

# Arab Bank MENA Fund

Performance Report 31.03.21

A fund of the Arab Bank MENA Fund Company B.S.C. (Closed)

NAV PER SHARE

\$8.58

## OBJECTIVES OF THE FUND

The Arab Bank MENA Fund is an open ended mutual fund that offers investors the opportunity to invest in the capital markets of the Middle East and North Africa region (MENA), with a particular focus on listed equities. The Fund aims to achieve an annual average net return in the range of 10% to 15% over a full investment cycle. The Fund aims to carry a lower volatility than that of the market, by dynamically rotating across asset classes, geographies and sectors, depending on market conditions.

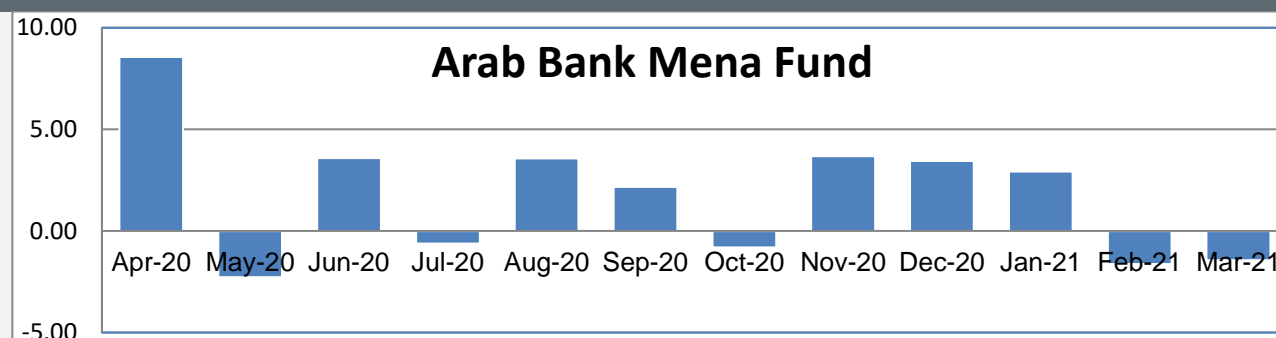
## KEY FEATURES

Domicile	Kingdom of Bahrain	Valuation point	Monthly, last business day of the month
Reference currency	USD	Minimum subscription	USD 25,000 & USD 1,000 thereafter
Fund assets	USD 13,252,277	Dealing frequency	Monthly, 5 business days prior to month end
Launch date	October 2005	Fund manager	Al Arabi Investment Group Co (AB Invest)
Administrator	Gulf Clearing Company	BBG code	ARABMNA BI Equity

## MONTHLY PERFORMANCE (%)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Y.T.D.
<b>Arab Bank MENA Fund</b>													
2021	2.93	-1.63	-1.44										-0.20
2020	0.21	-3.33	-16.49	8.57	-2.27	3.59	-0.63	3.57	2.17	-0.81	3.68	3.45	-0.52
2019	2.05	0.94	1.07	2.48	-1.86	0.33	3.65	-2.17	-0.23	-0.65	-0.32	1.80	7.13
2018	0.23	-0.81	0.79	2.30	-1.19	0.37	-1.14	-0.73	-0.31	-0.31	-0.77	-0.57	-2.18
2017	1.01	0.32	1.39	0.78	-1.70	0.97	0.22	-1.03	0.65	-0.57	-3.49	-0.11	-1.65
2016	-10.85	6.29	1.49	2.17	-1.11	-0.06	1.35	-0.90	-1.29	-1.26	5.06	2.19	2.05

## MONTHLY RETURN OVER THE PAST TWELVE MONTHS



## RETURN PERCENTAGES

1 month	-1.44%	3 months	-0.20%	Since inception	-14.18%
6 months	6.17%	12 months	22.72%		

## PERFORMANCE STATISTICS

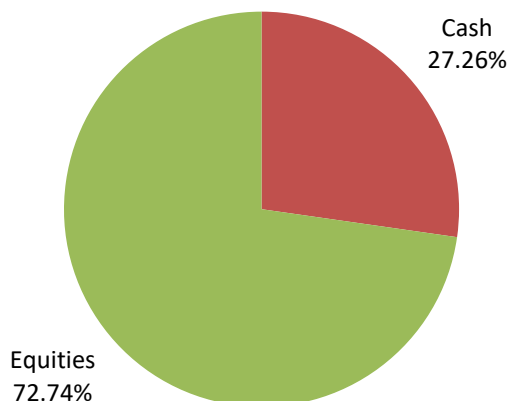
	The Fund
Annualized return	-1.0%
Annualized volatility	13.8%
Sharpe ratio	NM
Maximum month	13.7%
Minimum month	-23.5%
% Positive months	54.3%
Worst 12 months	-74%
Best 12 months	118.7%

## TOP TEN HOLDINGS

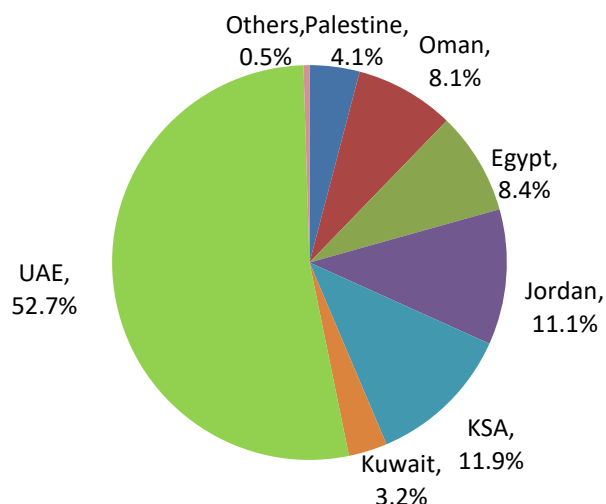
	Country	%
Dubai Islamic Bank	UAE	14.02%
Aramex	UAE	10.09%
Emaar Properties Company	UAE	8.18%
OOREDOO OMR	Oman	5.93%
Saudi Airlines Catering	KSA	5.73%
Abu Dhabi Commercial Bank	UAE	5.09%
Palestine Telecommunications Company	Palestine	2.98%
SAMBA Financial Group	KSA	2.90%
Arab Bank	Jordan	2.82%
Eastern Company for Tobacco	Egypt	2.74%



### ASSET ALLOCATION



### GEOGRAPHIC ALLOCATION (EQUITIES)



### COMMENTARY

MENA equity indices continued their relentless move upwards, surging again in March for the fifth straight month as recovery hopes heightened and the fiscal stimulus measures continued to inflate asset prices. The S&P Pan Arab Investable Index gained a whopping 5.72% (YTD 10.13%), and the Dow Jones MENA Index was up by 5.12% (YTD 9.74%). On the other hand, the Arab Bank MENA Fund shed 1.44% (YTD -0.20%). On the Sharia-compliant front, the Dow Jones Islamic Market MENA Index surged as well, gaining 5.39% (YTD 10.08%). The IIAB MENA Fund though lost 0.40% (YTD -1.05%). The IIAB MENA Feeder Fund consequently was down by 0.47% (YTD -1.25%).

The region's capital market performances varied during the month with extreme movements at either end. The Saudi Arabian TASI recorded the best performance of any index, surging by an incredible 8.34% (YTD 14.02%) followed by the Abu Dhabi Stock Exchange which was up by 4.40% (YTD 17.19%). The Kuwait Premier Market, the Omani Capital Market, the Qatari index and the Jordanian ASE index rounded up the month's gainers, going up by 2.71% (YTD 4.52%), 2.67% (YTD 1.36%), 2.52% (YTD -0.33%) and 0.62% (YTD 6.94%) respectively. On the other hand the Egyptian Stock Exchange was this month's biggest loser, shedding an incredible 8.30% (YTD -2.55%) with the Bahraini Index coming in at a distant second with a loss of 0.57% (YTD -2.13%) while the Dubai Financial Market shed 0.05% (YTD 2.34%).

Global capital markets were also predominantly up during March. In the U.S., the S&P 500 Index shot up by 4.24% (YTD 5.77%) while the Dow Jones surged 6.62% (YTD 7.76%). In Europe, indices also enjoyed a very strong month. The French CAC 40 Index surged 6.38% (YTD 9.29%), the German DAX went up by 8.86% (YTD 9.40%) and the FTSE 100 shot up 3.55% (YTD 3.92%). Asia on the other hand was the exception to the rule, so while the Nikkei index continued its momentum upwards by rising 1.44% (YTD 7.07%), the Hang Seng shed 2.08% (YTD 4.21%) and the Shanghai Composite lost 2.08% (YTD -0.90%).

March witnessed a number of market-supporting events, most important of which was President Joe Biden signing the USD1.9 trillion pandemic-relief bill into law, capping his first major legislative achievement and allowing aid to flow to tens of millions of individuals, businesses and state and local governments. Also in the US, Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell said current monetary policy is appropriate and there's no reason to push back against a surge in Treasury yields over the past month. The increase in yields had triggered a debate on whether the central bank would push back against the move which could be a prelude to Fed intervention, much to the relief of equities' investors.

In regional news, Oman will start implementing 5% value-added tax (VAT) from April 16, Oman News Agency reported. It is estimated that VAT will contribute 1.5% towards the country's gross domestic product (GDP) and raise around OMR400 million (USD1 billion) per year for the country's exchequer. The implementation of VAT comes in line with the GCC framework that was agreed between the six nation bloc.

In Dubai, ready property sales transactions surged to a three-year high in February, as more buyers snapped up ready units, the latest official data showed. Deals in the secondary market made up the biggest chunk (67%) of the total 3,787 transactions recorded for the month, valued at approximately AED7.43 billion (USD2 billion),



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In energy news, Abu Dhabi began selling futures contracts for its oil and then shipping the barrels from Fujairah, this will mark an aggressive shift by Abu Dhabi. It hopes to change the way nearly one-fifth of the world's crude is priced. Persian Gulf states pump nearly 20 million barrels of oil a day and Abu Dhabi wants the futures for its flagship Murban grade to become the region's main benchmark. The region has traditionally priced its barrels based on benchmarks from other regions.

The appetite for investment in equities is at historical levels, pushing up asset prices and making it more difficult to separate the wheat from the chaff. We continue to stick to our strategy of investing in fundamentally sound names on the basis of value. We believe this will offer our investors the best risk-return payoffs for the foreseeable future as the appetite for risk tapers off and the economies regain some semblances of normality after the coronavirus crisis eases with vaccinations.

## INVESTMENT METHODOLOGY AND EDGE

AB Invest is one of the most experienced and fastest growing MENA investment managers operating out of Jordan. AB Invest provides its clients with a number of MENA-focused investment solutions on conventional and Sharia-compliant bases. Our investment process is based on rigorous fundamental analysis with a view on delivering superior risk-adjusted returns, using a combination of top-down and bottom-up approaches. Our deep knowledge of the markets in which we invest allows us to deliver consistent returns while prudently managing risk.

## DISCLAIMER

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Arab Bank MENA Fund is a Fund created and sponsored by the Arab Bank MENA Fund Company B.S.C. (Closed) and is an open-ended investment Fund registered under the Laws of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

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Past performance should not be taken as a guide to the future. The value of investments can fall as well as rise.

