1.4 Safety and Security for Field Operations

Each context is so different that it is difficult to make specific recommendations for safety. Communities and organizations conducting mapping activities should establish contingency plans to address the different types of security incidents that may occur. Team members should coordinate all responses to such incidents so as to safeguard the rights and well-being of local community members, and ensure that staff members and volunteers are not put at risk.

For operations, the key to effective safety and security management is the creation of a culture of security. Each staff member and volunteer has a responsibility for their own safety and security, and that of other team members.

Please note: The below topics are suggestions for mapping teams to consider when building and discussing security plans for mapping activities, and is in no way comprehensive.

Considerations

- Personal Security
  - Behavior
  - Dress code
  - Language and communication
- Legal Requirements
  - Survey letter/Permission to conduct field activities
  - Local laws and customs
- Communications
  - Communication network
  - Internal Contact Details (mapping team)
  - External Contact Details (authorities)
- Travel
  - Attire
  - Visibility
  - Documentation
  - Accidents
  - Theft
- Common Crime
  - Types of crime
  - Frequency and patterns of occurence
  - Mitigation strategies
- Medical Emergencies
  - Pre-existing medical conditions of team members
  - Location and contact information for local health facilities
- Contingency Plans
- Incident reporting

Tips:

- Know the emergency services numbers for the local area
- Always have access to a first aid kit
- Teams should have someone trained in first aid
- Let people decide where they work and feel most safe in
- Avoid performing field work alone
- Always obtain relevant permits, licenses, permissions, and visas for work
- Develop a country specific security plan
- Create a minor incident and suspicious activity report
- Establish a process for regular monitoring and review of hazards
- If operating outside of your home country, sign up for travel alerts from your embassy

Resources:

- HOT General Hazard Mitigation Advice