Safety Tips from Former Students

✓ Be very observant of your surroundings.
✓ Be prepared—create a detailed list of contacts and numbers.
✓ Carry your cell phone everywhere you go and keep important numbers saved on the phone.
✓ Use your best judgment about your own health and safety. Never compromise your safety to complete your work.
✓ Be sure to discuss early with your mentor or host organization to whom you should address any health and safety concerns, should they arise later when it is not as comfortable to inquire about help.
✓ Use “common sense.” Just be smart. If it feels wrong, it probably is wrong, whether it is a person, place, or thing.
✓ Don’t be an “Ugly American” or traveler. Treat others with more respect than you normally would in your hometown. This will help you avoid confrontation.
✓ Talk to owners of guesthouses, read about health and safety before you go. Know how to educate yourself and find others who can provide more helpful information locally.
✓ Always be sure you are with someone else whom you trust if you go out. Be aware of the risks involved with going out and with certain behaviors.
✓ If you drink, drink in moderation when traveling abroad.
✓ Pay attention and do not act like a target to put yourself at greater risk, whether it is in the field or after hours.
✓ Dress appropriately to prevent negative or unwanted attention.
✓ Expect a lot more attention than you normally receive. Figure out a way to deal with it within your comfort zone.
✓ Don’t be afraid to talk with your host country mentors about any issues you may have or about any questions that arise.
✓ Realize that when working in these settings it is often very difficult to extract yourself from the situation once you are in it. Try to avoid situations where you do not feel in control of what is happening.
✓ Be flexible, be honest, and be open.
✓ Seek out students and others that have a lot of international experience. Connect with others familiar with the area you will be traveling to before you leave.