

Call for quotes: Research and writing of case study exploring learning from partnerships between fast-moving consumer goods companies (FMCGs) and waste pickers in India

Background

Public awareness of the scale and impacts of plastic pollution - and the role of FMCGs in contributing to this - is increasing. For example, see Tearfund's [Rubbish Campaign](#), highlighting the role of Coca-Cola, PepsiCo, Nestle and Unilever. Public awareness and pressure has resulted in large numbers of companies exploring or establishing voluntary Extended Producer Responsibility (VEPR) schemes in low- and middle-income countries, to demonstrate that they can collect their waste plastic. VEPR schemes immediately bring FMCGs into contact with the existing informal waste sector (IWS). In addition to EPR schemes, companies also come into contact with waste pickers through their procurement of post-consumer recycle (PCR) for their packaging. In both scenarios, the relationship between FMCGs and waste pickers will often be via a supply chain, including a Producer Responsibility Organisation (PRO) in the case of EPR (or an NGO or SME in smaller pilots), and recyclers in the case of procurement. However, while FMCGs will rarely be in direct contact with waste pickers, the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs) affirm that companies have a responsibility not only to avoid causing or contributing to adverse impacts, but also to seek to *prevent or mitigate impacts that are linked to their operations, products or services by their business relationships, including their supply chains*.

Tearfund's waste picker rights advocacy programme is focussed on developing and agreeing a set of principles to guide fair partnerships between FMCGs and the informal waste sector (the 'Guiding Principles') as well as guidance on how these can be implemented, monitored and evaluated in FMCG operations and supply chains. These principles were first circulated in January 2020 and have since undergone revision over the last 18 months, informed by comments from both FMCGs and waste picker representatives, and various research projects.

One outcome of the project is to develop a robust evidence base to inform these fair partnerships. As part of this, we are conducting a number of country case studies. Case studies on Nigeria and South Africa are currently being written. Tearfund is seeking a consultant to research and write a third case study, focussed on India.

The India case study

The aim of the country case studies is to examine specific examples of where FMCGs (either directly or through intermediaries) are engaging with waste pickers through EPR schemes and to draw out learning to inform Tearfund's waste picker rights advocacy workstream (explained above).

The India case study will do the following:

1. Describe the legislative context with regards to plastic-related EPR in the country.
2. On the basis of initial desk based research and interviews with waste picker representatives in India, three to five projects where The Coca-Cola Company, PepsiCo, Unilever and/or Nestle are engaging with waste pickers (ideally these

would be within EPR, but they could also include CSR (corporate social responsibility) projects). As a starting point the consultant should explore:

- Unilever-UNDP Plastic Waste Management Programme¹
 - Nestle's Hildaari programme²
 - Partnership between SWaCH and FMCGs³
3. Give a description of these projects including:
 - a. Their scale and reach (in the context of the total number of waste pickers in the country)
 - b. The role of the FMCG(s) in relation to the project.
 4. Explore:
 - a. What involvement did waste pickers have in the design of these projects/schemes?
 - b. What do the projects aim to achieve in terms of benefits for waste pickers? (this should be assessed in relation to the issues covered in Tearfund's Guiding Principles)⁴
 - c. What is the role of waste pickers in the project/scheme?
 - d. How are waste pickers involved in monitoring the success of the project/scheme?
 - e. What successes have these different projects and approaches seen in terms of waste picker participation and livelihoods?
 - f. What successes have these projects seen in terms of collection rates?
 - g. What challenges have been experienced within the different projects and approaches in terms of waste picker participation?
 - h. What challenges have been experienced in terms of the impact of the project on waste picker livelihoods and human rights?
 - i. What is the role played by different stakeholders including the government, PROs and wider industry?
 5. Present conclusions, including recommendations and learning points.

Methodology: the consultant will use desk-based research and semi-structured interviews with waste pickers, FMCG staff and other stakeholders (eg people working for intermediaries and academics). Tearfund will support the organisation of translation for interviews where needed.

Output: A 20-30 page paper, including a 4 page Executive Summary.

Consultant

The consultant will be an experienced researcher in issues related to poverty and human rights, the informal waste sector and/or sustainable development. They will have excellent English written

¹ <https://www.in.undp.org/content/india/en/home/projects/plastic-waste-management.html>

²

<https://globalrec.org/2020/05/16/empowering-and-equipping-the-waste-workers-in-the-himalayan-town-s-to-fight-against-the-pandemic/>

³ <https://swachcoop.com/>

⁴ The Guiding Principles include issues such as income security; safe, fair and beneficial working conditions; enabling participation and movement up the value chain; ending child labour; and ensuring safe end uses for recycled plastic; working constructively with suppliers and intermediaries; supporting the organisation of the informal waste sector; promoting public awareness and recognition; engaging in multi-stakeholder collaboration and using leverage to influence public policy.

communication skills. Ideally the consultant will also have a good understanding of issues relating to the integration of the informal waste sector in waste management systems (led by either municipalities or industry), but this is not essential.

Resources and timeline

We expect this work to take 12 days. A timeline will be developed once the consultant is appointed, but we envisage the research to be undertaken during July and August.

To submit a tender for this project, please provide a one-page document explaining why you would be a good fit, accompanied by your day-rate and CV to mari.williams@tearfund.org by 08.00 BST on 5 July 2021. For more information on the project, please contact me at the same email address.