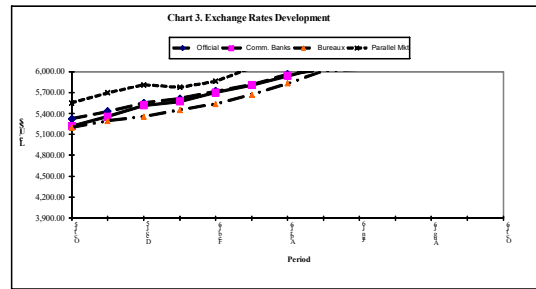


Currency In Circulation and Demand Deposits contracted by 0.64 per cent (Le16.52bn) in October 2016 partly because of tight liquidity conditions in the market and contractionary monetary policy stance by the Central Bank. Growth in Private Sector credit further increased to 2.55 per cent (Le31.17bn) in October 2016 from 2.31 per cent (Le27.55bn) recorded in September 2016. The expansion was as a result of gradual growth recovery in real sector activities. Reserve Money (RM) remained subdued with a marginal growth of 1.83 per cent (Le30.15bn) and this growth was manifested by increase in Currency Issued to the tune of 2.02 per cent (Le24.94bn). The growth in Currency Issued could be partly attributed to the additional BSL bridge loan to government. However, Bankers' Reserve declined by 0.54 per cent (Le1.97bn) partly reflecting tight liquidity condition in the banking industry. Yields on Government Securities continued to increase as a result of strong appetite for Government borrowing and tight liquidity conditions in the Market. The average annual yield on 91-days, 182-days and 364-days expanded from 7.96 per cent, 12.03 per cent and 19.34 per cent in September 2016 to 9.50 per cent, 14.69 per cent and 24.47 per cent, respectively. However, interest rates on Banks' Deposits declined across all tenure. The monthly average interest rate on Savings, 1-month, 3-months, 6-months and 12-months Time Deposits decreased from 2.54 per cent, 2.80 per cent 3.02 percent, 4.28 per cent and 5.80 per cent in September 2016 to 1.94 per cent, 2.37 per cent, 2.44 per cent, 3.62 per cent and 5.47 per cent respectively in October 2016. The average lending rate remained sticky downward at the range of 18.23 – 24.95 per cent partly reflecting high operational costs and risk premium as well as conscious lending behaviour of Banks. The wide spread between Lending and Deposit rates indicates that there are still structural challenges in the Banking sector.



followed by the Official market, Bureaux, Commercial banks and the Parallel market rates which depreciated by 5.98 percent to Le6,877.24/US\$1; 4.21 per cent to Le6,657.33/US\$1; 3.94 per cent to Le7,045.82/US\$1 and 1.64 per cent to Le7,380.95/US\$1, respectively. The premium between the Official and the Parallel rates narrowed by 8.75 per cent from Le851.43/US\$1 in the preceding month to Le589.89/US\$1 in the review month.

International Reserves

Gross external reserves of the Bank of Sierra Leone decreased to US\$479.03mn (6.19%), from US\$510.66mn recorded in September, 2016. This development was on account of increased outflows of US\$23.46mn, which outweighed inflows of US\$5.93mn, indicating a net outflow of US\$17.53mn. Foreign exchange inflows amounted to US\$5.93mn during the review month compared to the US\$6.35mn recorded in September 2016. The inflows largely constituted export receipts amounting to US\$1.65mn of which, US\$0.23mn was royalty payment from Shandong Iron and Steel Group Co. Ltd; Fishing Royalty/license during the month amounted to US\$0.49mn, Other mining receipts (US\$0.32mn), Diamond Exporter's income tax (US\$0.29mn) and Other Government receipts (US\$ 0.46mn). Aid Disbursement/BOP support amounted to US\$3.62mn with payments from UK/DfID (Poverty Reduction Budget Support) accounting for US\$3.06mn while US\$0.56mn was in respect of ongoing Islamic Development Bank (IDB) projects. Foreign exchange outflows amounted to US\$23.46mn during the reporting month. The major outflows included Bank of Sierra Leone's Sales of foreign exchange in the interbank market operations amounting to US\$12.0mn; Other government expenditures (US\$4.25mn); Embassies/missions payment (US\$1.45mn); New Infrastructure projects comprising roads, electricity, water and energy amounting to US\$1.91mn, and debt service payments to various creditors amounting to US\$1.57mn.

Exchange Rates Developments

Exchange rate development during the month of October 2016, showed similar trend as reported in September 2016. This development is explained by increased demand for foreign exchange over and above the supply. On the buying front, the Official rate depreciated by 5.98 percent to Le6,741.06/US\$1; while the Bureaux market rate, the Commercial Bank, and the Parallel market rates depreciated by 4.31 per cent to Le6,575.58/US\$1; 3.15 per cent to Le6,858.22/US\$1 and 1.65 per cent to Le7,330.95/US\$1, respectively. On the Selling front, the Auction rate depreciated the highest. The Auction rate depreciated by 15.29 percent to Le6,949.33/US\$1;



Notes: n.a - Not Available
** - Nil
N/A - Not Applicable
R - Revised
+ - Provisional

Highlights

Sierra Leone's macroeconomic performance was weak during the month of October 2016, as inflationary pressures persisted during the review month. The national year-on-year inflation rate rose from 11.31 per cent at end September 2016 to 12.56 per cent at end October 2016, while the overall fiscal deficit widened significantly from Le45.43bn in September 2016 to Le158.49bn in October 2016, on account of significant decline in domestic revenue mobilization, marked increase in government's total expenditure and a drop in external grants received during the

million, aimed at improving electricity supply and health care delivery in the country.

Real Sector

Production from the manufacturing sector continued to post mixed trends during the month of October 2016. Production levels increased for beer and stout, maltina, soft drinks, cement, acetylene and confectionery on account of increased demand, while paint, oxygen and common soap recorded declines in production due to limited availability of raw material inputs. Beer and stout, maltina and soft drinks grew by

Table 2. Inflation Rates - National. Table with columns for months (Oct-15 to Sep-16) and rows for various categories like Mineral, Agriculture, Manufactured Goods, etc.

Table 2. Inflation Rates - National. Table with columns for months (Oct-15 to Oct-16) and rows for Annual Inflation Rate, Monthly Inflation Rate, Consumer Price Index.

reporting month. The monthly average exchange rate of the Leone to the United States Dollar depreciated in all segments of the foreign exchange market. Movements in monetary aggregates slightly expanded during the review month, with Broad Money (M2) and Reserve Money (RM) expanding by 0.26 percent and 1.83 per cent, respectively. Gross external reserves position of the Central Bank dropped by 6.19 percent from US\$510.66mn at end September 2016 to US\$479.03mn at end October 2016, on account of total outflows of US\$23.46mn which outweighed total inflows of US\$5.93mn, resulting to a net outflow of US\$17.53mn. On 13th October 2016, the Parliament of Sierra Leone ratified four (4) loan and grant agreements signed between the Government of Sierra Leone and the International Financial Institutions amounting to over US\$120

6.98 per cent to 76.89 thousand cartons, 0.34 per cent to 23.54 thousand cartons and by 1.14 per cent to 78.86 thousand crates, respectively. Cement, acetylene and confectionery production increased by 5.3 per cent to 26.43 thousand metric tons, 10.92 per cent to 23.67 thousand cubic feet and by 1.52 per cent to 196.78 thousand pounds respectively. In contrast, production declines were recorded for paint, oxygen and common soap. Paint production dropped by 4.53 per cent to

