

Terms of Reference: Last Mile Distribution Technical Research Lead for the GDC State of the Sector report

Assignment	Methodology development, data collection, data analysis and report writing for the GDC State of the Sector Report 2024
Commissioning Manager	Russell Lyseight, Head of the GDC
Background	
Programme Overview	<p>The Global Distributors Collective (GDC) is a collective of over 200 last mile distributors around the world. We are dedicated to supporting and representing last mile distribution companies (LMDs) to help them reach underserved customers with beneficial products, and to developing the last mile distribution sector. Our purpose is to make last mile distribution the priority so that beneficial products can be made affordable and available to all.</p> <p>The GDC is hosted by Practical Action, alongside strategic and implementing partner Bopinc. Our State of the Sector (SoS) report has been published twice - in 2019 and 2022.</p>
Audience	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Last mile distribution companies (LMDs) that distribute beneficial products to underserved communities 2) The wider last mile distribution stakeholder community, including donors/investors, manufacturers, service providers, practitioners, and others.
Scope	<p>The GDC wishes to recruit a Remote Technical Research Consultant who will lead the execution of a series of deliverables concerning our State of the Sector 2024 report (SoS). This consultancy aims to find a Technical Research Lead who would be the preferred supplier for future similar projects with the GDC.</p> <p>The SoS is the GDC Programme’s flagship report, which aims to provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A description of the LMD sector as a whole and the different models of last mile distribution. - A benchmark of key data from GDC membership (sales, product categories and number of units offered, sales force size, growth stage, investment needs, etc). - The operational best practices of last mile distributors. - Provide rigorous analysis of the characteristics and challenges of GDC members, and the types of interventions needed to unlock LMD growth. It will also profile the customers of GDC members.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Future trends and opportunities in the LMD sector to expand. - Recommendations to different types of actors (LMDs, suppliers, investors, donors) that want to engage with and support the sector. <p>Research for the SoS report will aim to test a series of hypotheses developed by the GDC.</p> <p>The GDC will execute a survey of all LMDs that are members of the GDC to measure key data points. Analysis of data collected through this survey will provide a deeper understanding of LMD characteristics, key business data, and challenges and provide the evidentiary basis to test the hypotheses.</p> <p>To support this analysis, case studies of LMDs will be required to delve deeper into specific barriers to growth (to be identified), as well as case studies of innovative solutions to these barriers (to be identified) employed by sector stakeholders and LMDs themselves.</p> <p>To further support this analysis, interviews will be required with last mile distributors and sector stakeholders – investors, donors, technical assistance providers, sector-specific support organisations - alongside desk-based research of LMD-sector relevant literature.</p> <p>The deliverables which are the subject of this ToR are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stakeholder map. - Interview list. - Literature review list. - Analysis of Member Survey Data with pre-determined hypotheses. - Design, delivery, and analysis of interviews with last mile distributor and sector stakeholders. - Design and delivery of case studies. - Drafting of the SoS Report, collation, and incorporation of feedback - Finalisation of the SoS Report, ensuring clarity, accuracy, and coherence. <p>Please note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Copyediting, report layout, and design are out of scope for this ToR. - Development of the report structure, stakeholder engagement activities, and selection of key content topics (e.g. Deep Dives) will be a collaborative exercise between GDC team members and the consultant. - GDC team members will lead on some (to be determined) aspects of report drafting related to specialist topics, e.g., Access to Finance, where those GDC team members have relevant specialist expertise.
<p>Length of assignment</p>	<p>The high-level timeline/day allocation is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development and finalisation of stakeholder map and interview list – July 31 – 2 Days. - Delivery of literature review research and analysis – August 15 – 10 Days. - Analysis of Member Survey Data – August 30 [based on receipt of member survey data set by August 15] - 10 Days. - Delivery of expert interviews, GDC member interviews, case studies, and related analysis – October 4 – 10 Days. - Draft SoS Report – October 25 (including 3 rounds of feedback) - 15 Days. - Final SoS Report – November 11 (including 3 rounds of feedback) - 10 Days.

<p>Profile</p>	<p>The type of organisation/individual capable of executing these deliverables within the required timeframe will have the following required/desired characteristics:</p> <p>Required Characteristics</p> <p><i>Expertise in Last Mile Distribution</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Industry Knowledge: Deep understanding of the last mile distribution sector, including trends, challenges, opportunities, and key players. - Technical Expertise: Proficiency in logistics, supply chain management, and technological advancements impacting last mile delivery. <p><i>Research and Analysis Capabilities</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Methodological Rigor: Ability to design and implement robust research methodologies tailored to the unique aspects of last mile distribution. - Data Analysis: Expertise in quantitative and qualitative data analysis, including statistical analysis, survey analysis, and data interpretation. - Interview and Survey Expertise: Capable of conducting expert interviews and managing comprehensive surveys. <p><i>Project Management Skills</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Framework Development: Ability to develop and deliver structured frameworks for research activities such as expert interviews, desk-based research, and case studies. - Timely Delivery: Proven track record of delivering comprehensive reports within specified timelines. <p><i>Comprehensive Research Services</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Desk-Based Research: Proficiency in conducting extensive literature reviews, market analysis, and secondary data collection. - Expert Interviews: Capability to identify, reach out to, and interview key industry stakeholders and experts. - Case Studies: Experience in developing in-depth case studies that provide practical insights and real-world examples. <p><i>Reporting and Presentation Skills</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Drafting and Reviewing: Strong skills in drafting, reviewing, and refining detailed reports. <p>Desirable Characteristics</p> <p><i>Reputation and Credibility</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Established Reputation: A well-known name in the research and consulting industry with a portfolio of previous flagship reports or projects. - Credibility: Recognition and respect from industry peers and stakeholders.
<p>Budget</p>	<p>The consultancy may be undertaken by an individual consultant or a small team with a designated lead. If the consultancy is undertaken by an individual, we estimate it would require a commitment of 57 days.</p> <p>The maximum budget available for this consultancy is £32,000 (inclusive of all applicable taxes, expenses, etc.). The final fee will be agreed upon with the consultant based on agreed, contracted deliverables.</p> <p>Expressions of interest above our maximum budget or that cannot be completed within the proposed timeframe will not be considered.</p>

**Sharing your
expression of
interest**

Please send the below to gdc@practicalaction.org.uk by Friday, 12th July 2024 at 23:59 EAT - Cover note, indicating your motivation for participating in this project, representative writing samples, budget breakdown, including day rate(s), CVs of consultants/team members, key delivery risks and proposed mitigating actions.

If you would like to discuss this consultancy before submitting an expression of interest, please contact Russell.Lyseight@practicalaction.org.uk.