Al Baraka Bank Sudan approached Path Solutions to transform the bank into an intelligent one with *i*MAL*BI solution

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Established in 1984, Al Baraka Bank Sudan is headquartered in Al Baraka Tower Qasr Avenue, in Khartoum, Sudan. The bank unit is affiliated to Al Baraka Banking Group which is a Bahrain Joint Stock Company licensed as an Islamic wholesale bank by the Central Bank of Bahrain and is listed on Bahrain Bourse and Nasdaq Dubai stock exchanges. Eight foreign subsidiaries of Al Baraka Banking Group are *i*MAL users. Al Baraka Sudan offers corporate, retail, treasury, and investment banking services. The bank occupies a leading position in the field of improving Islamic financial and banking services in Sudan. Moreover, the bank is a pioneer in the areas of electronic banking services. The bank has a presence all over Sudan with 26 branches spread across different cities.

According to Mohamed Omer Ahmed Aburaid, Manager - Information Technology at Al Baraka Bank Sudan, the bank initially had two offers from two different vendors for the implementation of the Business Intelligence (BI) module. However, the bank chose Path Solutions as its vendor for the implementation of *i*MAL*BI solution since *i*MAL is the core banking platform of the bank. Al Baraka decided on an upgrade as it was facing technical issues with the bank's existing BI system. The initial timeline decided for the project upgrade was around four to five months. Path Solutions successfully completed the upgrade earlier than expected.

Developing Dashboards

Path Solutions assigned two on-site resources with the other two from the bank's IT department, in addition to one business resource from each business department to test the related dashboards.

The upgrade was bank-wide and covered the implementation of 24 dashboards. These dashboards covered around eight to ten banking areas, i.e. credit, HR, financing, marketing, trade finance, liquidity, and customer service management, among others.

"The key benefits achieved from this upgrade are the ability to utilise analysis techniques, ratios, formulas, and computation procedures to monitor online real-time profitability and the bank's performance

The bank considers the HR dashboard an important one. This dashboard provides information on the number of employees and their status of employment which enables the executive management to make decisions regarding the HR process.

The Financing dashboard is another important dashboard for the bank that provides information on the provision amount and information on finance and credit. Another effective dashboard is the Executive dashboard that highlights the bank's performance with great visibility and insight using organisational KPIs, metrics, and data, including response time to customers' requests, number of transactions per day, and the top 10 teller performance.

The BI solution was highly parameterised and flexible in a manner that required a minimum amount of customisation. Some customisation was made to the module to meet the regulations laid out by the Central Bank of Sudan. Before the implementation, Al Baraka used to create new reports manually. However, post implementation, the bank leverages BI to build customised reports.

One of the challenges highlighted by the bank was the migration issue faced in the Financing module. However, the issue was quickly

resolved through internal meetings with the bank's business units and Path Solutions' senior consultants. From a technical point of view, using the new technology was a bit challenging too, like getting used to the new features and functionalities. The bank did not face any major challenges but minimal technical issues that were overcome with the help of Path Solutions' team.

The bank's expectations from this implementation was to enable the management to make faster decisions. The implementation was carried using sophisticated BI tools. Post implementation, the executive management was able to monitor all sensitive information of the bank seamlessly, enabling ease of decision-making.

Key Benefits

According to Aburaid, the key benefits achieved from this upgrade are the ability to utilise analysis techniques, ratios, formulas, and computation procedures to monitor online real-time profitability and the bank's performance.

Moreover, the BI solution added robust capabilities to the bank making the executive management's decision-making easier. For instance, there is a unit in the bank's credit department that aids the credit manager and executive manager to take decisions regarding the credit process. Before the implementation, around four people were responsible for preparing credit-based information to the management. Post implementation, the information was obtained with just a click and assisted the credit and executive managers to undertake fast decisions regarding the bank's credit process.

The enterprise data warehouse has assimilated all of the bank's data into a centralised hub, where technical users can create reports without being concerned about data validity, and the bank's business users carry out their ad-hoc analysis and decisions accordingly.

Al Baraka Sudan had a good experience working with Path Solutions on the BI implementation. The bank appreciates the assistance offered by Path Solutions throughout the project implementation process.

The new *i*MAL*BI solution has provided the bank with the ability to:

- Have a single source of truth for all the bank's operations
- Take advantage of an intermediary database where all the bank's data is merged and saved in an easy manner
- Monitor daily and monthly financial KPIs
- Build their own dashboards and create self-service reports by exploring *i*MAL*BI data marts
- Collaborate internally with stakeholders
- Have an enterprise data warehouse that covers all the bank's business areas historically
- Leverage the cloud while respecting compliance and regulations
- Visualize and schedule alerts based on dashboards, which are customized and personalized for each audience, allowing stakeholders to receive email alerts based on their preference
- Reveal insights on the bank's data
- Achieve full mobility by doing bank's analysis on mobile phones and/or tablets while outside the office

The bank's advice to other banks that plan to go through a similar implementation or upgrade is to be clear with their requirements regarding the digital transformation process with the *i*MAL core banking platform. The bank considers it very important to select the right BI solution incorporating the best analytics tools.

As to the bank's future roadmap, Al Baraka Sudan has already begun its digital transformation journey in collaboration with Path Solutions. It plans to digitise and automate more areas across the bank in the coming years.

KEY FACTS

al Baraka

Bank: Al Baraka Bank Sudan
Headquarters: Al Baraka Tower Qasr Avenue, Khartoum, Sudan
Supplier: Path Solutions
Solution: *i*MAL*BI
Timeline: 4 months