

QATAR FINANCIAL SECTOR

SECTOR INSIGHTS



thebusinessyear



BANKING SMART

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As Qatar's first independent sharia-compliant bank, Lesha Bank acts as an investment partner in offering attractive, premium investment opportunities and innovative financial solutions with local, regional, and international reach.

How do you assess Qatar's financial sector stability?

Qatar's financial sector stability is underpinned by a combination of factors, primarily its substantial oil and gas wealth and its commitment to economic diversification. Despite external challenges such as regional diplomatic tensions or fluctuating global energy prices, we believe Qatar's financial sector remains robust due to its strong reserves and strategic economic planning. Strong ties with global partners, particularly through liquefied natural gas exports contribute to financial security. Qatar's proactive approach to international investments and acquisitions also diversifies its economic base and financial risk. These factors collectively support Qatar's financial sector to position as a cornerstone of Qatar's economic strength, potentially facilitating growth and stability.

What strategies has Lesha Bank implemented to adapt to global economic trends and technological advancements in the financial sector?

On the tech side, Lesha Bank has focused on staying innovative and improving how we operate. By rolling out advanced digital tools and streamlining our processes along with Cloud based CRM and state of the art ERP solution, we have been able to offer better service to our clients and make our internal operations run more smoothly. We are also committed to continuing the development of innovative financial products to try and meet the evolving needs of both local and global markets, all while sticking to sharia principles. We have also built strong partnerships with some of the world's top fund and asset managers to co-invest in unique opportunities across different regions and industries. These collaborations have been great for bringing in cutting-edge solutions and expanding the range of services we can offer. Our sustainability efforts also made significant progress. A number of our US based real estate investments earned LEED certifications, which are in line with global sustainability standards. On top of that, we saw improved ratings on the Qatar Stock Exchange's Sustainability and ESG dashboard, which highlights our dedication to responsible investing.

What initiatives have been taken by Lesha Bank to strengthen Anti-Money Laundering (AML) measures within its operations and to align with

Qatar's financial sector goals in this regard?

Our organization emphasizes a strong culture of ethics, transparency, and integrity, led by the board of directors and senior management, who actively oversee compliance and AML performance. We have implemented robust AML policies aligned with QFCRA Rules, Qatari laws, and FATF recommendations. Adopting a risk-based approach, we proactively identify and mitigate risks associated with our business, customers, and geographic connections. Our AML processes are optimized for efficient investigations, streamlined onboarding, and comprehensive reviews. We maintain reliable control programs to ensure compliance. Embracing technology and innovation, we use client and transaction screenings while investing in people and their skills to leverage data effectively. Regular training sessions are conducted for board members, senior management, and employees across the bank to enhance awareness of regulatory expectations and industry trends, reinforcing our commitment to combating money laundering and terrorist financing.

What are Lesha Bank's key priorities and strategies for the coming years?

We are excited about the future as we expand our global presence and tap into promising markets through partnerships with top-tier fund and asset managers. This allows us to broaden our range of investment solutions, ensuring tailored options for eligible individual and institutional clients alike. These sharia-compliant investments are designed to deliver unique opportunities while helping us potentially maintain a competitive edge. Our focus on diversifying investments across regions and asset classes is a key part of our strategy. This approach not only helps manage risks, but also possibly enhances returns for our shareholders and clients, reinforcing our commitment to targeting long-term sustainable growth. Even with geopolitical challenges in the region, we are confident in the strength of our business model. Through strategic initiatives and a diversified approach, we aim to continue driving growth, creating value for our shareholders and clients, and contributing positively to Qatar's banking sector. ✪

BIO

Mohamed Ismael Al-Emadi serves as CEO of Lesha Bank, bringing with him over 17 years of extensive and diverse experience in the banking sector. He has honed his expertise across several banking areas, including corporate, retail, private, international, and investment banking. Al-Emadi's leadership extends to his position as the chairman of Oryx Corniche Developments QPJSC. Prior to joining Lesha Bank, he was the group chief business officer at Masraf Al Rayan.