

**ATTACHMENT H: OUTREACH PROCESS**

## **Outreach to Tribes/FDPIR Programs**

While awaiting OMB clearance, we will conduct extensive outreach with the ITOs that have been selected for inclusion in the study. Our approach is to build on the Tribal Consultations conducted in advance of the research effort. The consultations and outreach will introduce the study to Tribal leaders and FDPIR staff and provide an opportunity to receive input that will inform the research design and build support for the study. We conducted teleconferences with the six FNS regional offices that have FDPIR programs in February 2012, and we will continue to keep them apprised of activities related to sites in their respective regions. Between November 2012 and January 2013 FNS conducted three in-person and one webinar formal consultations for all Tribal Leaders from the selected sample of Tribes to maximize acceptance of the study. Teleconferences are also planned with representatives of the National Association of Food Distribution Programs on Indian Reservations (NAFDPIR) from each of these regions. Proactive efforts with potential sites will also allow us to develop a sense of each ITO's willingness and capacity to participate in the study. The outreach effort is guided by a respect for Tribal sovereignty in the research process and is sensitive to the need to develop relationships, build rapport, and establish communication protocols with Tribal leaders, FDPIR staff, and members of the study team. We are aware that many Tribal populations have a historical wariness to participating in federally-sponsored research initiatives and may be reluctant to participate in this study as well. A number of Tribes have issued guidelines on conducting research in Indian country, such as providing suggestions to sensitize researchers to local culture, traditions, lifestyles, and research priorities, as well as detailing researchers' responsibility and accountability to the Tribe and its people (e.g., communication and coordination with Tribal leaders, negotiation to participate, sharing results, protecting participant and Tribal identity, etc.). Our individualized strategy for outreach and engagement is described below.

### **1. Advance informational materials to Tribes**

We will develop a suite of materials for dissemination to familiarize Tribal leaders, elders, and ITOs with the study and the study team. The outreach activity will be led by NORC with support from UI and SSI. The materials will include a cover letter that introduces the team, a template for inviting the study team onto tribal lands to conduct the research, a fact sheet about the study that is suitable for reproducing in Tribal newsletters or posting on Tribal websites, selected reports or briefs, and endorsement letters. The materials will also provide information about protocols and procedures that need to be discussed and negotiated prior to launching the case record abstraction and survey tasks, as detailed below. All of these materials can also be posted as updates on the FNS web site: [www.fns.usda.gov/fns/tribal/](http://www.fns.usda.gov/fns/tribal/).

### **2. Initial contact with Tribes**

After initial notification letters have been sent from USDA, NORC will contact ITOs by email or telephone to identify the appropriate person to whom materials should be sent. We will then place a follow-up call to ensure that the material was delivered and arrange for a conference call with Tribal leaders and FDPIR staff to discuss protocols. Several members of our team have long-standing relationships with a number of Tribes, and we anticipate that this will facilitate initial contact and cooperation.

### 3. Outreach telephone calls

Our team will arrange and conduct calls or webinar conferences with each ITO in the study sample. During these calls, team members will cover a number of topics: the study methodology; conducting the case record review; respecting confidentiality; appointment of a Tribal liaison (if desired) to facilitate contact with the study team and Field Interviewers; the topics of the interview questions; potential barriers and concerns to data collection of Tribal members; optimal timing for data collection; working with the designated Field Interviewer; Tribal protocols and etiquette to observe while visiting onsite; use of the information; and how findings will be conveyed to FNS and back to the community. We will negotiate a Data Sharing Agreement with each Tribe and draft a memorandum that details the Tribally-specific protocol for Case Reviewers and Field Interviewers to observe, and provide Tribal leaders with a copy for their reference. We will keep detailed records of our outreach and communication efforts to ensure common understanding of agreed-upon procedures. As we conduct outreach with the Tribes we will keep FNS and the Regional Offices informed about our communication with them. As shown in the exhibit below, we will prepare a bi-weekly summary of planned and completed calls with the ITOs. This information will provide information at a glance regarding each ITO contacted, the dates of each call, ITO and study team participants on the call, topics discussed (as noted above), and action items (pending and completed).

#### Bi-Weekly Summary Report to FNS: ITO Outreach for FDPIR Study

Regional Office	ITO	Date of Call	ITO Participants	Study Team Participants	Discussion Topics	Next Steps
<b>Northeast</b>						
<b>Southeast</b>						
<b>Midwest</b>						
<b>Mountain Plains</b>						
<b>Southwest</b>						
<b>West</b>						

#### **4. Attendance at the annual NAFDPIR meeting**

An additional venue for outreach with the ITOs selected for the study was the annual NAFDPIR meeting held June 2012 in Niagara Falls, NY. Members of the study team from UI, NORC, and SSI attended the meeting and conducted an informational session about the study.

#### **5. Compliance with Tribal Institutional Review Board (IRB) procedures**

One key task we will accomplish through the telephone outreach is to understand the requirements of each Tribal IRB. Over the past decade, Tribes—as sovereign nations—have heightened their stewardship and oversight of research conducted on Tribal lands to ensure that research enhances community well-being and protects the community from harmful research (NCAI, 2009: 18). Efforts include development of Institutional Review Boards; culturally-specific guidelines for conducting research; assessment checklists to guide the review of research protocols according to Tribal community values; Tribal research codes; policies for data sharing; and requirements for community consultation. We will work with each ITO and, if they have an IRB, work with their respective Tribal IRB to submit an IRB protocol to obtain permission to conduct the study. This effort will likely involve an in-person visit or a teleconference to make a presentation or to address questions.

#### **6. Tribal capacity-building**

Expectations regarding reciprocity in the research process have also been put forth by Tribes, expressly stating that researchers have an ethical obligation to help build the Tribe's own research capacity by relying on Tribal members to serve as part of the research team and by using community-based participatory research methods that will build capacity to conduct research in the future (NCAI, 2009: 23). Our approach will include activities such as instructions on sampling, data security for research studies, arranging interviews and discussion groups, and other research procedures, to facilitate Tribal capacity-building. We recognize that some Tribes may want to be actively involved in these activities and that others may prefer to let the study team conduct them instead. We will tailor our approach to accommodate Tribal preferences.

#### **7. Site visits**

In some cases it will be necessary to go onsite to meet with Tribal leaders and FDPIR programs to engage in face-to-face discussions on the topics noted above. We may be asked to make a presentation in person before a Tribal Council, a Tribal IRB, a research review committee, or the community. We intend to do so in a manner most conducive to each Tribe. It is likely that the study team will be asked to prepare a Tribal resolution in advance of the meeting. We will produce a set of PowerPoint slides or talking points that conveys key information about the study and the study team, and will tailor these materials as needed. During the visits and face-to-face meetings, we will also share information about the types of questions asked during the interview with participants. We will circulate copies of the draft FDPIR Participant Survey instrument, if requested, and will place the draft questionnaires on the FNS web site: [www.fns.usda.gov/fns/tribal/](http://www.fns.usda.gov/fns/tribal/).

We recognize that time will be needed for internal communication and decision-making with each sampled ITO. Therefore, we anticipate that outreach will be an extended process involving engagement,

communication and, sometimes, negotiation. At the conclusion of the data collection period, we will send a letter to each participating ITO to thank them for their participation.