



**TRANSPORTATION & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECT  
Annex II**

**FINAL REPORT  
GIGANTE CENSUS, JANUARY – FEBRUARY 2008**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

During the last week of January and the first week of February 2008 Project Wave of Optimism conducted a census of the community of Pie de Gigante, Nicaragua. The census was carried out in the field as Project WOO staff visited every home and conducted oral interviews with the heads of family to determine the exact population of the area in order to carry out short and long term projections within the business plan for the “Wave of Optimism Transportation” company that Project WOO plans to launch with local residents as an economic development program.

The area contemplated in the study begins at the first (southern) turn-off for Gigante from the principal Tola-Las Salinas highway, continues southwest to the Pacific Coast, and then turns northwest back up to the Tola-Las Salinas highway by way of the El Asentamiento neighborhood, coming out just south of the community of El Tambo.

The census contained questions regarding the name, age, sex, education level, occupation, average monthly salary of each employed family member, average monthly salary for the family in both the summer and winter, current mode of transportation, whether or not the family would utilize transportation from Gigante to Tola if it were available, and whether or not the family would pay 25 córdobas (about \$1.30) per person to use said transportation.

## AGE RANGE (MALE & FEMALE)

Age	Male	Female	Total
0-12	61	55	116
13-18	24	35	59
19-59	101	89	190
60 +	12	9	21
<b>Total</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>386</b>

### Graph: Age Range

31%

12%

51%

6%

0-12

13-18

19-59

60 +

0

50

100

150

200

0-12

13-18

19-59

60 +

Total

### Graph: Ages, Male vs. Female

Male

Female

## AGE RANGE (GENERAL)

Age	Total
0-5	58
6-10	43
11-19	78

20-29	80
30-39	59
40-59	47
60 +	21
<b>Total</b>	<b>386</b>

### Graph: General Age Range

15%  
11%  
20%  
22%  
15%  
12%  
5%  
0-5  
6-10  
11-19  
20-29  
30-39  
40-59  
60 +

The total population of Gigante is 386 people, and the average age is 26 years old. In the first chart and the graph titled “Age Range,” the study was broken down according to four age groupings: children 0-12, adolescents 13-18, adults 19-59, and elderly 60 and older. The highest population concentration is between the ages of 19-59, which makes up 51 percent of the entire population. This makes sense, of course, because it is the biggest range of the study, covering forty years. This is followed by the 0-12 children age group, which makes up 31 percent of the overall population, indicating that over the next eighteen years one third of Gigante’s current population will cross over into adulthood and therefore be seeking some form of gainful employment.

Further investigation – as shown in the “General Age Range” chart and graph – indicates that 20-29 year olds make up 22 percent of the overall population and 43 percent of the 19-59 age range while 11-19 year olds make up the next largest percentage of the general population with 20 percent. This data reveals that Gigante currently has a rather large population of young, able-bodied men and women. These people could surely benefit from increased employment opportunities as well.

### EDUCATION LEVEL

<b>Education</b>	<b>Active</b>	<b>Inactive</b>	<b>Total</b>
Pre-school	19	0	19
Primary	72	132	204
Secondary	27	49	76
University	0	9	9
Professional	3	0	3
None	0	75	75
<b>Total</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>311</b>

**Graph: Education Level of Active Students**

16%  
60%  
22%  
0%  
2%  
0%

Pre-school  
Primary

Secondary  
University  
Professional  
None

**Graph: Education Level of Inactive Students**

0%  
51%  
18%  
3%  
0%  
28%

Pre-school  
Primary  
Secondary  
University  
Professional  
None

## Graph: Overall Education Level

5%  
53%  
20%  
2%  
1%  
19%  
Pre-school  
Primary  
Secondary  
University  
Professional  
None

Based on the data reflecting the local population's level of education it can be seen that among adults no longer seeking a course of study the vast majority, 79 percent, has no higher than a sixth grade education. 51 percent of adults received only a primary education (up to sixth grade), while only 18 percent of the total adult population made it to the secondary level (no higher than eleventh grade). A full 28 percent of the population did not receive any kind of formal education. In other words, 97 percent of adults have no formal education past secondary school. This lack of education could indicate why such a high level of conflict exists among community members. It could also indicate why Project Wave of Optimism has had such a tough time promoting community development where the majority of adults have not been exposed to the open-mindedness that comes with exposure to higher learning and/or analytical thinking skills.

As far as the active students are concerned, 16 percent are pre-school students, 60 percent are currently enrolled in elementary school, and 22 percent attend secondary school either daily or on Saturdays. There is currently no secondary school in Gigante, meaning that all students wishing to continue past the primary level are forced to travel to Tola or Rivas, which is costly, unsafe, and unreliable. Based on this data it can be seen that Project Wave of Optimism Transportation will serve almost one quarter of the entire student population immediately upon launching service this year, and over the next eight years 76 percent of the current student population will be making use of the transportation service.

## AVERAGE MONTHLY INCOME & OCCUPATIONS

<b>Income in Nicaraguan Córdobas*</b>	<b>Income in U.S. Dollars**</b>	<b>Total # Families</b>
C\$ 0 – 1000	\$ 0 – 50	58
C\$ 1001 – 3000	\$ 50 – 160	193

C\$ 3001 +	\$ 160 +	135
<b>Total</b>		<b>386</b>

\*At the publication of this census \$1.00 (one U.S. Dollar) equaled C\$ 18.95 (eighteen Córdoba and 95 cents)

\*\*U.S. Dollar amounts are rounded off

### Graph: Average Monthly Family Income

15%  
50%  
35%  
C\$ 0-1000  
1001-3000  
3001 +

### Graph: Occupations

47%  
11%  
2%  
6%  
10%  
12%  
12%  
Fishing  
Agriculture  
Professional  
Day Worker  
Housekeeping  
Own Business  
Other

In the graph titled “Average Monthly Family Income” it can be seen that the majority of families, 65 percent, survive on less than C\$3000.00 (three thousand córdobas), or \$160.00, each month. Given that the most popular occupation is fishing, 47 percent of the population claim fishing as their occupation – almost exclusively among the male population – the average monthly income varies greatly depending on the ocean’s yield, which varies according to the season. Twelve percent of the population claims to own a business is Gigante, which is home to five restaurants, four foreign owned and operated surf camps/hotels, three wholesale seafood storage houses, three small general stores, one billiards hall, and one locally owned hotel. Due to growing tourism and related construction in the region, six percent of the local population is dedicated to day labor on construction sites and ten percent have service related jobs, mainly has housekeepers, at local hotels and restaurants. A world class resort and spa is

scheduled to open in Gigante sometime in 2009, which should stimulate the local economy by providing up to 120 service industry jobs to regional laborers.

In Gigante (as in Nicaragua in general) it is commonly understood that there are two seasons, summer and winter. Summer begins in December and marks the dry season, which lasts through April. Winter is the rainy season and lasts from May through October and sometimes November. As detailed in charts below, the majority of the population – 61 percent – feels that the economy is better during the summer. This judgment could be due to the fact that during the dry season the main access roads are in good shape and therefore allow fishermen to move their products freely; businesses are able to bring goods into town from Rivas and Managua easily and consistently; and tourism is high during the dry season. Surf tourism, which is a burgeoning industry in this small town, is at its peak from April through September, which could account for 17 percent of the population considering the wet season to be better for the economy and 22 percent seeing no difference.

### **BEST SEASON FOR THE ECONOMY**

<b>Season</b>	<b>Total</b>
Dry season	233
Wet season	67
No difference	86
<b>Total</b>	<b>386</b>

### **Graph: Best Season (Economic Outlook)**

61%

17%

22%

Dry

Wet

Same

## CURRENT MODE OF TRANSPORTATION

Walk	217
Bicycle	20
Car (own)	37
Hitch- hike	89
Other	23
<b>Total</b>	<b>386</b>

### Graph: Current Mode of Transportation

56%

5%

10%

23%

6%

Walk

Bicycle

Car (own)

Hitch-hike

Other

Currently there is no public transportation option for the community members of Gigante, nor is there a private company that provides this service. Coastal Gigante sits six kilometers off of the principal highway from Tola to Las Salinas. Because there is no safe or reliable transportation in and out of town residents are forced to walk, ride a bicycle or risk their safety by hitching a ride in the back of a fast moving pickup truck to travel the six kilometers to the main highway where they have to wait up to several hours for a full, slow, dirty, unsafe bus to pass by on its way to Rivas. As reflected in the data, 90 percent of the population is dependant on an outside source to travel in and out of Gigante, thus illustrating the overwhelming necessity for safe and reliable transportation.

### **WILLINGNESS TO USE TRANSPORTATION**

Would use	360
Would not use	26
<b>Total</b>	<b>386</b>

#### **Graph: Willingness to use Transportation**

93%

7%

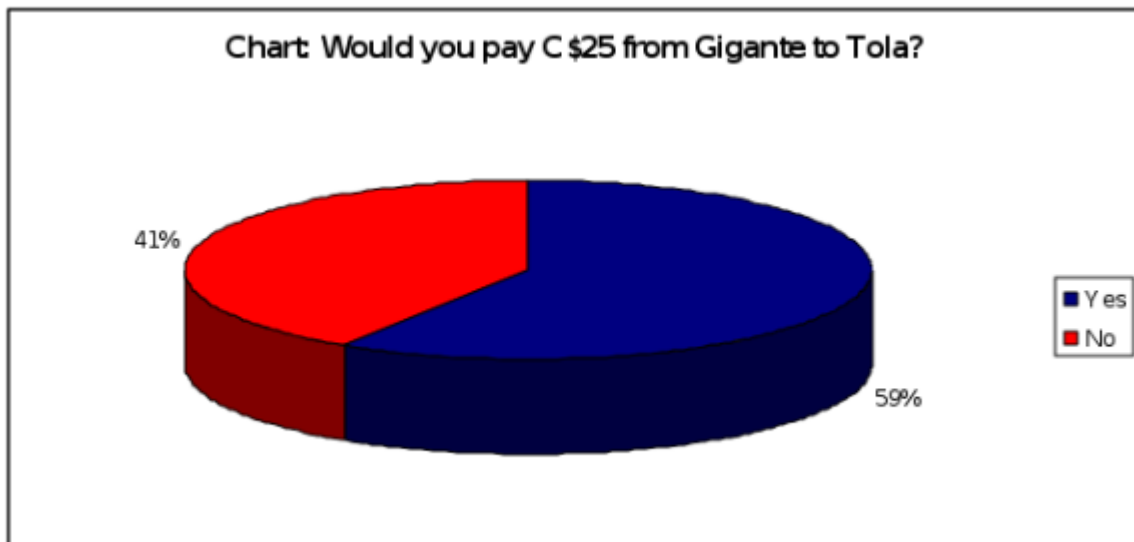
Yes

No

One of the central questions posed to the community members was, “If there was reliable transportation available from Gigante to Tola, would you use it?” The overwhelming majority, 93 percent, responded positively that yes, they would. The seven percent of the population that said they would not take advantage of the transportation service lives the closest to the main Las Salinas-Tola highway. However, given the option of safe, reliable transportation directly from ones home to Tola or Rivas, Project WOO feels that even those seven percent who said they would not use transportation would be inclined to take advantage of the option once it is widely available.

### **WILLINGNESS TO PAY C\$ 25.00 FROM GIGANTE TO TOLA**

Yes	227
No	159
<b>Total</b>	<b>386</b>



Another central question posed to community members during the oral interview was to find out whether or not residents would be willing to pay C\$25.00 (about \$1.30) for direct transportation from Gigante to Tola. One of the ideas behind this question was to gauge the reaction of the residents to possibility that the bus company would charge them C\$25.00 each way, making the cost of round trip service C\$50.00. Of the 59 percent that agreed to C\$25.00 as a far rate, the majority live on the coast and currently have to walk to farthest or pay the most just to get out to the main Las Salinas-Tola highway. The 41 percent of the population that did not agree to pay C\$25.00 live closer to the main highway and therefore do not mind walking part of the way, waiting for another bus, and paying C\$20.00 that other bus companies charge to get from the Gigante entrance to Rivas.

Project WOO came up with the value for the trip based on a preliminary feasibility study performed in December of 2007. Upon further review it was determined that the cost of the trip was much lower than originally contemplated and therefore the transportation business can charge less than C\$25.00 per trip. However, by initially presenting the value of the trip as C\$25.00 during the survey, the company hopes to attract more customers when it launches service at a lower price.