

INFOCUS

Meet Humbelina

By Katie Kuykendall



Humbelina sat, puzzled, with a pile of pencils.

She had come to a village near her own hometown in Peru to lead a “Women of the Bible” workshop — a study that focuses on the roles of 17 women in Scripture. About 100 Huallaga Quechua women had gathered to participate in the study designed to teach comprehension and application in their own language.

But now, when Humbelina tried to pass out worksheets and pencils, the women didn’t seem interested. “Well, we’ll take the worksheets,” they said, intending to take them home for their kids to play with instead of using them for the study. But not a single woman took a pencil from Humbelina.

Her heart sank. “How many of you know how to read and write?” she asked. Of the 100 women in attendance, six raised their hands.

“I realized in that moment, ‘Oh my, we are in trouble,’” Humbelina said. “We are on the cusp of receiving the entire Bible in our language, and this many people don’t know how to read?”

“It was a burden on my heart,” she said, through tears. “How could I let this be?” She thought about the translation team — families she knew who had given so much of their lives to translate the Scriptures. “How could we just let it fall?”

Humbelina returned to her community devastated. Feeling helpless, she and other women began praying, asking God what they could do about this great need for literacy. God answered Humbelina repeatedly, “You will be useful! I can use you. I will use you.”

Humbelina never anticipated a life in ministry. It wasn’t until she met her husband, a Quechua Bible translator, that she began to consider God’s love for her and his mission in the world. Now God was promising to make her part of that mission.

With her new passion for literacy, Humbelina and her team created Huallaga Quechua primers for pre-literacy and basic literacy needs. Once participants complete both primers, their reading level is high enough to do the “Women of the Bible” study. The literacy team teaches students in classes, on the radio and through one-on-one lessons.

Humbelina remembers one student in particular, a woman named Leonarda. One day after the workshop, Leonarda was sitting and reading with some older friends. When she saw Humbelina, she jumped up to greet her and introduced Humbelina to her friends as “the sister who taught me to read.”

Leonarda also started singing worship songs at church in Quechua, helping others worship in their own language. She didn’t keep her knowledge to herself; she shared it with others. That’s exactly the goal of Humbelina’s literacy training.

“Our desire is to keep bringing the Word of God ... so people can understand it,” she said. “When we share it with women, they don’t keep it to themselves. They share it with their children; they share it with other women. The Word of God ... has an impact in people’s hearts, and it’s what changes people’s lives.”



PERU FAST FACTS

POPULATION:
32,201,224

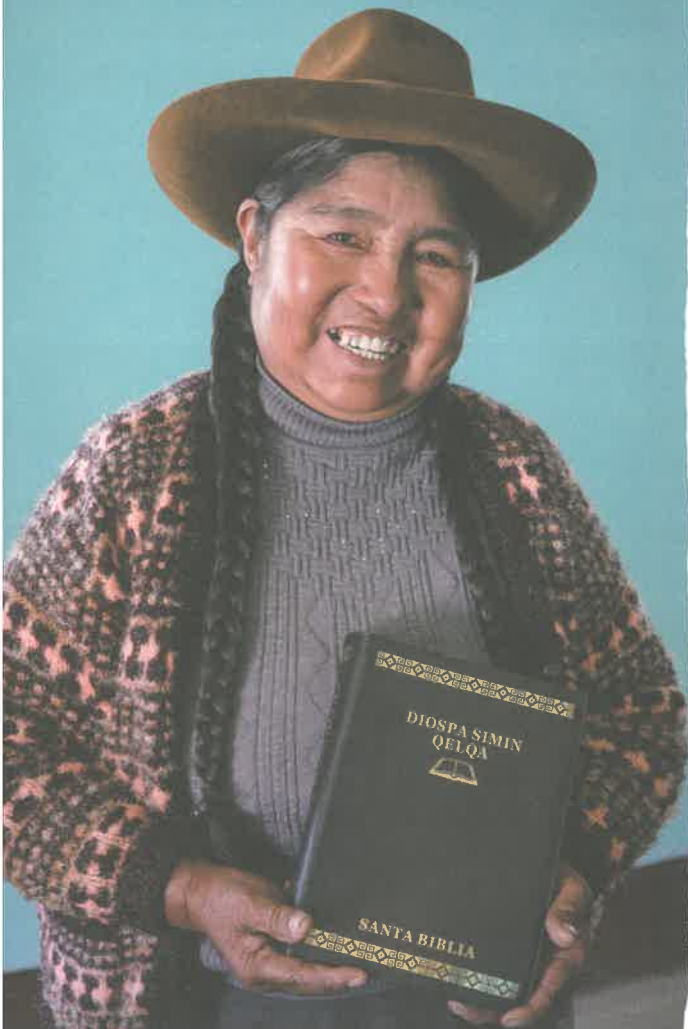
CAPITAL:
Lima

AREA COMPARATIVE:
Approximately twice the size of Texas

Source: cia.gov

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A GLIMPSE OF PERU

Peru is located on the west coast of South America in the southern hemisphere, just below the equator. The Andes Mountains and currents from the Pacific Ocean range from desert to tropical, which creates a unique mix of climates across Peru.

The country is known for its stunning geography, ancient civilizations and rich culture, making Machu Picchu, the Inca Trail, Lake Titicaca, Colca Canyon and the Amazon Rainforest popular destinations among visitors to Peru.

Spanish, Quechua and Aymara are all official languages of Peru, with dozens of additional indigenous languages spoken by Peruvians throughout the country. While Catholicism is the nation's predominant religion, many Peruvians practice syncretism — the combination of multiple belief systems.

You can make a difference in places like Peru by joining our prayer team. Sign up at wycliffe.org/prayer to receive prayer emails on various countries, people groups and more to help you pray about what God is doing around the world.

WAYS TO PRAY FOR THE WORLD

- » That more people like Humbelina would serve in Bible translation, Scripture engagement and literacy training around the world.
- » Bible translation projects would start in the languages across Peru that still need it.
- » Communities in the Americas would recognize God's love for their unique languages and cultures.