

UPU Emergency and Solidarity Fund response report – supporting Poste Maroc following the 2023 earthquake in Morocco

On 8 September 2023, a powerful 6.8-magnitude earthquake struck Morocco's High Atlas mountains, with devastating effects across several regions. The disaster claimed nearly 3,000 lives and injured over 5,600 individuals. Particularly hard-hit were the provinces of Al-Haouz and Taroudant, with widespread destruction to infrastructure and homes. Within the postal sector, Groupe Poste Maroc reported damage to 80 postal sites across six regions, including two collapsed agencies and several buildings with structural cracks. Despite the scale of destruction, postal services were maintained at over 99.99% functionality, with mobile agencies deployed in the most severely affected areas to ensure continuity of operations.

UPU Emergency and Solidarity Fund responds

In the wake of the disaster, the UPU Emergency and Solidarity Fund (ESF) activated its disaster risk management team to coordinate emergency assistance for Poste Maroc. In collaboration with national postal authorities, the ESF team conducted a needs assessment and jointly agreed on a list of priority equipment required to support and stabilize operations. This included thermal label printers, multifunction colour printers, postal service counters, ergonomic office chairs, and wooden desks with storage. These essential tools were identified as being needed to help maintain day-to-day functionality and facilitate the recovery of postal services in the most severely affected regions.

Global solidarity in action: support from Japan

The Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications of Japan and Japan Post demonstrated their strong commitment to international cooperation by contributing financial support through the ESF. The donation helped enable Poste Maroc's rapid recovery and underlined the solidarity of the international postal community in times of crisis. The support is a vital part of broader efforts to ensure uninterrupted postal service delivery and operational resilience following natural disasters.

Conclusion

The 2023 earthquake in Morocco had a profound humanitarian and infrastructural impact, yet the swift coordination between the ESF team, Poste Maroc and international partners like Japan ensured that urgent postal needs were quickly met. This response reflects the value of international cooperation and the effectiveness of the UPU's emergency mechanisms in helping postal operators withstand and recover from crisis. Morocco's case stands as a testament to the enduring importance of resilient postal networks in maintaining communication, connection and essential services – even in the most challenging circumstances.