

## Expression of Interest

**Issued on:** September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021

**Solicitation Number:** US.EMGFRT.09.21

**Proposal Deadline:** October 22, 2021

### I. SCOPE OF SERVICES

Catholic Relief Services (CRS) is an international humanitarian aid organization with operations focused on assisting the poor and vulnerable overseas by responding to major emergencies, fighting disease, supporting development programs, and nurturing peaceful and just societies. CRS has reached more than 130 million people in more than 100 countries on five continents.

To facilitate this important work, CRS seeks to pre-qualify global freight forwarders with the capability to support emergency response operations. Due to the nature of emergency response, service requirements (i.e. service points, transport mode, cargo type, etc.) are unknown until the actual need for service arises. CRS, therefore, invites only experienced and reputable freight forwarding companies with an extensive range of services and geographical coverage to submit proposals for pre-qualification consideration. Pre-qualification criteria will include, among others, the areas of logistics services, customs clearance, freight forwarding, and any other related activities. The pre-qualification criteria will form the basis for a pre-qualified short-list of companies.

Once approved, this pre-qualified pool of service providers will be contacted to compete for opportunities via a request for quotation (RFQ) process. At this time, pre-qualified providers will also be encouraged to provide any additional recommendations based upon their experience and expertise.

### II. DELIVERABLES

Prospective Contractor(s) will be responsible for the provision of end-to-end clearing and freight services (all modes of transport) from various international origin points to named final delivery destinations. This may also include cargo movements to/from UNHRD preposition warehouses based in United Arab Emirates, Panama, Ghana, Malaysia, Italy, and Spain.

Refer to section IV Request for Quote process. The RFQ will include a complete list of services required, including the shipping details (weights, measures, etc.) needed to quote.

Services offered by Prospective Contractor(s) should include, but not be limited to, the following:

#### A. TRANSPORT from ORIGIN PORT(s)/POINT(s) to DESTINATION PORT(s)/POINT(s)

- Liaising with Supplier(s) or Shipper(s) to confirm cargo availability dates/times. Any delays in the release of cargo by Supplier(s) or Shipper(s), that would prevent delivery within the desired timeframe(s), will be promptly reported to CRS' key points-of contact (POCs).

- Coordinate pick-up of goods, supplies, and/or equipment from named origin point, inclusive of loading/unloading (if required), for transport within 48 hours following notification of awarded opportunity, unless the agreed upon delivery timeframe allows for delayed cargo collection.
- Arrange booking of cargo via air, sea, rail, and/or truck, as well as provide cargo tracking status and daily shipment status reports. Experience in air/ocean chartering required.
- Ensure timely dispatch of consignment(s) from port(s)/point(s) of origin.
- For ocean shipments, Prospective Contractor will be responsible for sealing and/or ensuring that all ocean containers are properly sealed at time of loading with accurate seal number(s) reflected on corresponding bill(s) of lading and any related transport documents.
- Whenever possible, the Prospective Contractor will be required to consolidate shipments based upon CRS' shipment requirements and approval.
- Prospective Contractor will be responsible for regularly monitoring the movement of cargo for all shipments from point(s)/port(s) of origin until responsibility is transferred to receiver/consignee at agreed upon final point(s)/port(s) of destination. If any shipment deviation occurs (e.g. delays, short shipments or damages during transit), Prospective Contractor will provide CRS with prompt status updates and will notify CRS immediately of any shipment deviations, including a full report with recommendations for corrective action at no cost to CRS or impact to delivery schedule.
- Packages to be shipped should also be counted with all exceptions (O/S/D) documented and reported to CRS' POC immediately.
- Perform a review of packing and markings to determine if cargo is suitable for transport. This includes providing packaging recommendations for any cargo deemed unsuitable for safe transport.
- Provide (re)packaging services, including shrink-wrapping and/or palletization, when required, while complying with all international and/or local regulations (i.e. ISPM15, IATA Dangerous Goods, etc.).
- Coordination and arrangement of pre-shipment and/or freight inspection services, including collection of related certificates/documents. Prospective Contractor must not take possession of goods if subject goods have failed for any required pre-inspection(s). Prospective Contractor will also assist with facilitating swift resolution of any goods having failed inspection(s) to ensure that goods are shipped as soon as possible.
- Able to manage and facilitate export/import clearance formalities for all goods shipped on behalf of CRS (inclusive of in-transit clearances in intermediary countries that may be required) while strictly complying with any regulations in subject country.

- Arrange inland transportation from ports of arrival/entry to assigned delivery points. Whenever possible, the Prospective Contractor shall endeavor to make delivery appointments with the intended recipient.
- Ensure that all consignments are dispatched upon arrival/entry within allowable free time/storage limits permitted and that every consignment reaches its named final delivery destination within the estimated delivery period referenced.
- Provide an adequate number of vehicles and drivers to transport shipment from air/ocean port of discharge to named final delivery point(s).
- Ensure that all vehicles are in good operating condition, with valid registrations. From time to time, CRS may inspect the condition of vehicles/conveyances and may suspend performance of the Purchase Order until Prospective Contractors provide an adequate number of vehicles in good condition to ensure safe transport.
- Require that all drivers adhere to all local transportation regulations.
- Equip all vehicles with adequate and fully operable means of communication (e.g., VHF, HF, and/or mobile phones), so that Prospective Contractor may track and maintain regular communication with said vehicles.
- Repair or replace vehicles/conveyances in the event of a mechanical breakdown during transportation of shipment with immediate notification of the same to CRS.
- Oversee supervision of loading/unloading and storage at port(s) of shipment/arrival. As required, coordinate with appointed surveyor(s).
- Ability to provide storage/warehousing and to support distribution of shipped items in- country.
- Maintaining complete archives of documents, as required by international and/or local regulations. All shipping documentation should also be available and accessible via Prospective Contractor(s) web-based tracking site for a minimum of 12 months.
- Prospective Contractor shall offer free-to-user access to a web-based, real-time cargo tracking tool that allows client (CRS) to track all important shipment milestones with access to reporting. At a minimum, shipment milestones should include: cargo pick-up or cargo receipt date, estimated date of departure, actual date of departure, estimated arrival date at destination port, actual arrival date at destination port, actual delivery date(s) to named delivery point(s), and any customs clearance milestones.
- For truck movements, waybills will be issued for each vehicle. Waybills must be prepared with all of the information transmitted by CRS, including, but not limited to: full delivery address and consignee contact, and quantity and description of goods. Waybills must be signed by the carrier's representative prior to departure and then, counter-signed by the Consignee upon arrival at the final delivery destination as proof of delivery. Illegible waybills/manifests may not be accepted by

CRS for payment. The loss of the waybill/manifest cannot be claimed by the Prospective Contractor in a request for final payment.

- The Prospective Contractor may be tasked with leading on-boarding activities for CRS offices/staff, as well as, be requested to contribute to the development of training materials and/or participating in special project work.
- The Prospective Contractor will also be required to participate in meetings to discuss and evaluate service performance.
- Provide comprehensive cargo insurance (warehouse to warehouse coverage), if requested. The insurance shall be no less favorable than the Institute Cargo Clause (All Risks), including war risks and strike clauses. The amount of coverage shall be 110% of the costs equivalent to modified DAP at named destination(s) invoice costs of all shipments. The insurance must provide maximum, multi-peril coverage, inclusive of fire, theft, and other perils, and must also provide maximum coverage for political violence, inclusive of terrorism, sabotage, riots, strikes and/or civil commotion, malicious damage, insurrection, revolution or rebellion, mutiny and/or coup d'état, war and/or civil war, and looting following any and all of the perils listed above. The insurance policy(ies) may not include a deductible clause.

**B. KEY PERSONNEL & DESIGNATED POINTS of CONTACT (POCs)**

- Prospective Contractor will be responsible for providing all necessary qualified personnel, equipment, materials and supplies and for making the necessary arrangements to ensure the fulfillment of its obligations. Prospective Contractor assumes full responsibility for the cargo from point(s) of receipt/loading until cargo delivery at final delivery port(s)/point(s).
- Prospective Contractor will assign a single POC or Account Manager that will be responsible for account oversight, including all aspects pertaining to shipment opportunities and activities, regardless of service lanes. This single POC will serve as the primary contact for CRS HQ for communications and overall management for all account aspects. Senior Key Personnel must have experience providing services within an emergency response context.
- Prospective Contractor will ensure that Senior Key Personnel appointed are available 24 hours a day / 7 days a week via telephone and email or a delegate made available in his/her absence.
- Once an opportunity has been awarded, Senior Key Personnel will quickly identify key personnel within destination country and inform CRS POCs. Any communications with local CRS contacts/office must include Prospective Contractor's Senior Key Personnel and CRS HQ designated POCs.
- Key in-country (destination) personnel identified must have at least five years of freight forwarding experience and must be proficient in English – both verbal and written. The preferred method of communication is email, but phone calls are encouraged should an urgent response be required.

- Key in-country (destination) personnel will attend logistical meetings and report out to and liaise with designated CRS staff at the country level (cc CRS HQ designated POCs), ensure their availability for visits from and consultations with any of the various stakeholders, and be prepared (upon request) to provide additional competent and experienced staff to critical points/places in the delivery chain.

### **C. DOCUMENTATION**

- Manage documentation processes as prescribed in the shipping instructions, including issuance, collection, review and/or legalization of documents required to complete clearance formalities (i.e. invoices, packing lists, inspection certificates, certificates of origin, certificates of analysis, bills of lading, air waybills, etc.).
- Ensure prompt distribution of all transport, pre-advices, and shipping documents for all shipments (includes shipment references, ETD, ETA, vessel/flight details, etc.). Documents will be sent with sufficient time to enable the Consignee to obtain required customs duty and tax exemptions for cargo being shipped.
- Assist with licensing requirements, as needed.
- Prepare promptly all required documentation for inland distribution based on shipping instructions received from CRS, special instructions, if applicable, and applicable laws and regulations, and as dictated by the mode of transport.
- Collect all signed delivery notes from drivers as proof of delivery to the named delivery destinations.

### **D. INVOICING & ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

- The Prospective Contractor will be required to arrange pre-payment of all applicable charges from Origin to Destination, including customs clearance, as needed.
- The Freight Forwarder will be required to provide technical support and professional advice about international transportation requirements, as needed.
- All-inclusive pricing will be required at time of quotation and only invoices that match quoted cost will be approved for payment processing.
- CRS will not be required to process payment(s) for any charges that were not pre-approved by CRS in writing and prior to performance of such services or the incurrence/outlay of such fees, charges, costs, etc.
- A statement of account will be provided to CRS Designated POCs to ensure that billed country program offices have processed payment(s) timely.

- Prospective Contractor must provide a separate invoice for each unique shipment (unique identifier to be air waybill number, ocean bill of lading number, truck waybill number, etc.)
- All charges pertaining to a shipment should be submitted on a single invoice. Additional bills will not be accepted unless approval is sought and received from CRS. A copy of the written approval for the additional cost(s) should accompany the additional billing.
- All transportation documents will be reconciled within one week of delivery completion.

#### **E. REQUEST FOR QUOTE PROCESS**

CRS shall provide the following information to the Freight Forwarder to request a shipping rate:

- Weight (UoM)
- Dimensions (UoM)
- Number of Shipping Packages
- Commodity Type and Description
- Pick-Up/Receipt Point and Delivery Address

Prospective Contractor will respond to all Request for Quote(s) within 24 hours with an all-inclusive shipping rate for the services requested with any additional recommendations that may improve transit time (i.e. alternative transport methods, direct routes, etc.), mitigate risk, and ensure best value.

There will be no notification to the Offeror or Prospective Contractor if the shipping rate submitted is deemed unsuccessful regardless of whether the submission is rendered complete or incomplete.

#### **F. SHIPPING INSTRUCTIONS**

Once awarded, CRS will provide the Prospective Contractor with a copy of the freight Purchase Order containing information about the Supplier's/Shipper's name and address, description and relevant cargo details, origin and destination details, delivery address, incoterms, shipping instructions and markings, special handling instructions, if applicable, etc.

Purchase Orders shall indicate the expected Cargo Availability Date (Supplier/Shipper) where the Prospective Contractor will be required to either coordinate pick-up of cargo or prepare for supplier delivery of cargo to their facility. The omission of any of the above information shall not invalidate the Purchase Order or negate Prospective Contractor's responsibilities.

#### **G. REQUIRED EXPERIENCE**

- Minimum of ten (10) years of experience in international freight forwarding and transport operations, especially to/within developing countries and within an emergency context
- Previous experience working with humanitarian agencies to support emergency and/or development projects
- Adequate capacity to provide the services

- Global network of strategically located offices/warehouses and/or ability to provide global service coverage (services all major international trade lanes).
- Ability to provide 24-hour turnaround on all requests for quote
- Ability to extend air/ocean charter services with experienced staff to all regions
- Ability to deploy emergency cargo within 48 hours of award notification by CRS
- Ability to coordinate with UNHRD and its partners
- Ability to bundle transport options with other organizations on smaller shipments, when approved by CRS
- Ability to provide transportation insurance
- Ability to provide global freight forwarding services by air, ocean, road, and rail
- Maintains relationships with core carriers in all key global trade lanes
- Ability to handle FCL, LCL, breakbulk and oversized/overweight shipments (incl. consolidation/deconsolidation activities)
- Experience and ability to ship cold-chain commodities and to provide the required equipment
- Cold-chain: Capability to maintain efficacy of the product while in storage and in-transit to the destination
- Ability to manage and ship dangerous goods
- Ability to ship pharma and food products
- Ability to handle RO-RO and LO-LO
- Offers a free-to-user cargo tracking tool software package
- Sound financial standing and conducts business in a manner that averts any financial, operational, reputational, or other undue risk to CRS.

### III. Clarifications

Questions must be submitted via e-mail to [kathleen.mackin@crs.org](mailto:kathleen.mackin@crs.org) no later than close of business 10/1/2021. The solicitation number indicated above must be included in the subject line. Responses will be provided to all known offerors. CRS is under no obligation to respond to questions that are not received prior to the aforementioned deadline.

### IV. Proposal Deadline

All proposals must be received by CRS no later than [11:59 PM EST for electronic submission] 10/22/2021 via email to [kathleen.mackin@crs.org](mailto:kathleen.mackin@crs.org). The solicitation number indicated above must be included in the subject line.

### V. Modification

If at any time prior to award CRS deems there to be a need for a significant modification to the terms and conditions of this EOI, CRS will issue such a modification as a written EOI amendment to all competing offerors. No oral statement of any person shall in any manner be deemed to modify or otherwise affect any EOI term or condition, and no offeror shall rely on any such statement. Such amendments are the exclusive method for this purpose.

### VI. Resulting Award

As a result of this solicitation, CRS anticipates awarding a prequalified status to suppliers for those services for which they have applied, the supplier is automatically considered for inclusion in restricted tenders executed by CRS.

Being a prequalified supplier, does not guarantee a contract to any prequalified supplier. CRS reserves the right, at its own discretion to terminate the prequalified status of any supplier.

## VII. Payment Terms

Preferred payment terms are NET 45 on delivery.

## VIII. Proposal Guidelines and Instructions

Interested and qualified companies that meet the above requirements and criteria are encouraged to submit their proposals which should include the following information:

### A. Comprehensive Company Profile

- Supplier Profile Form - as provided
- Profile must include all areas of specialization e.g. food items, humanitarian commodities, etc.
- Financial statement for the last two years;
- Prospective Contractor must maintain active licenses and/or certifications as required by law to perform the Services.
- Any relevant certifications or registrations that the Prospective Contractor believes deems them qualified and capable of handling the services described above (i.e. FIATA, etc.)

### B. Technical Capacity

- Technical Response Form – as provided
- Comprehensive list of available assets (type and standard of aircraft, ships and vehicles, etc.);
- Description of chartering (air/ocean) service and capabilities (incl. number of operating years, regions/countries serviced, etc.)
- Description of their ability to surge – either through networks of partners/agents or sub-contracting (based on history)
- Provide a listing of the company’s global presence or network (i.e. offices, subsidiaries, correspondents, agents and representatives). This listing should clearly distinguish between wholly owned office(s) and non-wholly owned office(s);
- Proof of insurance arrangements with a recognized international insurance company;
- Ability to provide proof of registration or legal status and authorization to operate at a minimum in all or most of the following countries: UAE, Panama, Ghana, Malaysia, Italy, and Spain;

### C. References

- Included in the Supplier Profile Form
- Minimum of three references (including contact names and details) relative to past performance for logistics services provided by the company in the past five years within an emergency or humanitarian context.

### D. Relationship Disclosure and Mitigation Plan

- Describe any current or past relationships your organization may have with CRS, and if it is a potential conflict of interest. If there is a potential conflict of interest, please explain how this risk will be mitigated.
- Describe any personal or familial relationships any employee of the Contractor has with any employee of CRS. If there is a relationship, please explain how any conflict of interest risk will be mitigated.
- *Disclosure does not automatically disqualify offeror.*

### E. Example Contract or Service Level Agreement

- Please provide example contracts or service level agreements that your company would propose.



## IX. Evaluation Criteria

In evaluating the proposals, CRS will use a two-stage selection procedure:

- The first stage will consider the completeness of the bid submission.
- The second stage will evaluate the Technical Proposal.
- The evaluation of each **technical proposal** will be scored by a committee in accordance with the criteria category table below:

Criteria	Weight
Bid Submission a. Bid submitted on time b. Offeror is eligible to receive funding per background checks	Pass/Fail
Comprehensive Supplier Profile	5
Technical Capacity	40
Experience	40
References / Past Performance	15
Relationship Disclosure and Mitigation Plan	Pass/Fail
<b>Total Weight</b>	<b>100</b>

The total score will be calculated as follows:

The evaluator/bid committee member will add the individual scores for each category. The category score will be weighted in accordance with the table above. The weighted score of each category will be added together with the total possible score being 100.

**Total Score** = Will be the average of each bid committee member's total score.

After the completion of the above mentioned evaluation stages, CRS may request a presentation of services by the bidder.

CRS reserves the right to accept any proposal in whole or in part and to reject any or all proposals.

CRS shall not be legally bound by any award notice issued for this EOI until a contract is dually signed and executed with the winning offeror.

## X. Terms

CRS reserves the right to cancel this solicitation at any point and is under no obligation to issue a contract as

a result of this solicitation.

CRS will not reimburse any expenses related to the preparation of any proposal related materials or delivery.

## **XI. Agreement**

Any resulting agreement will be subject to the terms and conditions contained in final service level agreement provided by CRS. Acceptance of this agreement will be a condition of entry into CRS' pool of global providers.

Thank you,

Kathleen Mackin  
Procurement Specialist II  
Global Procurement – Global Supply Chain Management  
Catholic Relief Services