



UNHCR

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
Haut Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés

DATE: 21/10/2015

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: No. RFI/2015/724

REGARDING CASH-BASED ASSISTANCE SERVICES

CLOSING DATE AND TIME: 20/11/2015 – 23:59hrs CET

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is requesting information regarding the provision of services related to Cash-Based Assistance.

This Request for Information ("RFI") seeks input from the interested parties in the market of cash transfer mechanisms regarding technologies, infrastructures and implementation processes and transfer arrangements with regard to cash-based assistance for UNHCR's persons of concern. Responses to this RFI will be used by UNHCR to obtain a better global understanding of the market's capabilities and potentials for the purpose of formulating a corporate approach on cash-based assistance.

UNHCR does not currently plan to issue a procurement solicitation that is directly related to the subject matter of this RFI. However, in the course of ongoing operations, UNHCR regularly engages in procurement activity at a local level and the expertise and know-how developed as a result of this RFI may be used in the context of these procurement solicitations.

When responding to this RFI, **please do not provide any pricing information.**

INTRODUCTION TO UNHCR

UNHCR was established on December 14, 1950 by the United Nations General Assembly. The agency is mandated to lead and co-ordinate international action to protect refugees and resolve refugee problems worldwide. Its primary purpose is to safeguard the rights and well-being of refugees. It also has a mandate to help stateless people.

In more than five decades, the agency has helped tens of millions of people restart their lives. Today, a staff of some 8,600 people in more than 127 countries continues to help about 36.4 million persons. To help and protect some of the world's most vulnerable people in so many places and types of environment, UNHCR must purchase goods and services worldwide. For further information please visit our website at <http://www.unhcr.org>.

I. Cash-Based Assistance at UNHCR

The humanitarian community has turned to cash-based assistance as an alternative to "in-kind" transfers of food and core relief items. UNHCR's mandate for ensuring refugee protection and finding durable solutions lends itself particularly well to the use of cash-based assistance as a tool for assistance. Multi-purpose cash grants, in particular, allow the needs of refugees and other persons of concern to be addressed in an efficient and comprehensive manner. Cash-based

assistance also offers a cost-effective tool that allows refugees, returnees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) to determine and meet their own needs, providing more choice during displacement and/or on return to countries of origin.

UNHCR has been using cash-based assistance since the 1980s, largely for voluntary return and repatriation programmes, and has been a pioneer in the use of cash as a means of assistance. Where refugees have access to functioning markets, cash-based assistance have proven to be appropriate means of delivering assistance both in camp and out-of-camp settings. Today, UNHCR is working to mainstream the use of cash-based assistance, with a view to fully capitalizing on the benefits of using this form of assistance in its operations worldwide.

II. Request for Information

UNHCR wishes to engage in consultations with the companies in the market of cash transfer mechanisms regarding technologies, infrastructures and implementation processes and transfer arrangements with regard to cash-based assistance for UNHCR's persons of concern. While UNHCR does not currently plan to issue a procurement solicitation that is directly related to the subject matter of this RFI, the know-how developed as a result of this RFI may be used to inform procurement solicitations at the local level in support of developing implementation arrangements for UNHCR's cash-based assistance initiatives.

UNHCR requests interested parties to provide a submission in response to this RFI that will consist of the following items:

- A. A duly signed cover letter specifying the name of the service provider / supplier, registered office and locations.
- B. Description of Company:
 - A general description of the company and its areas of business, product/ services range relevant to the scope of this request.
 - Brochure of service provider's / supplier's company.
- C. Description of Company's experience and activities in Cash Transfer Business
 - General description of Company's activities
 - Capacity to provide the requested services
 - Resources and years of experience
 - Technologies
 - Applications
 - Implementation arrangements and partnerships
 - Coverage (global, regional, local), etc.
 - A list of countries/locations where these services can be provided.
 - Proof of all authorisations, permission and/or licences that may be required to conduct public sales in the countries for which the services can be offered.
- D. Description of Company's Projects in Humanitarian Cash Assistance.
- E. Past experience in providing these services (i) to UN organizations, governments, international organizations or any humanitarian agencies and (ii) to other entities in comparable contexts.
- F. Willingness to conduct a demonstration at a UNHCR site.
- G. Complete contact details of focal person/s for further correspondence and clarifications, including name, position, email address/es and phone numbers.

- H. An overview of operational, financial and liability risks typically associated with cash transfer programmes.
- I. Any other information from the service providers / suppliers that would be relevant to this RFI.

Interested companies may formulate their response based on the following scenarios using examples of the products and services they provide.

Scenario 1: Urban context with extensive network of financial services and reliable mobile/internet communication and power supply infrastructure.

Scenario 2: Semi urban contexts with limited network of financial services but reliable mobile/internet communication and power supply infrastructure.

Scenario 3: Remote rural areas (refugee camps) with very limited or no network of financial services and power supply, but with some mobile or internet communication infrastructure.

Please do not provide any pricing information.

III. Not a Procurement Solicitation

This RFI is being issued solely for the purpose of gathering market information to improve UNHCR's expertise and know-how in the field of cash-based assistance and to assist in the Organization's planning in its future strategies.

This RFI and the related follow-up activities do not constitute a procurement solicitation, nor do they represent a promise to issue a procurement solicitation in the future or commit UNHCR to a contract for any supply or service whatsoever. Except for procurement solicitations at the local level in the ordinary course of operations, UNHCR is not currently seeking proposals relating to the subject matter of this RFI and will not accept unsolicited proposals. No pricing information should be submitted in response to this RFP.

UNHCR will not reimburse interested parties or any other organizations for any information, administrative, travel or other costs incurred in response to this RFI. All costs associated with responding to this RFI will be solely at the interested parties' expense.

IV. Submission Instructions

Interested parties are requested to respond in writing not later than **20/11/2015 – 23:59hrs CET**. The documents must be sent by e-mail ONLY to: martha@unhcr.org

The covering letter must bear your official letter head, clearly identifying your company.

Documents including all attachments should be submitted in PDF format. (Copies of the PDF format documents may, as an addition, be included in Excel or other formats etc.).

It is your responsibility to verify that all e-mails have been received properly before the deadline. Please be aware of the fact that the e-mail policy employed by UNHCR limits the size of attachments to a maximum of [5] Mb so it may be necessary to send more than one e-mail for the whole submission.

Please indicate in e-mail subject field:

- RFI/2015/724: REGARDING CASH-BASED ASSISTANCE SERVICES
- Name of your firm with the title of the attachment
- Number of e-mails that are sent (example: 1/3, 2/3, 3/4).

All proprietary, confidential information or any other limitations on disclosure must be clearly marked and labelled. To the fullest extent consistent with UNHCR's rules and legal obligations, information identified by a respondent as "Proprietary" or "Confidential" will be kept confidential.

UNHCR will review the responses and may seek further clarification and information from certain respondents. These requests for clarification or information may take the form of communication by telephone, in writing, or emails. In addition, certain RFI respondents may be invited to present their responses and/or conduct on-site demonstrations to UNHCR. UNHCR will not bear any costs relating to such presentations or to the preparation and submission of the RFI responses.



Signature

Isaac Mcekeni
Chief of Section, Procurement of Services
Procurement Service
UNHCR

