
UPU
SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
GOALS REPORT
Assessing the alignment
of the UPU Strategy
2026–2029 (Dubai cycle)


SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS
1 NO POVERTY
2 ZERO HUNGER
3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING
4 QUALITY EDUCATION
5 GENDER EQUALITY
6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION
7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY
8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH
9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES
11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES
12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION
13 CLIMATE ACTION
14 LIFE BELOW WATER
15 LIFE ON LAND
16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS
17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive summary 4

The UPU and the SDGs 6

- Overview of the UPU 7
- Overview of the SDGs 7
- Linkage to the SDGs: the UPU's contribution 7

Integrating the SDGs into the Dubai Business Plan 10

- Embedded SDG alignment in the Dubai Business Plan 11
- Purpose of SDG analysis for the Dubai cycle 11

Methodology 12

- Methodology 12
- Limitations 13

Outcomes of the SDG mapping 14

- UPU–SDG matrix by goal 14
- UPU–SDG matrix by resource allocation 17
- UPU–SDG resource alignment by IB directorate 17
- Overall direction of SDG alignment: Abidjan and Dubai cycles 18

Key areas of SDG alignment 20

- Leading, contributing to and strengthening partnerships for sustainable outcomes 20
- Infrastructure, innovation and economic participation 21
- Inclusion and resilience 21
- Key SDG target areas and measurement links 21
- Contribution and collaboration to achieve other SDGs 23

The SDGs in an evolving United Nations context 24

- Accelerating progress towards 2030 24
- Pact for the Future and the Global Digital Compact 25
- Financing for development and partnerships 25
- UN 2.0 and UN80: a future-ready UN system 25

Reflections on the future: further embedding the 2030 Agenda 26

- From alignment to evidence of implementation 26
- Partnerships, data, innovation and resource mobilization 27
- Towards 2030 and future strategy development 27

Sources 30

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SDG linkages are now identified as part of programme design. This makes it possible to follow alignment, resources and implementation results more systematically throughout the cycle.

The Universal Postal Union (UPU), as the United Nations specialized agency for the postal sector, has an important role in connecting the global postal network with the objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Through its work on international postal infrastructure, interoperability, trade, digital transformation, financial and social inclusion, development cooperation, resilience and partnerships, the UPU supports the conditions that enable postal operators to contribute to sustainable development worldwide.

The UPU Strategy 2026–2029 (Dubai cycle) strengthens this connection by integrating considerations pertaining to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) directly into the organization's strategic planning. The Dubai Business Plan identifies relevant SDGs and targets, along with the expected results and resource requirements, creating a clearer basis to follow how the UPU's institutional work contributes to the 2030 Agenda over the course of the cycle.

Analysis shows a particularly strong relationship between the UPU's work and the enabling foundations of sustainable development. Goal 9 (Industry, innovation and infrastructure) has the broadest alignment across the Dubai Business Plan, reflecting the central role of reliable, interoperable and increasingly digital postal infrastructure. Goal 17 (Partnerships for the Goals) is also strongly represented, reflecting the cooperation between member countries, designated

operators, regulators, international organizations and other stakeholders that underpins the single postal territory.

Goal 8 (Decent work and economic growth) is another prominent area of alignment, linked to the postal network's role in facilitating trade, e-commerce, logistics, payments and economic participation.

The Dubai Business Plan also contains important linkages to reduced inequalities, poverty reduction, sustainable communities, responsible consumption and production, gender equality, climate action and strong institutions.

The allocation of financial resources reinforces these priorities. Approximately 37.0% of mapped resources are aligned with Goal 17 (Partnerships for the Goals) and 36.4% with Goal 9 (Industry, innovation and infrastructure), followed by 10.9% for Goal 8 (Decent work and economic growth) and 6.1% for Goal 10 (Reduced inequalities).

Together, these results highlight the UPU's role not only as a technical and regulatory organization, but also as an enabling platform for international cooperation, infrastructure development, economic participation and capacity building across the global postal network.

The Dubai cycle represents an important evolution, relative to the Abidjan cycle, in how the UPU incorporates sustainable development into its planning. SDG linkages are now identified as part of programme design, rather than reconstructed retrospectively, making it possible to follow alignment, resources and implementation results more systematically throughout the cycle.

This provides a stronger foundation for future reporting on how planned activities translate into measurable results and broader contributions to sustainable development.

In terms of scope, this report relates to the work of the UPU International Bureau (IB) as reflected in the Dubai Business Plan. It does not seek to quantify the wider contribution of individual member countries, designated operators or the global postal sector.

Looking towards 2030, the findings position the Dubai Business Plan within a wider UN effort to accelerate progress on the SDGs.

The UPU's global reach, its role as the primary forum for dialogue in the postal sector, its technical expertise and its ability to support interconnected postal infrastructure give it a distinctive platform from which to contribute to that effort, while the results-based framework of the Dubai cycle provides a basis to increasingly link strategic alignment with implementation evidence and measurable outcomes.

THE UPU and THE SDGs

OVERVIEW OF THE UPU

Established in 1874 and headquartered in Berne, Switzerland, the UPU is the United Nations specialized agency for the postal sector. It has 192 member countries and serves as the primary forum for cooperation among postal sector stakeholders. The UPU supports the single postal territory, sets rules and standards for international postal exchanges, provides technical assistance and helps member countries respond to changing market, technological and societal needs.

The UPU's mission, its "Postal Vision 2030" advocacy message and its strategy for the Dubai cycle provide the strategic framework for the 2026–2029 period. The strategy is organized around three goals, while the Dubai Business Plan translates those goals into implementable areas of work.

A brief snapshot of the UPU mission, Postal Vision 2030 and the UPU Strategy 2026–2029 (Dubai cycle) is presented on the next page.

OVERVIEW OF THE SDGs

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by the UN member states in 2015, sets out the 17 SDGs, covering the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. The SDGs are closely linked and progress in one area may depend on progress in others. Governments, international organizations, the private sector and civil society all have a role in achieving the SDGs.

LINKAGE TO THE SDGs: THE UPU'S CONTRIBUTION

As a UN specialized agency and a member of the UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB), the UPU contributes to UN-wide efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda. The CEB common principles for the 2030 Agenda emphasize country-led, people-centred and results-focused action, while the Strategy for Sustainability Management in the UN System 2020–2030 calls on UN organizations to integrate environmental and social sustainability into their policies, programmes and support functions.

The UPU's contribution to the 2030 Agenda arises from both its institutional mandate and the way in which the global postal network operates. Common rules and standards, interoperable networks, technical cooperation, data, partnerships and capacity building create enabling conditions for member countries and postal operators to advance objectives related to infrastructure, trade, inclusion, resilience and sustainability. The Dubai Business Plan makes these connections explicit by linking planned IB work to relevant SDGs and targets.



UPU MISSION

To stimulate the lasting development of efficient and accessible universal postal services of quality in order to facilitate communication between the inhabitants of the world by:

- Guaranteeing the free circulation of postal items over a single postal territory composed of interconnected networks;
- Encouraging the adoption of fair common standards and the use of technology;
- Ensuring cooperation and interaction among stakeholders;
- Promoting effective technical cooperation;
- Ensuring the satisfaction of customers' changing needs.

POSTAL VISION 2030

GOVERNMENTS

should decrease gaps in postal development through increased investment and focused policies, and promote the use of the postal network for socio-economic development.

REGULATORS

should harmonize and enhance the sector's regulatory framework.

OPERATORS

should seek to enhance their performance through diversified strategies and operational improvements.

OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

should pursue integration into the sector by engaging with traditional stakeholders, and vice versa, including through greater market openness and partnerships.

UPU STRATEGY 2026–2029

(Dubai cycle)

GOAL 1

LEVERAGING THE SINGLE POSTAL TERRITORY

GOAL 2

STRENGTHENING THE GLOBAL POSTAL ECOSYSTEM THROUGH INNOVATION FOR FACILITATING COMMUNICATION AND TRADE

GOAL 3

ENABLING POSTAL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH ENHANCED COOPERATION AND REGIONALIZATION

INTEGRATING THE SDGs INTO THE DUBAI BUSINESS PLAN

EMBEDDED SDG ALIGNMENT IN THE DUBAI BUSINESS PLAN

The Dubai Business Plan translates the UPU Strategy 2026–2029 into a set of domain work proposals (DWPs). Each DWP represents a defined area of work through which the strategy is implemented, setting out the relevant strategic objectives and outcomes, planned deliverables, activities and results, key performance indicators, delivery schedule and resource requirements.

Within this framework, SDG alignment is incorporated from the outset. Each DWP identifies the SDGs and, where applicable, the specific SDG targets with which the proposed work is aligned. This means that the relationship between the UPU's planned activities and the 2030 Agenda is built directly into programme design, rather than being mapped retrospectively after implementation has begun.

This approach makes the connection between UPU planning and the 2030 Agenda more explicit and allows SDG alignment to be considered alongside expected results and financial resources throughout the 2026–2029 cycle.

PURPOSE OF SDG ANALYSIS FOR THE DUBAI CYCLE

This report has five main purposes:

- Identify the SDGs explicitly linked to the DWPs and the breadth of those linkages;
- Review how financial resources are distributed across the SDGs;
- Examine funding-based patterns of SDG alignment across the IB directorates;
- Provide an overall comparison of direction, relative to the Abidjan cycle;
- Establish a baseline for future reporting on implementation and results.

The analysis is deliberately scoped to the work of the IB as set out in the Dubai Business Plan. It therefore does not assess the wider contribution of the global postal sector or the independent activities of individual member countries, designated operators or other postal sector players.

METHODOLOGY

METHODOLOGY

In creating this report, the following approach was adopted:

Definition of the Domain Work Proposal (DWP) portfolio: The analysis covers the 39 DWPs of the Dubai Business Plan;

Identification of SDG and target linkages: For each DWP, the SDGs and targets listed therein were recorded;

Linkage of SDG alignment to financial resources: DWP resource data was combined with the SDG allocation weights used in the budget mapping. Funding from the regular budget, voluntary contributions and sales or other sources was included in the calculation. Only voluntary contributions linked with the Provident Scheme and regular budget depreciation costs – both under DWP 31 – were excluded from the calculation, because they are purely operational in nature and not linked to the direct achievement of SDG-related programme activities captured by this analysis. It must be noted that the resulting analysis shows resource alignment, not actual expenditure or impact;

Review of overall patterns: The results were analyzed by SDG, the resources allocated to it and the internal IB directorate responsible for the DWP, to identify the main alignment patterns;

Establishment of a baseline for future reporting: The analysis provides a baseline to assess implementation and results as the Dubai cycle progresses.

LIMITATIONS

This analysis is inherently limited to the work to be conducted under the Dubai Business Plan. It does not measure the contribution to the SDGs of the global postal sector as a whole or the independent activities of member countries, designated operators, regulators or other postal sector players.

The absence of such activities from this analysis should not be interpreted as a lack of relevance to the SDGs or as understating the contribution made by the global postal sector in achieving the SDGs.

This distinction is particularly important for external interpretation. Across the sector, postal actors undertake substantial SDG-relevant work in areas such as universal service, logistics, financial and digital inclusion, social services, resilience and climate action. Unless those activities form part of a DWP under the Dubai Business Plan, they fall outside the scope of this report.

The results of this report should not be used as a proxy for the total contribution of the global postal sector to achievement of the SDGs.[1]

This report is an alignment analysis, not a priority-setting exercise or an impact assessment. It shows where the Dubai Business Plan is formally linked to the SDGs, along with the planned financial resources associated with those linkages. A greater alignment or share of resources does not in itself indicate greater strategic importance, effectiveness or attributable progress towards an SDG.

Within the Dubai Business Plan, a single DWP may be aligned with several SDGs and targets, so DWP coverage percentages do not add up to 100%. Conversely, the absence of an SDG from a DWP's formal alignment field does not necessarily mean that individual activities have no relevance to that goal. For consistency, this report uses the formal mappings approved by the 28th UPU Congress through the Dubai Business Plan and does not add further linkages.

The resource figures represent planned allocations rather than actual expenditure. Where a DWP is linked to more than one SDG, the shares reflect the analytical allocation weights used in the budget mapping. Similarly, the analysis by directorate shows portfolio patterns rather than exclusive responsibility, as several DWPs involve input from more than one part of the IB.

1 The IB is working on a global postal sector SDG database as part of its work on sustainable development, with input from certain member countries and restricted unions. Further details can be found in the section "Reflections on the future" on page 26.

OUTCOMES OF THE SDG MAPPING

UPU–SDG MATRIX BY GOAL

The 39 DWPs are explicitly aligned, to varying degrees, with 11 of the 17 SDGs (figure 1).

Goal 9 (Industry, innovation and infrastructure) is the most widely represented, tracking against 27 DWPs (69%). Goal 17 (Partnerships for the Goals) is linked to 20 DWPs (51%), while Goal 8 (Decent work and economic growth) is linked to 18 DWPs (46%).

Thereafter, Goal 10 (Reduced inequalities) is linked to eight DWPs (21%); Goals 1 (No poverty) and 11 (Sustainable cities and communities) are each linked to six DWPs (15%); and Goal 12 (Responsible consumption and production) is linked to five DWPs (13%). Goals 5 (Gender equality) and 16 (Peace, justice and strong institutions) are each linked to three DWPs (8%), while Goals 2 (Zero hunger) and 13 (Climate action) are each linked to one DWP (3%). Goals 3, 4, 6, 7, 14 and 15 are not explicitly listed in the formal alignment fields of the DWPs.

Taken together, this distribution points to three dominant themes in the portfolio: infrastructure and innovation, economic participation and partnerships. The remaining alignments broaden that picture to include inclusion, sustainability and institutional capacity.

SDG01 Goal 1 (no poverty)

SDG02 Goal 2 (zero hunger)

SDG05 Goal 5 (gender equality)

SDG08 Goal 8 (decent work)

SDG09 Goal 9 (infrastructure and innovation)

SDG10 Goal 10 (reduced inequalities)

SDG11 Goal 11 (sustainable cities)

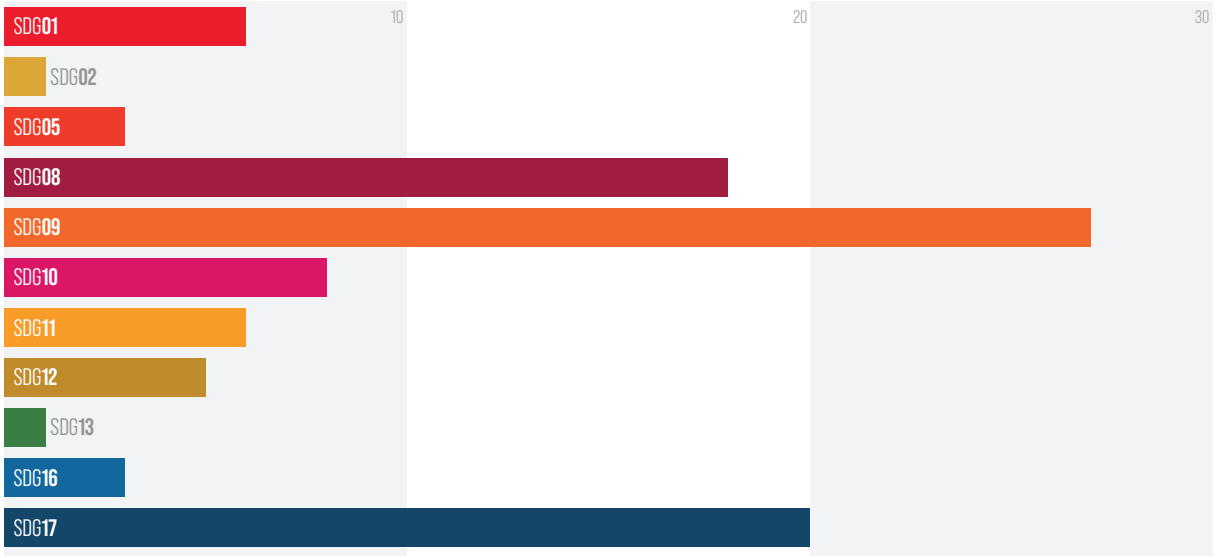
SDG12 Goal 12 (responsible consumption)

SDG13 Goal 13 (climate action)

SDG16 Goal 16 (justice and strong institutions)

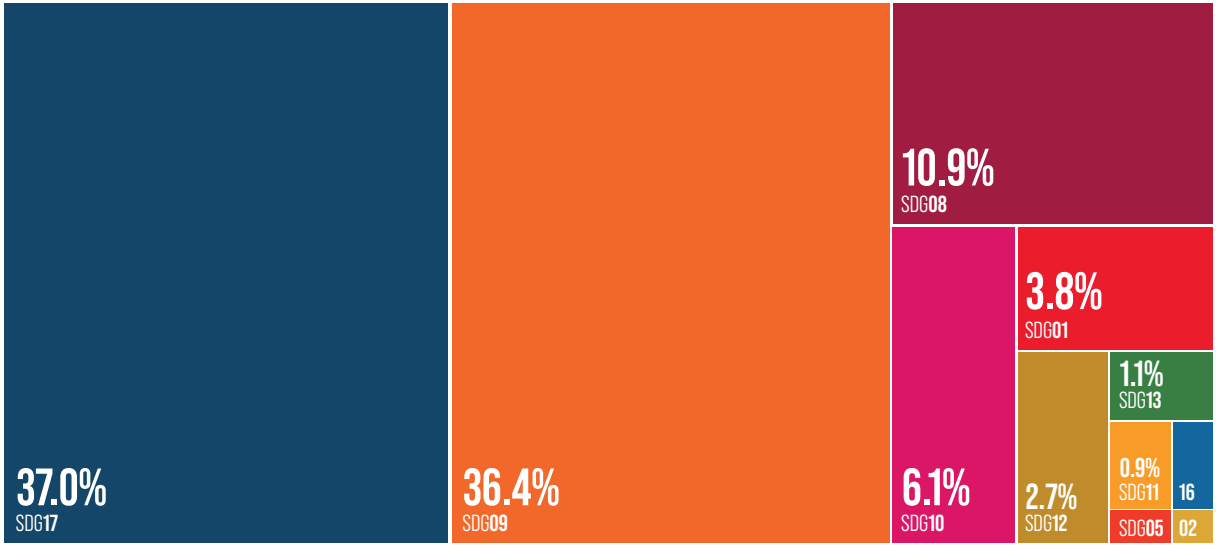
SDG17 Goal 17 (partnerships)

Figure 1: **Alignment of the DWPs for the Dubai cycle with the SDGs**



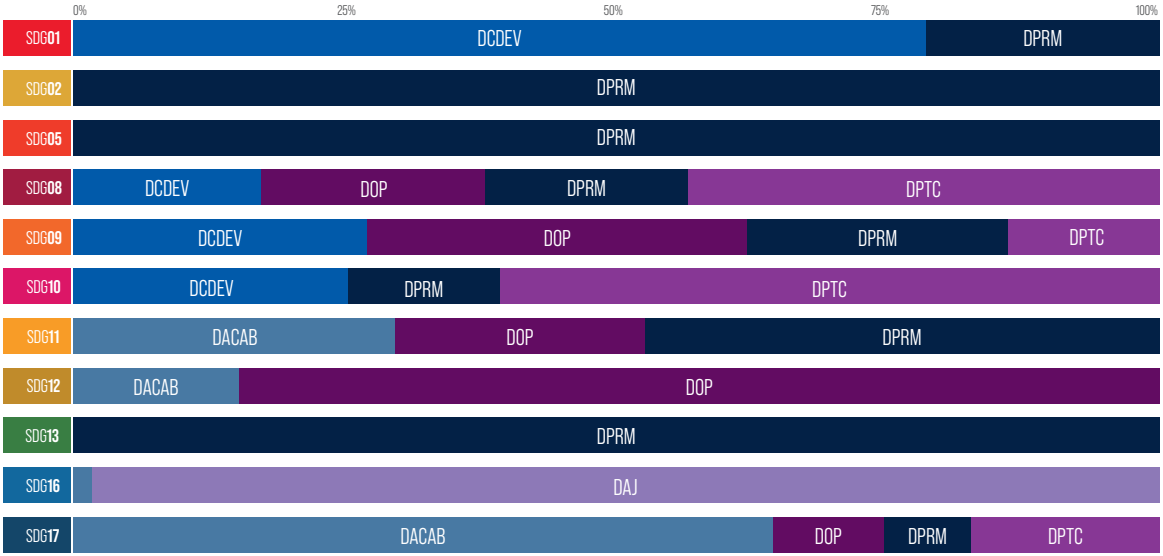
Note: Some DWPs track against multiple SDGs. Interpretation: 27 of the 39 DWPs have an identified linkage to SDG09.
Source: UPU Dubai Business Plan 2026–2029

Figure 2: **Resource allocation by SDG – share of mapped resources included in the analysis**



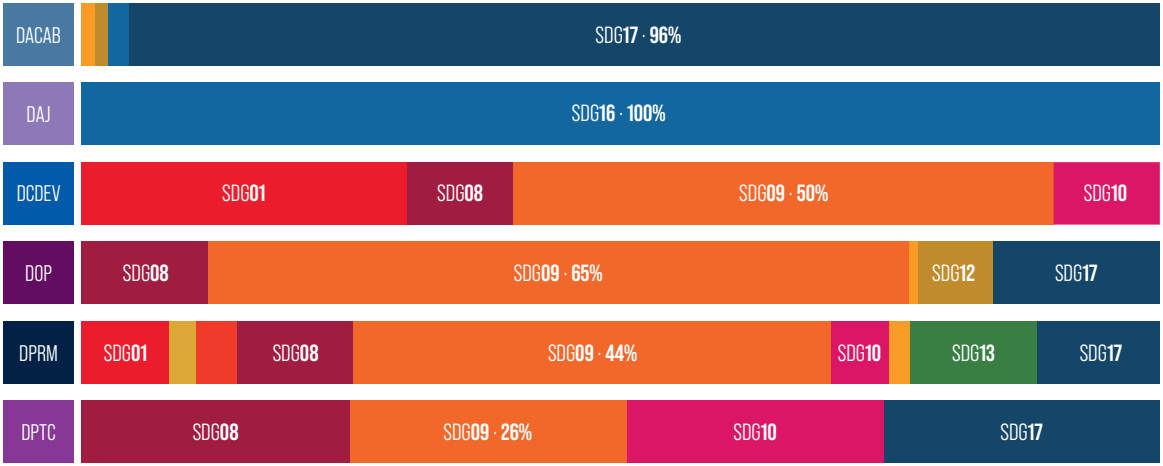
Source: UPU Dubai Business Plan 2026–2029 and associated DWP resource allocations
Note: SDG16 accounts for 0.6%, SDG05 for 0.4% and SDG02 for 0.2% of mapped resources.

Figure 3: **Contribution towards achieving the SDGs by IB directorate – funding-based view**



Source: UPU Dubai Business Plan 2026–2029 and associated DWPs

Figure 4: **SDG focus of IB directorates – funding-based view**



Source: UPU Dubai Business Plan 2026–2029 and associated DWPs

DACAB: Administration and Cabinet Directorate | **DAJ:** Legal Affairs Directorate | **DCDEV:** Development and Cooperation Directorate | **DOP:** Postal Operations Directorate | **DPRM:** Policy, Regulation and Markets Directorate | **DPTC:** Postal Technology Centre Directorate

SDG01 Goal 1 (no poverty)
SDG02 Goal 2 (zero hunger)
SDG05 Goal 5 (gender equality)
SDG08 Goal 8 (decent work)
SDG09 Goal 9 (infrastructure and innovation)
SDG10 Goal 10 (reduced inequalities)
SDG11 Goal 11 (sustainable cities)
SDG12 Goal 12 (responsible consumption)
SDG13 Goal 13 (climate action)
SDG16 Goal 16 (justice and strong institutions)
SDG17 Goal 17 (partnerships)

UPU–SDG MATRIX BY RESOURCE ALLOCATION

Figure 2 complements the coverage analysis by showing the financial weight associated with each SDG across the mapped resources of the Dubai Business Plan.

The largest share is aligned with Goal 17 (Partnerships for the Goals) at 37.0% of mapped resources, closely followed by Goal 9 (Industry, innovation and infrastructure) at 36.4%. Together, these two goals account for 73.4% of mapped financial resources.

The next largest share relates to Goal 8 (Decent work and economic growth) at 10.9%, followed by Goal 10 (Reduced inequalities) at 6.1% and Goal 1 (No poverty) at 3.8%. Goal 12 accounts for 2.7%, Goal 13 for 1.1%, Goal 11 for 0.9%, Goal 16 for 0.6%, Goal 5 for 0.4% and Goal 2 for 0.2%. The pattern shows that the largest financial allocations are linked to partnerships, infrastructure and innovation, while the remaining resources are distributed across economic participation, inclusion, sustainability and institutional capacity.

The concentration of resources reflects the scale and composition of the underlying work, not the eventual development impact of an SDG. In practice, many resources mapped to Goals 17 and 9 also enable trade, inclusion, resilience, development cooperation and access to services.

The coverage and resource views are broadly consistent at the top of the portfolio: Goals 17 and 9 occupy the first two positions (with the order reversed for resources, relative to coverage), while Goals 8 and 10 rank third and fourth respectively. Differences further down the ranking mainly reflect the scale and resource intensity of the DWPs mapped to each goal.

Taken together, figures 1 and 2 show a consistent pattern, whereby Goals 9 and 17 occupy the two leading positions in terms of both DWP coverage and resource allocation, with Goal 8 ranking third and Goal 10 fourth under both measures.

UPU–SDG RESOURCE ALIGNMENT BY IB DIRECTORATE

The resource mapping can also be viewed by IB directorate, showing how the composition of each portfolio shapes its SDG profile. This adds an institutional perspective to the overall results, without implying that any directorate has exclusive responsibility for a given SDG.

Figures 3 and 4 present complementary views of the same mapping. Figure 3 shows how each directorate contributes to the resources aligned with individual SDGs, while figure 4 shows the SDG composition of each directorate's own mapped resources.

Since several DWPs draw on more than one directorate of the IB, the charts should be read as portfolio patterns rather than measures of performance or exclusive ownership.

The breakdown by directorate shows that the UPU's overall SDG alignment is built from distinct but complementary areas of work.

Goal 9 is particularly prominent across the operational and policy portfolios: it represents around 65% of the mapped resources of the Postal Operations Directorate, 50% of those of the Development and Cooperation Directorate and 44% for the Policy, Regulation and Markets Directorate.

The Postal Technology Centre Directorate has a more balanced profile, with its resources distributed broadly across Goals 8, 9, 10 and 17. This reinforces the cross-cutting importance of infrastructure, innovation and interoperability across the Dubai Business Plan.

Other directorates show more specialized patterns. For the Administration and Cabinet Directorate, mapped resources are concentrated overwhelmingly under Goal 17, reflecting the enabling and institutional functions that support delivery of the wider UPU programme, while the mapped resources of the Legal Affairs Directorate are associated with Goal 16.

The DCDEV combines infrastructure with poverty reduction, economic participation and reduced inequalities, while the DPRM has the broadest spread of alignments, spanning infrastructure, sustainability, inclusion, partnerships and other development objectives.

Taken together, figures 3 and 4 show that the UPU's SDG profile does not arise from a single programme or organizational unit. Instead, it is the combined result of operational infrastructure, development cooperation, policy and research, institutional support, legal functions and technology-related work.

The directorate-based analysis should therefore be read as showing how different parts of the IB contribute to the overall pattern, rather than assigning ownership of individual SDGs.

OVERALL DIRECTION OF SDG ALIGNMENT: ABIDJAN AND DUBAI CYCLES

Analysis of the Abidjan and Dubai cycles provides an overview of the direction in which SDG alignment has evolved, but the cycles are not directly comparable as a performance series. The Abidjan assessment retrospectively mapped 133 work proposals, whereas the Dubai cycle evaluation is based on 39 consolidated DWPs with SDG and target linkages defined from the outset (figure 5).

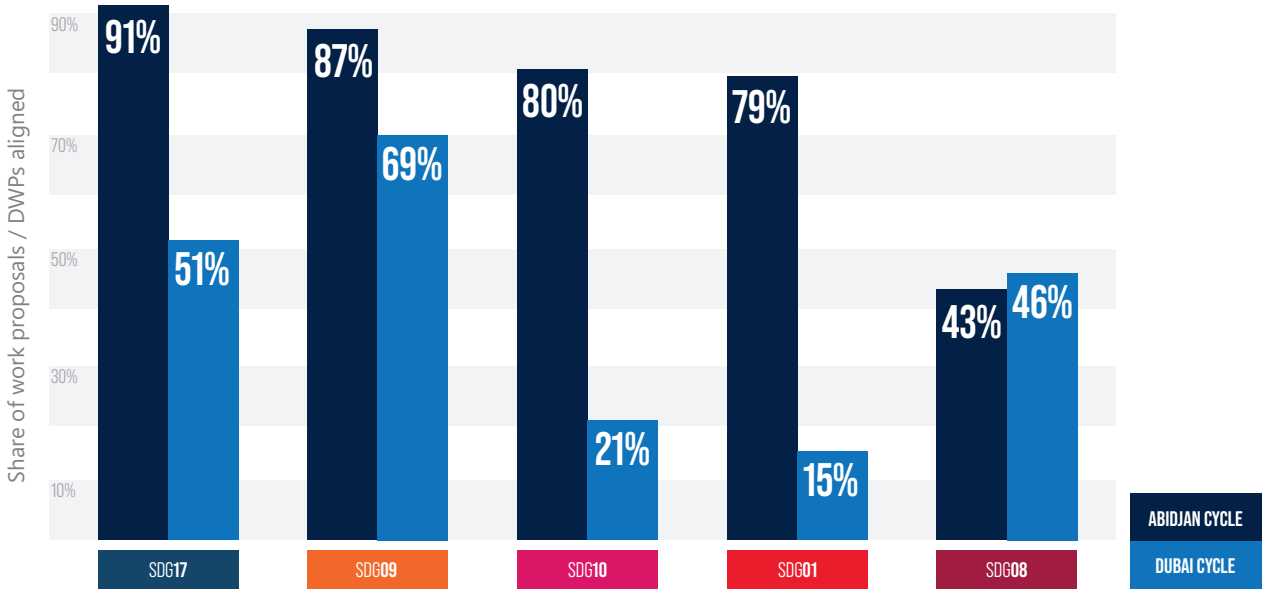
Under the assessment of the Abidjan cycle, the broadest work proposal alignments were Goal 17 (91%), Goal 9 (87%), Goal 10 (80%) and Goal 1 (79%), with Goal 8 ranked fifth (43%).

In the Dubai cycle, Goal 9 has the broadest explicit alignment (69%), followed by Goal 17 (51%) and Goal 8 (46%). Goals 10 and 1 remain important, but are linked to a smaller and more specific set of DWPs.

Distribution of the budget also reveals a stronger concentration around Goals 17 and 9 in the mapping for the Dubai cycle. For the Abidjan cycle, 29% of total resource allocation was associated with Goal 17 and 19% with Goal 9. Under the mapping used in this report for the Dubai cycle, the corresponding shares are 37.0% and 36.4%, together accounting for 73.4% of mapped resources.

Other objectives, including trade, inclusion, resilience and development cooperation, continue to be supported through the underlying DWPs.

Figure 5: **Comparison of selected SDG alignment percentages in the mappings for the Abidjan and Dubai cycles**



Source: UPU IB Sustainable Development Goals Report 2023 (Abidjan cycle) and UPU Dubai Business Plan 2026–2029.
Note: The percentages are not directly comparable as a performance series, owing to changes in the unit of analysis and mapping methodology.

Under the assessment of the Abidjan cycle, the broadest work proposal alignments were Goal 17 (91%) and Goal 9 (87%). In the Dubai cycle, Goal 9 has the broadest explicit alignment (69%), followed by Goal 17 (51%).

KEY AREAS OF SDG ALIGNMENT

The quantitative results point to a set of recurring development functions across the Dubai Business Plan, namely international cooperation, interoperable infrastructure, economic participation, inclusion and resilience. The sections below explain why these areas matter beyond the internal work programme and how the UPU's mandate can create enabling conditions for member countries and postal sector stakeholders.

PRIMARILY CONTRIBUTING TO AND STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS FOR SUSTAINABLE OUTCOMES

Goal 17 (Partnerships for the Goals) reflects a defining feature of the international postal system, specifically that reliable cross-border services are dependent on cooperation among governments, designated operators, regulators, restricted unions, international organizations and other partners. The UPU provides the institutional platform through which these stakeholders can agree on common rules, share knowledge, coordinate technical solutions and mobilize support.

This partnership function is embedded across the work programme, from physical services and logistics to quality of service, trade inclusion, data, cooperatives, cyber resilience and development cooperation. By turning cooperation into common systems, shared expertise and coordinated action, the UPU can help to strengthen trade, capacity, service resilience and access across the global network.

STRENGTHENING INFRASTRUCTURE, INNOVATION AND ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION

Goal 9 (Industry, innovation and infrastructure) relates to the importance of the postal network as both physical and digital infrastructure. Transport and delivery networks, addressing, customs and security systems, technical standards, data exchange, digital tools and cyber resilience all depend on interoperability across borders. Through standards, technical solutions and cooperation, the UPU helps to create the conditions for postal networks to connect people and businesses to markets and services.

This infrastructure function becomes increasingly important as postal services become more digital and data-dependent. Work on digital transformation, technology and data supports modernization, while technical cooperation helps countries strengthen their capacity to adopt and use common systems. The result is an enabling platform for e-commerce, cross-border trade, digital inclusion and resilient service delivery.

Goal 8 (Decent work and economic growth) is reflected in the postal network's role in enabling economic participation through trade, e-commerce, logistics, payments and business development. The UPU's work on trade inclusion, financial inclusion, postal financial services, logistics and development cooperation contributes to creating more accessible channels for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and underserved groups to participate in domestic and cross-border markets.

ENSURING INCLUSION AND RESILIENCE

Goals 10 (Reduced inequalities) and 1 (No poverty) bring the inclusion dimension into focus. Alignment with these goals is most relevant where the UPU helps countries to address gaps in postal development and access and to enhance both postal and societal resilience. Regionalization, technical assistance, emergency support, trade inclusion, financial inclusion and postal financial services can strengthen the capacity of countries and communities to connect to markets, financial services and essential networks. Postal resilience also has strong synergies with Goals 5 (Gender equality) and 13 (Climate action).

Data and analysis reinforce this work by helping to identify disparities and target assistance. Together with standards, cooperation mechanisms and technical support, these functions can strengthen the postal systems through which member countries and operators pursue broader inclusion and resilience objectives.

KEY SDG TARGET AREAS AND MEASUREMENT LINKS

The DWP mappings also identify the specific targets – and, in several cases, indicators – linked to the main SDGs. The table below combines the principal target areas reflected in the DWPs with relevant measurement links.

This is particularly important for Goal 9, for which the UPU has been recognized as a partner agency for indicator 9.1.2.

SDG	Relevant target areas reflected in DWPs	Measurement/indicator links in DWP mappings
GOAL 17 Partnerships for the Goals	Financial resources for developing countries (17.3); technology and knowledge-sharing (17.6 and 17.8); capacity building (17.9); multilateral trading system and exports of developing countries (17.10 and 17.11); policy coherence and partnerships (17.13, 17.14, 17.16 and 17.17).	Volume of remittances as a proportion of total gross domestic product (17.3.2).
GOAL 9 Industry, innovation and infrastructure	Quality, reliable and resilient infrastructure, including support to developing countries (9.1 and 9.a); access of small enterprises to financial services and markets (9.3); sustainable infrastructure and efficient use of resources (9.4); scientific research and innovation (9.5); access to information and communications technology (9.c).	The UPU is a partner agency for indicator 9.1.2, relating to passenger and freight volumes by mode of transport.
GOAL 8 Decent work and economic growth	Economic growth and productivity (8.1 and 8.2); growth of MSMEs (8.3); global resource efficiency in consumption and production (8.4); decent work for all (8.5); access to banking, insurance and financial services (8.10); aid for trade (8.a); youth employment (8.b).	Bank branches and automatic teller machines per 100,000 adults (8.10.1); proportion of adults with a bank or mobile-money account (8.10.2); national youth employment strategy (8.b.1).
GOAL 10 Reduced inequalities	Income growth of the bottom 40% of the population (10.1); social, economic and political inclusion of all (10.2); official development assistance and financial flows to countries most in need (10.b); transaction costs of migrant remittances (10.c).	Total resource flows for development (10.b.1); remittance costs as a proportion of the amount remitted (10.c.1).
GOAL 1 No poverty	Eradicating extreme poverty and halving poverty (1.1 and 1.2); access to basic and financial services (1.4); resilience to economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters (1.5); mobilization of resources for programmes to end poverty (1.a).	Proportion of population living below the international poverty line (1.1.1); proportion of population with access to basic services (1.4.1).

Source: UPU Dubai Business Plan 2026–2029.

CONTRIBUTION AND COLLABORATION TO ACHIEVE OTHER SDGS

Beyond the SDGs examined in greater detail above, the Dubai Business Plan contains specific and formal links to Goals 2, 5, 11, 12, 13 and 16. These areas illustrate the relevance of postal systems and of the UPU's enabling mandate in a wider development context, even where the formal DWP footprint is smaller.

Goal 5 (Gender equality) is reflected in work on trade inclusion, mainstreaming the SDGs and postal financial services, including attention to gender gaps in access to postal, e-commerce and financial services. Goal 13 (Climate action) is linked to climate resilience and mitigation, climate finance, emissions measurement, clean technologies and greener delivery. In both cases, the UPU can support common approaches, knowledge exchange and capacity building while implementation takes place through member countries, designated operators and partners.

Goal 11 (Sustainable cities and communities) appears across the UPU's work on security, trade inclusion, sustainability, philately and last-mile delivery, reflecting the role of postal networks in connecting communities and supporting resilient service delivery. Goal 12 (Responsible consumption and production) is linked to physical services, quality of service, operations and accounting, philately and the work of the Postal Operations Council, whereby resource efficiency and more sustainable production and consumption practices can be encouraged across postal activities.

By turning cooperation into common systems, shared expertise and coordinated action, the UPU can help to strengthen trade, capacity, service resilience and access across the global network.

Goal 16 (Peace, justice and strong institutions) is linked to philately, the UPU dispute settlement mechanism and legal capacity building, reflecting the Union's rules-based functions and support for institutional capacity. Goal 2 (Zero hunger) is formally linked to postal financial services. Although these links are more specific, together they show that the relevance of the Dubai Business Plan to the SDGs extends beyond its most prominent goals and touches the social, environmental and institutional dimensions of sustainable development.

THE SDGs IN AN EVOLVING UNITED NATIONS CONTEXT

The Dubai cycle is taking place at a time when the UN is renewing its attention to progress on the SDGs and to how the multilateral system supports them. This wider UN context is relevant to the UPU as a specialized agency and to the implementation of the Dubai Business Plan.

ACCELERATING PROGRESS TOWARDS 2030

The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2026 records progress since 2015 in areas such as access to clean water, electricity, health care and digital connectivity. However, overall progress remains uneven and insufficient, with issues such as conflict, slow economic growth, climate change, debt pressures and low official development assistance continuing to affect implementation. With less than five years remaining until 2030, the report calls for faster action and wider use of solutions that have already shown results.

UN priorities include greater investment, stronger international cooperation, wider access to technology and data, a faster energy transition, gender equality and renewed commitments to peace. The postal sector can support several of these areas through infrastructure, trade and logistics, digital and financial access, resilient service delivery, data and partnerships. The Dubai Business Plan therefore contributes to a broader UN effort to accelerate implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

PACT FOR THE FUTURE AND THE GLOBAL DIGITAL COMPACT

At the Summit of the Future in September 2024, UN member states adopted the Pact for the Future, together with the Global Digital Compact and the Declaration on Future Generations. The Pact places sustainable development alongside peace and security, climate change, human rights, financing, digital cooperation and reform of global governance.

The Global Digital Compact sets out a framework for international digital cooperation, including action to close digital, data and innovation divides and to promote safe and inclusive digital transformation. For the UPU, it is relevant to work on digital transformation, AI-enabled data analysis, cyber resilience, interoperability, trade inclusion and partnerships. It also highlights the importance of ensuring that technological change supports inclusion and sustainable development.

FINANCING FOR DEVELOPMENT AND PARTNERSHIPS

Financing for development remains a central part of the 2030 Agenda. The Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development, held in Spain in 2025, saw the adoption of the Sevilla Commitment, addressing investment, debt, the international financial architecture and the ability of developing countries to mobilize resources for sustainable development.

This is relevant to the Dubai Business Plan because implementation draws on several sources of funding, including the regular budget, voluntary contributions and sales of services. In addition, extrabudgetary resources include funds that are explicitly tied to the SDGs. Resource mobilization and partnerships therefore support a range of activities across development cooperation, sustainability, inclusion, digital transformation and other areas. The ability to secure and use these resources effectively will influence the scale at which some planned activities can be delivered.

UN 2.0 AND UN80: A FUTURE-READY UN SYSTEM

The United Nations is reviewing how it operates. UN 2.0 focuses on five areas, namely data, digital capabilities, innovation, strategic foresight and behavioural science. The aim is to strengthen the way in which UN entities use these capabilities in support of member states and the SDGs.

The UN80 Initiative, launched in 2025, places additional emphasis on effectiveness, coherence, mandate delivery and institutional efficiency across the UN system. For the UPU, these efforts are relevant to the results-based approach of the Dubai Business Plan, its clearer outcomes and key performance indicators, and its work on data, digital transformation, innovation, partnerships and resource mobilization.

REFLECTIONS ON THE FUTURE: FURTHER EMBEDDING THE 2030 AGENDA

FROM ALIGNMENT TO EVIDENCE OF IMPLEMENTATION

With formal SDG linkages built into the Dubai Business Plan, the next step is to systematically connect planned alignment with evidence of implementation. DWP results and key performance indicators for planned outcomes provide an existing basis for doing so through the UPU's strategy implementation processes.

Future reporting can move beyond mapping alone by distinguishing between what was planned, what resources were aligned, what results were achieved and what evidence exists of a broader contribution to sustainable development.

Complementing this IB-focused analysis, work is also in progress under the Dubai Business Plan to develop a global repository of postal sustainable development actions by member countries and designated operators. The proposed postal sustainable development knowledge centre would make sector experience more accessible and searchable, including through source-grounded AI-enabled tools for comparing and synthesizing relevant initiatives. Subject to funding and resource mobilization, the development and piloting of this work could provide a useful future evidence base for understanding and showcasing the wider contribution of the postal sector to SDG implementation beyond the scope of this report.

PARTNERSHIPS, DATA, INNOVATION AND RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

Delivery will also depend on cross-cutting enablers such as partnerships, data, innovation, technical expertise and resource mobilization. These capabilities affect not only whether individual activities are implemented, but also the scale, quality and reach of the results that they can produce.

Tracking how these enablers support implementation would add useful context to future SDG reporting, particularly for activities that depend on voluntary contributions, extrabudgetary resources or collaboration with external partners.

Beyond financing its own activities, the UPU also plays a role in facilitating access to external finance and resources for postal sector initiatives.

By supporting project identification, technical preparation, partnerships and engagement with financing institutions, the UPU can help member countries and designated operators develop investment-ready projects. This approach offers opportunities to mobilize resources beyond the Union's own budget and to contribute to sustainable postal infrastructure and inclusive service delivery.

TOWARDS 2030 AND FUTURE STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

The Dubai cycle covers the final years leading up to 2030. Evidence from implementation can therefore serve two purposes, namely to show where planned SDG alignment is translating into measurable results and to inform future strategy development by identifying where resources, delivery arrangements or partnerships may need to evolve.


1 NO POVERTY
2 ZERO HUNGER
3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING
4 QUALITY EDUCATION
5 GENDER EQUALITY
6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION
13 CLIMATE ACTION
14 LIFE BELOW WATER
15 LIFE ON LAND
16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS
17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS
1 NO POVERTY
8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH
9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES
11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES
12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION
13 CLIMATE ACTION
3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING
4 QUALITY EDUCATION
5 GENDER EQUALITY
6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION
7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY
8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH
15 LIFE ON LAND
16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS
17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS
1 NO POVERTY
2 ZERO HUNGER
3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING
10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES
11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES
12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION
13 CLIMATE ACTION
14 LIFE BELOW WATER
15 LIFE ON LAND


7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY
8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH
9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES
11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES
12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION
2 ZERO HUNGER
3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING
4 QUALITY EDUCATION
5 GENDER EQUALITY
6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION
7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY
14 LIFE BELOW WATER
15 LIFE ON LAND
16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS
17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS
1 NO POVERTY
2 ZERO HUNGER
9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES
11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES
12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION
13 CLIMATE ACTION
14 LIFE BELOW WATER
4 QUALITY EDUCATION
5 GENDER EQUALITY
6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION
7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY
8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH
9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS
17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS
1 NO POVERTY
2 ZERO HUNGER
3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING
4 QUALITY EDUCATION

SOURCES

Universal Postal Union

CA C 3 2026.1–Doc 4 and associated addenda – Dubai Business Plan and associated domain work proposals 2026–2029

Congress resolution C 16/2025 – UPU Strategy and draft Dubai Business Plan 2026–2029

UPU IB Sustainable Development Goals Report 2023: Assessing the alignment of the UPU strategy for 2021–2025 with the UN Sustainable Development Goals

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs

The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2026 (July 2026)

United Nations General Assembly

Pact for the Future, resolution A/RES/79/1 (2024), including the Global Digital Compact and the Declaration on Future Generations

UN80 Initiative, resolution A/RES/79/318 (2025)

Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, resolution A/RES/70/1 (2015)

United Nations

Sevilla Commitment, Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (2025)

Our Common Agenda, Policy Brief 11: UN 2.0 – Forward-thinking culture and cutting-edge skills for better United Nations system impact (2023)

@UPU_UN
@UNIVERSALPOSTALUNION
@UNIVERSAL_POSTAL_UNION
@UNIVERSAL-POSTAL-UNION

WWW.UPU.INT

UNIVERSAL POSTAL UNION
International Bureau
Weltpoststrasse 4
3015 BERNE
SWITZERLAND

Tel: +41 31 350 31 11
E-mail: strategy@upu.int

UPU UNIVERSAL POSTAL UNION