

Report of the seminar on disaster risk management for the postal sector in the Asia-Pacific region

DATE: 19 and 20 January 2016

VENUE: Asian-Pacific Postal College, Bangkok, Thailand



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PARTICIPANTS: 44 representatives from 16 UPU member countries (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, Japan, Korea (Rep.), Lao People's Dem. Rep., Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Samoa, Thailand, United States of America, Viet Nam), and experts from APPU, ESCAP, WMO and UPU IB for a total of 51 persons.

Opening Session (Moderator: Olivier Boussard)



1.1. Mr Olivier Boussard, Coordinator, UPU IB

- Message from Mr Bishar A. Hussein, UPU Director General: During the 2013–2016 cycle, the number and intensity of large-scale disasters has increased, resulting in more human casualties and economic damage, also affecting the postal sector. But the Post can be a key player in disaster response, for example, by serving as a distribution point for emergency supplies and money transfers in the affected areas, and by providing a basic means of communication when no other system is available.
- During the 2013–2016 cycle, the UPU has made numerous efforts to raise awareness, set a framework for the UPU DRM activities and provide a platform for exchanges of best practices. DRM is a rather new activity for the UPU, but it has gained momentum and is now an integral component of our development cooperation policy. This seminar is an example of the concrete actions being implemented by the UPU to meet this objective.
- In the coming years, the UPU will continue to promote DRM in the postal sector by integrating DRM principles and objectives into UPU development cooperation frameworks and projects, especially at regional level.



1.2. Mr Patrick Mendonca, Senior Director, Office of the Postmaster General, United States Postal Service (U.S.), Chair of the UPU Ad Hoc Group on DRM

- Disasters affect the postal sector and operators' ability to conduct business and serve their customers. Historically, the UPU has played an important role in assisting in the response to the effects of natural disasters on Posts.
- Because disasters will continue to happen, any steps that can be taken to prepare Posts and make the sector more resilient will be an investment in our future. The Asia-Pacific region has been hit hard by natural disasters, having the largest share of the world's recent disasters. We can learn from the experiences of the region's member countries and postal operators on how to prepare for and respond to disasters. It is critically important for all parties to work together to ensure the resilience of the postal sector.
- The UNDP likes to note that "each dollar invested in disaster preparedness saves seven dollars in response"; that is why DRM is critically important for the postal sector as a whole, and for UPU designated operators.



1.3. Mr Lin Hongliang, Director, APPU

- The Asia-Pacific region has suffered frequent natural disasters. On the one hand, natural disasters destroy postal facilities and infrastructure and cause deaths among postal staff. On the other hand, in some cases, the Post is the single channel for local people to communicate just after disasters. So it is very important to help and support Posts during and after disasters.
- This seminar is a great opportunity to share best practices from experts of the various organizations.



1.4. Mr Hiroshi Nakayama, Director, International Affairs Office, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (Japan)

- Building disaster-resilient postal services on a global scale through disaster risk reduction (DRR) projects matches the spirit of the UPU to promote communication among peoples and contribute to international cultural, social and economic cooperation.
- The UPU DRM project was launched when Japan's proposal was approved at the 2012 UPU Doha Congress. The project aims to build disaster-resilient postal services at a global level by sharing technologies, know-how and lessons learned.
- Japan's active involvement in addressing the issue is very beneficial not only to increase the value of the postal networks in the region, but also to discuss further improvement of our individual domestic measures.
- Japan intends to continue its contribution in this field in the cycles after the Istanbul Congress.

Session 1: Asia-Pacific and natural disasters (Moderator: Patrick Mendonca)



2.1. Situation in the region: 2015 report (UN ESCAP):

Dr Sanjay Srivastava, Chief of the Disaster Risk Reduction Section, Information and Communications Technology and Disaster Risk Reduction Division

- Between 2005 and 2014,
 - › 40% of global disasters,
 - › 60% of global deaths,
 - › 80% of global affected people and
 - › 45% of global economic damage occurred in the Asia-Pacific region.
- The Asia-Pacific Information Super Highway is the regional broadband network under the ESCAP initia-

tive to support the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with the aim of facilitating the movement of people, goods, money, information and knowledge for sustainable socio-economic development in the region.

- Disaster response is critical for the UN's 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda agreed to in August 2015:
 1. Many countries need to follow a consistent and coherent approach to address disasters, with the focus on response to be accompanied by DRR.
 2. International assistance needs to go beyond emergency response to risk preparedness, prevention and mitigation.
 3. Efforts to strengthen resilience are effective only when integrated into overall strategies for sustainable development.
 4. Just as every sector can be affected by disasters, so every sector needs to consider how to make its activities disaster-resilient.
 5. Regional cooperation is critical to addressing disasters in Asia and the Pacific.
 6. Asia-Pacific cannot achieve the SDGs without building resilience to disasters.



2.2. DRM plan in Thailand and case study of flood in 2011 (Department of Disaster Prevention, Ministry of Interior of Thailand): Mr Chainarong Vasanasomsithi, Director, Research and International Cooperation Bureau

- Thai government enacted Disaster Prevention and Mitigation Act in 2007 and has established the National Disaster Prevention and Mitigation Plan, which is a national framework for all sectors to carry out their roles and responsibilities in the areas of DRR and DRM.
- Flood in 2011 affected wide areas of Thailand (65 provinces): 13.6 million people affected (813 people

dead). Economic loss was 46.6 billion USD, and GDP growth decreased from +3.8% to -2.3%.

- After the flood in 2011, the Thai government learned many lessons, including:
 - › Deforestation was main cause of flooding
 - › Effective flood risk management requires collaboration and engagement among various stakeholders
 - › Data and information accessibility was not unified
 - › Structure countermeasures
 - › Build fundamental knowledge for disaster preparedness before next incident
 - › Financial incentive (e.g. tax reduction) for recovery
- Based on these lessons learned, the Thai government established a new National DRM Plan in 2015 with four strategies:

1. Reduce disaster risks: prevent and prepare for identified and projected risks through multi-hazard risk assessment with structural and non-structural measures.
 2. Enhance effectiveness of integrated emergency management;
 3. Enhance inclusive relief, reconstruction and rehabilitation programme with “build back better” approach.
4. Enhance international cooperation on DRM since disaster is trans-boundary in nature.
- The Thai government will also make efforts to enhance international cooperation in four areas:
 1. Ensuring unified humanitarian coordination system
 2. Standardizing humanitarian operation procedure
 3. Enabling learning environment for DRM
 4. Promoting Thailand’s leadership in DRR

Session 2: Recent natural disasters and postal services in the Asia-Pacific region (moderator: Patrick Mendonca)



3.1. Samoa Post: Mr Theodore McFarland, Assistant Clerk

- Samoa is ranked 30th of countries most exposed to three or more hazards. Samoa is at high risk of natural disasters, especially cyclones and floods. Samoa has

been affected by devastating cyclones multiple times in the last few decades, such as Cyclone Ofa in 1990 and Cyclone Val in 1991.

- Cyclones are associated with damaging winds, rainfall, flooding, swells, etc. Samoa Post built post offices with the ground floor several steps higher than sea level to prevent damage to postal items and equipment



3.2. Japan Post: Mr Toshihide Suzuki, Senior Manager, Risk Management Office

- In September 2015, Typhoon Etau (referred to as “Typhoon No. 18 in 2015” in Japan) caused record-breaking rainfall and floods, and 33 post offices were affected and obliged to close.

- Japan presented how it responded to this disaster:
 1. Initial response
 - › Gathering information
 - › Confirmation of damages, including safety of employees, damage of POs, etc.
 - › Establishment of Disaster Response HQ and Local Response HQ
 - › Announcement of information on the status of services and mail delivery on the website
 2. Service restoration activities
 - › Send support staff to affected POs
 - › Identify required equipment to resume services
 - › Installation of portable toilets
 - › Recovery operations (control traffic of mail, coordinate another shipment route, secure vehicles to deliver, determine priority services to recover such as express and parcel services)
 - › Deliver mail items to evacuation centres

3. Lessons learned and future measures
 - › Call tree did not work well: familiarize employees with the emergency contact procedures
 - › Japan Post could not get information on the refugees at the evacuation site from the local government for reasons of privacy protection, which caused delivery delays: enhanced mutual

cooperation with memorandum of understanding between POs and local governments

- › Criteria for deciding to resume services at POs under an evacuation order were unclear: decision should be made faster, in coordination with postmasters in the affected area



3.3. Nepal Post: Mr Badri Nath Gairhe, Director, Department of Postal Services

- Nearly 9,000 people were killed by the earthquake in April and May 2015, and total property loss was over 5 billion USD. Nepal Post also lost approximately 2.4 million USD. Currently, the UPU and Nepal Post are carrying out an emergency assistance project for recovery.
- Lessons learned:
 - › Before earthquake: anti-seismic building, relocation of POs away from earthquake-sensitive spots, preparation of first aid kit and food, training on how to protect oneself, placing of important items at a safe place, etc.
 - › During earthquake: don't panic, stop vehicles, protect oneself, etc.
 - › After earthquake: Prepare for aftershocks, stop gas and electricity services, ensure safety of family, don't use telephones to leave lines free for emergency use by the authorities, etc.



3.4. Pakistan Post: Mr Wasim Zafar, Director, ECO Postal Staff College, Islamabad

- There are many disasters in Pakistan; at the earthquake in 2005, 730,000 were killed. At Pakistan Post, two postmasters were killed and 92 post offices totally destroyed. Floods also hit the country, but most post offices have been relocated and act as a hub for security.
- Pakistan has a disaster risk reduction and recovery plan (DRRP). Only thing to do is identify how to minimize the damage and how to adapt plan afterwards. In case of disaster, Pakistan Post provides a free parcel service to affected areas and a free money order service.
- Pakistan Post has also created a training plan, and it involves local communities.



3.5. Thailand Post: Mr Kachit Kandet, Vice-President of Risk Management Department

- Thailand has faced many natural disasters, especially floods and tropical storms. The flood in 2011 had a severe impact on the Thai economy, industry and society. After the flood, Thailand Post management team ordered every division to check and revise the existing plan.
- 1. Preparedness phase
 - › Provide operational guide to POs to prevent asset damage
 - › Prepare spare generator, boat, vehicles and locate at safe place
 - › Prepare shelter for employees and their families
 - › Prepare risk mitigation plan for each disaster and contingency plan (four security levels)
 - › Establish business continuity plan and disaster recovery plan

2. During disaster phase
 - › Provide trained personnel to assist and monitor implementation of plans
 - › Watch/monitor/report
 - › Collaborate with all teams/organizations/departments concerned
 - › Provide adequate transport, logistics, appropriate communication and essential equipment for working in emergencies

3. Post-disaster phase
 - › On-site inspection/disaster assessment
 - › Reporting
 - › Reconstruction to “build back better”
 - › Restoring mental and physical health, as well as vital life support systems



3.6. Discussion (all participants)

Every country commented on their experiences as follows:

Afghanistan: DRM was not implemented before in postal sector in Afghanistan. It won't be easy for Posts to prepare with other authorities working on same issue. Needs further cooperation and focus of postal sector.

Bangladesh: Good concept for Bangladesh Post. Workshop is very helpful for Post. Post offices are in coastal areas and are built as cyclone shelter. Very helpful.

Bhutan: DRM is very helpful for Posts, including Bhutan Post.

Cambodia: Post uses some DRM elements, but only government does DRM. DRM experience is useful.

Japan: Experience and know-how from huge disasters is very useful; Japan was glad to hear from other countries.

Korea (Rep.): Sometimes floods affect the country. Necessary to take DRM elements back to Korea for preparation for floods.



Laos: Skills and experiences are good lessons for Laos; will take back to Post.

Malaysia: Business continuity is already addressed in Malaysia Post. Recommendations are good in terms of practicality of the plan, need to conduct regular testing; practice is good – important to know what to do in a situation.

Myanmar: Noticed that all presentations were helpful and all information was new for Myanmar. Preparations are important, especially in Japan Post's experience. Thai Post's presentation was also very good for business continuity.

Nepal: The seminar was fruitful for Nepal, which is very vulnerable. Lessons learned are good ones for Nepal.

Pakistan: Nothing can be done to stop nature but impacts can be mitigated through forecasting, preparedness, awareness and planning.

Philippines: The Philippines is a disaster-prone country, and it is important for the Post to have its own DRM and not rely too much on national DRM. There should be proper coordination with national DRM.

Samoa: Planning and implementation of DRM policy is very important for the Post.

Thailand: We must maintain customer trust to continue business. It is important for each country to have DRM and share its experience.

Viet Nam: Happy to be here, good opportunity to hear best practices and experiences from other neighbouring countries. Viet Nam's main natural disasters are tropical storms and typhoons. Viet Nam can learn much from the other countries, especially Thailand and Japan. In 2015, the country only suffered three storms, whereas before it had nine or ten. They assessed the damage to be about 110,000 USD to post offices and equipment

Session 3: Disaster risk management frameworks and action in the Asia-Pacific region (moderator: Olivier Boussard)



4.1. UN ESCAP actions on disaster risk resilience

(ESCAP): Mr Puji Pujiono, Regional Adviser on DRR, ICT and DRR Division

- ESCAP promotes regional cooperation for DRR in the areas of policy coherence, risk assessment, early warning system, and practical solutions including access to capital, assets, information and technology. The year 2015 was a pivotal one for integrating DRM into sustainable development in line with Sendai Framework and SDGs.
- ESCAP can act as a multi-sectoral, intergovernmental platform through regional mechanisms (e.g. analytical and policy research, regional platforms, coordination mechanisms, and financing mechanisms).
- ESCAP also challenges involvement of private sector in DRR. Private sector is the key of development investment with resilience in order to contribute significantly to the resilience of society. ESCAP thus promotes the effective participation of business in DRR as guided by the Sendai Framework. Posts also need to be resilient and can collaborate with ESCAP's effort. Posts can play an important role, and it is also important for the postal sector to engage with other government agencies.



4.2. UPU DRM framework and efforts to support reconstruction in the region (UPU IB):

Mr Yukio Teramura, Associate Expert for Disaster Risk Management and Emergency Aid

- UPU DRM framework was established in 2014 in line with international framework (e.g. Hyogo Framework for Action and UN Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience). In 2015, the Sendai Framework was adopted as a new international framework, and the UPU DRM framework was also revised.
- UPU activities in the area of DRM include:
 - › Emergency Information System (EmIS): Around one third of all service interruption messages sent via EmIS between 2013 and 2015 were linked to natural disasters
 - › UPU DRM website (www.upu.int/en/activities/disaster-risk-management-in-the-postal-sector/about-disaster-risk-management-in-the-postal-sector.html)
 - › Publishing a leaflet to promote UPU DRM activities
 - › Emergency and Solidarity Fund (ESF): The ESF is the main financial mechanism designed to support emergency assistance projects for UPU member countries. Between 2013 and 2015, half of the projects (three projects in the Philippines, Nepal and Myanmar) were in the Asia-Pacific region. However, the funds will not be sufficient to cover future needs, and appropriate decisions must be taken to sustain an adequate level of resources
- In conclusion, UPU DRM activities should be continued in the next cycle. The UPU is currently preparing a proposal of a general nature which includes promotion of DRM in the postal sector, capacity building and development of international partnerships. The proposal will be submitted to the Istanbul Congress.

Session 4: Climate change and disaster risk management (moderator: Olivier Boussard)



5.1. Weather/climate services and early warning system in the region (WMO): Mr Alasdair Hainsworth, Chief, Disaster Risk Reduction Services Division, Weather and Disaster Risk Reduction Services Department

- The World Meteorological Organization organizes regional frameworks and programmes in the Asia and South Pacific region, consisting of national meteorological agencies for weather and climate services. They are connected to a global observation system via satellite and the global telecommunications network.
- Through these systems, the WMO can share data among member countries, and its data is used for Multi-Hazard Early Warning Systems (MHEWS). MHEWS can promote synergies and partnerships among stakeholders at national, regional and international level. The UPU can be a partner with international MHEWS.

5.2. Climate change, DRM and the postal sector in the region (UPU IB): Ms Anne-Claire Blet, Sustainable Development Specialist (video link with Berne)

- Greenhouse gas effect, global warming and climate change: accumulation of gases in the atmosphere warms up the earth. Over the last 10 years, climate-related disasters cost 1.5 trillion USD. According to ESCAP, in the Asia-Pacific region, 1,625 disaster events were reported between 2005 and 2014, 500,000 people lost their lives, and around 1.4 billion people were affected. Economic loss totalled 523 billion USD (45% of global damage). Posts need to reduce their carbon footprint and adapt to climate change.
- The postal sector is making efforts in terms of climate action and links to DRM. Highlights are as follows:
 1. Measuring carbon emissions: The UPU has a new online tool called OSCAR (Online Solution for Carbon Analysis and Reporting), which enables member countries and their Posts to measure and report their greenhouse gas emissions and identify mitigation opportunities.
 2. Mitigating impact on climate: Some Posts (e.g. New Zealand, Korea (Rep.), China (People's Rep.) and India) in the AP region are taking steps to mitigate their impact through, for example, improvement of carbon performance, green initiatives, energy-saving campaigns and use of solar panels.
 3. Carbon offsetting: The UPU launched the Postal Carbon Fund as an offsetting mechanism to enable Posts in industrialized countries to offset their emissions by funding projects with a positive impact, either directly or indirectly, on the postal sector.
 4. Adapting to the consequences of climate change: Raise awareness and train staff; enforce emergency preparedness plans; review location of new facilities; reinforce protection of existing facilities; protect valuable assets, etc.



5.3. Posts and weather information (United States Postal Service): Mr Patrick Mendonca

- Posts have infrastructure and employees everywhere and operate up to seven days a week, 24 hours a day. As a result, in the event of severe weather-related natural disasters, the operations of a Post will likely be affected. The use of meteorological information can help Posts prepare for and react to upcoming severe weather.
- A daily weather report is issued by the U.S. Postal Service to its operations managers using national and other open source weather information. This data is used by operations managers to prepare for the effects of severe weather in the locations under their purview. This includes issuing preparedness checklists to employees and advising customers of contingency plans.

Starting session on Day 2
(moderator: Olivier Boussard)



6.1. Pakistan Post: Mr Wasim Zafar

- At the time of the earthquake in 2005, there were no DRM authority services in Pakistan. Subsequently, the Government of Pakistan established an organization to coordinate activities called "Rescue 1122", which anyone can access anywhere for emergency services (www.rescue.gov.pk).
- The National Disaster Management Authority (www.ndma.gov.pk/dynamic/) responds to natural disasters anywhere in the country. All governmental departments, including Pakistan Post, are involved in this agency.
- The Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority (ERRA) takes over the longer-term reconstruction (www.serra.gov.pk), including loan services for affected areas.
- The National Database and Registration Authority (www.nadra.gov.pk) provides solutions for identification, e-governance and secure documents that deliver the multi-pronged goals of mitigating identity theft, safeguarding the interests of clients, and facilitating public governance.



6.2. United States Postal Service: Mr Patrick Mendonca

- Hurricane Katrina severely affected a very large area of the United States in 2005. Before the hurricane made landfall, the U.S. Postal Service used checklists to prepare for the storm and ensure that assets were secured and employee contact information was current.
- After the hurricane made landfall, the top priority was to account for all employees and determine the operating capability of the postal and local civil infrastructure.
- Steps were taken to ensure that the displaced population received their postal items through mobile post offices, arrangements with shelters and special change-of-address procedures.
- Additionally, the U.S. Postal Service participated in the overall response by delivering flyers from the civil protection agency to citizens and providing other support.

Session 5: UPU Guide on Disaster Risk Management Introduction



7.1. 7.1 Presentation of the UPU DRM Guide:

Mr Paolo Iscaro, UPU consultant

Chapter 1: Purpose

- This guide provides a framework and emergency checklist templates for various natural disasters. It focuses on natural disasters such as typhoons, tornados, earthquakes, wildfires, tsunamis, winter storms and volcanic eruptions, but it is applicable even to man-made hazards, including violence in the workplace, wildfires caused by arson, and chemical and accidental events.

Chapter 2: Basic principles of DRM

- DRM is a continual and dynamic process of designing and implementing policies and measures to improve the understanding of disaster risk, as well as promote disaster risk reduction. The DRM process has four major components: mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery.
- Purpose of the DRM programme is to:
 - › Establish the emergency management organization used to mitigate any serious emergency or disaster
 - › Identify policies, responsibilities and procedures to protect the health and safety of employees and customers
 - › Ensure ongoing review and assessment of policies associated with DRM, and of how these policies are integrated and coordinated within the organization
 - › Promote understanding of programme elements within the organization through training, practice and development of guidance
 - › Establish the operational concepts and procedures associated with the day-to-day field response to emergencies

Chapter 3: Understanding Risks: Vulnerability and risk assessment, a fundamental first step to DRM

- Vulnerability and risk assessment are key components of a successful DRM programme.
- Using the risk grid as a starting point, it is possible to direct efforts to the highest priority risks.

Chapter 4: The Four Phases of DRM

- Mitigation: The measures taken to eliminate or reduce the intensity of hazardous events. There are three types of mitigation (physical, socio-economic and environmental).
- Preparedness: Aims to improve the capacity to respond rapidly and effectively to a natural disaster through the emergency management plan, business continuity plan and training.
- Response: Relatively short period of time just after the disaster (within 48 hours); postal operators should prioritize securement of 3Ps (people, properties and products).
- Recovery: Recovery activities take place after an emergency and aim to restore relatively normal conditions in the affected postal facilities and communities.

Chapter 5: Post-disaster damage and needs assessment (PDNA)

- A mechanism for joint assessment and recovery planning following a disaster
- A tool to assess the impact of a disaster and define a strategy for recovery, including an estimation of the financial resources required
- PDNA information needed by the UPU, including:
 - › Establish baseline pre-disaster data/information on the Post
 - › Determine the extent of impacts on employees, mail operations and infrastructure (3Ps)
 - › Develop a recovery strategy for physical assets, infrastructure and resumption of services

Chapter 6: Partners and resources for DRM

- There are many stakeholders the Post can cooperate with: national and local governments (planning departments, ministry of interior, etc.), first responders (police, fire, etc.), and academic and technical institutes.
- Regional and international partnerships are also important. For example, the WMO and the UPU cooperate to share information and need to discuss further cooperation.

Annex: Checklists and other information

- Guide contains two sets of checklists for designated operators (HQ level and field level) against various natural disasters. These checklists include two phases: pre-disaster and post-disaster.
- The guide also includes acronyms, a glossary, references and a list of regional/international organizations related to DRM.

7.2. Comments from participants

- Future plans, awareness and drills are important, not just to respond but more to prepare.
- Notes the practicality of keeping Murphy's law in mind: anything that can go wrong will go wrong.
- One cannot rely on cell phones, but satellite phones have to be used by people who know how to use them.
- Emergencies are local; the people on site are the eyes and ears for those outside the area; while headquarters can provide support, it can only deal with the emergency.
- Posts rely on suppliers, like power companies, for much; when the chain is broken, they cannot be available and become a weak link.
- Explains "call tree" process and importance of updating the information frequently.
- Write down phone numbers and keep them handy; do not rely on cell phone contact list. Important in case electricity goes down. Checklists should also be available.
- The guide is useful for participants. Good way forward. Serves as a reminder of what to do. Could be used as a starting point, some Posts may need to add to it.

Session 6: UPU Guide on Disaster Risk Management – Tabletop exercise (moderator: Paolo Iscaro, UPU consultant)

Mr Paolo Iscaro prepared two scenarios: typhoon and earthquake.

8.1 Typhoon scenario

- We can take the following actions to minimize the impact of a coming typhoon:
 - › Collect information.
 - › Take care of cash and stamps.
 - › Take control of valuable assets and move them out to safer area or move to high ground. We can also fill up vehicles and move to higher ground.
 - › Shield entrances and windows.
 - › Activate emergency management team.
 - › Shut off electrical panels maybe, shut off gas mains, understand maintenance issues.
- Prepare electric generator: Pakistan has one generator in every post office and Thailand has some generators. Rental agreement is also useful.
- Bangladesh has a control unit with a set of signals depending on strength of storms; HQ tells them what to do according to the levels. If above 4 (up to 7), the Post has to join with local administrations and move to shelter areas. In case of level 3 or 4, buildings are protected along coastal areas.
- Working with local authorities is important. Coordination is very important for shelters.
- In Bhutan, people can get information and notifications on post offices and railroads through TV, radio and social media. Need to be prepared for this at HQ level.

8.2. Earthquake scenario

- Earthquake hits suddenly: we cannot collect information in advance.
- With the Nepal earthquake last year, Nepal Post lost three employees, and many postal buildings in remote areas collapsed. Rescue operations were carried out immediately, but some died in collapsed buildings. One thing noted was that postmen volunteered in search and rescue. In recovery phase, building codes are to be implemented. Nepal Post is a big organization and is well represented in remote areas.
- Challenge involves the need for trained professionals and structural engineers. Depending on intensity, Posts can look for assistance from external professionals.
- Pakistan has engineers within postal sector, but every municipality has building assessment engineers to do it. At local level, every organization has a way to spend money and to find money. Posts can draw money from the deposits of other organizations. For big disasters, the national disaster management authority comes in and works with Posts. The ERRA does reconstruction for government agencies. Procurement regulatory laws can be bypassed to get funding for Pakistani post offices and relief packages for employees. Pakistan also has group insurance and postal life insurance.
- Bangladesh has similar insurance schemes to Pakistan's. Shift offices to other facilities and take assistance from local shop owners, who give space to provide postal services. Sometimes this is done rent-free as long as reconstruction takes place.



Comments from participants after sessions 5 and 6

Afghanistan: Learned lots of useful things. Post belongs to government, and disaster issues belong to government as well. So when privatizing postal sector, it's important to have DRM strategy in place to carry out business in good conditions. We should improve our strategic policies for the future, especially in DRM.

Bangladesh: This seminar was very helpful since Bangladesh is disaster-prone. This seminar showed that the postal sector has to be included in the government disaster response system as the Post has a lot to contribute.

Bhutan: This country is in a disaster area; however, it has not suffered from major ones. Government established a DRM unit in May 2015. Thanks to this seminar, we can now envisage implementing a DRM system in Bhutan from what was learned here.

Cambodia: During this seminar, I learned a lot, as I had limited ideas or knowledge on how to deal with disasters before. I plan to report to our leaders/top management that the Post should cooperate with national authorities. Gained a lot from experience of other countries during the seminar.

Laos: Laos Post had never had a DRM approach in place. From the experiences gained during the seminar, we will report to our leaders to include DRM in the future plan.

Malaysia: Malaysia has been lucky because it has not been exposed to major disasters, but it is exposed to floods and was hit quite badly the last two years, especially the eastern coast. Fortunately, not much damage to post offices, as these had been relocated to a safe area; plus Post has an MoU with local authorities to use their space during incidents. This was a good effort, and we need to come up with a guideline for all postal operators worldwide. Maybe not everyone in this room had knowledge about DRM or business continuity plan, and so to go forward, we should look at not only disasters but loss of revenue and inability



to continue business. Most important thing is to save lives before anything else.

Myanmar: In Myanmar, there are many disasters, such as the cyclones in 2008 and 2015. People traditionally have the custom to turn to government and other agencies for quick recovery. But we cannot prevent disasters, and now the government policy shifts to prevention and quick recovery. Seminar very useful; we will take back to Myanmar and apply this DRM approach.

Nepal: Up to now, there was no DRM system, so this was new for us. Different knowledge from different countries should help us to establish a DRM system in Nepal, and this seminar was very fruitful. We found some things to improve at Nepal Post and will communicate this (for example, new building codes, alternative business plans).

Pakistan: In this seminar, we had stakeholders from all areas, from international organizations, and we shared lessons learned. So this was great. Regarding suggestions: two days is too short because of travel. A third day could be round tables and could focus on specific disasters; countries could come up with strategies specific to their conditions. Also, regarding postal operators, perhaps the regulator could be invited along with the postal operator.

Philippines: Tactical approach was very good, as well as expertise of speakers. We can tailor some best practices to our local practices. We hope that this seminar will lead to international cooperation and assistance. If one country is totally devastated, DRM will not be implemented fully. We hope this can help neighbouring countries internally and externally.

Samoa: We learned a lot from the seminar, especially from each country's experience. Life insurance for employees is a good thing to have learned about, and we will report back to managers. We also learned a lot in terms of improvements, in disaster drills especially. The 3Ps (people, properties and products) is also a good approach not only for Samoa Post but for the entire country.

Thailand: (Thailand Post) We can learn about and share experiences from other colleagues. Thanks for this knowledge and DRM in general. Recommendation about community was good.

(Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation) This seminar was very useful for member countries. We learned for two days about the benefits of sharing experiences, about what the UPU can do for the countries, and about the ESF. We can also help countries raise awareness concerning disasters, recover and be united. In future, the department will include the postal sector in its plans.

Viet Nam: Viet Nam is situated in an area at high risk of disaster, in the South China Sea. We have more than 1,000 kilometres of coastline and every year we face severe storms, once per month. Especially in 2013, we had terrible storms, and last year there were three big storms. The Post works with the national emergency organization, the national government and the army. Thanks to the UPU for the opportunity to attend this seminar, which was very useful from the standpoint of the operations unit.

Closing session

Mr Olivier Boussard, UPU IB

- The postal operator should be included in national DRM plans. Participants were urged to report back to their managers about the importance of DRM for postal activities and talk to government to include the Post in national policies.
- The guide provides the basics on DRM and some concrete tools. It can also be used to develop DRM policies for countries that do not have one.



Mr Alasdair Hainsworth, WMO

- WMO services have much in common with Posts. The WMO can advise on meteorological and hydrological hazards and will cooperate with the UPU to help the Post better use weather information

Mr Patrick Mendonca, USPS

- This seminar was a very important first step in institutionalizing DRM at the UPU. It was critical to undertake such concrete actions before Congress to demonstrate the importance of DRM to the postal sector. Participants made valuable contributions by reviewing the guidelines, actively engaging in the tabletop exercise and providing examples of their own postal lessons learned and best practices for preparing for and responding to disasters.
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Tabletop exercise – Participant questionnaire

At the end of the exercise, questionnaires were completed and returned by participants. The questionnaires were specific to the venue and posed seven assessment factors.

A scoring summary for each assessment factor is presented below.

SCORING METHODOLOGY	
Score	Agreement
1	Strongly disagree
2	Somewhat disagree
3	Neither agree or disagree
4	Somewhat agree
5	Strongly agree

Assessment Factor A:

The objectives, as stated at the beginning of the exercise, were accomplished. – The average score was 4.5 out of 5, with 54% of participants reporting that they “strongly agree”.

Assessment Factor B:

The exercise scenario was plausible and realistic. – The average score was 4.6 out of 5, with 67% of participants reporting that they “strongly agree”.

Assessment Factor C:

The exercise materials were useful for the conduct of the exercise. – The average score was 4.3 out of 5, with 38% of participants reporting that they “strongly agree”.

Assessment Factor D:

The facilitator(s) was (were) knowledgeable about the area of play, kept the exercise on target. – The average score was 4.6 out of 5, with 67% of participants reporting that they “strongly agree”.

Assessment Factor E:

There were enough activities/issues for the group to work through during the exercise. – The average score was 4.1 out of 5, with 46% of participants reporting that they “strongly agree”.

Assessment Factor F:

Participation in the exercise was appropriate for someone in my position. – The average score was 4.0 out of 5, with 43% of participants reporting that they “strongly agree”.

Assessment Factor G:

This exercise contributed to my understanding of disaster risk management. – The average score was 4.5 out of 5, with 63% of participants reporting that they “strongly agree”.

In addition to the rankings, participants were asked to answer two questions. The questions and associated answers are provided below:

Question 1 What changes would you make to improve this exercise?

- Conduct exercises in groups with a focus on local-level issues
- Divide participants into exercise groups based on the similar disasters they are affected by
- Organize group work presentations by disaster type
- Divide into smaller groups for more detailed proposed solutions, tasks, etc.
- Time frame should be expanded to allow for more presentation and information
- Extend the seminar to three days: last day could be for the round table and making local strategies for disasters
- Lengthen the seminar to allow for more time for participants to grasp the new information and ask questions
- Include postal regulators in seminar
- Instructional materials should be more available and a slide handout provided for every presentation
- Explain how it complies with COSO-ERM or BCM and which components are similar
- Provide a standard to practice the exercises for all postal sectors
- Provide information on how this will affect the postal sector in the future
- Continue these seminars regularly in the future

Question 2 What did you like about the UPU Exercise 2016?

- The emphasis on being proactive not just reactive
- The guide can be adapted to specific disasters, specific countries
- The information about DRM is practical and effective and applicable at the operational level
- Clear and precise information about the processes and procedures of DRM, helping to develop an idea about how to plan for a disaster properly
- The division of 3Ps in the postal sector
- The checklists provided make it easier to understand the specific necessary steps to take for a disaster
- The checklists for the three different phases of DRM are in three time spans
- Sharing experiences, suggestions and recommendations from different countries
- The brainstorming and group participation in the exercises/scenarios
- Sharing the knowledge from the facilitator/subject matter experts and also from participants
- The UPU tasks and examples about how to assist member countries
- How knowledgeable the facilitator was about DRM
- Subject matter experts from AECOM, USPS and UPU were available
- Best practices from all participating postal administrations were well discussed
- Organized and understandable presentation with useful ideas

Participant questionnaire after the seminar

After the seminar, the International Bureau received responses to the participant questionnaire from seven member countries. This document summarizes the questionnaire responses..

Q1. Does the Post in your country have a role in the national disaster preparedness and response programmes?

- **In two member countries, the Post is involved in the national DRM programme. For example:**

1. Information: The relevant regional office communicates the early warning information, weather forecast, meteorological conditions and government announcements to the post offices and staff, as well as to the surrounding area that could potentially be affected.
2. Communication: The regional office identifies the best ways to contact the nearest person and the post office in case of emergency.
3. Reporting: Data is collected on the incident as soon as possible, and details and impact are then urgently reported to HQ by the relevant regional office.
4. Speedy action: The relevant regional office must be the first to assess damage and identify where emergency aid and support are needed in response to an incident. The postal network is adjusted to resume operations as soon as possible.
5. Training: The Post sends some staff to participate in training courses on fire and explosion prevention and disaster response organized by the government.
6. Member of the disaster risk reduction committee: The Post is involved in the national DRR committee. Every year the committee will establish an action plan for disaster response and define the responsibility of each person in charge.

- **In two member countries, the Post has indirect cooperation with the national government:**

The Post is used by and partnered with governmental agencies and international organizations (e.g. Red Cross, Oxfam) to distribute relief goods, deliver disaster equipment, and implement and provide financial assistance to affected populace.

- **In three member countries, the Post is not involved in the national DRM programme.**

Q2. Would you say DRM is an important element of your postal operations? What are or would be the priority actions for your Post in implementing a DRM programme?

All participants replied that DRM is an important element of postal operations. The identified priority actions of the Post include:

- Focus on the protection of employees and resources
- DRM must be primarily PROACTIVE rather than REACTIVE
- Make DRM plan and business continuity plan for the Post
- Use of UPU DRM guide
- Practical training for the Post/authorities
- Proper communication with employees
- Timely coordination with other responsible governmental agencies, and cooperation with the community and local governmental institutions
- Procurement of the required items and equipment for preparedness and response
- Risk/hazard assessment
- Locate property and product at a safe place and ensure maintenance
- Check evacuation route and evacuation centre
- Keep financial resources for new investment for preparedness, mitigation and recovery
- Off work in case of heavy storm or flooding

Q3. What type of support would you need from the UPU and regional actors in implementing or enhancing your DRM programme?

1. Interface between government and Post

- Approach the government to help it understand the role of the postal sector
- Have more technical collaboration among UPU, APPU and national governments in the future

2. Technical support

- Arrange professional training on DRM for postal employees
- Technical assistance of UPU DRM programme (resource person for training course)
- Getting early warning and disaster prediction

3. Financial support

- Support for purchasing required items, equipment and vehicles
- Fund for affected employees
- Support/cooperation for recovery

4. Constant review of guide and best practices

- Ongoing review of best practices and approaches of similarly situated postal operators through periodic meetings for exchange of ideas and experiences
- Need regular monitoring and review of UPU DRM guide to fit needs of all UPU member countries
- Share more experiences from other countries and the UPU in dealing with and responding to matters before and after the disaster

UNIVERSAL POSTAL UNION

P.O. Box 312
3000 BERNE 15
SWITZERLAND

