



CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF QUALITY

UPU Quality of Service Fund 2001–2021



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POSTAL
UNION





IN THE SPIRIT OF COOPERATION:

Message from the UPU Director General

As the world has evolved, so QSF-supported projects have grown in complexity and cost. To enable Posts to keep step with the ever-increasing pace of innovation, a significant proportion of funds has been granted to projects relating to digitalization of postal services and e-commerce. By building the capacities of DOs in beneficiary countries, the QSF has made a remarkable contribution to the development of the global postal network and to sustainable development at large.

As the digital and technological revolution drives the post-COVID economic recovery, Posts need to be prepared not only to seize new opportunities, but also to remain relevant and retain customers in the face of ever-increasing competition. In this regard, quality of service is more important than ever. The QSF mechanism, the renewal of member countries' funding commitments, and the refinement of procedures for the selection and evaluation of projects are central to further improving the interoperability and security of the postal sector in a sustainable way.

The volume of investment in the QSF is indicative of the trust placed in it as a unique funding platform designed to improve the quality of postal services around the world. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all donors, partners and operators that have participated in this initiative to date, and I encourage others to actively support and use the QSF.

Only by working together can we achieve truly universal quality of service.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. Hussein', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Bishar A. Hussein
Director General

The establishment of the Universal Postal Union in 1874, to ensure an uninterrupted and inclusive postal service, was an early example of modern-day multilateralism. And to this day, cooperation and mutual support are intrinsic to the delivery of the postal mandate and the universal service obligation. But two decades ago, it became clear that a special support mechanism was needed to ensure that the evolving standards of postal exchange could be effectively met by all member countries. This is how the Quality of Service Fund (QSF) was born – a direct reflection of the cooperative spirit at the heart of the UPU.

From its inception to the present day, this unique funding mechanism has channelled the funds required for the implementation of 898 projects in such areas as postal conveyance and delivery, tracking and tracing, global performance monitoring, postal security and disaster recovery. During my tenure as the Director General of the UPU International Bureau, from the start of the Doha cycle to the end of the Istanbul cycle, the QSF has allocated a total of 101.2 million USD for the implementation of 335 national projects and 13 global projects, benefiting 175 designated operators (DOs) across all continents.

MESSAGES FROM THE QSF BOARD

MICHAELA GEORGE,

Chair of QSF Board (United States)



"On behalf of the Board, I am pleased to contribute to the 20th special anniversary publication of the QSF. Launched in 2001, this historic fund continues to highlight the solidarity of UPU member countries in assisting those DOs that have insufficient capacity and funds to meet the demands of the global postal network. Beneficiaries of the fund continue to use it to finance projects that aim to improve quality of international mail processing and delivery through the purchase of software, equipment, vehicles and other services.

In addition, the Common Fund approved by Congress in 2016 has heralded a new top-down approach to solving complex supply chain issues that affect all member countries. This publication will highlight both the success of the QSF and opportunities that still exist to further enhance it.

I have served on the Board for six years, and as the current Chair, I am proud to continue the strong legacy of the United States as an active member of the QSF Board since its inception. The Board and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all present and past fellow Board members for their considerable contributions over the years. We also

appreciate the dedication and professionalism of the QSF team and other staff of the IB who have supported the work of the QSF.

Finally, I think it is apt to collectively thank all DOs for their ongoing support either as contributors to the fund or as beneficiaries who have implemented various important projects that have had a positive and significant impact on the postal network, the work of our employees and the service to our customers. We are clearly on the right path, and, while there is still a lot of work to be done, I am confident that with our continued dedication and determination we will reach our goals together."

SAMIA BZIWECH,

Vice-Chair of QSF Board (Tunisia)



"Working with the QSF has enabled me not only to broaden my professional experience, but also to collaborate in complete synergy with a cohesive team whose sole concern is to uphold the concepts of borderless postal quality and the single global postal territory. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all members of the Board of Trustees and all the QSF teams under the capable leadership of Ms Chum."

FELIPE TABILO,*Member of QSF Board (Chile)*

"As we mark the 20th anniversary of the QSF, I would like to express my appreciation for the professionalism and technical expertise of the QSF team, whose extensive efforts to foster international cooperation and improve quality of service have helped to facilitate and harmonize the work of the Board, of which I am a member. Under the capable leadership of Ms Chum, the QSF team has demonstrated a strong commitment to the member countries and an absolute determination to improve quality of service."

JIA RUDAN,*Member of QSF Board (China, People's Rep.)*

"Since its creation in 2001, the QSF has successfully funded hundreds of projects and helped to substantially improve the quality of mail services for the majority of UPU member countries. This is a marvellous achievement! I hope that, as a vital component of the Union's development cooperation system, the QSF will continue to develop structurally and methodologically and provide broader, more practical and more effective support to those UPU member countries that need it, while further improving the global postal network and the quality of mail services, strengthening the weakest links in the chain and increasing the commercial relevance of Posts."

HAMDI ABDELNABY,*Member of QSF Board (Egypt)*

"My very warmest congratulations to all on this milestone anniversary – 20 years of the QSF! My wholehearted appreciation to the IB and the QSF secretariat for making our jobs as Board members easier. Thank you, too, to my fellow Board members – both past and present – for their terms in office. I must say that it has been a great journey and learning experience for me. As a previous Chair of the QSF Board, my experience has been that of a well-functioning, supportive and collective Board that is not afraid of a challenge."

Particularly over the past cycle, we have worked to make the QSF simpler and more efficient, and to enhance benefits for member countries. The new QSF Common Fund model is an achievement to be proud of. I am convinced that we will continue to see the QSF do great things. Here is to the next 20 years!"

JEAN-PAUL FORCEVILLE,*Member of QSF Board (France)*

"The creation of the QSF, encouraged by France, is a shining example of postal multilateralism. It has brought numerous benefits to our global postal network. The Common Fund is a new advancement that will enable the network to continue adapting to market developments. Happy anniversary!"

SANDEEP KP,*Member of QSF Board (India)*

"Namaste from India!"

On the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the QSF, as a Board member who has been a part of this entire journey, let me on behalf of India applaud the efforts of all Board members, the Secretariat and national coordinators around the world, past and present, for their commitment to improving the quality of service of mail over the past two decades. Together, we have shown that breaking down geographical barriers makes the world a better place to live in!"

MIWA MUSHA,*Member of QSF Board (Japan)*

"What does the QSF stand for? For me, it is a symbol of the spirit of cooperation that the UPU has pursued throughout its history. When I joined the international postal business community around 20 years ago, the QSF had just been created to channel investment to those countries that needed it to improve the quality of their postal services. I wish to express my sincere appreciation to all those who have been involved in implementing this admirable, cooperative scheme."

MIKHAIL OVCHINNIKOV,*Member of QSF Board (Russian Federation)*

"On the eve of the 20th anniversary of the QSF, I would like to thank the Board members past and present for their expertise, professionalism and enthusiasm in improving the quality of postal services worldwide, and the IB for its unwavering support in handling DO applications and facilitating the work of the QSF. Although the postal business has changed dramatically over the past 20 years, the QSF has moved with the times to enable Posts to remain competitive on the mail and parcel delivery markets and to provide a dependable public service in all four corners of the world. May the QSF continue to develop and provide value through innovation for many years to come!"

AIMÉ THEUBET,*Member of QSF Board (Switzerland)*

"In the 20 years since its inception, the QSF has more than proved its worth, especially to developing and beneficiary countries. It is an indispensable tool for fostering postal solidarity and maintaining and improving quality of service and as such is vitally important to the global postal network. As a member of the QSF Board, it is my honour and privilege to serve this noble cause."

ARIYA THONGBAI,*Member of QSF Board (Thailand)*

"On the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the QSF, I would like to sincerely congratulate the QSF team for its considerable achievements. I am truly privileged to sit on the Board and to work closely with all QSF team members. It has been a wonderful journey and a resounding success, and long may it continue. Congratulations!"



During the COVID-19 pandemic, the QSF Board has remained committed to support DOs. In January 2021, at the peak of the second wave, it met remotely and approved funding for new projects.

CHAIRS OF THE QSF BOARD



2001/2002
Western Europe
FRANCE
Mr Dayan



2008/2009
Africa
BURKINA FASO
Mr Koutou



2015/2016
Western Europe
PORTUGAL
Ms Tavares



2002/2003
Africa
KENYA
Mr Omanga



2009/2010
Western Europe
FRANCE
Mr Hlavacek



2016/2017
Western Hemisphere
CHILE
Ms Hernandez



2003/2004
Western Hemisphere
USA
Ms Peak



2010/2011
Eastern Europe
RUSSIAN FEDERATION
Ms Orlova



2016/2017
Western Hemisphere
CHILE
Ms Hernandez



2004/2005
Asia-Pacific Region
INDIA
Mr Buschan



2011/2012
Western Hemisphere
USA
Ms Berrocal McClung



2016/2017
Western Hemisphere
CHILE
Ms Hernandez



2005/2006
Western Europe
PORTUGAL
Mr Silva e Sá



2012/2013
Africa
NIGERIA
Mr Debegbudu



2017/2018
Southern Asia and Oceania
AUSTRALIA
Mr McNeice



2006/2007
Western Hemisphere
BRAZIL
Mr Pohren



2013/2014
Western Europe
SWITZERLAND
Mr Epiney



2018/2020
Africa
EGYPT
Mr Hamdi



2007/2008
Asia-Pacific Region
JAPAN
Mr Suzuki



2014/2015
Asia-Pacific Region
INDIA
Mr Thakur Subhash Sinha



2020/2022
Western Hemisphere
USA
Ms George

THE HISTORY OF THE QUALITY OF SERVICE FUND

The origins of the UPU QSF date to before the Beijing Congress in 1999, when the terminal dues model was at a turning point, with countries in the target and transitional systems being converged into a single system over the long term.

The roadmap for the convergence spanned more than five UPU cycles. One of its key strategies was to improve the performance of the international mail service. To this end, the UPU members submitted a proposal to the Beijing Congress for the creation of a unique funding mechanism to implement projects aimed at aligning all countries with global standards. The idea was to leverage the terminal dues platform in such a way as to enable funds to flow from industrialized countries to less developed regions. Thus, in 2001, following extensive work on its specific rules and procedures, and almost two years after its official approval by the Beijing Congress, the QSF was born. In the five cycles since its creation, the QSF has proven to be one of the most reliable existing instruments for financing improvements to quality of service.

As of 30 June 2021, a total of 1,048 QSF projects for the benefit of 175 DOs have been registered, of which 898 have been approved by the QSF Board. A total of 660 of those projects have been fully implemented in compliance with QSF rules and procedures.

Choy Han Chum, who is in charge of the QSF and previously worked as a QSF national coordinator in Malaysia, says “I truly believe that the QSF is one of the UPU’s best instruments for implementing new quality of service projects”.

EVOLUTION OF THE QSF

In the early days, industrialized UPU member countries raised concerns about the mandatory nature of QSF contributions, with some claiming that it was a “tax on their services”. However, following extensive efforts to define the fund’s working methods, most member countries committed to developing the QSF.

As a user-funded group, the QSF reports directly to the UPU’s Postal Operations Council (POC) and does not have a distinct legal status. Since its inception, the fund has been linked to the terminal dues system, such that contributor countries of origin make payments to beneficiary destination countries in addition to their terminal dues contributions. The contributor and beneficiary country groups and the contribution amounts are decided by Congress.

The QSF is governed by its Board of Trustees, elected by the POC. The Board, supported by the UPU International Bureau (IB), is responsible for managing the finances and activities of the QSF. It consists of 11 UPU member country representatives, including one Chair and one Vice-Chair, which convene up to four times a year to discuss the QSF’s work. The ultimate aim of the QSF is to measurably improve quality of service, strengthen weak links and enhance the sustainability of the global postal network.

“We have come a long way since the 1999 Beijing Congress”, says Chum. “But the fact that three of the QSF’s founding Board members – France, India and the United States – still sit on the Board today says a lot about how highly valued this funding mechanism is. If you ask any of the these founding members why they are still on the Board, I am sure they will say that they understand the importance of the QSF in the global development of the postal sector.”

The QSF has changed dramatically since 2001. “The heart of the QSF is still about helping countries with their quality of service to enable them to be part of the global postal operations network”, explains Chum. “But its form has evolved greatly. We have broadened the scope of projects covered by the QSF and transformed the way that we reach out to countries to help them.”

When the QSF was launched in 2001, it only financed projects aimed at improving the quality of inbound letter-mail flows, with a view to making national postal services and international mail flows more efficient, reliable and secure. The majority of QSF projects involved only one operator, although a regional approach and solidarity among countries were also promoted. Projects were proposed “bottom up”, meaning that a DO would approach the UPU with a proposal and then the QSF Board would analyze and either approve or decline it.

As the postal industry transformed due to digitalization and the e-commerce boom, so too did the QSF. The 2012 Doha Congress called for a study to be conducted on the future of the QSF with a view to proposing a new model at the 2016 Istanbul Congress. “Swiss Economics carried out a study on the QSF in 2015 on behalf of the UPU”, explains Chum. “It found that more than 90% of QSF stakeholders agreed that the QSF should continue as a redesigned model. The findings were analyzed and a new model was built and presented to the Istanbul Congress in 2016.”

A NEW ERA

At the 26th UPU Congress in Istanbul, a new QSF model was adopted: the QSF Rules of Procedure replaced the 17-year-old QSF Deed of Trust. The new model provided for the establishment of the Common Fund, officially launched on 1 January 2018. This mobilized resources for UPU projects – an area in dire need of sustainable funding. The 26th Congress also extended the term of the QSF to 31 December 2028.

For the Istanbul cycle, the POC approved two main Common Fund projects: the electronic advance data (EAD) capture, transmission and compliance project, and the Global Monitoring System Statistical System for Analysis and Reports (GMS STAR).

The new QSF model aimed to facilitate access to the fund by simplifying and increasing the flexibility of the procedures and key processes for project submission and implementation. It also extended the scope of fundable QSF projects to cover all critical e-commerce elements, such as letters and small packets up to 2 kg, and postal supply chain infrastructure. In addition, eligibility requirements were relaxed to include both inbound and outbound mail flows, and a new top-down approach to project proposals was adopted.

More recently, a measurement tool developed by the Postal Technology Centre was implemented to gauge the impact of projects on the global postal network. The tool, which uses new standardized key performance indicators and quality of service measurement systems endorsed by the POC in 2016, was rolled out in 2021 and will be used to assess the impact of the QSF during the next cycle.

“Previously, DOs came to us when they wanted to implement a project, but now we leverage the UPU’s expertise and strong relationships with international organizations – such as the World Customs Organization, the International Civil Aviation Organization and the International Air Transport Association – to put forward projects that will benefit operators both now and in the future”, adds Chum.

The Istanbul Congress also instructed the QSF to work in concert with and support the various POC groups to achieve goals 1 and 2 of the Istanbul World Postal Strategy, namely improving the interoperability of network infrastructure and ensuring sustainable and modern products. Therefore, the QSF now prioritizes funding for projects within the framework of the operational readiness for e-commerce (ORE) initiative.

Project proposals submitted to the QSF must now, as far as possible, meet the requirements of one or more of the five ORE key pillars: minimum operational requirements; visibility; data quality; supply chain integration; and reliability.

In addition to adapting the QSF model to make it more sustainable, the Istanbul Congress also instigated a complete overhaul of the evaluation procedure for QSF projects. The QSF secretariat’s role and responsibilities were expanded to include remote and field evaluation of projects. Remote evaluations are carried out for projects with low budgets or whose results can be measured using the quality monitoring tools developed by the UPU’s Postal Technology Centre.

“This new approach enabled the QSF team to successfully complete 22 project evaluations in 2020, despite the COVID-19 pandemic”, says Chum. “It also helps us to save money, as we can evaluate more projects remotely, instead of conducting field evaluations.”

Under the rules of the new QSF model, the Board can also, at its sole discretion, demand an audit of any project at any stage of its implementation, in particular for highly complex projects or those with large budgets that are implemented in phases.

Since its inception, the QSF has made a considerable contribution to the development of the global postal network. “With this new sustainable model in place, the QSF Board, under the auspices of the POC, and the IB, will continue to work cohesively towards creating a modern network. The fact that 175 DOs have benefited in one way or another from QSF projects is a testament to the fund’s global imprint and its indispensability to the postal eco-system”, Chum concludes.



**WHAT DOES THE FUTURE
HOLD FOR THE QUALITY
OF SERVICE FUND?**

According to the head of the QSF, Choy Han Chum, the future of the fund is all about “driving the sustainability of the new model created at the 2016 Istanbul Congress”. The new model encompasses the Common Fund, new evaluation procedures, and a broader project scope, covering letters and e-commerce items, as well as both inbound and outbound letter-post mail.

“We will take on board the lessons learned from implementing the new model during the Istanbul cycle and continue to develop the QSF”, Chum says.

“The latest challenges facing the global postal network – such as technological advancements and tighter regulatory requirements – are too great for individual postal operators to overcome, so the Common Fund, with its top-down approach, supported by the IB’s team of experts, is the best way to address the future needs of DOs”, she continues. “I believe that the QSF will be more relevant than ever in the future, and the Common Fund will fund more and more projects on digitalization and process automation.”

Stronger support will remain at the heart of all QSF projects to ensure the future sustainability of both the QSF and DOs. QSF training workshops, for example, were revamped in 2018; they now follow a more structured and targeted approach, prioritizing hands-on project formulation directly linked to national action plans. This new methodology will be used to conduct regional workshops in the future.

In the course of 2020, during the pandemic, the QSF contributed to and participated in virtual workshops organized by the IB’s Development and Cooperation and Postal Operations Directorates. In conjunction with eight regional EAD workshops funded by the Common Fund, the QSF participated in the training of national EAD project teams, including the QSF national coordinators of participating DOs. In total, approximately 370 postal staff from 136 DOs benefited from this training. Moving forward, it is envisaged that virtual workshops will be conducted for QSF projects and finance training.

COMMON FUND PROJECTS

Country-specific projects using the original QSF will continue to be implemented alongside Common Fund projects. However, to motivate beneficiary countries to submit project proposals, from 2026 it will be possible to transfer unused funds from individual QSF accounts to the Common Fund.

For the Common Fund, the POC has identified five priority areas for global UPU projects in line with the Istanbul World Postal Strategy goals, namely customs, security, standards, the GMS and quality of service improvements.

At present, the QSF is supporting two key Common Fund projects approved by the POC in 2016: GMS STAR and EAD capture, transmission and compliance. The latter project, which has an initial budget of 2.84 million USD and a term of 30 months, is already well underway and involves more than 140 DOs. A feasibility study recommended the use of mobile app solutions for Customs Declaration System (CDS) data capture, as well as CDS kiosks to complement data capture and transmission capabilities for DOs.

These two data capture solutions have already been developed and are currently in the roll-out phase. “These solutions will help Posts to meet the new international customs requirements enacted by a number of countries worldwide, such as the United States STOP Act and EU ICS2. Other countries will be introducing similar regulations that make it obligatory to transmit electronic advance data, such as the sender’s name and address and details about the item contents, to destination Posts. Without this information, many items will be rejected by receiving operators”, says Abdel Ilah Bousseta, Director of Postal Operations.

The QSF has already supported a number of DOs through the Common Fund EAD project. Guyana Post Office Corporation, for example, has used the Common Fund to install CDS, procure IT and mobile equipment, develop and license a mobile application and deploy CDS kiosks for data capture, and to carry out staff training. (To find out more about the EAD project, see “An interview with: Abdel Ilah Bousseta, Director of Postal Operations” on page 14)

The second Common Fund project, on development of GMS, consists of two sub-projects. The first of these, on the enhancement of GMS STAR, has an estimated budget of 1.1 million USD and has been approved by the QSF Board. It stems from GMS Technical Design (third edition) – a measurement methodology for monitoring quality of service through GMS Link, including for e-format mail, which was approved by the POC in 2019. The GMS STAR enhancement project aims to develop a new reporting system for GMS Link to help to implement the new measurement methodology. It will benefit more than 120 DOs currently using GMS.



QSF funding enabled the installation of packet sorting machine in Kazan Logistics Centre, Russian Federation. Image courtesy of Russian Post.

The second sub-project, on the development of GMS Enhanced Data Gathering for E-commerce (EDGE), has an estimated budget of 400,000 USD and aims to strengthen the interoperability and security of the global postal network by enabling automatic scanning of mail receptacles and transmission of data to other systems via GMS Secure Transfer Electronic Automatic Messages (STREAM). This will ensure compliance with EU regulations that came into effect on 1 March 2020, under which the S9 receptacle identifier must be linked with the S10 international mail item identifier and transmitted in a PREDES message to the destination country.

The UPU will continue emphasizing transversality as a key element of future Common Fund projects, in the same way as for ongoing EAD and GMS projects.

THE NEXT CONGRESS CYCLE

In 2019, the POC approved the creation of an expert team to review and evaluate the performance of the new QSF model adopted by the Istanbul Congress, particularly the Common Fund, and to examine how the model can be improved further. The aim was to gain a detailed overview of the model from its stakeholders with a view to making recommendations on its future development, for submission to the Abidjan Congress in August 2021.

The recommendations made so far concern the development of a review committee to provide expert guidance to the POC on the prioritization of Common Fund projects, and the inclusion of sustainable development in the objectives of the QSF, as provided for in the QSF Rules of Procedure, to encourage the rollout of more projects in that area.

The expert team also recommended that group I countries be considered as beneficiaries of Common Fund projects, in addition to group II, III and IV countries, to ensure that the benefits of Common Fund projects were truly transversal. This would enable all contributing countries to share the benefits of projects funded by the Common Fund, particularly those concerning the development and deployment of infrastructure and IT solutions. “Some countries in group I still do not have access to the benefits of the Common Fund”, notes Chum.

In addition, the expert team identified the need to develop a long-term sustainable funding stream in addition to the Common Fund that prioritizes the special needs of the least developed countries (LDCs). A new funding stream will be proposed at the next Congress for implementation during the Abidjan cycle (2022–2025). The team proposed a contribution of 0.5% to a special account for the LDCs, in addition to the 1% currently paid into the Common Fund by the contributing countries. As proposed, the LDC special account will be ring-fenced under the umbrella of the Common Fund.

Further development of the QSF model, in particular the Common Fund, will be pursued throughout the Abidjan cycle to ensure a robust, integrated and sustainable QSF proposal for submission to the 28th UPU Congress. “In the future, the QSF will be integrated seamlessly with the main pillars of UPU business operations – such as supply chain, physical services and quality of service. Rather than a mere funding platform, it will be a strategic component that drives the value proposition of the key pillars of the UPU”, explains Chum. “I believe that the QSF will be a driver for projects that contribute to the attainment of the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Indeed, we are receiving an increasing number of proposals for green initiative projects for vehicles, postal facilities and mail processing machines. It is an undeniable fact that making postal operations economically viable gives DOs a competitive edge, so minimizing delivery costs is vital. To this end, the QSF has been funding the acquisition of electric trikes, motorbikes and vans, and it is hoped that more and more DOs will adopt green practices in the future”, Chum concludes.



AN INTERVIEW WITH:

ABDEL ILAH BOUSSETA, DIRECTOR OF POSTAL OPERATIONS

The transmission of EAD will help to enhance the security, efficiency and compliance of the global postal sector, according to Abdel Ilah Bousseta, Director of Postal Operations and Secretary of the Postal Operations Council, which oversees the work of the QSF and drives the new EAD and GMS projects under the Common Fund.

As part of the Common Fund EAD project, the DOP team, under the guidance of Project Leader Noor Adan, will help Posts to develop the solutions and skills required to provide EAD on postal items to destination Posts and Customs in accordance with regulations and UPU electronic data interchange (EDI) messaging standards.

As of May 2021, 145 DOs are participating in the EAD project, with a balanced distribution across the seven global regions. The regions of Africa (41 DOs), Asia-Pacific (30 DOs) and the Caribbean (24 DOs) are particularly well represented.

The project, which is due to run until May 2022, will help DOs to implement the UPU's Customs Declaration System and to exchange ITMATT, PREDES and PLACI messages. It is based on the three EAD pillars of data capture, data transmission and compliance.

The project is nearing the end of phase 1, which includes the establishment of a project management office, the development of a training programme on the CDS platform, the rollout of localized mobile applications on Android and iOS to facilitate capture of customs and tracking information at collection points, and the deployment of CDS.POST and CDS Kiosk to enable DOs to capture customs data. During phase 2, which concerns conformance and regional compliance, best practices will be shared among DOs, and processes and requirements will be adjusted as necessary. Phase 3 will focus on the continuous monitoring and improvement of project execution.

"Once the initial ITMATT, PREDES and PLACI regulatory requirements for 2020 and 2021 have been met, the project will focus on EDI exchange between Posts and carriers (CARDIT/RESBIT), improving data quality, and laying the foundations for compliance with the next set of transport regulatory timelines for PLACI, in 2023–2024", explains Bousseta.

"EAD is about more than just compliance, however. The exchange of EAD also helps DOs to provide advance notification of expected volumes, which enables the revenue management and capacity planning of mail, the simplification of operational processes and the near-real-time tracking of mail along the operational pipeline", he concludes.



Florian Bertschy



Diego Avaria



Jessica Chassot



Choy Han Chum



Wendy Kissling



Raphael Bourban



Dorothy Ducrest



Gaurav Mehta



Magali Voisard

**TWELVE POSTAL OPERATORS SHARE
THEIR EXPERIENCES OF WORKING
WITH THE QUALITY OF SERVICE FUND**



Operator: **Malawi Posts Corporation**
 Project value: **120,364 USD**
 Category: **Conveyance and delivery**
 Year implemented: **2016**

Malawi Posts Corporation has benefited greatly from the QSF. The Post used its QSF funding to invest in 20 new motorcycles for delivery services. This has helped it to improve mail conveyance between district administrative centres and rural post offices, bringing the quality of its mail delivery service up to the standards of more developed countries.

“Prior to the introduction of the QSF, Malawi, like many other developing countries, was finding it difficult to adjust to new customer demands and technological developments owing to the costs involved”, says Shadreck Vokhiwa, Acting Director of Operations for Malawi Posts Corporation. “The cost element has been the biggest stumbling block. Thanks

to the QSF, we have made progress in mail delivery. The benefit to Malawi Posts Corporation has been significant.”

Mr Vokhiwa believes that the QSF has considerably advanced the postal sector in developing countries in particular. It has helped to change the postal landscape worldwide and assisted DOs that were lagging behind because of financial constraints.

“The best way to gauge the importance of the QSF is to imagine at what level of development beneficiary countries would be now if they had not received assistance. Certainly, there would have been gaps”, Vokhiwa adds.



Motorcycles procured using QSF funds. Image courtesy of Malawi Posts Corporation.



Operator: **La Poste du Togo**
 Project value: **37,478 USD**
 Category: **Track and trace systems**
 Year implemented: **2014–2015**

In 2013, only a few of La Poste du Togo's post offices had the IT equipment needed to process incoming and outgoing items in the UPU's International Postal System (IPS). As a result, a limited number of shipments were processed in IPS, tracking data was rarely available, and customer complaints of lack of information were common. According to the Post, mail service quality was perceived by customers and partners as low.

The Post submitted a project proposal to the QSF Board for the improvement of consignment processing using IPS. The project helped to strengthen shipment processing capacity at 50 post offices and two exchange offices by equipping them with computers, barcode readers and label printers. It also saw 55 agents undertake training for the processing of consignments in IPS. According to La Poste du Togo, the project led to a lasting improvement in mail processing speed, reliability and security across the entire Togo postal network, and also resulted in greater customer satisfaction.

La Poste du Togo has worked with the QSF team to undertake other projects, for example to improve postal delivery in four regions through the acquisition of new vehicles, leading to an overall improvement in delivery times nationally, and to improve transshipment times through the acquisition of a vehicle dedicated to transshipment

operations. The latter project led to improved delivery times of dispatches between the airport and the office of exchange for letters and postal packages.

La Poste du Togo has also worked with the QSF to implement the Customs Declaration System (CDS). This project made it possible to install and deploy CDS in exchange offices and in the two post offices registering the most parcels and Express Mail Service (EMS) shipments. According to La Poste du Togo, the project enabled the generation and exchange of customs declarations in the form of ITMATT messages with partner operators, thus improving customs clearance processes for consignments.

The QSF has helped La Poste du Togo to significantly improve service quality and build trust with the Togolese public and its partners. "These projects have helped us to adapt to the challenges of the hour", says Thierry Kokou Elom Adzomada, head of the EMS centre at La Poste du Togo. "We are grateful to the QSF project and finance teams for their assistance and attentiveness, which have never faltered. In the future, we hope that the QSF will help countries to carry out more digital transformation and energy-related projects."



Togo postal staff using computers, printers and barcode scanners procured using QSF funds. Image courtesy of La Poste du Togo.



Operator: **Posta Uganda**
 Project value: **67,914 USD**
 Category: **Security**
 Year implemented: **2010–2011**

Mail theft was a major challenge for Posta Uganda in 2010–2011. Items were being stolen at parcel and sorting centres, leading to low consumer confidence in the Ugandan postal service and high compensation costs. To combat the issue, the Post submitted a proposal to the QSF Board for a CCTV project.

The project entailed the installation of a CCTV system to monitor mail centres, from offloading to delivery points and from receiving to dispatch points. The installation, which was complemented by an extensive staff training programme in 2011, saw 77 surveillance cameras, running 24 hours a day, installed at the Kampala GPO office of exchange. A CCTV control centre was also set up with six digital video recorders. Employees in the security and investigations unit were trained to use the new equipment.

Further training was carried out by the Post to establish a zero tolerance policy with regard to mail violation. In addition to reducing the occurrence of mail theft, the CCTV and training project has increased mail processing speed, as staff are now aware that the Managing Director of the Post can monitor all activities in and around the facility from his office.

According to Posta Uganda, the project has led to a significant overall improvement in mail security and a drastic reduction in customer complaints. “We would like to thank the QSF team for its assistance in drafting the proposal and its guidance on project management”, says Jessica Uwera, QSF national coordinator at Posta Uganda. “This project was a gateway to restoring customer confidence in Posta Uganda and helped to improve the image of the Post.”



CCTV procured using QSF funds installed in the mail processing centre of Posta Uganda. Image courtesy of Posta Uganda.



Operator: **Poste Maroc (Morocco)**
 Project value: **50,905 USD**
 Category: **Global Monitoring System**
 Year implemented: **2012–2013**

Poste Maroc was the first operator in the Africa region – and among the first 90 UPU member countries worldwide – to join the GMS Link measurement programme following GMS implementation in 2009.¹

GMS Link provides DOs with valuable insight into their actual letter mail performance and enables them to take appropriate action to improve quality of service. It also provides tools to help operators to consistently and objectively measure performance. Every two years, a multinational GMS Link project to extend the use of GMS is presented to the QSF Board for consideration and approval. The project is funded by the QSF and managed by the UPU/ DOP GMS quality measurement programme in consultation with the DO and QSF.

Poste Maroc benefited from this project in 2012 and 2013. The QSF enabled the operator to invest in new RFID readers,

panel services for test items and diagnostic services for monitoring mail. According to Poste Maroc, the project significantly improved performance and even exceeded the targets set. The Post maintained its performance in 2014 and 2015.

“We are very thankful to the QSF for funding the RFID equipment to enable Poste Maroc to participate in this very important global monitoring system”, says El Mostafa Baaddi, Industrialization and Modernization Director at Poste Maroc. “We are grateful to the DOP–GMS team for assisting us with on-site missions, technical support, practical training, and installation and configuration of RFID equipment. Technology transfer has been successful and now our own technical team can perform installation and certification at 49 sites throughout Morocco.”



RFID semi-active equipment at Poste Maroc facilities funded by the QSF. Image courtesy of Poste Maroc.

¹ GMS is a state-of-the-art RFID quality measurement system for letter mail, available to all UPU members.



Operator: **Myanmar Post**
 Project value: **65,768 USD**
 Category: **Conveyance and delivery**
 Year implemented: **2011–2012**

As one of the least developed countries, Myanmar does not have the budget to meet the requirements of a modern postal service or to build strong and dependable infrastructure. According to Myanmar Post, the QSF has provided a vital lifeline, without which it would not have been possible to improve service quality.

With the urban population in Myanmar growing, Myanmar Post was struggling to achieve high mail delivery standards. To combat this, the Post submitted a project proposal to the QSF for the establishment of a motorized street delivery system, including the procurement of 60 motorcycles, 60 helmets and other accessories such as jackets, gloves and bags.

“With the support of the QSF, we have been able to implement a fantastic postal project to improve service quality”, says Ngu Thida, General Manager of Myanmar Post.

“We would like to implement further projects with the QSF team to provide an even better service to our customers.”

The project significantly enhanced service quality, improved efficiency and enabled the introduction of time-specific zonal deliveries. In addition, postal workers were more motivated during their delivery rounds as they were fully equipped with new motorcycles and accessories. Upon successful implementation of the project, Myanmar Post was handed a QSF award for best management.

Myanmar Post was very grateful to the QSF experts for their close collaboration and support in successfully implementing the project. The QSF managers supported Myanmar Post from the project’s inception right through to completion, including filling out the project application form and working with the UN Development Programme to purchase the motorcycles.



Delivery postmen ready to start delivery duties using motorbikes procured using QSF funds. Image courtesy of Myanmar Post.



Operator: **Sri Lanka Post**
 Project value: **50,350 USD**
 Category: **Disaster recovery**
 Year implemented: **2014–2015**

In 2013, Sri Lanka Post began work on improving letter mail service delivery throughout tsunami-affected areas of the country. The DO submitted a project proposal to the QSF for the purchase of four mini delivery vans to serve the northern and southern coastal belts, and the south and north of Batticaloa – all areas hard hit by the tsunami.

The project helped to improve the quality of mail delivery in these areas by reducing delivery times. The aim was to reduce delivery time from three days to next day for local mail and from seven to five days for international mail.

During the implementation of the project, Sri Lanka Post focused on improving and, where necessary, rearranging delivery routes to cover a wider geographical area using the new vans. The project introduced new fleet routeings, which

helped to reduce fuel and driver costs and increase delivery speed.

Sri Lanka Post greatly appreciated the support of the QSF team, from the drafting of the project proposal through to the final evaluation. The QSF team also provided assistance with project change requests and accounted for the practical difficulties faced by the Post as a government entity.

“We highly value the contribution of the QSF team to improving letter mail service quality and are extremely grateful to both the QSF team and Board for helping to coordinate this project and others from which Sri Lanka Post has benefited over the years”, says U.G. Ranjith Ariyaratne, Postmaster General of Sri Lanka.



Delivery vans for serving tsunami-hit areas of Sri Lanka as part of disaster recovery efforts. Image courtesy of Sri Lanka Post.



Operator: **Barbados Postal Service**
 Project value: **64,125 USD**
 Category: **Security**
 Year implemented: **2013–2014**

Barbados Postal Service requested the assistance of the QSF to improve postal security, integrity and safety. The fund helped the DO to acquire and install a new HI-SCAN dual-view x-ray inspection system approved by the United States Transport Security Administration.

According to the Post, prior to the project, Barbados had no means of identifying the contents of mail bags other than by reading manifests or bag labels. This made it impossible to identify items containing prohibited or dangerous goods. Opening bags to discover what is inside puts human lives at risk and is dangerous for the immediate working environment and community at large. Before the project, screening and scanning of mail was done at random by customs authorities, causing delays in mail processing and delivery times. Following the introduction of the scanner, Barbados Postal Service was able to automatically identify items containing prohibited or dangerous goods. Thanks to

both the project and a global campaign to raise awareness of prohibited and dangerous substances in the mail, the number prohibited items being sent through the Barbados Postal Service was reduced by 1–2%. In addition, postal staff were trained to the same level as customs security officers to enable them to scan mail bags using the x-ray inspection equipment without customs authority oversight.

“The installation of the x-ray scanning machine coupled with the training and certification of postal officers has increased the role of the Barbados Postal Service in border security. We are trusted by the government to scan incoming mail and parcels and provide a high-quality service to customers and postal partners”, says Iris Lashley, Deputy Postmaster General, International Postal Affairs and Business Development, Barbados Postal Service.



X-ray scanning machine procured using QSF funds for Barbados Postal Service. Image courtesy of Barbados Postal Service.



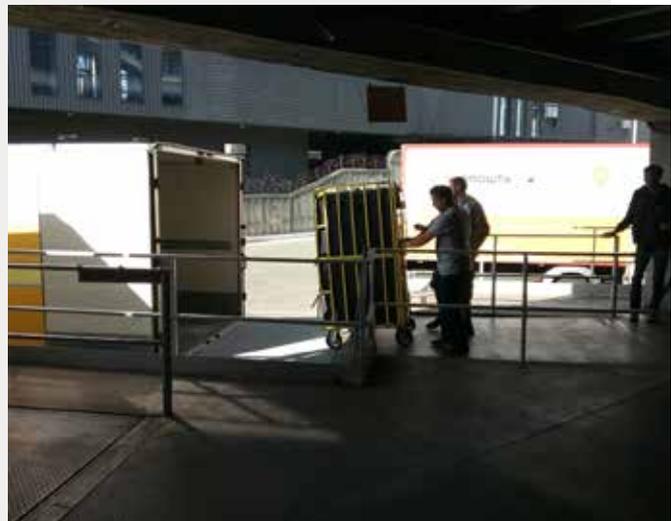
Operator: **Ukrposhta (Ukraine)**
 Project value: **1,099,200 USD**
 Category: **Conveyance and delivery**
 Year implemented: **2016–2017**

Ukrposhta procured new tail-lift trucks as part of its QSF-funded project, the aim of which was to enhance the quality of service and safety and security of domestic and international mail transportation. The Post needed the new trucks to modernize the handling, loading, unloading and transportation of mail in containers and on pallets. Before the project, the DO used its own fleet of trucks, which had an average age of 14 years, to transport domestic and international mail along six international, 53 interregional, 2,389 intraregional and 1,100 urban routes. Since the outdated vehicles were not suited to carrying containers and pallets, significant time and resources were expended on mail sorting and preparation for dispatching, loading and unloading at exchange points. The QSF project saw Ukrposhta invest in 24 new trucks weighing up to six tonnes. Regional postal facilities were also equipped with special areas for the loading and unloading of containers, pallets and specific types of postal items.

Ukrposhta points out that the new tail-lift vehicles enable faster and more convenient transportation of postal items

in containers and on pallets, and hence better planning of resources and operational processes at postal facilities. Its international postal service performance improved as a result. The improvement increased consumer confidence in Ukrposhta. In addition, the Post was able to add a new, faster and more reliable service – Ukrposhta Express (up to 30 kg) – to anywhere in Ukraine. It also expanded the sending of items on pallets (up to 550 kg) to all regional centres of Ukraine.

The QSF team provided valuable support to Ukrposhta throughout the project and issued recommendations on further steps to improve quality of service. “Ukrposhta is very grateful to the QSF secretariat for its prompt and continuous assistance with the project, the successful implementation of which has enabled us to shorten the turnaround time for uploading and offloading mail and parcels, thereby improving our performance level”, says Tymur Balan, Head of the Route and Flow Management Office at Ukrposhta.



Tail-lift trucks, procured using QSF funds, for unloading and offloading mail and parcels in Ukraine. Image courtesy of Ukrposhta



Operator: **Correos de Costa Rica**
 Project value: **45,339 USD**
 Category: **Global Monitoring System**
 Year implemented: **2015–2016**

Correos de Costa Rica joined the GMS Link project in 2011 using its own resources. In 2016, the postal operator utilized its QSF assets to cover the cost of renewing its participation in the programme.

As part of an overarching effort to improve quality of service at Correos de Costa Rica, the GMS team undertook diagnostics to identify operational bottlenecks using GMS data. The QSF Board subsequently approved the GMS membership support project for on-site process review, funded by the QSF. During the project, an action plan was developed to address operational bottlenecks and improve processes, including the reorganization of RFID readers at the airport.

Within six months of implementing the action plan, Correos de Costa Rica had improved its performance results

and achieved the targets set. During the project, due to increased mail volumes, Costa Rica also changed its GMS technical design classification and increased the number of cities to be tested from one to four. In 2017, the QSF Board handed Correos de Costa Rica an award for continuous improvement in performance and sustainability of results.

“Thank you to the DOP–GMS and the QSF team for funding Costa Rica’s participation in the GMS measurement system and the on-site process review, which has helped Correos de Costa Rica to address the gaps in its operational chain and improve its performance. The technical support provided by the International Bureau was invaluable to our business operations”, said Kenneth Campos Villalobos, International Relations Advisor at Correos de Costa Rica.



RFID gates and readers installed at the entrance of Correos de Costa Rica’s Mail Processing Centre. Image courtesy of Correos de Costa Rica.



Operator: **Maldives Post**
 Project value: **94,776 USD**
 Category: **Conveyance and delivery**
 Year implemented: **2017–2019**

Two major issues affecting the overall quality of service at Maldives Post – insufficient address information on mail items and unavailability of addressees at time of delivery – resulted in a large number of unsuccessful home deliveries, which in turn increased customer dissatisfaction. To address this, Maldives Post conceptualized a project to provide around-the-clock deliveries for customers by installing three e-locker systems, each comprising 540 lockers, at strategic sites across Malé. The project also saw the procurement of a mail van to improve deliveries to the sites.

To secure funding for the project, Maldives Post contacted the QSF secretariat and explained its plan. The QSF team then helped the operator to refine its plan for submission to the QSF Board, which approved the project and provided

the requisite funds. According to Maldives Post, the advice received from the QSF secretariat and the guidance and support provided by the QSF Board were instrumental in the successful implementation of the project, as a result of which delivery times, customer satisfaction and quality of service all improved.

According to Aishath Shirdha, Director of Business Development and Marketing at Maldives Post, “the project transformed the delivery value proposition for Maldives Post. The installation of e-locker systems solved Maldives Post’s problems and enabled it to provide a first-class delivery service. Our customers are very happy with the delivery options available, and we are grateful to the QSF team and Board for approving this project”.



E-locker systems procured using QSF funds serving Maldives Post customers. Image courtesy of Maldives Post.



Operator: **Guyana Post Office Corporation**
 Project value: **5,200 USD**
 Category: **Common Fund EAD**
 Year implemented: **2020–present**

Guyana Post Office Corporation is one of the great success stories of the Common Fund. The operator is benefiting from the EAD capture, transmission and compliance project, which assists DOs in meeting new regulatory requirements on the provision of EAD for parcels, such as the United States STOP Act and the EU ICS2.

The project has enabled Guyana Post to install the UPU's Customs Declaration System (CDS), procure IT and mobile equipment, develop a mobile application for CDS data capture, deploy CDS kiosks to complement data capture and train staff. According to Guyana Post, if it had not participated in the project, it would not have had the funds to implement a system to meet the new EAD requirements in the timeframe required.

The purchase of computers, printers, mobile phones and tablets as part of the project has enabled Guyana Post to assist its customers in completing their declaration forms prior to posting. The investment has also equipped the operator's international employees with the tools they need to perform their duties effectively and efficiently.

And during the COVID-19 pandemic, it helped to make postage procedures quicker and safer .

Guyana Post is grateful to the QSF team for its persistent hard work and research, which have helped it to significantly improve its quality of service. It reserved particular praise for the UPU's QSF regional coordinator, whose guidance helped to ensure the smooth and timely implementation of the project. The QSF team provided precise information regarding the execution of the project and promptly answered all queries. "On behalf of the management and staff of Guyana Post, I would like to formally express my gratitude to the QSF team for their service over the years. Their diligence, creativity and attentiveness are unparalleled. It would not be an exaggeration to say that they were the beating heart of this project, which could not have been implemented so efficiently and so well without them. We are grateful to the QSF Board for its financial support and to the IB for its technical and operational assistance, which has helped us to grow and improve our services in many ways", says Nichola James-Erskine, Finance Director at Guyana Post.



UPU EAD Mobile App, CDS Kiosk being used by customers for customs declaration purposes. (Source: Guyana Post)



Operator: **Ethiopian Postal Service**
 Project value: **5,200 USD**
 Category: **Common Fund EAD**
 Year implemented: **2020–present**

In the past, customs data was transmitted in hard-copy form at the Ethiopian Postal Service, which says that the transition to electronic data capture and transmission is one of the organization's greatest ever achievements. The operator's participation in the EAD capture, transmission and compliance project under the Common Fund helped it to meet regulatory requirements on the sending of ITMATT data.

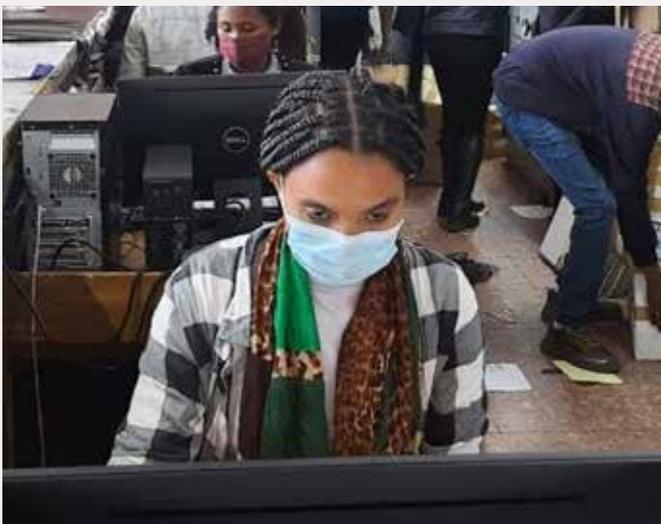
The project involved the installation of the UPU's Customs Declaration System (CDS) and the training of staff on customs data capture both at post office counters and virtually to reach remote areas and minimize costs. Customs data was initially captured using the UPU's cloud environment, and subsequently – following sufficient quality assurance checks – using a local CDS server. The Ethiopian Postal Service also concluded multilateral agreements with a view to sharing the data with other DOs.

According to the operator, the main challenge encountered in using CDS was a malware attack on the local server, as

a result of which all data was lost. The operator subsequently took steps to prevent similar attacks in the future. However, it has yet to implement CDS kiosks or a mobile app owing to security concerns, so data is currently captured only by computers on the organization's network. It is now looking at implementing improved network security solutions.

The Ethiopian Postal Service reported that the project has enhanced aviation security and improved customs processing times at destination locations. It has leveraged ITMATT data exchange to enhance its mail security by conducting advance risk assessments based on the types of goods it receives.

"The IB and QSF team have been tremendously supportive and have responded to our every request in the implementation of this project, which involved installing CDS and training staff. The assistance of the regional UPU Postal Technology Centre was instrumental in achieving the project objectives", says Anteneh Terefe, Advisor and QSF National Coordinator with the Ethiopian Postal Service.



IT and mobile equipment procured using QSF funds for uploading ITMATT data to a CDS system. Image courtesy of Ethiopian Post.

QSF REGIONAL TRAINING WORKSHOPS

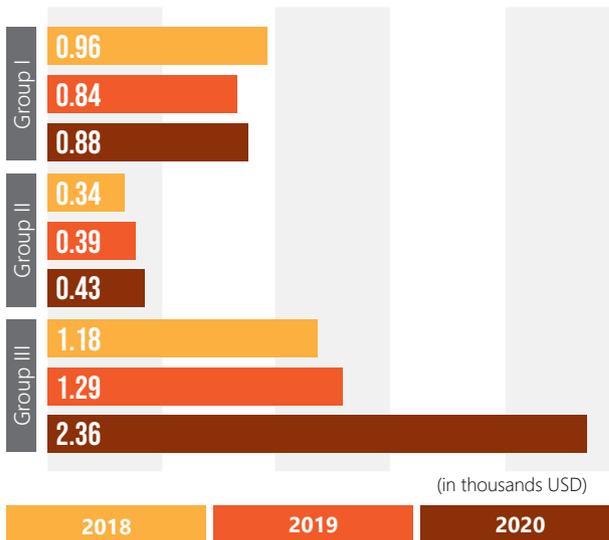


KEY FACTS AND FIGURES

FINANCIAL

As at 31 December 2020, the total resources billed since the creation of the QSF stood at approximately 255 million USD, which corresponds to an annual average contribution to the fund of approximately 13 million USD.

Common Fund billing by country classification group and year (as at 31 December 2020)



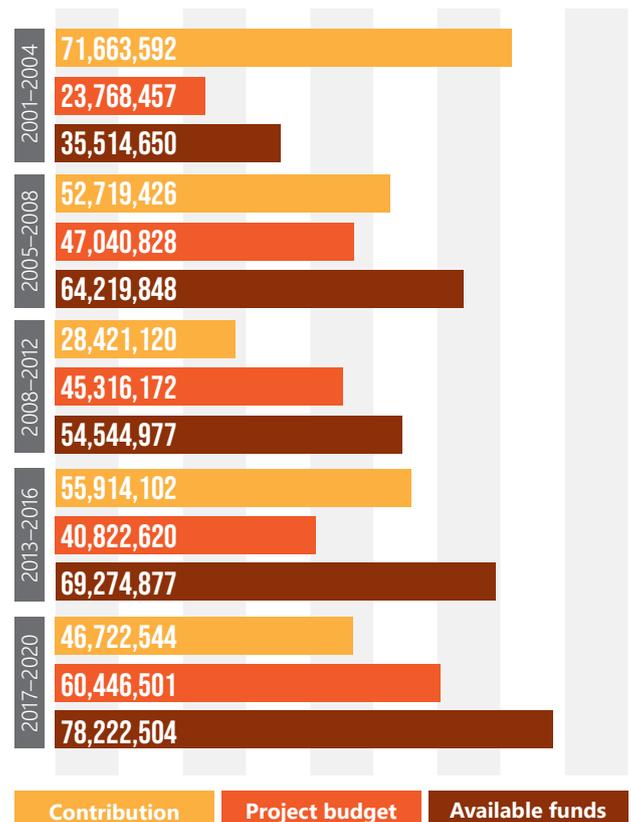
CONTRIBUTIONS (IN USD)

2001–2004	71,663,592
2005–2008	52,719,426
2009–2012	28,421,120
2013–2016	55,914,102
2017–2020	46,722,544

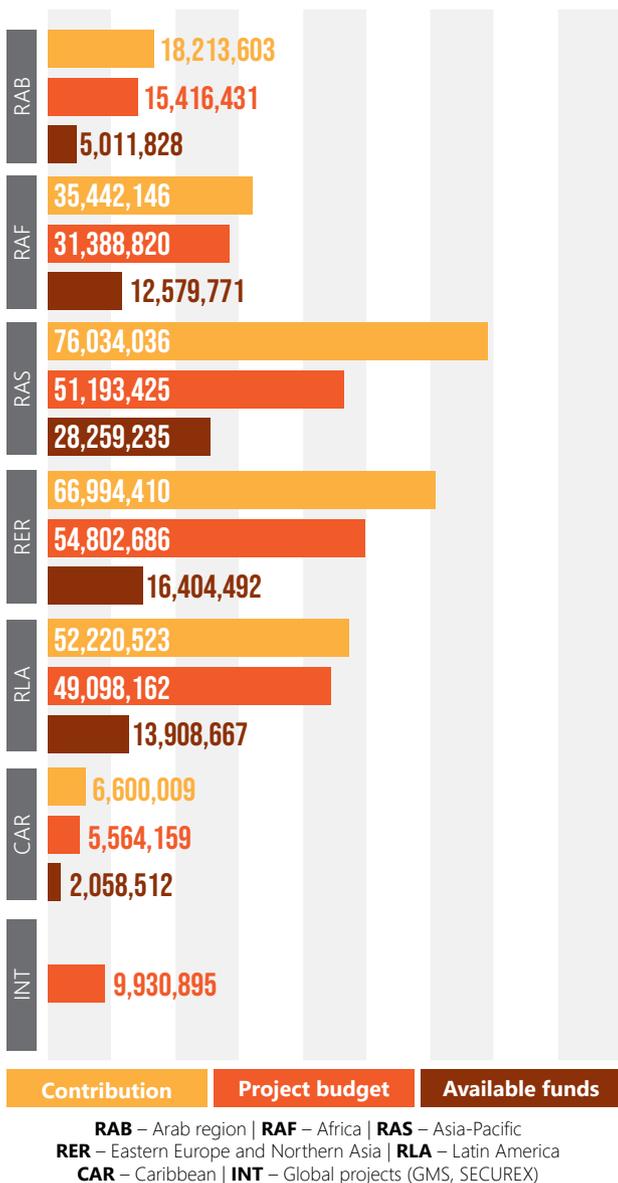
QSF contributions peaked during the first cycle (2001–2004) when the contribution conditions were very stringent, with a large pool of beneficiary countries and high contribution rates. Contributions dropped during the 2009–2012 cycle owing to the end of expedited billing in 2010 compounded by reimbursements to operators related to the expedited billing for 2007, 2008 and 2009.

The 2013–2016 cycle saw QSF contributions stabilize but the 2017–2020 cycle was characterized by a slight drop. With Group III countries ceasing to receive QSF contributions, a marked decline in contribution levels is to be expected in the coming cycles.

Comparison of contributions invoiced with approved project budgets and available capital by Congress cycle (as at 31 December 2020)



Comparison of contributions invoiced with approved project budgets and available capital by region (as at 31 December 2020)



As at 31 December 2020, the most active region in terms of project implementation was Eastern Europe and Northern Asia, with a total of 54.8 million USD allocated for projects, followed by Asia-Pacific, Latin America, Africa, the Arab region and the Caribbean. Most of the operators in the Caribbean region were in groups 1.2 and 2 and therefore ceased to be beneficiaries from 2009 onwards, resulting in a low project budget. Funds allocated to international projects (global and regional projects), such as GMS and SECUREX pilot, totalled almost 10 million USD.

As at 31 December 2020, the Asia-Pacific region had the highest level of available funds at 28.3 million USD, followed by the Eastern Europe and Northern Asia region and the Latin America region.

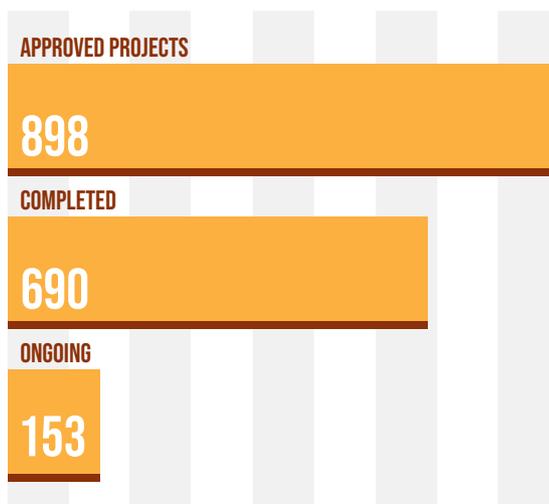
Common Fund billing commenced in 2018 based on provisional billing of 1% of terminal dues payable to group III countries by countries in groups I, II and III. The provisional Common Fund billing for 2018 – CFOne – was based on CN 61/64 forms for reference year 2015. CFOne billing for 2019 and 2020 was based on reference years 2016 and 2017, respectively. Final billing for the Common Fund – CFTwo – will be on the third year following CFOne billing (i.e. CFTwo for 2018 will be billed in 2021, and so on). The total amount billed for the Common Fund stood at 8.6 million USD.

Group III countries were the highest all-time contributor to the Common Fund in 2018, followed by countries in group I and group II. It is forecast that group III will continue to be the main contributor to the Common Fund in future years.

PROJECTS

Given that the objective of the QSF is to provide a funding platform for the development and implementation of projects aimed at improving quality of service, strengthening weak links and enhancing the sustainability of the global UPU postal network, project implementation lies at the heart of the QSF model.

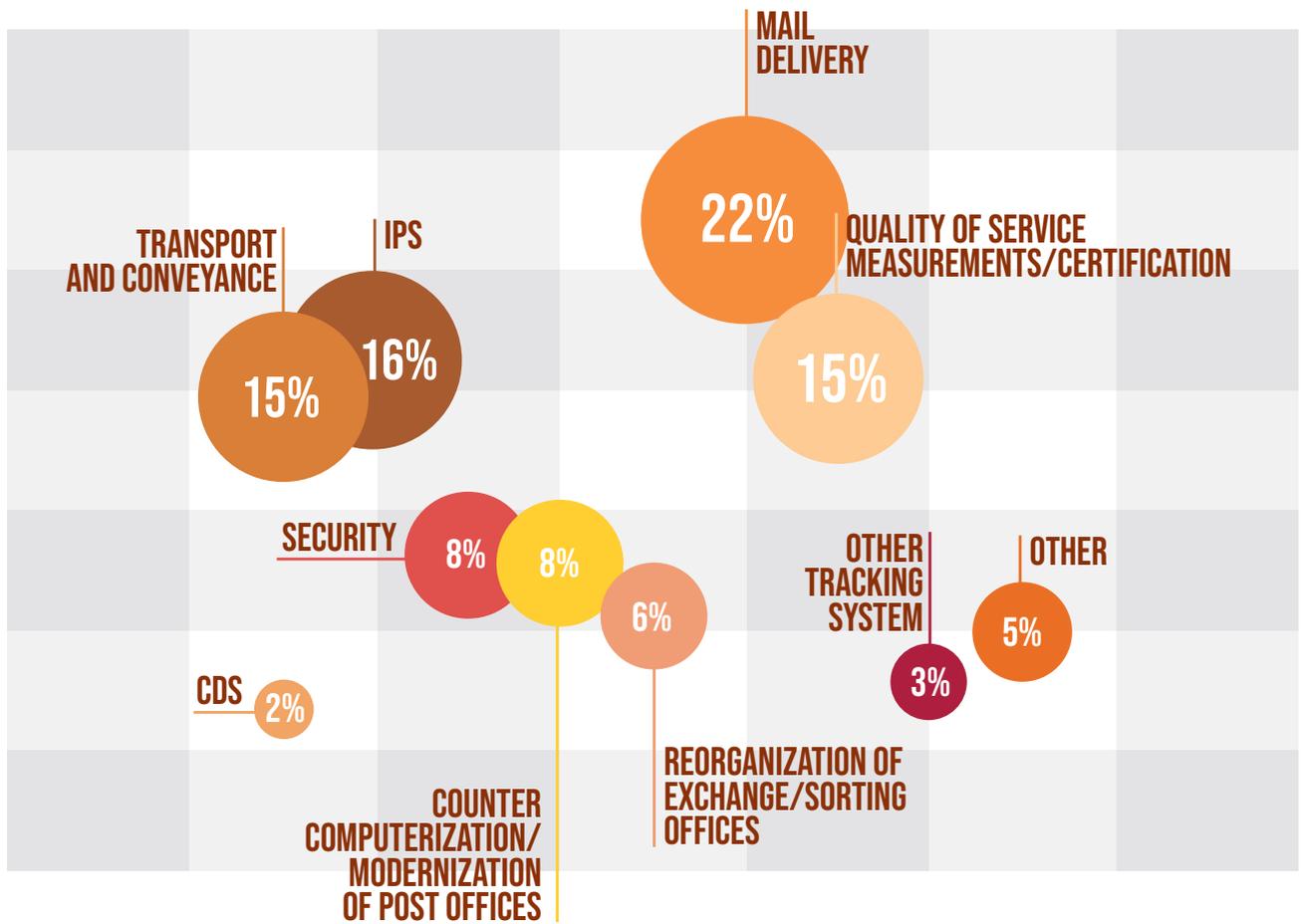
Status of QSF projects (2001–June 2021)



As at 30 June 2021, a total of 1,048 project proposals had been submitted by operators to the QSF Board. Of those proposals, 898 had been approved and implemented or were currently being implemented. On average, the life cycle of a QSF project from approval to completion is 2–3 years, depending on its size and complexity. Projects are usually evaluated 1–2 years after completion to assess the sustainability of the results achieved. More than two thirds of completed QSF projects have been evaluated.

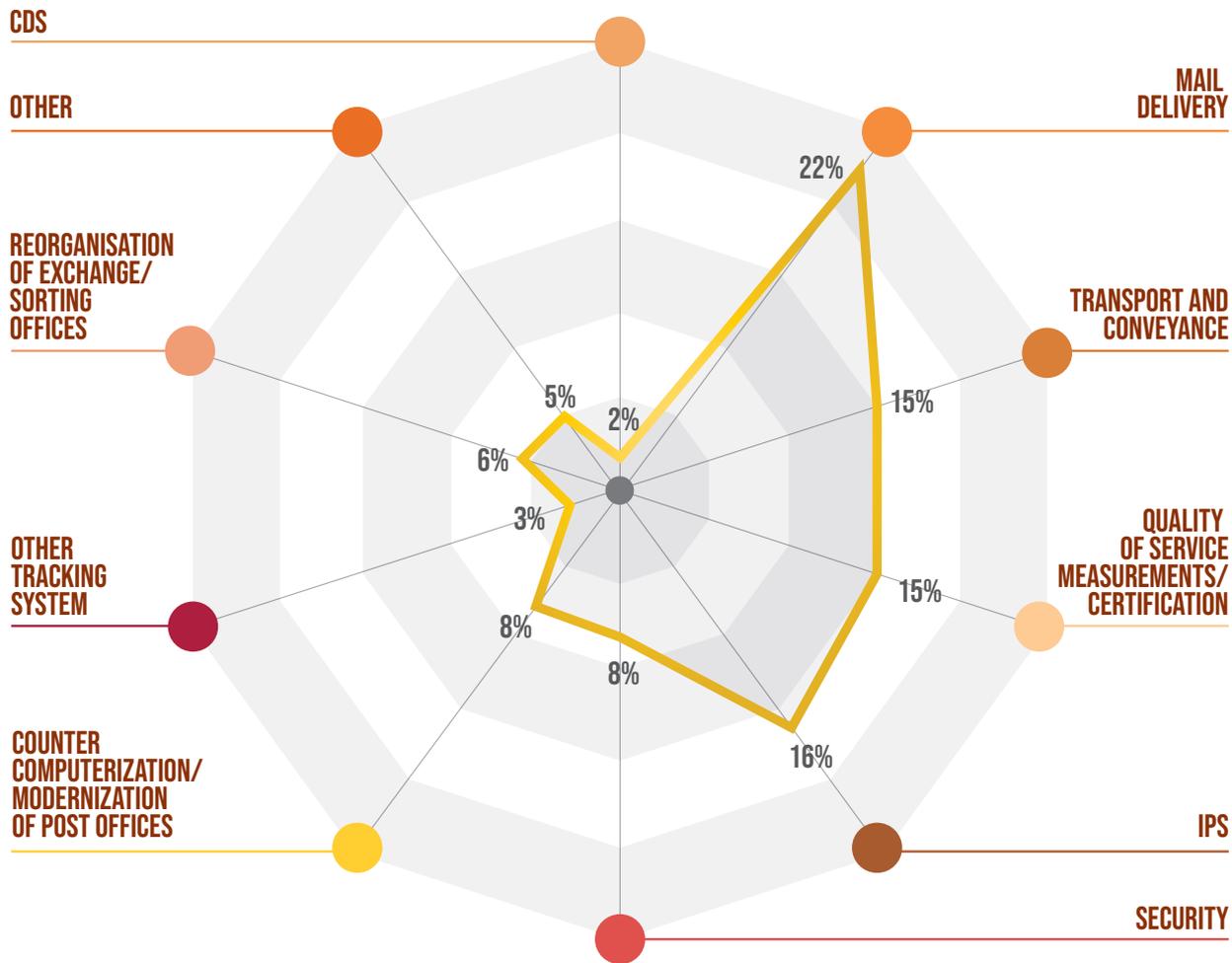
The number of ongoing projects for the 2017–2020 cycle decreased, while the average cost and complexity of projects grew.

Categories of QSF projects implemented (2001–June 2021) based on total number of approved projects



More than 37% of QSF projects involving procurement of vehicles such as trucks, vans, motorcycles and e-bicycles were implemented to improve conveyance of mail and last-mile delivery. A total of 21% of the projects were related to IT systems such as IPS, CDS and other tracking systems (UNEX), making this the second largest category of projects. Of equal importance were projects concerning quality of service measurement and certification, such as GMS and implementation of S58/S59 security standards and S42

addressing standards, which made up 20% of the total projects. In the past five years, the QSF has accepted an increasing number of projects for the implementation of small packet sorting machines. These projects aimed to equip the operators with the necessary infrastructure for handling exponential growth in e-commerce volumes.



The QSF invested heavily in projects for improving delivery and conveyance of mail, in particular for the procurement of vans and trucks for conveyance of mail and mini vans, motorcycles and e-bicycles for last mile delivery. Up to 30 June 2021, the total budget allocated for procurement of vehicles was 59.6 million USD, benefiting 130 DOs. The Global Monitoring System programme was the second largest beneficiary of QSF funds, accounting for a total of 30.7 million USD, enabling the participation of 93 DOs in GMS measurements since 2007. Countries in groups II and III were the main beneficiaries of GMS projects, since their participation in GMS is mandatory for the purpose of quality of service-linked terminal dues.

In addition, the QSF financially supported a number of lesser-known projects relating to the reorganization of international offices of exchange and mail processing centres, with substantial funds of 20.3 million USD

allocated to 32 DOs for the expansion of mail processing facilities and the installation of mail/packet sorting machines, conveyor belts, equipment and accessories. In addition to the project categories mentioned above, a total of 12.3 million USD was allocated for security projects involving 55 DOs, covering x-ray machines for scanning inbound and outbound dispatches, CCTV facilities in international offices of exchange and physical security, including perimeter fencing for OEs, detection and control systems and strong rooms. Lastly, products and services developed by the Postal Technology Centre have enjoyed strong QSF backing, with a total of 12.1 million USD allocated for the implementation of IPS for 112 DOs since 2005 and approximately 3 million USD for the implementation of the Customs Declaration System for 148 DOs.



Twenty-one years ago, the emergence of the UPU's Quality of Service Fund corresponded with the adoption of the first ever global development agenda for the new millennium. This innovation stemmed from the UPU's commitment, as part of the United Nations system, to ensure that development efforts and the associated quality of postal services leave no one behind.

During the Doha and Istanbul postal cycles (2013–2021), a turbulent external environment, with technological breakthroughs, economic and political shocks and, more recently, a global health crisis, has been accompanied by increasing challenges in the global postal sector itself. The challenge related to the enforcement of stricter requirements for cross-border mail exchanges by international regulatory bodies – in particular in the area of electronic advance data – has been one of the most pronounced for the postal community. These requirements, which in many cases exceeded the capacities of individual operators, would have impaired the activities of many of them if not for the lifeline offered by the QSF Common Fund.

Apart from the financial contribution of 3 million USD, the EAD project has benefited 145 DOs through the development of infrastructure for customs data capture, the provision of IT and mobile equipment, capacity-building workshops and the deployment of the Customs Declaration System. Given the transversality and uniformity of the QSF Common Fund, I am confident in the success and great scaling potential of this project.

TOWARDS AN INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE FUTURE:

Message from the UPU Deputy Director General

As we approach the midway point of our 2015–2030 sustainable development roadmap, although many gaps still remain, the enormous progress already made through the effective re-allocation of funds and generous support of donor countries should be recognized and celebrated. The global postal sector should likewise be celebrated as a cornerstone of social and economic infrastructure and a universal provider of accessible social services.

Drawing on the recommendations of the dedicated expert team, the upcoming Abidjan cycle will likely see a deeper integration of sustainable development in QSF policies and procedures, along with the mechanisms to channel diversified support to the countries and areas that need it most. In accordance with the concepts of comprehensive development and inclusion that characterize the 2030 Agenda, it is recommended that everyone – industrialized and developing countries alike – be allowed to share in the benefits offered by the Fund.

The importance of the postal network and its quality of service for the achievement of all the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goal 1 (ending poverty) and Goal 10 (reducing inequalities), cannot be understated. I call on all postal stakeholders to adopt cooperative approaches and to continue pooling our expertise and resources, which are indispensable for the welfare of the communities that we serve.

Only by working together can we achieve truly universal quality of service.

Pascal Clivaz

Deputy Director General

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62%



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