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**PROPOSAL FOR A  
MONITORING AND INFORMATION SYSTEM  
FOR USG SUPPLIED FOOD AND COMMODITIES**

**AFGHANISTAN  
COMMODITY EXPORT PROGRAM**

**RONCO Consulting Corporation  
1629 K Street, N.W.  
Suite 300  
Washington, D.C. 20006**

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## I. BACKGROUND

To help rehabilitate rural Afghanistan, and to support the people of Afghanistan living in areas affected by the disturbances and in areas freed by the Mujahideen, the United States Government established a Humanitarian Assistance program for Afghanistan. The program objective is to help meet the basic human needs related to the damages and destruction caused by the conflict. To this end, objectives of the program have been to help the Afghan Resistance Alliance and its seven parties in efforts to provide food, goods and services to the Mujahideen and other affected Afghans and to help the Afghans reestablish themselves quickly in their towns and villages as soon as security permits.

In order to achieve those objectives, the O/AID/REP in 1986 began to implement the humanitarian assistance program. Because of the nature and urgency of the situation, O/AID/REP authorized the expenditure of funds to procure essential goods and services for distribution inside Afghanistan. More recently, with the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan and some improvement in the internal security situation, the need arises for a Monitoring and Information system for tracking commodities, for identification of distribution sites, and for determining end-users and evaluating impact.

The Commodity Export Program (CEP) is designed to provide Afghans affected by the disturbance with a range of humanitarian goods which includes food, medical supplies, shelter, and related items. The program has also provided vehicles and pack animals that are critical to the transport and distribution of these goods. Identification of the goods for which there is the greatest need is made by the Alliance Logistics Committee. The CEP handles procurement of the goods as well as logistics and commodity accounting within Pakistan. The majority of goods is procured from the local market in Pakistan. The remainder is procured from the United States and other free world countries.

Over the past year the focus of program operations has shifted from providing humanitarian assistance as expeditiously as possible to areas affected by the disturbances, to establishing controls for the purpose of accountability and end-user verification. While humanitarian assistance continues to account for the majority of program activities, an objective of the assistance is now one of preparing the Afghan Interim Government (AIG) to take a greater participatory role in accounting for commodities they receive and distribute. Identification of the end-users and an assessment of the impact of the commodities on the livelihood of the end-users are of prime concern to O/AID/REP.

Obtaining end user and impact analysis information is difficult, at best. In the past, RONCO monitors have accompanied convoys to the border of Afghanistan but have been unable to cross over into Afghanistan. In Quetta, RONCO has experienced the most difficulties in getting Afghan monitors into Afghanistan. Monitoring has been limited to inventory control at the Party warehouses, verification of documents at Party warehouses and to accompanying convoys to the border. In Peshawar, we have had a little more success with monitoring as monitors have been able to cross over into Afghanistan. Even so, monitoring has been limited essentially to accompanying convoys to a Party depot, accompanying convoys to final destinations and to observing distribution. Reports submitted by monitors who enter Afghanistan through Peshawar have described the distribution of commodities to villagers and have summarized market surveys. Although the monitoring activities out of Peshawar provide information on distribution and final destination, a need remains to obtain good information on end users, their eligibility and the impact of the commodities.

RONCO was asked by O/AID/REP to analyze what is needed to put together an effective and efficient monitoring and information system. The scope of work to conduct an analysis of the monitoring system currently being used by RONCO gave special emphasis to the adequacy of data sources for monitoring and evaluation of Program activities and the appropriateness of data being collected and its usefulness in information management.

To summarize, there is no mechanism in place at present which allows the O/AID/REP to determine who is receiving donated commodities, or whether or not the recipients are eligible to receive assistance. Neither is there information regarding basic demographic information (age, sex, family status, education, and occupation), or prior and recent locations of the recipients. Essentially, there is no way under the existing monitoring system to determine who is an eligible recipient and who is not.

The objective of this proposal is to identify and detail an approach to establishing a monitoring system that remedies these deficiencies.

## **II. TECHNICAL APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY**

This section describes RONCO's proposed approach to setting up a Monitoring Unit to address the monitoring and reporting requirements identified in Section I. The proposed monitoring system has three elements:

- A Data Gathering System;
- A Data Based Information System; and
- An Analytical Unit.

The purpose of the Monitoring System is to verify and to document the final delivery, end use and impact on recipients of commodities procured by the CEP.

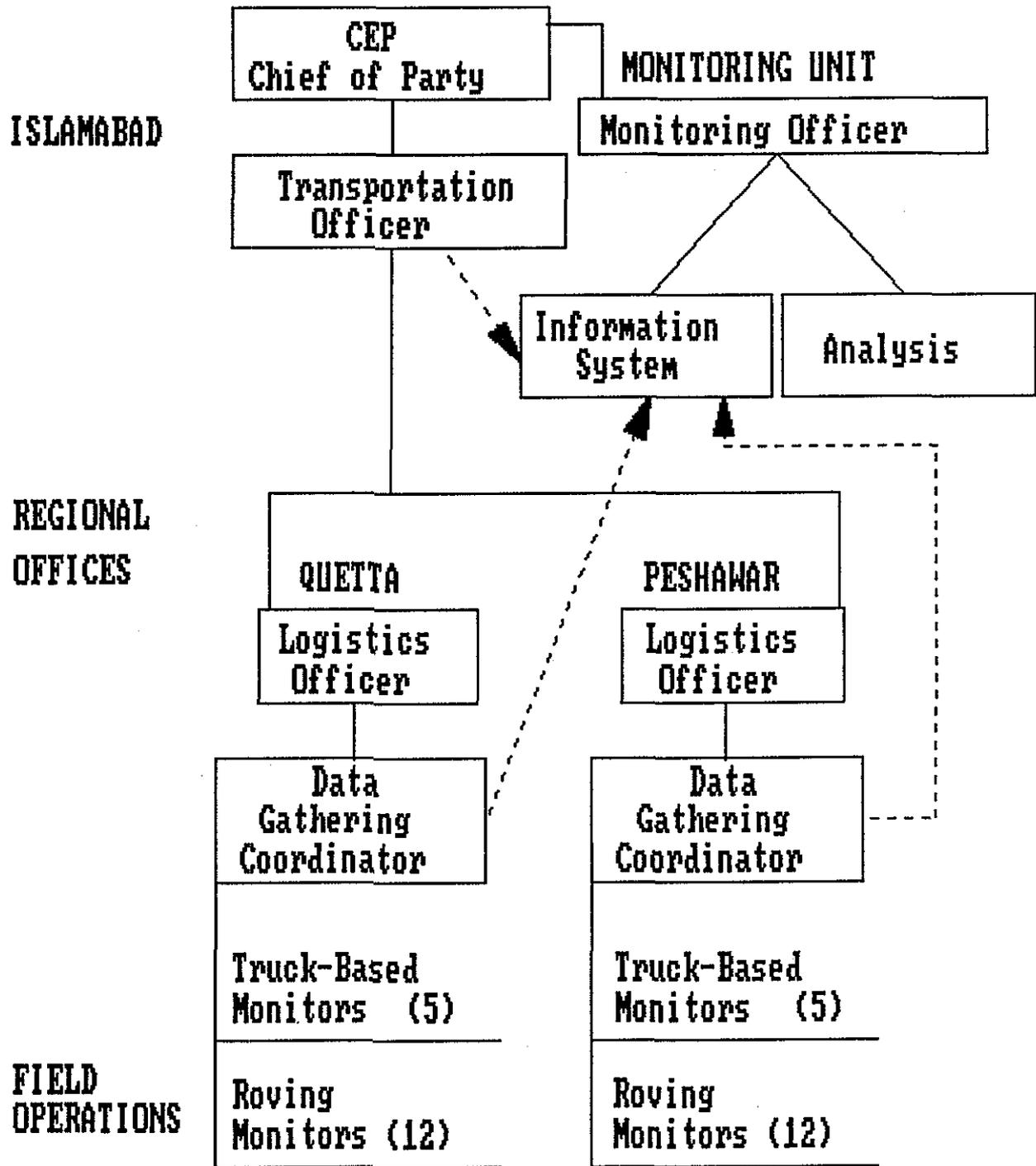
### **A. Structure of the Monitoring System**

The Monitoring System will be headed by a Monitoring Officer whose sole responsibility is the monitoring, analysis and reporting function. This person will report directly to the CEP Chief of Party (Figure 1). The Monitoring Unit, based in Islamabad, will have on the staff an Analyst who will be responsible both for maintaining the Information System and for analyzing the data and putting it into reports in agreed formats and on specified dates. The Monitoring Unit will have two Data Collection Coordinators -- one in Peshawar and one in Quetta -- who will report administratively to the respective regional CEP Logistics Officers, but who will take direction from the Monitoring Officer on the substance and procedures for obtaining the data. Each regional office will have Truck-Based Monitors (an estimated five will be based at each regional office) and Roving Monitors (an estimated twelve will work out of each regional office).

### **B. Operational Procedures for the Monitoring System**

Working together, the Chief of Party and the Monitoring Officer will recommend to the Office of AID Representative the kinds of data and reports which will give as accurate a picture as possible of the end-use and impact of the commodities distributed. Once the O/AID/Rep has concurred in the report formats, the Monitoring Officer will be responsible for implementing the system. The Monitoring Officer will instruct the Data Gathering Officers (DGOs) on the kinds of data to gather and in what format. The DGOs will supervise the Truck-Based Monitors (TBM) and the Roving Monitors (RM) in the data collection process.

**FIGURE 1  
ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**



————— Lines of Management Reporting  
 - - - - - Data Flows

**1. Flow of Data**

The flow of data to the information system in Islamabad will be as follows:

**a. Data from the Transportation Officer**

Data on receipts and shipments of goods is now being collected by the CEP Transportation Officer in Islamabad. It is planned that the Transportation Officer will remain responsible for collecting the following specific kinds of data and transferring it directly to the information system in Islamabad, where it will be tabulated into movement and inventory reports:

- Receipt of goods at Islamabad
- Storage of goods at Islamabad
- Shipment of goods from Islamabad to Peshawar
- Shipment of goods from Islamabad to Quetta

**b. Data from Regional Logistics Officers**

The two regional Logistics Officers will continue to have responsibility for maintaining the following kinds of data and transferring it on a timely basis directly to the information system:

- Receipt of goods from Islamabad
- Storage of goods in regional warehouses
- Shipment of goods from regional warehouses, to Afghanistan

**c. Data from Truck-Based Monitors**

Each truck which departs Peshawar or Quetta will be accompanied to its destination in Afghanistan by a Truck-Based Monitor who will be responsible for transferring to the information system, via the Data Gathering Coordinator, the following data:

- Truck content report - this monitoring process will allow the monitor to compare transport receipts against warehouse receipts. Other relevant information will include delivery schedule, condition of goods upon arrival at site, and records of any unusual circumstance

which may have occurred during the transport (e.g. divergence, loss, spoilage, etc.)

- Inventory/warehouse reports - actual inventory of commodities received will be made at least on a monthly basis. Physical inventory of commodities will be reconciled against warehouse records. A survey of warehouse conditions and operations will be performed on a monthly basis (e.g., how many shipments went out and where did they go?). If needed, the monitors will provide technical assistance to warehouse personnel by making specific recommendations.
- Warehouse status report - physical condition of warehouses will be checked to ensure that the buildings are safe, kept clean, and that machinery used to handle commodities is in good working condition. Special checks will be made to inspect that there is no leakage of rain from ceilings or side walls, and the plinth of floor from ground level is high enough to prevent flooding.
- End use monitoring report (see Appendix A) - the on-site monitoring distribution process will include a variety of activities. The end use activities are to assure proper distribution of food and other CEP commodities. The monitor will observe and record:
  - Beneficiary eligibility;
  - Reconciliation of shipping documents;
  - Reviews of commercial markets for the availability of PL 480 and DOD commodities; and
  - Follow-up needed on any problems identified.
- Impact survey (see Appendix B) - this process will include interviews with the recipients of CEP and PL 480 commodities, using a structured questionnaire developed by RONCO and approved by O/AID/REP. This process will gather data which later can be used to analyze the amount and type of assistance needed in the future.

**d. Data from Roving Monitors**

The Roving Monitors will be expected to spend approximately three weeks out of each month inside

Afghanistan gathering and recording data. At pre-designated times, these monitors will go back to the regional offices and turn in their data in the proper format to their respective Data Gathering Coordinators, who will in turn transmit it to the information system in Islamabad. Following are the kinds of data which will be collected by the Roving Monitors:

- Distribution sites - geographical location of site and related storage facility;
- Size of local stocks - what is available at the site, how much is available, and type of commodity;
- Methods of distribution;
- Records of interviews with recipients and local officials; and
- Reports of local needs and acceptability - via interviews.

## 2. Processing the Data

The data-based information system will have been programmed so that data coming to the system from the various sources can easily and quickly be entered and stored by a data-entry clerk. The Data Analyst can then retrieve the data and analyze and manipulate it into the required formats and reports.

### C. The Implementation Plan

#### TASK 1. Establish a Monitoring Unit Within the CEP

The Monitoring Unit will not be operational and hands-on in respect to actual commodity receipt or distribution, but will serve as a body for observation and for the collection of information concerning commodity use and impact, handling and distribution.

The Monitoring Unit will be established over a six month period in three steps, which can occur simultaneously:

- Establish the central office (Islamabad)
- Establish field operations inside Afghanistan
- Evaluate and upgrade the system.

**Establish the Central Office in Islamabad**

The monitoring unit headquarters will be established at the Islamabad Office of CEP. This first step will take about two months and will involve operational planning, staff hiring and training and the establishment of an information processing system at the head office. This step will center on the creation of a base for information dissemination, information gathering, and information processing. Actual monitoring during this step will focus on the most macro activities being carried out under the CEP. Those activities include the receipt, storage and dispatch of commodities centered in Pakistan. During this step, the initial and the final operational data collection and processing functions of the system will be established and personnel involved in all aspects of the system will be trained.

#### **Establish Field Operations in Afghanistan**

The second step will require approximately a three-month period, and will interface and link with the operational aspects of the monitoring system created under the first step. It is envisioned that this step will fill the information collection gap between CEP and PL 480 activities taking place on the Pakistani side of the border and the required information concerning commodity end use taking place on the Afghan side of the border. This step will be the most critical as the conditions of operation are unstable and thus system organization and implementation are difficult.

As part of this step, trained monitors will be placed inside Afghanistan. They will observe and record the distribution of CEP and PL480 commodities. These monitors will gather information for the preparation of reports and analysis of program impact.

#### **Evaluate and Upgrade the System**

The third and final step will entail an evaluation of all monitoring activities which will have taken place in steps 1 and 2. This final step of the program will look at the usefulness of data being collected, the role of unit members in the collection and processing of data, and what parties are participating in the data collection and how. From this evaluation recommendations will be made toward improving the monitoring operations, streamlining data collection and information processing and for follow-up training of field staff. This third step will be an ongoing and continuous evaluation and self-improvement process.

#### **TASK 2. Design and Develop an Integrated Information System**

RONCO is presently operating an information system at the CEP Headquarters Office in Islamabad. This system uses a network

which incorporates data from the regional offices in Peshawar and Quetta as well as Islamabad. The integrated system processes information from various sections of the office: administration, commodity management, finance, procurement and transportation.

Although a system has been established, it needs to be modified and improved to incorporate the monitoring data and analytical functions. To upgrade the information system, RONCO has identified the following objectives which it plans to pursue:

**1. Data Analysis**

There is a need to streamline and facilitate data analysis. In order to do this the means of data collection and data transmittal must be modified. Monitoring forms for use under the CEP program will be codified. Staff will be trained in recording and interpreting data in a consistent manner. Macro programs will be established within the information system in order to process data more quickly and to eliminate the need for the manual functions which are now used. Meaningful reporting forms for the final presentation of data will be produced and integrated into the system.

**2. Data Inventory**

The information system presently used by CEP Headquarters does not store data in a central data bank. Each section--i.e., finance and procurement--maintains its own data bank. Therefore, reports cannot be generated which include the processing and presentation of multi-sectorial information. This makes laborious the production of special reports for the Office of AID Representative.

As part of the upgrade of the data inventory, RONCO plans to centralize data storage. Centralization should decrease the time and effort required for multi-sectorial data analysis and increase the types and usefulness of the reports which can be produced.

Finally, RONCO/Islamabad presently has a backlog of existing data which has not been entered into the information system. This data must be inventoried, analyzed, processed and entered into the correct data bank.

**3. Data Management**

RONCO plans to improve on the data management

capabilities of the CEP program. By upgrading the information system, the amount of data which it is able to process will be increased. We plan to process monitoring information so that meaningful reports can be produced in various formats. Some of the reporting formats could include the following:

**a. Commodity Receipt and Distribution Reports**

Information stored in the data bank could be arranged to generate reports based on a fixed indicator with numerous variables. Some possible configurations are:

- i. Quantity of X commodity delivered to X place over X time;
- ii. X places received X quantity of X commodity over X time;
- iii. Over X time X places received X quantity of X commodity;
- iv. X commodities were lost by X vehicle over X time;
- v. X vehicle made X trips to X place over X time;
- vi. X vehicle carried X quantity of commodity over X time;
- vii. X quantity of commodity can be delivered by CEP fleet to X places over X period of time; and
- viii. X quantity of commodity costs X \$ delivered to X place.

**b. Field Monitoring Reports**

Information for these reports will be generated from observation and interviewing done by field monitors while attending commodity distributions. This information will be used to confirm commodity end-use and to complement comprehensive end-use reports.

**c. Impact Survey Reports**

These reports will serve as a tool for follow-up monitoring of the CEP program. The roving monitors who will be taking these surveys in the field will

have the objective of retrieving and recording information concerning the long-term effectiveness of the CEP logistics system and on the impact of the commodities received by the participant population. The processing and reporting of information obtained from these surveys can provide meaningful information to the O/AID/Rep which can be used for program planning.

Many reporting formats are possible. RONCO plans to continue to study which formats are most useful for the impact monitoring system as well as for inventory control. RONCO plans to redefine or redesign the reporting format as needed, in consultation with O/AID/REP.

**TASK 3. Establish Monitoring Teams and Define Roles and Responsibilities**

The monitors will have the specific responsibility of confirming information contained in receipt, stock and distribution reports issued by representatives of the Afghan commanders, checking on warehouse and transport conditions, and witnessing distributions.

Monitoring teams will be staffed with locals from Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Staff of Pakistani origin will fill positions related to the receiving and initial warehousing of goods purchased under the CEP program. These staff will also serve as commodity accountants, tabulating and compiling information from the field.

Truck-Based Monitors will not be assigned to one particular truck. Each time vehicles are scheduled for deliveries a random selection will be made from available monitors to accompany each truck. Truck dispatch will be random as well so truck drivers do not continue to visit the same distribution points each trip.

The primary function of the roving monitors will be to observe distribution, conduct market surveys, interview end-use recipients and, when possible, conduct warehouse or depot inventories. These monitors should witness and report on as many end-use activities as possible. They should seek to establish a liaison relationship with local officials to gain information on the time and place of diversion to local markets. They will submit weekly and monthly progress reports to the Monitoring officer. Each roving monitor will spend approximately three weeks in the field and one week a month in the regional office organizing data and preparing reports.

**APPENDIX A**  
**END-USE MONITORING REPORT**

**APPENDIX B**  
**IMPACT SURVEY**

RONCO / CEP MONITORING  
REPORT / QUESTIONNAIRE

ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS SHOULD BE WRITTEN ON THE BACK  
OF THIS FORM. ATTACH EXTRA SHEET, IF NECESSARY.

LOCATION:	DATE:
LOCATION CODE:	PARTY CODE:
TIME:	

1. Has the population been notified of the arrival of the commodities?  
 YES       NO

If so, how many days before?

2. Were the commodities stored in a safe and protected area before distribution?     YES     NO

3. Was an official distribution list available for review?  
 YES       NO

4. Were the local authorities cooperative?     YES     NO

If so, explain.

5. What commodities and quantities were distributed to each family?

COMMODITY	PACKAGE/WEIGHT	QUANTITY (KILOS)	TOTAL FAMILIES
GHEE			
DALL GHANA			
TEA			
SUGAR			
LUBIA			
FOOD PACKS			
WHEAT			

MONITOR'S CODE:	MONITOR'S NAME:
-----------------	-----------------

LOCATION:	DATE:
LOCATION CODE:	TIME
<p>6. WAS THERE ENOUGH COMMODITIES TO BE DISTRIBUTED TO ALL FAMILIES?  <input type="checkbox"/> YES    <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p> <p>7. WAS THE DISTRIBUTION WELL ORGANIZED?    <input type="checkbox"/> YES    <input type="checkbox"/> NO  IF NO, WHY NOT? - IF YES, WHY?</p> <p>8. WERE THE COMMODITIES IN GOOD CONDITION?    <input type="checkbox"/> YES    <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p> <p>9. WERE ANY OTHER TYPES OF COMMODITIES REQUESTED?    <input type="checkbox"/> YES    <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p> <p>10. WHEN WAS THE LAST DISTRIBUTION TO THIS VILLAGE?</p> <p>11. WERE THERE ADEQUATE VILLAGE FOOD STOCKS BEFORE THE DISTRIBUTION?  <input type="checkbox"/> YES    <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p> <p>12. HOW DID THE GENERAL HEALTH OF THE VILLAGE APPEAR?  <input type="checkbox"/> POOR    <input type="checkbox"/> AVERAGE    <input type="checkbox"/> GOOD    <input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT</p> <p>13. WERE THERE COMMODITIES LEFT IN STORAGE AFTER THE DISTRIBUTION?  <input type="checkbox"/> YES    <input type="checkbox"/> NO  HOW MUCH, WHAT TYPE?</p> <p>14. COMMENTS:</p>	
MONITOR NAME	DATE:
MONITOR SIGNATURE	MONITOR NUMBER

R O N C O / C E P I M P A C T S U R V E Y

ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS SHOULD BE WRITTEN ON THE BACK  
OF THIS FORM. ATTACH EXTRA SHEET, IF NECESSARY

LOCATION:		DATE
LOCATION CODE:		TIME
NAME (Optional)		
VILLAGE BORN IN:		
AGE:	NUMBER OF MEMBERS IN FAMILY:	NUMBER OF CHILDREN:
RECENT DEATHS IN FAMILY <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO		CAUSE:

1. DO YOU OWN A FARM?  YES  NO

2. HOW BIG IS YOUR FARM?  
DO YOU DO OTHER WORK?  YES  NO  
WHAT KIND OF WORK DO YOU DO?

3. HOW MUCH FOOD DO YOU PRODUCE EACH YEAR?  
IS THE FOOD YOU PRODUCE ENOUGH TO FEED YOUR FAMILY?  
 YES  NO

4. DO YOU HAVE ANIMALS?  YES  NO HOW MANY \_\_\_\_?  
WHAT KINDS OF ANIMALS?

5. WHEN WAS THE FIRST TIME YOU RECEIVED FOOD LIKE THIS?

6. HOW MUCH FOOD DID YOU RECEIVE BEFORE?  
DO YOU KNOW FROM WHOM?

MONITOR'S CODE:	MONITOR'S NAME:
-----------------	-----------------

LOCATION:

LOCATION CODE:

7. HAVE YOU RECEIVED FOOD LIKE THIS BEFORE?  YES  NO

8. HAVE YOU EATEN FOODS LIKE THIS BEFORE?  YES  NO

9. DO YOU LIKE THESE FOODS?  YES  NO

WHY/WHY NOT?

10. DID YOUR FAMILY HAVE ENOUGH FOOD TO EAT BEFORE THE DISTRIBUTIONS?  
 YES  NO

11. DOES YOUR FAMILY HAVE ENOUGH FOOD NOW?  YES  NO

IF NO, WHY NOT?

12. DO YOU EVER GIVE OR SELL FOOD TO OTHERS?  YES  NO

SELL  GIVE

TO WHOM DO YOU SELL OR GIVE FOOD AWAY?

FAMILIES  INDIVIDUALS  MARKET

13. HAS YOUR FAMILY RECEIVED CLOTHING?  YES  NO

HOW MANY TIMES PER YEAR?

14. WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU RECEIVED CLOTHING?

15. WHAT TYPE OF CLOTHING HAS BEEN RECEIVED?

MONITOR'S CODE:

MONITOR:

LOCATION:

LOCATION CODE:

16. DO YOU HAVE ENOUGH CLOTHING TO KEEP YOU AND YOUR FAMILY WARM?  
 YES  NO

17. HAVE YOU RECEIVED BLANKETS?  YES  NO

18. HAVE YOU RECEIVED BOOTS?  YES  NO  
DO YOU STILL HAVE THESE?  YES  NO

19. DO YOU KNOW WHO HAS DONATED THESE GOODS?  YES  NO

20. DID YOU KNOW THEY WERE FROM THE USA?  YES  NO

21. WHAT OTHER TYPE GOODS WOULD YOU LIKE TO RECEIVE?  
WHY?

22. HAVE YOU EVER SEEN THE GOODS FOR SALE IN THE LOCAL MARKET?  
 YES  NO

23. DID YOU EVER HAVE TO PAY TO GET THE FOOD OR CLOTHES?  YES  NO

24. DO YOU KNOW WHERE THE GOODS ARE STORED?  YES  NO

25. WERE YOU TOLD ABOUT DISTRIBUTION AHEAD OF TIME?  YES  NO  
IF NO, WHY?

26. HOW DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THE GOODS BEING AVAILABLE?

MONITOR'S CODE:

MONITOR:

LOCATION:

LOCATION CODE:

27. DID YOU MOVE TO THIS LOCATION BECAUSE YOU HEARD THERE IS FOOD BEING GIVEN AWAY?  YES  NO

28. ARE YOU STAYING BECAUSE THERE IS FREE FOOD AND CLOTHING?  YES  NO

29. WOULD YOU LEAVE THIS AREA IF THE DISTRIBUTIONS STOPPED?  YES  NO

30. IF YOU LEFT, WHERE WOULD YOU GO?

MONITOR'S CODE:

MONITOR: