Street, Hoedspruit

Closest hospital

Tintswalo Hospital
Phone: 013 795 5001
Physical Address: Road to Orpen Gate, Acornhoek

Preferred hospital

Nelspruit Medi-Clinic
Phone: 013 759 0500
24 Hour Emergency: 013 759 0645
Physical Address: 1 Louise Street, Nelspruit 1200

Northwestern Contacts. If any incident arises that involves your on-site administrators and you do not feel comfortable broaching an issue with them (including, but not limited to, discrimination or sexual harassment), please know that you can contact staff members at the NU GESI Office:

- Brian Hanson: bhanson@northwestern.edu, **847-491-5058**; cell: **847-660-3771**
- Nicole Patel: nicole-patel@northwestern.edu, **847-467-0844**; cell: **847-602-3616**

Mental Health. Your mental health is critical to your success on GESI and to your overall wellbeing. If there is anything that you think the THINKIMPACT site team, your host family, or GESI staff might need to know about your mental health history in order to help you stay healthy while you are abroad, don't hesitate to let us know. As long as you are not a risk to yourself or others, we will keep this information confidential.

While you are in country, the THINKIMPACT site team is always available to discuss your mental health and to provide you with recommendations for mental health care. If you are experiencing a mental health crisis, contact the THINKIMPACT staff on their cell phones. Alternatively, Northwestern's Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) has a crisis counselor on-duty 24 hours a day. During daytime (CST), call **(847) 491-2151**. After hours, call **(847) 491-8100**. Ask to speak to the crisis counselor on duty. They will help you talk through your situation and decide what next steps to take.

The Northwestern University Study Abroad Office and Counseling and Psychological Services has put together a helpful web resource to assist you in caring for your mental health abroad. You can access it here: http://www.northwestern.edu/studyabroad/health_safety/Mental_Health_Abroad.html.

Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity. You may already identify yourself as a heterosexual, gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender student, or you may still be exploring these issues. In either case, you will find that the social climate, laws, and personal interactions of your host culture often differ from the U.S.

Gender roles in your host country may differ greatly from those in the U.S. You may choose not to behave in exactly the same ways a local men and women do; however, it's important to educate yourself about cultural gender roles within your host community in order to make sensitive choices about how you will behave while abroad, and to understand how your personal views and opinions may be interpreted by your host culture.

In preparing for GESI, it will be important for you to research the LGBT climate of Uganda. You should be informed about specific laws pertaining to sexual behavior and sexual/gender orientation. When doing your research, try to ascertain:

- The legality of same-sex sexual behavior (sometimes male-male sexual behavior is while female-female sexual behavior is not)
- The age consent for sexual behavior
- Restrictions on freedom of association or expression for LGBT people
- Anti-discrimination laws
- Sodomy laws

Your Predeparture Packet includes a short summary of attitudes and laws relating to gender and sexuality, but you may want to conduct your own research in order to understand the complete picture and increase your comfort level before arriving in-country. For more on this topic, visit the NAFSA Rainbow Special Interest Group website (<http://www.indiana.edu/~overseas/lesbigay/student.htm>). This is a very comprehensive site on issues of concern to lesbian and gay students abroad. Another site with Uganda-specific resources (including laws and news relating to LGBT issues) is <http://www.mask.org.za/index.php?page=uganda>.