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| ITU Logo | INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION UNION  **TELECOMMUNICATION STANDARDIZATION SECTOR**  STUDY PERIOD 2017-2020 | | SG3-C298 | | |
| **STUDY GROUP 3** | | |
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| **Question(s):** | | Q12/3 | | Geneva, 23 April – 2 May 2019 | |
| **CONTRIBUTION** | | | | | |
| **Source:** | | United States of America | | | |
| **Title:** | | Assessment of Work Programme of Q12/3 | | | |
| **Purpose:** | | Proposal | | | |
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| **Keywords:** | | Mobile Financial Services (MFS) | | | |
| **Abstract:** | | The United States requests a comprehensive review/discussion on the work programme of Q12/3 aimed at understanding the goals and objectives of the current and proposed work items, and to focus on those work items that are relevant to the ICT/telecom sector. | | | |

**1 Introduction**

At WTSA-16, the United States supported the adoption of [Resolution 89 (Hammamet, 2016) - Promoting the use of information and communication technologies to bridge the financial inclusion gap](https://www.itu.int/pub/publications.aspx?lang=en&parent=T-RES-T.89-2016). At the 2018 Plenipotentiary Conference, the United States supported the adoption of Res. 204 (Dubai, 2018) on the “Use of ICTs to bridge the financial inclusion gap.”

The adoption of these Resolutions, however, does not entitle the ITU, and in particular ITU-T Study Group 3, to expand its scope and mandate beyond the ICT/telecom sector in addressing the needs of mobile financial services (MFS).

**2 Discussion**

Currently, the work programme of [Question 12/3](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-T/studygroups/2017-2020/03/Pages/q12.aspx) on “Tariffs, Economic and Policy Issues Pertaining to Mobile Financial Services (MFS)” and its associated [Work Items](https://www.itu.int/ITU-T/workprog/wp_search.aspx?sg=3&q=12) are entirely based on the output of the former Focus Group on Digital Financial Service ([FG DFS](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-T/focusgroups/dfs/Pages/default.aspx)).

FG DFS, which was funded and supported by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation as well as a broad range of multistakeholder experts covering both the telecom and financial sectors, issued more than [85 policy recommendations and 28 technical reports](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-T/focusgroups/dfs/Pages/deliverables.aspx) to support the implementation of a digital financial inclusion strategy and the promotion of MFS.

There are many policy recommendations as well as technical reports (or parts thereof) issued by FG DFS that are intended to the banking/financial sector and to regulators that are clearly outside the jurisdiction of the ITU. They are also outside the target audience of the ITU. A substantial body of this work is currently ongoing through the Financial Inclusion Global Initiative ([FIGI](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-T/extcoop/figisymposium/Pages/default.aspx)), co-organized by the ITU, which is the more relevant audience.

While TSAG endorsed the output of FG DFS at its meeting in May 2017, it was clearly not the intent of TSAG, nor the intent of the experts of FG DFS, that each output of FG DFS should have a corresponding ITU-T text (either as a Recommendation, Report, etc.).

In fact, converting the output of FG DFS to ITU-T text, subject to additional modifications and revisions outside the peer review of the FG DFS experts, would undermine the credible work of the FG DFS. Indeed, the Standardization Committee for Vocabulary (SCV) already noted that the “Digital Financial Services Glossary” we adopted without change at last year’s meeting requires editing to make the terms and format consistent with ITU-T standards, [SG3-TD137/GEN](https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.itu.int%2Fdms_inf%2Fitu-t%2Fmd%2F17%2Fsg03%2Ftd%2F190423%2FGEN%2FT17-SG03-190423-TD-GEN-0137!!MSW-E.docx&data=02%7C01%7CCFrank%40ntia.gov%7C2c0ab2ab33ff4b12f1f808d6b77f0be4%7Cd6cff1bd67dd4ce8945dd07dc775672f%7C0%7C1%7C636898153625966961&sdata=tpqbSxdxIc%2BKCmPOyBrSrRLWHANrBfX5HK0NbiITV8A%3D&reserved=0).

**3 Proposal**

If necessary, the United States does not object to converting the output of FG DFS to ITU-T Technical Reports, provided that they address the needs of MFS, and in response to Res. 89 (Hammamet, 2016) or Res. 204 (Dubai, 2018).

The United States does not support the conversion of the output of FG DFS to ITU-T Recommendations, unless such a Recommendation provides an “added value” to the ICT/telecom sector in terms of specific guidance that is not currently covered by the FG DFS report.

Such Recommendation(s) must also be entirely within the mandate of the ITU, namely, addressing the needs of the ICT/telecom sector, and not related to the banking/financial sector. Such Recommendation(s) should not contain any provision(s) that are incumbent upon the banking/financial sector, upon which ITU-T Recommendations cannot be imposed.

The United States seeks a comprehensive review/discussion on the work programme of Q12/3 aimed at understanding the goals and objectives of each of the current and proposed work items consistent with this proposal.

The United States appreciates the work undertaken in Q12/3. This work, however, must demonstrate an “added value” above and beyond the output of FG DFS, and must be restricted to the mandate of the ITU consistent with Res. 89 (Hammamet, 2016) and Res. 204 (Dubai, 2018).

The United States requests that this contribution be made available publicly without restriction.

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