

Microsoft plans more than \$10bn in Gulf cloud and AI spending through 2030

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Microsoft has served the Middle East since it began operations in the region in 1991. Since then, we've steadily expanded our presence and investments, growing from a local technology provider into a long-term partner to governments, businesses, educational institutions, and civil society organizations. Today, Microsoft is reaffirming that commitment through a new framework focused initially on Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates.

We are expanding our investments in the Middle East with confidence in the region's future as it pursues one of the world's most ambitious AI transformations. We will add to our local partnerships across the region. We will build on the work we have done to stand by these countries' governments and people through a period of significant challenges. As we look to the future, we will invest further in technology, digital resilience, and the people across the region.

From now until 2030, we will pursue the following initiatives with our partners in the region:

Technology

We will expand cloud and AI infrastructure across the Middle East

Microsoft will continue to invest in cloud and AI infrastructure across the region, expanding capacity, launching new capabilities, and delivering long-term infrastructure commitments. We plan to invest more than \$10 billion in capital and operating expenses between now and 2030 in the region.

We will deepen our partnerships through national AI champions

Microsoft will deepen strategic partnerships with governments and national AI champion organizations to translate AI ambition into economic growth, modern public services, and global competitiveness. This builds on work with organizations including HUMAIN, G42, QAI, and the Government of Kuwait, alongside digital-government initiatives such as TAMM in the UAE, SDAIA's ALLaM in Saudi Arabia, TASMU in Qatar, and Microsoft 365 Copilot adoption across the Government of Kuwait.

These partnerships will support responsible AI adoption, sovereign-ready cloud services, Arabic and multilingual AI, and the use of AI to improve services for citizens and businesses. They will be supported by capabilities including Microsoft Sovereign Public Cloud, Sovereign Private Cloud, and Project Digital Shield, where relevant and available.

We will invest in subsea and terrestrial connectivity

Digital resilience depends on strong and reliable networks. Protecting subsea and terrestrial connectivity requires sustained cooperation between governments and the private sector, but the foundation of continuity is redundancy. A diverse network of high-capacity routes allows traffic to be rerouted around disruptions, minimizing latency and maintaining critical data flows.

Microsoft has helped expand both the capacity and reliability of digital connectivity across regions through investments in major international subsea cable systems, including SeaMeWe-6, which has landings in Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates, as well as operating a global network spanning more than 275,000 miles of terrestrial and subsea fiber. During network disruptions, Microsoft has demonstrated the value of redundancy by rerouting traffic through Middle East corridors and maintaining service continuity with minimal impact on customers.

Building on this foundation, Microsoft plans to invest more than \$400 million in subsea and terrestrial connectivity

across the Middle East by 2030. This investment will expand capacity, strengthen regional data flows, and support Microsoft's growing cloud and AI infrastructure footprint across the region.

We will build AI infrastructure with the planet in mind

As we expand our cloud and AI infrastructure in Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE, we will do so with a focus on responsible growth. Guided by Microsoft's global goals to address carbon, water, waste, and ecosystems, we will work with our lessor partners to ensure that the cloud infrastructure supporting our services advances Microsoft's water-positive ambitions, including by prioritizing zero-water cooling technologies where feasible.

Water resilience is particularly important across the Middle East. Building on Microsoft's global experience advancing water stewardship through water reuse, replenishment, and innovative water management solutions, we will work with governments and local stakeholders to identify opportunities that advance responsible water stewardship across the region.

As AI accelerates economic opportunity across the Middle East, expanding access to clean energy will be essential to ensuring this growth is sustainable. We will also collaborate with regulators, utilities, and our lessor partners to help create the market conditions needed to expand carbon-free electricity procurement and stimulate new clean energy investment. By combining infrastructure investment with local partnerships and innovation, we aim to support the region's energy and water priorities while helping build the sustainable foundations needed for long-term AI-led economic growth.

Digital resilience

We will launch a new Middle East digital resilience initiative

Conflict in the Middle East has reinforced the connection between digital resilience and digital sovereignty. Microsoft has worked with customers to support business continuity through resilience options tailored to different operational and regulatory needs. Going forward, Microsoft will make digital resilience a cornerstone of its Middle East strategy, helping organizations strengthen continuity and recovery through digital resilience assessments, reference architectures, readiness guidance, continuity planning, and enablement programs that help identify vulnerabilities, protect critical data, and build tested recovery capabilities.

We will strengthen data protection, privacy, and business continuity

Microsoft will expand our existing commitments on data-protection sovereignty and business continuity to eligible governments and customers in Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE. These are designed to give organizations greater confidence in how their data, systems, and operations are protected while maintaining continuity in times of uncertainty. They will be complemented by Microsoft's growing sovereign-cloud portfolio, including Sovereign Public Cloud and Sovereign Private Cloud capabilities, together with Project Digital Shield and other capabilities that support security, privacy, transparency, and operational resilience.

We will expand and strengthen cybersecurity cooperation

As Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE accelerate their digital transformation, cybersecurity has become a core pillar of national and economic security. As governments, critical infrastructure, and economies become more connected, cyber threats and influence operations can have consequences that extend far beyond physical borders. That's why we are announcing that we are deepening our partnerships with the cybersecurity authorities in these countries.

A network of dedicated Microsoft cybersecurity champions in Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE will help governments translate these resources into action and connect national priorities with expertise across Microsoft. Stronger cybersecurity benefits far more than individual networks. It helps build trust to ensure digital transformation will succeed.

We will advance responsible AI through governance, assurance, and inclusion

Microsoft will work with governments, businesses, researchers, and civil society organizations across the Middle East to help people and institutions benefit from new technology. As AI advances, realizing its full potential will require not only access to powerful technology, but the governance, assurance, and skills required to deploy it confidently and responsibly.

We will help strengthen AI governance capabilities across the region and support practical approaches to testing, evaluating, and assurance systems. We will also expand collaboration with the Responsible AI Future Foundation (RAIFF), co-founded with G42 and the Mohamed bin Zayed University of Artificial Intelligence (MBZUAI), to support the development and sharing of responsible AI practices and evaluation tools that can be applied across high-impact AI use cases in the Middle East and beyond.

By helping organizations align with emerging international practices, we aim to strengthen confidence in AI systems, support responsible innovation, enhance global competitiveness, and ensure that the Middle East plays an active role in shaping the future of AI.

We will advance AI for Good research and innovation

Microsoft's AI for Good Lab will continue to support the region through research and partnerships focused on food security, low-resource language development, and climate and disaster resilience. This includes work through initiatives such as the LINGUA program, which supports the development of language technologies for underserved communities.

In partnership with governments, NGOs, nonprofits, and research institutions, the AI for Good Lab will continue developing and scaling AI solutions that address real-world challenges across the Middle East and beyond.

People

We will prepare the next generation for the AI economy

We believe AI should enhance human ambition, strengthen human capability, and help prepare workers to thrive in a changing economy. That is why Microsoft will continue to invest in AI skills, workforce readiness, public-sector capability building, and inclusive talent development across Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE, building on existing commitments to help skill more than 4.2 million people by 2030.

This work includes training for public-sector leaders, students, and workers; initiatives focused on expanding opportunities for women; and partnerships with educational institutions across the region. This work builds on programs such as Saudi Arabia's AI Global Leadership Program, AI Skills 4 Women programs in Saudi Arabia and Qatar, and the Women's Datacenter Academy in Saudi Arabia. Microsoft will also engage with workforce coalitions that can support national talent strategies and policy recommendations.

We will help education communities prepare learners for the AI era

Microsoft is working with governments, educators, institutions, and partners across the Middle East to develop responsible AI principles across primary, secondary, and tertiary education. This includes supporting AI literacy, helping educators integrate AI into teaching and learning, and sharing practical guidance for responsible AI use in educational settings. Across Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE, we will work with local partners to ensure students and educators can benefit from AI safely, responsibly, and effectively and will engage educators, policymakers, industry leaders, and civil society to support practical approaches to AI implementation that reflect local priorities.

We will help empower workers in the AI economy

We will partner with governments, employers, workers, education providers, and other stakeholders to help people adapt to changing workplace demands. Our focus is on practical skills development, workforce readiness, and leadership development that helps countries build competitive economies and create new opportunities for workers in an AI-enabled future.

We will support local and national AI talent priorities across the Middle East

Microsoft is partnering with governments, academic institutions, and civil society organizations to support national talent priorities by advancing AI skills, leadership development, and workforce readiness programs for public-sector leaders, students, underrepresented talent, and people across the Middle East. The goal is to help countries build globally competitive workforces, accelerate innovation, and unlock new economic opportunities in the AI era.

From ambition to impact

While no one can predict the future, one thing is certain: Microsoft has been part of this region's journey for more than 35 years, and we are committed to being a partner for the long term. We look forward to continuing to work

alongside governments, businesses, educators, and communities to help build that future together.