# Nepal: Development, Gender, and Social Change in the Himalaya

**Country Overview & Packing Guidelines**

**Spring 2027**

## Country Overview

### GENERAL INFORMATION

Nepal, land-locked between China and India, is small in terms of square miles, but has the highest mountains in the world. Geographically, ecologically, and culturally, it is very diverse, with a topography that stretches from sea-level (subtropical jungles) to the world's highest point and a complex mix of ethnic, linguistic, and religious traditions that structure their way of life. The program is based in Kathmandu, the capital of Nepal, a busy South Asian city where the traditional and modern are side by side. Program excursions include visits to rural areas in Nepal allowing for a transection of Nepal's geographic and cultural regions.

Whether it will be able to represent minority voices and define a multi-cultural future for itself in the wake of a new constitution is a challenge that awaits Nepal. This also reflects on the importance of constructive engagement between government and governed amidst a rapidly changing political environment as the country appears to be establishing a semblance of democracy in which citizens can partake. In this program, you will have an opportunity to learn from scholars, activists and community members who play an important role in creating an inclusive society that addresses the issues of inequality, rights, gender disparities and community approach to conservation and development.



**School for International Training**
1 Kipling Road, PO Box 676
Brattleboro, VT 05302-0676 USA
P: 888 272-7881
F: 802 258-3296
studyabroad@sit.edu
**studyabroad.sit.edu**

## CLIMATE AND GEOGRAPHY

Climatic regions vary widely in Nepal, ranging from hot tropical jungles in the Tarai to the permanent snowfields of the Himalayas. Kathmandu stands at an altitude of just under 4,500 ft.; at times during excursions, students may be traveling to altitudes of approximately 13,000ft.

**[Kathmandu]: AVERAGE HIGH/LOW TEMPERATURES (°F)**

| JAN | FEB | MAR | APR | MAY |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 66/37 | 68/43 | 81/54 | 81/54 | 86/63 |

| SEPT | OCT | NOV | DEC |
|---|---|---|---|
| 77/55 | 77/55 | 77/55 | 66/37 |

Kathmandu experiences cool winter weather in late January and February, followed by warmer temperatures in March and April. In late January and February, mornings and evenings can be quite cold, with temperatures dropping to around 2–7°C (36 45°F). Daytime temperatures generally range from 18–20°C (64-68°F). Warm layers and a jacket are recommended.From March to May, the weather becomes warmer, with daytime temperatures rising from around 24°C (75°F) in March to 27°C (81°F) in April and 28°C (82°F) in May, when humidity and occasional rainfall begin to increase.Temperatures in the Himalayan region might hugely differ to the temperature in Kathmandu. Homes and buildings in Nepal do not have heating systems in the winter, so please plan accordingly.

## LOCAL CUSTOMS

Many different ethnic groups have their own complex customs but there are enough commonalities where the student does not need to worry. To Nepalis, “guest is god” which leads to a spirit of open welcoming of visitors of diverse backgrounds. Despite the impression you might get from Bollywood films from India, Nepalis, mostly in the rural areas are conventional when it comes to dress (see guidelines below) and interactions between the sexes and are somewhat formal with new acquaintances. Do not worry, though, during orientation we cover all the cultural do’s and don’ts and introduce you to common customs and courtesies.

## LOCAL DIET

Participating in the local food culture is a central aspect of daily life in country. Students are encouraged to participate in the local food culture as a central aspect of daily life. By trying to replicate your diet at home you may miss out on an important part of your host culture. Due to the unique living and learning community central to all SIT programs, we cannot separate food and eating communally (including with your host family) from the program experience.

The staple of the Nepali diet that is served for most meals is *daal bhaat*, a meal centered on rice and lentils with sides of curried vegetables, pickle, and sometimes meat. It is quite easy to maintain a vegetarian diet in Nepal, though it is more difficult to be vegan or to maintain a kosher diet. In urban areas, most people eat three meals a day and mealtimes are similar to those in

the west, but in rural areas, there are usually only two main meals, at mid-morning and late evening, supplemented by snacks late afternoon If you ever crave western food, almost every food is readily available in the cities.

Note: if you have special dietary needs, including allergies, please inform the office of Student Health, Safety & Wellbeing prior to the start of your program (studenthealth@sit.edu). We will advise you on realistic expectations about avoiding or incorporating certain foods within the program context.

## MEAL PLANNING

Homestay families generally provide breakfast and dinner during the week and breakfast, lunch, and dinner on the weekend. This is a wonderful opportunity to enjoy traditional meals and immerse yourself in the local culture.

The estimated cost for meals not provided during the program is based on the cost of modestly eating out or buying groceries to prepare your own meals, when cooking facilities are available. If you plan on eating out regularly, you should budget more money. Exploring local food is one of the highlights of living abroad, so give yourself room to savor the experience.

Please remember to budget at least **$630** for your meals not provided during the semester. For a breakdown of your program's estimated out-of-pocket expenses, please see the table in the Money section of this document.

## SAFETY, SECURITY, AND HEALTH

Maintaining good health is essential to having a successful study abroad experience.

SIT recommends you do research prior to departure about the health, safety, and security specifics of the country(ies) you plan to visit. Consult the U.S. Department of State website and search their Countries and Areas Archive for international travel information and current travel advisories for each country. Search the Center for Disease Control Traveler's Health page to see travel health notices and vaccine requirements and recommendations for any country(ies) you plan to visit.

SIT recommends doing research ahead of time to stay up to date on It will be critical that you educate yourself about the potential health and safety hazards that may exist in your areas of travel and make informed decisions about what preventative measures to take prior to departure. You should also reference the Health, Access, and Identity information on your program's webpage.

If you have any questions, please reach out to the Student Health, Safety, & Wellbeing Team. Students are thoroughly briefed on safety considerations during in-country orientation and are updated throughout the semester if and when circumstances change. For information regarding safety and security, emergency communications, SIT policies, health and personal property insurance, and general program tips, please read the Safety, Security, and Health document and Student Handbook on your program's predeparture page.

## HOUSING

As many SIT Study Abroad alumni will tell you, the homestay experience can be one of the most rewarding and most challenging aspects of the program. We hope you will come prepared for the experience and committed to moving beyond cultural immersion as you begin to question, distinguish, and analyze the host culture vis-à-vis your own culture and come to a deeper understanding of both.



Family structures vary in every culture. SIT Study Abroad values the diversity of homestay families, and your family may include a single mother of two small children or a large extended family with many people coming and going all the time. Additionally, please bear in mind that, in many countries, the idea of what constitutes a "home" may be different from what you expect. You will need to be prepared to adapt to a new life with a new diet, a new schedule, new people, and new priorities, and expectations.

Each program's homestay coordinator will be responsible for placing students in homestays. These placements are made first based on health concerns, including any allergies or dietary needs, to the extent possible. **Please note: in order to ensure the best fit for students and families, SIT may make final adjustments to homestay placements after student arrival in country. Therefore, SIT will not provide information about your homestay family before you depart for the program.**

We seek to foster increased cross-cultural understanding in students by immersing them in local culture through daily life in a new family and community. Students are expected to assume roles as family members, respecting and following host family norms around communications, visitors, and activities of daily living.

On this program, you will be staying in two homestays. You will be staying in one extended homestay in urban Kathmandu during most of the program, and a short rural homestay during

the village excursion. It is difficult to say how many, or of what ages, your family members will be and whether they will be wealthy, more educated or less affluent families. In general, though, if a family has extra space to accommodate a student it means they are more middle-class in the local context. When staying with these families, please expect the following: You may be fortunate enough to have a room with an attached washroom; however, sharing a bathroom is common in most homes in Nepal. Additionally, the Wi-Fi speed may not match what you are accustomed to. You will likely need to learn how to take bucket showers and hand-wash your clothes. Be prepared to use squat toilets, especially during rural excursions and while traveling.

## OTHER ACCOMMODATIONS

Students should expect to share a room with one or more students during orientation/launch and while on excursions. During orientation, the group stays in a guesthouse in a town just outside of Kathmandu. While on the village study tour, students may stay in any number of different accommodations in small villages. These accommodations are typically guesthouses in towns and trekker teahouses in more remote areas. During ISP, accommodations vary according to the needs of student research. In some cases, students continue to stay with their homestay family during ISP; in most instances, students stay in a guesthouse or small hotel.

## TRANSPORTATION

In Kathmandu, you will mostly travel by foot or public transportation (local minibuses). Taxis are widely available and cheap. Students should expect traffic congestion during commuting times and pollution related to the traffic in Kathmandu. The Nepal program center does not provide motor bikes/scooter for student use - be it either as a passenger or a rider. However, most students prefer to walk given the chaotic nature of the streets in Kathmandu, which are narrow, potholed, frequently unpaved and under construction. Most often, students enjoy walking around the city. However, if they prefer to hire a taxi, they can download travel apps like Pathao and Indrive, Yango on their phone to simplify their search for taxis.

Outside of the larger cities, there are many locations in Nepal that are only accessible on foot. To get to excursion locations, students will usually travel by chartered bus along with short flights, jeep, and on foot. You should be prepared to walk. Sometimes this is walking in areas of high altitude, and while you do not need to be an Olympic athlete, you should be in fairly good physical shape. However, in case of emergency or if any student is unable to walk for any reason, we can hire transportation.

## COMMUNICATION

While you may want to be in regular communication with friends and family from home during the term abroad, please bear in mind that different time zones, unreliable phone lines, and changing program activities can complicate communication.

It's important to be clear with family and friends about your availability during the term. Many students recommend making an appointment to call home or to receive a call. You should also consider the impact of constant communication with friends and family at home on your cultural immersion.

Visit our Contact & Communication page for practices on program communication, emergency communication, and home institution communication.

## PHONES AND INTERNET

### Cell Phone Policy

As part of SIT's commitment to student safety and security, all students are required to have a working cell phone capable of making and receiving both local and international calls, including a data plan so that your phone is operational when you are away from wi-fi. If needed, during orientation SIT staff will provide you with a normal phone with a local SIM card in it or provide you with an e-sim and assist you in acquiring minutes for calls and texting. Hence, make sure your phone is unlocked so that you can use the e-sim. Failure to maintain a working phone capable of making and receiving calls/texts will be considered a conduct violation and a breach of our student code.

The SIT program center provides internet access during posted hours. Most neighborhoods have businesses such as cafes or restaurants that provide free Wi-Fi as well, but connections can be slow. You can also use data from your Nepali phone service, if necessary. WiFi has now been a part of both urban and rural life, but bandwidth and coverage range might be an issue at times. When we go out, we usually don't get free hotspots on the way, we might have to rely on our own internet plan.

## MAILINGS

Unlike receiving a package here in the US, receiving a package at your program site is usually **expensive** and **problematic**. Customs agents must inspect all packages and you, as the recipient, are responsible for duty and storage fees. In addition, there are cases of items being lost in the mail or taking so long to reach the recipient that the recipient is nearly back in the US by the time the items are received. For these reasons, sending packages should be done only for emergency situations. Additionally, sending valuables is highly discouraged. Mailing prescription medication abroad is illegal.

For this program, **DHL, FedEx, UPS services are available in the country**. Despite cheaper prices, reliance on the US Postal Service is not advised due to delays and unreliability. When given the option, it's always a good idea to send packages certified and with a tracking number that allows the sender to track the package.

If it is necessary for someone to send you mail, then posted letters and packages should be sent to the following address:

Student Name
[Student mailing address]

Packages should be sent to the following address via ***DHL, FedEx, or UPS and General post office (GPO) services are available in the country.***

Student Name
c/o SIT
PO Box 1373
Kathmandu, Nepal 44600
For express services (e.g. DHL, FedEx, etc.) include the Program Center phone number (+9771-4457012) with the address and the courier will contact the office when your parcel arrives. [Address for packages]

## MONEY

The local currency in Nepal is the Nepali Rupee. Nepal is generally inexpensive, although inflation rates are rising steadily. ATMs are readily available in Kathmandu and in most large towns throughout the country and can be generally relied upon to withdraw Nepali rupees (up to 20,000 rupees at a time but some ATMs allow to withdraw 25,000 rupees at a time). (I was unable to edit the visa expense below- could you please make it 350 USD instead of 300?) This will lead the total personal cost to be 2430 USD)

Although possible, it can be expensive to transfer or wire funds to Nepal. It is also possible to get cash advances, in rupees, against a MasterCard or Visa, but only in limited amounts. Credit/ATM card usage for purchases is not common and only in larger shops.

Please consider what balance of cash and credit/debit cards you will need. There is a safe in the program center to securely store your excess cash and cards.

Check current exchange rates: http://www.oanda.com/currency/converter/

If using a debit and/or credit card, you should contact your bank and/or credit card companies regarding your travel plans. If you don't inform these companies that you will be away, they will often assume the card has been lost or stolen and will put an immediate hold on the card. You should also check on costs of withdrawal, as these costs vary and can sometimes be very expensive. Renewing and receiving reissued credit and debit cards while on the program will be an expensive and highly inconvenient process. Before you leave for your program, please check the expiration dates on your cards to ensure that they will not expire while you are abroad. It is also very important that you make photocopies of all your debit/credit card information and leave them with someone you trust in case your card(s) is/are lost or stolen.

We suggest that you budget between **US$1900 to $2330** for out-of-pocket costs not covered by the Tuition and Housing Fees. To determine where you might fall in this range, please examine your spending habits during a typical semester at your home school and consider any exceptional expenditures you may have on the program. Please carefully consider your personal spending habits when creating your out-of-pocket expense budget. Some items to consider are meals not provided by the program, textbooks, Independent Study Project or Internship-related expenses not covered by the program, interpretation services, medical expenses, personal spending, and gifts. Use the average estimates below as a guide to help you plan for out-of-pocket expenses.

Please budget approximately:

| | |
|---|---|
| **Personal spending (from past student suggestions):** | 500USD |
| **Meals Not Provided** | 630 USD |
| **Books, printing, supplies:** | 100 USD |
| **Up-front medical costs:** | 500 USD |
| **Potential ISP travel expenses:** | 250USD |
| **Visa:** | 350 USD |
| **Estimated total:** | 2330USD |

Please note that up-front medical costs can vary widely. Though you are completely covered by SIT's travel insurance GeoBlue, which you can read more about on our Participant Insurance page, you still may need to pay up-front for medical care and then file for reimbursement.

## VISITORS AND FREE TIME

**SIT strongly discourages and will not provide support for any visitors to students during the term,** due to the rigorous nature of the program and the disruption that such visits cause in program flow and group dynamics. Students should be sure that relatives and friends are aware of this policy and that visits are scheduled for dates after the formal conclusion of the program. Students will not be excused from program components to attend to visitors. See the Attendance and Participation Policy.

If a visitor does come while a program is in progress, they must plan their own independent accommodations; SIT Study Abroad homestay families can accommodate only their assigned student and, due to cultural and contractual understandings with SIT, should not be asked to host students' guests.

## INDEPENDENT TRAVEL

Please read our full Independent Travel policy for our definition, guidelines and how to access our independent travel notification form. Please note that independent travel is only allowed during program free time and students will not be excused from program activities to travel. SIT is not responsible for any costs of student independent travel including logistics, preparations, cancelation fees, change fees, and any other costs associated with independent travel. We highly recommend you wait to book any independent travel until AFTER arriving on program and receiving the final academic schedule from your program.



During the program, students follow an intense schedule of classes and field-based learning assignments, even during the ISP. Free time for pursuing an independent interest or hobby during the program will be limited. Your admissions counselor can advise you about particular interests you may have. For example, if you must keep in shape for your next athletic season, or if you play a musical instrument and want to know whether to bring it, we can help you to understand your schedule and any concerns or limitations that may exist.

## CODE OF CONDUCT AND POLICIES

SIT maintains a Code of Conduct and clear institutional policies regarding student behavior through a commitment to mutual learning and respect for others. Visit the policy page for detailed policies around academic integrity, alcohol and drug use, anti-harassment and non-

discrimination, attendance and participation, credit hours, equal education opportunities, grading, housing, independent travel, prohibited activities, religious holiday observance, sexual harassment and misconduct, and withdrawal among others.

# Packing Guidelines

## LUGGAGE

Please pack lightly and include only necessary items. You should be able to carry all your luggage significant distances on your own. Try to minimize both the number of bags and weight of your bag(s) since you will likely be acquiring more belongings while abroad. We recommend a small daypack, which will also be useful for short excursions when on the program. During the rural excursion, we will be walking in the mountains, while it can be strenuous with lots of uphill and downhill hiking, it is more a social and cultural experience of walking from village to village where we stay in tea houses. So, while you will not need technical or camping gear be prepared to carry your backpacks and pack accordingly.



Students report that a medium sized backpack (about 50-60 liters) is useful for most travel in-country, but if you do not have a backpack already, it is not necessary to go out and buy one just for this program; adequate locally made backpacks are available for sale and for rent.

If carrying prescription medications, you should carry a letter from your doctor to prevent any concerns at customs or in transit. (Please see the “General Health Tips” section in the Safety, Security, and Health pre-departure document.)

Please check the current requirements of the Transportation Security Administration (http://www.tsa.gov) as well as those of the airline on which you are flying for domestic and international baggage restrictions.

## CLOTHING GUIDELINES

Dress practices in Nepal vary by age, location, occasion, and individual preference. In Kathmandu and other urban areas, clothing styles are diverse and increasingly informal, while some rural communities and formal settings may have more conservative expectations. As you participate in academic activities, visit local organizations, travel, and stay with host families,

dressing neatly and appropriately for the setting will help you feel comfortable and show consideration for those you meet.

Bring comfortable everyday clothing, including T-shirts and casual wear, as well as clothes suitable for academic sessions, organizational visits, presentations, and special occasions with your host family. For program lectures, language classes, NGO visits, and other formal or academic activities, students are expected to wear neat, smart-casual or formal attire, as appropriate to the occasion. Clothing that covers the shoulders and reaches at least to the knees is a practical choice, particularly when visiting religious sites or communities where more conservative dress may be preferred. Shorts and other casual clothing are generally suitable for exercise and informal settings, though expectations may vary by location. A light layer or scarf can also be useful for adjusting to different settings and weather conditions.

You do not need a completely new wardrobe; clean, comfortable, well-maintained clothing that suits the activity and context is sufficient. When in doubt, follow the guidance of program staff and observe local practices at the places you visit.

Climatically, keep in mind that Spring semester starts off cold and gets hotter as the semester progresses and Fall semester is the opposite – starts off as fairly hot and gets colder over time. Clothing is inexpensive in Nepal, and you are encouraged to wear local styles. It is best to pack planning to purchase some things here. Your Kathmandu families will not mind if you wear Western styles, including pants. In fact, most of them will be sporting fashions that you are used to seeing in the U.S.

Women: Many women find local dress (like kurta surwals) to be very comfortable and have some made for use throughout the semester. In Kathmandu, young women wear pants, including jeans, but make sure yours are clean and well-tailored. You may have little privacy

during your time in Nepal, especially while in your homestays, so bring something conservative to sleep in as well; a t-shirt and long pajama bottoms would be fine.

Rural Nepal is a different story. For women, long skirts or locally made garments really are the best and easiest things to wear, even while trekking. Trekking pants are also fine on the trail.



You may feel more comfortable in the local styles, and you might find that many Nepali people will notice and appreciate your style of dress. Shorts and tank tops are culturally inappropriate, though generally acceptable if they are modest, and you are engaging in sports activities.

Men: Clothing should be neat and kept clean. Again, local clothes are inexpensive and comfortable. Jeans and khakis should not be ragged, faded or patched. Shorts are not for regular wear except around the house and for sports activities. Remember, much emphasis is put on appearance.

Shoes: It is very important to have a comfortable pair of boots or walking shoes with decent ankle support. Lightweight boots and walking sneakers are perfectly fine – it is not necessary and not recommended to have heavy-duty (e.g. high altitude mountaineering) boots. Make sure the shoes fit and are suitable for cold and rain. Same as with clothing, don't bring ragged, beat up, shoes and make sure that they are comfortable as there is lots of walking in Nepal. If you have big feet, do not expect to be able to find shoes to fit you in the local market, so please plan accordingly.

## EQUIPMENT

During the program, including excursions, little equipment is needed. Other than shoes that fit and have good ankle support, most any equipment you might need is locally available.

In the past, students have been happy to have their own backpacks and have felt a bit foolish bringing other camping gear, especially because they have to carry it all. If you have any water purifier (equipment or tablets) please bring it with you and use it whenever you are not sure if the water is safe. We too recommend life straw water bottle instead of reusable water bottle. Treated water is available at our Program Center in Kathmandu and in homestays.

You can actually get away without much else besides your clothes and toiletries. The rule of thumb is: if you don't already own it, don't go out and buy it just for the program as most gear is available locally. We generally do not recommend bringing a sleeping bag, as most accommodations during the program provide blankets and quilts. However, if you plan to go on a high-altitude trek before or after the program, bringing a sleeping bag may be useful.

Ultimately, it is a personal choice, and you are welcome to bring one if you do not mind carrying the extra weight.

## COMPUTERS AND OTHER ELECTRONICS

It is recommended that you bring a laptop computer. If you bring a laptop, the computer will be your personal property and responsibility. It is recommended that you insure your computer, smartphone, or other valuables for full coverage in the event of loss or theft (SIT insurance does not cover personal property).

Any program-specific information here. The program provides Internet access and has two computers for student use. You will also be able to find access to the Internet/e-mail through shops/cafes in Kathmandu. Printing is not available at the program center so, for printing papers, we recommend a flash drive to take to printing place.

Please see the following website for information about electricity, voltage and electrical adapters. http://www.worldstandards.eu/electricity/.If you plan to bring electrical equipment, check first to see if it will work on 220v. It is recommended that you bring a travel adapter.

Many laptops and other electrical equipment work on 220v but check what it says on your gear. If you need a power converter, these are available locally. Plug converters are readily available in the local market, so you won't need to bring any with you. Be aware that Macintosh laptops have had some power issues in the past, and in general they are more expensive to get fixed.

A digital recorder can be invaluable for fieldwork, recording interviews, music, street sounds, etc. If you have a phone with a built-in recorder, you can use that during your fieldwork.

## GIFTS

As you might imagine, it is best to be prepared with a gift to offer your homestay family in gratitude for their hospitality and as a means to share a part of your culture with them. We suggest one or two gifts that the whole family can enjoy. You may also wish to consider gifts for people outside your homestay family. Try to choose gifts that represent you or the part of the country and/or community you live in. Think about what your city, state, or local artisans produce. Draw upon your personal interests or hobbies for ideas. Pack a couple of small gifts for children, such as small games, bubbles, or a Frisbee. Even if your homestay family does not have small children, chances are that you will engage with children in your homestay community. Once you are on the program and learn more about the local culture, you will discover other ways to thank your family. Remember to bring pictures of your friends and family to share.

Former students have recommended calendars, picture books, postcards, music, or souvenirs from your college bookstore as gifts.



Program-specific guidelines shared here. Be prepared to bring and share pictures of your family, friends, neighborhood, etc., as these are invaluable in breaking the ice when meeting your homestay families. When selecting photographs, you should remain aware of the Nepali attitudes regarding dress and displays of affection between men and women. Nepali will generally dress in their finest outfits when having their pictures taken. It may be taken as a sign of disrespect rather than informality to appear disheveled or untidily dressed. In addition, pictures of boyfriends and girlfriends should be tasteful and somewhat conservative.

## WHAT YOU CAN AND CANNOT OBTAIN IN COUNTRY

Most consumer goods are now available in Kathmandu, though maybe not exactly what you are looking for. Imported products carry a price tag comparable to the U.S. and offer a very limited choice in brand names or varieties. Items from Nepal and other Asian countries are less expensive alternatives. Therefore, although the quality may sometimes be questionable, you should be able to find some form of almost all goods.

All of the things listed on the packing guidelines above are available in Kathmandu, though they may not be exactly the kind you want, they may cost more than in the U.S., and you may spend time searching them out locally. If you are very particular about the type and quality of your notebooks and other school supplies, then plan to bring them with you.

Past female students have reported dissatisfaction with locally available feminine hygiene products, so if you are partial to a particular brand, it is advised you bring a supply with you.



## ALUMNI CONTACTS

If you have further questions, please contact your admissions counselor and/or ask an alumni contact:https://studyabroad.sit.edu/admissions-aid/application-process/contact-a-former-student/.

Don’t miss the Packing List on the next page!

# Packing List

These packing guidelines are based on suggestions from past students and your academic director.

Packing List sample:

## GENERAL

- 1 nice outfit suitable for a social event
- Lightweight clothes including pants, long-sleeved shirts, light T-shirts
- Underwear and socks (10-day supply)
- Warm pajamas or nightgown
- Slippers or flip flops (for use inside house. Flip flops not recommended for use outdoors because of the cobble stone sidewalks and roads.)
- 1 pair comfortable sneakers
- Long underwear (1 set, not cotton; polypropylene is a good option)
- Wool or fleece hat
- Neck warmer
- 1 pair sandals
- 1 pair nice shoes
- Rain gear (waterproof jacket, poncho)
- 2–4 pairs pants or jeans
- 1 skirt and/or dress
- 5–6 mixed long and short-sleeved t-shirts
- 2–3 blouses or button-down shirts
- Sweater
- Jacket or fleece
- Scarf
- Bathing suit
- Optional – workout clothes

## TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

- Passport
- 2 photocopies of your passport stored separately from your actual passport
- Photocopy of visa
- 2 passport photos
- Any relevant vaccine records/documents

## HEALTH/TOILETRIES

- Adequate supply of any medications you use regularly
- Small first aid kit (most supplies can be bought here)

- Extra eyeglasses and/or contact lenses
- Sunscreen (at least SPF 30)
- Sunglasses
- Wide-brimmed hat or baseball cap (for sun protection)
- Iodine or chlorine-based water purifier for purifying drinking water – can be purchased locally if needed
- Bottle water purifiers- Students in the past have recommended LifeStraw Go or Water to Go bottles. This is useful during the trek or ISP in the remote villages.
- Feminine hygiene/sanitary products if you are particular to a specific brand
- A list of generic medicines that you are allergic to.

## OTHER IMPORTANT ITEMS

- Medium-sized day pack (to pack clothes for 3–4 days for excursions)
- Small, quick-drying towel
- Flashlight
- Reusable water bottle
- Small luggage lock
- Laptop computer *(please insure it)*
- Visa or MasterCard credit card for emergencies
- Debit/ATM Card
- Combination padlock (for storing your belongings at the program center) & mini combo locks (for daypack and backpack)
- Homestay gifts, small tokens from your home
- Students are encouraged to bring a battery-operated carbon monoxide detector

***Remember to place all valuable items and any prescriptions in your carry-on luggage while traveling and all sharp items in your checked luggage.***

## GEAR

- Backpack –50-60 ltrs. not too big or fancy; can be purchased/rented locally if needed
- Water bottles (2 one-liter unbreakable bottles)

## OPTIONAL

- Ace bandage
- Moleskin
- Dental floss
- Sunscreen and sunglasses
- Digital voice recorder and batteries
- Camera