



Financial literacy and investor awareness form a key pillar of Bahrain Bourse’s strategy. Stock exchanges play an important and growing role in promoting and facilitating investor education and awareness, which ultimately results in higher investor empowerment and protection. Recognising the positive correlation between investor education, financial literacy and market growth, Bahrain Bourse continues to dedicate resources toward promoting and instilling financial acumen at a young age.

Education and training are key to supporting sustainable economic development for the Kingdom of Bahrain, and financial educational programmes (TradeQuest, Smart Investor, Investment Academy) offered by the Bourse over the past 10 years have allowed participants to enrich their knowledge and gain a deeper understanding of investment products, market practices and current trends. The overall goal is to cultivate financial literacy and promote inclusive investment products.

TradeQuest

Our journey towards investor awareness started with the TradeQuest programme, which was tailor-made for high school and university students. The programme is a competitive financial simulation which kicked-off 22 years ago and is geared to giving students a realistic experience of trading in the stock market. TradeQuest also focuses on developing students’ presentational, teamworking and time management skills. Winning teams are financially rewarded and recognised at the end of the programme.

Over the years, given the popularity and success of the programme, Bahrain Bourse has expanded it to serve more than 200 students per annum across 21 educational institutions, encompassing private and public schools as well as universities.

Smart Investor

As part of efforts to expand its reach and broaden its financial literacy programmes to target students at a younger age, Smart Investor was launched three years ago for elementary school students in collaboration with INJAZ Bahrain. The scheme aims to equip elementary students with basic concepts related to money management, savings and smart financial planning through interactive “edutainment” activities to assist them in making sound financial decisions. The programme consists of seven themed sessions designed to equip students with the following concepts: Thinking, specifying, planning, execution, saving, progression and evaluation. Since its launch, more than 15,000 students have benefitted from Smart Investor.

Investment Academy

The Investment Academy was launched in November 2017 as a collaborative effort between Bahrain Bourse and Bahrain Institute of Banking of Finance (BIBF) which offers various public courses as well as professional certifications related to the capital market. The response from the market has been overwhelming, with more than 2,000 people benefitting from the programmes since the launch of the academy, while more than 400 professional certifications were awarded. The Investment Academy has also worked with recognised institutions including Middle East Investor Relations Association to offer Certified Investor Relations Officer (CIRO) training.

Under the umbrella of the Investment Academy, capital market training includes the Investment Representative Programme (Based on Series 7) and the Capital Market Regulatory Certification Programme (Based on Series 79) along with dealing room simulation courses to meet dynamic and growing market requirements for specialised capital markets training. Monthly awareness sessions are also being conducted, targeting the public for fundamental saving and investment skills. The sessions are being offered at three levels: beginner, intermediate and advanced.

Awareness

To further amplify and raise awareness on financial literacy educational programmes, Bahrain Bourse welcomes visits from student delegations to introduce them to the capital markets. In addition, regular career days are held at university fairs, and regular awareness material is published via social media channels. Hosting frequent awareness events aims to strengthen Bahrain Bourse's ties to the local community and raise financial awareness to the general public. Bahrain Bourse aims to promote interactive investor education programmes based on investors' experience and feedback.

Bahrain Bourse's latest news, statistics and data can be found here – www.bahrainbourse.com – or accessed via its LinkedIn page: @Bahrainbourse.