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| The International Teleocmmunication Union - Connecting the World. | | **International telecommunication union**  **Telecommunication Standardization Bureau** | |  | |
|  | | | Geneva, 4 May 2020 | | |
| **Ref:** | | | **TSB Circular 247** | | **To:**  - Administrations of Member States of the Union;  - ITU-T Sector Members;  - ITU-T Associates;  - ITU Academia  **Copy to:**  - The Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of Study Groups;  - The Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau;  - The Director of the Radiocommunication Bureau | | |
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| **Subject: Insights on Digital Financial Services during COVID-19 Webinar Series   (Fully Virtual Meetings)** | | | | | |

Dear Sir/Madam,

1 The International Telecommunication (ITU) is organizing a series of webinars on [**Insights on Digital Financial Services during COVID-19**](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-T/webinars/Pages/dfs.aspx)with the objectives of discussing the **innovative applications of telecommunications services, digital payments and fintech, in addressing the social distancing related challenges, triggered by** COVID-19. The webinar will share lessons learned from countries and DFS stakeholders on the diverse measures being implemented. The first three episodes of the Webinar series will be on the topics below:

a) **Using digital financial services to curb the threat of the pandemic** on 14 May 2020 at 3:00 – 4:45 pm CEST

b) **Benefits of Digital ID to enable governments and private sector response to the pandemic – Part 1** on 20 May 2020 at 3:00 – 4:45 pm CEST

c) **Benefits of Digital ID to enable governments and private sector response to the pandemic – Part 2** on 21 May 2020 at 4:00 – 5:45 pm CEST

2 With more than half of the world’s population under lockdown from COVID-19, most of the world’s poor do not have any income. Many do not have a safe place in which to quarantine, most have minimal savings to stock up on food and supplies, and some do not even have access to basic services such as the water needed to wash their hands. Moreover, cash access points have also been limited due to business closure or lack of adequate liquidity. How will the poor and unbanked be able to access financial services during the pandemic?

**3 Telecommunications availability, digital payments and fintech are key to getting money quickly and efficiently to those who need it during the times of the pandemic.** Many governments will rely on safety net payments as the first financial line of defence; and digital mechanisms will play a critical role in enabling these payments to help mitigate the crisis for the poor. Digital channels also provide quicker access to funds, not only to victims but also to those helping to mitigate a crisis.

4 The first episode on **“Using digital financial services to curb the threat of the pandemic”** will explore the technical measures being implemented by governments and private sector to promote the use of digital financial services instead of physical cash; and how digital finance is being used as a lever to influence social distancing and payment transactions during this health crisis. The webinar features key experts from Kenya, Pakistan, Tunisia, Morocco and international organizations discussing the measures that have been implemented to encourage use of digital finance.

5 The second and third episodes on **“Benefits of Digital ID to enable governments and private sector response to the pandemic”** will explore how businesses are increasingly using technology to verify identity remotely, to quickly onboard people onto digital financial services. Using digital financial services and digital id solutions, governments can also effectively distribute social aid to the population during the crisis. This webinar features key experts discussing how digital id solutions can enable remote onboarding of customers and will also explore emerging technologies in the field.

6 Participation in these webinars are open to ITU Member States, Sector Members, Associates and Academic Institutions and to any individual from a country that is a member of ITU who wishes to contribute to the work. This includes individuals who are also members of international, regional and national organizations.

7 All relevant information pertaining to the webinars, (speakers, registration links, remote connection details) will be made available on the [main landing page](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-T/webinars/Pages/dfs.aspx) and the respective event websites below. These websites will be regularly updated as new or modified information becomes available. Participants are requested to check periodically for new updates.

<https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-T/webinars/20200514/Pages/default.aspx>

<https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-T/webinars/20200520/Pages/default.aspx>

<https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-T/webinars/20200521/Pages/default.aspx>

Yours faithfully,

Chaesub Lee  
Director of the Telecommunication  
Standardization Bureau