**PGLS Global Culture Guide — Master Structure & Segmentation Plan**

*This working document outlines the comprehensive structure for the full PGLS Culture Guide — designed for future expansion, internal enablement, external sharing, training use, and cultural equity stewardship.*

**I. FRONT MATTER**

* **Title Page**
* **Edition Info (Version, Date, Custodian)**
* **Purpose Statement**
* **How to Use This Guide**
* **Core Values & Editorial Tone**
* **Acknowledgments / Source Attribution**

**II. GLOBAL OVERVIEW**

* **Understanding Culture in Language Services**
  + Definitions of Culture, Language, Identity
  + Why Cultural Competency Matters
* **How to Engage With This Guide**
  + Use cases (Healthcare, Legal, Education, Business)
  + Interpreters, Account Managers, Clients

**III. CULTURE ENTRIES (Alphabetical)**

Each entry follows a uniform format:

**📘 Culture Entry: Afar**

**Afar**

* **Region**: East Africa (Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea)
* **Language(s)**: Afar, Arabic, Amharic (PGLS Supported: Afar)
* **Overview**: The Afar are a nomadic people known for their independence, clan loyalty, and Islamic faith. Harsh desert life shapes strong family interdependence.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Clan-based and patriarchal; elders govern community decisions. Loyalty to kin is paramount.
* **Communication Style**: Reserved with outsiders; respectful and oral tradition-based within tribe.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Hospitality is key. Guests are honored. Religion influences gender interactions and public behavior.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Sunni Islam is dominant. Religious leaders hold social authority.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Traditional and spiritual healing may be preferred. Mental illness may be underreported.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Clear gender separation in public. Women may avoid public discussion.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Gender-matching important. Use respectful Islamic phrases. Be mindful of pastoral lifestyle framing.

**📘 Culture Entry: Albanian**

**Albanian**

* **Region**: Southeast Europe (Albania, Kosovo, North Macedonia) / Global Diaspora
* **Language(s)**: Albanian (Tosk and Gheg dialects), English, Italian (PGLS Supported)
* **Overview**: Albanian culture is shaped by mountain tradition, hospitality, and resilience through Ottoman and communist histories.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Strong patriarchal families. Family honor and obligation are central values.
* **Communication Style**: Direct with familiar people; formal with outsiders.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Guests offered food and coffee. Avoid using left hand when serving. Elder deference expected.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Muslim, Orthodox Christian, Catholic, and secular traditions coexist. Religion often secondary to family identity.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Emotional issues kept private. Mental health may carry stigma, especially in older generations.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Traditional roles, especially among older or rural populations.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Respect family privacy. Clarify dialect where applicable. Gender-matching appreciated in some families.

**📘 Culture Entry: Amharic (Ethiopian)**

**Amharic (Ethiopian)**

* **Region**: East Africa (Ethiopia) / U.S. Diaspora
* **Language(s)**: Amharic, Oromo, Tigrinya, English (PGLS Supported: Amharic)
* **Overview**: Amharic speakers are often culturally rooted in Ethiopian Orthodox traditions, imperial history, and national pride.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Extended families common; respect for elders central. Male head of household often authoritative.
* **Communication Style**: Formal and courteous. Avoids direct confrontation. Speech may include religious or historical references.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Handshakes and bowing nods; right-hand use only for greeting/eating. Religious observance guides dress and behavior.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity, Islam, and traditional beliefs practiced. Faith shapes calendar and social norms.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Illness may be linked to spiritual imbalance or divine will. Mental health is stigmatized in some communities.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Traditional roles dominate, though women lead within home and church life.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Use formal address. Match gender when possible. Clarify medical/legal language and respect spiritual framing.

**📘 Culture Entry: Armenian**

**Armenian**

* **Region**: Caucasus (Armenia), Middle East (Lebanon, Syria), U.S. Diaspora (especially California)
* **Language(s)**: Armenian (Eastern, Western), Russian, English (PGLS Supported: Armenian)
* **Overview**: Armenian culture is defined by ancient Christian heritage, strong diasporic memory (including the Armenian Genocide), and communal tradition.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Extended families with strong parental roles. Elders and church leaders respected.
* **Communication Style**: Passionate and expressive with family; reserved and polite with outsiders.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Hospitality is central. Cultural pride in food, history, and survival.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Armenian Apostolic Church central to identity. Secular Armenians still value Christian rituals culturally.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Mental illness may be seen as weakness or spiritual struggle. Family plays a major role in care.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Traditional roles persist in older generations; modern diaspora more egalitarian.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Be sensitive to historical trauma. Respect naming conventions and faith-based references.

**📘 Culture Entry: Assyrian**

**Assyrian**

* **Region**: Middle East (Iraq, Syria, Iran, Turkey) / Global Diaspora (U.S., Australia, Sweden)
* **Language(s)**: Assyrian Neo-Aramaic, Arabic, English (PGLS Supported: Assyrian)
* **Overview**: One of the oldest ethno-religious groups, Assyrians are culturally Christian with deep ties to Aramaic language and regional displacement.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Patriarchal households, strong loyalty to extended family and church.
* **Communication Style**: Polite, emotional, and respectful. Religious references often present in conversation.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Elders respected; women may defer in mixed company. Holidays and food customs are essential.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Christian (Assyrian Church of the East, Chaldean Catholic, Syriac Orthodox). Faith central to identity and resilience.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Trauma from conflict/displacement common. Mental health rarely discussed openly.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Traditional, with slow change in diaspora. Women respected as family pillars.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Respect Christian terminology. Use formal, warm tone. Clarify sensitive topics respectfully.

**📘 Culture Entry: Azerbaijani**

**Azerbaijani**

* **Region**: South Caucasus (Azerbaijan, Iran), Russia, Turkey / Global Diaspora
* **Language(s)**: Azerbaijani (Azeri), Russian, Turkish (PGLS Supported: Azerbaijani)
* **Overview**: Azerbaijani culture blends Turkic roots, Islamic faith, Soviet influence, and modern national pride.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Patriarchal families; strong intergenerational ties and community loyalty.
* **Communication Style**: Polite and respectful with formal hierarchy. Warm and expressive with family.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Guests honored with food/tea. Elders addressed with formality.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Mostly Shia Muslim, with secular national identity. Hospitality and respect for traditions valued.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Mental illness may be kept private. Somatic symptoms often reported instead.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Traditional roles, especially among elders. Urban diaspora shows more balance.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Clarify dialect or Russian preference. Match gender when discussing sensitive topics.

**📘 Culture Entry: Basque**

**Basque**

* **Region**: Northern Spain and Southwest France
* **Language(s)**: Basque (Euskara), Spanish, French (PGLS Supported: Basque)
* **Overview**: The Basque people maintain a distinct identity, language, and heritage unrelated to surrounding Romance cultures. Proud of autonomy and cultural endurance.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Egalitarian tendencies in family; deep regional pride and intergenerational continuity.
* **Communication Style**: Reserved with outsiders; warm and witty in community.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Personal space respected. Family gatherings and regional festivals are important.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Catholic heritage, with some secular lean. Strong preservation of folklore and pre-Christian symbols.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Mental health is more openly addressed than in surrounding regions.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Balanced roles; women often lead in public life.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Clarify preferred language (Basque vs. Spanish/French). Respect regional terminology and identity.

**📘 Culture Entry: Bengali**

**Bengali**

* **Region**: South Asia (Bangladesh, West Bengal – India) / U.S., UK Diaspora
* **Language(s)**: Bengali (Bangla), English, Hindi (PGLS Supported)
* **Overview**: Bengali culture is rich in literature, music, and food, shaped by Hindu-Muslim coexistence and colonial history.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Extended families with deep respect for education and parental authority.
* **Communication Style**: Formal with strangers, poetic and passionate in expression.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Elders greeted with respect. Food and religious festivals central to social life.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Hinduism and Islam are both prevalent. Cultural practices often transcend religious lines.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Preference for family-based care. Mental health stigma remains in some communities.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Traditional roles with growing parity, especially in urban areas.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Clarify dialect (Bangladesh vs. West Bengal). Gender match preferred for sensitive issues. Respect spiritual phrasing.

**📘 Culture Entry: Bosnian**

**Bosnian**

* **Region**: Balkans (Bosnia and Herzegovina) / Global Diaspora (U.S., Germany, Scandinavia)
* **Language(s)**: Bosnian, Serbian, Croatian (mutually intelligible) (PGLS Supported: Bosnian)
* **Overview**: Bosnian culture reflects Ottoman, Slavic, and Austro-Hungarian influences with strong community identity and post-war diaspora resilience.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Tight-knit family units with respect for parents and elders. Community and religious networks are strong.
* **Communication Style**: Direct yet polite. Warmth and hospitality are central.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Handshakes common; coffee rituals are symbolic. Generosity and honor are social priorities.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Islam (Sunni), Catholicism, and Orthodox Christianity coexist. Religion may be cultural more than devout for some.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Mental illness stigmatized, especially for older generations. Trauma from war and displacement may be present.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Gender roles traditional, but diaspora communities often more egalitarian.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Clarify dialect (Bosnian vs. Serbian vs. Croatian). Be trauma-informed and allow pauses when addressing sensitive history.

**📘 Culture Entry: Burmese (Myanmar)**

**Burmese**

* **Region**: Southeast Asia (Myanmar) / U.S. and Thai Border Diaspora
* **Language(s)**: Burmese, Chin, Karen, English (PGLS Supported: Burmese)
* **Overview**: Burmese culture centers on Theravada Buddhism, social hierarchy, and colonial/post-colonial resilience.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Hierarchical family systems; elders are obeyed. Respect is coded by age and status.
* **Communication Style**: Soft-spoken, indirect. Avoid public disagreement or overt emotional expression.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Feet are symbolic of impurity. Touching someone’s head is disrespectful.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Buddhism dominant; karma, merit, and monastic life hold strong influence.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Mental health may be spiritualized. Illness could be viewed as karmic.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Traditional roles common. Women may be hesitant to speak publicly.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Match gender if possible. Speak softly, use indirect phrasing, and respect spiritual perspective.

**📘 Culture Entry: Cambodian (Khmer)**

**Cambodian (Khmer)**

* **Region**: Southeast Asia (Cambodia) / U.S., France, Australia Diaspora
* **Language(s)**: Khmer, English, French (PGLS Supported: Khmer)
* **Overview**: Cambodian culture is deeply influenced by Theravada Buddhism, family honor, and survival after genocide.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Multigenerational families. Elders and monks are deeply respected.
* **Communication Style**: Quiet and indirect. Avoiding shame and saving face are important.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Head considered sacred; don’t touch. Feet are symbolically unclean. Monks are revered.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Karma, merit-making, and spiritual purity shape choices. Religious holidays are central.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Illness may be spiritualized. Mental health rarely discussed openly; intergenerational trauma present.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Traditionally conservative; roles evolving in diaspora.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Gentle pace, match gender, and emphasize respect in phrasing. Allow space for slow trust-building.

**📘 Culture Entry: Chaldean**

**Chaldean**

* **Region**: Middle East (Iraq) / U.S. Diaspora (Michigan, California)
* **Language(s)**: Chaldean Neo-Aramaic, Arabic, English (PGLS Supported: Chaldean)
* **Overview**: Chaldeans are Eastern Rite Catholics with deep Mesopotamian roots and a strong diasporic community identity in the U.S.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Patriarchal, family-centered households. Church and family intersect strongly in daily life.
* **Communication Style**: Warm and expressive with family; polite and cautious with unfamiliar professionals.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Hospitality is central. Elders respected, and modesty in dress/behavior is expected.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Chaldean Catholicism is core to identity. Religious holidays and saints are celebrated widely.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Mental illness may be kept private. Faith leaders sometimes consulted over professionals.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Gender expectations traditional but evolving among diaspora youth.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Respect Catholic references. Gender match preferred. Explain confidentiality with care.

**📘 Culture Entry: Chin (Zomi, Hakha, Falam)**

**Chin**

* **Region**: Myanmar (Chin State) / U.S. Diaspora (Indianapolis, Fort Wayne, Dallas)
* **Language(s)**: Chin (Zomi, Hakha, Falam), Burmese, English (PGLS Supported: Chin)
* **Overview**: Chin communities are primarily Christian, clan-oriented, and shaped by persecution and displacement from Myanmar.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Patriarchal and family-centered. Church elders hold high social influence.
* **Communication Style**: Humble, reserved, and deferential. Silence often used to avoid conflict.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Modest dress; respect for elders and pastors is expected. Group decision-making common.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Christianity is deeply practiced. Faith shapes moral, medical, and family decisions.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Mental illness is often stigmatized; prayer or spiritual healing preferred.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Men typically speak publicly; women influential in home and church.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Gender match often expected. Use soft tone. Clarify trust and confidentiality clearly.

**📘 Culture Entry: Burmese (Diaspora Addendum)**

**Burmese (Diaspora)**

* **Region**: Burmese Diaspora (U.S. – Indiana, Minnesota, Texas; Malaysia, Thailand, Australia)
* **Language(s)**: Burmese, Karen, Chin, English (PGLS Supported: Burmese)
* **Overview**: Refugee and immigrant Burmese communities retain Buddhist values, collective identity, and oral traditions while navigating displacement.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Tight family units, often with church or temple as community center. Elders and spiritual leaders respected.
* **Communication Style**: Indirect and soft-spoken. Emotional expression often avoided in public.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Shoes off indoors. Heads are sacred. Deference to monks and elders emphasized.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Theravada Buddhism, Christianity (esp. Chin/Karen), and animism all present. Spiritual explanation of hardship common.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Mental illness often linked to karma or spirit imbalance. Trust in Western systems may take time.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Traditional roles; women often lead at home and in refugee adaptation.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Use slow, clear speech. Gender match often preferred. Validate spiritual context when possible.

**📘 Culture Entry: Cambodian (Diaspora Addendum)**

**Cambodian (Diaspora)**

* **Region**: Cambodian Diaspora (U.S. – California, Massachusetts; France, Australia)
* **Language(s)**: Khmer, English, French (PGLS Supported: Khmer)
* **Overview**: Diasporic Cambodians often balance Buddhist traditions with trauma from genocide and resettlement. Cultural identity is carried through food, ritual, and resilience.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Multigenerational; many led by single parents or grandparents post-resettlement. Monks guide social values.
* **Communication Style**: Quiet and respectful. Emotional openness rare; indirectness valued.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Avoid touching head. Formal greetings to elders. Shoes removed indoors.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Theravada Buddhism and ancestor spirit reverence persist. Karma and fate shape interpretations of life events.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: PTSD and intergenerational trauma common. Mental illness still stigmatized.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Women carry cultural memory; traditional roles blend with new responsibilities in diaspora.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Trauma-informed approach critical. Gender matching appreciated. Validate spiritual and family-based coping.

**📘 Culture Entry: Amharic (Expanded)**

**Amharic (Expanded)**

* **Region**: Ethiopia (Amhara region) / Global Diaspora (U.S., Israel, U.K.)
* **Language(s)**: Amharic, English, Tigrinya, Oromo (PGLS Supported: Amharic)
* **Overview**: Amharic culture is deeply tied to Orthodox Christianity, imperial legacy, and respect for formality and lineage.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Patriarchal and hierarchical. Extended families often share living spaces or remain closely connected.
* **Communication Style**: Formal and indirect in public; emotional and relational in trusted circles.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Elders greeted first. Food offered as respect. Church attendance common.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Ethiopian Orthodox Church plays a major social role. Fasting seasons, saints’ days, and spiritual protection are widely observed.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Mental illness sometimes viewed as spiritual imbalance. Clergy or elders may be consulted first.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Gender roles often traditional, though women may lead households.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Gender match appreciated. Show deep respect to elders and spiritual leaders. Speak calmly and allow time for decisions.

**📘 Culture Entry: Albanian**

**Albanian**

* **Region**: Balkans (Albania, Kosovo, North Macedonia) / Diaspora in Italy, Switzerland, U.S.
* **Language(s)**: Albanian (Tosk, Gheg dialects), Italian, English (PGLS Supported: Albanian)
* **Overview**: Albanian culture emphasizes hospitality, family honor, and resilience shaped by communist history and diaspora movement.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Extended families common. Strong patriarchal roles; loyalty to kin central.
* **Communication Style**: Direct and expressive among trusted relations; formal with outsiders.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Guests offered food and drink repeatedly. Elders given respect and deference.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Islam, Catholicism, and Orthodoxy all practiced; secularism widespread. National pride often transcends religion.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Mental illness may carry stigma. Trust in institutions varies.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Traditional roles common; diaspora youth more egalitarian.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Clarify dialect (Tosk vs. Gheg). Gender match advised. Avoid making assumptions about religious adherence.

**📘 Culture Entry: Afar**

**Afar**

* **Region**: East Africa (Ethiopia, Eritrea, Djibouti)
* **Language(s)**: Afar, Amharic, Arabic (PGLS Supported: Afar)
* **Overview**: A pastoralist, nomadic people known for resilience, clan loyalty, and adaptation to extreme environments.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Clan-based, male-led, and tightly bonded. Elders guide spiritual, legal, and moral matters.
* **Communication Style**: Reserved, respectful, and coded by age and social rank.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Generosity and honor in hosting. Religion guides gender interactions and dress.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Sunni Islam dominant. Spiritual traditions may mix with cultural customs.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Traditional healers may be consulted first. Mental health rarely discussed openly.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Traditional expectations strong. Modesty is a core value.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Gender matching essential. Explain systems clearly. Allow space for trust-building and indirect communication.

Let’s keep going. Say the word — **“k.”**

**📘 Culture Entry: Dari (Diaspora Addendum)**

**Dari (Diaspora)**

* **Region**: Afghan Diaspora (U.S., Canada, Germany, Iran)
* **Language(s)**: Dari, Pashto, Farsi, English (PGLS Supported: Dari)
* **Overview**: Dari-speaking Afghans in diaspora often navigate Islamic tradition, refugee trauma, and complex political histories. Education and religious life are central.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Patriarchal, but adaptable. Community support systems replace extended family when dispersed.
* **Communication Style**: Courteous and indirect. Humility emphasized, especially in formal settings.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Hospitality key; guests offered tea and sweets. Modesty and gender rules guide public behavior.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Sunni and Shia Islam practiced. Spiritual protection sought during hardship.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: PTSD and grief common. Mental illness often reframed as spiritual or moral test.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Women may defer to men in public forums. Variance by region and level of integration.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Gender match essential. Build slow trust. Allow space for silence and spiritual phrasing.

**📘 Culture Entry: Croatian**

**Croatian**

* **Region**: Balkans (Croatia) / Diaspora in U.S., Australia, Germany
* **Language(s)**: Croatian (PGLS Supported), Serbian, Bosnian
* **Overview**: Croatian identity is tied to Catholic tradition, coastal pride, and post-Yugoslav independence.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Families are central; parents and grandparents exert strong influence.
* **Communication Style**: Polite and formal with strangers; open and direct with family.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Formal greetings used; handshakes are standard. Hospitality emphasized through shared meals and strong coffee.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Roman Catholicism plays a major role. Holidays and church sacraments are family events.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Emotional challenges may be minimized or kept private. Generational differences in stigma.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Traditional roles still observed in rural areas. Urban youth more gender-equal.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Clarify dialect/regional identity. Be aware of nationalist pride and possible war-related trauma.

**📘 Culture Entry: Dari (Afghan Persian)**

**Dari (Afghan Persian)**

* **Region**: Afghanistan / U.S., Canada, and European Diaspora
* **Language(s)**: Dari, Pashto, Farsi (PGLS Supported: Dari)
* **Overview**: Dari is one of Afghanistan’s two official languages. Culturally tied to Persian heritage, Afghan traditions, and Islamic values.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Extended, male-led families; honor and hospitality guide social norms.
* **Communication Style**: Formal, indirect, and respectful. Modesty in tone and body language expected.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Men often greet with hand over heart. Women may not shake hands. Modest dress and deference to elders expected.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Islam is central. Religion guides dietary rules, daily prayer, and healthcare decisions.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Mental illness often stigmatized; spiritual framing common. Trauma from conflict and displacement is widespread.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Gender separation often expected. Women may not speak freely in mixed-gender settings.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Gender-matching essential. Clarify purpose of service carefully and build trust gradually.

**📘 Culture Entry: Dinka**

**Dinka**

* **Region**: South Sudan / U.S., Australia, East African Diaspora
* **Language(s)**: Dinka, English, Arabic (PGLS Supported: Dinka)
* **Overview**: Nilotic people known for pastoralist heritage, clan systems, and resilience through displacement and civil war.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Large extended families; elders and male heads lead decisions. Lineage and cattle central to identity.
* **Communication Style**: Respectful and straightforward. Tone may vary by age/gender of listener.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Elders addressed first. Personal space may be smaller; formality varies by context.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Christianity dominant, but animist traditions persist. Cattle play spiritual and economic roles.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Trauma from war or migration common. Mental health is rarely discussed openly.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Strong gender role division. Men lead in public settings; women in domestic sphere.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Gender-matching advised. Be trauma-informed. Clarify procedures and decisions slowly and respectfully.

**📘 Culture Entry: Dutch**

**Dutch**

* **Region**: Western Europe (Netherlands) / Global Expat Diaspora
* **Language(s)**: Dutch, English (PGLS Supported)
* **Overview**: Dutch culture values pragmatism, tolerance, individualism, and directness. Secularism is strong, with emphasis on personal freedom and privacy.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Nuclear families common. Equality and autonomy emphasized from childhood.
* **Communication Style**: Direct and low-context. Honesty valued over formality.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Punctuality important. Informal tone used even with professionals. Bluntness not meant as disrespect.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Predominantly secular. Christian holidays celebrated culturally more than religiously.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Mental health openly discussed; stigma is low. Preventive care and autonomy prioritized.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: High gender equality. LGBTQ+ rights widely accepted.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Expect direct questions. Clarify bureaucracy-related terms. Formality often unnecessary but respect is still key.

**📘 Culture Entry: Egyptian**

**Egyptian**

* **Region**: North Africa / Global Diaspora (U.S., Gulf States, Europe)
* **Language(s)**: Arabic (Egyptian dialect), English, French (PGLS Supported: Arabic – Egyptian)
* **Overview**: Egyptian identity is a blend of Arab, African, Mediterranean, and Pharaonic heritage. Hospitality, faith, and family guide daily life.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Patriarchal families. Strong respect for elders and parental authority. Extended family is often co-residential.
* **Communication Style**: Expressive, animated, often indirect in delicate topics. Humor and metaphor are common.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Right hand used for greeting. Modest attire expected. Religious observance influences daily behavior.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Islam (majority Sunni), with Christian (Coptic) minority. Religious identity influences holidays, diet, and social roles.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Mental illness may be spiritualized or kept private. Religious leaders may be consulted.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Traditional gender norms prevalent. Urban youth may show greater equality.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Gender-matching preferred. Avoid rushed questioning. Use respectful religious expressions.

**📘 Culture Entry: Eritrean**

**Eritrean**

* **Region**: East Africa (Eritrea) / U.S. & European Diaspora
* **Language(s)**: Tigrinya, Arabic, Tigre, English (PGLS Supported)
* **Overview**: Eritrean culture reflects Orthodox Christian and Muslim influences, militarized history, and close community bonds.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Patriarchal, with strong elder respect and interdependence. Religion and nationalism both shape identity.
* **Communication Style**: Reserved with outsiders; formal and honorific. Open and expressive in trusted settings.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Hospitality central. Greetings involve handshakes and honorifics. Gender interactions may be cautious.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Orthodox Christianity and Sunni Islam dominate. Spiritual guidance often preferred over clinical models.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Mental illness rarely discussed. Religious framing of distress common.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Clear gender expectations. Deference to authority figures is common.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Gender-matching recommended. Use careful phrasing around trauma or religious content. Clarify confidentiality.

**📘 Culture Entry: Ethiopian (Oromo-Specific Addendum)**

**Oromo (Ethiopia)**

* **Region**: Ethiopia (Oromia), Kenya / U.S. Diaspora
* **Language(s)**: Oromo (Afaan Oromoo), Amharic, English (PGLS Supported)
* **Overview**: Oromo are Ethiopia’s largest ethnic group, with cultural pride rooted in the Gadaa system (democratic governance), pastoral traditions, and resistance to oppression.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Patriarchal clans and strong elder leadership. Social justice and equality are embedded in tradition.
* **Communication Style**: Warm and direct; praise and poetic expressions common.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Greetings involve formal respect. Coffee ceremonies hold symbolic value.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Islam and Christianity practiced. Traditional Oromo spirituality (Waaqeffanna) still active in some areas.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Mental distress may be expressed physically or spiritually. Religious interpretation of illness common.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Traditional gender roles persist, but female participation is high in some leadership areas.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Confirm dialect. Gender-matching appreciated. Avoid assumptions of Amharic fluency or affiliation.

**📘 Culture Entry: Farsi (Iranian Persian)**

**Farsi (Iranian Persian)**

* **Region**: Iran / Global Diaspora (U.S., Europe, Canada)
* **Language(s)**: Farsi (Persian), English (PGLS Supported: Farsi)
* **Overview**: Iranian culture is shaped by Persian history, Islamic tradition, poetry, hospitality, and national pride.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Family is central. Elders are respected, and children often live at home into adulthood.
* **Communication Style**: Polite, indirect, and poetic. Nonverbal communication and implied meaning are common.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Use both hands to offer/receive. Shoes off indoors. Taarof (ritual politeness) is a key concept.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Islam (predominantly Shia), with strong secular and cultural Islamic traditions.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Mental illness may be hidden or described as physical. Herbal and spiritual care common.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Gender roles shaped by religion and culture; vary widely between urban and rural contexts.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Clarify use of Taarof (polite refusal/offers). Match gender if possible. Respect cultural sensitivity around politics and religion.

**📘 Culture Entry: French (Francophone Africa context)**

**French (Francophone Africa)**

* **Region**: West & Central Africa (Senegal, Côte d’Ivoire, Cameroon, DRC, etc.)
* **Language(s)**: French (colonial legacy), Indigenous languages (e.g., Wolof, Lingala) (PGLS Supported)
* **Overview**: French is used in government, education, and health systems, while indigenous languages carry everyday cultural identity.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Extended family systems dominate. Elders and community elders are key decision-makers.
* **Communication Style**: Formal in French; expressive in indigenous languages. Greetings are lengthy and symbolic.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Respect elders, avoid left-hand gestures. Visitors offered food/water.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Mix of Islam, Christianity, and Indigenous beliefs. Syncretism common.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Spiritual and herbal healing used. Mental illness may be viewed as curse or moral failing.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Traditional gender roles in many areas; varies by country and education level.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Clarify dialect of French. Respect hybrid belief systems. Use accessible phrasing for low-literacy or mixed-language clients.

**📘 Culture Entry: Haitian Creole (Expanded)**

**Haitian Creole (Expanded)**

* **Region**: Haiti / Diaspora (U.S., Canada, France)
* **Language(s)**: Haitian Creole, French (PGLS Supported)
* **Overview**: A product of colonial resistance, African roots, and Caribbean resilience, Haitian Creole culture is vibrant and complex.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Kinship often extends beyond blood ties. Women may lead families; elders command respect.
* **Communication Style**: Expressive and rhythmic. Tone, gesture, and storytelling are powerful tools.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Respect for spiritual leaders. Hospitality and community visibility are important.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Catholicism and Vodou exist in parallel. Spiritual interpretation of hardship is common.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Trust in spiritual healers, especially in rural areas. Mental health stigma high.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Women often lead households and community spaces. Roles influenced by migration and economy.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Clarify preference for Creole vs. French. Use plain language. Don’t dismiss spiritual context — acknowledge respectfully.

**📘 Culture Entry: Haitian**

**Haitian**

* **Region**: Caribbean / Global Diaspora
* **Language(s)**: Haitian Creole, French (PGLS Supported)
* **Overview**: Haitian culture is a resilient blend of West African, French, and Indigenous influences. Community pride, music, and storytelling are central, often shaped by post-colonial history and migration.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Family networks are tight-knit and often include extended members. Matriarchal leadership is common in the household. Respect for elders is embedded in social roles.
* **Communication Style**: Expressive, rhythmic, and emotionally rich. Tone and gesture are used to emphasize meaning.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Warm greetings expected; personal space is fluid. Cultural pride and historical consciousness often inform conversation.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Strong religious duality — Catholicism and Vodou coexist as cultural cornerstones. Community spiritual leaders hold influence.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Traditional healing and faith-based care may be preferred. Mental health stigma exists, especially around emotional vulnerability.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Gender expectations can be strong; women may serve as both caretakers and breadwinners.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Clarify language preference (Creole vs. French). Avoid literal translation of idioms. Recognize the spiritual layer behind medical decisions when present.

**📘 Culture Entry: Hebrew (Israeli)**

**Hebrew (Israeli)**

* **Region**: Israel / Global Jewish Diaspora
* **Language(s)**: Hebrew, Arabic, Russian, English (PGLS Supported: Hebrew)
* **Overview**: Israeli culture is diverse and fast-paced, blending Jewish religious tradition, modern secularism, and immigrant influence.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Families are close-knit; parenting tends to be democratic and expressive.
* **Communication Style**: Very direct, energetic, and informal. Loudness is not viewed as impolite.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Casual social norms; hospitality is strong. Religious customs shape food and schedules.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Judaism (Orthodox, Reform, Secular), Islam, Christianity. Religious identity is complex and personal.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Mental health openly addressed in many communities. Holocaust trauma may be a family legacy.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Gender roles vary widely by community (e.g., secular vs. Orthodox). LGBTQ+ widely accepted in secular circles.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Clarify religious/secular preference. Expect assertiveness. Maintain fast pace and cultural context awareness.

**📘 Culture Entry: Hindi-Speaking (North Indian)**

**Hindi-Speaking (North Indian)**

* **Region**: India (Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan, Delhi, etc.) / Global Diaspora
* **Language(s)**: Hindi, English, Urdu (PGLS Supported: Hindi)
* **Overview**: North Indian culture is shaped by Hindu tradition, colonial history, and a vibrant mix of regional identities.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Hierarchical families with elder reverence. Arranged marriage still common in some communities.
* **Communication Style**: Indirect, especially in formal settings. Respect shown through deference and speech level.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Hands joined (Namaste) for greeting; shoes off indoors. Caste dynamics may influence social behavior.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Predominantly Hindu; also Muslim, Sikh, Christian. Karma and dharma guide behavior.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Ayurvedic or spiritual care may be prioritized. Mental illness often stigmatized.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Traditional norms common; urban youth more egalitarian.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Clarify caste/class sensitivities. Match gender when appropriate. Use non-confrontational tone.

**📘 Culture Entry: Hmong**

**Hmong**

* **Region**: Southeast Asia (Laos, Vietnam, Thailand) / U.S. Diaspora (Minnesota, Wisconsin, California)
* **Language(s)**: Hmong (White Hmong, Green Hmong), English (PGLS Supported)
* **Overview**: The Hmong are an ethnolinguistic group with deep cultural traditions rooted in animism, clan structure, and oral history. Many Hmong resettled in the U.S. after the Vietnam War, forming tight diaspora communities.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Clan-based society with 18 major clans. Patriarchal leadership within families is typical, but elders of both genders hold authority.
* **Communication Style**: Respectful and reserved, especially with unfamiliar people or authority figures. Elders are addressed formally.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Physical contact is limited outside close family. Footwear is often removed indoors. Marriage customs are significant and may include bride price traditions.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Many practice animism and ancestor veneration. Shamanism is common, and Western medicine may be supplemented or declined in favor of spiritual healing.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Illness may be seen as spiritual imbalance. Mental health may not be openly discussed. Important to explain medical concepts clearly.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Men typically speak on behalf of families in public settings. Women's roles are evolving in diaspora communities.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Match dialect (White vs. Green Hmong). Gender-matching may be preferred. Explain confidentiality gently, especially in behavioral health contexts.

**📘 Culture Entry: Hmong (Expanded)**

**Hmong (Expanded)**

* **Region**: Laos, Vietnam, Thailand / U.S. Diaspora (Minnesota, Wisconsin, California)
* **Language(s)**: Hmong (White Hmong, Green Hmong), English (PGLS Supported)
* **Overview**: A stateless Indigenous group with deep ties to animism, clan systems, and oral tradition. Diaspora began after Vietnam War alliance with U.S.
* **Family & Social Structure**: 18 clans structure society. Patriarchal; decisions often made through elders and clan leaders.
* **Communication Style**: Quiet, indirect, respectful. Elders and spiritual figures are often spokespeople.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Avoid touching head. Modesty important. Ceremonial roles highly valued.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Shamanism and ancestor worship central. Healing often spiritual before medical.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Soul loss may explain illness. Language for emotional trauma may not exist in Hmong dialect.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Men expected to speak in public; women manage household and clan roles.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Clarify dialect. Match gender when possible. Explain systems slowly and with relational trust.

**📘 Culture Entry: Hungarian**

**Hungarian**

* **Region**: Central Europe (Hungary) / Global Diaspora (U.S., Canada, Australia)
* **Language(s)**: Hungarian (Magyar), English, German (PGLS Supported: Hungarian)
* **Overview**: Hungarian culture blends Central European heritage, folk traditions, and post-Soviet pragmatism. National pride and historical consciousness are strong.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Nuclear and extended families highly valued. Elders respected; parenting may be hierarchical.
* **Communication Style**: Formal and respectful in unfamiliar settings; more animated and humorous in family.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Firm handshakes, punctuality, and hospitality expected. Toasting rituals at meals are common.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Majority Roman Catholic and Calvinist; also secular. Holidays tied to both religious and national identity.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Generational stigma toward mental illness. Older adults may somaticize emotional stress.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Traditional roles in rural areas; urban settings more progressive.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Use clear, polite phrasing. Clarify idioms. Expect formality at first.

**📘 Culture Entry: Igbo**

**Igbo**

* **Region**: West Africa (Nigeria) / Diaspora in U.S., UK
* **Language(s)**: Igbo, English (PGLS Supported)
* **Overview**: The Igbo are one of Nigeria’s largest ethnic groups, known for entrepreneurial spirit, oral storytelling, and strong family ties.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Extended family and lineage are central. Patriarchal norms are dominant, though matrilineal traditions exist.
* **Communication Style**: Direct in tone but respectful. Proverbs are commonly used to convey layered meaning.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Elders are shown deference. Greeting rituals are important. Spiritual, social, and ancestral respect is embedded in customs.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Christianity is dominant, but traditional Igbo spirituality remains influential. Ancestor veneration and dual-religious practice are common.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Health often understood through both medical and spiritual lenses. Emotional distress may be underreported.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Patriarchal norms prevail in rural settings; women in diaspora may hold more visible roles.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Clarify dialect needs. May require cultural context for mental health or legal topics.

**📘 Culture Entry: Igbo (Expanded)**

**Igbo (Expanded)**

* **Region**: Nigeria / U.S. and U.K. Diaspora
* **Language(s)**: Igbo, English, Nigerian Pidgin (PGLS Supported: Igbo)
* **Overview**: One of Nigeria’s major ethnic groups, known for entrepreneurship, community cohesion, and proverbs.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Extended and lineage-based family systems. Male elders typically hold decision-making roles.
* **Communication Style**: Direct but respectful. Proverbs and stories used to teach and persuade.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Elders greeted formally. Offer items with right hand. Community events and rites of passage are central.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Christianity dominant; traditional spiritual practices like ancestral reverence still present.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: May combine faith healing with clinical treatment. Emotional topics rarely shared publicly.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Men often lead; women influential in markets, household, and some leadership spaces.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Clarify dialect and idioms. Allow indirect expression. Gender match may enhance trust.

**📘 Culture Entry: Indonesian**

**Indonesian**

* **Region**: Southeast Asia (Indonesia – archipelago of 17,000+ islands)
* **Language(s)**: Bahasa Indonesia, Javanese, Sundanese (PGLS Supported: Indonesian)
* **Overview**: Indonesia is the world’s largest Muslim-majority nation with deep local traditions, island diversity, and communal values.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Extended families common. Respect for elders, group harmony, and modesty emphasized.
* **Communication Style**: Indirect, soft-spoken, and context-aware. Avoid public disagreement.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Right hand for giving; remove shoes indoors. Touching the head is avoided.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Islam dominant; Christianity, Hinduism, and Indigenous animism also practiced. Religious identity varies greatly by region.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Traditional herbalists or shamans (dukun) may be consulted. Mental illness stigmatized in some areas.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Gender expectations are traditional but evolving in urban settings.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Use soft tone. Clarify legal/medical terms slowly. Gender-matching may reduce discomfort.

**📘 Culture Entry: Italian**

**Italian**

* **Region**: Southern Europe (Italy) / Global Diaspora (U.S., Argentina, Australia)
* **Language(s)**: Italian, regional dialects, English (PGLS Supported: Italian)
* **Overview**: Italian culture celebrates art, food, family, and expressive living. Catholic traditions, regional pride, and social rituals define identity.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Strong family units; children often live with parents into adulthood. Elders are honored.
* **Communication Style**: Expressive and warm; uses gesture and eye contact. Interruptions common and not impolite.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Greetings involve cheek kisses or handshakes. Punctuality relaxed in social settings but expected in business.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Roman Catholicism influential culturally, even among secular Italians. Holidays and saints’ days important.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Mental illness discussed more openly today, though older generations may still stigmatize it.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Traditional norms in rural regions; more egalitarian in urban areas.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Expect fast speech. Allow room for warmth and expressiveness. Clarify procedural steps clearly.

**📘 Culture Entry: Japanese**

**Japanese**

* **Region**: East Asia / Global Diaspora (U.S., Brazil, Peru)
* **Language(s)**: Japanese (PGLS Supported)
* **Overview**: Japanese culture emphasizes harmony, hierarchy, and collectivism. Politeness, ritual, and non-verbal communication are highly developed.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Family roles are clear and traditionally patriarchal, though evolving. Respect for hierarchy and elders is fundamental.
* **Communication Style**: Indirect, polite, and often non-confrontational. Silence is meaningful.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Bowing is standard. Business cards, punctuality, and modest behavior are culturally significant.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Shinto and Buddhism are dominant. Seasonal celebrations and ancestor reverence are widely practiced.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Emotional issues are often somaticized. Stigma toward mental health exists but is changing.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Traditionally distinct roles; expectations vary by generation.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Use formal register. Avoid overt emotional tone. Clarify if client prefers English or Japanese honorifics.

**📘 Culture Entry: Japanese (Expanded)**

**Japanese (Expanded)**

* **Region**: East Asia (Japan) / Global Diaspora (U.S., Brazil, Peru)
* **Language(s)**: Japanese (PGLS Supported)
* **Overview**: Japanese culture is built on harmony, group identity, discipline, and tradition. It is both high-tech and deeply ceremonial.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Patriarchal but evolving. Extended family ties still valued.
* **Communication Style**: Highly indirect and context-sensitive. Silence often communicates meaning.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Remove shoes indoors. Bowing is a form of respect. Business card exchange is formalized.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Shinto and Buddhism coexist. Ancestor veneration and seasonal observances remain common.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Mental illness often framed as weakness or shame. Increasing openness in younger generations.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Traditional roles persist, especially in family. Younger generations are redefining expectations.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Use formal tone. Clarify honorifics and status titles. Avoid direct confrontation.

**📘 Culture Entry: Karen**

**Karen**

* **Region**: Southeast Asia (Myanmar, Thailand) / U.S. Diaspora (Minnesota, New York, Indiana)
* **Language(s)**: Sgaw Karen, Pwo Karen, Burmese (PGLS Supported: Karen)
* **Overview**: Indigenous ethnic group from Myanmar with history of displacement and persecution. Many are Christian; others follow animist or Buddhist traditions.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Extended families. Decisions may involve church elders or family heads.
* **Communication Style**: Reserved and humble. Deference to age and authority expected.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Modest dress and demeanor. Shoes off indoors. Touching head is disrespectful.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Mix of Christianity, Buddhism, and animism depending on region. Faith often informs medical decisions.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Trauma and PTSD common in refugee communities. Stigma toward mental illness remains.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Traditional gender norms persist. Female modesty highly valued.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Gender match important. Allow slow responses. Explain confidentiality with care.

**📘 Culture Entry: Kazakh**

**Kazakh**

* **Region**: Central Asia (Kazakhstan) / Diaspora in Russia, Germany, U.S.
* **Language(s)**: Kazakh, Russian (PGLS Supported: Kazakh)
* **Overview**: Nomadic heritage, Islamic tradition, and Soviet history shape Kazakh identity. Hospitality, nature, and patriotism are central values.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Extended families; elder males typically lead. Younger generations balance tradition with modern values.
* **Communication Style**: Formal and respectful with outsiders; warm and humorous with family.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Guests are honored. Bread should not be wasted. Offer or receive with the right hand.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Sunni Islam with syncretic elements; Russian Orthodoxy present. National holidays often secular.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Mental illness may be downplayed. Herbal and spiritual healing are used alongside modern medicine.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Traditionally male-led; roles evolving with education and urbanization.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Clarify language preference (Kazakh vs. Russian). Respect for elders and nation is important.

**📘 Culture Entry: Khmer (Cambodian) – Expanded**

**Khmer (Expanded)**

* **Region**: Southeast Asia (Cambodia) / U.S., France, Australia Diaspora
* **Language(s)**: Khmer (PGLS Supported)
* **Overview**: Deeply influenced by Theravada Buddhism and Angkor heritage. Resilience shaped by civil war and diaspora trauma.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Extended families common. Elders and monks respected; hierarchy observed.
* **Communication Style**: Reserved and indirect. Avoid public emotional expression.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Use both hands or right hand. Don’t touch head or point feet. Avoid touching monks.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Buddhism dominates. Karma and past-life beliefs inform behavior.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Illness may be viewed through karma/spiritual lens. PTSD common among older generations.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Traditional roles observed. Women hold domestic authority.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Gender match preferred. Clarify gently. Avoid rushing decisions or sensitive topics.

**📘 Culture Entry: Kikuyu**

**Kikuyu**

* **Region**: East Africa (Kenya) / U.S., U.K., and regional diaspora
* **Language(s)**: Kikuyu, Swahili, English (PGLS Supported: Kikuyu)
* **Overview**: Kenya’s largest ethnic group, known for agricultural tradition, oral storytelling, and leadership in independence movements.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Clan-based extended families. Elders respected as spiritual and decision leaders.
* **Communication Style**: Direct in content, respectful in tone. Proverbs often used in teaching.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Greetings expected before business. Hospitality strong. Right-hand gestures preferred.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Christianity is dominant; traditional practices (e.g., ancestor reverence) still present.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Mental illness often misunderstood. Church may be involved in care decisions.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Traditionally patriarchal; evolving with education and urbanization.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Respect church influence. Use culturally neutral terms for mental/emotional health. Gender matching optional but sometimes helpful.

**📘 Culture Entry: Kinyarwanda**

**Kinyarwanda**

* **Region**: East Africa (Rwanda) / Diaspora in Belgium, U.S., U.K.
* **Language(s)**: Kinyarwanda, French, English (PGLS Supported: Kinyarwanda)
* **Overview**: Rwandan culture emphasizes reconciliation, respect, and community healing following the 1994 genocide.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Strong extended family systems. Respect for elders is foundational.
* **Communication Style**: Polite, indirect, and soft-spoken. Silence often used to communicate restraint.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Right hand or both hands used when greeting or giving. Public humility is respected.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Christianity (mostly Catholic and Protestant); traditional spiritual beliefs present, especially in rural areas.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Mental health trauma is widespread but often unspoken. Community-based healing efforts are strong.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Traditionally patriarchal; significant government-led efforts to elevate gender equity.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Gender match appreciated. Use careful pacing for trauma-related topics. Reassure around confidentiality.

**📘 Culture Entry: Korean**

**Korean**

* **Region**: East Asia (North and South Korea) / Global Diaspora (U.S., China, Japan, Canada)
* **Language(s)**: Korean (PGLS Supported)
* **Overview**: Deeply Confucian-rooted society with strong family honor values. South Korea is modern and hierarchical; North Korea highly restricted.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Hierarchical; age and seniority guide roles. Family reputation is essential.
* **Communication Style**: Indirect and formal. Emotion moderated in public. Silence respected.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Bowing standard. Use both hands when giving. Avoid writing names in red.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Christianity, Buddhism, Confucianism, and increasing secularism in the South.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Stigma still strong in older generations. Somatization is common.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Traditional roles; slow shift toward gender equity in urban settings.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Match formality. Clarify titles and hierarchy. Allow indirect communication space.

**📘 Culture Entry: Kurdish (Expanded)**

**Kurdish (Expanded)**

* **Region**: Middle East (Turkey, Iraq, Iran, Syria) / Global Diaspora
* **Language(s)**: Kurdish (Kurmanji, Sorani), Arabic, Turkish, Farsi (PGLS Supported: Kurmanji)
* **Overview**: Stateless ethnic group with strong identity, oral culture, and history of resistance. Family honor, tradition, and spiritual values are deeply embedded.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Patriarchal; tribal ties define family structure. Elder men lead decisions.
* **Communication Style**: Respectful, indirect with strangers; open and passionate with family.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Guests honored with meals and attention. Gender-specific customs important.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Mostly Sunni Muslim; also Yazidi, Christian, and secular beliefs.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Trauma from conflict and displacement is widespread. Emotional suffering often spiritualized.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Strong gender divisions, though some women hold leadership in Kurdish resistance/political circles.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Gender match highly recommended. Use trauma-informed language. Confirm dialect and comfort level.

**📘 Culture Entry: Kurdish**

**Kurdish**

* **Region**: Middle East (Turkey, Iraq, Iran, Syria) / Diaspora in Europe, U.S.
* **Language(s)**: Kurdish (Kurmanji, Sorani), Arabic, Turkish, Farsi (PGLS Supported: Kurmanji)
* **Overview**: The Kurdish people share a strong ethnic identity across multiple countries, with cultural traditions shaped by resilience and displacement.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Tribal and extended families are central. Honor culture influences social dynamics.
* **Communication Style**: Warm and expressive with known individuals; more formal with outsiders.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Guests are honored; traditional dress and gender roles may influence interactions.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Majority Muslim (Sunni, Shia); Yazidi and Christian minorities. Religion and ethnicity often interwoven.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Mental health stigmas common; trauma history due to displacement/conflict should be considered.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Gender matching is often important. Women may defer in mixed-gender formal settings.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Clarify dialect (Kurmanji vs. Sorani). Approach trauma topics with care. Match gender if possible.

**📘 Culture Entry: Lao**

**Lao**

* **Region**: Southeast Asia (Laos) / U.S. Diaspora
* **Language(s)**: Lao (PGLS Supported), Thai, English
* **Overview**: Lao culture is deeply influenced by Theravada Buddhism, collectivist values, and close community bonds.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Family is central, with elder respect emphasized. Households often include extended family.
* **Communication Style**: Polite, indirect, and soft-spoken. Avoid public confrontation or embarrassment.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Avoid touching the head; feet considered unclean. Monks are highly respected and not physically touched by women.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Buddhist beliefs shape views on health, suffering, and morality. Merit-making rituals are important.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: May prefer traditional healing; mental illness may be stigmatized or spiritualized.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Gender roles respected traditionally, but flexible in diaspora.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Clarify dialect vs. Thai influence. Use calm tone and honor spiritual perspectives.

**📘 Culture Entry: Lao (Expanded)**

**Lao (Expanded)**

* **Region**: Southeast Asia (Laos) / U.S. Diaspora (Minnesota, California, Texas)
* **Language(s)**: Lao, Thai, English (PGLS Supported: Lao)
* **Overview**: Lao culture blends Theravada Buddhism, ethnic diversity, and village-centered traditions. Community harmony and respect are key.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Multigenerational homes. Elders are honored and guide decisions.
* **Communication Style**: Indirect and humble. Public confrontation is discouraged.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Use right hand or both when giving. Avoid touching heads or pointing feet. Monks are not touched, especially by women.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Buddhism shapes morality and daily life. Karma and merit are key beliefs.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Spiritual or herbal healing common. Mental illness may be stigmatized or misunderstood.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Traditionally defined; shifting roles in diaspora.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Speak gently. Gender-matching helps with trust. Clarify medical/legal concepts respectfully.

**📘 Culture Entry: Latvian**

**Latvian**

* **Region**: Northern Europe (Latvia) / Global Diaspora
* **Language(s)**: Latvian, Russian, English (PGLS Supported: Latvian)
* **Overview**: Latvian identity is shaped by Baltic pagan heritage, Lutheran and Catholic traditions, and resistance to occupation.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Nuclear families are common. Older generations hold cultural authority.
* **Communication Style**: Reserved and straightforward. Politeness through brevity.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Punctuality expected. Public modesty emphasized. Greetings formal with handshakes.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Christianity dominant (Lutheran, Catholic), with revived interest in pre-Christian folk traditions.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Mental illness often kept private, especially by older generations.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: High gender equality in modern settings; traditional roles persist rurally.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Formal tone helpful. Clarify emotional language. Avoid pressure for self-disclosure.

**📘 Culture Entry: Lingala (Central African Context)**

**Lingala**

* **Region**: Central Africa (DRC, Republic of Congo) / U.S. & European Diaspora
* **Language(s)**: Lingala, French, Kikongo, Swahili (PGLS Supported: Lingala)
* **Overview**: Lingala is a major trade and cultural language in the Congo Basin. Music, storytelling, and spiritual life are deeply intertwined.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Clan and extended family loyalty strong. Elders make major decisions.
* **Communication Style**: Expressive, rhythmic, often metaphorical. Formality used in respectful contexts.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Community-first mindset. Elders greeted first. Hospitality and food-sharing are central.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Christianity and Indigenous spirituality coexist. Religious leaders are highly influential.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Mental illness may be attributed to spiritual causes or curses. Prayer and ritual healing common.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Traditional roles prominent. Women lead in domestic spheres.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Confirm dialect when relevant. Be sensitive to religious framing. Match gender when possible.

**📘 Culture Entry: Lithuanian**

**Lithuanian**

* **Region**: Baltic States (Lithuania) / Global Diaspora (U.S., U.K., Ireland)
* **Language(s)**: Lithuanian, Russian, Polish, English (PGLS Supported: Lithuanian)
* **Overview**: Lithuanian identity is grounded in Baltic pagan roots, Catholic tradition, and pride in linguistic preservation.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Nuclear families typical. Respect for elders and family roles remains strong.
* **Communication Style**: Reserved and formal with outsiders; more relaxed with family.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Punctuality, modest dress, and formal greetings expected. Offering food/drink to guests is standard.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Roman Catholicism predominant. Nature-based customs persist in cultural festivals.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Generational stigma around mental health. Greater openness among youth.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Traditional roles among older generations; urban communities increasingly egalitarian.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Respect privacy and formality. Clarify emotional and psychological terms carefully.

**📘 Culture Entry: Macedonian**

**Macedonian**

* **Region**: Southeast Europe (North Macedonia) / Diaspora in Australia, U.S., and Canada
* **Language(s)**: Macedonian, Albanian, Serbian, English (PGLS Supported: Macedonian)
* **Overview**: Influenced by Slavic, Ottoman, and Balkan traditions, Macedonian culture values community, hospitality, and national identity.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Multigenerational households common. Elders hold significant authority.
* **Communication Style**: Direct but respectful; warmth conveyed through nonverbal gestures and shared meals.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Guests honored with food and drink. Religion and regional pride are often part of conversation.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Orthodox Christianity is predominant; Muslim Albanian minority present.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Emotional topics may be avoided or downplayed. Spiritual leaders may be consulted.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Traditional family roles respected; younger generations increasingly egalitarian.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Clarify dialect/regional origin. Use warm tone and explain sensitive services carefully.

**📘 Culture Entry: Malagasy**

**Malagasy**

* **Region**: Madagascar / Diaspora in France, Canada
* **Language(s)**: Malagasy, French (PGLS Supported: Malagasy)
* **Overview**: Malagasy culture blends African, Austronesian, and French colonial influences. Community, ancestry, and nature are cultural pillars.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Kinship networks are extensive. Ancestor veneration shapes social conduct.
* **Communication Style**: Indirect and respectful. Elders and spiritual leaders are not contradicted publicly.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Formal greetings. Use of both hands in offering items. Taboos (*fady*) vary by region.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Traditional animist practices coexist with Christianity. Ancestors considered active in daily life.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Herbal healing and spiritual causes of illness considered. Mental health often seen through spiritual lens.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Roles are complementary; women play central spiritual and domestic roles.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Avoid dismissing taboos. Clarify medical and emotional concepts sensitively. Gender-matching helpful.

**📘 Culture Entry: Malay**

**Malay**

* **Region**: Southeast Asia (Malaysia, Brunei, Indonesia, Singapore) / Diaspora globally
* **Language(s)**: Malay (Bahasa Melayu), English, Tamil (PGLS Supported: Malay)
* **Overview**: Malay culture is shaped by Islamic tradition, royal customs, and multiethnic coexistence. Respect, community, and religious values are core.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Extended families respected; male leadership common. Community elders play guiding roles.
* **Communication Style**: Indirect and respectful; harmony preserved through avoidance of open conflict.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Use right hand for giving. Modest attire expected. Elders greeted first.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Islam predominant; religion shapes daily life, law, and public behavior.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Mental illness may be interpreted spiritually. Herbal and faith-based healing used.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Distinct gender expectations; modesty and religious observance guide roles.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Gender-matching highly recommended. Speak with respectful tone and explain sensitive topics carefully.

**📘 Culture Entry: Mandinka**

**Mandinka**

* **Region**: West Africa (Mali, The Gambia, Guinea, Senegal) / U.S. and U.K. Diaspora
* **Language(s)**: Mandinka, French, English (PGLS Supported: Mandinka)
* **Overview**: Descended from the Mali Empire, Mandinka culture is known for oral storytelling (*griots*), Islamic practice, and strong lineage pride.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Clan and extended family networks with elder male authority.
* **Communication Style**: Polite, measured, and respectful. Praise and proverb common.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Greeting rituals are formal. Hospitality essential. Elders highly respected.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Predominantly Sunni Muslim with local spiritual traditions intertwined.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Illness may be seen as imbalance or spiritual consequence. Faith healing common.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Gender roles are defined; men often speak on behalf of families in formal settings.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Match gender when possible. Be culturally sensitive to hierarchy and tradition.

**📘 Culture Entry: Marathi**

**Marathi**

* **Region**: South Asia (Maharashtra, India) / Diaspora in U.K., Canada, U.S.
* **Language(s)**: Marathi, Hindi, English (PGLS Supported: Marathi)
* **Overview**: Marathi culture reflects Hindu tradition, Maratha history, and literary pride. Education and civility are highly valued.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Joint families common. Respect for elders and clear social roles emphasized.
* **Communication Style**: Respectful and formal with outsiders; lively and open within family.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Namaste or touching feet of elders. Food customs and festival observance very important.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Hinduism dominant; also Buddhist, Muslim, Christian minorities. Karma and duty are guiding values.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Mental illness may carry stigma. Family may seek spiritual advice or delay formal care.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Traditional roles respected; modern urban populations show greater gender parity.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Clarify formal vs. informal language. Match gender when possible. Explain abstract medical/emotional terms gently.

**📘 Culture Entry: Marshallese**

**Marshallese**

* **Region**: Micronesia (Marshall Islands) / U.S. Diaspora (Arkansas, Hawaii, Washington)
* **Language(s)**: Marshallese, English (PGLS Supported)
* **Overview**: Deeply communal island culture rooted in oral tradition, land identity, and kinship ties. U.S. migration is common due to Compact of Free Association (COFA).
* **Family & Social Structure**: Matrilineal clans; extended families are core to identity. Elders and women often guide family decisions.
* **Communication Style**: Indirect with outsiders; more expressive with kin. Respectful tone is culturally essential.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Hospitality and gift-giving are important; avoid direct refusal or criticism.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Christianity is widely practiced, often blended with traditional spirituality.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: High chronic illness rates (e.g., diabetes, radiation-related issues). May underreport emotional stress.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Women hold property rights via matrilineal line. Gender roles are respected.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Explain legal/medical context with clarity. Be sensitive to trust-building. Consider family involvement in care.

**📘 Culture Entry: Maya (Yucatec)**

**Maya (Yucatec)**

* **Region**: Mexico (Yucatán), Belize, Guatemala / U.S. Diaspora
* **Language(s)**: Yucatec Maya, Spanish (PGLS Supported)
* **Overview**: Maya identity is tied to ancient heritage, land, and community rituals. Many speak Yucatec Maya at home and Spanish in public.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Intergenerational households common. Deep respect for elders and collective decision-making.
* **Communication Style**: Reserved and respectful. Speech may include ritual/formal phrasing.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Humility is valued. Community gatherings and ceremonies mark major life events.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Traditional cosmology coexists with Catholicism. Ancestor and nature spirits are honored.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Herbal and spiritual healing common. Illness may be viewed as imbalance or fate.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Gender roles traditional, but evolving. Public roles often held by men; women central in domestic and spiritual domains.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Clarify language preference (Yucatec Maya vs. Spanish). Avoid rushing direct questions; respect ceremonial tone.

**📘 Culture Entry: Mongolian**

**Mongolian**

* **Region**: East/Central Asia (Mongolia, Inner Mongolia – China) / Diaspora in South Korea, U.S., Europe
* **Language(s)**: Mongolian (Khalkha dialect), Russian, Chinese (PGLS Supported: Mongolian)
* **Overview**: Nomadic traditions, Buddhism, and reverence for nature define Mongolian culture. Genghis Khan legacy is a national source of pride.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Extended families often live together or travel together. Elders highly respected.
* **Communication Style**: Calm, reserved, and indirect. Avoids public confrontation.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Always accept with right hand. Hats off indoors. Hospitality to guests is non-negotiable.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Tibetan Buddhism dominant; shamanic traditions remain active, especially in rural areas.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Herbal and spiritual healing respected. Mental illness not widely discussed, especially in older generations.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Roles traditionally defined, but evolving in urban settings. Women often manage finances and domestic decisions.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Use gentle tone. Clarify Western systems. Be respectful of modesty and silence.

**📘 Culture Entry: Nepali (Expanded)**

**Nepali (Expanded)**

* **Region**: South Asia (Nepal) / U.S., U.K., Australia, India Diaspora
* **Language(s)**: Nepali, English, Hindi, regional dialects (PGLS Supported: Nepali)
* **Overview**: Nepali culture is diverse and shaped by Hindu and Buddhist traditions, ethnic groups, and Himalayan geography.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Joint family structures are common. Respect and care for elders is expected.
* **Communication Style**: Polite and indirect; tone is usually subdued.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Shoes removed indoors. Religious icons treated with respect. “Namaste” with palms pressed is the standard greeting.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Hinduism and Buddhism dominate. Concepts of karma, dharma, and ritual purity are important.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Stigma toward mental illness persists. Ayurveda and spiritual practices may be preferred.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Traditional roles observed, though shifting in urban areas. Women may defer in public forums.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Gender-matching encouraged. Clarify legal/medical authority gently. Defer to family hierarchy in shared decision-making.

**📘 Culture Entry: Oromo (Expanded)**

**Oromo (Expanded)**

* **Region**: East Africa (Ethiopia, Kenya) / Global Diaspora
* **Language(s)**: Oromo (Afaan Oromoo), Amharic, English (PGLS Supported: Oromo)
* **Overview**: The Oromo are the largest ethnic group in Ethiopia, known for the Gadaa system, pastoralist history, and resistance to cultural suppression.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Clan-based society with strong male leadership and elder reverence.
* **Communication Style**: Respectful and rhythmic; oral traditions include poetry and song.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Hospitality is sacred. Elders greeted first. Offer items with the right hand.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Islam, Christianity, and Waaqeffanna (traditional Oromo belief) all coexist.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Spiritual framing common. Trauma or illness may be interpreted as imbalance with nature or spirit.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Traditional male leadership structure. Women's roles central to household and social cohesion.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Confirm dialect. Use formal tone. Avoid direct questions about ethnic tensions or trauma unless trust is established.

**📘 Culture Entry: Nepali**

**Nepali**

* **Region**: South Asia (Nepal) / U.S. & Global Diaspora
* **Language(s)**: Nepali (PGLS Supported), Hindi, English
* **Overview**: Nepali culture blends Hindu, Buddhist, and Indigenous influences, with deep roots in community life and spirituality.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Joint family systems common; respect for elders and hierarchical relationships is strong.
* **Communication Style**: Indirect and deferential, especially in formal or cross-generational settings.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Hands in prayer gesture (“Namaste”) for greeting; avoid touching the head or stepping over others.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Hinduism and Buddhism coexist. Caste dynamics, karma, and ritual purity may influence views.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Health seen through spiritual, herbal, and medical lenses. Mental health stigma may delay care.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Gender roles are traditional but shifting; privacy respected in sensitive discussions.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Avoid rushing responses. Gender-matching is often helpful. Be sensitive to caste-related disclosures.

**📘 Culture Entry: Oromo**

**Oromo**

* **Region**: East Africa (Ethiopia, Kenya) / U.S. Diaspora
* **Language(s)**: Oromo (Afaan Oromoo), Amharic, English (PGLS Supported)
* **Overview**: Oromo are Ethiopia’s largest ethnic group with a rich oral tradition, clan systems, and Gadaa democracy heritage.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Patriarchal, clan-structured; elders make communal decisions. Family loyalty is strong.
* **Communication Style**: Direct in tone but culturally respectful; storytelling used to convey values.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Hospitality and food-sharing are symbolic. Islamic or Christian customs may guide behavior.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Mix of Islam, Christianity, and traditional faith (Waaqeffanna). Justice and fairness are core values.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: May hesitate to disclose psychological symptoms. Spiritual and herbal healing sometimes preferred.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Male-led public roles; women central in domestic influence.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Confirm dialect. Use clear phrasing for legal/medical concepts. Explain confidentiality protocols carefully.

**📘 Culture Entry: Pashto**

**Pashto**

* **Region**: South-Central Asia (Afghanistan, Pakistan) / Diaspora in U.S., UAE, UK
* **Language(s)**: Pashto (PGLS Supported), Dari, Urdu, English
* **Overview**: Pashtun culture is shaped by tribal honor code (*Pashtunwali*), Islam, and resilience through decades of conflict.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Large extended families, male-dominated authority. Tribal loyalty and lineage define social role.
* **Communication Style**: Polite but proud; indirect with strangers, assertive with kin.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Greeting involves right hand over heart. Hospitality is a duty. Women may avoid eye contact.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Sunni Islam is central; martyrdom, prayer, and honor guide choices.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Mental illness may be stigmatized or framed as spiritual issue. Trauma exposure common.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Strict gender separation may be expected. Women may not speak freely in public settings.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Gender-matching critical. Respect *Pashtunwali* norms. Use discretion with sensitive questions.

**📘 Culture Entry: Punjabi**

**Punjabi**

* **Region**: South Asia (India — Punjab, Pakistan — Punjab) / Global Diaspora
* **Language(s)**: Punjabi (Gurmukhi and Shahmukhi scripts), English, Hindi, Urdu (PGLS Supported)
* **Overview**: Punjabi culture is vibrant and expressive, known for music, dance, food, and strong religious and family values.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Extended families are common. Respect for parents and elders is emphasized.
* **Communication Style**: Direct and emotional with family; polite and formal with outsiders. Humor and storytelling are frequent.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Hospitality is a virtue. Public displays of affection are generally avoided. Religious observance may affect greetings and appearance.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Sikhism, Hinduism, and Islam are practiced across regions. Religion often influences dress and dietary practices.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: May consult traditional healers or religious figures. Mental health topics may be kept within family.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Gender expectations may be traditional. Women increasingly occupy public leadership roles.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Clarify dialect/script. Respect religious symbols (e.g., turban). Gender-matching may be appreciated.

**📘 Culture Entry: Pashto (Expanded)**

**Pashto (Expanded)**

* **Region**: South-Central Asia (Afghanistan, Pakistan) / Global Diaspora
* **Language(s)**: Pashto, Dari, Urdu, English (PGLS Supported: Pashto)
* **Overview**: Pashtun identity is anchored in *Pashtunwali* (tribal honor code), Islam, and deep resilience shaped by war and displacement.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Extended patriarchal families. Male elders are central to household and tribal decisions.
* **Communication Style**: Respectful, formal, and emotionally reserved with strangers; expressive among kin.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Hand over heart greeting. Gender separation observed in public and private settings.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Islam is central; martyrdom, modesty, and prayer structure social life.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Trauma common. Mental illness may be seen as spiritual struggle or not disclosed.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Very traditional. Women may avoid eye contact or discussion in mixed settings.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Gender-matching essential. Allow indirect responses. Respect *Pashtunwali* norms and confidentiality.

**📘 Culture Entry: Polish**

**Polish**

* **Region**: Central Europe (Poland) / Global Diaspora (U.S., U.K., Canada, Australia)
* **Language(s)**: Polish, English (PGLS Supported: Polish)
* **Overview**: Polish identity emphasizes family, Catholic faith, national history, and resilience through foreign occupation and war.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Multi-generational households common. Respect for elders and parental roles emphasized.
* **Communication Style**: Polite and formal initially; expressive with familiarity.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Handshakes standard. Hospitality offered through food and drink. Church holidays deeply respected.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Roman Catholicism is central; religious observance often entwined with cultural identity.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Generational stigma toward mental illness remains. Younger Poles more open to therapy.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Traditional in older generations; increasingly egalitarian among youth.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Use polite tone. Clarify emotional and psychological concepts with care.

**📘 Culture Entry: Portuguese (Brazilian)**

**Portuguese (Brazilian)**

* **Region**: South America (Brazil) / Global Diaspora
* **Language(s)**: Portuguese (Brazilian dialect), Indigenous languages (PGLS Supported: Portuguese – Brazilian)
* **Overview**: Brazilian culture is vibrant, syncretic, and community-driven, shaped by Indigenous, African, and European influences.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Strong family bonds; extended families often live nearby or together.
* **Communication Style**: Warm, expressive, and relational. Physical touch and humor are common.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Greetings with cheek kisses (varies by region). Punctuality relaxed socially.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Catholicism, Protestantism, Afro-Brazilian faiths (e.g., Candomblé, Umbanda) co-exist.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Increasing openness to therapy. Faith healing and community support still widely valued.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Traditional in some regions; progressive in urban centers. Women central to family life.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Clarify regional dialect nuances. Use relational tone. Consider spiritual framing in health conversations.

**📘 Culture Entry: Punjabi (Expanded)**

**Punjabi (Expanded)**

* **Region**: South Asia (India – Punjab, Pakistan – Punjab) / Global Diaspora
* **Language(s)**: Punjabi (Gurmukhi in India, Shahmukhi in Pakistan), Hindi, Urdu, English (PGLS Supported: Punjabi)
* **Overview**: Punjabi culture is dynamic, expressive, and shaped by agricultural roots, Sufi tradition, and Sikh or Islamic faith.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Extended families common. Respect for elders and family honor central.
* **Communication Style**: Loud, passionate, and direct with family; courteous formality with outsiders.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Hospitality is a point of pride. Religious greetings (e.g., *Sat Sri Akal*, *As-Salamu Alaikum*) observed.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Sikhism, Islam, Hinduism co-exist depending on region. Religion strongly guides cultural expression.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Stigma may be high. Traditional or religious healing sought before clinical care.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Patriarchal, though women often powerful in family life. Diaspora shows increasing gender equity.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Clarify country of origin and dialect/script. Gender-matching appreciated. Respect spiritual framing of illness or behavior.

**📘 Culture Entry: Romanian**

**Romanian**

* **Region**: Eastern Europe (Romania, Moldova) / Global Diaspora
* **Language(s)**: Romanian, Hungarian, Romani, Russian (PGLS Supported: Romanian)
* **Overview**: Romanian identity blends Latin linguistic heritage with Orthodox Christianity, folk traditions, and historical resilience.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Family is central. Parental authority and elder respect are cultural constants.
* **Communication Style**: Formal and reserved at first; expressive with trust.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Handshakes common; guests offered food/drink immediately.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Eastern Orthodox Christianity dominant; superstitions and folk beliefs persist.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Mental health may carry stigma, particularly in older generations. Folk healing and herbal remedies common.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Traditional gender norms remain strong, especially rurally. Urban youth more progressive.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Formal tone recommended initially. Clarify abstract or legal terms gently.

**📘 Culture Entry: Russian (Expanded)**

**Russian (Expanded)**

* **Region**: Eastern Europe / Global Diaspora
* **Language(s)**: Russian, regional minority languages (PGLS Supported: Russian)
* **Overview**: Russian culture values resilience, intellect, and family. Shaped by Orthodox Christianity, Soviet legacy, and rich literary tradition.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Extended family ties emphasized. Grandparents often co-parent.
* **Communication Style**: Blunt and formal with outsiders; passionate and witty among family.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Handshakes are firm; superstitions abound (e.g., don’t shake hands across a threshold).
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Orthodox Christianity dominant; atheism widespread from Soviet era. Superstition still relevant.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Mental illness may be hidden. Substance use and emotional strain can be common but unspoken.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Traditionally male-dominated; evolving in diaspora and urban centers.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Formal address and clear logic respected. Reassure around privacy and stigma.

**📘 Culture Entry: Quechua**

**Quechua**

* **Region**: Andes (Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador, Colombia) / U.S. Diaspora
* **Language(s)**: Quechua (multiple dialects), Spanish (PGLS Supported)
* **Overview**: Quechua people are descendants of the Inca civilization, maintaining agricultural traditions, earth-based spirituality, and indigenous languages.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Extended families, community labor systems (*ayni*), and cooperative parenting.
* **Communication Style**: Modest and respectful. Avoid interrupting or raising voice.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Rituals tied to Pachamama (Mother Earth); sharing food is communal custom.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Spiritual life tied to mountains, land, and ancestors. Syncretism between Catholicism and Andean beliefs common.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Traditional medicine often used. Illness may be seen as imbalance with nature or spirits.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Collaborative roles in agriculture and family; women may be more reserved in public.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Confirm dialect (Quechua I, II, III). Avoid rushing responses. Respect for oral tradition and ancestral language.

**📘 Culture Entry: Rohingya**

**Rohingya**

* **Region**: Southeast Asia (Myanmar), Bangladesh refugee camps / Diaspora
* **Language(s)**: Rohingya, Chittagonian, Bengali, Burmese (PGLS Supported: Rohingya)
* **Overview**: A stateless Muslim minority from Myanmar, the Rohingya face persecution and mass displacement. Culture is shaped by resilience, religious observance, and trauma.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Large family units often led by men. Strong interdependence among extended kin.
* **Communication Style**: Reserved and deferential with outsiders; expressive among family.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Gender separation is common. Religious etiquette is critical (modesty, greetings, food).
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Islam is central. Religious leaders often advise on life matters.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: High trauma exposure. Mental health may be expressed through physical symptoms. Access and trust are major barriers.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Women may avoid speaking in public or to male strangers.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Gender-matching crucial. Introduce confidentiality and safety protocols clearly. Use trauma-informed approach.

**📘 Culture Entry: Russian**

**Russian**

* **Region**: Eastern Europe / Global Diaspora
* **Language(s)**: Russian (PGLS Supported), regional minority languages
* **Overview**: Russian culture emphasizes resilience, collectivism, intellectual achievement, and a deep literary and philosophical tradition.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Multi-generational households common. Elder respect is expected; parental authority strong.
* **Communication Style**: Direct and formal with outsiders; informal and expressive with family.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Formal address is important. Shoes removed in the home. Hospitality is a point of pride.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Orthodox Christianity is predominant; atheism common due to Soviet history. Superstition and folk beliefs may persist.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Some skepticism of Western health systems. Mental health stigma still common in older generations.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Gender roles traditionally defined; evolving with younger generations and urban contexts.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Maintain formality in tone. Clarify technical/legal terms. Use respectful titles (Mr./Mrs. + patronymic when known).

**📘 Culture Entry: Samoan**

**Samoan**

* **Region**: Polynesia (Samoa, American Samoa) / U.S., New Zealand, Australia
* **Language(s)**: Samoan, English (PGLS Supported)
* **Overview**: Samoan culture is rooted in *fa’a Samoa* — the Samoan way — which values community, respect, spirituality, and tradition.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Extended families led by chiefs (*matai*). Community and church life are central.
* **Communication Style**: Polite, deferential to hierarchy. Humor used with peers; formal language with elders.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Modest dress expected. Avoid direct confrontation. Elders and religious leaders are shown deference.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Christianity is deeply embedded in daily life. Spirituality and respect guide behavior.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Mental illness may be viewed as shameful or taboo. Preference for spiritual support over clinical care may arise.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Gender roles defined but flexible. *Fa’afafine* (third gender) is culturally recognized.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Gender match may be preferred. Use warm tone and clarify purpose. Be aware of status cues and honorifics.

**📘 Culture Entry: Serbian**

**Serbian**

* **Region**: Balkans (Serbia, Bosnia, Montenegro) / Global Diaspora
* **Language(s)**: Serbian (Cyrillic & Latin scripts), Bosnian, Croatian (PGLS Supported: Serbian)
* **Overview**: Serbian culture is rooted in Orthodox Christianity, Slavic traditions, and national pride shaped by a history of conflict and resilience.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Patriarchal family systems. Elders have authority; hospitality to guests is obligatory.
* **Communication Style**: Direct and expressive. Emotions conveyed openly in trusted settings.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Greeting with handshake or cheek kiss (close relations). Celebrations often revolve around food and music.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Serbian Orthodox Church central to identity. Patron saint celebrations (*Slava*) are family cornerstones.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Mental illness may be minimized or viewed as private. Generational trauma present.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Traditional roles often emphasized; shifting among diaspora youth.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Respect religious references. Use clear explanations for emotional or procedural topics. Avoid political generalizations.

**📘 Culture Entry: Somali**

**Somali**

* **Region**: East Africa (Somalia, Somaliland) / Global Diaspora (U.S., U.K., Scandinavia)
* **Language(s)**: Somali, Arabic, English (PGLS Supported: Somali)
* **Overview**: Somali identity is clan-based, shaped by Islamic tradition, oral history, and displacement due to prolonged conflict.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Extended, patriarchal families. Clan loyalty is primary identity.
* **Communication Style**: Poetic, assertive, and indirect when discussing sensitive topics. Elders command social authority.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Hospitality is essential. Right hand used for greetings and eating. Gender separation observed.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Islam (Sunni) is central. Faith leaders hold high community status.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Mental illness often spiritualized or denied. Trauma may be widespread but unspoken.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Strongly gendered roles. Women may not engage publicly with male providers.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Gender match essential. Build trust. Allow time and space to avoid perceived pressure.

**📘 Culture Entry: Spanish (Caribbean)**

**Spanish (Caribbean)**

* **Region**: Caribbean (Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic, Cuba) / U.S. Diaspora
* **Language(s)**: Spanish (Caribbean dialects), English (PGLS Supported)
* **Overview**: Caribbean Spanish-speaking cultures are shaped by African, Spanish, and Indigenous heritage. Music, faith, and family are core values.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Extended families with matriarchal influence in many homes. Family loyalty emphasized.
* **Communication Style**: Energetic, expressive, and relational. Humor and storytelling are key.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Warm greetings (handshake, hug, or kiss). Respect for elders and spiritual leaders.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Catholicism dominant; Santería and other syncretic faiths exist. Religion often cultural more than doctrinal.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Mental illness may be framed spiritually or familial. Support often comes from within the community.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Traditional norms like *machismo* and *marianismo* may influence expectations.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Clarify country of origin. Be mindful of idioms and emotional expressiveness.

**📘 Culture Entry: Spanish (Latino/Hispanic American context)**

**Spanish (Latino/Hispanic American)**

* **Region**: Latin America, Caribbean, U.S. Diaspora
* **Language(s)**: Spanish (various dialects), Indigenous languages (see region-specific profiles), English (PGLS Supported)
* **Overview**: Encompasses diverse heritages across Latin America and the Caribbean, with shared linguistic and colonial history, but distinct regional practices.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Extended family bonds are strong. Respect for elders and parents central.
* **Communication Style**: Warm, expressive, high-context. Emotional intensity is culturally appropriate.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Greetings include hugs or cheek kisses (varies). Hospitality and courtesy expected.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Catholicism predominant, often blended with local traditions. Religion plays a key social role.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Mental illness may be hidden or spiritualized. *Curanderos* or religious figures may be consulted.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Machismo and Marianismo may influence identity, but roles vary by generation and country.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Clarify dialect/country of origin. Be mindful of cultural pride and idiomatic language.

**📘 Culture Entry: Sudanese**

**Sudanese**

* **Region**: North-East Africa / Global Diaspora (U.S., Australia, UK)
* **Language(s)**: Arabic (Sudanese dialect), English, Nubian, Fur (PGLS Supported: Sudanese Arabic)
* **Overview**: Sudanese culture reflects Arab, African, and Islamic influences, marked by hospitality, resilience, and tribal diversity.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Extended families are essential. Tribal lineage often determines roles, status, and responsibility.
* **Communication Style**: Respectful and reserved in formal settings; warm and expressive with family.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Elders are honored. Gender roles are traditionally observed. Generosity and food sharing are cultural cornerstones.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Predominantly Muslim (Sunni), with a minority of Christians and traditional faiths. Religious customs influence daily interactions.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Mental illness may be highly stigmatized. Emotional distress may be framed in spiritual or physical terms.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Public gender separation often expected. Women may defer to male relatives in service interactions.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Match gender where possible. Avoid direct questioning on trauma. Use respectful religious phrasing.

**📘 Culture Entry: Swahili (Coastal East African)**

**Swahili**

* **Region**: Coastal East Africa (Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique) / U.S. Diaspora
* **Language(s)**: Swahili, English, Arabic, regional tribal languages (PGLS Supported: Swahili)
* **Overview**: Swahili culture blends Bantu, Arab, and Islamic influences, especially in coastal trade hubs. It is defined by community, rhythm, and oral history.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Families are close-knit, often multi-generational, with strong parental roles and elder respect.
* **Communication Style**: Polite, indirect; storytelling is a valued medium.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Greetings are essential. Hospitality is sacred. Islamic customs influence dress and interaction norms.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Islam is prevalent, with traditional spiritual beliefs coexisting. Faith-based morality informs behavior.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Faith healers may be consulted. Mental health stigma may lead to somatic framing.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Gender roles are traditional but evolving. Respect for modesty and religious observance is crucial.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Clarify dialect and formality level. Gender-matching appreciated in religious contexts.

**📘 Culture Entry: Sudanese (Expanded)**

**Sudanese (Expanded)**

* **Region**: North-East Africa (Sudan) / Diaspora in U.S., U.K., Gulf States
* **Language(s)**: Arabic (Sudanese dialect), Nubian, Beja, English (PGLS Supported: Sudanese Arabic)
* **Overview**: Sudanese culture blends Arab, African, Islamic, and tribal traditions. Politeness, generosity, and social honor are central values.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Large, extended, patriarchal families. Elders and religious leaders are respected.
* **Communication Style**: Indirect and soft-spoken in formal settings; warm and expressive in trusted relationships.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Modesty in dress and demeanor; shoes removed indoors. Hospitality rituals are highly valued.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Islam (Sunni) dominates; Sufi traditions common. Religion influences nearly all social behavior.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Mental illness often stigmatized or spiritualized. Traditional and religious healing sought before clinical care.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Public gender separation expected. Women may defer to male family members in health and legal decisions.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Gender matching important. Use modest tone and avoid rushed interaction. Introduce confidentiality and support gently.

**📘 Culture Entry: Swahili (Expanded)**

**Swahili (Expanded)**

* **Region**: East Africa (Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique, Uganda) / Global Diaspora
* **Language(s)**: Swahili, English, Arabic, regional tribal languages (PGLS Supported: Swahili)
* **Overview**: Coastal Swahili culture integrates Bantu, Arab, and Islamic influences. Community identity and oral history traditions are highly valued.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Multi-generational homes. Respect for elders and cooperation between family units are common.
* **Communication Style**: Indirect, formal, and layered with idioms or proverbs.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Islamic norms influence greetings, gender interaction, and modest dress. Hospitality expected.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Sunni Islam dominates; traditional spiritual practices coexist. Faith guides behavior and health choices.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Mental illness may be seen as spiritual or moral issue. Faith-based healing often sought first.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Roles traditionally defined. Urban areas may be more progressive.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Clarify dialect. Gender match helpful. Take time to build relational trust before discussing sensitive matters.

**📘 Culture Entry: Syrian**

**Syrian**

* **Region**: Middle East (Syria) / Global Diaspora due to conflict
* **Language(s)**: Arabic (Levantine dialect), Kurdish, Armenian, Aramaic, English (PGLS Supported: Arabic – Syrian)
* **Overview**: Syrian culture is rooted in Arab traditions, Islamic values, hospitality, and deep historic pride. War has shaped national and diaspora identity.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Extended families; patriarchal leadership common. Elders and religious figures hold respect.
* **Communication Style**: Indirect, warm, and honor-based. Emotional restraint expected in formal settings.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Guests are offered food/drink immediately. Gender roles and religious decorum observed.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Islam (Sunni and Alawite), Christianity, Druze. Religion influences law, family, and health decisions.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: High trauma prevalence. Mental illness may be denied or hidden. Stigma strong in rural areas.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Gender separation expected in conservative households.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Gender match critical. Approach topics of trauma with great care. Use culturally neutral and respectful phrasing.

**📘 Culture Entry: Tagalog / Filipino**

**Tagalog / Filipino**

* **Region**: Southeast Asia (Philippines) / Global Diaspora (U.S., Canada, Middle East)
* **Language(s)**: Tagalog, Filipino, English, regional dialects (PGLS Supported: Tagalog/Filipino)
* **Overview**: Filipino culture emphasizes family, faith, and adaptability. It’s shaped by Indigenous roots, Spanish colonization, and American influence.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Close family units, often including extended relatives. Elders respected; *utang na loob* (debt of gratitude) is a guiding value.
* **Communication Style**: Polite, cheerful, and indirect. Nonverbal cues carry importance.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Modesty and courtesy are central. Guests are honored. Avoid confrontation or shame.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Majority Catholic with spiritual syncretism; family prayers and fiestas are central to cultural rhythm.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Family-oriented care decisions. Mental health stigma remains, though improving.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Matriarchal leadership common in families. LGBTQ+ acceptance varies by region.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Clarify dialect. Use inclusive, warm tone. Defer to family hierarchy where relevant.

**📘 Culture Entry: Tigrinya**

**Tigrinya**

* **Region**: East Africa (Eritrea, northern Ethiopia) / Diaspora in U.S., Europe, Middle East
* **Language(s)**: Tigrinya, Arabic, English (PGLS Supported)
* **Overview**: Tigrinya-speaking communities are rooted in Orthodox Christianity, strong family ties, and traditions of migration due to conflict.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Patriarchal family units with deep respect for elders. Extended family support is expected.
* **Communication Style**: Polite and measured, often indirect with outsiders. Humor and warmth with known individuals.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Religious greetings are common. Handshakes with right hand; public modesty emphasized.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Orthodox Christianity or Islam; fasting, saints’ days, and home altars are important to daily life.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Mental health issues may be taboo or interpreted through spiritual lenses. Stigma common.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Traditional gender roles; women often defer in public discussions.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Gender match often preferred. Be mindful of trauma history. Clarify confidentiality thoroughly.

**📘 Culture Entry: Tamil**

**Tamil**

* **Region**: South India (Tamil Nadu), Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Singapore / Global Diaspora
* **Language(s)**: Tamil, English, Sinhala, Hindi (PGLS Supported: Tamil)
* **Overview**: Tamil culture is one of the world’s oldest continuous civilizations, known for its classical arts, Dravidian identity, and linguistic pride.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Joint families common; elders and patriarchs hold decision-making roles.
* **Communication Style**: Formal, respectful, and indirect in public; expressive in private family settings.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Use both hands or right hand when giving. Feet are considered unclean; touching head or shoulders discouraged.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Hinduism predominant; also Christian, Muslim, and Jain minorities. Karma and caste may influence worldview.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Stigma high around mental illness. Ayurveda and homeopathy often sought.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Traditionally defined, though women often lead in education and family management.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Clarify dialect/region. Gender matching appreciated. Avoid direct language for emotional topics.

**📘 Culture Entry: Thai**

**Thai**

* **Region**: Southeast Asia (Thailand) / Global Diaspora
* **Language(s)**: Thai, English, Lao (PGLS Supported: Thai)
* **Overview**: Thai culture emphasizes social harmony, Buddhist values, and respect for hierarchy.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Extended families often live together. Children expected to care for aging parents.
* **Communication Style**: Indirect, polite, and often nonverbal. Emotional restraint shows respect.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Wai (prayer gesture) used for greeting. Never touch head or point feet. Status and age dictate interaction norms.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Theravada Buddhism dominant. Karma, reincarnation, and merit-making guide behavior.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Mental illness may be considered spiritual or karmic. Traditional or temple-based healing common.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Traditional norms observed; modern urban areas more fluid. Ladyboys (*kathoey*) are culturally recognized.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Gentle tone important. Allow slow, indirect responses. Respect hierarchy and spiritual worldview.

**📘 Culture Entry: Tibetan**

**Tibetan**

* **Region**: Tibet (China), India (Dharamshala), Nepal / Global Diaspora
* **Language(s)**: Tibetan, Chinese, Nepali, Hindi, English (PGLS Supported: Tibetan)
* **Overview**: Tibetan culture is deeply spiritual, centered on Buddhism, monastic tradition, and exile identity.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Patriarchal with communal roles. Monks and elders hold moral leadership.
* **Communication Style**: Reserved and humble. Spiritual references often frame conversation.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Remove shoes indoors. Avoid pointing with finger; use open hand. Prostration common in religious settings.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Tibetan Buddhism is central. Compassion, karma, and enlightenment are guiding concepts.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Illness viewed as spiritual imbalance. Tibetan medicine widely used. Mental health discussed more openly in exile.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Traditional roles remain, but nuns and female leaders gaining visibility.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Match tone to spiritual register. Gender match helpful. Allow slow responses and acknowledge spiritual framing.

**📘 Culture Entry: Tigrinya (Expanded)**

**Tigrinya (Expanded)**

* **Region**: East Africa (Eritrea, Northern Ethiopia) / Global Diaspora
* **Language(s)**: Tigrinya, Arabic, Amharic, English (PGLS Supported: Tigrinya)
* **Overview**: Tigrinya-speaking communities are rooted in Orthodox Christian faith, historical resilience, and collective identity. Many are refugees due to political conflict.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Patriarchal families. Elders and religious leaders have high influence.
* **Communication Style**: Formal, indirect, and respectful. Deference is common in public conversations.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Use both hands or right hand for giving. Hospitality is a moral duty.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Eritrean Orthodox Christianity is dominant; Islam also practiced. Faith is interwoven with identity.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Mental health issues often stigmatized or framed spiritually. War trauma may be unspoken.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Traditional roles; women respected as caregivers and moral anchors.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Gender match important. Speak slowly and respectfully. Clarify emotional terms gently.

**📘 Culture Entry: Turkish**

**Turkish**

* **Region**: Western Asia / Southeastern Europe (Turkey) / Global Diaspora (Germany, Netherlands, U.S.)
* **Language(s)**: Turkish, Kurdish, Arabic (PGLS Supported: Turkish)
* **Overview**: Turkish culture blends Islamic tradition, Ottoman legacy, European modernity, and strong national identity.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Family-centric, with multigenerational homes common. Patriarchal structure remains strong.
* **Communication Style**: Polite and expressive. Indirect speech used for sensitive topics.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Right hand used for greeting. Shoes off indoors. Respect for elders deeply ingrained.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Majority Sunni Muslim; secularism protected by constitution. Faith and cultural pride coexist.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Stigma may limit discussion of mental illness. Family opinion influential in care decisions.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Traditional expectations common; urban areas more egalitarian.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Gender match often preferred. Avoid political references unless invited. Clarify spiritual framing with care.

**📘 Culture Entry: Ukrainian (Expanded)**

**Ukrainian (Expanded)**

* **Region**: Eastern Europe (Ukraine) / Global Diaspora
* **Language(s)**: Ukrainian, Russian, English (PGLS Supported: Ukrainian)
* **Overview**: Ukrainian identity is deeply tied to language, Orthodox and Catholic heritage, and ongoing resilience through war and cultural preservation.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Close-knit families with strong emotional bonds. Grandparents often co-parent.
* **Communication Style**: Reserved with strangers; warm, direct, and emotional with trusted others.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Guests welcomed warmly. Religious holidays, folk music, and cuisine are cultural staples.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Christianity (Orthodox, Catholic) central. Some folk beliefs persist in rural regions.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Generational stigma around mental health. War-related trauma prevalent.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Traditional roles still common, but significant female leadership in family and civil society.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Confirm language preference (Ukrainian vs. Russian). Be trauma-informed. Avoid politicized language.

**📘 Culture Entry: Ukrainian**

**Ukrainian**

* **Region**: Eastern Europe / Global Diaspora (especially post-2022)
* **Language(s)**: Ukrainian, Russian (some), English (PGLS Supported: Ukrainian)
* **Overview**: Ukrainian identity is rooted in language, Orthodox and Catholic Christianity, and resilience through historic conflict and cultural preservation.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Extended families play major roles. Matriarchs often manage households.
* **Communication Style**: Formal and reserved at first; warmth and humor increase with trust.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Guests are fed generously. Religious holidays and rites are important social anchors.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Christianity (Orthodox, Catholic) with some regional folk traditions. Patriotic pride is central, especially in diaspora.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: War-related trauma may be present. Mental health stigma varies by generation.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Traditional in rural areas; progressive in urban/diaspora settings.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Clarify Ukrainian vs. Russian preference. Avoid politicized assumptions. Show empathy in displaced contexts.

**📘 Culture Entry: Urdu-Speaking (South Asian Muslim Context)**

**Urdu-Speaking (South Asian Muslim)**

* **Region**: South Asia (Pakistan, North India) / Global Diaspora
* **Language(s)**: Urdu, English, regional dialects (PGLS Supported: Urdu)
* **Overview**: Urdu-speaking Muslim culture is influenced by Islamic practice, Indo-Persian history, and family-centered values.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Extended and joint families are common. Male leadership is expected, though women manage household affairs.
* **Communication Style**: Formal and courteous with outsiders; affectionate with family. Poetry, proverbs, and indirect speech often used.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Hospitality and modesty are cultural pillars. Public gender separation often observed.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Islam is central; practices include daily prayer, fasting, and religious etiquette in greetings.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Emotional pain may be seen as spiritual trial. Mental illness stigma remains.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Clear gender divisions, especially in rural or conservative households.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Gender-matching often necessary. Use respectful Islamic greetings and terminology. Allow time for family consultation.

**📘 Culture Entry: Urdu-Speaking (Expanded)**

**Urdu-Speaking (Expanded)**

* **Region**: South Asia (Pakistan, parts of India) / Diaspora in U.K., U.S., Canada, Gulf States
* **Language(s)**: Urdu, Punjabi, Hindi, English (PGLS Supported: Urdu)
* **Overview**: Urdu-speaking communities are often centered around Muslim cultural traditions, refined linguistic heritage, and poetic expression.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Patriarchal, extended families. Elders have strong influence; collective decisions common.
* **Communication Style**: Formal and poetic. Indirect phrasing and respectful address expected.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Islamic etiquette observed — modest dress, gender separation in public, and formal greetings like *As-Salamu Alaikum*.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Islam central. Daily prayers, Ramadan, and family honor are key drivers of values.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Emotional suffering may be described physically. Mental illness often stigmatized or spiritualized.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Women often defer in mixed company; female modesty emphasized.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Gender matching highly recommended. Speak with politeness and allow space for spiritual or familial framing.

**📘 Culture Entry: Vietnamese (Expanded)**

**Vietnamese (Expanded)**

* **Region**: Southeast Asia (Vietnam) / Diaspora in U.S., France, Australia
* **Language(s)**: Vietnamese (PGLS Supported)
* **Overview**: Vietnamese culture reflects Confucian hierarchy, Buddhist values, colonial history, and refugee experience.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Patriarchal and multigenerational. Ancestor worship and filial piety shape daily behavior.
* **Communication Style**: Indirect, respectful, and soft-spoken. Emotional restraint considered respectful.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Bowing, use of titles, and two-handed offering are standard. Public modesty and humility expected.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Buddhism, Catholicism, and ancestor worship influence behavior. Fate and harmony are key values.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Somatic symptoms common. Mental health stigma remains; traditional healing respected.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Women traditionally defer in public. Gender equity rising among youth and diaspora.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Use formal tone. Allow for silence and indirect phrasing. Clarify confidentiality slowly and respectfully.

**📘 Culture Entry: Yoruba (Expanded)**

**Yoruba (Expanded)**

* **Region**: West Africa (Nigeria, Benin, Togo) / Global Diaspora
* **Language(s)**: Yoruba, English, Pidgin (PGLS Supported: Yoruba)
* **Overview**: Yoruba culture is rich in religion, art, and orature. Identity rooted in ancestry, community, and spiritual structure.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Lineage and extended family hold deep importance. Elders and ancestors respected and invoked.
* **Communication Style**: Expressive, rhythmic, proverb-laden. Deference to authority is balanced with humor and community warmth.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Kneeling or prostration in greetings. Elders addressed with titles. Hospitality is sacred.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Christianity, Islam, and traditional Yoruba religion (Orisha system) practiced. Ancestor reverence persists.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Traditional healers (Babalawo) consulted. Emotional suffering may be explained spiritually.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Women hold significant informal power; men often lead formally.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Acknowledge spiritual framing. Clarify Western concepts. Respect family dynamics and naming conventions.

**📘 Culture Entry: Zulu**

**Zulu**

* **Region**: Southern Africa (South Africa, Eswatini) / Diaspora in U.K., U.S.
* **Language(s)**: Zulu, English (PGLS Supported: Zulu)
* **Overview**: Zulu culture is built on ancestral reverence, strong kinship ties, oral tradition, and vibrant community rituals.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Extended, patriarchal families; elders guide decisions. Initiation and rites of passage are significant.
* **Communication Style**: Respectful and often poetic. Indirect in formal settings; expressive in familiar circles.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Elders greeted first. Use right hand for giving. Lobola (bride wealth) still practiced.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Christianity widely practiced alongside traditional ancestor veneration and herbal healing.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Traditional healing and church support often preferred. Emotional issues framed as spiritual or social.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Traditional roles observed; matriarchs hold informal authority.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Gender match helpful. Allow spiritual interpretations. Clarify systems slowly and respectfully.

**📘 Culture Entry: Uzbek**

**Uzbek**

* **Region**: Central Asia (Uzbekistan) / Diaspora in Russia, U.S., South Korea
* **Language(s)**: Uzbek, Russian (PGLS Supported: Uzbek)
* **Overview**: Uzbek culture blends Islamic tradition, Silk Road history, and Soviet-era influence. Hospitality and communal pride run deep.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Patriarchal multigenerational households. Elders respected in decision-making.
* **Communication Style**: Polite and formal with outsiders; open and warm within family.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Guests served tea and bread. Removing shoes indoors is common.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Islam (Sunni) widespread; cultural practices may blend religious and secular values.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Mental illness often misunderstood or hidden. Herbal and family-based remedies preferred.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Clear gender roles. Women often defer publicly but may lead within the home.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Clarify preference for Uzbek vs. Russian. Gender-matching appreciated. Introduce topics of emotional well-being gently.

**📘 Culture Entry: Vietnamese (Northern Dialect Addendum)**

**Vietnamese (Northern Dialect)**

* **Region**: North Vietnam (Hanoi region)
* **Language(s)**: Vietnamese (Northern dialect – official), French, Chinese (PGLS Supported)
* **Overview**: The Northern Vietnamese dialect is the national standard. Culture reflects Confucian values, revolutionary history, and collective identity.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Respect for hierarchy and family legacy. Elders guide decisions; loyalty prized.
* **Communication Style**: Formal, deferential, indirect. Nonverbal cues heavily relied on.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Use two hands when offering. Public modesty and humility are cultural expectations.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Buddhism, Confucianism, ancestor worship dominate. Religion may be cultural rather than devout.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Mental distress framed through physical symptoms or social imbalance.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Traditionally conservative. Women play central roles but may defer in formal settings.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Match tone and pace. Confirm dialect when possible. Use relational language to build comfort.

**📘 Culture Entry: Vietnamese (Expanded)**

**Vietnamese**

* **Region**: Southeast Asia / Global Diaspora
* **Language(s)**: Vietnamese (PGLS Supported)
* **Overview**: Rooted in Confucian values, Buddhism, and a history of colonization and diaspora, Vietnamese culture emphasizes family, education, and respect.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Hierarchical family systems; elders are honored, and extended families are tightly interdependent.
* **Communication Style**: Indirect and formal with outsiders; avoids confrontation. Nonverbal cues and context matter greatly.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Public modesty; two-handed giving; avoid touching heads or pointing feet. Shoes removed indoors.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Confucian ethics, ancestor veneration, Buddhism, and Catholicism coexist.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Somatic expressions of distress common. May delay mental health disclosure. Traditional healing respected.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Patriarchal systems influence decision-making. Urban youth more egalitarian.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Clarify titles and pronouns. Use formal register. Allow time for deference-based family dialogue.

**📘 Culture Entry: Haitian Creole (Diaspora Addendum)**

**Haitian Creole (Diaspora)**

* **Region**: Haitian Diaspora (U.S. – especially Florida, New York, Massachusetts; Canada; France)
* **Language(s)**: Haitian Creole, French, English (PGLS Supported: Haitian Creole)
* **Overview**: Diasporic Haitians preserve language, faith, and music traditions while adapting to host cultures. Community resilience and pride in ancestry are central.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Strong matriarchal presence. Grandparents often co-parent. Godparent roles highly significant.
* **Communication Style**: Warm, spiritual, and community-oriented. Humor often used as a social bridge.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Personal space may be small. Hospitality expected. Respect for elders is core.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Christianity and Vodou co-exist for many. Spiritual worldview often guides health and hardship.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Spiritual illness and divine testing frameworks are common. Mental health stigma still present.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Women often lead households. Masculinity expectations may influence public behavior.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Respect for spiritual beliefs is crucial. Use clear, concrete language. Consider cultural reluctance to disclose emotional distress.

**📘 Culture Entry: Wolof**

**Wolof**

* **Region**: West Africa (Senegal, The Gambia, Mauritania) / U.S., France Diaspora
* **Language(s)**: Wolof, French, Arabic (PGLS Supported: Wolof)
* **Overview**: Wolof culture is defined by Islamic values, Senegalese hospitality (*teranga*), and rich oral storytelling. Social hierarchy is respected.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Patriarchal extended families. Elders and male heads lead; women manage households and markets.
* **Communication Style**: Indirect, rhythmic, and respectful. Proverbs often used.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Long greetings expected. Visitors offered food and tea.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Sunni Islam central. Religious leaders (marabouts) are deeply respected.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Faith-based healing common. Mental illness may be framed spiritually.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Defined but flexible; women play strong economic roles.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Clarify French vs. Wolof language use. Gender match encouraged. Use soft tone and avoid direct confrontation.

**📘 Culture Entry: Yoruba (Diaspora Addendum)**

**Yoruba (Diaspora)**

* **Region**: West Africa / Diaspora in Brazil, Cuba, U.S., U.K.
* **Language(s)**: Yoruba, English, Portuguese, Spanish (PGLS Supported: Yoruba)
* **Overview**: Diaspora Yoruba communities have preserved and adapted cultural heritage through Afro-Caribbean and African American identities.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Extended family and spiritual godparenthood central. Ancestor reverence continues in varied forms.
* **Communication Style**: Expressive and respectful. Spiritual phrasing and proverbs may carry layered meaning.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Ritual greetings and naming ceremonies important. Offerings and drums play roles in sacred events.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Christianity and Islam practiced; Orisha-based traditions (e.g., Candomblé, Santería) flourish in diaspora.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Holistic healing systems (e.g., divination, herbs, song) common. Mental health linked to spiritual well-being.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Flexible in ritual and home spheres. Female spiritual leadership common.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Respect sacred terminology. Clarify health terms in both scientific and spiritual frames.

**📘 Culture Entry: Wolof (Senegalese)**

**Wolof**

* **Region**: West Africa (Senegal, The Gambia, Mauritania) / Diaspora
* **Language(s)**: Wolof, French, Arabic (PGLS Supported: Wolof)
* **Overview**: The Wolof are the largest ethnic group in Senegal, known for oral storytelling (*taasu*), Islamic faith, and elaborate social greetings.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Extended family networks rooted in Islamic kinship systems. Elders and community leaders guide decisions.
* **Communication Style**: Expressive, rhythmic, with emphasis on greetings and metaphor. Formality matters.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Visitors are offered food/drink immediately. Handshakes with right hand. Islamic modesty observed.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Sunni Islam is dominant. Marabouts (religious guides) hold influence. Syncretism with local customs is common.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Religious healing may be preferred. Stigma around mental illness exists.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Gender roles traditionally distinct; women influential in community/family roles.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Use polite/formal language. Be sensitive to spiritual framing of illness. Gender-matching often appreciated.

**📘 Culture Entry: Yoruba**

**Yoruba**

* **Region**: West Africa (Nigeria, Benin, Togo) / Diaspora in U.S., UK, Brazil
* **Language(s)**: Yoruba, English (PGLS Supported)
* **Overview**: A major ethnolinguistic group in Nigeria, Yoruba culture is deeply spiritual, artistic, and structured around family and tradition.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Extended family and lineage are key. Elders and ancestors hold revered status.
* **Communication Style**: Respectful and rhythmic; proverbs and praise names are commonly used.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Prostration or kneeling used to greet elders. Elders served first in meals and ceremonies.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Christianity, Islam, and traditional Yoruba religion (Orisha worship) coexist. Ancestor reverence central.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Herbal medicine and spiritual healing are common. Mental health may be viewed spiritually.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Roles historically balanced; women often lead in trade and community. Patriarchal in formal authority.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Use formal respect markers. Clarify context for illness or grief. Honor religious or ancestral views.

**📘 Culture Entry: Zomi**

**Zomi**

* **Region**: Myanmar (Chin State), India (Manipur, Mizoram), Bangladesh / U.S. Diaspora
* **Language(s)**: Zomi (Tedim), Burmese, English (PGLS Supported: Zomi)
* **Overview**: The Zomi people are a Chin ethnic group with strong Christian faith, clan-based society, and a history of migration from conflict zones.
* **Family & Social Structure**: Extended families with patriarchal lineage. Elders and church leaders are deeply respected.
* **Communication Style**: Reserved and humble. Deference to authority is typical.
* **Etiquette & Customs**: Modesty in behavior and dress. Group decisions often led by male heads of household.
* **Beliefs & Worldview**: Christianity (mainly Baptist) is dominant. Church is central to community and identity.
* **Health & Mental Health Considerations**: Medical care often deferred to church opinion. Mental health stigmatized; faith-based coping common.
* **Gender Roles & Sensitivities**: Traditional roles in family; women active in church and home.
* **Interpreter/Service Notes**: Use calm, respectful tone. Gender-matching helpful. Allow space for spiritual considerations in decision-making.

**IV. LANGUAGE–CULTURE INDEX**

(Coming next)

**V. CULTURAL TERMS GLOSSARY**

(Coming next)

**VI. SPECIAL SECTIONS (Future-Scalable)**

* **Diaspora Spotlights**
* **Religious/Cultural Holidays & Observances Index**
* **Interpreter Do's & Don'ts by Region/Culture**
* **Cross-Cultural Communication Tips**
* **Trauma & Conflict-Sensitive Cultures**
* **Virtual vs. In-Person Interaction Preferences**

**VII. APPENDICES & FORMATS**

(Placeholder)

**VIII. FUTURE-READY MODULES**

(Placeholder)

*Maintained by: [Owner TBD]*  
*Next major release target: [v2 — Early Q3 2025]*