



# REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2026–2029

# LATIN AMERICA

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# FOREWORD

Today, technological developments and the globalization of trade continue to reshape economies and societies worldwide. As a result, the activities and characteristics of the postal sector have changed profoundly, along with the expectations of society and businesses with regard to postal services. In this evolving environment, our role in facilitating communication across borders is more relevant than ever. Governments must provide the necessary enabling environment and ensure that universal postal services are maintained. In parallel, postal operators around the world must adapt to these shifts and meet the evolving demands through structural reforms, innovative services and continuous modernization.

Supporting our member countries in building resilient and future-ready postal services is central to the UPU's mandate. In this regard, the regional development plan (RDP) constitutes a key document, translating our shared priorities into concrete support at regional level. During the Abidjan cycle, we significantly strengthened our field presence, including doubling the number of regional offices. This demonstrates the high priority we continue to place on development cooperation.

This RDP reflects detailed analyses of the region's current situation and the lessons we learned from the Abidjan cycle. It provides both an overview of the global and regional postal environment, together with a targeted set of development cooperation actions tailored to the needs of the region for the 2026-2029 cycle. I believe that it will serve as a guiding reference for implementing development cooperation in line with the discussions held at the Dubai Congress on regionalization.

As the United Nations specialized agency responsible for postal services, we work closely with our regional partners to identify priorities for development cooperation activities and initiatives. This RDP is therefore the result of an inclusive regional dialogue between us and our stakeholders. Despite present challenges, significant opportunities arise from the continued growth of cross-border e-commerce and trade. By leveraging their extensive networks and trusted reputation, designated postal operators are well placed to support governments in advancing national policy objectives.

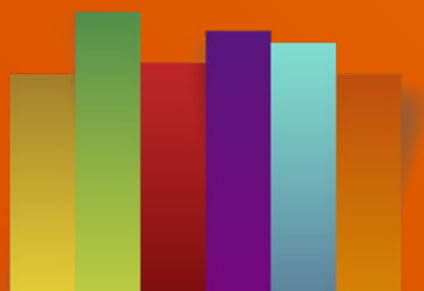
I look forward to strengthening our close cooperation with regional partners as we work together with our 192 member countries to maximize the impact of their socio-economic development efforts and deliver tangible benefits to citizens and businesses across the region.

## **MASAHIKO METOKI**

*Director General of the UPU International Bureau*

CHAPTER 1

# GLOBAL DEVELOPMENTS IN THE POSTAL SECTOR



## GLOBAL TRENDS AND CHALLENGES

The global postal sector is undergoing a profound transformation. Although the world economy grew at an average annual rate of 3.38% between 1996 and 2023, in terms of gross domestic product adjusted for purchasing power parity (GDP PPP), the postal sector recorded slower growth of 2.28% in real revenue. This divergence, commonly referred to as “postal decoupling”, reflects both the structural challenges and the potential of the sector amid digital disruption and evolving customer needs.

Despite the decline in traditional letter mail, the sector has shown resilience through the expansion of e-commerce, logistics and financial services. In 2023, for the first time, global revenue from parcels and logistics (32.5%) surpassed that from letter post (32.4%), marking a pivotal shift in the sector’s economic profile.

### Structural shift in the sector

Postal operators are rapidly transitioning from traditional, letter-dominant service models to integrated networks that encompass parcel logistics, digital services, financial inclusion and public service delivery. This transformation is driven by the need to remain relevant in the digital economy and to respond to the evolving expectations of citizens and businesses. However, the pace and depth of transformation vary greatly across regions. New business models, investment in digital infrastructure, the reskilling of the postal workforce and the establishment of agile regulatory frameworks are essential prerequisites for success.

## Diverging regional dynamics

The trajectory of postal sector development differs markedly between regions, revealing disparities that must be addressed through targeted cooperation:

**AFRICA** is a prime example of postal decoupling: while GDP has climbed steadily over the past 20 years, postal revenue has shrunk by 2.53% per year on average. Key constraints include underinvestment in infrastructure, low mail and parcel volumes, patchy regulation, and slow uptake of electronic advance data (EAD) and digital standards. In many countries, universal service obligations (USOs) are still to be defined, and access to international funding remains limited;

**ARAB COUNTRIES** have shown robust growth in postal revenue, outpacing GDP growth, largely owing to the rapid uptake of financial services and government-backed modernization programmes. Nonetheless, the Arab region faces challenges in addressing cross-border operational fragmentation and in harmonizing regulations for postal and digital services;

the **ASIA-PACIFIC** region has emerged as a global leader in postal innovation. The region boasts strong growth in e-commerce logistics, digital payment systems and postal financial services. However, the pace of growth is uneven, with countries in the region still facing infrastructure and policy bottlenecks that limit last-mile delivery and digital inclusion;

the **CARIBBEAN** has recorded modest economic growth, but postal revenue remains low owing to small market size and high operational costs. Regulatory inconsistency, low digital uptake and limited Post–Customs integration constrain development. There is an increasing need for targeted capacity building and climate-resilient digital transformation efforts;

the **EUROPE AND THE COMMONWEALTH OF INDEPENDENT STATES (CIS)** region shows relatively high levels of service reliability and resilience. However, it faces strong competition, with customer-centric innovation and both exogenous and endogenous regulation among the main challenges. Demographic shifts and labour shortages also pose structural issues for the sustainability of national postal operators;

**LATIN AMERICA** displays moderate economic growth, but postal revenue lags behind. Outdated and fragmented regulatory frameworks, uneven digital adoption and limited investment capacity hinder progress. Demand is rising for capacity building and more coordinated digital transformation strategies.

These divergences underscore the need for tailored intervention, strong regional coordination and continued alignment of UPU-led actions with national strategies.

## Climate, resilience and inclusion

Across all regions, the increase in climate-related disasters, geopolitical tension and pandemics has exposed the vulnerability of postal supply chains. The need to mainstream disaster risk management (DRM), business continuity planning and climate resilience into postal development has become imperative. In parallel, the postal network continues to serve as vital infrastructure for social inclusion, particularly in rural and underserved areas. Postal operators are uniquely positioned to deliver essential services such as social payments, e-government services, digital identification and financial access – reinforcing their role as enablers for the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

## ACHIEVEMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE 2022–2025 CYCLE

Under the Abidjan Postal Strategy, the UPU achieved significant progress:

By the end of the cycle, the majority of planned development cooperation activities had been completed across all regions, reflecting sustained delivery under the Abidjan Business Plan;

Implementation of the UPU's broader strategic priorities advanced consistently across the Council of Administration (CA) and Postal Operations Council (POC) work programmes, as reflected in the progress reports presented during the cycle;

Development cooperation was strengthened through regionalization, with expanded field presence and broadened partnerships with restricted unions and donors, in line with Congress mandates.

Key lessons from this cycle include the importance of strong regional engagement, flexible and diversified funding, and enhanced cross-cutting coordination within the UPU and with member countries – particularly through increased field presence, harmonized project management and improved collaboration with restricted unions.

## STRATEGIC ORIENTATION FOR 2026–2029

The Dubai Business Plan translates the UPU's long-term vision into 38 domain work proposals (DWP), structured around three strategic goals:



GOAL 1

**GOAL 1: LEVERAGE THE SINGLE POSTAL TERRITORY THROUGH AN EFFECTIVE RULES-BASED SYSTEM;**



GOAL 2

**GOAL 2: STRENGTHEN THE GLOBAL POSTAL ECOSYSTEM THROUGH INNOVATION FOR FACILITATING COMMUNICATION AND TRADE;**



GOAL 3

**GOAL 3: ENABLE POSTAL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH ENHANCED COOPERATION AND REGIONALIZATION.**

Among these, the importance of goal 3 is underscored by the fact that it requires the largest share of projected resources, at 133.58 million CHF over the 2026–2029 cycle. This highlights the Union's commitment to ensuring that no member country is left behind.

A core pillar of this commitment is the deepening of regionalization, which now serves not only as a delivery mechanism but as a strategic approach in its own right. Regionalization is no longer limited to field implementation; it is being positioned as a means of co-creation, empowerment and resilience building. Through enhanced regional presence – including the expansion of regional offices, the deployment of field experts, and closer engagement with restricted unions and local stakeholders – the UPU aims to tailor solutions more precisely to the unique needs of each region.

Key proposals such as DWP 27 (Development and cooperation – regionalization and projects), DWP 101 (Development and cooperation – emergency assistance) and DWP 205 (Development and cooperation – regionalization) support this approach by:

elevating regional offices into centres for technical assistance, policy dialogue and resource mobilization;

ensuring that regional strategies are shaped with – and not just for – member countries;

strengthening alignment between regional priorities and global goals, particularly in areas such as digital transformation, financial inclusion, logistics development and regulatory modernization.

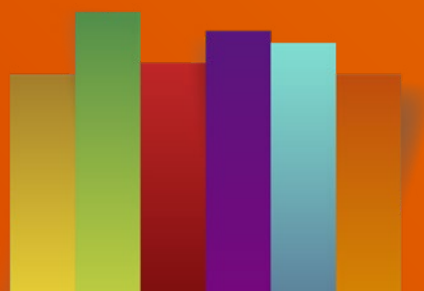
In this way, regionalization is both a structural lever and a political message: development must be regionalized, inclusive and responsive. It reinforces the idea that no solution is truly global unless it is regionally relevant.

This renewed emphasis on region-specific delivery models, combined with the results-based approach of the DWPs through key performance indicators (KPIs), sets the foundation for a more agile, equitable and accountable UPU that is prepared to support its members in navigating uncertainty, embracing innovation and achieving sustainable postal development.

The regional development plan (RDP) for the 2026–2029 cycle will be defined by its responsiveness to regional needs, its emphasis on resilience and sustainability, and its integration with the Dubai Business Plan and the UN SDGs. Chapter 2 will present a detailed regional analysis to guide priority setting and cooperation modalities tailored to each region.

CHAPTER 2

# REGIONAL POSTAL SECTOR ANALYSIS



## OVERVIEW OF THE POSTAL SECTOR IN LATIN AMERICA

The postal sector in Latin America remains a fundamental component of social and economic infrastructure, linking remote and urban areas and enabling access to communication, trade and public services. The region encompasses 19 UPU member countries with diverse postal realities, ranging from advanced designated operators (DOs) with automated logistics systems to small island and landlocked economies facing structural limitations. The postal sector plays a crucial role in connecting citizens, communities and businesses, serving as a key enabler of trade, financial inclusion and social cohesion.

Over the past decade, sustained progress has been achieved in digitalization, logistics performance and cross-border e-commerce integration. The sector demonstrated strong resilience during and after the COVID-19 pandemic, ensuring service continuity and accelerating modernization.

Nevertheless, challenges persist. Uneven investment capacity, fragmented governance and disparities in infrastructure quality continue to constrain the full potential of the postal network as an engine for inclusive growth. While countries such as Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Uruguay have reached advanced levels of automation and service diversification, many others face persistent funding constraints, ageing infrastructure and limited digital capacity. The region's postal ecosystem thus reflects a dual dynamic of innovation and uneven progress.

## POSTAL DEVELOPMENT PERFORMANCE

According to the UPU's Integrated Index for Postal Development (2IPD), the median score for the Latin America and Caribbean region combined reached 32.3 points in 2024, showing a steady improvement compared with 2021 (up 16.2 points). Reliability and reach remain the region's strongest dimensions. However, the "relevance" dimension, linked to demand, diversification and innovation, remains a challenge. Many DOs continue to depend heavily on traditional mail revenue, while logistics, financial and digital services still account for only a limited share of total income. This underscores the need for sustained investment and policy support to unlock the full potential of the postal sector in driving digital economies.

Recent performance assessments show that Latin American DOs have made steady progress in operational reliability, connectivity and data exchange.

Around half of all measurable indicators have shown improvement since 2022, particularly in small-packet and parcel services, while a smaller proportion of indicators remained stable and a limited number declined.

Service reliability and on-time delivery improved in over half of the reporting countries, reflecting greater integration into global data exchange systems and increased use of EAD. However, performance in certain areas – such as EMS, electronic data interchange (EDI) exchange and last-mile quality of service compliance – remains below expected thresholds, indicating the need for sustained investment in digital infrastructure and operational efficiency.

These results confirm progress in terms of connectivity and performance, but also highlight persistent capacity gaps in data exchange, quality of service measurement and last-mile logistics. Continued modernization and investment are therefore essential to sustain progress.

## STRUCTURAL AND INSTITUTIONAL CHALLENGES

Although progress is being made, several structural and institutional challenges limit the sector's capacity for inclusive development, as follows:

### **Fragmented governance and limited inter-institutional coordination:**

In many countries, postal policies are not fully integrated into national digital or trade strategies. Weak coordination among ministries, regulators and DOs leads to policy fragmentation and inconsistent regulatory environments;

### **Insufficient institutional capacity:**

Limited human and technical resources constrain DOs' ability to plan, manage and monitor projects effectively, and to meet current quality of service requirements, particularly in small and/or island states;

**Funding and financial sustainability:**

Postal modernization remains underfunded at national level, with high dependency on the UPU and the Postal Union of the Americas, Spain and Portugal (PUASP), as well as on donor assistance;

**Obsolete postal regulatory**

**frameworks:** In many countries, existing legal frameworks are heterogeneous and outdated. Some markets maintain state monopolies without cost-compensation mechanisms for universal service, while others, although liberalized, lack a modern regulatory environment that incentivizes investment, innovation and the full integration of digital and financial services into the postal network;

**Persistent digital divide and cybersecurity vulnerabilities:**

The digital readiness gap between large and small DOs continues to widen, while cybersecurity risks and a lack of interoperability hinder progress;

**Exposure to climate risks:** Latin America is one of the world's most disaster-prone regions, exposing postal infrastructure to recurrent disruption as a result of hurricanes, floods and earthquakes.

Addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive approach, with emphasis on the importance of maintaining a permanent UPU regional presence, enhancing project management skills and diversifying funding sources.

## KEY DIMENSIONS OF THE POSTAL SECTOR IN LATIN AMERICA

### INFRASTRUCTURE AND LOGISTICS

Urban postal infrastructure is relatively developed, but rural areas still face access gaps. Some DOs are introducing mobile branches and community post office models to expand last-mile coverage.

### DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

Countries such as Brazil, Chile and Uruguay lead in digital transformation, while others require greater support with regard to system interoperability, automation and secure data management. The implementation of EAD, postal automation and artificial intelligence-based solutions has expanded rapidly. However, digital inclusion across DOs remains uneven.

### FINANCIAL SERVICES

During the 2022–2025 cycle, postal networks consolidated their role as financial intermediaries for underserved populations, though many DOs still need stronger regulatory frameworks and partnerships with fintechs and central banks in order to scale up operations.

### REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT

Legal frameworks remain heterogeneous. Some countries operate liberalized markets with independent regulators, while others maintain state monopolies without cost-compensation mechanisms for universal service.

### HUMAN RESOURCES

An ageing workforce and limited digital skills remain a bottleneck. Investment in training through distance-learning tools and the “pool of experts” initiative has proven effective but needs to be expanded.

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# **SOCIO-ECONOMIC ROLE OF THE POSTAL SECTOR IN LATIN AMERICA**

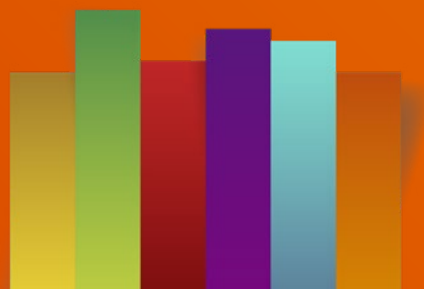
The postal network contributes directly to multiple SDGs, including decent work and economic growth (SDG 8), industry, innovation and infrastructure (SDG 9), reduced inequalities (SDG 10) and climate action (SDG 13).

By bridging physical and digital divides, DOs act as catalysts for e-commerce, trade facilitation and public service delivery. Strengthening this contribution will be central to the 2026–2029 cycle.



## CHAPTER 3

# EVALUATION AND LESSONS LEARNED



## EVALUATION OF REGIONAL PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

The 2022–2025 cycle strengthened the UPU's development cooperation presence in Latin America through improved coordination, effective project implementation and enhanced monitoring mechanisms.

This period also marked the consolidation of cooperation frameworks between the UPU, PUASP and other regional partners, fostering a more coherent and results-oriented approach to postal development. The UPU's regional presence in Montevideo, Uruguay, served as a coordination hub, ensuring that national and multi-country projects were aligned with global strategic priorities and regional needs.

Despite a challenging macroeconomic context, DOs across the region demonstrated strong commitment to modernization and integration. Efforts were focused on post-pandemic recovery, the acceleration of digital transformation and the strengthening of institutional and operational capacities.

The extensive programme of field missions, capacity-building initiatives and project monitoring not only reinforced ownership at regional level, but also laid the groundwork for deeper regionalization and greater impact under the 2026–2029 cycle.

### Implementation of the 2022–2025 regional development plan

The implementation of the 2022–2025 regional development plan demonstrated the effectiveness of the UPU's cooperation framework and the growing maturity of the regionalization process in Latin America. The regional office in Montevideo and the PUASP General Secretariat played a central role in coordinating activities, supporting the translation of global priorities into field actions, and facilitating regular dialogue among governments, regulators and DOs.

Cooperation efforts were marked by the growing contribution of regional experts, who acted as key proximity actors ensuring technical continuity, responsiveness and knowledge transfer at country level.

Implementation achievements were particularly significant in the following areas:

**Operational modernization and digital transformation**, driven by ongoing postal reforms (including projects for the reform of postal regulatory frameworks) and the renewal of integrated postal reform and development plans (IPDPs) as instruments for sector governance, together with the expanded use of EAD, customs integration and automation tools. These actions strengthened operational efficiency, interoperability and cross-border performance throughout the region;

**Financial inclusion and service diversification**, through the development of new postal payment, remittance and microsavings services, as well as the digitalization of existing financial products. These initiatives expanded access for unbanked and rural populations, and reinforced the Post's role as an entry point for inclusive digital finance;

**Disaster risk management and resilience**, with the integration of risk reduction and business continuity components into national postal strategies. Several DOs established continuity frameworks and operational protocols to ensure service sustainability in the face of natural disasters and crises;

**Human capacity development and knowledge transfer**, through targeted training, technical exchanges and regional workshops that strengthened managerial, digital and operational competencies across the region, while fostering a culture of continuous learning and innovation within postal institutions.

The experience of the 2022–2025 cycle reaffirmed that proximity and coordination are decisive factors for achieving sustainable results. The regional expert network has become an indispensable part of the UPU's operational structure, ensuring effective communication with national stakeholders and the coherent implementation of projects. At regional level, the close coordination established with the PUASP General Secretariat has contributed significantly to optimizing the use of resources and enhancing complementarities, thereby reinforcing the efficiency and overall impact of region initiatives.

At the same time, implementation of the regional development plan highlighted the need to further consolidate the regionalization framework by clarifying mandates, harmonizing operational practices, and ensuring that regional experts benefit from consistent professional conditions and adequate technical support. This will be critical in order to sustain institutional continuity and operational efficiency during the 2026–2029 cycle.

## CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

The implementation of the 2022–2025 regional development plan confirmed the relevance of the UPU's regional cooperation model, but also revealed structural challenges that will require attention in the next cycle.

### GOVERNANCE AND COORDINATION

While the regional approach has strengthened alignment between global and national priorities, the degree of institutional coordination among DOs, regulators and ministries continues to vary. Stronger governance frameworks and clearer mechanisms for inter-institutional collaboration will be essential to ensure policy coherence and facilitate the integration of postal development into national digital and trade agendas.

### INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR REGIONAL PRESENCE

The regional expert network has proven its value as a cornerstone of proximity-based cooperation. However, differences in administrative arrangements and access to technical resources still limit its effectiveness. The next cycle should consolidate this framework through standardized roles, professional development and improved logistical support to guarantee stable and high-quality field operations.

### DIALOGUE AND KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

The UPU's Ministerial Conferences, Postal Leaders Forums and coordination meetings with the restricted unions have emerged as a key mechanism for high-level policy dialogue and strategic reflection. To maximize their contribution, these forums should adopt harmonized methodologies, evidence-based analyses, and a follow-up mechanism to monitor the implementation of recommendations and ensure continuity between cycles. Furthermore, a central objective of such dialogue must be to raise the awareness and improve the engagement of national political and regulatory authorities, ensuring that decision makers recognize the postal sector as a priority for national digital and economic development.

### SUSTAINABILITY AND RESOURCES

Despite improvements in resource mobilization, funding constraints remain a major challenge. The diversification of financing sources, including partnerships and voluntary contributions, will be crucial to maintaining programme continuity and scaling up regional projects.

The principal lesson drawn from this cycle is that institutional stability, regional proximity and coherent coordination mechanisms are essential to achieve lasting development outcomes. By reinforcing its regional presence, professionalizing field operations and institutionalizing regional dialogue, the UPU will further strengthen its capacity to support Latin American member countries in building a modern, inclusive and resilient postal sector.

## REGIONAL COOPERATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

The 2022–2025 cycle strengthened regional cooperation and reaffirmed the UPU's role as a facilitator of dialogue, partnership and technical coordination across Latin America.

Through its regional office and proximity-based cooperation model, the UPU worked closely with PUASP, governments, regulators and DOs to translate global postal development objectives into regional and national actions.

Collaboration with customs authorities and organizations such as the World Customs Organization advanced the exchange of EAD, the simplification of customs procedures and the facilitation of cross-border e-commerce. These efforts improved compliance, traceability and efficiency throughout international postal supply chains.

The UPU International Bureau in Berne, Switzerland, maintained close engagement with embassies and permanent missions. Moreover, together with the PUASP General Secretariat, it increased engagement with national institutions, supporting the organization of activities, strengthening dialogue with authorities and raising the visibility of UPU initiatives at governmental level.

Partnerships with regional and international organizations (including UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the Latin American Integration Association (ALADI)) and development banks (including the Inter-American Development Bank) expanded during the period, promoting the use of postal infrastructure as a driver of inclusive economic growth and digital transformation.

Together, these initiatives consolidated the UPU's position as a trusted multilateral platform for governments and DOs to coordinate policy, innovation and capacity-building efforts, while enhancing resource mobilization and the integration of postal priorities into broader public policy frameworks. In particular, PUASP has played a key role as a strategic partner, contributing important human and financial resources and knowledge throughout the cycle.

## KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

The achievements and experiences of the 2022–2025 cycle provide a strong foundation for the Latin American regional development plan for 2026–2029. The new plan builds on the results of the Abidjan cycle and reflects the lessons learned from the implementation of regionalization and cooperation mechanisms across Latin America.

Aligned with the UPU Strategy 2026–2029 and the development cooperation policy for 2026–2029, this regional development plan will consolidate progress through a more integrated and results-based approach, focusing on proximity in the field, institutional capacity and measurable impact.

Through consultations with governments, regulators and regional partners, the following strategic priorities have been identified for the new cycle:

**acceleration of digital transformation and innovation, to modernize operations and promote service diversification;**

**expansion of postal contributions to e-government, digital finance and public service delivery, ensuring that postal networks remain at the heart of inclusive and citizen-oriented development;**

**consolidation of regional cooperation, sustainability and resilience frameworks, to enhance operational stability and institutional continuity.**

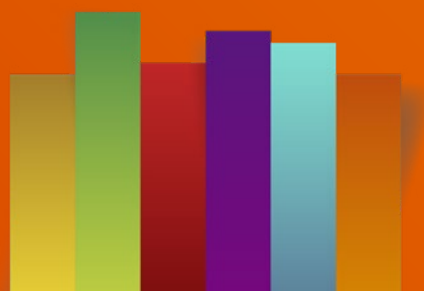
In addition to these strategic pillars, the 2026–2029 cycle will also reinforce several operational areas essential to strengthening implementation. These include: the expansion of hybrid (virtual and field-based) training models on EAD; progress in analytical accounting through South–South and triangular cooperation; and the application of both full and streamlined IPDPs to support modernization processes. Crucially, enhanced support will be directed towards the modernization of national postal legal frameworks to underpin digitalization initiatives and business portfolio development, as well as strengthening engagement with governmental and regulatory authorities to facilitate project adoption. The cycle will further encourage broader uptake of disaster risk management certification across the region and support the development of AI-driven applications tailored to postal operations, improving efficiency, innovation and resilience.

The regional development plan for 2026–2029 will be implemented under domain work proposal (DWP) 27 (Development and cooperation – regionalization and projects) of the Dubai Business Plan, ensuring coherence with the global UPU framework and emphasizing transparency, accountability and results-based management.

Through these initiatives, the UPU and its member countries reaffirm their shared commitment to advancing an innovative, inclusive and sustainable postal sector that contributes to economic growth, trade facilitation and social development across Latin America. This new cycle will mark a decisive step towards consolidating the UPU's regional presence, strengthening partnerships with governments and international organizations, and ensuring that the Latin American postal network continues to serve as a cornerstone of inclusive and resilient development.

CHAPTER 4

# DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION FRAMEWORK FOR 2026–2029



## DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION POLICY

Building on the achievements and lessons learned from the 2022–2025 cycle, the UPU development cooperation policy for 2026–2029 introduces a renewed and results-based approach structured around three main development areas:

**regionalization and field presence;**

**development cooperation projects with an emphasis on South–South and triangular cooperation; and**

**disaster risk management and emergency assistance.**

This new framework reinforces the UPU’s proximity to member countries, enhances coordination with PUASP and other regional and subregional institutions, and promotes efficient delivery of technical cooperation through regional offices and experts. It also emphasizes results-based management and measurable outcomes, in line with the UPU Strategy 2026–2029.

The 2026–2029 framework seeks to strengthen the UPU’s role as a trusted partner for governments, regulators and DOs in the Latin America region, helping them to modernize the sector, bridge development gaps, and ensure that postal networks continue to serve as catalysts for inclusive and sustainable growth.

## REGIONAL OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITY ALIGNMENT

### Strategic links with the regional development agenda

The Latin American regional development plan for 2026–2029 is fully aligned with the UPU priorities for the Dubai cycle, as set out in the UPU Strategy 2026–2029 and the development cooperation policy for 2026–2029. Together, these define the global framework for the Union’s action and aim to create a modern, inclusive and resilient postal ecosystem that drives innovation, facilitates trade and supports sustainable growth.

The UPU Strategy 2026–2029 is structured around three main goals, which serve as the cornerstone for UPU cooperation activities worldwide. These goals provide a clear framework for the regional priorities defined in this plan, ensuring coherence between global objectives and the specific needs of Latin America:



#### GOAL 1: LEVERAGE THE SINGLE POSTAL TERRITORY THROUGH AN EFFECTIVE RULES-BASED SYSTEM

is aimed at strengthening the global postal network through enhanced reliability, connectivity and modernized regulatory frameworks. In Latin America, this goal supports trade facilitation, customs integration and cross-border e-commerce, while encouraging the development of regional postal hubs and improvement of quality of service. It also promotes the harmonization of national postal policies and regulatory frameworks to foster economic integration across the region;



#### GOAL 2: STRENGTHEN THE GLOBAL POSTAL ECOSYSTEM THROUGH INNOVATION FOR FACILITATING COMMUNICATION AND TRADE

focuses on digital transformation, financial inclusion and service diversification. It promotes the use of emerging technologies, integration of postal networks into national digital and financial

ecosystems, and support for micro, small and medium enterprises through postal logistics and e-commerce solutions. For Latin America, this goal is key to promoting digital inclusion and leveraging the postal network as a vehicle for economic empowerment and social cohesion;



### GOAL 3: ENABLE POSTAL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH ENHANCED COOPERATION AND REGIONALIZATION

constitutes the cornerstone of this regional development plan. It is aimed at reinforcing technical assistance, capacity building and regional cooperation, ensuring that no country is left behind. It further emphasizes resource mobilization, South–South and triangular cooperation, and integration of sustainability and resilience principles into postal development strategies. In Latin America, this goal will be implemented through close collaboration with PUASP and regional and subregional organizations, as well as through the enhanced role of the UPU regional office in Montevideo to support countries with targeted technical assistance and project coordination.

## Priority areas and key performance indicators

The regional development plan for Latin America translates the global goals into three priority areas of intervention, aligned with the Dubai Business Plan. Each area is linked to specific deliverables and targets that will be monitored throughout the cycle. Intervention in these areas will contribute to the DWP 27 deliverables relating to capacity development (27D05), project implementation (27D06–18) and resilience (27D19–23), ensuring that Latin America benefits from the global cooperation framework established by the Dubai Business Plan.

## AREA 1 REGIONALIZATION, PARTNERSHIPS AND FIELD PRESENCE

The objective is to strengthen the regionalization process by reinforcing the UPU’s field presence and cooperation with regional partners to ensure tailored support for member countries.

### Expected outcomes

A stronger and more effective regional UPU presence, ensuring proximity and responsiveness to member countries’ needs

Enhanced coordination and synergy with PUASP, as well as regional and subregional organizations, for joint project delivery

Increased institutional capacity of the regional office and national stakeholders to plan, manage and monitor postal development initiatives

Broader inclusion of small island developing states and landlocked developing countries through targeted assistance and equitable participation in cooperation activities

### Indicative indicators

Number of regional partnerships and memoranda of understanding signed

Volume of extrabudgetary resources mobilized

Number of countries supported through IPDPs and field missions

## AREA 2

### DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION PROJECTS AND CAPACITY BUILDING

The objective is to implement targeted projects to reduce postal development gaps through digital transformation, financial inclusion and South–South cooperation.

#### Expected outcomes

A more efficient, reliable and integrated regional postal network supporting e-commerce and trade facilitation

Expanded digital and financial inclusion, leveraging the postal network as an entry point for accessible and affordable services

Strengthened institutional and human capacity through targeted training, knowledge exchange and South–South cooperation

Improved operational performance and innovation culture across DOs

#### Indicative indicators

Average improvement in ZIPD scores (reliability and reach)

Number of countries offering postal financial services or digital platforms

Number of regional and interregional capacity-building activities implemented

## AREA 3

### DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT AND EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

The objective is to enhance the resilience and preparedness of the postal sector to respond to natural disasters and crises, ensuring service continuity and sustainability.

#### Expected outcomes

Institutionalized disaster risk management frameworks within national postal policies and IPDPs

Improved regional and inter-institutional coordination for emergency response and crisis management

Increased access to technical and financial assistance through the UPU Emergency and Solidarity Fund

Mainstreamed environmental sustainability and climate action in postal operations

#### Indicative indicators

Number of DOs with active business continuity or disaster risk management plans

Number of countries benefiting from UPU emergency or resilience support

Number of DOs implementing environmental or climate-smart initiatives

# COOPERATION METHODS AND RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

## Cooperation modalities

Implementation of this plan will be based on an integrated cooperation model combining institutional partnerships, regional coordination and resource mobilization. In line with DWP 27, regionalization will be pursued through the strengthening of regional offices as implementation hubs, enhanced flexibility in field operations, and the establishment of regional centres. Cooperation methods will continue to prioritize strategic partnerships with governments, regulators, DOs, regional unions and international organizations, ensuring that activities reflect regional priorities and generate tangible impacts.

Under the guidance of the Development and Cooperation Directorate, the UPU's regional programmes will serve as a single entry point for all technical cooperation activities. Regional offices will provide support for coordination with PUASP, national authorities and development partners to ensure efficient delivery and alignment with regional priorities.

The UPU will promote partnership-based implementation through collaboration with regional unions, as well as with international financial institutions and UN agencies. Priority will be given to South–South and triangular cooperation, the pooling of regional expertise and joint delivery of capacity-building initiatives, as established in DWP 27.

Resource mobilization will be embedded in project design, drawing on a mix of regular budget funds, voluntary contributions and in-kind support. The goal is to secure predictable and diversified financing while fostering ownership by member countries.

## Funding strategy

In accordance with the Dubai Business Plan and development cooperation policy for 2026–2029, the development cooperation activities for the Dubai cycle will be financed through a diversified and complementary set of funding mechanisms, ensuring continuity and adaptability to evolving needs.

## GLOBAL ALLOCATIONS AND TARGETS

For the entire 2026–2029 period, a total of 31.18 million CHF has been allocated globally to support the implementation of DWP 27 (Development and cooperation – regionalization and projects), comprising 22.31 million CHF from the regular budget and 8.87 million CHF from voluntary contributions.

The Latin America region will benefit from a proportional share of these global resources, with funding distributed according to the scale of its projects and alignment with the regional priorities identified in this plan. Complementary financing will be sought through voluntary contributions, in-kind support and co-financing agreements with regional and international partners.

## RESOURCE CHANNELS AND INSTRUMENTS

The main instruments for financing and coordination will include:

**regular budget resources:** used for planning, coordination, project monitoring and delivery of small-scale capacity building;

**voluntary contributions:** dedicated to project implementation in key thematic areas, such as e-commerce readiness, digital transformation, financial inclusion and disaster risk management;

**UPU Emergency and Solidarity Fund:** supported by regular and voluntary contributions, this fund will continue to serve to provide a rapid response in the event of natural disasters and emergencies;

**Joint initiatives with regional unions and development partners;**

**Private sector partnerships.**

## SUSTAINABILITY AND FINANCIAL GOVERNANCE

The UPU will adopt an integrated results-based budgeting and monitoring system to ensure transparent and accountable use of funds.

All projects will include built-in evaluation components and follow the standardized project management framework established by the Project Management Office and the SIGA platform. Regular financial and implementation status reports will be submitted to the Council of Administration, in accordance with deliverables 27D02 and 27D03. Additionally, the UPU and PUASP will carry out joint monitoring of performance indicators.

To further strengthen sustainability, the UPU will promote the inclusion of postal sector funding within national development frameworks and budgets, encouraging governments to recognize postal modernization as a key component of digital and economic development policies.

## CONCLUSION

The Latin American regional development plan for 2026–2029 sets a strategic roadmap for a modern, inclusive and resilient postal ecosystem. Through the three development areas set out in the plan – namely regionalization, cooperation and resilience – the UPU and PUASP aim to bridge development gaps, foster digital and financial inclusion, and strengthen the region’s capacity to adapt to future challenges.

This plan reflects the UPU and PUASP’s commitment to ensuring that no country in Latin America is left behind in the pursuit of sustainable and equitable postal development. It represents a renewed vision of cooperation grounded in proximity, innovation and shared responsibility, ensuring that the postal network continues to serve as a catalyst for connectivity and inclusive growth across the region.

AFRICA

ARAB REGION

ASIA-PACIFIC

CARIBBEAN

EUROPE AND CIS

LATIN AMERICA



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