

Practical ACTION

Job profile

COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER



Practical Action

ABOUT US

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We are an international development organisation putting ingenious ideas to work so people in poverty can change their world.

We help people find solutions to some of the world's toughest problems. Challenges made worse by catastrophic climate change and persistent gender inequality. We work with communities to develop ingenious, lasting and locally owned solutions for agriculture, water and waste management, climate resilience and clean energy. And we share what works with others, so answers that start small can grow big.

We're a global change-making group, working with communities who are vulnerable to poverty and climate change to support them to change their world. Together we develop innovative, community powered and locally owned solutions that achieve transformative change in lives and livelihoods. And we work with a range of partners, including governments, business and international organisations to ensure improvements are sustained and scaled and to change the systems that keep people poor and vulnerable.

We were founded in 1969 by radical economist EF Schumacher who challenged the development thinking of the time. He believed in solutions suited to context, equipping people with the skills and knowledge to change their situation, economic systems that work for all and living within the planets means. This ethos continues to fuel all our work. Schumacher was the author of 'Small is Beautiful: A study of economics as if people mattered'. In our work we start 'small', ensuring we understand what is already working but we aim big focussing on what will deliver the systems change required.

We have over 60 years of experience working across Africa, Asia and Latin America. Our group consists of a UK registered charity with experienced country teams, an expert consulting service and an independent development publishing company. We combine these specialisms to multiply our impact and help shape a world that works better for everyone.

By 2025, our work with partners has enhanced risk knowledge systems so that four million people living in hazard-prone, climate-vulnerable communities are better protected.

Making cities fit for people for the millions of people living in urban slums and settlements without proper sanitation, clean water and waste services. Our work with communities is making cities in poorer countries cleaner, healthier, fairer places for people to live and work, with clean water for drinking and sewage safely contained, collected and processed. By 2025, our work with partners will have led to improved water, sanitation and waste management services for one million people living in slum communities and a further 2.4 million people through wider systems change.

Cultivating farming that works for smallholder farmers struggling to make a sufficient income and adapt to the negative effects of climate change. We're teaming up with smallholder farmers, many of whom are women, so they can adapt to climate change and achieve a good standard of living. By 2025, our work with partners will have improved food security and incomes for two million people in rural communities and a further one million people through wider systems change.

Practical Action

ABOUT THE ROLE

SCOPE

For the past eight years, Practical Action has been incubating an exciting initiative called the [Global Distributors Collective](#) (GDC): a collective of over 300 last mile distribution companies that cumulatively reach millions of the poorest consumers in the world with beneficial products like solar lanterns, water filters and improved cookstoves. The GDC provides a collective voice for distributors to ensure their voice is heard; drives research and innovation across the sector; facilitates the exchange of information, insight and expertise; and provides critical services that leverage economies of scale. Find out more about the GDC's 2026-30 strategy [here](#). The GDC is currently hosted by Practical Action alongside strategic and implementing partner Bopinc.

This is a highly strategic role in the GDC team focused on designing, managing, and implementing all communications and member engagement activities for the GDC, and contributing to the direction of the GDC as a whole.

Title	Communications Manager – GDC
Reporting to	Head of the GDC
Days	Full time – 35 hours per week
Direct reports	Senior Member Engagement Officer, Communications and Events Coordinator
Financial scope	N/A
Location	UK, Kenya Hybrid working pattern; if UK-based, the role can be predominantly home based
Duration	This is a fixed term contract to provide maternity cover for up to 12 months
Grade	5
Travel	Expected approximately 2-3 weeks per annum

RESPONSIBILITIES

Strategic communications and member engagement (60%)

- Oversight and quality control of all externally facing GDC communications activities; responsible for brand oversight and brand risk to uphold and grow the GDC's visibility and profile. This includes:
 - Leading on developing, managing, and implementing the overarching communications strategy for the Global Distributors Collective, to increase brand awareness and recognition for the GDC and to disseminate key information about workstreams, innovations and knowledge products to our members, partners and the wider sector. This involves working closely with GDC team project leads, to ensure

that communications activities are considered, embedded, and maximised within project design and delivery from the outset.

- Leading the GDC's digital strategy, including website management and development (annual traffic of 65k page views, with 9k visitors); bi-monthly e-newsletters (to mailing list of 1700+ contacts); and growing the GDC's social media presence on LinkedIn (3k+ followers).
- Leading on media relationships and campaign opportunities, to reach new audiences
- Overseeing the design and execution of 5-10 virtual webinars per year, featuring senior executive speakers from across the private and public sectors, and often delivered in partnership with other sector players
- Overseeing the design and delivery of a series of in-person GDC member learning and collaboration events around the world
- Leading production and dissemination of a range of comms content and knowledge products, for both members and the wider development community, ensuring effective management of inputs from across the team, and amplified via e.g., podcasts, blogs, articles, how-to-guides, etc
- Responsible for member engagement and management activities, to ensure members are aware of and engaged with the work that we do, that we are operating inclusively of our members' needs and priorities, that our membership criteria is fit-for-purpose, and that our membership continues to grow. This includes:
 - Oversight and coordination of a brand-new project to develop a GDC customer relationship management (CRM) system to track all GDC interactions with members, partners, donors and other key stakeholders.
 - Oversight of other membership management processes and all digital communications systems (GDC member database, GDC inbox, Dotdigital, website, SurveyMonkey, Eventbrite, etc)
 - Overseeing the development and execution of the bi-annual GDC Member Survey, with the next scheduled for late 2026
 - Designing and overseeing the 'member experience' with the GDC, starting at the onboarding process and moving through to participating in bespoke programmes e.g., the GDC benchmarking tool and Investment Catalyst Facility
 - Leading membership and audience segmentation, to enable effective tailoring and targeting of advocacy messages, knowledge products, resources and opportunities
 - Liaising with the central Practical Action Communications and Marketing team to increase the impact of GDC communications activities, and to ensure consistent and timely contribution on last mile distribution to the organisation-wide communications plan.
 - Identifying key opportunities to promote the last mile distribution sector and provide strategic support with convening workshops/forums on key GDC issues
 - Providing support, advice, and guidance about GDC communications and brand strategy to the wider team and the implementing partners' communications teams

Impact (10%)

- Review and analyse performance of communications channels and activities, utilising evaluation for improvement in reaching strategy objectives.
- Provide strategic input into M&E processes
- Lead on data collection (quantitative and qualitative) and analysis from members to gather feedback on and refine our interventions, including designing and managing the annual GDC member survey

Project management (10%)

- Commission, oversee and manage relationships with external agencies, freelancers and consultants as required, e.g., web developers, graphic designers, etc.
- Project manage communications activities including using platforms such as Asana

Planning and Strategy (5%)

- As a core member of the GDC leadership team, contribute to the strategic direction of the GDC, including business development and fundraising, project design and development, and partnership management.
- Lead the GDC membership strategy, including in managing decisions around changes to GDC membership criteria and recruiting new members
- Represent the GDC and present on behalf of the GDC at international meetings and events as needed.

Line management (15%)

- Manage the GDC Senior Member Engagement Officer, and the GDC Communications and Events Coordinator.

PERSON PROFILE

Experience, Knowledge & Skills

Required:

- Minimum 5 years' experience in strategic communications
- Proven expertise in producing and disseminating innovative content and knowledge products to international development / third sector audiences
- Demonstrable experience in community building / network management
- Leadership skills and track record of line management and managing external suppliers
- Significant experience of project management: delivering projects on time, to expectations and within budgets
- Partnership management skills
- Strategic thinking skills and ability to conceptualise and deliver strategy
- Exceptional communicator, written and verbal
- A team player that enjoys working collaboratively and iteratively
- Proven ability to work independently with little supervision required
- Ability to clearly undertake tasks and deliver to time-pressured deadlines
- Commitment to a markets-based approach to supporting people to improve their lives

Desirable:

- Technical understanding of last mile distribution and/or energy access, and experience working with last mile distribution and/or energy access companies
- Demonstrable experience of engaging media outlets, pitching to media, etc
- Demonstrated knowledge and experience of monitoring and evaluation
- Demonstrable knowledge of gender inclusion approaches
- French language skills

HOW TO APPLY

If you want to work for a charity with significant people ambitions, then we would like to hear from you. For more information, please visit our careers page. **To apply please submit a copy of your CV and supporting that includes the answers to the following questions:**

1. Why do you consider yourself a strong candidate for the role of GDC Communications Manager at Practical Action?
2. What most excites you about working on the Global Distributors Collective programme?
3. What do you think would be your biggest strength and steepest learning curve in this role?

Please send your CV and Supporting Statement to recruitment@practicalaction.org.uk

APPLICATION INFORMATION

Why join us?

The opportunity to work for an organisation that is making a positive difference to the lives of people worldwide, a friendly and supportive culture, and working with values-driven and highly engaged colleagues are just some of the reasons we think Practical Action is a great place to work.

This will be a global role based either in the UK or in our country offices in Kenya. The final salary and benefits for this role is dependent on the country of base and job market conditions.

RECRUITMENT PROCESS PRIVACY NOTICE

Information you need to know:

Your CV/resume, covering letter or supporting statement submitted in support of an application for any position with the Practical Action Group will be used during the recruitment process to short list suitable candidates who will be invited to interview.

Practical Action collects a range of information about you. This includes:

- Your name, address and contact details, including email address and telephone number;
- Details of your qualifications, skills, experience and employment history;
- Information about your current level of remuneration, including benefit entitlements;
- Bank details at on-boarding stage to set you up for pay if you are successful in your job application;
- Whether or not you have a disability for which Practical Action needs to make reasonable adjustments during the recruitment process;
- Information about your entitlement to work in the UK;

We sometimes use third party job application platforms to publish and receive applications for roles at the Practical Action Group. When you apply through these portals the organisation's privacy information will be available to you. We only work alongside other organisations in this way under a contract and if we are satisfied that they will keep your information safely and securely using it only in the same legal ways that we would.

During the recruitment process and with your permission, informing you that we are doing so, Practical Action may also collect personal data about you from third parties, such as references supplied by former employers. We may also perform checks on your identity to establish your right to work in the UK where applicable. We are also obliged to seek information about criminal convictions and offences in meeting our obligations and exercising specific rights in relation to employment.

If your application is successful, personal data gathered during the recruitment process will form part of your electronic personnel file and retained during your employment and afterwards in line with legislation including the storage of personal records and to comply with the requirements of any statutory bodies.

The legal basis for processing personal data is either contract and/or legal obligation when applying for roles and the employment contract between Practical Action and you if you are successful. If we are required by law to share your information, (e.g., in response to a warrant or court order), we will do so.

Practical Action may process information about whether or not applicants have a disability in order to make reasonable adjustments. This is to carry out its obligations and exercise specific rights in relation to employment.

Practical Action is obliged to seek information about criminal convictions and offences. Where Practical Action seeks this information, it does so because it is necessary for it to carry out its obligations and exercise specific rights in relation to employment.

We automatically delete the personal information of unsuccessful applications 12 months after the application process ends, unless a candidate requests that we keep their details for longer. Statistical information like ethnicity, sexuality and disability may be kept ensuring that our recruitment processes are inclusive and not discriminatory, but this information is completely anonymised.

We may also share your information both within and outside of the European Union with those involved in the recruitment process, if necessary for the performance of their roles in terms of supporting with this process. In addition to the above, we may also use your information for the purpose of monitoring the number of applicants received through a particular advertising campaign. This will only be used where we have received your explicit consent to do so.

Consultant details are held on our consultancy database and shared within Practical Action Consulting, including outside of the UK, for potential roles. We will contact you if we find a suitable role or proposal which we think you may be interested in. To ensure your information is accurate and that you are happy to remain on our database, we will ask you to refresh your CV with us periodically according to our Data Retention Policy.