

## **REPORT OF POSTAL FINANCIAL SERVICES WORKING GROUP**

As a restricted Union, the APPU was instructed by UPU Istanbul Congress to follow the resolution C23/2016 to integrate the relevant elements of the Istanbul World Postal Strategy (IWPS) into their respective priorities and action programs. Again, following the directives given in congress resolution C23/2016, APPU formed 5 working groups in last APPU congress in Tehran, Iran. Postal Financial Service WG is assigned to promote and boost up postal financial services and financial inclusion under IWPS goal 2, Ensuring Sustainable and Modern Products.

UPU Congress resolution C6/2016 stated E-commerce services as a key to a vibrant and effective postal services. Besides inviting member countries to contribute their activities aimed at introducing new and innovative e-services is based on customer expectation and fostering a culture of making use of e commerce solution in all aspects of their postal operation.

Keeping pace with that UPU congress, 2016 through resolution C8/2016 APPU had taken decision regarding development of postal payment services and financial inclusion to encourage member countries and designated operators to develop effective, reliable, secure and affordable electronic postal payment services to continue developing the multilateral framework for postal payment.

The Congress had also stressed to promote the provision of financial services directly by designated operators or in partnership with banks, micro finance institutions or mobile operators with a view to promoting the financial inclusion for mass population. Besides Congress had invited the member countries to take necessary action to ensure the efficient operational exchange of the internal payment of designated operators through UPU interconnection platform.

The financial inclusion is the outcome of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) goals 1 and 8. It is also the result of Big data Big impact. Big data analysis is crucial for monitoring the indicators associated with the SDGs.

Pursuant to the above mentioned UPU and APPU Congress instructions a study was conducted among the postal financial service working group and APPU member countries through a semi structured questionnaire. The core view of the questionnaire was-

- a. Understanding the existing basic financial services;
- b. Understanding the mode of operation of financial services;
- c. Gathering the knowledge about availability of mobile apps for rendering financial services;
- d. Gathering opinion regarding common payment gate way.

In the study, Payment service, Savings, Insurance, Credit, Money transfer service are found as basic financial service rendered by posts. Among these, money transfer and payment service were predominant followed by Insurance and Credit service.

In case of mode of Operation of the basic financial services completely automation was the apex one followed by partially automation and manual operation, respectively.

In the study almost of all of the responses regarding availability of cross border money transfer gateway among APPU member countries was negative which definitely implies the necessity of having a common payment gateway among the APPU member countries.

Moreover, lesser use of mobile apps in rendering financial services was well noted while the essentiality of mobile apps was also recognized broadly. In favor of developing mobile apps, the response was very high and positive. It was anonymously agreed that APPU member countries should have a common payment gateway for cross border ecommerce, financial inclusion along with to boost up of new and innovative financial services.

To ensure the smart management to achieve the IWPS goal and to keep pace with these instructions given by UPU and APPU congress, the working group shall have to ahead with the following plan-

- a. Conducting a impact study to find out the sustainable technology for financial inclusion among APPU member countries;
- b. Establishment of a common payment gateway to boost up ecommerce and exchange of financial service to ensure financial inclusion.
- c. Establishment of a CEO forum in order to make common consensus regarding the common interest. Bangladesh would be honored to host the proposed CEO forum meeting in Dhaka based on APPU and other stakeholders opinion.