



CENTRAL BANK OF LIBERIA

MONTHLY ECONOMIC REVIEW

NOVEMBER 2021

VOLUME 7 No. 11



The Monthly Economic Review is produced by the Central Bank of Liberia (CBL). Inquiries concerning this publication should be addressed to:

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Price index for agriculture under the non-energy commodities is expected to rise marginally by 1.7 percent due to expected rise in prices of food and beverages in anticipation of rising demand from Europe and USA coupled with rising input cost.

Similarly, the price indices of metal and precious metal for the month of December show the projection to remain 3.7 percent and 0.3 percent at 121.4 and 136.9 respectively, due to rising demand for the commodity in China to restore inventory and high investment cost in the US. However, risk alert over slow climate friendly recovery in advanced economies, limited resources to accelerate economic recovery in emerging economies, as flagged by the World Bank, may have implications for commodity prices.

Table 8: Global Commodity Prices

GLOBAL PRICE	Nov - 20	Sep - 21	Oct - 21	Nov - 21	Percent Change	
					MoM	YoY
	(In price per Unit of Measure)					
Iron ore (US\$/MT)	124.36	124.52	122.91	96.24	(21.70)	-22.61
Gold (US\$/Oz)	1,866.30	1,775.14	1,776.85	1,821.76	2.53	-2.39
Rubber (US\$/MT)	2,300.00	1,790.00	1,870.00	1,930.00	11.45	-16.09
Cocoa Beans (US\$/MT)	2,360.00	2,558.09	2,572.86	2,390.00	(7.11)	1.27
Palm Oil (US\$/MT)	917.81	1,181.38	1,306.90	1,348.07	3.15	46.88
Crude Oil (US\$/BBL)	42.30	72.80	82.06	79.92	(2.61)	88.94
Food Price Index (FAO)	105.45	128.93	133.20	134.40	0.90	27.45
Rice 5% broken (US\$/MT)	489.00	400.00	401.00	400.00	(0.25)	(18.20)
Sugar (US\$/MT)	310.00	431.66	424.39	430.00	1.32	38.71
Commodity Price Index	115.12	108.61	118.98	183.85	54.52	59.70

Source : www.indexmundi.com, <http://www.fao.org/worldfoodsituation/foodpricesindex/en/>
 1/ Commodity Food Price Index includes Cereal, Vegetable Oils, Meat, Seafood, Sugar, Bananas, and Oranges Price Indices
 2/ Commodity Price Index includes both Fuel and Non-Fuel Price Indices

Compared with November in the previous year, the price of palm oil rose by 46.88 percent, from US\$917.81 per metric ton.

7.8 Rice

The price of rice dropped by 0.3 percent to US\$400.00 per metric ton at end November 2021, from US\$401.00 per metric ton in October 2021. The decline was due to supply pressures mounted from increased supplies available for export, coupled with supplier competition to avoid high freight costs and container shortages on demand. On an annualized basis, the price of the commodity declined by 18.2 percent, from US\$489.00 per metric ton in November 2020.

7.9 Cocoa Beans

Cocoa beans price fell to US\$2,390.00 per metric ton in the review month, from US\$2,572.86 per metric ton. This development was on account of concerns on the London and New York cocoa markets about weather condition of unseasonal rainfalls, and restriction caused by the Omicron variant of the COVID-19 that could have negative impact on cocoa beans productions in Ivory Coast, and Ghana, two of the world's major producers of the commodity. Compared to November 2020, the price of cocoa beans increased by 1.3 percent from US\$2,360.00 per metric ton.

7.10 Commodity Outlook

Prospects for commodity prices for the month of December remain the same as in the preceding month of November; based on the World Bank Commodity Outlook. The price indices of energy commodity (mainly crude oil) are forecast to average more than 80 percent for the remaining of the year. However, prices of non-energy commodities (including metal, agricultural products, and food) are forecast to decrease in the near term on account of global recovery and easing of supply constraints.

Price index for agriculture under the non-energy commodities is expected to rise marginally by 1.7 percent due to expected rise in prices of food and beverages in anticipation of rising demand from Europe and USA coupled with rising input cost.

Similarly, the price indices of metal and precious metal for the month of December show the projection to remain 3.7 percent and 0.3 percent at 121.4 and 136.9 respectively, due to rising demand for the commodity in China to restore inventory and high investment cost in the US. However, risk alert over slow climate friendly recovery in advanced economies, limited resources to accelerate economic recovery in emerging economies, as flagged by the World Bank, may have implications for commodity prices.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Monthly Economic Review (MER) is published by the Research, Policy and Planning Department (RPPD) of the Central Bank of Liberia (CBL). It is a regular publication of the Bank that provides a snapshot of economic developments in key sectors (Real, Monetary, Fiscal and External) of the Liberian economy. The MER also highlights the Monetary Policy stance of the CBL and provides synopsis of exchange rate developments in the West African Monetary Zone (WAMZ).

2.0 OVERVIEW

Production statistics from the Real Sector generally showed mixed results in November 2021. Except for diamond, outputs of key minerals (gold and iron ore) in the mining subsector increased due to improvement in weather condition on mining sites during the review period. For the agriculture subsector, rubber production fell during the month on account of inventory accumulation. However, production in the manufacturing subsector was mixed as cement output marginally grew, while output of beverages moderated.

Headline inflation rose to 5.44 percent in November 2021, from 4.42 percent in the preceding month mainly induced by increase in the prices of items relating to restaurants and hotels, housing, water, electricity, gas & other fuels, furnishings, and household equipment & routine household maintenance. Month-on-month, inflation moderated to negative 3.17 percent, from negative 1.85 percent recorded in the previous month, driven by the pass-through effect from the appreciation of the Liberian dollar. Core inflation (inflation excluding food and transportation) grew to 14.20 percent, from 9.14 in October 2021, on account of the Liberian dollar's appreciation against the United States dollar.

The CBL monetary policy stance remained anchored on price stability mainly through the management of Liberian dollar liquidity. As part of the CBL's monetary policy operations, the Bank issued bills at tenors of two-week, one-month, and three-month at an effective annual rate of 20.0 percent during the review month.

From provisional statistics, broad money (M2) growth slightly increased by 0.2 percent to L\$124.92 billion at end-November 2021, on account of a 1.6 percent growth in the net domestic assets (NDA) of banks. Similarly, the estimated stock of Liberian dollar in circulation accelerated marginally to L\$22.90 billion at end-November 2021, led by a 1.4 percent increase in currency outside banks.

The financial soundness indicators of the banking system remained largely favorable in November 2021 as banks were in compliant with most of the regulatory requirements of the CBL. The Return on Assets (ROA) and Return on Equity (ROE) increased during the period. Liquidity Ratio (LR) rose and remained above the 15.0 percent regulatory thresholds by 29.17 percentage points, while Capital Adequacy Ratio (CAR) exceeded the minimum regulatory requirement by 17.47 percentage points. The non-performing loans (NPL) to total loan ratio decreased by 5.12 percentage points to 20.71 percent, from 25.83 percent at end-October 2021.

Provisional statistics of the Government's fiscal operations resulted in a deficit of

7.2 Gold

The price of gold rose by 2.5 percent to US\$1,821.76 in November 2021, from US\$1,776.85 in October 2021 mainly on account of strong inflation expectation in the US, Europe and emerging market economies. Year-on-year comparison showed that the price decreased by 2.4 percent, from US\$1,866.30 reported in November 2020.

7.3 Crude oil (Petroleum) price

Crude oil price decreased by 2.6 percent to US\$79.92 per barrel, from US\$82.06 per barrel, in October 2021 due to weak demand coupled with improvements in weather related supply disruptions in the Gulf of Mexico and production restraints imposed by OPEC and its partners. Compared to November 2020, the price of crude oil increased by 88.9 percent from US\$42.30 per barrel.

7.4 Rubber

The price of rubber increased by 11.6 percent to US\$1,930.00 per metric ton, from US\$1,870.00 per metric ton recorded in the preceding month. The increase was largely due to shifting demand factors in the automobile industry for raw materials required for car manufacturing as the development of electric cars requires higher consumption of rubber in building components to replace those that are currently made from byproducts of petroleum products. Compared to the corresponding month in 2020, the price of the commodity declined by 16.1 percent, from US\$2,300.00 per metric ton.

7.5 Food Price (FAO)

The FAO food price index showed a slight increase of 0.9 percent in the review month compared with the October 2021 index. The persistent rise in the index, especially during the month, was engendered by strong demand for mainly cereal and palm oil products coupled with supply constraints from major exporting countries (Canada, Russia and the United States of America). Further analysis showed that annual price of food rose by 27.5 percent compared with the price in November 2020.

7.6 Sugar

The price of sugar rose by 1.3 percent to US\$430.00 per metric ton from US\$424.39 per metric ton, occasioned by high prices of ethanol. Annual comparison showed that the price of sugar increased by 38.7 percent from US\$310.00 per metric ton in November 2020.

7.7 Palm Oil

The price of palm oil rose by 3.2 percent to US\$1,348.07 per metric ton, from US\$1,306.90 per metric ton in the preceding month, mainly due to concerns over fall in palm oil production in Malaysia as a result of migrant labor shortage.

Relative to the end-of-period (EOP) exchange rate, developments in the currencies of the West African Monetary Zone (WAMZ) were mixed in November 2021. The Gambian Dalasi, Sierra Leonean Leone, and Ghana Cedi weakened against the United States dollar by 2.0 percent, 3.0 percent, and 0.3 percent, respectively. In contrast, the Liberian dollar and Guinea franc appreciated by 5.8 percent and 2.3 percent, respectively, while the Nigerian Naira remained relatively stable at 410.64NGN per 1USD.

The Leone recorded the highest level of depreciation during the month compared to the depreciation recorded in other currencies. Year-on-year comparison showed that except the Liberian dollar and the Guinea franc that strengthened by 10.8 percent and 5.3 percent, respectively, all other currencies of the WAMZ countries weakened against the United States dollar, relative to November 2020 (See Table 7).

Table 7: WAMZ Countries End-of-Period & Liberian Dollar Average Exchange Rates per US Dollar

Rate & Currency	Nov - 20	Sep - 21	Oct - 21	Nov - 21	Appr (+)/Depr (-)	
					MoM	YoY
End-of-Period Exchange Rate y per USD						
Percent change						
GHC	5.71	5.87	5.90	5.92	(0.3)	(3.5)
GMD	50.00	52.29	51.66	52.74	(2.0)	(5.2)
GNF	9,829.12	9,710.65	9,574.24	9,332.90	2.6	5.3
LRD	157.53	170.99	150.34	142.13	5.8	10.8
NGN	379.50	410.30	410.56	410.64	(0.0)	(7.6)
SLL	10,224.02	10,579.89	10,780.93	11,117.56	(3.0)	(8.0)
Average Exchange Rate (LD/USD)						
LD	162.79	171.38	161.95	144.43	12.1	12.7

Source: CBL, WAMA: www.amao-wama.org/
 GHC - Ghanaian Cedi; LD - Liberian Dollar; GMD - Gambian Dalasi; USD – United States Dollar; GNF - Guinean Franc; NGN - Nigerian Naira; SLL—Sierra Leonean Leone; USD – United States Dollar

7.0 GLOBAL COMMODITY PRICE DEVELOPMENTS

The general commodity price index increased during the review period. The rise in commodity price index reflected increase in prices of major commodity groups, including food, and other non-energy commodities such as mineral (mainly gold), and some agricultural products. The movement in prices during the month was basically influenced by demand factors.

7.1 Iron ore

The price of iron ore declined by 21.7 percent to US\$96.24 per metric ton in November 2021, from the price of US\$122.91 per metric ton in the preceding month. This development was attributed to the persistent weak demand for the commodity from mainly China. Compared with the price in the corresponding month of 2020, iron ore price declined by 21.6 percent, from US\$124.36 per metric ton.

from the surplus of 0.4 percent of GDP recorded in the previous month. This development was occasioned by increase in government expenditure that outweighed the rise in revenue. The stock of public debt slightly increased to 51.1 percent of GDP at end-November 2021 but remained in compliance with the ECOWAS regional benchmark of less than 70.0 percent of GDP.

Provisional statistics from Government's fiscal operations showed a surplus of 0.4 percent of GDP, from a deficit of 1.0 percent of GDP reported in the preceding month, induced by fall in Government expenditure. The stock of public debt marginally grew to 50.2 percent of GDP at end-November 2021, due to increase in external debt. However, it remained below the ECOWAS regional benchmark of not exceeding 70.0 percent of GDP.

External sector developments in November 2021 showed that although total merchandise trade increased, the trade deficit worsened to US\$57.36 million, from the US\$38.98 million recorded in the preceding month, mainly due to reduction in total merchandise exports.

Gross International Reserves (GIR) was estimated at US\$646.64 million at end-November 2021, from US\$651.97 million. Although the months of import cover declined to 4.7 months in November 2021, it remained well above the ECOWAS regional threshold of 3.0 months.

At end-November 2021, net inflows of personal remittances moderated by 40.7 percent to US\$27.05 million, on account of a 39.0 percent decline in inward remittances.

The Liberian dollar remained largely stable evidenced by its performance on an end period and period average exchange basis in which the domestic currency strengthened against the US dollar by 5.8 percent and 12.1 percent, respectively during the review period. On the regional front, relative to currencies in the WAMA, the dalasi, cedi and leone weakened against the US dollar, while the Liberian dollar and Guinean franc appreciated against the US dollar. However, the Nigerian Naira remained relatively stable during the period.

3.0 REAL SECTOR & PRICE DEVELOPMENTS

3.1 Production Analyses of Key Commodities

Performances of key production statistics in November 2021 were mixed.

In the mining sector, outputs of all minerals except diamond continued to show improvements due to favorable weather conditions on mining sites. Iron ore output increased to 495,000 metric tons, from a revised 385,000 metric tons in the previous month. Gold output grew by 43.5 percent to 36,216 ounces, from 25,229 ounces produced in October 2021, while the total output of diamond declined by 12.6 percent to 4,650 carats during the month, from 5,321 carats recorded in the previous month.

For the manufacturing subsector, cement production rose slightly by 1.2 percent to 47,079 metric tons, from 46,515 metric tons produced in the preceding month due to demand for the commodity. However, total beverage production declined by 12.5 percent to 1.28 million liters attributed to reduction in production of alcoholic beverages due to decreased demand.

In the agriculture subsector, rubber production reduced by 52.4 percent to 5,167 metric tons, from 10,855 metric tons in the previous month, mainly due to inventory accumulation despite favorable global price of the commodity in the period under review.

3.2 Consumer Prices

For the first time since May 2021, headline inflation slightly rose to 5.44 percent in November, from 4.42 percent in the preceding month mainly induced by increase in the prices of items relating to restaurants and hotels, housing, water, electricity, gas & other fuels, furnishings, and household equipment & routine household maintenance. Conversely, month-on-month inflation moderated to negative 3.17 percent from negative 1.85 percent recorded in October 2021. The pass-through effect from the appreciation of the Liberian dollar remained the key driver for the single digit inflation.

Table 1: Production and Price Statistics

Production	Nov. - 20	Sept. - 21	Oct. - 21	Nov. - 21
	<i>(In Metric ton, Ounce, Carat and Liter)</i>			
Iron Ore (Metric ton)	470,000	365,000	385,000	495,000
Gold (Ounces)	10,949	21,689	25,229	36,216
Diamond (Carat)	3,106	5,004	5,321	4,650
Rubber (Metric ton)	6,150	4,132	10,855	5,167
Cement (Metric ton)	32,837	51,036	46,515	47,079
Total Beverages (liter)	1,198,609	1,159,801	1,456,988	1,275,588
Alcoholic	1,080,292	1,025,058	1,321,913	1,134,002
Non-Alcoholic	118,317	134,743	135,076	141,586

6.2 Personal Remittances

Net inflows of personal remittances decreased by 40.7 percent to US\$27.05 million (0.8 percent of GDP) in November 2021, compared to the amount recorded in October 2021. Similarly, inward remittances decreased to US\$32.52 million relative to the amount in the preceding month. The spark in COVID-19 in the United States caused by the Omicron variant and public observance of social distancing accounted for the fall in remittance inflows.

6.3 Gross International Reserves

Gross International Reserves (GIR) at end-November 2021 was estimated at US\$646.64 million, compared to the stock of US\$651.97 recorded at end-October 2021. Accordingly, months of import cover moderated to 4.7 months, from 4.9 months in the previous month but remained well above the ECOWAS minimum threshold of 3.0 months (Table 6).

6.4 Direction of Trade (DOT)

Switzerland, The United States of America, France, and Belgium were the main destinations of Liberia's exports (mainly iron ore, rubber, and gold) accounting for 75.54 percent of total export earnings. Export earnings from Switzerland (mainly gold) fell by 13.9 percent to US\$26.35 million compared to the value recorded in the previous month. Export earnings from the United States of America (predominantly rubber) dropped by 12.7 percent to US\$7.39 million, while earnings from France (mainly iron ore) increased by US\$2.18 million to US\$6.41 million. Export earnings from Belgium (mainly iron ore) dropped by 17.1 percent to US\$3.83 million. On the overall, export earnings declined by US\$4.28 million to US\$58.22 million, from the amount recorded in the previous month.

The five main sources of imports to Liberia in November 2021 were Cote d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast), China, the United Arab Emirates, India and Indonesia. Import payments to Cote d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast) mainly Minerals, fuels and Lubricants increased over 100 percent to US\$36.39 million. Payments to China, mainly for the purchase of machinery and transport equipment fell by US\$1.53 million to US\$11.52 million. Payments mainly for the purchase of machinery and transport equipment to the United Arab Emirates increased by US\$9.76 million to US\$10.45 million. Payments to India for the purchase of mainly machinery and transport equipment decreased by US\$21.07 million to US\$7.22 million during the review month, while payments for the purchase of Animals and vegetables from Indonesia increased by US\$6.28 million to US\$6.73 million. On the overall import payments rose.

6.3 EXCHANGE RATE DEVELOPMENTS

The average exchange rate for November 2021 showed that the Liberian dollar strengthened against the United States dollar by 12.1 percent to L\$144.43/US\$1.00, from L\$161.95/US\$1.00 recorded in October 2021. The appreciation of the Liberia dollar mainly reflected the relative effectiveness of CBL's monetary policy instruments, weak demand for foreign exchange and the Liberia dollar liquidity squeeze experienced during the close of 2021.

Imports (CIF)/^{1†}	93.55	103.20	101.48	115.58
Minerals, Fuel, Lubricants	26.10	6.93	6.25	44.35
o/w Petroleum Products	22.10	0.88	-	-
Food and Live Animals (incl. Animal and veg. oil)	14.21	38.38	40.91	23.26
o/w Rice	1.25	22.46	26.52	0.30
Machinery & Transport Equipment	19.91	21.77	25.95	28.09
Manufactured goods classified by materials	13.58	13.08	12.08	6.52
Other categories of imports	19.76	23.04	16.30	13.36
Trade Balance	(29.85)	(26.46)	(38.98)	(57.35)
Total Trade	157.25	179.94	163.98	173.80
External Trade (Volume)	(In Unit as may be specified)			
Rubber (MT)	10,001.36	4,131.75	11,016.37	5,574.00
Iron Ore (MT)				
	477,136.05	245,689.77	243,448.15	314,465.62
Cocoa Beans (MT)	1,300.00	100.00	492.00	-
Palm Oil (MT)	13,789.00	29,759.00	29,571.00	12,504.00
Gold (Oz)	10,949.28	21,689.10	25,228.64	21,656.25
Diamond (Crt)	3,106.35	5,004.00	5,320.92	4,650.46
Petroleum Products (MT)	15,444.55	460.65	-	-
Rice (MT)	-	-	-	-
Other Indicators				
Net Foreign Reserves Position	37.65	383.36	356.98	383.33
Import (FOB)	85.67	94.71	88.42	106.32
Gross International Reserves (GIR) ²	281.30	651.97	646.64	661.63
Import covers (In Month)	2.5	4.7	4.9	4.7
Personal Remittances				
Inflows	25.54	25.67	53.33	32.52
Outflows	5.43	8.08	7.75	5.47
Net flows	20.11	17.59	45.58	27.05
Direction of Trade (DOT)				
Destination of Export	63.70	76.74	62.50	58.22
o/w Switzerland	13.70	25.18	30.60	26.35
o/w Unite States of America	5.29	6.77	8.46	7.39
o/w France	14.70	13.36	4.23	6.41
o/w Belgium	3.83	1.53	4.62	3.83
Sources of Import (fob)	85.67	94.71	88.42	106.32
o/w Cote d'Ivoire (Ivory coast)	22.34	0.96	0.01	36.39
o/w China	16.50	13.76	13.05	11.52
o/w United Arab Emirates	4.41	3.21	0.69	10.45
o/w India	9.98	13.99	28.29	7.22
o/w Indonesia	0.38	0.41	0.45	6.73

Source : LRA (ASYCUDA), AML, MLME, FSL & CBL

¹ Trade data are primarily sourced from LRA (Custom) with larger coverage than BIVAC.

^{1†} as of July 2020, import data reported here are on CIF instead of FOB

Inflation	(In percent)			
Overall (Y-o-Y) Rate of Inflation	10.39	6.69	4.42	5.44
a. Food and Non-alcoholic Beverage Inflation	13.96	0.18	(2.39)	(6.58)
- Domestic Food Inflation	16.45	4.00	0.65	(3.58)
- Imported Food Inflation	12.36	(2.88)	(4.78)	(9.10)
b. Transport Inflation	6.83	1.16	(0.90)	(3.67)
c. Imported Fuels Inflation	(7.61)	1.95	(0.49)	(7.57)
Overall (M-o-M) Rate of Inflation	(4.10)	0.10	(1.85)	(3.17)
Core Inflation				
Inflation excluding Food & NAB ¹	8.50	10.14	8.00	12.12
Inflation excluding Imported Food	10.01	8.97	6.60	8.97
Inflation excluding Domestic Food	10.39	7.78	5.74	7.61
Inflation excluding Food and Transport	8.73	11.29	9.14	14.20
Annual Gross Domestic Product (GDP)²				
Nominal (NGDP)(in millions US\$)	3,037.3	3,363	3,363	3,363
RGDP growth (in percent)	(3.0)	3.6	3.6	3.6

Sources: AML, MLME, FSL, CEMENCO, LCCBC, RITCO, NICOM, MB, CEMENCO, CBL & LISGIS.

¹ Non-alcoholic beverages

² GDP was revised following the IMF- ECF review mission in April 2021

± - Not Available (na)

4.0 MONETARY DEVELOPMENTS

4.1 Monetary Policy Stance

In its effort to achieve price stability through broad exchange rate management, the CBL in October 2021 maintained its interest-rate based monetary policy stance to manage Liberian dollar liquidity in the economy. The issuance of CBL bills continued during the month with tenors of two-week, one month and three-month at an effective annual rate of 20.0 percent.

4.2 Monetary Aggregates

From preliminary statistics, broad money (M2) growth accelerated by 0.2 percent to L\$124.92 billion at end-November 2021, from the L\$124.69 billion recorded at end-October 2021. From the liability side, this development was mainly driven by a 3.0 percent rise in demand deposits, while on the asset side, it was due to a 1.6 percent increase in the net domestic assets (NDA) of banks. However, total estimated stock of Liberian dollar in circulation grew slightly to L\$22.90 billion at end-November 2021, from the L\$22.60 billion recorded in the preceding month. The growth was induced by 1.4 percent increase in currency outside banks to L\$22.10 billion, from the L\$21.79 billion recorded in the previous period.

Sectoral distribution of commercial banks' credits showed that the construction, and oil & gas subsectors accounted for 8.2 percent of total Liberian dollar denominated credits to the private sector.

Similarly, the manufacturing, trade, and oil & gas subsectors constituted 37.5 percent of total United States dollar denominated credits to the private sector. However, disbursement of commercial banks' loans in both currencies declined. Loans denominated in Liberian dollar shrank slightly by 0.2 percent to L\$5,603.40 million, on account of decreases in loans to the construction, and oil & gas subsectors, while the US dollar denominated loans contracted by 1.8 percent to US\$402.92 million, occasioned by decreases in new loans advanced to the manufacturing, trade, and oil & gas subsectors.

All projected deposits converted to Liberian dollar as percent of GDP grew to 21.5 percent of GDP at end-November 2021, from the 20.3 percent of GDP reported in the preceding month. This development was largely explained by the appreciation of the domestic currency vis-à-vis the United States Dollar (Table 2).

Table 2: Monetary Aggregates

Monetary Aggregates	Nov - 20	Sep - 21	Oct - 21*	Nov-21
	<i>(In Millions)</i>			
Liberian Dollars in Circulation - (LD)	22,885.60	22,423.12	22,599.47	22,880.90
-o/w Currency in banks (LD)	641.32	1,112.56	805.21	777.42
Money Supply (M1) in LD only	32,559.31	32,228.05	32,215.94	32,877.98
Quasi Money in LD only	7,752.17	7,812.89	7,179.04	7,225.62
Broad money (M2) in LD only	40,369.85	40,110.22	39,449.59	40,245.48
Broad money (M2) (both LD and USD Converted to LD)	119,024.35	144,804.16	124,685.61	124,919.80
Net Foreign Assets (NFA) – LD	11,176.66	25,140.22	20,701.53	19,220.34
Net Domestic Assets (NDA) – LD	107,847.69	119,663.94	103,984.08	105,699.46
Currency outside banks – LD	22,244.28	21,310.57	21,794.26	22,103.48
Demand deposit – LD	57,801.44	78,953.97	63,547.63	65,426.71
Time & Savings deposits – LD	38,645.28	44,144.07	39,079.36	36,575.49
Other deposits – LD	333.35	395.55	264.37	814.12
Loans to Private Sector				
Commercial banks loans to private sector- USD	397.34	410.35	410.18	402.92
Commercial banks loans to private sector - LD	5,948.06	5,482.65	5,612.29	5,603.40
Demand Deposits of Commercial Banks				
Demand deposits – USD	301.44	398.03	353.38	384.52
Demand deposits – LD	10,315.03	10,917.49	10,421.68	10,774.50
Time & savings deposits – USD	196.11	212.54	212.19	206.50
Time & savings deposits – LD	7,752.17	7,812.89	7,179.04	7,225.62
	<i>(In percent)</i>			
Actual US\$ component of other deposits	1.75	1.91	1.40	4.73

o/w Payments on Loans, interest, and other charges	4.04	14.79	2.71	14.29	427.09
Overall Balance (Surplus+; Deficit -)	0.93	(32.59)	14.93	(10.83)	
Total Debt Stock	1583.05	1687.93	1688.30	1718.94	1.81
o/w Domestic	644.50	692.24	691.58	691.58	0.00
o/w Financial Institutions	586.02	621.44	621.44	621.44	0.00
o/w Other Debts	58.49	70.80	70.14	70.14	0.00
o/w External	938.54	995.69	996.72	1027.36	3.07
o/w Multilateral	825.57	882.28	883.31	913.95	3.47
o/w Bilateral	112.97	113.41	113.41	113.41	0.00
Memo Items					
Government Revenue (% of GDP)	1.43	1.21	1.35	1.43	-
Government Expenditure (% of GDP)	1.56	2.16	0.92	1.71	-
Total Debt Stock (% of GDP)	52.13	49.27	49.28	50.17	-
NGDP (at Level)	3037.00	3426.00	3426.00	3426.00	-

Source: CBL calculation using MFDP's data

6.0 EXTERNAL SECTOR DEVELOPMENTS

6.1 Merchandise Trade

From provisional statistics, developments in the external sector resulted to declines in merchandise exports and volumes, coupled with an increase in import payments in November 2021. Accordingly, merchandise trade deficit widened to US\$57.36 million in November 2021, from the US\$38.98 million recorded in the preceding month. However, total merchandise trade increased to US\$173.80 million (5.2 percent of GDP) during the review period, from US\$163.98 million (4.9 percent of GDP) recorded in October 2021.

Earnings from exports decreased by 6.9 percent to US\$58.22 million (1.7 percent of GDP), from a revised US\$62.50 million (1.9 percent of GDP), driven by decreases in receipts from mainly gold and rubber. Payments for merchandise imports rose by 13.9 percent to US\$115.58 million (3.4 percent of GDP) in November 2021, from 3.0 percent of GDP in the preceding month, driven by increases in payments for mainly minerals, fuels and lubricants.

Table 6: External Sector Statistics
Table 1: Production and Price Statistics

External Trade (Value)	Nov - 20	Sept- 21	Oct - 21	Nov-21
	(Millions of USD; Except Otherwise Indicated)			
Exports^{1/}	63.70	76.74	62.50	58.22
Iron Ore	34.39	31.72	9.31	14.12
Rubber	10.97	7.74	14.31	12.87
Gold	15.34	26.78	30.60	26.88
Diamond	1.02	1.89	1.23	0.64
Cocoa Bean	1.33	0.09	0.13	-
Palm Oil	0.19	4.00	5.23	0.60
Other commodities	0.47	4.54	1.69	3.11

Non-performing Loans (percent change)	(24.05)	(3.45)	(6.17)	(25.03)
Returns on Assets (ROA)	1.38	2.45	2.95	3.11
Returns on Equity (ROE)	7.81	14.32	16.54	17.74
Liquidity Ratio***	36.01	42.44	40.39	44.17
Capital Adequacy Ratio (CAR)****	31.41	26.38	27.47	27.47

Source : CBL

**** - The Minimum Capital Adequacy Ratio is 10%

*** - The Required Minimum Liquidity Ratio is 15%

5.0 FISCAL SECTOR DEVELOPMENTS

5.1 Total Revenue and Expenditure

From provisional statistics, Government of Liberia (GOL) fiscal operations resulted in a deficit of US\$9.9 million (0.3 percent of GDP), largely driven by increase in government expenditure that exceeded the slight increase in total revenue.

Total revenue marginally expanded by 5.4 percent to US\$48.9 million (1.5 percent of GDP), largely occasioned by 9.6 percent growth in tax revenue that amounted to US\$44.7 million (1.3 percent of GDP). Similarly, government expenditure expanded by 87.3 percent to US\$58.8 million (1.8 percent of GDP). The expansion was chiefly occasioned by rise in current expenditure (by 56.0 percent of GDP) and payments on loans, interest & other charges (by more than 100 percent). Current expenditure totaled US\$44.3 million (1.3 percent of GDP), while capital expenditure was US\$0.2 million (approximately 0.0 percent of GDP). Interest and other payments amounted to US\$14.3 million (0.4 percent of GDP).

5.2 Total Public Debt

The stock of public debt at end-November 2021 marginally rose to US\$1,718.94 million (50.2 percent of GDP), against the US\$1,688.30 million (49.3 percent of GDP) at end-October 2021, explained by a 3.1 percent increase in external debt via multilateral borrowing. However, domestic debt remained unchanged during the period. Domestic and external debts amounted to 20.2 percent of GDP and 30.0 percent of GDP, respectively, at end-November 2021.

Table 5. GOL's Fiscal Operations

Fiscal Operations	Nov-20	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	M-O-M
	(In Millions of USD)				(% Change)
Government Revenue	48.25	41.31	46.29	47.93	5.44
<i>o/w Tax Revenue</i>	<i>28.81</i>	<i>35.13</i>	<i>40.75</i>	<i>43.79</i>	<i>9.60</i>
o/w Taxes on Income & Profits	10.42	14.33	18.32	25.82	45.90
o/w Taxes on International Trade (Customs)	14.43	17.06	16.46	12.65	(23.37)
<i>o/w Non-tax Revenue</i>	<i>4.88</i>	<i>6.18</i>	<i>5.54</i>	<i>4.14</i>	<i>(25.20)</i>
o/w Property Income	3.64	4.54	4.01	2.74	(31.66)
o/w Administrative Fees & Forfeits	1.24	1.65	1.51	1.40	(7.01)
<i>o/w Other Revenue (Including Grants)</i>	<i>14.56</i>	<i>0.00</i>	<i>0.00</i>	<i>0.00</i>	<i>0.00</i>
Government Expenditure	47.33	73.90	31.36	58.76	87.33
o/w Current Expenditure	43.26	58.76	28.38	44.27	55.97
o/w Compensation	20.53	25.93	4.28	24.68	476.54
o/w Goods and Services	17.22	22.42	17.26	14.17	(17.91)
o/w Capital Expenditure	0.03	0.34	0.27	0.20	(26.98)

Liberian \$ component of other deposits	58.36	69.28	54.60
Total Deposits (both USD & LD) converted to LD ¹	96,780.07	123,493.59	102,891.35
Total Deposits (both USD & LD) converted to LD ¹	96,780.07	123,493.59	102,891.35
Liberian Dollar share of Broad Money	33.92	27.70	31.64

Source: CBL

‡ - Reserves excluding ECF borrowing from the IMF;

** - Other Deposits Including Official and Manager Checks;

/1 - The total deposits (US and Liberian dollars) of commercial banks expressed entirely in Liberian dollars.

4.3 FINANCIAL MARKET (FM) DEVELOPMENTS

Financial Market operations during the month were largely focused on the issuance of CBL bills using interest rate-based instruments in support of price stability. The bills were issued with tenors of 2-week, 1-month, and 3-month at the effective annual policy rate of 20.0 percent.

The total CBL bills issued during the month amounted to L\$3,754.00 million, reflecting 26.59 percent decrease compared to the preceding month largely due to the need for cash by commercial banks to service the withdrawal demands of their customers during the festive season. It was also reflected in retail investors subscription which declined by 68.31 percent to L\$31.66 million from L\$99.92 million in the preceding month. At end-November 2021, retail investors subscription stood at 0.84 percent to L\$31.66 million of the total amounts issued, while commercial banks' subscriptions remained high at 99.16 percent (L\$3,722.94 million), from 98.05 percent in the preceding month. Similarly, total redemption fell by 25.67 percent to L\$3,755.00 million. The CBL recorded a net injection of about L\$1.00 million during the month of November 2021.

There was no issuance of new Treasury securities by the Government during the review period. The outstanding principal on Liberian dollar T-Bond remained unchanged at L\$6,000,000,000.00 while the outstanding coupon and principal on the United States dollars T-bond stood at US\$57.56 million. Similarly, the outstanding principal on Treasury bills in both Liberian and United States dollars remained at L\$2,437.72 million and US\$5.73 million, respectively.

The lending, average savings, and time deposit rates were unchanged at 12.4 percent, 2.1 percent, and 3.5 percent, respectively in reference to the previous month. However, money markets instruments such as repo were not traded during the month. In the interbank operations, commercial banks continued to trade with only non-interest-bearing swaps to ease the liquidity disparity among banks for their international and intra-country transactions. The non-interest-bearing nature of the swap continued during the period under review to compensate for the risks and high cost involved in cash transfers and transshipment with international corresponding banks, and bank branches in Liberia (see Table 3).

Table 3. Financial Market and Interest Rates Statistics

Market Instruments (CBL indexed Bills)	Nov - 20	Sep - 21	Oct - 21	Nov - 21
	<i>(In Millions of Liberian Dollar)</i>			
Bills Purchased per month on coupon basis	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Redemption during the month (coupon rate)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Bills (Index) outstanding on coupon basis	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00
Coupon rate on Index Bill (in %)	na	na	na	na
Bills Purchased per month on EAR basis	2,281.20	4,481.93	5,114.30	3,754.60
Redemption during the month (EAR basis)	2,440.46	4,344.61	5,051.56	3,755.00
Bill Outstanding (EAR basis)	5,049.54	6,937.26	7,000.00	6,999.60
Effective Annual Rate (EAR)	25.00	20.00	20.00	20.00
Total Purchases (coupon rate & EAR)	2,281.20	4,481.93	5,114.30	3,754.6
Total Redemption (coupon rate & EAR)	2,440.46	4,334.61	5,051.56	3,755.00
Total Outstanding Bills (coupon rate & EAR)	5,208.81	6,937.26	7,000.00	6,999.60
CBL Foreign Exchange Auction¹	<i>(In Millions of United States Dollar)</i>			
US Dollar offered	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
US Dollar Amount Sold	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Subscription	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Over (+)/ Under (-) Subscription	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Treasury Securities	<i>(In Millions of Liberian Dollar)</i>			
T- Bills Issued (in LD)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
T- Bills Redeemed (in LD)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
T-Bills Outstanding	860.94	2,437.72	2,437.72	2,437.72
Net Treasury Bills Operations[^] withdrawal (+)/Injection (-)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Ave. Weighted Discount Rate (T-Bills)	7.47	5.00	5.00	5.00
T- Bills Issued (In USD)	na	0.00	0.00	0.00
T- Bills Redeemed (In USD)	na	0.00	0.07	0.00
T-Bills Outstanding	2.60	5.73	5.66	5.66
Ave. Weighted Discount Rate (T-Bills)	8.00	6.50	6.50	6.50
Treasury Bond Issued (in LD for 2 years)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Treasury Bond Outstanding (In LD)	6,000.00	6,000.00	6,000.00	6,000.00
Coupon Payment	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Outstanding coupon on Treasury Bond	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Early Redemption	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Coupon rate (%)	16.00	16.00	16.00	16.00
Treasury Bond Issued (USD)	na	0.00	1.84	0.00
Treasury Bond Principal Payment	na	0.00	0.00	0.00
Treasury Bond Outstanding (In USD) (Coupon and Principal)	na	56.65	58.49	57.56
Coupon Payments (USD)	na	0.16	0.93	0.00

Outstanding coupon on Treasury Bond	na	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total T-Bond Outstanding (Coupon & Principal In USD)	na	56.65	57.56	57.56
	<i>(As specified)</i>			
SCF rate	0.00	25.00	25.00	25.00
SCF Amount (In Millions LD)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
SDF overnight rate	0.07	0.05	0.05	0.05
SDF Amount (In Millions LD)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Interest Rates	(In Percent)			
- Lending rate	12.44	12.44	12.44	12.44
Average Deposit rates				
-Savings	2.10	2.10	2.10	2.10
-Time	3.53	3.53	3.53	3.53
Money Markets Instrument (In percent)				
Repo	5.50	0.00	0.00	0.00
Swap lending	6.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Source : CBL

[^] - with Liquidity Effect¹ - CBL Foreign Exchange Auction includes use of the remittance split to ease the demand for foreign currency² - Treasury Bill issued and redeemed during the month were in US Dollar**4.4 BANKING SECTOR DEVELOPMENTS**

The banking industry remained largely in compliance with the sector's regulatory requirements. Return on Assets (ROA) increased by 0.16 percentage point to 3.11 percent, while Return on Equity (ROE) increased by 1.20 percentage points to 16.54 percent during the review period relative to the preceding month. Capital Adequacy Ratio (CAR) stood at 27.47 percent during the period under review and remained above the minimum regulatory requirement of 10% by 17.47 percentage points. Additionally, liquidity ratio grew by 3.78 percentage points to 44.17% and remained above the minimum regulatory requirement of 15% with 29.17 percentage points.

At end-November 2021, the non-performing loans (NPL) to total loan ratio reduced by 5.12 percentage points to 20.71 percent, compared to the 25.83 percent recorded at end-October 2021. This development was driven by a 6.8 percent and 25.0 percent declines in gross loans and NPL, respectively.

Table 4: Selected Financial Soundness Indicators, FSIs

Financial Soundness Indicators	Nov- 20	Sep- 21	Oct - 21	Nov - 21
	<i>(In Billions of Liberian Dollar)</i>			
Total Gross Loans	69.72	79.29	70.28	65.52
Total Non-performing Loans	12.54	19.29	18.10	13.57
	(In Unit As May Be Specified)			
Non-performing Loans to Total Gross Loans (ratio)	17.85	24.33	25.83	20.71
Gross Loan (percent change)	(6.20)	2.90	(11.36)	(6.80)