

Peru Agricultural Project Mission Impact Analysis

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General Religious Condition of Peru:

Peru represents a large range of mission opportunities. Many of the peoples have been evangelized, but as a contrast there are still people groups that have never been contacted. Operation World estimates that 11.6% of the population of Peru is considered evangelical Christians. They define an evangelical Christian as all who emphasize and adhere to all four of the following:

- The Lord Jesus Christ as the sole source of salvation through faith in Him, as validated by His crucifixion and resurrection.
- Personal faith and conversion with regeneration by the Holy Spirit.
- Recognition of the inspired Word of God as the ultimate basis and authority for faith and Christian living.
- Commitment to biblical witness, evangelism and mission that brings others to faith in Christ.

They further recognize that only 10-40% of evangelicals that meet the above definition may have had a valid conversion experience and attend church regularly. This number does show how many persons align themselves with churches where the Gospel is being proclaimed.

Operation World also indicates that 95.4% of the population is “Christian”. They define “Christian” as:

“Anyone who professes to be Christian. The term embraces all traditions and confessions of Christianity. It is no indicator of the degree of commitment or theological orthodoxy. The primary emphasis utilized is that of recognizing self-identification as well as accepting the Scriptural principles illustrated in Matt 10:32 and Romans 10:9.”

Operation World further indicates that 5% of the 106 people groups in Peru are unreached. They define unreached as:

“An ethnolinguistic people among whom there is no viable indigenous community of believing Christians with adequate numbers and resources to evangelize their own people without outside (cross-cultural) assistance. Other researchers have adopted the terms “hidden people” or “frontier people group.”

These groups in Peru are known as: Cujareno, Isconahua, Pisabo, Yora, and Jews. Each one of these groups has less than 2% Christ followers. They represent less than 1% of the total population. The Joshua Project defines unreached or least reached as:

“...a people group among which there is no indigenous community of believing Christians with adequate numbers and resources to evangelize this people group.

The original Joshua Project editorial committee selected the criteria less than 2% Evangelical Christian and less than 5% Christian Adherents. While these percentage figures are somewhat arbitrary, there are some that suggest that the percentage of a population needed to be influenced to impact the whole group is 2%.”

The locations of these people groups, except for the Jews, is shown on the language map of Peru in Appendix A.

Survival International, a group that works to protect the rights of tribal groups, has indicated that there are at least 15 un-contacted groups in Peru. These are groups that have supposedly not had contact with the outside world. Some of the people groups named are: Cacataibo, Isconahua, Matsigenka, Mashco-Piro, Mastanahua, Murunahua (or Chitonahua), Nanti and Yora. This includes three of the groups mention by Operation World and listed above. Some of these, but not all, are noted on the language map in Appendix A.

The Joshua Project indicates, based on the 2% definition, that significant progress with the spread of the Gospel has been made in Peru. They also show that of the 106 language groups 62 have less than 10% evangelical presence. This would indicate that although Peru has a few unreached people groups that in general it would not be considered an unreached country. It does, however, indicate that it is an under-reached country.

Agricultural Project:

The agricultural project is located in the department of Junin a distance from the capital of Lima of 12 hours traveling on paved highway in a vehicle, plus 4 hours on dirt road, plus 10 hours walking; essentially two days travel from the Capital of Lima. Currently there is no road to the site. A road project is progressing toward the site and hopefully will provide access by four wheel drive vehicle by the end of 2011.

This location is in the valley of the Ene river. This was one of the strongholds of the terrorist group, The Shining Path, and to a lot of the narcotics trade. Peru is currently the world’s top coca producer and second largest producer of cocaine. This area is no longer controlled by these groups, but they continue to have a stronghold approximately 30 to 40 miles south in the area designated the VRAE (Valle Rio Apurimac Ene). The effects of this domination are still very strong in this region. See also Appendix B.



Tributary to the Ene river that passes the site.



Political Map of Peru

Native People:

The native peoples in this zone are Asháninka, with possibly some people from the Nomatsiguenga people group. The Asháninka people group exists in 6 different departments (states) in Peru in 353 different communities, with a total population of 52,461 based on 1993



census figures. This census indicates that the Asháninka people constitute the most important indigenous group in the Amazon jungle of Peru, being 21.89% of the total indigenous population of the Peruvian Amazon jungle region. These statistics are probably adversely affected by the inability to do a thorough census due to the political violence in this region during this time (the presence of The Shining Path Terrorist). The average community size is 171 persons with groups as small as 10 persons and as large as 600 persons or larger. The largest being 1284 persons. 48% of the population is 15 years of age and under. Those older than 64 represent only 1% or less of the population. Six of the communities had 30 or more deaths as a result of the terrorist war and another 33 communities register numbers of death due to terrorist activity from 10 to 29 per community.

Asháninka Religious History:

Starting in 1634, the Asháninka started to be evangelized by the Dominican and Franciscan orders. The first mission was established in La Merced by the Franciscans. By 1640 the Franciscans had established seven mission centers in this region. These missions were essentially destroyed by a rebellion provoked by the arrival of Spanish miners. In 1671 some of the missions were reestablished and others were opened along the Perené River. These missions were adversely affected by an uprising by Fernando Torote, an Asháninka chief, because of the fear that the Franciscan presence would interfere with the salt trade.

In 1709, a new attempt to evangelize was attempted by the Franciscans and by 1739, 38 missions were established that reached some 8500 Asháninka people. Again, epidemics in this region along with other rebellions closed the missions for almost 100 years.

In 1869 the armed Asháninka resistance was broken in the Chanchamayo Valley, and the city of La Merced was founded. The hostility continued until the establishment of the “Peruvian Corporation”, an English business, which was given 500,000 hectares in the valleys of the Perené and the Ene rivers in the Asháninka territory. With this action the beginning of the penetration of colonization began and has continued to the present. The enslavement of the Asháninka, especially of the women and children, started in this period and continued until approximately 1950.

In 1920 the Adventists church started working in this region followed in 1950 by the Summer Institute of Linguistics. In 1965 violence again entered the region with the arrival of the terrorist group Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria (MIR) and the Peruvian armed forces. In 1974, the Peruvian government passed a law giving the Asháninka certain guarantees to their native

lands. Violence again engulfed the region from 1986 to 1996 with the arrival of the terrorist groups, the Shining Path and Movimiento Revolucionario Túpac Amaru, along with actions of the Peruvian armed forces against these movements.

Currently this population is considered to be approximately 10% evangelical Christian, 10% Catholic and the remaining population being ethnic religions. It appears that the majority of the Christian groups are located in the Canchamayo Valley and the area between that region and Satipo. The evangelical influence lessens further into the jungle from this area.

Economic Activities:

The principal activity in this region is agriculture. The principle products are: yucca, banana, corn, peanuts, yams, rice, beans, sugar cane, and citrus fruits. In the Chanchamyo valley down to Satipo, the production of coffee and achiote have grown. Hunting and fishing are also significant activities. Cattle farming was introduced into this region by evangelical missionaries and the Summer Institute of Linguistics. Logging is also significant.



Typical hut used for living in this area.

Education:

The 1993 census indicates that the level of illiteracy is 39% among persons older than 5 years. The men are more literate than women with 33% illiteracy among men and 45% among women. 32% of the population 5 years and older have not formal education and 51% have not completed elementary education. Only 9% of the population has secondary education and 15% superior education of which only 23% completed their superior education.

This people group only has 332 schools, with 73% of these being only elementary level. Only 7% offer complete secondary education. There are a total of 575 teachers for this region and only 232 of them are indigenous.

Potential Project Impact:

The principle purpose of this project is to provide income to self-sustain the Peru ministry. The project could begin providing income in 3 years with enough income to support Peruvian ministry workers and provide ministry materials in 4 years. The long term impact is even greater as the project grows. With additional outside help this project can produce more income sooner. The estimated potential income from the initial phase of the project would be approximately S/.100,000.00 nuevos soles (\$37,000.00) per year after four years.

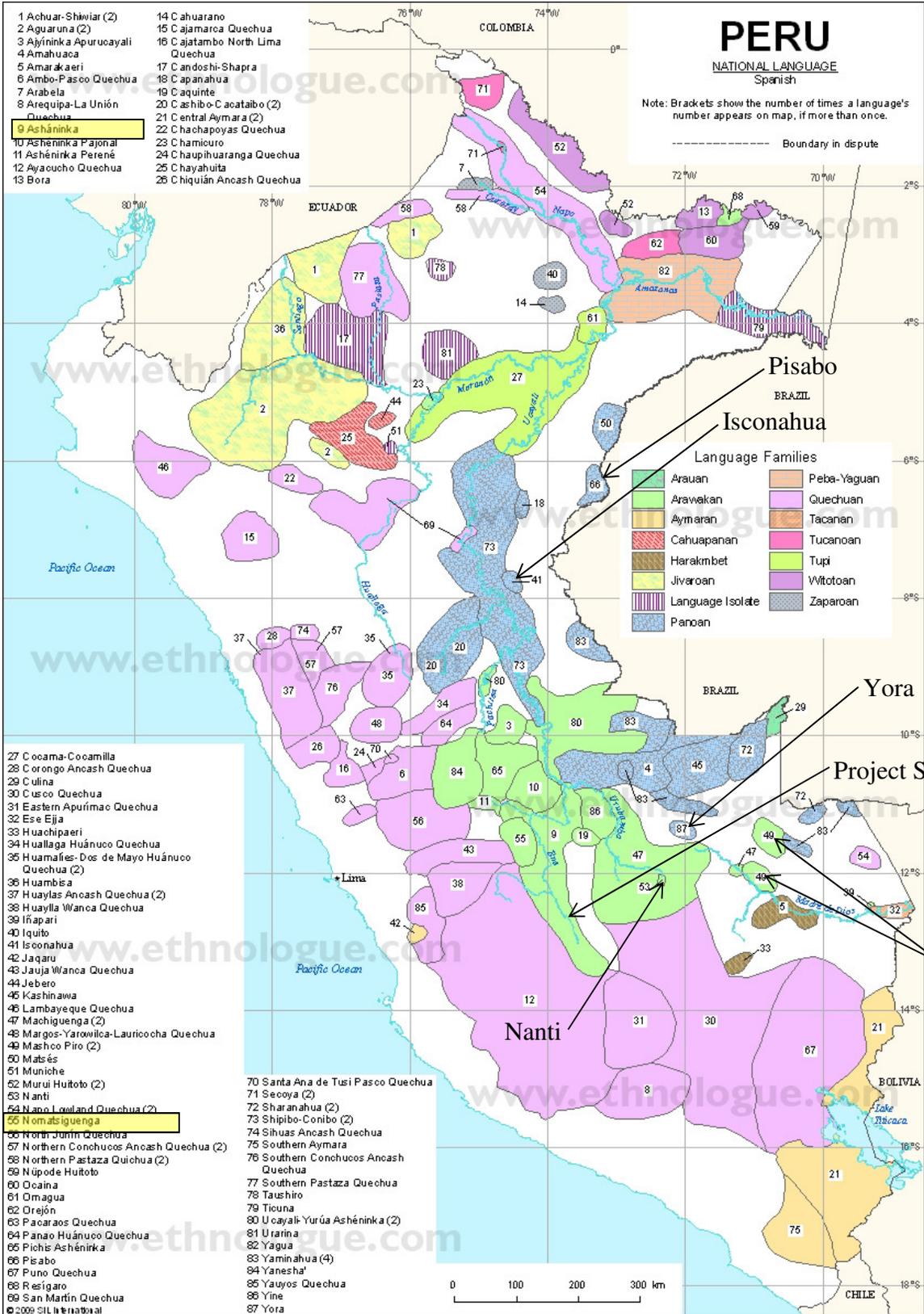
In addition to providing mission support, this project will provide jobs for local people. The first phase of the project is projected to provide approximately 2430 man-days of work in the first 4 years. This also creates influence in the local communities providing opportunities for evangelism and discipleship.

The project location provides future potential to construct a camp for Christian activities and outreach which can be used as a center of operation to provide educational opportunities as well as leadership training for further penetration of the Gospel into the jungle regions. The location on a semi navigable river and the future road will provide access to more remote areas.

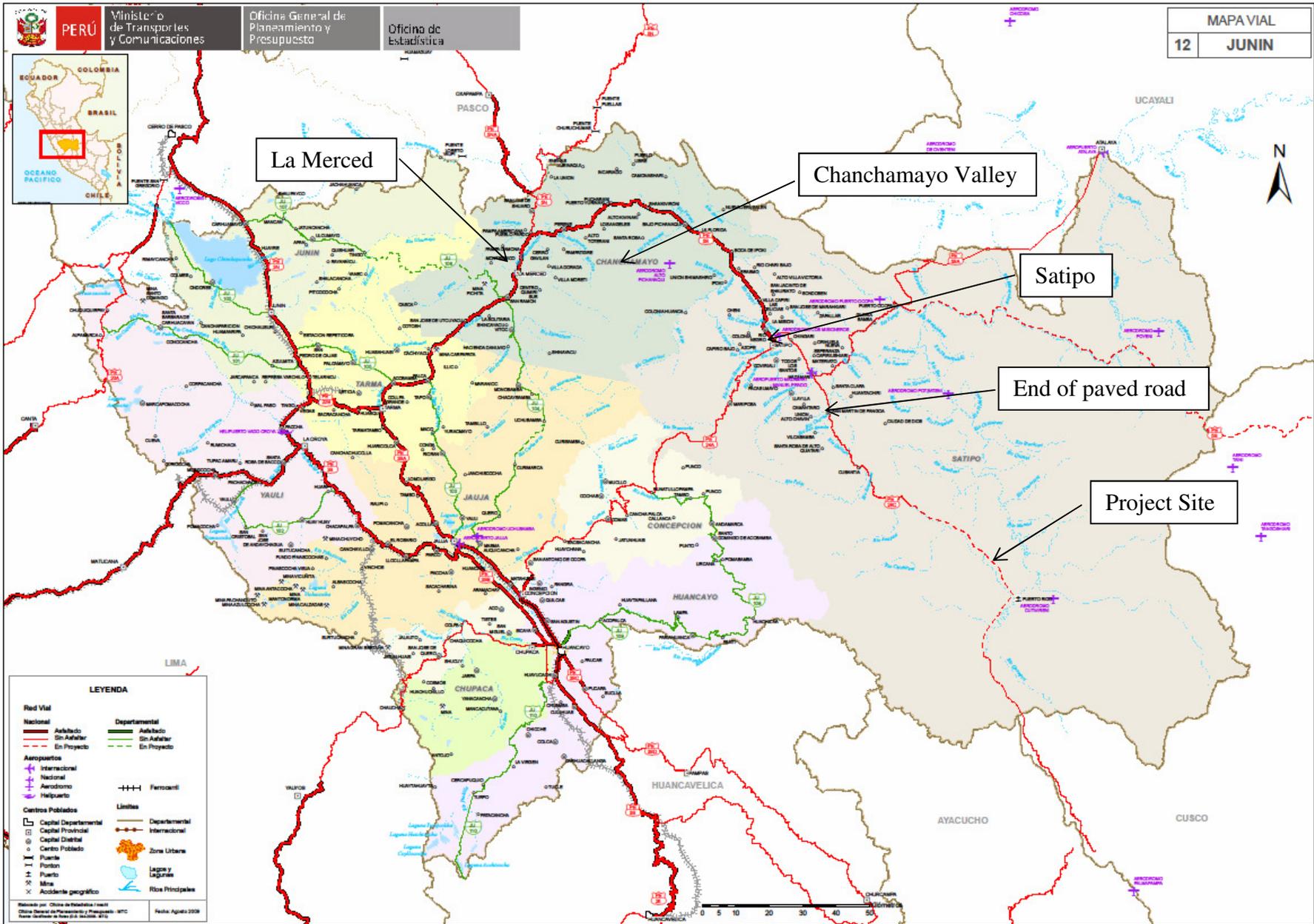
When electricity becomes available to this site it can provide future opportunities for processing plants to create added value to the agricultural products to be produced on the project and, as a result, additional employment for local peoples. Currently the small stream flowing through the site could be used to turn small generators to produce some electrical energy on a small scale.

References:

1. **Operation World**, by Partick Johnston, 1995, p. 655
2. **Operation World** <http://www.operationworld.org/peru>
3. **The Joshua Project** <http://www.joshuaproject.net/countries.php?rog3=PE>
4. **Ethnologue** http://www.ethnologue.com/show_map.asp?name=PE&seq=10
5. **Survival International** <http://www.survivalinternational.org/tribes/isolatedperu>
6. **Centro Cultural José Pío Aza** <http://www.selvasperu.org/documents/Ashaninka.pdf>
7. **Ministerio de Transportes y Comunicaciones**
http://www.mtc.gob.pe/portal/transportes/red_vial/dptos/junin_3v.pdf
8. **Instituto Nacional Geográfico del Perú**



Appendix A: Language Map of Peru



Appendix B: Road Map of the Department of Junin.