

# Tanzania

## Safety and security

### Crime

Although most visits to Tanzania are trouble-free, violent and armed crime is increasing. The British High Commission continues to receive regular reports of British nationals who are the victims of mugging and bag snatching (especially by passing cars or motorbikes) and armed robbery and burglary have increased throughout the country. In December 2016, a European family were robbed at gun point and their campsite guard killed at south Beach, 20km southeast of Dar es Salaam. In Dar es Salaam, British tourists have been kidnapped, assaulted, robbed and forced with the threat of violence to withdraw cash from ATMs and arrange cash transfers of up to £5,000 through Western Union after being befriended by strangers or using unlicensed taxis.

Walk as far away from the road as possible and avoid walking and cycling at night. If you need to walk alongside the road, walk towards the traffic. Avoid carrying large amounts of cash or other valuables including expensive jewellery or watches. Leave your passport in the hotel safe and carry a photocopy for ID. If you're attacked, don't resist. If you carry a bag, it is safer to hold it loosely by the handle or hanging off your shoulder rather than by securing the strap across your chest. Both pedestrians and cyclists have been targeted by bag thieves. Don't accept lifts from strangers or individuals offering to procure a licensed taxi on your behalf. Don't use unlicensed taxis. Where possible, you should arrange a taxi through a reputable establishment, for example a hotel, and you should always ask to see the driver's ID. App-based taxi services are not reliable. Avoid walking and exercising alone, particularly in isolated areas and on beaches.

Take particular care in places frequented by tourists and expatriate residents. In Dar es Salaam, tourists and residents have been targeted in the city centre, at Ubungu bus station, the Masaki/Oysterbay peninsula

area, particularly at Coco Beach and along Toure Drive. In Zanzibar incidents have taken place in Stone Town and at hotels and on popular tourist beaches.

There has been an increase in the number of residential burglaries in Zanzibar and Arusha in 2018. Make sure residential property is secure and lock all doors and windows, especially at night. Your security guard should insist on official identification before allowing anyone to enter your property or compound. If in doubt don't let them in and raise the alarm.

You should remain vigilant at all times.

If you need to contact the emergency services, dial 112 and ask for the emergency service you require.

### **Air travel**

In October and November 2017, there were 2 accidents affecting Coastal Aviation flights to the Serengeti National Park. In the most recent incident, all 11 people on board were killed.

### **Local travel**

If you're planning to travel to a neighbouring country or across the region, make sure you check our travel advice for each country you intend to visit.

Information about travel in remote areas can be patchy. Invest in an up-to-date travel guide and only use reliable tour companies.

### **Burundi border/Kigoma region**

Take particular care in the area bordering Burundi/Kigoma region. There have been armed robberies in this area, including vehicle hijackings. Drive only in hours of daylight. There are few facilities for visitors.

## **Mozambique border**

Take great care near the border with Mozambique. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) advise against all but essential travel to the districts of Palma, Mocimboa de Praia and Macomia in Cabo Delgado province due to an increase in attacks by groups with links to Islamic extremism. This advice does not apply to islands off the coast of Mozambique. Check our [travel advice for Mozambique](#) for more information.

## **National Parks**

Careful planning is important to get the best out of your safari. If you choose to camp, only use official sites. Make sure you are properly equipped and seek local advice when travelling to isolated areas. Some parks are extremely remote, and emergency access and evacuation can be difficult.

There are risks associated with viewing wildlife, particularly on foot or at close range. Always follow park regulations and wardens' advice, and make sure you have the correct documentation or permit before entering a national park.

## **Trekking**

If you are trekking or climbing, only use a reputable travel company, stick to established routes and always walk in groups. Make sure you are well prepared and equipped to cope with the terrain and low temperatures. The extreme altitude on Mount Kilimanjaro can cause altitude sickness.

## **River and sea travel**

In the last few years there have been several ferry disasters in which hundreds of people have died. These were ferries travelling between Dar es Salaam and Zanzibar, between the islands of Zanzibar and in the Lake Zone area.

Use a reputable ferry company and if you believe a ferry to be overloaded or unseaworthy, don't get on. Familiarise yourself with emergency procedures on board and make a note of where the life jackets and emergency exits are located.

You should also beware of aggressive ticket touts at Tanzanian ports.

Recent piracy attacks off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden highlight that the threat of piracy related activity and armed robbery in the Gulf of Aden and Indian Ocean remains significant. Reports of attacks on local fishing dhows in the area around the Gulf of Aden and Horn of Africa continue. The combined threat assessment of the international Naval Counter Piracy Forces remains that all sailing yachts under their own passage should remain out of the [designated High Risk Area](#) or face the risk of being hijacked and held hostage for ransom. For more information and advice, see our [Piracy and armed robbery at sea](#) page.

## **Road travel**

Road conditions are generally poor and driving standards are erratic. There are a large number of accidents, often involving inter-city buses. There have been a number of serious bus crashes that have resulted in fatalities and injuries to tourists. If you have concerns about the safety of the vehicle, or the ability of the driver, use alternative transport.

If you plan to drive yourself during a visit to Tanzania, you'll need your UK licence and an International Driving Permit. To drive in Zanzibar you'll need your UK licence and a local Zanzibar driving permit (which you can get through your hire car company). Carry several copies of your driving licence, permits and insurance documents.

Self-driving in Tanzania can be challenging and the quality of car hire companies is variable. Consider using reputable taxis as an alternative. There are no roadside rescue or breakdown services. Road maps are hard to come by and not always up to date. Service stations are infrequent and may not have supplies of fuel.

Driving conditions in Tanzania's national parks can be unpredictable as the roads around the parks, mainly dirt tracks, are generally poor and can become hazardous or impassable after heavy rain. A 4x4 vehicle is often required. Avoid driving out of major towns and cities at night.

Keep doors locked, windows up and valuables out of sight, as vehicles are sometimes targeted by thieves. Be particularly careful at night when there is a higher incidence of crime and drunk driving. Avoid driving out of town at night. If you become aware of an unusual incident, or if somebody in plain clothes tries to flag you down, it is often safer not to stop.

There are frequent police road blocks. If you're stopped by the police, ask to see identification before making any payments for traffic violations. If you're involved in a road accident, co-operate with the local police.

## **Train travel**

There have been several accidents on Tanzanian railways. Seek local advice for any long-distance train travel.

## **Political Situation**

Demonstrations and political rallies happen occasionally across Tanzania (including on the islands of Unguja (Zanzibar) and Pemba). Some have turned violent and resulted in fatalities. Police may use tear gas and/or live ammunition for crowd control. Keep up to date with local and international events and avoid all demonstrations and large gatherings. If you become aware of any nearby protests, leave the area immediately and monitor our [travel advice](#), [Twitter](#) and local media for up-to-date information.

## **Terrorism**

Terrorists are likely to try to carry out attacks in Tanzania. Although Tanzania hasn't suffered a major terrorist incident since the bombing of the United States embassy in 1998, there have been a number of smaller

scale incidents. Most attacks target the local security forces, although attacks against western interests can't be ruled out.

Attacks could be indiscriminate, including in places visited by foreigners. Be vigilant at all times, especially in crowded areas and public places like transport hubs, hotels, restaurants and bars, and during major gatherings like sporting or religious events. Previous terrorist attacks in the region have targeted places where football matches are being viewed.

Extremists linked to the Islamic terrorist group Al-Shabaab based in Somalia pose a threat across the east Africa region, and are thought to be active in Tanzania. There is also thought to be some support for Daesh (formerly referred to as ISIL). However, many incidents in Tanzania are of unclear origin and may be conducted by criminal gangs.

Although there have been no significant terrorist attacks in Tanzania in recent years, the authorities in Tanzania successfully made a number of arrests in connection to terrorism throughout 2016.

Previous attacks include:

- in May 2016, 3 people were killed when a group armed with machetes and axes attacked a mosque in Mwanza district, north-west Tanzania
- in May 2016, 8 people were killed when an armed group raided houses in Kibatini village, 55km from Tanga in north-east Tanzania
- in August 2016, 4 police officers were killed in the outskirts of Dar es Salaam in an attack on bank, and in July 2015 an attack on a police station in Dar es Salaam killed 6 people including 4 police officers; the motivation behind these and several similar attacks is unclear
- in April 2017, several police officers were ambushed and killed in an attack in the Pwani coastal region, about 100km south of Dar es Salaam.

Following the April 2017 incident, and reports of the murders of several local officials, there's a heightened security presence in the area. On 29 March 2017, the Regional Commissioner of Pwani issued a decree covering the Rufiji area requiring drivers of motorcycles, popularly

known as Boda Bodas, to stop carrying passengers at 6pm. You should take extra care when travelling in Rufiji and surrounding areas, including at police checkpoints and monitor local media for the latest information.

There's a heightened threat of terrorist attack globally against UK interests and British nationals, from groups or individuals motivated by the conflict in Iraq and Syria. You should be vigilant at this time.

Find out more about the [global threat from terrorism](#), how to minimise your risk and what to do in the event of a terrorist attack.

## Natural disasters

Tanzania lies on an active fault line stretching from the north of the country to the south and tremors occur from time to time. The last significant earthquake (magnitude 5.7) happened on 10 September 2016 in the Kagera region, north west Tanzania. The US Federal Emergency Management Agency has advice about what to do [before, during and after an earthquake](#).

## Health

At least 8 weeks before your trip, check the latest country-specific health advice from the [National Travel Health Network and Centre \(NaTHNaC\)](#) on the TravelHealthPro website. Each country-specific page has information on vaccine recommendations, any current health risks or outbreaks, and factsheets with information on staying healthy abroad. Guidance is also available from NHS (Scotland) on the [FitForTravel website](#).

General information on [travel vaccinations](#) and a [travel health checklist](#) is available on the NHS website. You may then wish to contact your health adviser or pharmacy for advice on other preventive measures and managing any pre-existing medical conditions while you're abroad. The legal status and regulation of some medicines prescribed or purchased in the UK can be different in other countries. If you're travelling with prescription or over-the-counter medicine, read this

guidance from NaTHNaC on [best practice when travelling with medicines](#). For further information on the legal status of a specific medicine, you'll need to contact the [embassy, high commission or consulate](#) of the country or territory you're travelling to.

Medical facilities are limited, especially outside Dar es Salaam. Make sure you have adequate [travel health insurance](#) and accessible funds to cover the cost of medical treatment abroad, evacuation by air ambulance and repatriation.

[Malaria](#), [dengue fever](#) and [cholera](#) are common in Tanzania.

Isolated outbreaks of Ebola virus disease have occurred occasionally in neighbouring Democratic Republic of Congo, often in remote areas. On 1 August 2018, an outbreak of Ebola was declared in Beni territory, North Kivu Province in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Passengers travelling from the DRC may be subject to health screening at ports of entry in Tanzania. The latest updates can be found on the [WHO's](#) website.

There have also been cases of [sleeping sickness](#) occurring after bites from tsetse flies in the north, including the Serengeti. Other diseases, such as rift valley fever, occur mostly in rural areas where access to sanitation is limited.

In the 2015 Report on the Global AIDS Epidemic, the UNAIDS/WHO Working Group estimated that around 1,400,000 adults aged 15 or over in Tanzania were living with HIV; the prevalence percentage was estimated at around 4.7 of the adult population. You should exercise normal precautions to [avoid exposure to HIV/AIDS](#).

If you need emergency medical assistance during your trip, dial 112 and ask for an ambulance. You should contact your insurance/medical assistance company promptly if you are referred to a medical facility for treatment.