

Intercultural Understanding Guide: West African Culture

West Africa is a sub-region of the continent of Africa which includes the following countries: Ivory Coast, Togo, Benin, Sierra Leone, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Cape Verde, Liberia, Mali, Guinea, Niger, Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal and Burkina Faso.

West Africa is made up of many very diverse cultures.

Social norm/structure/hierarchy:

- Cultural values are based on a foundation of the past and present, a leading reason why elders are so well respected. Therefore it's necessary to always acknowledge an elder.

Communication style:

- Pointing at something or someone in West African culture with the index finger can be perceived as offensive.
- West Africans have great self control and are careful to not offend or shame anyone in public.
- Meeting people and spending time with others to create lasting relationships is cherished.
- Positive communication is a key aspect.
- Public exhibition of negative emotions is notably restrained.



References:

- [Migrationology](#)