

1. Third Party Evaluation of Plan Scheme of Department of Posts “POSTAL OPERATIONS”

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

India’s postal system is in the midst of an ambitious transformation aimed at becoming a technology-driven, customer-centric logistics powerhouse capable of meeting 21st-century communication and commerce demands.

The PO Scheme has evolved from being a traditional postal service delivery mechanism into a comprehensive framework that integrates digitalisation, financial inclusion, export facilitation, and citizen-centric outreach. Its seven sub-schemes now address the entire spectrum of logistics, communication, identity, and social protection, while simultaneously enabling India Post to compete with private sector operators through network optimisation, parcel modernisation, and international business linkages. With *Dak Ghar Niryat Kendras* empowering MSMEs, *DARPAN* devices enabling last-mile DBT payments, Sevottam certification strengthening accountability, and philately positioned as a soft power tool, the scheme embodies a multi-dimensional approach to nation-building. Its emphasis on structured training, digital skill development, and capacity-building must be pursued with urgency over the next five years to make a meaningful contribution toward achieving the SDG 2030 goals and realizing the Prime Minister’s vision of *Viksit Bharat* well before 2047.

This Evaluation report reiterates that to meet the growing needs, it is essential to continue the PO scheme rigorously, with enhanced funding support, for the next five years. DoP has to plan and implement strategies to achieve its key transforming India Post into a digitally integrated, financially inclusive, and logistics-driven service provider that ensures universal access, global competitiveness, and citizen-centric service delivery.

Executive Summary presents a critical synthesis of the challenges faced by the Department of Posts, derived from extensive staff surveys covering a total of 329 staff and 381 Beneficiaries from 14 HOs, 24 SOs 64BOs, followed by operational analyses, and articulating a sequenced strategic plan. The approach categorizes interventions into short-term medium-term and long-term initiatives, underscoring the need for integrated reforms encompassing training, infrastructure, digital adoption, human resource management, and operations.

Short-Term Strategies (1–2 Years)

Challenges

The immediate hurdles confronting India Post include gaps in staff training, especially on cutting-edge digital platforms such as the Digital Address Code (DAC) and portable *DARPAN* devices, with roughly one-third of staff indicating inadequate or irregular instruction (**Figures 4.8, 4.9, & 4.11**). Moreover, operational inefficiencies manifest in customer wait times where 8.4% face delays exceeding 45 minutes (**Figure 4.50 & 4.51**) and inconsistent parcel handling that impacts overall service reputation.

Further, awareness of innovative schemes, particularly international services like *Dak Ghar Niryat Kendras* (DNKs), remains patchy among frontline staff, limiting as well their promotional efficacy. Moreover,

conventional media employed for marketing have shown limited reach and impact, especially amid India's diverse linguistic and socio-economic environment (**Table 4.11 & 4.12**).

Recommendations

Training Enhancements: To overcome these shortcomings, India Post should immediately initiate targeted, inclusive refresher training programs specifically focused on digital tool proficiency and customer service skills. Designing clear, multilingual training materials and brief reference guides tailored for easy comprehension would significantly enhance ground-level uptake and operational consistency. Deploying bite-sized, video-based e-learning modules accessible via mobile devices can further democratize training access, especially for rural staff.

Operational Process Streamlining: A thorough process review to identify bottlenecks in customer service workflows can enable redesigning for efficiency. Introducing queue management systems and optimizing staff deployment during peak hours will minimize customer wait times, improving satisfaction. Strengthening frontline staffing ratios in high-footfall zones requires urgent attention.

Communication and Awareness Drives: Recognizing the limited effectiveness of traditional advertising, strategic shifts toward digital and social media campaigns targeting diverse citizenry are imperative. Internal communication must be streamlined, ensuring frontline staff receive timely updates on new policies, schemes, and technological tools. Leveraging local languages and culturally sensitive content will amplify outreach efficacy.

Medium-Term Strategies (3–5 Years)

Challenges

Persistent infrastructure inadequacies endure as major constraints. Facility audits reveal inconsistent availability of dedicated, well-equipped training spaces and unreliable internet connectivity (**Table 4.3 & Figure 4.6 & 4.7**). The postal workforce faces acute gender imbalances—only 34.9% female participation with considerable regional disparities (**Table 4.1 & Figure 4.3**) and workforce shortages, particularly in Left-Wing Extremism (LWE) and geographically challenging areas. Technical support systems lag in attending to device malfunctions and software updates, constraining operational continuity.

Recommendations

Infrastructure Modernization: India Post needs sustained investment into upgrading training centers nationwide. This includes introducing state-of-the-art audiovisual equipment, improved broadband internet, and creating comfortable, accessible learning environments. Mobile training units can bridge the geographical divide by bringing capacity building to remote and underserved locales.

Workforce Reforms: Proactive policies must be instituted to boost gender diversity and regional representation within the workforce. This involves gender-sensitive recruitment drives, enhanced skill development programs focused on women, and incentives for deployment in underserved territories. Equally, comprehensive staff welfare measures addressing occupational wellbeing, career progression, and recognition will augment morale and retention, especially in high-demand regions.

Technology Support Strengthening: Establishing dedicated IT support helpdesks and expanding field service capabilities will minimize application downtime and enhance user trust in digital tools. Training programs emphasizing practical usage should be tailored to varying skill levels, ensuring inclusive coverage. Particular attention should be paid to the digital needs and challenges faced by women and older employees.

Long-Term Strategies (5+ Years)

Challenges

Although India Post has initiated significant digitization, the current ecosystem remains fragmented, hampering holistic operational oversight and data-driven decision-making (**Table 4.13**). Logistical coordination suffers from standardization gaps across hubs, transport nodes, and last-mile delivery functions (**Table 4.8 & Figure 4.18**). Emerging imperatives for environmental sustainability, such as adoption of electric vehicles and green infrastructure, are nascent and without clear scale-up pathways.

Recommendations

Integrated Digital Ecosystem Development: India Post should conceptualize and realize a unified digital platform seamlessly integrating mailing, financial services, customer relationship management, and analytics. Harnessing AI and advanced data analytics will enable real-time operational optimization, predictive demand management, personalized customer interactions, and secure transaction processing. Open API frameworks could foster dynamic collaboration with e-commerce and logistic partners, expanding service reach.

Next-Generation Logistics Overhaul: The logistics network must be redesigned employing smart routing algorithms, automated dispatch systems, and green fleet integration. Partnering with private sector entities will enable leveraging cutting-edge innovations and scaling sustainable transport solutions. Periodic operational and environmental audits will monitor progress and guide iterative refinement.

Sustainability and Innovation Leadership: Long-term commitments to reducing carbon footprints through electric and energy-efficient transport, eco-friendly packaging, and waste management practices will position India Post as an exemplar in public-sector sustainability. Continuous research and development collaborations with academia and industry will foster an innovation culture, addressing evolving customer and environmental needs.

2. Third Party Evaluation of Plan Scheme of Department of Posts “HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT”

Executive Summary

The Human Resource Management (HRM) scheme of the Department of Posts, aligned with the Postal Training Policy 2012 and its mandate of "Training for All," has been addressing a significant increase in training requirements. **This Evaluation report reiterates that to meet the growing needs, it is essential to continue the scheme rigorously, with enhanced funding support, for the next five years. DoP has to plan and implement strategies to achieve its key objective of Training for All, including mandatory three Mid-career trainings for all cadres, apart from re-training of staff about new developments in the department specially on the technical front, which requires that the HRM Scheme continues with more resources (financial and human).**

As part of the primary data collection, structured surveys were conducted at the Training Academy and Training Centres across eleven cities in seven postal circles from the six NSSO Zones. The cities were - Una, Solan, Ghaziabad, Delhi, Bhopal, Jaipur, Mysuru, Yadavgeri, Ranchi, Guwahati, and Ulubari - having a Training Academy and number of Training Centres from where a total of 420 trainees, and 50 trainers. Among the academy and training centres surveyed, PTC Mysuru, operating on a 32-acre campus, had the highest trainee strength, with around 200 participants undergoing two induction training and one ADP.

The HRM Scheme has evolved as a comprehensive initiative dedicated to building a skilled, technology-enabled, and beneficiary-focused workforce. Its emphasis on structured training, digital skill development, and capacity-building must be pursued with urgency over the next five years to make a meaningful contribution toward achieving the SDG 2030 goals and realizing the Prime Minister's vision of *Viksit Bharat* well before 2047.

Based on the field visits to Academy, Training Centres and Workplace Training Centres in the selected circles across six NSSO zones, primary and secondary data was collected, collated, analyzed, and findings documented. The Recommendations categorized in three sections, viz. i) Long term strategies, ii) Medium term strategies and, ii) Short term strategies are summarized as follows:

A comprehensive vision for the future of postal training and human resource development in India Post should be structured across three clear horizons: short-term (1–2 years), medium-term (3–5 years), and long-term (5+ years). This tiered approach ensures both immediate operational benefits and a sustained trajectory of excellence, innovation, and inclusivity. Below is an integrated vision, with justifications and rationale rooted in the survey/FGD data from major postal training institutions and based on the current needs and forward-looking priorities of the organization.

Foremost, it is recommended that the scheme should be continue with enhanced budget provisions for next five years.

Short-Term Vision (1–2 Years)

1. Infrastructure Consolidation and Expansion

Allocation of resources for upgrading infrastructure of the existing training centres, which will enable more trainees to undergo the trainee program.

Commencement of focused renovation initiatives in key institutes such as RAKNPA and select PTCs, addressing functional deficits in hostels, classrooms, labs, and administrative facilities.

Initiation of improvements in training delivery infrastructure, including enhanced IT hardware compatible with IT modernization platforms and expanded e-learning content development.

Recent survey findings consistently highlighted that infrastructure quality is a key strength; with hostels, sports, and classroom facilities rated positively, but still requires targeted improvements for consistency and inclusivity, especially in resource-constrained regions. Short-term focused actions like ensuring functional Wi-Fi, quick maintenance protocols, cleaner hostels, and increasing hostel mess capacity (e.g., at RAKNPA/PTC Mysuru) will immediately improve trainee satisfaction, productivity, and well-being. Quick-fix solutions in this horizon can address basic shortages (beds, ACs, sports gear) and resolve maintenance complaints.

2. Digital Platform Stabilization and Support

Ensure reliable, user-friendly access to platforms like *Dak Karmayogi* and *iGOTKarmayogi* with multi-language, accessibility, and basic navigation features.

Both trainers and trainees reported challenges with platform usability, network issues, and the lack of essential features like rewinding or regional languages. Addressing these quickly will boost digital adoption, enable equitable access (especially for less digitally literate/rural staff), and fulfill the growing demand for blended or online learning. Platform stabilization will also enable better feedback collection and monitoring of training effectiveness, which is otherwise lost when staff rejoin their workplaces.

3. Strengthening Trainer and Institutional Capabilities

Propagation of trainer development programs to deepen pedagogic skills and adaptability across diversified delivery modes.

Strategic outsourcing for specialized modules (e.g., marketing, soft skills) to incorporate external expertise.

Preliminary steps toward establishing robust monitoring and evaluation frameworks, including performance metrics and enhanced feedback gathering for training impact assessment.

Data reveals a crucial shortage of trainers, especially in content creation and management roles. Many institutions blend administration and training tasks, leading to fatigue and loss of focus. Bringing in more Assistant Directors (especially for administration), content creators (for digital modules), and specialists for new domains will unburden existing teams and accelerate course development, ensuring rapid responsiveness to skill needs.

Medium-Term Vision (3–5 Years)

1. Updating Training Content and Expanding Digital Skilling

Systematic and periodic update of training modules to include rapidly evolving domains such as AI, data analytics, logistics, compliance, and soft skills.

Recalibration of training curricula to embed modules on digital governance, cloud computing, secure digital transactions, and data management aligned with the ongoing India Post Modernization Project 2.0. This ensures that the workforce begins to acquire foundational skills responsive to emergent technology applications and cybersecurity demands.

Continued emphasis on targeted capacity building for Gramin Dak Sevaks (GDS) in digital literacy and community mobilisation roles, reinforcing their pivotal place in last-mile service delivery and socio-economic inclusion.

Revision and augmentation of Standard Training Packages (STPs) incorporating distance and blended learning formats to supplement traditional classroom engagements. This includes the deployment of the *Dak Karmayogi* platform for online learning, with initial efforts directed at improving navigation and accessibility.

Both trainers and trainees consistently reported that training content lags behind technological and regulatory developments. The push for digital literacy is robust but modules on AI, Money Laundering, and Data Analytics remain niche or insufficient. Instituting a cross-institutional curriculum review board, with rotating input from the field and global benchmarks, ensures training remains relevant, timely, and uniformly delivered—a key concern in maintaining quality across batches and locations.

2. Institutionalizing Advanced Digital Learning Ecosystems

Full operationalization of AI-enabled adaptive learning platforms to personalize learning pathways and optimize skill acquisition efficiency. The *Dak Karmayogi* portal will evolve into a comprehensive digital ecosystem integrating assessments, certifications, and analytics for continuous learner engagement.

Broad integration of blended and distance learning models, balancing online modules, classroom instructions, and field-based practical experiences. This empowers employees to access training flexibly across hierarchical levels and geographies, especially benefitting rural and hard-to-reach personnel.

Blended learning is popular, with high satisfaction for hybrid approaches, but implementation is uneven and often undermined by digital infrastructure and engagement gaps. A mid-term push to develop digital case studies, scenario-based simulations, and interactive sessions (with role play/feedback loops) will optimize learning for diverse cadres. Addressing identified issues—like insufficient opportunity for hands-on practice, variable teaching styles, and lack of interactivity—will further strengthen learning outcomes.

3. Feedback Loops and Impact Monitoring

Implement structured post-training feedback mechanisms involving both trainees and their workplace supervisors.

Current inability to track real-world impact after training is a recognized weakness, particularly as trainees report to officers much higher up the hierarchy post-course. Introducing centralized, digital feedback forms and periodic supervisor check-ins will close the feedback loop, ensuring training effectiveness translates into workplace performance and contributing data for ongoing course improvement.

4. Inclusion and Accessibility

Prioritize universal accessibility in all facilities and digital content, especially for trainees with disabilities and from diverse regional backgrounds.

Heritage structures and uneven facility development have left some centres inaccessible to PwDs, and digital content is not yet universally adaptive or bilingual. Investing in ramps, lifts, and assistive technologies—and embedding accessibility features into all digital offerings—not only fulfills legal mandates but also enshrines inclusivity as a core organizational value.

Capacity Enhancement and Expansion of Training Infrastructure

Completion of major new facility constructions, notably the establishment of a dedicated International Training and Research Centre near Delhi acting as a hub for knowledge management, content creation, and change management. Proposed short-term projects include establishment of new RTC in Jaipur and PTCs in Amravati and Shivpuri, along with planned enhancement of WTC nodes.

It is proposed to establish an off-campus facility of RAKNPA in Delhi as a Postal Resource Development, Research, and Dissemination Centre under the HRM Scheme. Conceived as a Centre of Excellence, it will integrate digital content creation, knowledge management, and change management functions, serving as a hub for blended learning,

innovation, and inter-agency collaboration, while aligning postal human resource development with emerging governance and technological priorities.

Continued modernization of heritage training institutions, enhancing accessibility (including for women and differently-abled personnel), IT infrastructure, and residential amenities. This includes expansions in hostel capacity, installation of air conditioning, and upgrading of recreational facilities in line with international standards.

Expansion of training centres' physical and technological capabilities to support large-scale skilling across diverse domains, with emphasis on emerging operational areas such as logistics management, AI-led fraud detection, and customer experience analytics.

Strengthening Institutional Quality and Global Engagement

Pursuit of ISO certification and adherence to global best practices in training program governance, quality assurance, and infrastructure management.

Expansion of international exposure opportunities for postal officers through collaborations with reputed global institutions such as the Asian Pacific Postal College, fostering benchmarking and innovation.

Development of a cadre of specialized trainers and learning content developers, supported by collaborations with domestic and foreign academic and technical institutions.

Long-Term Vision (5+ Years)

1. Centre of Excellence and Global Benchmarking

Transform key institutions (PTCs, RAKNPA) into national and international centres of excellence, benchmarked globally and ISO certified; become leaders in public sector digital innovation and postal management training.

Current best practices—like the 3-star rating of PTC Guwahati, and RAKNPA's international courses—demonstrate potential for world-class recognition, but system-wide standardization is needed. Achieving ISO certification, offering international field trips, collaborating with postal academies globally, and expanding digital learning labs will position India Post as a benchmark for public sector training, facilitating knowledge transfer and talent attraction.

2. Fully Data-Driven and Personalized Learning

Adopt advanced analytics to personalize learning paths, forecast training needs, and enable data-driven workforce planning for both postal operations and leadership development.

The future of HRD lies in leveraging big data and AI-driven insights to tailor training to individual profiles and emerging organizational needs. This shift will require investment in learning management systems, up-skilling trainers, and integrating HR analytics into decision-

making. Over time, such an approach ensures that training anticipates, rather than follows, operational change.

3. Sustainable, Scalable, and Flexible Training Ecosystem

Develop a training ecosystem that is environmentally sustainable (green campuses), scalable to handle recruitment surges or emergencies (e.g., during pandemics), and flexible to adapt to future technologies or organizational priorities.

Long-term success will depend on the system's ability to adapt, scale, and support distance and self-paced learning, especially in response to disruptive scenarios. Emphasizing digital sustainability, green initiatives, and modular course architecture will future-proof India Post's training infrastructure and global reputation.

4. Building a Future-Ready Workforce

Institutionalization of adaptive competencies encompassing digital fluency, AI ethics, cyber security proficiency, and data-driven decision-making, ensuring workforce readiness for unpredictable technological and policy shifts.

Embedding of holistic behavioural and leadership development programs fostering emotional intelligence, collaboration, innovation, and entrepreneurial mindsets to underpin departmental transformation.

5. Sustainable and Inclusive Training Ecosystem

Ensuring equitable access to training and capacity building, particularly integrating marginalized groups such as women, minorities, and differently-abled persons through infrastructural, curricular, and technological inclusions.

Implementation of universal service standards for residential and learning environments based on global benchmarks, encompassing privacy, safety, accessibility, and sustainability to nurture well-being alongside performance.

6. Integrated Knowledge and Change Management

Operation of a National Postal Resource Repository and Research Centre, advancing evidence-based policymaking, institutional learning, and cross-sectoral innovation.

Fostering a culture of continuous improvement, enabled by comprehensive data analytics, standardized impact assessment, and systematic feedback loops connecting training, field application, and organizational outcomes.

7. Strategic Alignment with National and Global Agendas

Seamless integration of training initiatives with broader national missions such as Digital India, *Viksit Bharat 2047*, and Mission *Karmayogi*, driving synergies across public sector modernization drives.

Strengthening of India Post's international collaboration footprint, supporting India's diplomatic and economic ambitions through postal service excellence and knowledge exchange with global counterparts.

Conclusion

A phased, horizon-based vision allows India Post to build on its strengths (infrastructure, blended learning, residential model), close persistent operational gaps (content, feedback, digital readiness), and boldly innovate for the future (global benchmarking, personalized learning, scalable systems). Each phase responds directly to diagnosed needs from trainees and trainers and aligns with global best practices, ensuring that India Post's HRD system evolves as a modern, inclusive, and world-class driver of public sector excellence.

3. Third Party Evaluation of Plan Scheme of Department of Posts “ESTATES MANAGEMENT”

Executive Summary

Estates Management Scheme, a central sector scheme for building Postal buildings, restoring & renovating existing old Postal buildings; and allied infrastructure, involves infrastructure management of the Department of Posts, which has to be a continuous process. Duration of this continuing Scheme is financial year 2021-22 to 2025-26 to make it co-terminus with the implementation of the report of 15th Finance Commission of India. This Evaluation report also reiterates that the scheme should continue with more funds under capital investment for new construction, restoration, renovation of administrative buildings, staff quarters, boundary walls and more funds for Annual Maintenance so as to arrest the deterioration of reasonably good condition buildings, which currently have comfortable environment for customers and conducive work environment for postal officers, and staff.

As part of the primary data collection, structured surveys were conducted across six major cities in India—Gwalior, Guwahati, Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata, and Chandigarh—covering a total of 179 respondents, out of which 120 were employees and 59 were beneficiaries (citizens). Among the locations, Mumbai recorded the highest number of employee responses (43), followed by Assam (25) and Gwalior (18). In terms of beneficiary responses, Gwalior had the highest number (21), reflecting active public participation in that region, followed by Chennai (13) and Chandigarh (7). While cities like Kolkata and Assam showed comparatively lower citizen engagement with only 4 responses each, they still had a notable number of employee responses, especially in Assam.

The Department is expected to provide own building facilities for all 25,096 Departmental Post offices (as on 31.03.2024) in 23 Postal Circles spanning across the length and breadth of the Country. Percentage of Post Offices functioning in Rented buildings is maximum (77%), followed by 17% in Departmental Buildings and rest 4% are functioning in rent-free buildings.

Based on the field visits to Post Offices, Staff colony & vacant plots in the selected circles across six NSSO zones, primary and secondary data was collected, collated, analyzed, and findings documented. The Recommendations categorized in two sections, viz. i) Long term strategies, and, ii) Short term strategies are summarized as follows:

Long-Term Strategies

➤ Staff Quarters

Because of the deplorable/literally un-livable conditions of the staff quarters visited, the occupancy rate was found to be very low in Guwahati, Kolkata, Gwalior, Mumbai, and Chennai. Most of the staff colonies are strategically placed in prime locations and are in the vicinity of Post Offices, but the DoP's House Rent

Allowance (HRA) rate is about 60% less than the prevailing market rate. Hence the staff who moves out from colony can't afford to take rented accommodation from market in that locality.

It is recommended that after conducting demand survey for assessing the number of families requiring postal accommodation, two developmental models listed below can be explored. If staff quarters not required in that areas option 3 or option 4 can be explored.

Option 1: Demolish the existing structures and reconstruct staff quarters, based on demand.

Option 2: Collaborate with central government agencies on EPC contract or develop the plot through PPP model.

Option 3: Develop the site as a commercial hub or multipurpose convention center and lease it out.

Option 4: Repurpose the land for community use by developing public amenities such as a park, library, or museum etc.

➤ **Heritage Buildings**

Several postal offices including General Post Office operate from heritage buildings dating back to the 17th or 18th century, many of which pose serious safety risks.

It is highly recommended that the Department conducts a systematic structural audit annually to assess the building's structural integrity, safety, and durability. Before approving any civil work, a comprehensive safety assessment and risk mitigation plan should be in place. Additionally, a third-party inspection should be mandated to certify the work quality.

➤ **Renovation, repairs and maintenance works**

Absence of co-ordination of civil works and electrical works was evident in renovation, repair and maintenance work. Postal officers had raised the issue that the amount disbursed for maintenance when not utilized fully has to be surrendered, which DoP again disburses the aggregated amount to same or some other needy PO, the amount reaches in February, which is usually less time for completing the work and submitting expenditure details.

Hence to address these issues, it is recommended that DoP considers constituting panel of architects, engineers, across their postal circles whose services could be hired for coordinating and monitoring of renovation work. Further, it is recommended that the policy of surrendering unspent Annual Maintenance amount be revised so that concerned PO keeps the said amount separately and uses it with next Annual Maintenance amount

➤ **Automated Machines**

Postal services are predominantly used by the working and elderly population, whereas automated facility such as passbook printing machines is attracting younger generations.

More such automated facilities like self-service parcel booking kiosks etc. could be installed to reduce waiting time, offer greater convenience and flexibility in service usage.

➤ **Lease Agreement**

Substandard conditions of the POs functional from rented premises, is because of landlords' reluctance towards Repairs & Maintenance, an important clause of Lease Agreement. Landlord's unwillingness to repair is due to the fact that rent offered by DoP is far less as compared to other government organizations.

It is highly recommended that the policy be revised on priority basis to ensure market-competitive rental rates for premises used in postal operations.

Short-Term Strategies

➤ **Roof Construction Based on Climate**

The roofing structure should be designed considering local weather conditions. Fully cemented roofs should be preferred to ensure durability and better insulation. It is recommended that water proofing over flat roof slabs of Postal buildings in the Postal circles experiencing heavy rains, should be proper without any cracks. In case the top floor of such buildings has dampness, it is recommended to relay the water proofing with proper slope so as to facilitate uninterrupted flow of rain water towards the rainwater outlet. Other alternative is to construct a sloping false roof structure over the flat roofs with adequate projections beyond outer walls. Also, any plant especially sacred fig (*peepal*) tree growing in the cracks on walls or window chajjas should be removed, as it endangers the interior in terms of dampness, cracks and growth of termites.

➤ **Creating a Comfortable Working Environment**

It is recommended that sufficient water coolers should be installed to meet the thermal comfort needs of employees. Also, for POs in big urban centers of Postal Circles in Central and Western NSSO zones, it is recommended to install air conditioners (window or wall mounted) wherever & whichever is feasible to ensure a more comfortable and conducive work environment

For aesthetic working environment, it is recommended that contract for renovation of electrical setup of buildings should include removal of old electrical lines, and paraphernalia.

➤ **To Delegate the Financial Powers to Postmasters:**

Postmasters should be granted some minimum financial authority—approximately ₹10,000 to ₹20,000/-per month for SO, HO, GPO for routine minor estate-related expenses.

➤ **Rotational Maintenance Schedule**

It is recommended to establish a maintenance roster, which will ensure that all POs receive attention on a periodic basis—ideally every 4 to 5 years.

➤ **Timely ATM Contract Renewals:**

Renewal of contracts for ATM services must be initiated 3 to 6 months prior to expiry to avoid service disruption.

➤ **Enhanced Security for Cash and Premises:**

It is recommended that an unarmed staffer with a baton for safety of PO treasury should be replaced by either or all the below mentioned options:

- Sensor-based security systems be installed,
- Reinforced safes and doors be provided,
- Armed guards be deployed to protect cash vaults and ATMs.

➤ **Power Supply**

Frequent **power outages**, particularly in rural areas, severely hampers daily operations and reduces overall productivity. It is recommended to:

- **Provide Power Backup**
- **Adopt Renewable Energy Solutions (Long-term Strategy)**
- DG sets which no longer can be used in Urban areas, due to aging (15yrs+) can be repurposed for rural locations,

➤ **Usage of the vacant space**

Rooftops of department-owned buildings can be utilized for installing billboards. The basements of postal offices can be repurposed as parking facilities, with provisions for electric vehicle (EV) charging stations.

➤ **Signage and Visibility of Rural Post Offices**

Rural post offices were found lacking **adequate external signage**. It is recommended

- To install clear and visible **Directional signboards on poles or walls/trees etc**
- **Front-Facing Signboards** should prominently display **Operating Hours, Public Holidays, Opening and closing hours** (on weekdays and Saturdays)
- **Letterbox should be installed outside** the post office building, where the residents **drop letters during non-working hours also.**

➤ **Washrooms**

In rural and remote post offices, it is recommended that toilets be cleaned at least on alternate days, if not daily. A dedicated individual may be appointed, deputed, or hired on a part-time or contractual basis or a professional cleaning agency can be engaged to clean the toilets.

Few POs in urban areas were lacking in basic sanitation, also, number of toilets for women was insufficient. It is recommended that separate and sufficient number toilets should be available for men and women.

➤ **CCTV Installation**

To ensure security, transparency, and accountability within post office premises, it is recommended that **installation of CCTV cameras be made mandatory** at critical locations of PO, including treasury, **customer service counters**:

➤ **Infrastructure Support for Diversified Postal Services**

With **diverse services** offered by POs - such as **Aadhaar enrolment and updating**; financial services; and parcel delivery - it is essential that appropriate infrastructure is provided.

It is recommended to have a dedicated infrastructure for each additional service to ensure efficient delivery and a better customer experience.

➤ **Securing Vacant Postal Land**

Vacant land parcels of the Department of Posts are **vulnerable to encroachment and misuse**, in both rural and urban areas.

It is recommended that a boundary wall or fencing should be constructed around all vacant land parcels to clearly demarcate ownership and prevent unauthorized use. Proper signage indicating ownership by the Department of Posts should be displayed at the site. Regular monitoring and documentation of such land assets should be undertaken.

➤ **Water Conservation through Replication or Harvesting**

To promote sustainable resource management, it is recommended that the Department of Posts **explore the option of water replication or conservation**, particularly in areas where water usage is high or water scarcity is a concern

➤ **Mandatory Fire Safety Measures:**

Every post office handles both people and valuables, it is crucial to ensure **fire safety preparedness. Annual maintenance of fire extinguishers** should be made **mandatory**.

➤ **Inclusive Access for Differently Abled Persons:**

Majority of POs are **not adequately accessible** for differently abled persons. **Ramps and appropriately designed service windows** must be provided to ensure **equitable access**.

➤ **Accessibility Enhancements and Sanitation for PDAs:**

Tactile tiles for the visually impaired were **completely absent** at the sites visited. **Washrooms meant for differently abled persons** were either locked or **unusable**.

It is recommended that facilities for the differently abled persons (visual impairment, wheelchair bound person) are functional, unlocked, and well-maintained. Regular monitoring and audits should be conducted to ensure facilities meant for inclusivity are not misused or neglected.

These short-term and long-term strategies will significantly improve safety, inclusivity, and service quality, enhancing the overall public experience.

Summary of Long-Term and Short-Term Strategies

S.N.	Long-Term Strategies (2-4 years)	Short Term Strategies (1-2 years)
1.	Reconstruct unsafe or heritage buildings where needed	Conduct annual structural audits to assess safety and integrity
2.	Develop commercial complexes (e.g., convention centers, Post Shoppe)	Carry out immediate repairs of ceilings, walls, and seepage issues
3.	Convert surplus or unused land into public parks, libraries, or museums	Perform third-party inspection post- civil and electrical renovations
4.	Develop staff quarters based on demand through complete reconstruction	Post masters may be given financial power for spending on minor civil works
5.	Collaborate with agencies like NBCC/CPWD by EPC and also explore PPP-based development	Engage local workers, SHGs, or contract staff for sanitation

S.N.	Long-Term Strategies (2-4 years)	Short Term Strategies (1-2 years)
6.	Coordination of Civil and Electrical work during renovation, and repair works	Repurpose unused DG sets in rural areas where generators are rented
7.	Funds for Annual Maintenance may be deposited in separate account at PO level instead of surrendering.	Use top floors (post-repair) for training purposes
8.	Construct additional washrooms, especially for women (e.g., Badabazar HO)	Open basements for parking and EV charging stations
9.	Optimize the postal network by rationalizing post offices in close proximity	Install fire extinguishers and conduct regular fire drills
10.	Expand rooftop solar energy installations across all suitable buildings	Install automated passbook and parcel kiosks to reduce queues
11.	Establish a long-term safety and risk mitigation framework	Install billboards on rooftops to promote postal and third-party products
12.	Secondary data shows uneven progress—South at 25.4% and East at 23.4%. To ensure fairness, future funds must be evenly distributed across all postal circles.	Reduce staff in overlapping post offices if automation is in place