



ORGANISATION OF EASTERN CARIBBEAN STATES

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

NAME OF PROJECT - OECS REGIONAL HEALTH PROJECT

GRANT NO.: D513

Assignment Title: Assessment, Development and Implementation of Laboratory Specimen Transportation Agreements, Policies and Legislation in the OECS

Reference No. LC-OECS COMMISSION-148796-CS-QCBS

The Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) has received financing from the World Bank towards the cost of the OECS Regional Health Project, and intends to apply part of the proceeds for a Consultancy for Assessment, Development and Implementation of Laboratory Specimen Transportation Agreements, Policies and Legislation in the OECS.

This consultancy aims to develop and implement a sustainable and integrated specimen transportation system for the OECS Member States to enable effective and efficient transportation of specimens from the various health facilities to the diagnostic laboratories in and out of the country.

The OECS now invites eligible consulting firms (“Consultants”) to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services. The minimum required qualifications and experience are listed in section 6.0 of the TOR below.

The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to Section III, paragraphs, 3.14, 3.16, and 3.17 of the World Bank’s “Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers” July 2016 and revised in November 2017 and August 2018 (‘Procurement Regulations’), setting forth the World Bank’s policy on conflict of interest. In addition, please refer to the following specific information on conflict of interest related to this assignment:

Consultants shall not be hired for any assignment that would be in conflict with their prior or current obligations to other clients, or that may place them in a position of being unable to carry out the assignment in the best interests of the Borrower. Without limitation on the generality of the foregoing, Consultants shall not be hired under the circumstances set forth below:

- a) a firm that has been engaged by the Borrower to provide Goods, Works, or Non-

consulting Services for a project (or an affiliate that directly or indirectly controls, is controlled by, or is under common control with that firm), shall be disqualified from providing Consulting Services resulting from, or directly related to, those Goods, Works, or Non-consulting Services. This provision does not apply to the various firms (Consultants, contractors, or suppliers), which together are performing the contractor's obligations under a turnkey or design and build contract;

- b) a firm that has been engaged by the Borrower to provide Consulting Services for the preparation or implementation of a project (or an affiliate that directly or indirectly controls, is controlled by, or is under common control with that Consulting firm), shall be disqualified from subsequently providing Goods, Works, or Non-consulting Services resulting from, or directly related to those Consulting Services. This provision does not apply to the various firms (Consultants, contractors, or suppliers), which together are performing the contractor's obligations under a turnkey or design and build contract;
- c) neither a Consultant (including personnel and sub-consultants), nor an affiliate (that directly or indirectly controls, is controlled by, or is under common control with that Consultant), shall be hired for any assignment that, by its nature, creates a conflict of interest with another assignment of the Consultant;
- d) Consultants (including their experts and other personnel, and sub-consultants), that have a close business or family relationship with a professional staff of the Borrower, or of the project implementing agency, or of a recipient of a part of the Bank's financing, or any other party representing or acting on behalf of the Borrower, that is directly or indirectly involved in any part of:
 - i. the preparation of the TOR for the assignment;
 - ii. the selection process for the contract; or
 - iii. the supervision of the contract, may not be awarded a contract, unless the conflict stemming from this relationship has been resolved in a manner acceptable to the Bank throughout the selection process and the execution of the contract.

Consultants may associate with other firms in the form of a joint venture or a subconsultancy to enhance their qualifications.

A Consultant will be selected in accordance with the Quality Cost Based Selection (QCBS) method set out in the Procurement Regulations.

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours *08:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (0830 to 1600 hours)*.

Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States
OECS Regional Health Project
P.O. Box 179
Morne Fortune
Castries
Saint Lucia
TEL: +1 758-455-6349/68
E-mail: procurement@oecs.int

An electronic copy of the Expressions of Interest must be sent by May 28, 2021 to:

Yasmine Anatole, Procurement Officer
At the following email address:
procurement@oecs.int

copied to: avion.bamodu@oecs.int
faith.hjnbaptiste@oecs.int

The email submissions should include the name and address of the Consulting Firm/Joint Venture and shall be clearly marked in the subject line as “**Expression of Interest – Assessment, Development and Implementation of Laboratory Specimen Transportation Agreements, Policies and Legislation in the OECS.**”

To obtain the maximum degree of comparison among Expressions of Interests (EOIs) and facilitate the evaluation process, the EOI should be a maximum of 40 pages and include the following information included below:

- **Title page with name of firm submitting the EOI:** should contain name of firm (or joint venture and/or a sub-consultancy, if applicable), address, email, telephone, name of contact person and date of submission.
- **Expression of Interest:** including the firm’s general and specific experience, pool of experts etc.

The Terms of Reference and Guidelines for the Submission of Expressions of Interest for this consultancy are provided below.



THE ORGANISATION OF EASTERN CARIBBEAN STATES COMMISSION

TERMS OF REFERENCE

CONSULTANCY SERVICES FOR

Assessment, Development and Implementation of Laboratory Specimen Transportation Agreements, Policies and Legislation in the OECS.

1. BACKGROUND

The OECS Regional Health Project was launched in 2019 to improve preparedness capacities of health systems for public health emergencies in the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) region.

Small Island Developing States (SIDS), including OECS Member States, are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of a variety of natural hazards, including geophysical (earthquakes, landslides, volcanic activity), hydrological (floods), climatological (extreme temperatures, droughts), meteorological (cyclones/hurricanes, storm surges). This vulnerability has been exacerbated by anthropogenic actions which induce climate change and other scenarios.

This was particularly evident during 2017, when the region experienced an unprecedented number of consecutive and concurrent tropical storms, including two super category 5 hurricanes (Irma and Maria), which devastated Dominica, Barbuda, Anguilla and BVI, and also impacted St. Kitts and Nevis, Martinique and Montserrat. The hurricanes exposed the particular vulnerability of the OECS sub-region to climate change and variability and amplified the call for urgent and accelerated action and support towards building resilience through adaptation and mitigation interventions.

The region has also been shown to be affected by outbreaks of infectious diseases as evidenced by the Chikungunya outbreak, which spread to over 350,000 people between December 2013 and July 2014, the 2016 Zika outbreak, and the Ebola outbreak in West Africa which led the world to consider infection control mechanisms to prevent disease. These outbreaks highlighted the challenges associated with lab capacities and transportation of specimens to and from regional Labs including CARPHA in Trinidad and Tobago. These outbreaks coupled with the current COVID-19 pandemic highlight the importance of well-coordinated country

and regional responses and containment strategies to avoid the high costs associated with outbreaks, including productivity and investment opportunity (tourism) loss.

During the current pandemic, the importance of clear protocols for emergency transportation of lab samples has been highlighted. As the world shut down travel, several existing regional modes of air and sea transport were no longer available. Since the start of the pandemic in the OECS Region, the countries have been dependent on regular flights of the Regional Security System Headquarters (RSS HQ) for the transportation of samples.

Consequently, the OECS Commission (OECSC) is desirous of developing and implementing an efficient and sustainable system for transportation of Laboratory specimens to regional and international reference Labs, that improves operating efficiency and strengthens resilience of the region which it services, in the face of financial and capacity challenges. The strategic goal is to support and maintain a public health laboratory system that is expeditious in its response to emergencies impacting its Member States by establishing framework agreements for transportation services of Laboratory specimens and relevant policy and legislation to support this initiative to aid in greater efficiency in routine operations as well as pre- and post-disaster operations and recovery.

The OECS Commission has established a Laboratory Specimen Transport Technical Oversight Committee (TOC) herein referred to as the TOC, which will provide guidance and oversight to the OECS Commission in managing this consultancy. The TOC is an advisory committee primarily responsible for making recommendations, providing guidance and information, oversight, monitoring and management of the selected consulting firm, leveraging their expert knowledge, experience, best practices, networking and influence of the various member agencies and departments in order to efficiently guide this consultancy.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE CONSULTANCY

This consultancy aims to develop and implement a sustainable and integrated specimen transportation system for the OECS Member States to enable effective and efficient transportation of specimens from the various health facilities to the diagnostic laboratories in and out of the country. The primary purpose of this consultancy is two-fold:

- 1) To conduct an assessment and develop an action plan for the complete implementation of the Laboratory Specimen Transportation Agreements, Policies, Legislation and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) in the OECS Member States and CARPHA/Caribbean Public Health Laboratory Network (CARIPHLN) to support effective and efficient transportation of specimens to the diagnostic laboratories.
- 2) To facilitate the negotiation and implementation of Agreements, Policies, Legislation and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) in the OECS Member States for Transportation of Laboratory Specimen.

3. SCOPE OF SERVICES AND DELIVERABLES

In pursuit of the above objectives, the consulting firm is responsible for the following:

- 1) Undertake an assessment/situation analysis of the current networks and capabilities of labs in the OECS region. This should include evaluation of the Labs in the French Territories of the OECS to which Samples are referred as well as that of CARPHA's CARIPHLN and should consider animal health and environmental labs. This assessment is critical for determining the types of samples referred, the volume of samples referred and the reasons for such.
- 2) Perform a gap analysis and needs assessment of the current OECS lab network for specimen transportation systems. This activity should include the following:
 - a) Stakeholder engagement to aid in an analysis of the current practices for the transportation of laboratory specimens at the different levels of the health delivery system, including their strengths and weaknesses and the players involved. This should include engagement of regional airlines and the Regional Security System.
 - b) Review and analyse the relevant agreements, policies, legislations, process flows, internal and external constraints among others of the relevant transportation systems and support structures for transportation of laboratory specimens at the different levels of the health delivery system, including their strengths and weaknesses and the players involved. This review should consider existing national and regional systems to explore synergies, develop redundancies and avoid unnecessary duplication, as well as global best practices and should include an analysis of clinical labs, ground transportation and aviation transportation;
 - c) Identify the avenues and conditions for the implementation of agreements harmonised policies, legislation, SOPs etc. at the national and regional levels, to promote greater efficiency in operations as well as greater responsiveness to emergencies.
 - d) Make recommendations for policies, legislations and agreements as needed to support the transportation of laboratory samples.
- 3) Develop a detailed action plan and budget for the development and implementation of the laboratory transportation agreements, policies, legislation and SOPs in the OECS countries, including detailed recommendations of possible agreements to be negotiated and policies and legislation to be drafted and/or modified and ratified.
- 4) Present the draft action plan and recommendations for validation to the TOC for this consultancy, the OECS Leadership Team, Commissioners and OECS Authority, and any other key delegate as recommended by the TOC or the OECS Commission.
- 5) Facilitate validation and sensitization meetings to ratify the draft Action Plan with relevant stakeholder groups including key representatives from Member States including, Health personnel, Lab Managers/Directors, Policy Makers, Air and Sea Port Authorities, Courier/Shipping Companies, International Air Transport Association (IATA) and CARPHA.

- 6) Draft Lab transportation agreements, policies, legislation and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for local and intercountry Lab specimen transportation as proposed and agreed in the Action Plan.
- 7) Facilitate validation and sensitization meetings with all relevant personnel (including Policy makers, Health Personnel, Lab Managers/Directors, Transport and Customs) in the four participating countries (Dominica, Grenada, St Lucia and St Vincent) as well as CARPHA and relevant personnel in Trinidad; in the proposed agreements, policies and SOPs.
- 8) Facilitate the negotiation, finalisation, and implementation of Lab transportation agreements, policies, legislation and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for local and intercountry lab specimen transportation as proposed and agreed.
- 9) Conduct knowledge transfer and capacity building of all relevant personnel (including Policy makers, Health Personnel, Lab Managers/Directors, Transport and Customs) in the four participating countries and Trinidad (s/a) in the finalized agreements, policies and SOPs.
- 10) Submit and present the final report of all deliverables and outcomes of all activities under this assignment along with recommendations for long-term sustainability and efficiency.

4. DURATION OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The Assignment is expected to be undertaken within two hundred (200) professional days and is scheduled to be conducted from *July 2021 to Dec 2022*.

The Consulting firm shall take all the necessary steps to ensure that the entrusted task is executed properly and on schedule in accordance with the established Terms of Reference.

5. REPORTING AND DELIVERABLES

In the conduct of work, the Consulting Firm shall cooperate fully with the relevant departments and units of the OECS Commission, including the Health Unit, Procurement Unit, Finance and Accounting Unit, and the Legal Unit, as well as the relevant Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies involved in or impacted by the work of this consultancy.

Reports to be delivered should reflect progress made against the scope of services, agreed work plan and deliverables, as well as any matters to be resolved. The Consulting firm will be expected to produce reports as defined in Table 1 to be presented to the Project Coordinating Team for this consultancy. The Project Coordinating Team which includes the Technical Oversight Committee (TOC) will provide technical guidance, advice and operational oversight in guiding the Consulting Firm towards the accomplishment of the assigned tasks.

All deliverables, reports and documentation should be presented in draft to the OECS Commission for review before final submission. The payment associated with each deliverable will be made upon approval and acceptance of the deliverable by the OECS Commission.

The allocation of days and payment per activity is subject to review and agreement at contract negotiations. Table 1 below provides an indicative timetable for undertaking key activities described under the Scope of Services to be accomplished.

Table 1 - Reporting Timetable

Deliverable	No. of Days	% Payment
1) Inception Report and Workplan	10	5%
2) Report on the assessment/situation analysis of the current networks and capabilities of labs in the OECS region. Including an evaluation of the labs in the French Territories of the OECS to which samples are referred as well as that of CARPHA's CARIPHLN and should consider animal health and environmental labs.	15	5%
3) Report on the gap analysis and needs assessment of the current OECS lab network for specimen transportation systems. Giving attention to all areas of consideration noted in point #2 in the Scope of Services.	25	15%
4) Report on the drafted action plan and budget for the development and implementation of Lab transportation agreements, policies, legislation and SOPs in the OECS countries, including detailed recommendations of possible agreements to be negotiated and policies and legislation to be drafted and ratified. Present the drafted Action Plan and recommendations to the TOC for this consultancy, the OECS Leadership Team, Commissioners and OECS Authority, and any other key delegate as recommended by the TOC or the OECS Commission.	25	15%
5) Report on the validation and sensitization meetings conducted with all relevant stakeholder groups to ratify the draft Action Plan. See list of required stakeholders in #5 of the Scope of Services.	25	10%

6) Report and Present the Draft Lab transportation agreements, policies, legislation and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for local and intercountry Lab specimen transportation as proposed and agreed in the Action Plan to the TOC & OECS Leadership.	20	10%
7) Facilitate validation and sensitization meetings with all relevant personnel in the four participating countries as well as CARPHA and relevant personnel in Trinidad in the proposed agreements, policies and SOPs. Submit meeting report. See #7 in the Scope of Services for a list of required stakeholder groups.	20	10%
8) Report on the negotiation, finalisation, and implementation of Lab transportation agreements, policies, legislation and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for local and intercountry Lab specimen transportation as proposed and agreed.	25	10%
9) Conduct and report on knowledge transfer and capacity building of all relevant personnel in the four participating countries and Trinidad in the finalized agreements, policies and SOPs. See list of required stakeholders in #9 of the Scope of Services.	25	10%
10) Submit and present the final report of all deliverables and outcomes of all activities under this assignment along with recommendations for long-term sustainability and efficiency to the TOC and broader OECS governance mechanism.	10	10%
TOTAL		100%

6. SELECTION REQUIREMENTS

The Consulting Firm shall take all the necessary steps to ensure that the entrusted task is executed properly and on schedule in accordance with the established Terms of Reference.

The Consulting Firm in general:

- At least seven (7) years of general consulting experience
- At least five (5) years supervisory/managerial experience working in the field of cross-border transportation logistics.
- Expertise in Health Systems and Lab Specimen Transportation Systems in the region or internationally.

- At least one successfully completed similar assignment during the past five (5) years.
- Experience in undertaking consultancies in the OECS and/or Caribbean region or in small island developing states (SIDS) would be an advantage.
- Expertise in negotiating agreements and developing policies and legislation.

The Consulting Firm shall have core team members who possess a range of skills and qualifications, including the key experts identified below with the corresponding qualifications, in order to successfully undertake the assignment. As such, the Consulting Firm shall have key experts with the following qualifications and experience:

1) Team Leader

Academic Qualifications

- At least a Master's degree in Logistics or Supply Chain Management or a related field in Health Services Management.
- Relevant Certification in logistics or supply chain management or Project Management is desirable.

Experience, Knowledge and Skills

- At least five (5) years' experience working in evaluation and/or Project Management at a management level.
- At least five (5) years' experience working in Logistics or Supply Chain Management or Health Services Management at a management level.
- Demonstrated work experience in evaluation or management of Health Systems and/or Lab Transportation Systems regionally or internationally.
- Familiar with the issues and challenges of multi-country mechanisms and SIDS.
- Familiar with issues and challenges of public policy.
- Demonstrated experience working with National Governments and other multilateral institutions
- Excellent command of written and spoken English, presentation and communication skills and proven experience with preparing technical and analytical reports.

2) Health Systems Expert

Academic Qualifications

- Master's Degree or equivalent in Laboratory Sciences, Health Services Administration, Public Health or Health Economics or related area.

Experience, Knowledge and Skills

- At least ten (10) years' experience in Laboratory Management
- At least seven (7) years progressive experience in design/administration and financing of health systems and health facilities.

- c. Experience in the OECS and/or CARICOM region is an advantage
- d. Excellent presentation skills including the ability to present technical materials to a mixed audience in a very clear and concise manner.

3) Legal Expert

Academic Qualifications

- At least a Master's degree in Law from a recognised institution.

Experience, Knowledge and Skills

- a. At least Ten (10) years' legal experience; experience working in the Caribbean would be an advantage.
- b. Experience in legislative drafting would be an advantage.
- c. Demonstrated work experience in advisory and management positions of similar projects or initiatives with high levels of success.
- d. Demonstrated knowledge and understanding of framework agreements and public procurement policies, procedures and guidelines.
- e. Experience in public policy, working with Governmental, Regional and other Multilateral institutions.
- f. Experience in mediation and obtaining consensus.
- g. Excellent presentation skills including the ability to present technical materials to a mixed audience in a very clear and concise manner.