

## Virtual Session

### Hiring a Consultancy Firm for “Developing a Robust Cloud Ecosystem to Encourage Cloud Adoption by Public Sector Entities in Pakistan

Date: 9th April 2025 Time: 10:30 AM

A meeting was convened to discuss the proposed consultancy assignment under the Digital Economy Enhancement Project (DEEP), which aims to develop a robust cloud ecosystem and promote cloud adoption by public sector entities in Pakistan. The session opened with a brief presentation on DEEP, outlining the fragmented nature of public service delivery in the country and the need for a whole-of-government approach enabled through cloud-based infrastructure. The consultancy is expected to facilitate the implementation of the Cloud First Policy and support both federal and provincial entities in transitioning towards cloud platforms.

The floor was opened for questions from interested firms. **Mr. Ahmer Kazi (Jazz)** asked about the level of access consultants would have to end-user organizations for assessing their infrastructure, life cycles, and planning a comprehensive study.

**Response:** It was clarified that under the Cloud First Policy, all public sector organizations are mandated to opt for cloud services over maintaining individual data centers. The selected consultant will be supported by the Ministry in coordinating access to relevant organizations and is expected to assess cloud readiness and raise awareness among public sector entities.

**Mr. Jaffer Askari (McKinsey & Company)** raised two questions: first, whether there was a priority subset of public sector entities for readiness assessment, and second, whether there was any weightage assigned between assessment/strategy and training components.

**Response:** In response, it was highlighted that while prior groundwork was done during the policy formulation, the full potential and volume of cloud demand is yet to be quantified. Firms are expected to propose a structure for the study based on effectiveness. Training of public officials is essential and will be evaluated for its practical impact. The approach to training—centralized, provincial, or organizational—should be detailed in the proposal.

**Mr. Amir Imam (ARTHUR D. LITTLE)** asked whether the market assessment, which includes both public and private sectors, would require consultants to analyze cloud usage in the private sector as well.

**Response:** It was confirmed that although the Cloud First Policy applies only to public sector entities, the consultancy must cover private sector usage to assess the full market of the cloud services in Pakistan.

**Mr. Sajid (Optiwave Technologies Pvt. Ltd)** inquired whether the Ministry would provide a list of public and private sector entities to be included in the study and how data access from the private sector would be ensured.

**Response:** It was explained that while the Ministry will facilitate coordination with federal ministries and provincial IT boards, consultants must engage stakeholders directly to collect and analyze data. The government does not possess an aggregated list of private sector entities, but consultants are expected to determine market demand using their expertise.

**Mr. Aneeq** sought clarification on whether existing cloud service providers could participate in this consultancy and whether their involvement would constitute a conflict of interest.

**Response:** It was clarified that cloud providers may participate if they meet the RFP criteria. There is no perceived conflict unless flagged under World Bank procurement rules, which will be reviewed further.

**Mr. Faisal Waheed (Inara Technologies)** asked whether any prior studies had been conducted by the Ministry on this subject and if those materials could be shared.

**Response:** The Ministry confirmed that a preliminary assessment was carried out in 2021 during the policy formulation phase. Although it was basic and non-exhaustive, it may be shared post internal review to guide consultants in developing a comprehensive study.

**Mr. Zeeshan (bikotech.biz)** asked if private firms involved in the sector assessment study could simultaneously contribute to this consultancy.

**Response:** The Ministry stated that such involvement is permissible unless determined otherwise under conflict-of-interest provisions. A related question followed, asking if a firm engaged in the digital sector assessment study could also bid for this consultancy. The Ministry responded that this is likely acceptable, but final clarification will be sought from the World Bank.

**Mr. Zain (International Consulting Associates Pvt. Ltd – iConsult)** asked whether there was any plan to extend the submission deadline.

**Response:** The Ministry confirmed that no extension is currently under consideration and the published timeline will be followed.

**Mr. Zeeshan (bikotech.biz)** further inquired about the post-submission process and decision timeline.

**Response:** It was stated that presentations would likely be held within 20 days of submission, and the evaluation process is expected to conclude within one month, depending on the number and complexity of applications received.

In response to the two questions pertaining to potential conflict of interest for firms that may arise in case a cloud service provider also intends to participate in this EOI, please refer to ***“Section III, paragraphs. 3.14, 3.16, and 3.17 of the World Bank's "Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers" September 2023, setting forth the World Bank's policy on conflict of interest”***.

The meeting concluded with a reiteration of the importance of detailed, well-structured proposals that emphasize both strategic planning and effective implementation.