

ROLE PROFILE

HEAD OF THE GLOBAL DISTRIBUTORS COLLECTIVE



ABOUT THE ROLE

Last review: January 2026

Title	Head of the Global Distributors Collective
Reporting to	Head of Programme Strategy - Livelihoods and Climate Adaptation
Direct reports	GDC Programme Team (currently a team of eight)
Financial Scope	Programme contracts and budget management – c. £1M per annum
Location	Any African Practical Action registered office
Duration	Permanent, Full Time
Grade	TBA
Travel	Frequent national and international travel (up to 8 weeks per year)

ABOUT THE GLOBAL DISTRIBUTORS COLLECTIVE

The Global Distributors Collective (GDC) is an international network of 300 last mile distributors working in more than 60 countries around the world. Together, our members reach more than 60 million people with beneficial products such as solar lights, clean cookstoves, and water filters.

The GDC supports distributors to improve their business performance and grow, and builds a collective voice for the last mile distribution sector as a whole. Having been setup in 2018, we are now embarking on a brand new, ambitious five-year strategy (2026-30), to further drive business efficiency and performance, unlock much-needed finance, scale innovations, and shape enabling systems that support last mile distributors to reach even more underserved customers. Find out more about our 2026-30 strategy [here](https://www.globaldistributorscollective.org/). GDC webpage <https://www.globaldistributorscollective.org/> GDC strategy page <https://www.globaldistributorscollective.org/about-us>

The GDC is hosted by Practical Action with activities delivered in partnership with our strategic and implementing partner Bopinc.

KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES

The purpose of this role is to lead, champion and provide oversight of Practical Action's key initiative, the Global Distributors Collective (GDC):

- Lead the Global Distributors Collective, bringing the 2026-30 strategy to life and ensuring impactful outcomes through strong stakeholder engagement, partnership building, fundraising, and programme delivery.
- Serve as a key technical expert on the last mile distribution sector, providing thought leadership
- Develop and lead a high-performing team of functional and thematic experts, external consultants, and strategic advisors, managing relations with the GDC co-host Bopinc.
- Create and maintain influential relationships and partnerships with stakeholders including members, impact investors, foundations, government institutions, and multilateral institutions.
- Act as an ambassador and spokesperson for the GDC and its 300 members, building networks and amplifying the GDC at key international and regional events.

- Be accountable for the achievement of fundraising targets that will enable the GDC to deliver on its strategy.
- Support GDC project managers to ensure high quality outcomes, ensuring timely delivery and rigorous financial controls across the GDC's various programmes.
- Chair the GDC Steering Committee (consortium partners) and Advisory Council (high level experts and member representatives).
- Support the GDC Communications Manager to ensure high quality stakeholder communications and member engagement activities across all channels, including member events and surveys, webinars, publications, and websites.
- Integrate the GDC with Practical Action at critical touchpoints, including joint concept development and fundraising, theory of change and impact reporting, cross-cutting learning and knowledge sharing.

PERSON PROFILE

The job holder must have the right to live and work in an African country where Practical Action has a registered office.

Qualifications, Knowledge and Experience

To be successful in the role, the ideal candidate will be able to demonstrate:

ESSENTIAL

- In-depth and high-profile expertise in the last mile distribution sector, energy access, agriculture, or relevant area of social entrepreneurship in emerging markets.
- Demonstrable experience of leading or working within diverse, member-led organisations or multi-stakeholder partnerships.
- Experience leading an organisation or business unit with overall accountability for the successful delivery of strategy and operational plans.
- Business development including demonstrable experience of successfully achieving fundraising targets, submitting of high-quality proposals and successfully undertaking contracting.
- Strong partnership building, networking, public speaking and advocacy skills, working comfortably with government, funders, private sector and civil society at all levels.
- A strategic mindset with strong analytical skills and an ability to translate systems level thinking into pragmatic plans and activities.
- Strong project management skills including financial management, contract management, MEL and gender inclusive programming, stakeholder management, and donor reporting.
- Team development skills with expertise in managing global team members (including remotely), bringing diverse groups of specialists together under a common goal, and leading beyond formal reporting lines.
- A thoughtful approach to team and line management, which balances programme delivery requirements with nurturing and strengthening team members' capacities and confidence.
- A strong understanding of and commitment to gender equality, diversity and inclusion.

- Fluency in written and spoken English.
- Hands-on attitude: willingness to get stuck in and get things done - we are a small team!

DESIRABLE

- Fluency in French.
- Existing relations with key funders, such as government development institutions, private foundations, development banks, impact investors.
- Ability to travel up to 8 weeks per year.
- Post-graduate degree in a relevant subject.

Safeguarding Commitment

Practical Action is fully committed to preventing all forms of abuse, exploitation, and harm to children and vulnerable adults. All employees are expected to:

- Uphold and model the highest standards of behavior and integrity in line with the organization's Safeguarding Policy.
- Promote a culture of awareness, prevention, and zero tolerance for harm.
- Report any safeguarding concerns through the appropriate channels promptly.
- Participate in regular safeguarding training and meet all related compliance requirements.

All employees are expected to embody and promote Practical Action's values:

- **People-centred:** We prioritize fairness, accessibility, dignity, and respect for all — from colleagues and communities to supporters and stakeholders.
- **Impact-driven:** We are motivated by the desire to create **lasting, meaningful change** for the people and communities we serve.
- **Transparent:** We act with **honesty, integrity, and strong ethics**, fostering mutual trust and upholding the highest standards.
- **Innovative:** We champion **curiosity, learning, and fresh thinking**, drawing on local knowledge to deliver global impact.
- **Resilient:** We face challenges with determination and adaptability, committed to learning and evolving in pursuit of **sustainable development**.

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