

# UNION POSTALE

MOVING THE POSTAL SECTOR FORWARD SINCE 1875 | SPRING 2022



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POSTAL  
UNION



## POSTAL SOLIDARITY AT WORK

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and MARJAN OSVALD

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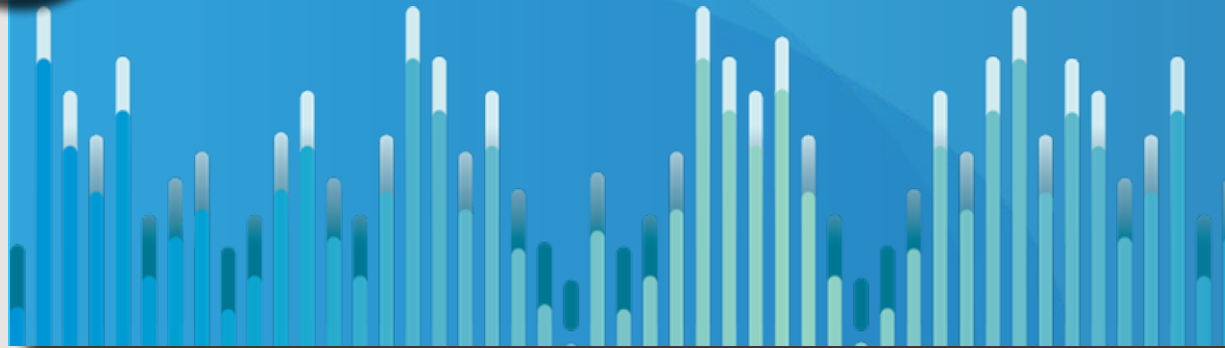
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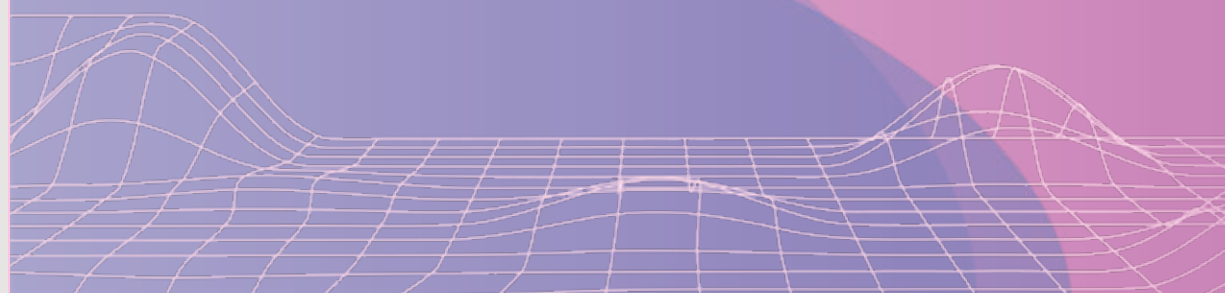
**VOICE MAIL**




**DIGITAL UNION**




**POSTAL MATTERS**





“Voice Mail” offers postal stories from around the world. Experienced podcast host Ian Kerr – the founder of Postal Hub Podcast – speaks to the people who deliver the mail, the decision makers that influence the sector, and those who work so hard behind the scenes to help things move from A to B.

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The UPU’s blog “Postal Matters” offers fresh insights into the international postal sector, as well as its technological advances and latest innovations. Postal operators and other postal sector players are welcome to send us their contributions containing reflections, views and perspectives on the postal future, e-commerce, sustainable development, financial inclusion and other related areas.

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To have your postal blog featured, contact us at **[communication@upu.int](mailto:communication@upu.int)**





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## FEATURE

# SHIFTING PERSPECTIVES: MASAHIKO METOKI and MARJAN OSVALD

UPU Director General Masahiko Metoki and Deputy Director General Marjan Osvald assumed their new duties in January 2022, ushering in a change of perspective for the UN specialized agency for the postal sector.



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# A PEOPLE-FIRST APPROACH TO POSTAL TRANSFORMATION

Canada Post Chief People and Safety Officer Susan Margles provides her point-of-view on the importance of company culture to successful postal transformation.

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UNION POSTALE is the Universal Postal Union's flagship magazine, founded in 1875. It is published quarterly in four languages and takes a closer look at UPU activities, featuring international news and developments from the postal sector.

The magazine regularly publishes well researched articles on topical issues facing the industry, as well as interviews with the sector's leading individuals. It is distributed widely to the UPU's 192 member countries, including thousands of decision-makers from governments and Posts, as well as other postal stakeholders. All regard it as an important source of information about the UPU and the postal sector at large.

UNION POSTALE is also published in French, Arabic, and Chinese.

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## SPRING 2022

*Refers to the season in the country of publication.*

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# POSTAL SOLIDARITY AT WORK: POSTS STAND WITH UKRPOSHTA

As the war in Ukraine continues, the postal industry pledges its support to Ukrainian postal operator Ukrposhta as it perseveres to deliver despite life-threatening operating conditions.

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# UPU CELEBRATES INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2022

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Throughout the month of March and to coincide with International Women's Day on March 8, the UPU focused on UN Sustainable Development Goal 5, which aims to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

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## SOLUTION SPOTLIGHT

# DIGITALIZING DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

When the pandemic struck, putting an end to travel to member countries, a digital solution was paramount for both the UPU's Development Cooperation Directorate (DCDEV) and members to remain on track with their capacity building objectives. The unit turned a challenge into an opportunity, boosting participation through innovative working methods.

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## MARKET FOCUS

# TTPOST'S NEW TRACK AND TRACE SOLUTION LEADS TO INCREASED CUSTOMER CONFIDENCE

In June 2021 the Trinidad and Tobago Postal Corporation (TTPost) launched a new track and trace solution for courier package items in a bid to increase efficiency levels, improve its service offering and provide customers with dynamic and innovative solutions that facilitate convenience.



# LEADING BY LISTENING

My first months as the UPU's Director General have been intense, but rewarding.

I have had the pleasure to hold my first meetings with the member countries of this Union – many of whom I have already had the pleasure of working with in my capacity of Postal Operations Council Chair over the course of the past nine years. They have shared their views about the challenges and opportunities facing their postal operators and their ideas on how the UPU can help. These discussions have been extremely enlightening.

While the role of Director General comes with distinct and list of responsibilities, the first of which is creating a space for members to engage in open and honest dialogue. This is the only way, in my view, to ensure that the work we do together will be successful. As I promised on the day I received the keys to UPU headquarters in Berne, I commit to do all I can to strengthen the ties that bind the members of this Union closely together.

While many challenges lie ahead of us, I have full faith in the solidarity of the UPU family to overcome them. The first example of this during my short time in office has been the response of UPU members to the outbreak of conflict in our fellow member country, Ukraine. While our colleagues at Ukrposhta stepped in to support the millions of civilians seeking humanitarian aid, financial services, and a way to stay connected to those beyond the country's borders, others across the postal community stepped in to help Ukraine in whichever way possible.

Neighbouring countries helped ensure the flow of postal items to and from Ukraine. Many dropped fees for sending parcels containing humanitarian goods, while some waived terminal dues fees. Others took in refugees and provided those arriving in their countries with essential services and access to telecommunications. This is just a modest summary of the outpouring of support.

The International Bureau is doing all it can to help foster solidarity among the postal family, including through its Emergency and Solidarity Fund. Voluntary contributions to this fund will help provide direct assistance to Ukrposhta as it serves those who need it most. I strongly encourage our members to contribute to this fund so that the UPU may intervene quickly to support the restoration of postal infrastructure and services in affected areas across Ukraine. Several countries have already sent in their contributions, but more will be needed to ensure a timely recovery. In the meantime, the International Bureau remains in touch with our Ukrainian colleagues to monitor the situation and devise a plan for assistance.

I will take this opportunity to thank UPU members for their unwavering dedication to the universal postal network and the billions of people it delivers to each day. This spirit is what will help us weather any challenge ahead of us. It is what will help us move forward together, with no country left behind.

**Masahiko Metoki**  
Director General, UPU

**"I commit to do all I can to strengthen the ties that bind the members of this Union closely together."**

**Masahiko Metoki**  
Director General, UPU



# NO ONE LEFT BEHIND

## EDITOR'S NOTE

Solidarity is the essence of the postal family. As you will read in our cover story, Ukrposhta employees have worked tirelessly, despite facing great danger and damages, to ensure civilians' access to essential services. UPU members have also stepped in to support our Ukrposhta colleagues, civilians in Ukraine and refugees, including through support to the UPU Emergency and Solidarity Fund. The situation is evolving quickly, but we have done our best to give readers an overview.

Transformation is a thread that ties the majority of this edition of our magazine together. The UPU's new Director General and Deputy Director General share their vision for the organization and the transformation of the postal sector as they begin their terms at the helm of the organization. From the UPU's own Development Cooperation Directorate, readers will learn how digital transformation has allowed the organization to reach new horizons with capacity building during the pandemic. In "The Interview," Canada Post provides useful insight on the organization's strategy to include postal employees at the forefront of its own transformation plans.

Beginning with this edition of our magazine, we are zeroing in on the UPU's regions with the Market Focus and Digest sections. In this Spring issue of Union Postale, we've focused our attention on Latin America and the Caribbean. You can look forward to similar coverage of the other regions in future issues.

You may also notice some changes to Union Postale's design in this issue. A fresh outlook calls for a fresh look as well.

Happy reading.

**KAYLA REDSTONE**  
*Editor-in-chief*

# New cooperation helps move mail in the Caribbean

by TARA GIROUD

A new collaboration between the UPU and countries of the Caribbean region, funded by La Poste France and the Caribbean Postal Union (CPU), has begun to address long-standing transportation and mail flow issues.



The UPU, through its technical cooperation mechanisms, addressed the complex challenges with a team of stakeholders to examine the issue from various perspectives, which required investments in training, equipment and consultancy missions.

"The project aims to improve the connectivity with posts and carriers, both air and sea, and enhance the capabilities and exchange of Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) messages between posts and carriers to meet the latest legal requirements," said Owena Beepot, UPU's Regional Project Coordinator for the Caribbean. She worked on the project alongside UPU Transport Programme Manager Jan Bojnanský.

Lack of air lift to South America, Europe, and the rest of Caribbean is a major challenge, Beepot said. More flights connect North America, however, embargos with some Caribbean countries mean some carriers will not transport mail.

The pandemic ground intra-regional transport to a halt, with no movement of mail within and among the eastern Caribbean islands.

Mail delivery to North America typically takes 10 days, which brings difficult consequences for designated operators.

"It presents a poor image and reputation for the postal sector and the employees,"

Beepot said. "Customers usually want to be compensated. On the other hand, carriers usually do not want to take responsibility. For some time, we did not have visibility for Leg 2 (international transport)."

The project will bring greater visibility with the exchange of EDI messages between the carriers and posts, and it will bring a harmonized structure for mail transportation, with service level agreements to hold the carriers accountable. New carriers may also be introduced to the region.

Things have already begun to change. Thirteen regional carriers, air and sea, have confirmed their interest, Bojnanský said. There have been improvements in Leg 2 performance as well as awareness of the importance of data, coupled with the UPU's Electronic Advance Data (EAD) Project.

"We prepared a simple IT tool for data transmission and successfully piloted with the first carriers, TUI and RMP," he said.

For many countries now, delivery is about five days. The team expects continued improvement with full implementation of the project.

For La Poste France, investments in projects like this improve interoperability of the entire postal network. The Post contributed CHF 100,000 (USD 104,500). The UPU budgeted CHF 18,500 (USD 19,300) and CPU contributed CHF 2,722 (USD 2,800).

Elisabeth Massonnet, Deputy Director of La Poste France's International and European Department said the project is expected to be a win-win for postal operators, regional carriers and customers, which will benefit economies and societies in the region, particularly with the provision of IT equipment, software, training and partnerships.

"Considering, on one side, the current transport gaps, the latest legal requirements for EAD, the needs of the local designated operators, and on the other side, the wide possibilities offered by the concept and the expected quality improvements, we consider the initiative as one of the critical activities to help the Caribbean region for the next coming years," Massonnet said. **KR**



# UPU PUTS POSTAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN FOCUS

by KAYLA REDSTONE

A year-long campaign launched by UPU will help draw connections between the Post and progress on the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The campaign, launched in early 2022, will have the UPU shine a spotlight on a different sustainable development goal each month, drawing connections to demonstrate how the organization and the global postal sector are advancing the work on that goal.

"The Post provides people in the far reaches of the world with access to essential communication, social, financial, government and digital services that can advance the socio-economic development of nations," said UPU Director General Masahiko Metoki.

"Through this campaign, the UPU hopes to demonstrate the natural role the Post plays as partner in achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development," he said.

The UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted by member countries in 2015 and comprises 17 sustainable development goals, known as the SDGs. These goals call on

governments, international organizations, the private sector and other stakeholders to work in partnership to tackle urgent issues spanning from climate change and environmental issues, to gender equality, poverty, education and more.

As a member of the UN family, the UPU is committed to achieving these goals through the postal network. The UPU works as the primary forum for postal cooperation, ensuring that all posts have the knowledge, capacity and tools they need to contribute to sustainable development.

The UPU campaign will feature stories from the sector that demonstrate the Post's contribution to the goals in a special multimedia resource centre on the organization's website and across social media. **KR**



For more information, visit:  
<https://www.upu.int/en/SDGsinfocus>

## GOALS IN FOCUS FOR 2022

JANUARY



JULY



FEBRUARY



AUGUST



MARCH



SEPTEMBER



APRIL



OCTOBER



MAY



NOVEMBER



JUNE



DECEMBER



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# SUSAN ALEXANDER

**Programme Manager,  
Sustainability Services**

Directorate  
**Policy, Regulation and Markets**

Nationality  
**American**

Languages  
**English, French, Spanish,  
German, and Swiss German**

For Susan Alexander, being offered a role at the UPU in Switzerland more than 25 years ago was a dream come true. Alexander, who previously worked as an Assistant Attorney General for Virginia in the United States, fell in love with the country during her time studying Comparative Literature at Duke University in Durham, North Carolina.

"While I was attending Duke University, I spent a year studying at the University of Fribourg, spending my free time there and in Berne," she explains. "I always wanted to come back to Switzerland to live – I wanted to be able to speak different languages every day. I also had a second dream, which was to work for the United Nations. It was such an incredible coincidence when I was in Berne and learned about the UPU. I was very fortunate to be able to make both goals a reality."

Following her time at Duke University, Alexander studied law at the University of California, Hastings College of the Law in San Francisco, and then went on to her role in Virginia. She has now been with the UPU for 25 years, starting out as a Regularly Affairs Expert, progressing up to her position as Programme Manager today. Her passion for the job is still as strong as it was on her first day.

"Because of my studies, my interest in public international law is a good fit for my work in postal regulation and policy," she explains. "And as sustainability has become more important over the years, I have also developed an interest in the UN Sustainable Development Goals, particularly gender equality and the empowerment of women. It's a privilege to be able to work on topics that I am passionate about."

Alexander and her team, are currently working on two very important resolutions which were adopted at the Abidjan Congress – one on climate action and the other on gender equality. In brief, the former commits the UPU to investigate possible emissions reduction targets and the latter will encourage posts globally to adopt gender-sensitive approaches within their organizations.

For many years, Alexander, who enjoys hiking, cooking, reading and music in her spare time, has also been championing gender equality outside of her work and has been a member of a local chapter in Berne for an international women's association.

"I enjoy the social aspect as well as the programs at global level advocating for policies and supporting projects that contribute to achieving gender equality," she comments. "In terms of music, I have always sung in choirs and have been part of performing all kinds of music, ever since I was young. I can't imagine life without music. The emotional power of multiple voices in a choir is a physical feeling that resounds deep in your heart, which I feel when I listen, but even more profoundly when I am a part of it."

For Alexander, the best part of working for the UPU is the diversity of staff at the International Bureau. "I feel so fortunate to work with people from all over the globe and get to know their cultures through working together," she says. "It is more challenging than working in my own country, but so much more rewarding." **HN**





# POSTAL SOLIDARITY AT WORK: POSTS STAND WITH UKRPOSHTA

*by* HELEN NORMAN

As the war in Ukraine continues, the postal industry pledges its support to Ukrainian postal operator Ukrposhta as it perseveres to deliver despite life-threatening operating conditions.

It has now been around four months since the beginning of the conflict, during which time, civilians have been killed, many more have been displaced and essential infrastructure has been damaged or destroyed.

Despite all of this, Ukrposhta remains open for business. The Post has now been operating in war conditions for more than 16 weeks, but despite the intense challenge of working in war zones and risk to employees, the postal operator is committed to, as far as possible, uphold its universal service obligation of providing postal services to every person in every part of the country.

"About 20% of the country's territory has no access to postal services currently," explains Julia Pavlenko, Director of the International Operations Department at Ukrposhta. "This is equivalent to 41% of the territory of Italy, 35% of Germany and 23% of France. To date, about 500 post offices have been ruined or damaged and about 450 are inaccessible due to temporary occupation."

Furthermore, 20% of Ukrposhta employees are working in hostile areas in Ukraine and mail transportation within the country is becoming even more challenging in the face of fuel deficits spurred by the targeting of fuel depots. "Mail transportation is complicated and takes more time because of damaged roads and bridges, which affects total delivery times. Ukrposhta is working in close cooperation with the government and local authorities to facilitate transportation," Pavlenko says.

Since April 1 Ukrposhta, for example, has been cooperating with Ukrainian Railways to deliver mail. Between April 1 and June 16, the post transported 10,395 tonnes of mail via train. From train stations, Ukrposhta trucks parcels to operating post offices in the destination regions. "Still, this way of transporting mail is also at risk," Pavlenko comments, adding that railway infrastructure has also been targeted.

Many of Ukrposhta's post offices and sorting centers have also been damaged or destroyed, and equipment has been lost.

**"The designated postal operator, in many places, is often the only point of access to pensions, money orders, and important goods."**

**Julia Pavlenko**

Director of the International Operations Department at Ukrposhta

"We are doing our best to renew activities as soon as possible, first by opening in temporary locations such as schools or administrative buildings and second by opening mobile post offices where possible," Pavlenko adds.



Bpost delivers humanitarian aid to Ukraine

Since the beginning of the conflict, Ukrposhta has opened 372 mobile post offices and 14 fixed post offices to ensure that citizens still have access to postal services. The fast set up of new postal services is essential in Ukraine, according to Pavlenko, as “the designated postal operator, in many places, is often the only point of access to pensions, money orders, and important goods,” she adds.

### Postal industry support

While Ukrposhta continues to operate in extreme conditions, the postal sector has stepped up in solidarity with the Ukrainian postal operator, with posts all around the world offering support. “Almost all European posts are helping Ukraine by donating to aid agencies, fundraising, issuing special stamps, and offering free services, accommodation, and jobs to Ukrainian refugees. We are grateful to the citizens of all these countries for their solidarity, and we appreciate the commitment of their postal workers in supporting Ukraine,” Pavlenko added.

As of June 16, more than 1,700 tonnes of humanitarian aid have been sent to Ukraine. A significant portion of this aid has been transported by postal operators which have provided delivery for free.

However, more support is needed. In March, the UPU appealed to its 192 member countries for their solidarity in raising emergency funds to aid Ukrposhta. Donations from member countries are managed by the UPU’s Emergency and Solidarity Fund, a special account that allows the UPU to provide emergency assistance to support postal activity in countries affected by disasters and armed conflicts. The fund relies entirely on voluntary contributions from UPU’s member countries, restricted postal unions, and other postal sector partners.

“The Post is a lifeline delivering essential items, services, and humanitarian assistance to civilians everywhere, especially in times of crisis. I encourage UPU members to stand in solidarity with the global postal family by contributing to this special fund, which will

help ensure the Ukrainian Post can continue to serve those who depend on it,” said UPU Director General Masahiko Metoki when the appeal was launched.

According to Fumiko Nohara, who works on the ESF, the ESF has so far received financial support from Italy, Japan, Panama, and Slovakia. “Ukrposhta is currently requesting funds for IT equipment, such as routers and printers,” Nohara explains. “We are talking with them constantly and the UPU will support Ukrposhta with some of the IT equipment it has requested, but if we had a bigger budget then we could support them more. Therefore, more financial support is needed.”

**“The Post is a lifeline delivering essential items, services, and humanitarian assistance to civilians everywhere, especially in times of crisis. I encourage UPU members to stand in solidarity with the global postal family by contributing to this special fund, which will help ensure the Ukrainian Post can continue to serve those who depend on it.”**

**Masahiko Metoki**  
UPU Director General



Ukrposhta is also appealing to postal operators to donate vehicles and equipment, such as computers, laptops, sorting equipment to help it renew activities in the most affected areas.

Following the appeal for emergency funds, the UPU announced in May that it had launched an additional channel of support for Ukrposhta through its Quality of Service Fund (QSF). Contributions through QSF will help support the reconstruction of postal infrastructure and restoration of postal services in conjunction with the ESF. The UPU’s QSF supports projects in developing countries that improve the quality of their postal services. The synergy between the two funds will allow QSF beneficiary countries to donate some of their QSF assets to joint emergency assistance projects in Ukraine.

“Following the call for donations by the ESF program, the QSF board reached out to all QSF beneficiary countries to donate a part of their available QSF assets to support projects for the restoration of postal services

**“The funds mobilized from QSF assets will be collectively managed for the provision of equipment, rebuilding infrastructure such as mail processing offices, provision of vehicles for the conveyance of mail and delivery of mail, provision of generators for electricity, etc.”**

**Choy Han Chum**  
the head of UPU’s QSF unit

in Ukrposhta,” explains Choy Han Chum, the head of UPU’s QSF unit. “The funds mobilized from QSF assets will be collectively managed for the provision of equipment, rebuilding infrastructure such as mail processing offices, provision of vehicles for the conveyance of mail and delivery of mail, provision of generators for electricity, etc.”

The closing date for QSF beneficiary countries to donate from their QSF assets was June 17 and the UPU has already received commitment from some countries to mobilize part of their QSF assets to assist Ukrposhta.

“The UPU community has always come to the aid of its own as evidenced by past fund-raising efforts undertaken by the QSF to assist designated operators in need. We believe member countries will once again galvanize their aid to restore basic postal services in Ukraine in the spirit of solidarity of the UPU,” says Chum.

### **New resolution**

In an additional show of unity from the global postal sector, a resolution was passed during the plenary session of the UPU’s supervisory body, the Council of Administration, in May, calling for extra support to rebuild postal infrastructure in Ukraine amid the conflict.

Through the resolution, the UPU’s secretariat is instructed to monitor Ukrposhta’s needs and assess the impact of the war on UPU programs and activities, as well as any operational, infrastructure, financial or other impacts on postal services across the global network. The resolution will also have the UPU provide technical assistance to the country and its postal operator to support the continuation and reconstruction of its postal services. The results of these actions will be reported to the organization’s Extraordinary Congress taking place in 2023.

The resolution also invites member countries to support this reconstruction effort through the UPU or other means and highlights the obligation of member countries to exempt letters, parcels and postal payment services addressed to prisoners of war or civilian internees from postal charges.

Members also passed a second, broader resolution presented by the Russian Federation that will have the UPU bolster its assistance efforts to member countries in the wake of natural or technological disasters, regional conflicts and other emergencies. A working body will be established to identify countries in need, determine a humanitarian assistance mechanism, and define funding sources for assistance.

### **Ukrposhta’s appeal**

Ukrposhta’s Pavlenko highlights the UPU’s ESF as one of the key ways posts can provide emergency assistance to Ukrposhta and support the designated operators of neighboring member countries undertaking international postal and humanitarian assistance efforts in response to the situation in Ukraine.

“Another way posts can support is by waiving terminal dues and inward land rates,” Pavlenko continues. “As Ukrposhta is suffering tremendous losses, any reduction







“We have launched this eBay [stamp] store to enable shopping from anywhere in the world... It is symbolic that Ukrposhta, which for years has been training Ukrainian entrepreneurs to open and promote their own stores on marketplaces, including eBay, is now opening a store itself.”

**Igor Smelyansky**  
Ukrposhta CEO



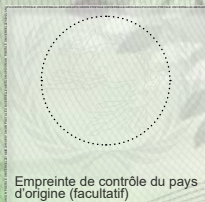


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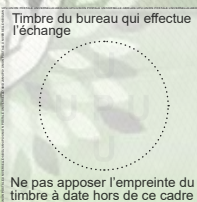
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“Ukrposhta is grateful to all the postal operators ... supporting its international postal exchange, helping it reduce expenses, helping the people of Ukraine with free humanitarian parcels and collecting and delivering humanitarian aid to Ukraine”

#### Julia Pavlenko

Director of the International Operations Department at Ukrposhta

of expenses is very helpful. Several operators have already waived charges for the delivery of postal items from Ukraine in their countries, including operators in Estonia, Sweden and Denmark, Ireland, Portugal, France, Luxembourg, Japan, Norway, Finland, Slovenia, and Australia.

Another way people can support Ukrposhta, and its employees is through the Ukrposhta Trade Union Special Recovery Fund, which was set up to help its workers, many of which are operating in difficult and dangerous conditions to deliver parcels, pensions, and money orders throughout Ukraine.

“Many employees have suffered losses during the war and/or have lost their homes,” Pavlenko says. “Anyone wishing to support the cause can donate to the fund. Then, Ukrposhta’s employees who have suffered losses, provide information in a form. Two or three months after the end of the war the committee will meet to decide on the distribution of funds. Then, the funds will be transferred to those in need.

“Ukrposhta is grateful to all the postal operators that have been helping it since the very first day of the Russian aggression by supporting its international postal exchange, helping it reduce expenses, helping the people of Ukraine with free humanitarian parcels and collecting and delivering humanitarian aid to Ukraine,” Pavlenko concludes.

#### Stamps: Symbols of support

Many posts around the world, including Poland, Estonia, Latvia, Austria, and Canada, have also released special stamp collections to show support to Ukrposhta and Ukraine. Poczta Polska, for example, launched a special postage stamp in March with the message, “We are with you!” to express its support, respect, and solidarity with Ukraine. Poczta Polska produced three million of these stamps, which depict a handshake between two hands – one is in the national colors of Poland and the other in the national colors of Ukraine. The image shows “unity” between the two countries, according to Poczta Polska.

Meanwhile, Latvia’s postal operator, Latvijas Pasts, has issued a stamp block, which consists of three stamps featuring the national flags of Ukraine and Latvia, Ukraine’s Independence Monument in Kiev, and Latvia’s Freedom Monument in Riga as well as supportive inscriptions in Ukrainian and Latvian such as, “We are with you!” According to Latvijas Pasts, the price of the block is EUR 9 with 50% of the sales proceeds donated to the charity fund, Ziedot.lv, in support of Ukraine.

Canada has also used philately to share messages of peace and solidarity with Ukraine and to generate funds for the war-torn country. Canada Post has issued a semi-postal fundraising stamp to provide customers and collectors with a way to support the people of Ukraine and the escalating humanitarian crisis.

The stamp depicts a sunflower, which is Ukraine’s national flower and has now become a widely recognized symbol of peace and unity. The yellow sunflower and

blue-sky background reflect the colors of Ukraine’s flag. Sunflowers also adorn the vinok, Ukraine’s traditional floral headdress.

A donation of CAD 1 from each booklet of 10 stamps (and 10 cents from the official first day cover, a special collectible envelope) will provide essential aid to those affected by the situation in Ukraine. Funds raised through the purchase of this stamp will be distributed through the Canada-Ukraine Foundation. This is the first time that Canada Post has issued a stamp in support of a country in need of humanitarian assistance.

Ukrposhta has also released several commemorative stamps of its own, to help raise awareness of what is going on in the country and to generate vital relief funds. The stamps have proven so popular that the post has also printed them on envelopes, cards, t-shirts, sweatshirts, and magnets. These are all sold through Ukrposhta’s online store on eBay – the first of its kind in the postal industry.

“Over the past month, Ukrposhta postage stamps have become popular not only in Ukraine but also around the world,” Ukrposhta CEO Igor Smelyansky says. “I know that a lot of foreigners want to buy commemorative stamps. For their convenience, we have launched this eBay store to enable shopping from anywhere in the world. In addition, selling on an international marketplace is not only about convenience and accessibility, but also about diversification. As practice has shown, selling postage stamps on one platform can result in its failure because of a large influx of buyers. Now we are offering specific platforms to foreign buyers and others to Ukrainian ones. It is symbolic that Ukrposhta, which for years has been training Ukrainian entrepreneurs to open and promote their own stores on marketplaces, including eBay, is now opening a store itself.”

Ukrposhta is due to release its latest commemorative stamp in mid-July. **HN**



# SHIFTING PERSPECTIVES



*Interview by* KAYLA **REDSTONE**

*Photos:* SOPHIA **BENNETT**

UPU Director General Masahiko Metoki and Deputy Director General Marjan Osvald assumed their new duties in January 2022, ushering in a change of perspective for the UN specialized agency for the postal sector. They sat down with Union Postale to discuss their vision for the four-year term ahead of them.





## MASAHIKO METOKI

### Director General of the UPU

#### **You have dedicated your career to public service. Why did you choose this career path and why is the Post such an important public service?**

In my view, there is nothing more rewarding or more humbling than dedicating oneself to the service of others. This is why I chose to lead a career in the public service sector.

My love for the Post itself began early on when I worked for Japan's Ministry for Posts and Telecommunications in the 1980s. However, that love really grew as I went on to serve as a Postmaster for a local post office and I had direct contact with the community my post office served. It was then that I came to understand how essential the Post was to society. Postal workers are one of the few public servants who reach the public every single day. They provide access to bare essentials, communication, commerce, financial services and more at peoples' very doorsteps.

#### **How have you seen the postal sector change over this time and where do you think it is going?**

As I mentioned, I began my career in this sector several decades ago and I have seen it change tremendously during that time – especially as digitization has taken hold of

the world around us. This shift in communication style has changed the role of the Post. Though its focus used to be on letters, the postal business has moved onto new opportunities such as delivering parcels generated by the development of e-commerce, deepening its role as a financial services provider, and working more closely with governments to deliver social programmes and other initiatives that require close contact with communities. The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated this shift. The Post's relevance as a public service partner is now evident not only to governments, but to customers. Posts must seize this the opportunity and continue that momentum to recoup profitability as the lion's share of the postal business – letters – continues to decline.

#### **How has your experience as Chair of the Postal Operations Council informed your vision for the UPU over the next cycle?**

My role as Postal Operations Council Chair allowed me a depth of insight into the workings of the postal business across the globe. I gained knowledge of the challenges and opportunities faced by posts in different regions, at different levels of development. The development gaps I noted between countries and regions have motivated my vision as Director General. That vision seeks to ensure that no country is left behind as the sector progresses.

I believe the UPU is in the prime position to diagnose and address postal development gaps. Only UPU has the reach to obtain a global view of where they exist. Comprising 192 countries, the UPU also has the ability to facilitate cooperation and knowledge sharing across the network to address and bridge the divide. We are in the best position to work with governments to show them why investing in postal infrastructure is critical. We also have contact with the restricted postal unions, who can help accelerate development efforts in each region.

#### **You have now been in office for more than a month. What are your first impressions of the International Bureau and what are some of your first priorities as Director General?**

As Chair of the Postal Operations Council, I worked with parts of the International Bureau secretariat quite closely. I have always known IB staff to be hardworking and dedicated to the advancement of the Union and the sector. Therefore, I was not surprised to be approached with new ideas when I took up my post here in Berne. However, I noticed silos and inefficiencies in the way different parts of the secretariat were working together. This is not uncommon for a bureaucratic organization.

**"The UPU has the unique advantage of being able to unite operators from 192 countries in one space to cooperate, exchange knowledge and best practices, develop solutions and plan the sector's future."**

**Masahiko Metoki**

Director General of the UPU

I wanted to figure out how to eliminate these barriers to the smooth functioning of the secretariat, which is ultimately responsible for ensuring the Union can continue with its work for the cycle.

My first priority, then, was to listen. Marjan-san and I collected feedback from the staff themselves to find out how their teams work, how they interface with other teams, and how they thought they could work better. This input was extremely valuable to us and informed my next priority, which was to redesign the International Bureau secretariat in a way that would address the challenges staff brought to us and ensure the IB could better serve the UPU's membership. This reorganization also allowed the formation of a new think-tank within the International Bureau that will focus on clinching opportunities for the Post. This division will help the UPU make the most of its role as a forum, a provider of postal solutions and knowledge centre for its 192 member countries, as well as wider sector partners.

#### **What is the greatest opportunity you plan to help the sector seize?**

COVID-19 has been one of the greatest challenges for the postal sector, but it has also provided several key opportunities to transform our business. The pandemic showed the entire world that the Post is a truly essential service, but it also forced Posts to diversify and to innovate.

One of my key aims is to keep this spirit of innovation going. We know that the letters business is rapidly declining. We understand that there is a parcelization of trade occurring. We can clearly see that customer expectations are changing with the development of new technologies. We can turn these challenges into opportunities if we keep driving ourselves outside of our comfort zone. I intend to make sure we do this.

**"I intend to lead by example, ensuring that I create a space where we can engage in open dialogue by first listening, then speaking."**

**Masahiko Metoki**  
Director General of the UPU

#### **How do you envision the role of the UPU in terms of readying the sector for the future?**

I envision the UPU as a think-tank for the postal sector. The UPU has the unique advantage of being able to unite operators from 192 countries in one space to cooperate, exchange knowledge and best practices, develop solutions and plan the sector's future. This is enshrined in our strategy for the next four years, the Abidjan Postal Strategy.

Now, countries are also discussing the possible ways in which our many partners outside of our network of members might be better included in this process. We can use this diversity of viewpoints to our advantage to bring all countries to a high level of postal development and to evolve our service into one that meets and exceeds the expectations of the more than 7 billion people on this planet.

#### **During your campaign you spoke about creating harmonized communication with UPU member countries and International Bureau staff. How will you lead this harmonized communication?**

What I have just mentioned will not be possible without good and open communication across the UPU network, between members, but also within the secretariat. I intend to lead by example,

ensuring that I create a space where we can engage in open dialogue by first listening, then speaking. Listening should be the first step in any decision-making process that has a direct impact on 192 member countries. Each country has its own unique set of ideas, challenges and constraints and we must do our best to consider those varied conditions in order to ensure that the outcomes of the work done at the UPU moves us all forward, without leaving anyone behind.

Our staff at the International Bureau help organize and facilitate the work of the UPU, and therefore it is important that there are no silos within the organization. As I mentioned, one of my priorities upon arriving here in Berne was to understand how the secretariat worked and to help it work more efficiently. The Deputy Director General, myself and our transition team spent the first few months observing daily operations and collecting input. We have since restructured the IB in a way that we believe will help break down those silos and streamline our work.

#### **You have also focused on sustainable development. Now that you are at the helm of a UN specialized agency, how do you intend to maximize or promote the contribution of the organization and its members to the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda?**

The UPU is a member of the UN family and therefore has a duty to help coordinate the effort to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Agenda for 2030. We have known for many years that the Post is an important partner to governments implementing inclusion and socio-economic development programmes. We see that the Post also has an important role to play in other areas such as the fight against climate change and gender equality – the last Congress developed resolutions on these two areas and we are working full speed ahead to make progress.



## MARJAN OSVALD

### Deputy Director General of the UPU

#### **You have led a substantial career in the Post. What drew you into this sector?**

If I had to describe the reason in one word, I would say it was "solidarity." Traditional postal services promote inclusion and connect people. They make our lives easier. That is why the role of the Post in forming a society of solidarity is very important to me, because it benefits everyone – it is universally useful and good for society as a whole. Post as an institution must have its role in a society, and that role is to be decided by the owners of the Post.

#### **How have you seen the sector evolve and where do you see it moving in the years to come?**

I have been following the development of the sector for 25 years and I can say that is no different from any other sector. To be honest, we have had considerable luck if we compare ourselves to others. The way technology seems to be taking over the sector worries me a bit. I fear that the development may lead us in a direction we may not be able to influence. I'm not sure if robotization or automation and artificial intelligence can, in addition to the humanization of work processes, take over all of the necessary functions in our

environment. We must not forget that our members are at completely different stages of development, which means that our less developed members will lag behind even more if we do not act. Future developments and trends are rather tricky to predict. In the 1990s, we first heard predictions that integrators such as DHL, TNT, DPD, and GLS, among others, would privatize public postal operators. The exact opposite happened.

#### **You have been an active member of PostEurop's management over the years. What role do you see for restricted unions in the sector's development?**

Monitoring the development of the postal sector in Europe, or rather within the European Union, has been a privilege. PostEurop is an association of the European public postal operators, which, in my opinion, is a very successful example for the future development of postal operators around the world. As a member of the PostEurop Management Board, I was involved in several important projects and I am pleased to say that the differences between developed and less developed operators are smaller within this region than on a global scale.

Restricted unions need to be more involved in the development process. It is up to us, the UPU, to make that possible. Regional development is the most effective form of development. Two or three neighboring countries in Latin America, for example,

would know best how to work together more effectively and efficiently. Some things are actually very simple if you look at them from the right angle.

#### **How do you envision your role as Deputy Director General?**

I will do my best to use the experience and good practices I've gained from my previous environment for the good of all. I believe that I know how to distinguish between good and bad, and I am ready to learn and to compromise. I also have quite a bit of experience with mediation, which I believe is a crucial tool in overcoming institutional and other obstacles.

Above all, I will try to lead by good example. This is the only way to motivate employees who, when it comes to the service industry, are more important than the users in my opinion. If you do not know how to sell bread, you will fail, even though bread is an essential food.

**"Traditional postal services promote inclusion and connect people. They make our lives easier. That is why the role of the Post in forming a society of solidarity is very important to me, because it benefits everyone – it is universally useful and good for society as a whole."**

#### **Marjan Osvald**

Deputy Director General of the UPU



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## FOR A SUSTAINABLE POSTAL FUTURE



UPU

UNIVERSAL  
POSTAL  
UNION



**You have been in the office for several months now. What are your first impressions of the International Bureau and what are some of your first priorities as Deputy Director General?**

Since I arrived, I have been learning, meeting and to getting to know my new colleagues and, above all, listening. This is how I have been sorting out my priorities as a Deputy Director General. While my list may be different by the end of the year, initially, I want to restore trust in this organization and to raise the level of communication to one that is honest and respectful. At the same time, we must not forget sustainable development or those undeveloped members of the UPU that need our help. I believe that we are all aware that the time we will spend here is limited and that others will follow in our place. I will do everything in my power to make sure that those following us will be better off, not worse.

**You have advocated postal development for the least advanced countries while encouraging more advanced countries to forge ahead. In your view, how will UPU help ensure no country is left behind as the sector transforms?**

It is true. I want to highlight good practices as well as responsible ownership. Fortunately, within our industry, there is still a certain degree of solidarity. This means that responsible operators and owners share their experience and good solutions with other developing postal operators. Deploying new models and solutions is easier and more cost effective. Moreover, responsible owners know what they want to do with their national post, how they want to position postal services in society, what the role of postal services is today and what it will be in the future. Global transformation is simpler than we imagine today – it just needs to be articulated correctly.

**How do you plan to increase the engagement of postal stakeholders in the work of the UPU?**

The Union – the organization itself – needs to become more efficient. This is what I believe to be the most important step in increasing engagement. We are here because of our members and not the other way around. To put it more explicitly – we are not here for our own sake.

Let me try to illustrate with the UPU's goals and objectives, where we have achieved 99% or even 100% in the past. I am always afraid of such results. I have doubts, either about the measurement or the goals themselves – maybe they are set too low. This needs to be clear and transparent to the UPU's stakeholders.

External stakeholders are equally important to me. The fact is that we have missed opportunities in the past – financial services are one example. In Europe in particular, with some rare exceptions, traditional postal banks have unfortunately completely lost their significance. I do not know which model our members will find most suitable in terms of engaging external stakeholders, but I do think we need to be present in the financial segment as well. I expect external stakeholders to articulate their demands and expectations more clearly in the future. Of course, this means that we would have to let them in.

**“Together, we will try to motivate our employees by setting a good example and with clear and correct communication.”**

**Marjan Osvald**

Deputy Director General of the UPU

I do not know what concept will prove to be the best for this Union in the end, but I know that I will do my best to ensure whatever decisions is made is adopted with the consensus of all members.

**Since your election, you have emphasized the importance of management innovations, transparency and business ethics under your leadership. How will you improve or adjust UPU's operating processes to make them more transparent and future-oriented?**

Every improvement takes time. The Director General and I have an open, communicative relationship and I am very grateful to him for always considering my opinion when we are talking about short-term as well as long-term measures and changes. I believe that our relationship, which is one based on honesty, will make it easier for us to take difficult decisions.

I have also met with our senior colleagues, some of whom I knew from before. Together, we will try to motivate our employees by setting a good example and with clear and correct communication. My colleague Metoki-san and I have already introduced some changes, some are still waiting for us. I have already said that we need to listen to our members and understand their problems. That is the foundation. Our employees simply need to have a better understanding in how this organization can help its responsible members with technological solutions, legislation, standards, regulations and measures. That is where I see our role.



# A PEOPLE-FIRST APPROACH TO POSTAL TRANSFORMATION

Interview by KAYLA REDSTONE

Canada Post Chief People and Safety Officer Susan Margles provides her point-of-view on the importance of company culture to successful postal transformation.

**Canada Post's Postal Transformation Project is something that has been in the works for a few years now. How has the project evolved and what are you currently targeting?**

What I've learned in 15 years in the postal industry is that we're always transforming – there isn't a discrete start and stop to the different chapters or plans.

We are certainly living our company purpose of "A stronger Canada delivered," which is the highest expression of where we are moving with our transformation plans. Coming through COVID-19, we have learned a lot about how important we are to Canadians in delivering the things they need every day. That has been a big underpinning in this chapter of our transformation.

The plans we are undertaking now are organized under three pillars. Providing a service that all Canadians can count on is the first pillar. That includes expanding our capacity, making sure we are supporting small and medium enterprises, and enhancing our service, our tracking, and our retail network, which is the bread and butter of the business.

The second pillar focuses on establishing a position of environmental leadership and social purpose – which is tied to our role as a Crown corporation – to ensure that we are serving Canadians in the way in which they expect to be served. This means taking a leadership position on things like the environment and climate, equity, diversity and inclusion, and indigenous reconciliation.

The third pillar is what we call "doing right by our people" and that is the one that my team is most immersed in. Under that pillar, we are

making health and safety an even stronger part of our culture going forward. We are making sure we work collaboratively and seek alignment with our different unions to create a fair and respectful workplace. In today's market with so much going on post-COVID and people questioning how they want to work, who they want to work for etcetera, this pillar is very important in terms of our positioning as an employer.

**The Post is a very particular kind of organization - it has a public service mandate, but is expected to be a profitable business. What are the challenges of managing transformation in this kind of environment?**

I think it is about finding the right trade-off. In our constituting legislation, we have the dual mandate of providing the service for Canadians, but doing it in a financially self-sufficient manner. That is challenging because, as the market shifts, the letter monopoly is running away from us and the competitive parcels business is becoming our future. It means we need to be more dynamic and think differently.

The way we have articulated our purpose – “A stronger Canada delivered” – speaks to where we have grounded ourselves. Post-COVID, we have made many discoveries about how important we are to Canadians and I think it's fair to say we've gone through different phases of balancing the financially self-sufficient piece with the service piece in different ways, shapes and forms. I think it is probably ever-thus for most postal organizations.

What is particularly germane when you look at transformation in that context is a real effort to engage and work with different groups of stakeholders because you can't make a decision focused only on the bottom line. We need to think about the federal government, who is our owner and represents all Canadians. We need to think about different stakeholder groups amongst our customers and how they are going to react to, live with and understand the transformation that we are going through. Our unions and our employees are also stakeholders.

**How do internal stakeholders need to come together to execute the transformation process?**

If you have people working in silos, you are never going to reach the maximum impact of your transformation plan because you will miss things along the way.

We have a number of different processes and fora in which we bring together different parts of the company on a regular basis to make sure that we understand how each of us impacts the other in the initiatives we're leading. We then share those plans amongst ourselves so we know how other people are counting on us.

From my vantage point, I think it is important that my team and I are injecting the question of culture, along with our human resources pillars, into all other areas of the transformation. Our people are the ones who have to deliver this transformation at the end of the day, so if we do not include them in what we are building then I think we face the risk of falling flat. We are working hard to do that whether through formal or more informal processes.

**What has gone into Canada Post's culture change efforts?**

We came to the conclusion early on that we couldn't achieve business transformation unless we also transformed our culture. That's not to say we wanted to throw out our culture entirely – we had a lot of very positive aspects to our culture that we wanted to enhance, such as employee pride. We went through a process of discovery to determine those aspects that were not serving us as well as they had in the past.

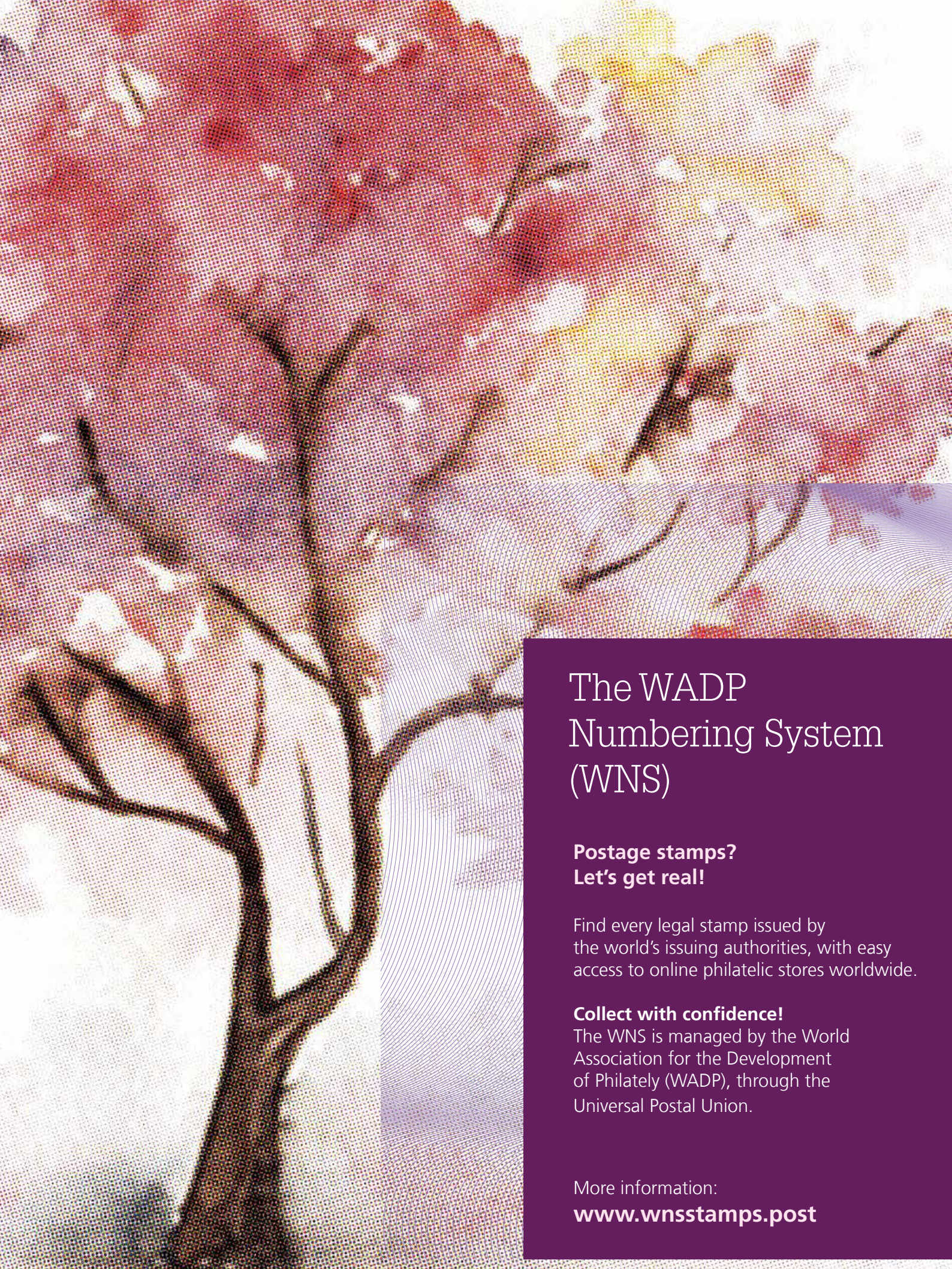
Not unlike many other posts, we were built up in a time of hierarchy and I think today's world requires a more agile, more responsive, more flexible approach. One example we have been hearing from our people that we're still a little too hierarchical in terms of decision-making, that things take a long time, and they're looking for a way to have more responsibility in their areas and, in turn, more accountability for decision-making.

“The plans we are undertaking now are organized under three pillars. Providing a service that all Canadians can count on is the first pillar. [...] The second pillar focuses on establishing a position of environmental leadership and social purpose [...] The third pillar is what we call “doing right by our people.”

**Susan Margles**

Canada Post Chief People and Safety Officer





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**“Don’t shy away from change and start thinking about it early [...] You need to think about what aspects of the culture you need to fire up or tamp down in order to deliver real transformation.”**

**Susan Margles**

Canada Post Chief People and Safety Officer

When leading change, you have to match where you are trying to take the culture with the business transformation you are trying to lead, and then work to ensure that it will enhance what you’re doing. Part of that is articulating to our people what our culture is, what it is not, and where we might want to make some changes. It is about engaging people and getting their perspective.

It is a big effort. There is definitely an importance on tone from the leadership, but it is also about engaging people all across the company all the way down to the front lines. Those are the people Canadians see every day, who really represent the Post.

#### **How are customers part of this process?**

I would say that our sales team, who is our face with customers on the business side, is probably one of the groups most excited about the culture change because they love to have something new to talk about with customers. We worked with the sales team in developing our new values and behaviours and putting together the workbooks and different sessions that we are going to be rolling out across the company to equip them to have that conversation. But first we did some listening through the sales team to gather feedback from individual customers – the good, the bad and the ugly – to learn more about their expectations. We want to put Canadians first in our culture discussions.

As an example, when we developed the new expression of our values, which are “trust, respect and deliver,” we looked at them through three different lenses. That is: how do we relate to those as individuals, how do we relate to them as a team, and how do we relate to them vis-à-vis Canadians. Then, when I say I “deliver,” that does not just mean delivering for my team in my role; it is also how I am delivering for Canadians.

I think that by putting customers front and centre in our culture, we’re going to have much more resonance out there. We are going to continue to listen to them and adjust to make sure we are living up to their expectations of us as a Crown corporation.

#### **What are some lessons learned that you might share with other postal operators embarking on their transformation and culture change journey?**

Don’t shy away from change and start thinking about it early. We can get very caught up in the business and what we need to do to change the business and then we expect culture to follow, but I don’t think that’s reality. You need to think about what aspects of the culture you need to fire up or tamp down in order to deliver real transformation.

It is also important to include all sorts of stakeholders, all sorts of elements of your employee base, in that culture conversation. Whether that conversation is about the elements of the culture people really want to hang on to, that work for us and make us who we are, or whether it’s the things people feel it is time to let go. It is important you don’t do that from an ivory tower. It is not a one-and-done approach, it is a process of checking back and making sure that things are resonating, that they are landing the way you intended.

Also, be inclusive and have an open mind. People who have been in the organization a long time can get stuck on what they think is the most important part of the culture, but we’re seeing a real shift generationally. Younger people are coming in with different expectations of what a good employer is and what culture they want to develop and thrive in. **KR**

# UPU CELEBRATES INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2022

*by* HELEN **NORMAN**

Throughout the month of March and to coincide with International Women's Day on March 8, the UPU focused on UN Sustainable Development Goal 5, which aims to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.



Although good progress is being made, gender parity remains a key issue worldwide, with World Bank figures recently revealing that around 2.4 billion women of working age worldwide are not afforded equal economic opportunity and 178 countries still maintain legal barriers that prevent their full economic participation.

It is clear that more needs to be done when it comes to gender equality globally and this was echoed at the 27th Universal Postal Congress in Abidjan in August when all 192 UPU member countries unanimously approved a resolution for gender equality and the empowerment of women in the postal sector and beyond. As part of this resolution, the UPU will develop an international gender policy for the Post.

The UPU is still in the process of finalizing the deliverables for the new resolution and it hopes to begin work on a gender mainstreaming policy soon. Speaking at a special gender equality event held on International Women's Day, Susan Alexander, Sustainability Services Programme Manager at the UPU, said, "One of the first steps will be to undertake a global study to find out where the Post sits in terms of women's representation.

"We currently don't have any specific statistics on women's involvement in the postal sector. The study will look at the issue geographically and look at levels of development. Posts will also be able to benchmark themselves so they can see where they stand. We also plan to do a lot more in terms of raising awareness and to assist members to support the goal of gender equality. We will unfold the action plan for the new resolution during 2022 to establish the foundation for action over the next four years," she adds.

Alexander was joined by three other leading women from the postal sector at the Sustainable Means Equal virtual event, which was hosted by UPU Voice Mail podcast host, Ian Kerr. The other speakers were Kristin Bergum, Senior Vice President, International and Regulatory Affairs at Posten Norge; Jennifer Beiro-Réveillé, Senior Director,

Environmental Affairs and Corporate Sustainability at USPS, and Pierangela Sierra, Co-Founder and CEO of Latin American grocery e-commerce platform, Tipti, and UNCTAD eTrade for Women Advocate for Latin America (Ecuador).

All three echoed Alexander's commitment to achieving gender equality in the postal sector and in business worldwide. Posten Norge's Bergum emphasized that to achieve excellence in sustainable development, posts need to recruit the best talent, no matter what gender. "To be excellent in the field of sustainable development we need to recruit from 100% of the talent pool, not just from 50% of it," she explained. "Therefore, we need to employ the most talented men and women and create attractive working environments for both."



**"To be excellent in the field of sustainable development we need to recruit from 100% of the talent pool"**

**Kristin Bergum**

Senior Vice President, International and Regulatory Affairs at Posten Norge



**"Our focus is to ensure that we represent the communities that we serve, otherwise we are not relevant."**

**Jennifer Beiro-Réveillé**

Senior Director, Environmental Affairs and Corporate Sustainability at USPS

Posten Norge's management board currently features 60% women and its executive board 40% women. "We are trying to achieve a good mix of men and women at all levels," Bergum continues. "We are doing this at top management level, but we have more to do when it comes to gender parity amongst all leaders – which currently sits at about 30% females."

To attract more females into leadership roles, Bergum highlights how Posten Norge aims to create an attractive working environment for females, uses gender neutral language in new job advertisements, and ensures that there is always at least one person of each gender in the final interview



# FOCUSING ON MENTORSHIP

The UPU's secretariat, the International Bureau, engaged with the topic of gender equality on 15 March with its "Inspire and Empower" mentorship event for staff, which featured a fireside chat with UN Development Programme (UNDP) Director of Gender, Raquel Lagunas.

Opening the event, UPU Director General Masahiko Metoki said, "By fostering equality here at home, we can lead change across the sector by example. As the title of this very event suggests, our goal for today and for the future is to inspire and empower all of you to become champions for gender equality at the International Bureau and beyond."

Lagunas, who made her way up the UN ladder, explained the significant role mentors played throughout her career. "Mentors give you much more than what to do with your career. They are role models, you start believing that many things are possible. They listen and nurture you," she said.

She added, "When you have diversity of all kinds in the workforce, you have more productivity."

While encouraging women to take on leadership roles was a good first benchmark for measuring gender quality within an organization, but she noted that organizations' commitment to the issue should also be measured in terms of budgetary investment towards gender equality programming. **KR**



**"...Gender equality improves economic growth and raises social and environmental sustainability."**

## Pierangela Sierra

Co-Founder and CEO of Latin American grocery e-commerce platform, Tipti, and UNCTAD eTrade for Women Advocate for Latin America (Ecuador)

stage. "You need to work around gender norms and patterns that could be intrinsically exclusive of either men and women, and sometimes actively encourage women. This is all part of our recruitment system," she adds.

The USPS also has good representation of minority groups in its workforce. According to figures shown by Beiro-Réveillé during the event, 49% of USPS's workforce are minorities and of that 46% are women. Meanwhile, 35% of senior management are minorities and 36% women. "We are very proud of our continuing efforts and progress in diversity and inclusion," she says. "Our focus is to ensure that we represent the communities that we serve, otherwise we are not relevant."

During the virtual event, Beiro-Réveillé also spoke about the importance of mentors in attracting more women into business and encouraging them to strive for management positions. Speaking from her own experience, she said, "Women need to take some ownership of gender equality. For example, what women do at USPS, and what I do in my personal and professional life, is engage in mentor programs. Many of the characteristics that have led to my success are due to me having a female in leadership as my mentor. It is like they are reaching out a hand to someone and pulling them up into the higher ranks."

Similarly, in her role as UNCTAD eTrade for Women Advocate for Latin America and the Caribbean, Pierangela Sierra of Tipti, highlighted how she is encouraging women to challenge gender stereotypes and drive female communities in e-commerce. "We are working very hard to try to drive more women in the STEM area, in particular, because we are so few currently," she explained.

"In my opinion, equality is not a gender issue, it is a business one. Gender equality in Latin America, for example, and in some other parts of the world, seems far behind what we really need in our business and this matters because gender equality improves economic growth and raises social and environmental sustainability," she added.

To back up her point, Sierra highlighted a McKinsey Global Institute report, which found that USD 12 trillion could be added to global GDP by 2025 by advancing women's equality.

Concluding, Alexander said, "The postal sector is still dominated by men; my hope is that women will continue to be encouraged and supported to work in the postal sector and to advance to senior positions, so that we reach true gender equality. **HN**



# #PostForEqual

Representatives from across the postal sector voiced their views on why gender equality is so important to achieving sustainable development in the postal sector as part of the UPU's #PostForEqual campaign during Women's History Month.



**Herna Verhagen**

*CEO, PostNL*

Creating a safe environment, with the same opportunities for everyone, regardless of who they are, is the key to being successful as a company. It makes organizations much stronger in every respect: how they make decisions, how they set their priorities and how they operate. I believe that promoting diversity makes employers stronger, more innovative and more attractive to a much larger talent pool. To promote gender equality in our senior management, we aim to have a gender balance of at least one-third women and one-third men by 2025.



**Verena Knott-Birklbauer**

*Gender Balance Management,  
Austrian Post*

Gender equality is vital for entrepreneurial success, and even more so in male dominated industries like the postal sector. Gender and diversity are essential cornerstones of our corporate strategy in terms of social diversity in our teams, as well as in relation to our products and services. By promoting people of all genders, you intensify innovative capacity and creativity in a company and sustainable development at the same time. That's why we are taking our ambitions regarding gender equality extremely seriously.



**Monisha Singh**

*Legal Counsel and Board  
Secretary, Post Fiji*

Leadership diversity will certainly make a difference. When more women are in decision-making positions, more inclusive decisions are made, different voices are being heard and different solutions created. It's important to ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic, work and public life. We all should promote women's sense of self-worth and their ability to determine their own choices.





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### Mary Anderson

*Executive Director, International Postal Affairs, USPS*

At the United States Postal Service, we are committed to a diverse, equitable and inclusive workplace where everyone, including women, has an opportunity to thrive. As stated in the Postmaster General's Delivering for America plan, diversity and inclusion are key to our corporate success because they affect every aspect of the organization—employees, customers, and the business.



### Melissa Corella Castro

*Head of Postal Sorting Center, Correos de Costa Rica*

The rise of the equal opportunity workplace has enabled substantial and healthy growth in business performance. Teams led by women are stronger professionally and personally by having different opinions and contributions integrated.

Correos de Costa Rica has not been outside of this transformation. Having a high percentage of women in operational and administrative positions, including heads, directors, and managers not only makes us very proud, but also helps us benefit from the whole range of skills and capacities across different fields.

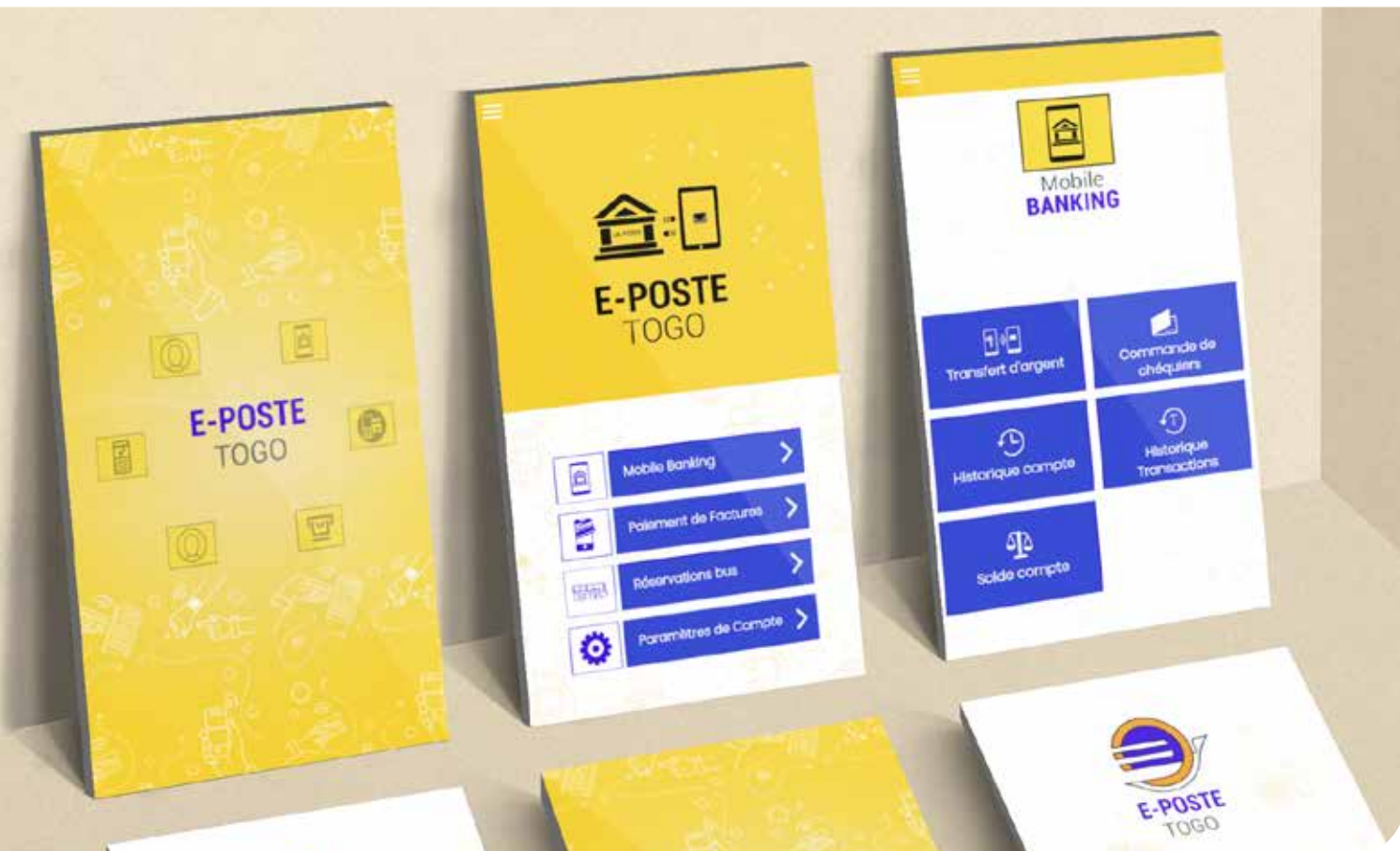


### Bouchra Amimi

*Head of Internal Communications and Change Management, Poste Maroc*

Development is only sustainable if it is built on the responsible use of human and material resources to create wealth and improve living conditions for populations, without upsetting the balances holding up the environment, society and the economy. (...) The postal sector understood this truth early on and made gender equality one of the pillars of its human resource policies. Indeed, if we are to recognize that the sector has, for example, stood the test of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is only because it has been able to rely on the expertise of both men and women. This resilience is testament to the sector's long-standing decision in favour of equality, which it continues to pursue today.





# Togo Post launches E-Post application

by TARA GIROUD

Togo Post has enhanced its digital offerings to bring accessible and inclusive services to its customers with the launch of a new mobile app, E-Poste.

"The E-Poste solution is important for the Togolese population as it brings them closer to the Post's financial products and services, without the need to travel," said Martin Kwadzo Dzodzro Kwasi, Director General of Togo Post. "E-Poste is important for the Post as it helps reach marginalized communities – those last-mile customers."

E-Poste was a necessary next step in the Post's ECO CCP project, which created mobile savings accounts. While customers were enthusiastic about the initial digital efforts - about 300,000 accounts opened in two years rather than the expected three years - the number of transactions was low.

Customers were discouraged from utilizing the services, which required a series of codes necessary to perform various operations. This led Togo Post to develop E-Poste, which made all of those services, and more, accessible with the press of a few buttons.



Transactions available with E-Poste include those using the USSD code \*165#, which is wallet-bank, bank-wallet and bank-bank transactions, as well as overviews, money transfers, and requests for a chequebook or bank card.



Transactions available with E-Poste include those using the USSD code \*165#, which is wallet-bank, bank-wallet and bank-bank transactions, as well as overviews, money transfers, and requests for a chequebook or bank card.

The E-Poste app also provides partner services, such as payment of water and electricity bills, post office box fees, taxes, subscription fees to associations, academic fees for public schools and universities, and tickets for Le Courrier bus services.

The response has been a success, Kwasi said.

From its earlier iterations in June 2018 through the new app as of February 2022, some 334,000 transactions were processed in the amount of 14 billion CFA francs.

"Customers of a certain age who still remember the clichés about the Post of 30 years ago, where you had to travel back and forth several times just to find out your account balance, are truly amazed by E-Poste," Kwasi said.

Digitalizing postal services also benefits some of the country's most vulnerable populations. For example, isolated communities can be better served with partnerships in the development sector, such as with the World Bank for cash transfers. Additionally, the UN Population Fund, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and the World Food Programme all reach beneficiaries of their aid programs through the Post's digital solutions.

The app also addresses the Post's efforts to remain relevant in the digital age and the reduction in traditional postal services.

"Digital postal services can help improve quality of service and products, which is vital given the decline of household letter post – the core business of the Post – following the emergence of information and communications technologies," he said. "The Post has thus needed to reinvent itself, especially in terms of the financial services it offers, to make up for this shift."

Togo Post's services are now 75% financial services and 25% letter-post and related services.

"E-Poste aims, first and foremost, to fulfil social objectives, and then to ensure

competitiveness in the long term," Kwasi said. "Indeed, by enabling customers to carry out certain processes themselves, the Post will have more time and resources to dedicate to customers of other products and services. In this way, the quality of these other services can be improved."

The Post plans to expand offerings through E-Poste in such areas as e-commerce, migrant money transfers, and micro- and nano-credit. Togo Post has also requested support from FITAF, the UPU's Financial Inclusion Technical Assistance Facility, to study the feasibility of granting micro loans. **TG**



E-POSTE team promoting the app to students. Photo: La Poste, Togo



# Postal Heroes

by SONJA **DENOVSKI**

The postal service, a network that facilitates the universal exchange of communication, has gone through countless transformations. Despite numerous challenges and setbacks over the centuries, the Post has stepped up to continue its service in even the most extraordinary conditions.

Today when we speak of challenging times, our minds immediately focus on the ongoing pandemic. Posts worldwide amplified and adapted their services to match the needs of their communities during this global phenomenon, delivering medication, checking in on the elderly, transporting vaccines, and helping manage the setbacks of international lockdowns.

This reflex for quick action was built upon past experience.

During the cholera outbreak of 1881-1896, Posts reacted quickly to disinfect mail items arriving on ships at European ports. During the Spanish flu pandemic in 1918, fearing that influenza could be spread by delivered items, Posts implemented recommendations for disinfecting offices, service areas, and mail cars, including rules on frequent handwashing. Despite the brutal hit to staffing, Posts persevered.



But the Postal Service is not only a lifeline in the wake of outbreaks of disease. It continues to operate during times of conflict as well, enabling people and communities to receive humanitarian aid, correspondence, and essential goods and services.

### Keeping communication flowing

In France, during the Siege of Paris, balloons with improvised gondolas carried millions of letters. In the United States, the army created traveling Post Offices during the Civil War. This service enabled soldiers to send and receive mail from home while Prisoner of War mail was exchanged at designated points under truce flags.

It was during the 1906 Congress in Rome that member countries modified the UPU Convention to enable Prisoners of War to receive and send correspondence and money orders free of charge. This decision was later included in Article 71 of the Geneva Convention, ratified in 1949 by 196 countries. The Convention, forming the core of international humanitarian law, still enables Prisoners of War to send and receive letters and cards in their native language.

Posts also rose to the occasion following the outbreak of World War I. The General Postal Office of the United Kingdom, affected by the extensive enlistment of their staff to the armed forces, met the challenge of increased mail delivery demands by employing a temporary workforce that included over 30,000 women. According to the British Postal Museum, the industry was expected to carry on most pre-war functions alongside additional duties and responsibilities. Thousands of bilingual women were employed to monitor international correspondence, and widows of fallen colleagues were offered employment within the postal industry. The "Post Office Relief Fund," established to provide for orphans and widows, organized concerts to raise money and encouraged employees to donate. The same fund played a pivotal role in funding hospitals and recovery centers.

### Necessity breeds invention

The Second World War forced the Post to find new ways to manage international postal exchanges. With airmail capacity significantly reduced to enable the transport of necessary military materials, there was a need to reduce the size and weight of an ordinary letter and ensure maximum use of the smaller space allocated to mail.

Having navigated through many uncertain times, the experience shared by Posts has bestowed strength upon them.

Airgraphs were introduced in 1941 to manage this, enabling Posts to photographically reduce a letter's size and weight before transporting it and enlarge it again before delivering it to the addressee. Written on a pre-determined template available in post offices, letters were photographed on a continuous 16 mm film. Through this process, a small canvas package with film containing 1,700 compressed letters weighed only 150 grams.

The service, which transmitted about 300 million letters during the time it operated, was used by over 50 countries. Between 1943 and 1944, the Indian Post alone handled around 34 million airgraphs. The service reached its peak in March 1943 when 1.5 million airgraphs were dispatched from the United Kingdom in one week alone. As soon as regular air transport became more available, interest in the service decreased, making it unprofitable by July 1945.

Having navigated through many uncertain times, the experience shared by Posts has bestowed strength upon them. Solidarity has continued to be a core value within the postal family, and despite many obstacles, the service has always prevailed. **SD**



# Digitalizing development cooperation

by TARA GIROUD

When the pandemic struck, putting an end to travel to member countries, a digital solution was paramount for both the UPU's Development Cooperation Directorate (DCDEV) and members to remain on track with their capacity building objectives. The unit turned a challenge into an opportunity, boosting participation through innovative working methods.

As the end of the cycle approached, DCDEV required a solution that would accommodate follow-up missions, closeout workshops and seminars with the possibility for simultaneous interpretation, said Pooran Parampath, Training Expert for the UPU, who led the implementation of an online training solution.

Within four months, the UPU had researched online solutions used in other UN agencies, selected the platform that could be implemented in the most regions with the fewest technological requirements, piloted the product, and implemented it, gaining two unexpected benefits: cost savings and greater reach.

"This tool allowed us to adjust our training processes and to effectively manage all sub-processes online," he said, which included event creation, participant management, interpreter management and session recordings. "This solution therefore enabled us to continue to provide training to our members in a seamless manner irrespective of their physical location and the language that they speak."



## Quick adaptations

There were several challenges to overcome with the transition to the new process.

"In a face-to-face classroom environment, it is easier to have open discussion through higher levels of active participation, less distractions and the general comfort level compared to online modalities," he said.

The UPU had to find ways to simulate these experiences and create an environment online that promoted meaningful interaction and contribution.

"We had icebreakers and introductions, made full use of the chat feature, breakout group discussions, as well as short coffee breaks," Parampath said. "Of course, we also enabled sharing of presentations, had dedicated Q&A segments, and utilized short videos to break up the sessions and keep them interesting."

Still, the transition to the online platform wasn't always easy. Some users resisted, he said. But as with much of life affected by the pandemic, participants adapted and, with feedback they provided, they helped to shape the trainings into a more user-friendly experience.

For instance, when participants requested a multi-window view for speakers, it was quickly prioritized, tested, and implemented, Parampath said.

"We were astonished at how quickly we were able to modify our internal processes to ensure continuity of our training initiatives and in a manner that did not adversely affect our project milestones," he said.

## Improved results

With programs moved online, the UPU completed more than 40 training activities in Europe and CIS, Arab, Latin America and Africa regions, he said.

Not only were the missions and trainings completed, but more people were also able to participate.

Since the only requirement for participation was access to a steady internet connection,

in many cases, training reached 20 to 60% more participants than in-person interventions.

"Where previously we were able to provide fellowships to one or two participants per country because of our budgetary constraints," Parampath said. "With this solution, entire work teams were able to attend and benefit with minimal impact on the existing budget."

For example, in 2018, the UPU was able to offer fellowships to 31 participants for the closeout workshop of the UPU Operational Readiness for E-commerce Arab program held onsite in Tunisia. In 2020, using the online platform, the workshop accommodated 52 trainees, which was an increase of approximately 40%. Similar results were seen in other regions, as well.

Additionally, the training solution allowed DCDEV to benefit from cost savings and do more with its allocated budget.

"We were able to shorten the planning time for activities, as some sub-processes were no longer needed," Parampath said. "Overall, we saved money and time while implementing our planned activities."

This was evidenced in DCDEV's Interregional Capacity Building Project for Postal Security.

One KPI was to train 45 security personnel from designated operators (DOs), via workshops and distance learning, to carry out security reviews within DOs in their regions. In 2019 and early 2020, this was accomplished with both onsite and distance modalities. Then, during the pandemic, it was able to continue utilizing the online solution.

The achievement of this KPI then boosted the outcome achievements in other KPIs, he said, namely by creating a pool of well-trained regional security experts in Latin America and the Caribbean. This brought much-needed self-sustainability to the security review process in these regions, he said. It also boosted the achievement of pilot security audits from two to four in the Latin America and Caribbean regions.



**Pooran Parampath**

Training Expert for the UPU

## Lessons learned

Parampath said the process taught the team several valuable lessons should the pandemic's path allow for more in-person training.

"The first thing we have learnt is that no online solution will 100 per cent replace face-to-face training," Parampath emphasized. "Having said that, there are lessons that we have learnt, and these can be taken forward in a hybrid model for the benefit of our members: the importance of creating an enabling online environment so that participants almost forget about the tools and feel comfortable enough to interact and discuss as if they were face-to-face."

Yet the online solution was invaluable. It allowed the UPU to continue to train its members and to effectively sustain the momentum that it worked hard to build before the pandemic.

"Without it," he said, "all activities would have been halted, which would have had negative implications for the beneficiary countries involved in different capacity building projects." **TG**

# TTPost's new track and trace solution leads to increased customer confidence

by HELEN NORMAN

In June 2021 the Trinidad and Tobago Postal Corporation (TTPost) launched a new track and trace solution for courier package items in a bid to increase efficiency levels, improve its service offering and provide customers with dynamic and innovative solutions that facilitate convenience.



Source: Trinidad and Tobago Postal Corporation (TTPost)





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## Pack it... Send it... Track it!!!

The origins of the new solution date way back to 1999 when the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago initiated a long-term postal reform programme based on modernizing a chronically under-achieving postal institution. The aim of the programme was to build consumer confidence in the public operator, increase its volumes and revenues, improve overall quality of service, and strengthen its financial performance.

The track and trace solution, which is offered as part of TTPost Couriers for express items, is one way the postal operator is working toward achieving this aim. According to George Nicholas Martin, Product Manager of Courier & Express Services at TTPost, the solution has already proven to be "very successful" and had led to "improved levels of confidence with customers, and reductions in the number of calls and emails to query delivery statuses," he said.

TTPost worked with Indian-based software development company Reason Solutions to develop the track and trace offering. The Post used the company's Post Global software tracking module and customized it to create the TTPost Post Global Track and Trace System, which is currently hosted on two servers at the National Mail Centre in Piarco and used in the retail network for data entry and task management.

The system provides real time updates on express items to customers and helps gather data for improved management decision making in the areas of network, fleet capability and performance.

"TTPost continues to lead the way in the Caribbean region by embracing innovation and technological advancements," Martin explained. "The enhancement of its courier service through the implementation of the new online tracking system demonstrates its commitment to its customers to provide dynamic and innovative solutions and facilitate convenience."

As part of the track and trace project, investments were made in new mobile units for data entry and scanning on the road and in in-house scanners and PCs to increase processing and dispatch capacity. Other supporting applications were also implemented, including: a mobile app for Android, which is used by couriers and transport drivers in the field; a virtual post office on TTPost's website, which has been created for corporate customers to upload pickup information; and a central administrator and management information system.

"The new track and trace system has led to a number of benefits," explains Martin. "Customer convenience has been greatly enhanced as they can now digitally track express items, rather than calling or sending an email to receive information. The new digital system also allows for shorter search times when tracking an item. Other benefits include improved visibility on the movements of an item and the provision of critical management data, which can be used to monitor, review, and adjust the network to create improved efficiencies of the service."

**"TTPost continues to lead the way in the Caribbean region by embracing innovation and technological advancements."**

Now the track and trace system is successfully up and running, TTPost is turning its attention to another important development – the introduction of its V Box subscription-based service, which provides a virtual mailbox/address to its subscribers and is set to launch within the next two months, according to Martin.

"V Box is being introduced to cater to the needs of micro and small business who require a formal mailing address (i.e., not in a residential area) to create a new revenue stream as the service includes delivery via courier at chosen timelines, to reduce the costs involved in having physical PO Boxes.

"TTPost is also currently exploring the capabilities of its existing online payment platform to accept payments of duties, taxes and delivery for incoming EMS and parcel post packages, and to facilitate payments from SME customers who want to engage in e-commerce, among other things," Martin concludes. **HN**

## IN FOCUS THE AMERICAS

by HELEN NORMAN

### ARGENTINA

At the end of last year, **Correo Argentino** played a key role in assisting the Argentinian Government with an experimental census across the country to test the processes and preparatory tasks ahead of the 2022 National Population, Households, and Housing Census in March 2022.

Correo Argentino was responsible for the logistics, including the distribution and returns, of the material associated with the experimental census. The operation, which included more than 18,700 homes, took place in the Santa Fe city of Gálvez and in some selected areas of communes two and five of the Autonomous City of Buenos Aires, and had a digital and face-to-face modality.

Correo Argentino was also in charge of the assembly and deployment operations for more than 320 census boxes – a process, which began back in December 2021. The boxes contained forms, envelopes, stationery, questionnaires, and materials necessary to carry out the census.

The assembly of each of these kits was carried out at the Buenos Aires logistics plant located in Tortuguitas, according to the guidelines provided by the National Institute of Statistics and Censuses (INDEC).

### BRAZIL

In March 2022 **Correios Brazil** announced that it had closed 2021 with a historic recurring profit of BRL 3.7 billion (USD 798 million) – 101% higher than the previous year, and a

positive result for the third year in a row. According to Correios, this is the highest figure it has achieved in the past 22 years and reflects the success of the financial recovery, modernization, and economic sustainability project carried out by the management of the Post, under the supervision of the federal government.

The project saw the Post review business lines, rationalize costs, renew service channels, improve operational quality, and increase sales revenue, making it possible to invest in the future. New investments included the launch of a same-day delivery portfolio, the rollout of a parcel locker network, renewal of its delivery fleet and the optimization of the delivery network.

Following the announcement of record profits, Correios Brazil also revealed that it plans to transform the company from a “logistics operator” to a “marketplace” by the end of the year through the launch of Correios Shopping. To make the transformation possible, Correios Brazil will also inaugurate two more international operations centres this year. The locations of these are yet to be confirmed.

### COLOMBIA

The Government of Chocó in western marketing platform Kolau and **Servicios Postales Nacionales** (4-72), the official postal operator of Colombia, have signed an agreement for the execution of the MIPYMES Digitization Plan in Chocó.

MIPYMES was originally launched to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on small and medium enterprises by giving them the tools to create an intelligent web page with integrated electronic commerce completely free of charge.

With the formalization of this alliance, microentrepreneurs in Chocó will be able to access electronic commerce and create their own web page easily, quickly, and free through the portal: [www.kolau.es/choco](http://www.kolau.es/choco).

The MIPYMES Digitization Plan seeks to support nearly 4,000 microentrepreneurs formalized in the department of Chocó, of which 93% do not have their own website, to market their products and services online. In addition, Chocoan entrepreneurs and business owners will have preferential prices in logistics and shipping management in the 32 departments of Colombia and in 192 countries around the world through the support of 4-72.

To date, the MIPYMES Digitization Plan has benefited micro, small and medium-sized companies in 12 Latin American countries. In Colombia, the initiative came to light two years ago, launched at the national level by the ICT Ministry and Kolau, with the aim of digitizing 75,000 companies annually.

### COSTA RICA

**Correos de Costa Rica** has installed several self-service mailboxes for sending packages at its post offices to make the processing of shipments faster and easier. According to the Post, customers manage the service in its virtual branch before depositing packages in drop-off mailboxes.

So far post office branches in Zapote, Escazú, San Pedro de Montes de Oca, Cartago and Guadalupe have self-service mailboxes. These strategic locations were chosen as they have “high footfall,” according to Correos. The Post aims to expand the self-service network to 25 more branches during the first half of 2022.

Before the client drops off their package they must enter the complete information of the sender, recipient, and characteristics of the package online to generate the shipping guide. They then select the location of the self-service mailbox they want to use and make an online payment. Once this procedure is finished, the client will receive a confirmation email with a QR code.

When the customer reaches the branch, they must scan the QR code on the mailbox’s reader and the information on the packages will immediately be displayed on the



screen. Shipping labels are then printed, which need to be attached to the package. The customer then scans the barcode on the label and places the package in the mailbox.

## JAMAICA

At the end of 2021, **Jamaica Post** celebrated its 350th anniversary with the theme Transformation Through Innovation. The operator marked the occasion with several activities such as a customer appreciation day, decorating some major locations, the launch of its anniversary stamps and a tree planting initiative.

Jamaica Post was first established in 1671 under the rulership of King Charles II, in the old capital of St Jago De La Vega, now known as Spanish Town. Being the first British colony to have an established postal service, Jamaica Post has maintained its rich legacy by consistently innovating, growing its portfolio and its market share, while simultaneously expanding its geographical reach.

Jamaica Post has excelled in the execution of its core business - the delivery of mail items both locally and internationally. In keeping with its mandate to increase revenue streams based on customer demands, Jamaica Post has recently expanded its offerings with the introduction of premium services such as the launch of Zip Mail, a local next business day delivery solution; Fast Track, an express international shipping service; and Klick 'N' Ship Express, a hassle-free freight forwarding service to facilitate online shopping.

The Post has also introduced its newest location, the first cashless Jamaica Post Shop, a boutique outlet in Kingston.

## MEXICO

**Correos de México**, the national postal service of Mexico, has requested funding of between MXN 500 million (USD 25.2m) and MXN 600 million (USD 30.3m) from the Mexican Government Budget to modernize its

offering and capture new market opportunities, according to a report from Mexican media outlet Mural.

Speaking to the outlet, Rocío Bárcena, director general of Correos de México, said that the money would be put towards a new operations centre at Felipe Ángeles International Airport, north-east of Mexico City. The new centre will handle a variety of different postal items and will be in addition to the Post's facility at Mexico City International Airport, which handles around 2.5 million pieces of mail and parcels per month.

Bárcena told Mural that Correos de México is currently undertaking market analysis for the new Felipe Ángeles center to assess flights and cargo handling capacity.

Correos de México also intends to use some of the government funding to invest in new technology, which would enable it to become the first entity to certify emails in Mexico. The Post also wants to use the funding to strengthen its last mile parcel services offering, which has grown exponentially during the pandemic.

## PERU

In February 2022 **Serpost**, the national post office of Peru, launched a new free service for blind and visually impaired people as part of its mission to foster greater social inclusion in the country.

The service, called "Cecogramas", has been developed to help low-vision people access postal services. According to the National Council for the Integration of Persons with Disabilities (CONADIS), there are around 35,000 people diagnosed with vision deficiency currently living in Peru.

The service consists of the free delivery of relief prints (Braille), sound

or digital recordings, or special paper for the blind – to any local, national, or international destination. The service is available at any Serpost office nationwide.

To access the service, the sender or recipient must be registered with a recognized institution for the blind. Furthermore, the Cecogramas must only contain documents, and not merchandise, letters or notes, etc. Cecogramas is only available as part of Serpost's Economic Service.

## URUGUAY

**Correo Uruguayo** and UTE, Uruguay's government-owned power company, have inaugurated a new TeleService post in the Progreso post office branch in southern Uruguay. The new post is the result of a successful partnership between the two organizations, which will help bring UTE closer to customers regardless of where they are located in the country.

Silvia Emaldi, President of UTE, said: "Through the [TeleService] post there will be a UTE official, who will be responding to the different procedures and solutions for customers, from a distance." Emaldi also thanked Correo Uruguayo saying that due to its network of Uruguayan post offices, UTE can better serve citizens where "it could not be in person" through the installation of the TeleService technology "which we will take to the small towns of the country," she added.

Rafael Navarrine, President of Correo Uruguayo, thanked the UTE authorities "for the trust they have placed in Uruguayan Post to carry out this initiative" and highlighted the importance of strong synergy between state agencies "for the benefit of the population."

According to the established schedule, UTE's commercial TeleService will be implemented in several other towns throughout the country by the end of December 2022.



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# UNION POSTALE

## Advertising rate card 2022

Union Postale is the Universal Postal Union's flagship magazine, founded in 1875. Each issue is published quarterly in several languages, giving advertisers a regular opportunity to reach out to their audience.

Some 12,000 copies of Union Postale are sent to named distribution lists annually. The bulk of these readers are the top decision-makers from national Posts and ministries from the UPU's 192 member countries. They include chief executives, operations managers, technical experts, industry regulators and government ministers.

Around 1,000 further copies of the magazine are also distributed each year during meetings of the UPU's decision-making bodies, the Postal Operations Council and Council of Administration, attended by thousands of delegates from member countries and special industry events, such as Post-Expo.

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