



Dakar 2026 | International Youth Games Special Report

Dakar, Diamniadio, Saly - Senegal
October 31 - November 13, 2026

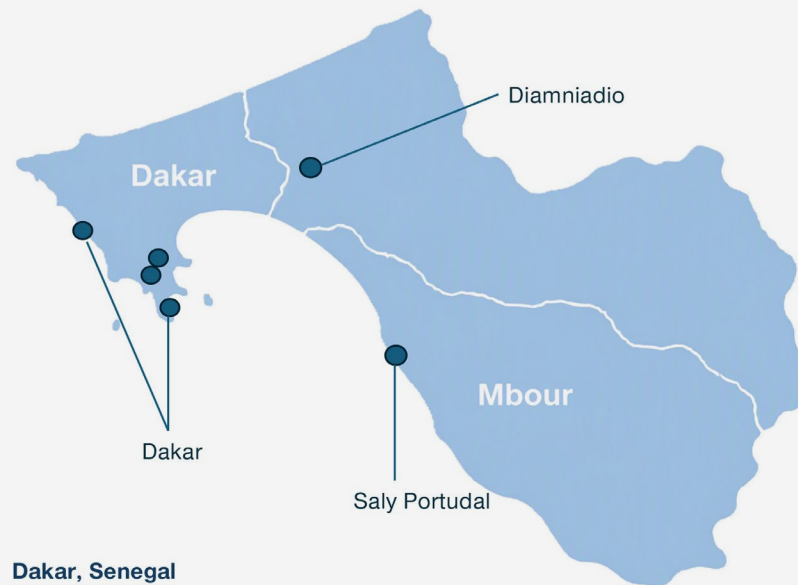
United
Healthcare
Global

Executive summary

The Dakar 2026 International Youth Games are scheduled to take place in Senegal from October 31 to November 13, 2026, marking the first international multi-sport youth event of this scale to be hosted on the African continent. The Games will be staged across three main zones: Dakar, Diamniadio and Saly, each supporting a distinct mix of competition, logistics, cultural programming and athlete engagement.

The event is expected to bring together approximately 2,700 young athletes competing across 25 official sports and more than 150 medal events. Dakar 2026 is also positioned as a milestone for youth sport, gender equality and sport development in Africa, with the broader program combining competition, education, culture and community engagement under the theme of welcoming the world to Senegal.

This report provides intelligence on the health care landscape in Senegal, with particular attention to medical access, emergency response considerations, hospital capabilities and logistics factors relevant to the Dakar, Diamniadio and Saly venue zones.



Health care landscape: Senegal

Before travel

Find care

Medications
and evacuation



Medical risk rating



Risk level ratings
1 - Very low, 2 - Low, 3 - Medium, 4 - High, 5, Very high



Before travel

In Senegal, health care is accessed through private clinics, government-funded hospitals and health centers, and facilities operated by the armed forces. Hospitals operated by the military are accessible to civilians and are well regarded locally for their structure and ability to manage life-threatening illnesses and injuries. Travelers typically seek care in private clinics for routine and urgent care and are referred to the public or military systems, or are evacuated, for complex procedures and dire medical emergencies.

Medical services are available throughout the country, with the most comprehensive range of care located in the capital. Facilities and resources may vary by location, particularly outside major urban centers. Regional hospitals in larger cities can provide emergency and routine medical care, while patients requiring highly specialized treatment may be referred to Dakar or an international medical facility when appropriate.

- In general, medical services offered at facilities in Senegal are below international standards, although adequate care can be sought for certain services at select medical facilities staffed with experienced clinicians and where advanced diagnostics equipment is available
- The quality and availability of medical services decreases significantly outside of the capital city, Dakar, and is inconsistent between facilities across the nation
- Physicians are mostly trained domestically, with many seeking additional qualifications, specialization, and experience in France. The quality of nursing care is limited.
- Due to the limited availability of specialists, it is common for clinicians to practice simultaneously in the public and private sectors
- Select private clinics provide quality inpatient services for low acuity surgical cases and urgent care illnesses
- The quality of hospital accommodations is generally poor, although certain clinics catering to niche markets for services - usually cardiology, OBGYN, internal medicine, minor trauma - tend to offer better accommodations

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Language proficiency

Health care workers countrywide speak French. Very few medical staff, usually only physicians, speak English.

Diseases and health risks

Travel to Senegal carries significant health risks for foreign visitors, including malaria, respiratory infections, diarrheal and other tropical diseases. Foreign visitors should exercise caution when consuming food and water. Tap water should be considered potentially contaminated.

For more information on endemic diseases, preventive treatments, as well as recommended and required vaccinations for Senegal, visit the [US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#).

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Ground ambulance & emergency medical services

Ambulance and Medical Emergency Services: 1515 (SAMU)

SOS Medecin: +221 33 889 15 15 (Private Ambulance)

Fire: 18

Police: 17

A public ambulance service is available, and managed by the fire department in coordination with the Service d'Aide Medicale Urgente (SAMU). The national fire department assists with road traffic incidents and emergencies on public roadways while the SAMU specializes in pre-hospital care and transportation from private residences and businesses. The responsiveness of public Emergency Medical Services (EMS) varies drastically depending on the location. Generally, services are available in major cities such as Dakar, however the effectiveness and reliability of such services are highly questionable due to inconsistencies in staff training, equipment and availability of medical supplies onboard ambulances. In Dakar, SOS Medecin, a private ambulance company, is one of the best options for expatriates and visitors.

Hospital care

Most inpatient care needs can be met at private clinics, including for minor trauma, lower acuity surgical cases, general illnesses and obstetrics and gynecology. The management and stabilization of emergent conditions such as major burns, emergency interventional and surgical cardiology needs, and major trauma are best handled at designated university and military hospitals. It should be noted that the management of medical emergencies after hours and on weekends is particularly challenging. Travelers should be prepared

accordingly and leverage reputable service providers to help navigate through the health system during emergencies.

Due to gaps in nursing care, and higher risks for hospital-acquired infections during longer term hospitalization, medical evacuation may be recommended for serious medical conditions or emergencies requiring complex care, invasive procedures, complex surgical interventions or prolonged hospitalization.

The supply and distribution of blood products are coordinated through the National Center for Blood Transfusion. While private clinics generally request blood products as needed, only a limited number of public hospitals maintain on-site blood banks. Depending on availability and clinical circumstances, family members or travel companions may be asked to support transfusion needs through blood donation.

Non-urgent care

Outpatient care is available - usually at low cost - within the public hospitals and health centers, however longer wait times and queues are common for specialty consultations. Expatriates and visitors are encouraged to seek care in private clinics and doctors' offices. Generally, an appointment with the same experienced clinicians can be obtained in the private sector at fees regulated by the union of private physicians. The use of reputable house call physician services is also an option for simple consultations.

Specialists in Senegal are accustomed to and forthcoming about referring patients abroad for medical conditions that cannot be managed locally.

Good quality dental care is available at select private practices in Dakar.

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Venues and medical facilities

The following hospitals have an emergency room (ER) available 24/7 supported by advanced diagnostics, and provide a range of medical and surgical services. It is important to note that public hospitals remain the best option of the management of complex emergent conditions, and referrals to such facilities are best managed via assistance service providers.



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Medications and evacuation

Medications

Many prescriptions and over-the-counter medications are available at pharmacies in Dakar and other tourist areas such as Saly where some of the events will take place. Privately owned pharmacies are common in Senegal's main cities, with specifically designated pharmacies on duty after hours on a rotational basis. Pharmacies are operated by university-trained pharmacists with the support of technicians and assistants. Some pharmaceutical products may be unavailable or their acquisition delayed. Specialty pharmaceutical products can be ordered at local pharmacies from suppliers abroad.

Medical evacuation & repatriation

Dakar is the evacuation destination for the stabilization or treatment of high acuity conditions domestically. It also serves as a referral center for local populations from surrounding countries.

Medical conditions requiring invasive procedures, complex surgical interventions or longer-term hospital stays may require a medical evacuation, typically to Western Europe. Medical evacuations can be coordinated by air ambulance or commercial airline when appropriate. When coordinating medical evacuations by commercial airline, the current availability of convenient and direct flight routes should be considered in the destination selection.