

13 Cultural and Social Challenges – Walkthrough

(Slide deck and white board recommended – 30 to 60 min. depending on participation)

Intro: In every workshop we face cultural and social challenges. These can be opportunities for growth and support.

Remember that WHO we have in common is far more important than any differences.

Ask: What are some cultural and social differences that might be challenges?

- List answers on white board or easel.

Explain: Every culture experiences difficulties, both within their social culture (even in the church) and from those outside their culture. When we come together to translate God's Word, we have the common foundation of having Jesus as our Savior and wanting to have His Word available for all people. This foundation doesn't mean that we won't experience cultural tension. One way to build on common ground (see Romans 12) is by listening to and learning from one another.

- **Connect**—share differences and find similarities between participants from different cultures or subcultures. Practice this by trying the following:
 - Have each participant pair up with someone from a different culture or subculture.
 - Pick two or three areas of culture—such as food, education, marriage and family, work, housing, death, and recreation—and ask each person to share some stories or basics about that area of his or her culture with the other person.

Taking turns doing this will help team members to find connections and build on common ground, while also appreciating differences.

- If time allows, bring people together again into the larger group and encourage an individual from each small group to share with the others what they learned.

Ask: When thinking about the MAST process, which steps might cause difficulty from a cultural context? *(Pray. Leave space and opportunities for them to share without introducing any examples. Some we have heard in the past include that people of elevated position might not want others of lower position to check their work, that women might not be accepted on the team, or that young people might not be respected.)*

- List their answers on white board or easel.
- **Read** Ephesians 4:1–6.
- Offer more encouragement (based on challenges listed).

Review key points:

- When working with a team of translators, expect that certain aspects of the training and the method will be counter cultural. Accept that this is true for you and everyone in the group.
- Explain to the group that some of the translation process will feel uncomfortable because it does not fit with their culture.
- Talk about what they should or could do in these instances. Remember it is not our job to change culture, or to make people happy. We must find the right solutions for the team to be successful in translating without getting sidetracked by cultural differences.

Confirm: Translators understand that they will face cultural and social challenges and will not be surprised or deterred by them.