

Annual Report | 2020



STERLING INVESTMENTS LIMITED

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An underwater photograph showing several dolphins swimming in clear blue water. A scuba diver is visible in the lower right corner, partially obscured. Sunlight filters through the water from the top, creating a bright, shimmering effect. A thin white horizontal line is visible at the top of the page.

Mission

To create sustainable wealth for local investors

Vision

To be the most profitable value investing fund in the region



Our Philosophy

SIL's investment philosophy is focused on generating higher risk adjusted returns through the active purchase and sale of financial instruments in the international capital markets. The company invests primarily in fixed income securities issued in global markets in order to provide local investors with diversification and sustainable growth. The manager conducts thorough and rigorous due diligence on its investment prospects within a "value oriented" investing framework.



Investment Mandate

Sterling Investments Limited (SIL) provides investors with long term growth, value and US dollar income. Since 2012, SIL shareholders have enjoyed

1. Consistent US\$ dividend income
2. Lower risk levels and higher income
3. Diversification – insulation from local risk and exposure to the growth and value in the global markets

The company has delivered attractive risk adjusted returns to its shareholders by strategically investing in the global bond market. The company's investment strategy was particularly rewarding at the heights of the COVID-19 pandemic. SIL is generating more income post COVID-19 than it was before. The company's assets are more valuable post COVID-19 than they were before. Investors will continue to benefit from growth in the company's US\$ assets and US\$ income.

Directors' Report

The Directors are pleased to present their report for the year ended December 31, 2020. The report presents the results for Sterling Investments Limited.

COMPANY RESULTS as at December 31, 2020

- Total assets increased 18% to **J\$1.9 billion**
- Total revenue increased 48% to **J\$219,755,788**
- The profit after income tax increased 33% to **J\$134.339 million**
- Stockholder's equity totalled **J\$1.34 billion**

KPMG, Barbados and Eastern Caribbean have indicated their willingness to continue in office as auditors of the company.

The Directors wish to thank the management and all team members for their performance during the year under review. As always, we express our deep and sincere appreciation to the stockholders for their continued support and partnership.

By Order of the Board



Dated this February 6, 2021

Corporate Profile

Sterling Investments Limited (SIL) is an investment holding company that was formed in 2012. At the time, J\$92 Jamaican dollars purchased US\$1. The company exists to protect and grow the capital of its stockholders by investing in bonds and equities. Early investors in SIL avoided the National Debt Exchange and 48% devaluation since its inception. SIL listed its ordinary shares on the Main Market of the Jamaica Stock Exchange in October 2014.

The company invests primarily in an array of fixed income securities denominated in United States dollars. The company generates income in two ways: (a) through interest income earned on the securities in the portfolio; (b) through capital gains on the sale of securities that have increased in price. It offers investors the opportunity to enjoy:

- US dollar income
- Growth
- A hedge against devaluation and inflation
- Diversification
- Access to the global capital markets
- Access to experienced and successful investment managers

Sterling Investments Limited has no employees. The operations of Sterling Investments Limited are managed by the Investment Manager -Sterling Asset Management Limited (SAM). As a result, SIL has one of the highest net profit margins and lowest efficiency ratios of any company on the Jamaica Stock Exchange. SAM’s team ensures that SIL’s portfolio is optimized and executes the directives of the Board. SAM also ensures SIL’s compliance with the applicable regulatory regimes.

The relationship between SAM and SIL is governed by an investment management agreement. The agreement stipulates payment of a management fee and performance dividend as follows:

- **Management Fee:** During the life of the company the Manager receives a management fee of 0.5% of the value of the assets under management each quarter.
- **Performance Fee:** 25% of profits in excess of the hurdle rate are paid to preference shareholders. The hurdle rate is the 10 Year UST plus a margin of 300 basis points.



Investment Manager Overview

Sterling Asset Management Limited (SAM) is a licensed securities dealer registered with the Financial Services Commission in Jamaica. SAM is a full-service financial planner, fund manager and global securities trader specializing in, but not limited to, US Dollar investments. Sterling boasts one of the highest capital adequacy ratios in the industry and was one of the first local institutions to bring high quality, US dollar fixed income investments to Jamaican investors.

For 20 years, SAM has provided a source of consistent growth and a safe haven to sophisticated investors locally and internationally. Sterling's hallmark product is an offshore US dollar mutual fund which has delivered returns of over 11.8% per annum between 2003 and 2020. US\$100,000 invested in the fund in 2003 would have been worth over US\$710,333 at the end of 2020. SIL's investment strategy has been modelled in a similar way.

SAM is involved with several charitable projects which include the Franciscan Ministries, the Maxfield Park Children's Home and the Phoenix Lodge charities through their annual golf tournament.



Chairman's Message

Despite the social and economic hardship of the past year, Sterling Investments Limited has generated the highest profit in its history of J\$134,339,601 for the 2020 fiscal year, approximately 33% higher than the previous year.

The company's performance is a testament to its investment strategy which focuses on generating higher risk adjusted returns in the global capital markets. The Manager's prudent management of the investment portfolio enabled the company to buy undervalued assets at the depths of the market decline. These assets have subsequently appreciated significantly in value. The company shared these gains with shareholders via an increase in the dividend payout ratio from 50% to 80%. As at December 31, 2020 the SIL Stock delivered a 4.77% dividend yield.

SIL continues to deliver on its mission to provide higher risk adjusted returns to the country's savers, retirees and pension funds. With US dollar denominated dividends, our shareholders receive income that is protected from inflation and devaluation (devaluation has averaged 6.2% per annum over the last 20 years).

SIL intends to continue its focus on value investing as the primary means of creating sustainable income and growth for its shareholders. On behalf of the board of directors, I would like to thank all the shareholders for their continued confidence in SIL and look forward to another outstanding year.

Derek Jones

Chairman



Performance Summary

Total assets grew 18% from J\$1.633 billion in 2019 to J\$1.923 billion in 2020. The portfolio growth was financed primarily by an increase in margin loans. Total margin loans increased from J\$350,839,368 in 2019 to J\$531,800,766 in 2020. The larger portfolio led to an increase in total interest income. Total Interest income grew by 22.4%, from J\$98,299,266 in 2019 to J\$120,294,499 in 2020. Other revenue components also increased year on year. Foreign Exchange Gains increased from J\$43.867 million in 2019 to J\$79.153 million in 2020 while the gain on sale of debt investments increased from J\$4.346 million to J\$19.230 million in 2020.

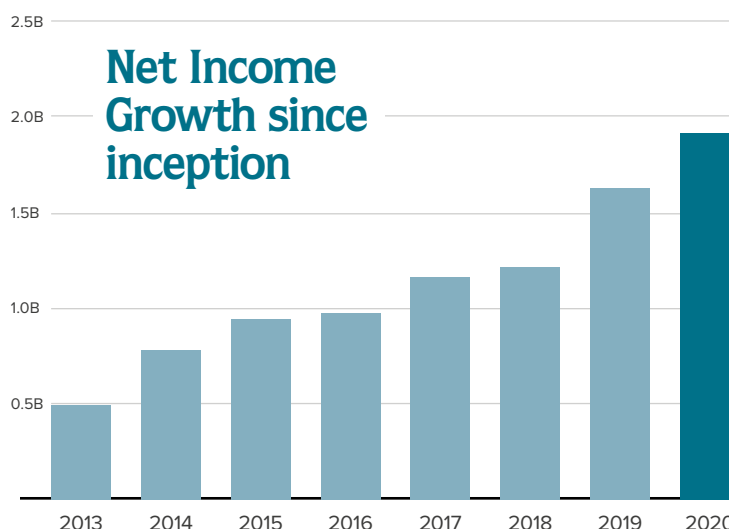
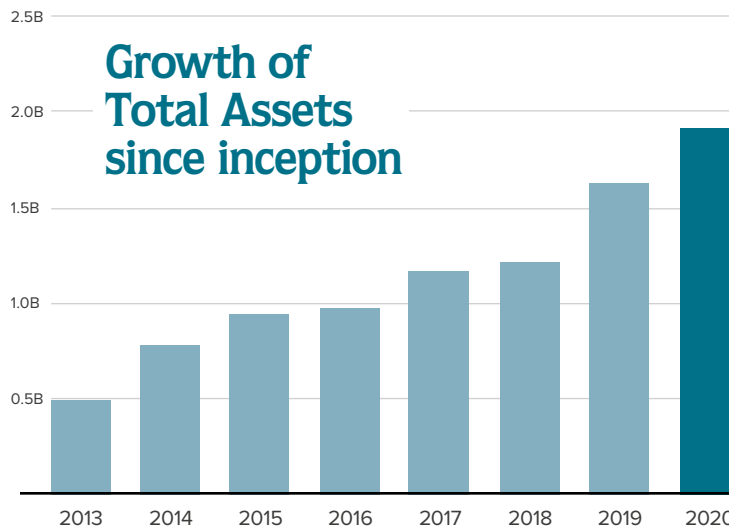
The reduction in interest rates led to a decline in interest expense from J\$12.872 million in 2019 to J\$11.414 million in 2020. Other operating expenses remained roughly the same year on year - J\$37.739 million in 2019 and J\$37.825 million in 2020. Net Profit increased by 32.7% to J\$134.339 million in 2020 from J\$101.166 million in 2019. Earnings per share in 2020 totalled J\$0.36 per share, up from J\$0.28 per share in 2019.

Dividends are paid twice a year in USD, which affords investors a hedge against devaluation and inflation.

Outlook: SIL continues to focus on delivering growth and value for stockholders. The company plans to continue to take advantage of the volatility in the global market. Management anticipates future tailwinds for the company to include:

- The economic recovery in the large, developed countries
- Easy monetary and fiscal policy in the developed markets

The company is also actively reducing its duration risk and ensuring that it is well-positioned to take advantage of any market shifts.





**“Be fearful when others
are greedy. Be greedy
when others are fearful”**

Warren Buffet



Board of Directors

Sterling Investments Limited (SIL)

SIL's Board consists of well-respected and experienced professionals who hold the investment manager accountable on behalf of the shareholders.

Derek Jones, Chairman, QBE // **Charles Ross**, BSc. (Hons), MSc.

Maxim Rochester, BSc. (Accounting) Hons. FCA, FCCA // **Michael Bernard**, BA, BSc., MBA, FJIM



Derek Jones
Chairman QBE



Charles Ross
BSc. (Hons), MSc.



Michael Bernard
BA, BSc., MBA, FJIM

Sterling Asset Management (SAM)

SAM's Board consists of well-respected and experienced professionals who hold the investment manager accountable on behalf of the shareholders.

Charles Ross, BSc. (Hons), MSc. // **Maxim Rochester**, BSc. (Accounting) Hons. FCA, FCCA //

Marian Ross, BA (Hons), MBA // **Robert Taylor** BSc., MBA, LLB, L.E.C.



Maxim Rochester
BSc. (Accounting) Hons. FCA, FCCA



Marian Ross
BA (Hons), MBA



Robert Taylor
BSc. MBA, LLB, L.E.C.

Board of Directors Biographies

Sterling Investments Limited (SIL)

Derek Jones, Chairman QBE

Admitted to several Bars in the Caribbean and as a Solicitor of the United Kingdom, Derek is a former Managing Partner of Myers, Fletcher & Gordon in Jamaica, where he spent some 40 years. He is also a former Founding Partner of HSM Cayman. Under Derek's tenure, both firms were ranked by the authoritative guide of Chambers and Partners. Derek acted as Senior Legal Counsel to the Cricket World Cup organization leading up to the hosting of the ICC Cricket World Cup in the West Indies in 2007. He chairs the Cable and Wireless Jamaica Pension Fund, the Red Stripe Pension Fund and the Jamaica College Trust. He is a Director of the JN Cayman, formerly known as the National Building Society of the Cayman Islands. Derek is also the Chairman of the Conduct review Committee.

Other Appointments:

- ▲ [LIME Pension Fund \(Chairman\)](#)
- ▲ [Red Stripe Pension Fund \(Chairman\)](#)
- ▲ [Jamaica College Trust \(Chairman\)](#)
- ▲ [Jamaica National Building Society, Cayman \(Director\)](#)

Charles Ross, BSc. (Hons), MSc.

Charles is a founding director of Sterling Asset Management Limited. In his role as President for the past 20 years, the company has generated a return on equity in excess of 20% per annum. Charles is a qualified engineer with over 15 years' experience in the field. Charles left the field of engineering, to act as the Executive Director of the PSOJ. Since its inception, Charles has guided Sterling's investment and portfolio management functions and maintained the company's focus on delivering higher risk adjusted returns for the medium to long term. He holds a Postgraduate Diploma in Business Administration

from the University of Manchester, a BSc (Hons) in Civil Engineering from the University of Edinburgh and an MSc. in Construction Engineering and Management from the University of the West Indies.

Other Appointments:

- ▲ [Sterling Asset Management](#)
- ▲ [The National Crime Prevention Fund \(Crime Stop\)](#)

Michael Bernard, BA, BSc, MBA, FJIM

Michael has more than 20 years of executive management experience and is a retired Managing Director of Carreras Group Limited. During his tenure as the Chief Executive at Carreras, he successfully led the company to deliver commendable and continuous growth in shareholder returns, which earned the company awards for being the best performing company listed on the Jamaica Stock Exchange, including "Best Performing Company for 2010". In addition to his extensive local and international business experience, Michael holds a B.A. and BSc. in Business Administration and Forest Management respectively, and an MBA from the Harvard Graduate School of Business Administration. He is the Chairman of the Asset-Liability (ALCO) Committee.

Other Appointments:

- ▲ [Salada Foods Jamaica Ltd.](#)
- ▲ [Carreras Ltd.](#)
- ▲ [Jamaica College \(Chairman\)](#)
- ▲ [GK General Insurance Co. Ltd.](#)
- ▲ [Hardware & Lumber Ltd.](#)
- ▲ [Jamaica College Foundation](#)
- ▲ [Spike Industries Limited \(Chairman\)](#)
- ▲ [Peak Bottling Company Ltd. \(Exec. Chairman\)](#)
- ▲ [New Transport Group Ltd.](#)
- ▲ [One on One Educational Services limited \(Chairman\)](#)
- ▲ [Pioneer Manufacturing and Distribution Limited \(Chairman\)](#)
- ▲ [Catherine's Peak Bottling Company \(Chairman\)](#)

Maxim Rochester, B.Sc. (Accounting) Hons. FCA, FCCA
(see *bio under SAM Ltd.*)

Board of Directors **Biographies**

Sterling Asset Management Limited (SAM)

Maxim Rochester, BBSc (Accounting) Hons. FCA, FCCA

Max, a former Territory Senior Partner of PriceWaterhouseCoopers, has over thirty (30) years' experience in the auditing of Jamaica's largest banking and insurance corporations. As such, Max is intimately familiar with the operations, financial systems, regulatory environment and reporting requirements of the local financial sector. He has invaluable expertise and experience in dealing with international and major domestic corporations and financial institutions. He has a BSc in Accounting with honours from the University of the West Indies, in addition to being a Member of the Chartered Association of Certified Accountants (UK) and a Member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Jamaica. Maxim is an independent director on the board of Sterling Asset Management Limited and is the Chairman of the company's Audit Committee.

Other Appointments:

- ▲ [Sterling Asset Management](#)
- ▲ [Eppley Limited](#)
- ▲ [Guardian Holdings Ltd.](#)
- ▲ [Guardian Life Ltd.](#)
- ▲ [Guardian Life of the Caribbean Ltd.](#)
- ▲ [Guardian General Insurance Ltd.](#)

Charles Ross, BSc. (Hons), MSc.
(see bio under SIL Ltd.)

Marian Ross, BA (Hons), MBA

Marian has eight years of experience in the financial sector and has worked in credit analysis and investment research in both the regional and international capital markets. Her work has covered fixed income, publicly traded equities and private equity. Her work experience has taken her through the Caribbean and to North America and South-East Asia. She is the Vice President, Trading & Business Development, and executive director of Sterling Asset Management.

Robert Taylor BSc, MBA, LLB, L.E.C.

Robert possesses extensive experience in risk management, corporate banking, real estate development and commercial and real estate law. Robert spent 11 years at Citibank and left as the Resident Vice President, Financial Institutions & Public Sector Unit where he helped to structure credit and capital market transactions and also managed the Bank's relationships with the Government of Jamaica and Financial Institutions. He subsequently launched Taylor Law -a full time law practice specializing in Real Estate and Commercial law. Robert has a Bachelor of Laws from the University of London, an MBA, and a certificate in Legal Education from Norman Manley Law School. Robert is an independent director on the Board of Sterling Asset Management Limited and is the Chairman of the company's Asset Liability Management Committee.

Directors & Connected Parties

TOP TEN SHAREHOLDERS as at December 31, 2020

Name	Number of shares	Percentage
ATL Group Pension Fund Trustees Nominee Limited	47,856,608	12.7%
GraceKennedy Pension Fund Custodian Ltd for GraceKennedy Pension Scheme	34,848,550	9.2%
Lloyd Badal	23,431,379	6.2%
PAM - Pooled Equity Fund	22,025,175	5.8%
Cable and Wireless Jamaica Pension Fund	14,492,015	3.8%
Everton Lloyd McDonald	13,331,584	3.5%
Charles A. Ross	12,145,918	3.2%
Satyanarayana Parvataneni	11,134,784	3.0%
National Insurance Fund	10,080,645	2.7%
JN Fund Managers Limited for JN Pooled Pension Local Equity Fund	8,912,355	2.4%

Shareholdings of Directors & Connected Parties as at December 31, 2019

Directors	Shareholdings	Percentage
Derek Jones		
Michael Bernard		
Maxim Rochester		
Charles Ross	12,145,918	3.2%

	Number of shares	Percentage
Marian A. Ross	1,301,010	0.35%
Charles Andrew Ross	642,756	0.17%
Sterling Asset Management Limited	93,500	0.02%
Natalie A. Farrell-Ross	89,068	0.02%

**“The big money is not in
the buying and selling,
but in the waiting.”**

Charlie Munger



Corporate Governance

The Board of Directors of SIL has the following responsibilities:

- Oversee and monitor the performance of the investment manager
- Periodically review the investment strategy and risk criteria to ensure that return on equity is being optimized
- Enforce good corporate and risk governance and ethical codes of conduct
- Enforce the code of ethics
- Oversee the company's adherence to and observation of the relevant global and local regulatory regimes

The company's corporate governance guidelines can be found at www.sterlinginvestmentsltd.com

The company's code of ethics can be found at the company's website www.sterlinginvestmentsltd.com

Board Sub Committees

Audit Committee

The Audit Committee assists the Board of Directors in fulfilling its oversight responsibilities by monitoring and assessing critical areas of the Company's operations and regularly reporting to the Board of Directors on same. The key focus areas consist of, but are not limited to: the integrity of financial record keeping and reporting, the risk and control environment, the Internal Audit, the External Audit, AML/CFT Regulatory Compliance internationally and locally and the Company's Codes of ethical and business conduct. Maxim Rochester serves as the Chairman of the Audit Committee.

Principal Activities of Audit Committee

Assess and Approve:

- ⬆ The integrity of financial record keeping and reporting
- ⬆ Quarterly in-house management accounts and explanations for divergence from budget
- ⬆ The system of internal controls and procedures
- ⬆ Stability and security of IT Infrastructure
- ⬆ Internal audit report & findings and implementation of recommendations
- ⬆ Internal audit focus & budget for the financial year
- ⬆ Appointment of internal auditors
- ⬆ Annual audited financial statements with a view to ensuring they are complete, utilizing the appropriate accounting principles and consistent with information known to committee members.
- ⬆ Appointment of external auditors
- ⬆ Local and international regulatory submissions
- ⬆ Codes of ethics and business conduct

- ⬆ AML / CFT local and international regulations

Meet privately with:

- Internal auditors as deemed necessary
- External auditors as deemed necessary

PriceWaterhouseCoopers was appointed by the Board of the Investment Manager to perform the internal audit of its operations. The audit areas reviewed in 2020 included general Information Technology controls, trading and settlement activities, and compliance. All issues identified were addressed satisfactorily.

Meetings and Attendance

Audit Committee Members	Meetings	% Attendance
Maxim Rochester (Chairman)	4	100%
Derek Jones	4	100%
Michael Bernard	4	100%
Charles Ross	4	100%

Asset Liability Committee (ALCO)

The Asset Liability Committee aims to ensure that the assets and liabilities of Sterling Investments Limited are effectively managed to maximize return on equity, bolster the capital base and to safeguard the company against adverse consequences of changes in interest rate and liquidity risk. These objectives are pursued in the context of a framework of strong risk management, investment and liquidity policy guidelines, which are outlined in the investment policy. The committee's mandate is to oversee the management of the company's assets and liabilities in the context of these objectives and budgeted targets.

This committee meets quarterly and consists of four members. It is chaired by Michael Bernard. Additional meetings may be scheduled as needed. The purpose of this committee is to maximize net interest income and capital gains over both the short and long term while managing within acceptable board approved risk tolerances for credit risk, liquidity risk, interest rate risk and capital. Other issues such as credit trends, credit concentrations and other credit-related metrics that may impact strategy development; especially as it relates to capacity for growth are discussed in this forum.

Principal Activities of Asset Liability Committee

Assess:

- ▶ Local and international macro-economic conditions and the implications for the company's investment strategy
- ▶ Management of market, liquidity and credit risk
- ▶ Investment strategies employed to maximize risk adjusted return on equity
- ▶ Quality and structure of funding and asset base
- ▶ Adherence to liquidity, capital and trading policy limits
- ▶ Achievement of budgeted profitability targets

Meetings and Attendance

Asset Liability Committee Members	Meetings	% Attendance
Michael Bernard (Chairman)	4	100%
Derek Jones	4	100%
Maxim Rochester	4	100%
Charles Ross	4	100%

Compensation and Nomination committee

This committee meets quarterly and consists of four members. It is chaired by Derek Jones. The Committee is governed by the Corporate Governance Guidelines. Specifically, the Committee: (i) submits for approval by the Board of Directors the Remuneration Report and the remuneration policy for executive Directors which will be put forward to the approval of the Shareholders' Meeting (ii) puts forward proposals for the remuneration of the Chairman, (iii) puts forward proposals for the remuneration of non-executive Directors, who are members

of Board Committees (iv) leads the process for Board appointments. In addition, this committee reviews on an annual basis the performance evaluation of all the non-executive directors in assessing whether they have effectively discharged their duties. They also review new appointments of board members for any potential conflict of interest. All of the directors are non-executive directors. No new appointments were made to the board this financial year.

Principal Activities of the Compensation and Nomination Committee

- ▶ It maintains a formal and transparent procedure for setting policy on directors' remuneration and to determine an appropriate remuneration packages for all directors including the Chairman.
- ▶ It is responsible for reviewing the structure and composition of the board at least annually and making recommendations to the board to complement its corporate strategy.
- ▶ It identifies individuals suitably qualified to become board members and selects or makes recommendations to the board on the selection of individuals nominated for directorships.
- ▶ It is responsible for assessing the independence of independent non-executive directors.
- ▶ They review new appointments of board members for any potential conflict of interest.
- ▶ It reviews the annual evaluation of the performance of board members.

Meetings and Attendance

Compensation and Nomination Committee Members	Meetings	% Attendance
Maxim Rochester	4	100%
Derek Jones (Chairman)	4	100%
Michael Bernard	4	100%
Charles Ross	4	100%

Composition & Frequency of Meetings

The Audit and all other Committees of the board meet at least quarterly and consists of four (4) members. The Committee members are Mr. Maxim Rochester (Chairman), Mr. Michael Bernard (Director), Mr. Derek Jones (Director) and Mr. Charles Ross (Director). All committee members are non-executive directors.

Board Annual Self Evaluation

SIL's Board conducts an annual self-evaluation of its performance and all its sub-committees during the year. Directors are required to evaluate specific issues regarding the effectiveness of the Board governance. The issues include the quality of the information provided by management, the effectiveness of the operation of any Committee and a performance assessment of the Board and Chairman during the year. Additionally, smaller discussions are held with the various Directors to solicit feedback on the performance of the Board and Management. SIL remains committed to good corporate governance practices and continues to comply with the applicable laws and regulations, international best practices and guidance from the Jamaica Stock Exchange and the Financial Services Commission.

Directors' Compensation

SIL compensates its Directors responsibly and aligns remuneration with the company's strategy. For the financial year ending December 31, 2020, a total of JS\$3,976,109 was paid to the four Directors. Each director gets the same amount in fees.

Independent Directors

SIL recognizes the important role that independent directors play in the company's governance. Of the four non-executive Directors serving during the year, 75% of them were deemed to be independent. The Board considers a director to have met the criteria for independence if he or she: is free of any interest, position, association or relationship that might

influence or reasonably be perceived to influence, in a material respect his or her capacity to bring an independent judgment to bear on issues before the board and to act in the best interest of the entity and its shareholders generally; does not hold cross-directorships or has significant links with other directors through involvement in other companies or bodies; does not represent a substantial shareholding; is not a close relative of a significant shareholder; does not have an employment relationship with the SIL or Sterling Asset Management. The independence of directors is kept under constant review and all independent directors are required to disclose whether they have any interests or relationships that could impact on their ability to act in the best interests of the company.

The Board, having undertaken an assessment in the period under review, has determined that the following nonexecutive directors met the criteria for independence during the period under review:

- Derek Jones
- Michael Bernard
- Maxim Rochester

Cybersecurity

Cybersecurity is a key reporting area for internal and external auditors. The manager of SIL, Sterling Asset Management, retains one of the top IT consulting firms on the island to manage and protect its data and technology infrastructure. The IT consulting firm is in turn held accountable by internal auditors. The Directors receive regular reports from the manager confirming the security and robustness of the IT environment.

Employees and Option Scheme

SIL does not have any employees and there are therefore no option schemes or any other incentives in place for the company.

Shareholder & Stakeholder Relations

With the onset of the pandemic, SIL turned to virtual platforms to host its Annual General Meeting. The company was pleased to be able to provide insight, direction and clarity on the business. The first virtual AGM was successful and resulted in a broader range of participation from stakeholders.

Human Development Policies & Practices

Sterling Investments Limited optimizes efficiency by outsourcing its operations to an investment manager – Sterling Asset Management (SAM). SAM’s human development policies and practices are documented in its Human Resources Manual. The company’s core values and behaviours are reinforced through periodic training, professional coaching and on the job feedback mechanisms.



Corporate Data

Investor Relations Contact:

Marian Ross

✉ sil@sterlinginvestmentsltd.com

☎ +1 (876) 754-2225

Registered Address:

20 Micoud Street

P.O. Box 189

Castries, St. Lucia

🌐 www.sterlinginvestmentsltd.com

✉ sil@sterlinginvestmentsltd.com

External Auditors:

Sterling Investments Limited is audited by KPMG, Barbados

Internal Auditors:

PricewaterhouseCoopers Jamaica, serves as the internal auditor for Sterling Asset Management Limited (the Investment Manager for Sterling Investments Limited)

Macro-Economic Overview

Macro-Economic Overview

The movements in the global markets during 2020 were largely driven by the COVID19 pandemic and the responses of Governments and Central Banks across the world. Volatility spiked and markets declined dramatically in the first quarter. Uncertainty and fear gripped most markets for the first 3 months of 2020. This was manifested in the market movements summarized below:

- ▶ The S&P 500 declined by 34% ; the Dow Jones Industrial Index fell by 37% and the Euro Stoxx 600 Index declined by 36% ; the 10 Year US Treasury yield had declined from 1.92% in December 31, 2019 to 0.67% while the 30 year had fallen from 2.39% to 1.32% by the end of March 2020. WTI had fallen by 66.5% and Brent by 60.2%. Gold was up by 5.2% in the first quarter of 2020.
- ▶ Economies across the world recorded dramatic increases in unemployment and contractions in GDP. The Federal Reserve estimated that the U.S. economy contracted by 3.5% in 2020 and unemployment was 8.11% at the end of December 2020.
- ▶ In response to the pandemic, the Federal Reserve reduced its benchmark interest rate to 0% - 0.25% and announced a series of aggressive bond buying programs. The Federal Government announced a series of fiscal stimulus measures for businesses and individuals.

Uncertainty persisted for most of the second and third quarters of 2020 but growth returned (on a quarter by quarter basis) as some developed economies eased lockdown measures. Financial markets rallied on aggressive fiscal stimulus and easy monetary policy introduced by the developed economies.

Two major positive catalysts for the market were announced in the fourth quarter of 2020. The successful development of a number of effective vaccines and the Biden Presidential victory (i.e. the promise of more aggressive fiscal stimulus) pushed markets higher. The S&P 500 gained 11.7% in the fourth quarter of the year to end 2020 with a gain of 16.3%. The Dow Jones logged a gain of 10.2% in the fourth quarter and was 7.2% higher overall in 2020. European equities gained 10.5% in Q4 to shrink the loss for 2020 to -4%. The positive news also pushed Treasury Yields higher. The 10 year US treasury yield rose 23bps in Q4 and the 30 year US Treasury yield climbed 18bps in the same period. However, both yields were still lower at the end of 2020 than they were at the end of 2019. The 10 year US Treasury yield fell 101bps in 2020 (vs. a decline of 76bps in 2019) while the 30y declined 75bps in 2020 (vs. a decline of 62bps in 2019). Yields at year-end were 0.91% for the 10 year and 1.64% for the 30 year.

In contrast, European Government bond yields fell in Q4. The yield on the German 10 year bund fell 5bps in Q4 and ended 2020 39bps lower to sink further into negative territory (-0.57%).

The increase in volatility and liquidity and lower interest rates created a positive environment for bond investors. Bond prices rose as the Fed pumped new liquidity into the market through its bond purchases. Similarly, the cost of leverage declined with the reduction in interest rates.

Local Economy

During 2020, the Jamaican dollar fell by 7.6%, moving from J\$132.57 to J\$142.65 in December 2020. The Bank of Jamaica sold US\$292.3 million to the FOREX market in 2020 in response to the collapse in Foreign Exchange inflows from tourism. The fall-off in tourism receipts stemmed from the disruption in international travel as countries closed their borders and imposed restrictions on travel in an attempt to curtail the spread of the virus that causes Covid 19. The BOJ also reduced its policy rate to 0.5%, reduced the cash reserve ratios for banks and established a GOJ and BOJ bond buying program in an attempt to increase liquidity in the local financial system. The Jamaica Stock Exchange declined by 22.4% in 2020, compared to gains of 34.3% in 2019 and 31.7% in 2018.

According to STATIN, the Jamaican economy declined by 1.7% in 1Q20 and 15.7% in 2Q20 before rising 8.3% in 3Q20. Unemployment of 10.7% was recorded as at October 2020 compared to 7.2% in 2019. This was attributed to the fall off in tourism and local restrictions imposed to curtail the spread of the virus.

Impact of Macro-Economic Movements on Company Performance

Lower interest rates led to a reduction in interest expense and an increase in the net interest margin. The market decline was beneficial for SIL as it provided an attractive entry point for the company to purchase undervalued assets. The increase in market volatility was also advantageous as it provided a good environment for the issuance of attractive structured notes which generated higher income levels for shareholders. The vaccine and stimulus driven recovery in the U.S. and global markets fueled an appreciation in the value of assets that were purchased during this period. SIL was able to share the proceeds of this success with its shareholders in the form of a higher dividend payout ratio. While banks and other regulated financial institutions had to reduce the dividends they paid out to shareholders – SIL was able to increase the US dollar dividends its shareholders received.

Corporate Social Responsibility Activities 2020



Sterling provided a donation of JA\$300,000 to the Jamaica Stock Exchange Ventilator Covid-19 Project in May 2020



Donation of a variety of items such as games, sporting equipment and sanitizing products to Maxfield Park Children Home – July 2020



To show their support for the hard working staff at the UHWI Hospital, Sterling provided lunch for 300 members of staff in September 2020.



Sterling Asset provided lunch for hard working Doctors, Nurses and Administrative staff at Spanish Town Hospital in October 2020



Maxfield Park Children's Home donation of; Children's face masks, sanitation products, games, crayons, reading and colouring books for all ages and personal care products.



Sterling provided some well needed supplies to the Golden Age Home in May 2020



Sterling provided some well needed sanitizing supplies for the Ozanam Home for the aged in June 2020



Annotto Bay High School donation of 20 Samsung tablets and cases to help increase access to online learning. The primary recipients will be students who are preparing for CSEC exams in 2021. Acting Principal Mrs. Pringle-McKenzie accepted the tablets on behalf of the school and expressed great appreciation for the donation. She highlighted that there are many students who have no means of participating in online classes.



Sterling Investor Briefing 2020. Charles Ross with Keith Collister; Chairman ATL pension fund (far right) and W. St. Elmo Whyte; Chief Actuary, Actman International Ltd (middle)

Management Discussion & Analysis

Income Statement Analysis:

Sterling Investments Limited derives the majority of its income from a portfolio of US dollar denominated fixed income securities. The company uses modest amounts of leverage to enhance returns to shareholders.

Total revenue increased 48.1% from J\$148.4 million in 2019 to J\$219.8 million in 2020. This was driven by increases in:

- ▶ The net gain on sale of debt securities which increased 343% from J\$4.3 million to J\$19.23 million.
- ▶ Foreign exchange gains which increased 80% from J\$43.9 million to J\$79.2 million
- ▶ Interest income which increased 22% from J\$98.3 million to J\$120.3 million

Interest expense declined by 11% from J\$12.9 million in 2019 to J\$11.414 million in 2020. This was primarily the result of the lowering of interest rates by the U.S Federal Reserve. Other operating expenses totalled J\$37.8 million in 2020 and J\$37.7 million in 2019. Operating profit increased 44% from J\$108.6 million in 2019 to J\$156.42 million in 2020. Preference share interest expense rose from J\$7.2 million to J\$21.6 million.

The increases in revenue and the reduction in interest expense resulted in a 32.8% increase in net profit from J\$101.2 million in 2019 to J\$134.3 million in 2020.

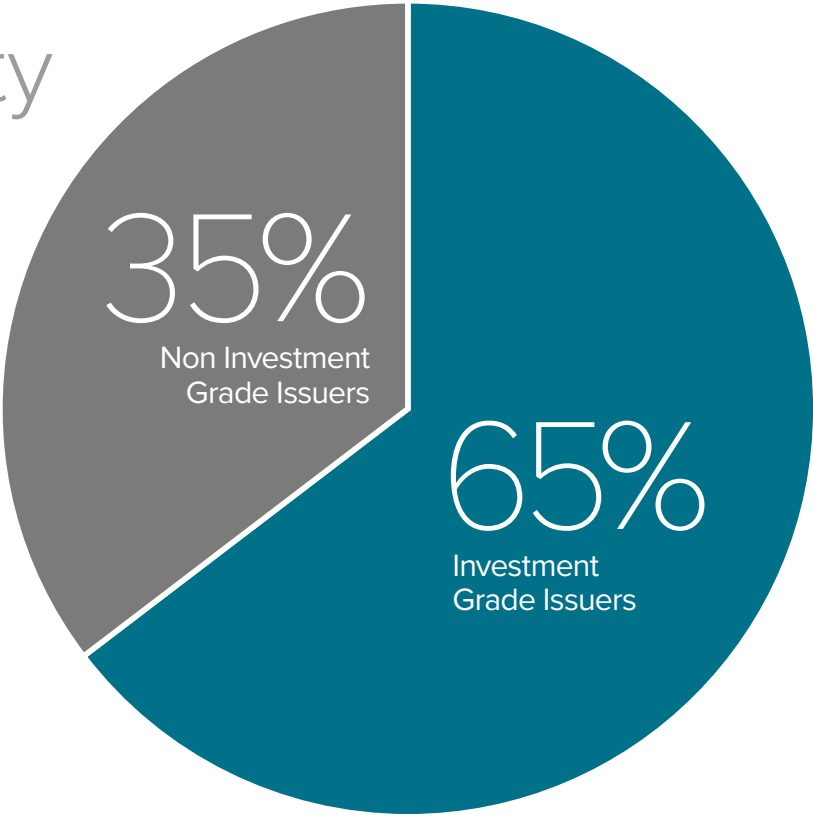
Balance Sheet Analysis

Total assets increased 17.7% from J\$1.6 billion in 2019 to J\$1.9 billion in 2020. This was primarily driven by an increase in investment securities. The company financed the asset growth using margin loans which increased by 52% from J\$350.8 million in 2019 to J\$531.8 million in 2020. It is important to note that interest expense declined despite the rise in margin loans, underscoring the value of this method of financing. The company was able to strategically purchase undervalued assets during the 2020 COVID-19 induced market decline. Margin loans represent the company's largest liability.

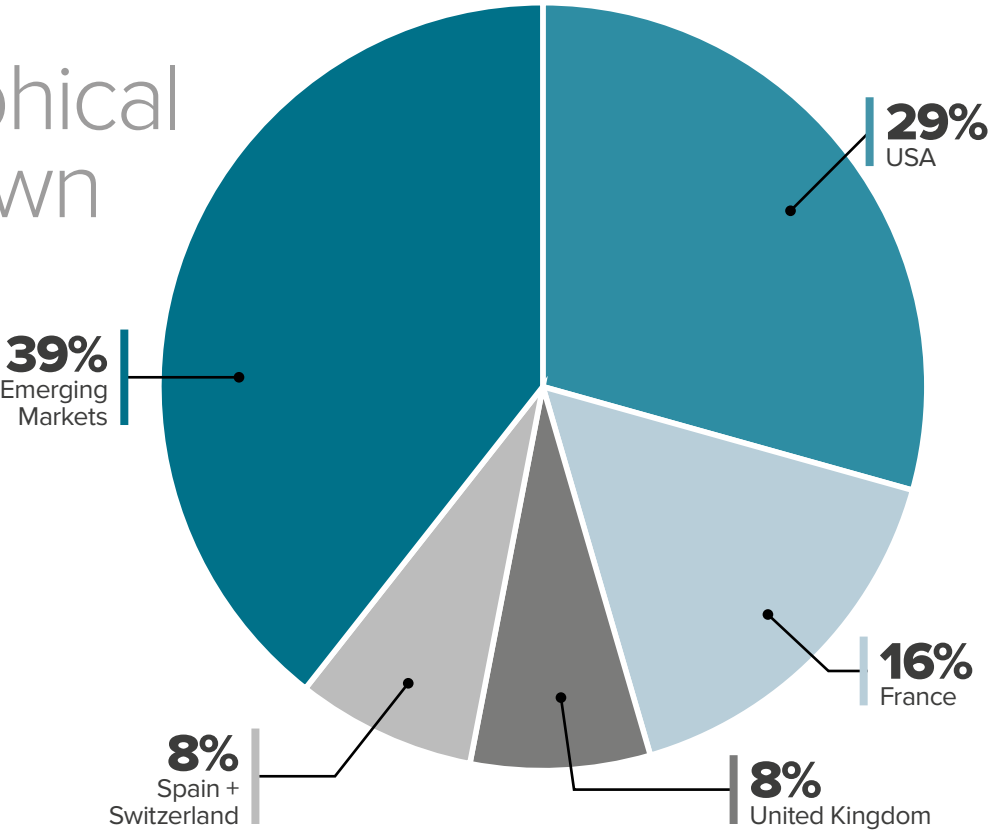
Total equity increased 9% from J\$1.2 billion in 2019 to J\$1.4 billion in 2020. This was driven primarily by an increase in retained earnings (From J\$270.3 million in 2019 to J\$372.6 million in 2020).

As at December 31, 2020, the levered Weighted average Yield on the portfolio was 9.58%. Details on the portfolio are represented in the pie charts on the following page.

Credit Quality Overview



Geographical Breakdown



An underwater photograph showing several dolphins swimming in clear blue water. In the background, the surface of the water is visible with a boat and a person on board. The lighting is bright, creating a serene and natural atmosphere.

Audited Financial Statements

December 31, 2020



KPMG

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No. 2 Bella Rosa Road
Gros-Islet
Saint Lucia
Telephone: (758)-453-2298
Email: ecinfo@kpmg.lc

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

To the Members of
STERLING INVESTMENTS LIMITED

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Sterling Investments Limited ("the Company") set out on pages 33 to 74, which comprise the statement of financial position as at December 31, 2020, the statements of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, changes in equity and cash flows for the year then ended, and notes, comprising significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Company as at December 31, 2020, and its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS).

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (ISAs). Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of our report. We are independent of the Company in accordance with International Ethics Standards Board for Accountants' International Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including International Independence Standards) (IESBA Code) together with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Saint Lucia and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements and the IESBA Code. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

KPMG in Barbados and Eastern Caribbean, registered in Barbados, Antigua and Barbuda, Saint Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and a member firm of the KPMG global organization of independent member firms affiliated with KPMG International Limited, a private English company limited by guarantee. All rights reserved.



INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT (CONTINUED)

To the Members of
STERLING INVESTMENTS LIMITED

Key Audit Matters

Key audit matters are those matters that, in our professional judgement, were of most significance in our audit of the financial statements of the current period. These matters were addressed in the context of our audit of the financial statements as a whole, and in forming our opinion thereon, and we do not provide a separate opinion on these matters.

Fair value of investment securities

Key audit matter

The Company's investment portfolio includes investment in an unquoted equity security, classified as *equity investment securities at fair value through other comprehensive income (FVOCI)* and measured at fair value.

Management has determined the fair value of this investment using the net asset approach which involves the valuation of the underlying assets of a business, in the absence of a quoted price for the instrument on a trading market.

The key areas requiring greater level of management's judgement and estimate is the expected cash flows to be generated by the underlying assets and the determination of the discount rate to be applied.

How the matter was addressed in our audit

- We assessed the reasonableness of the cash flow projection by:
 - (i) comparing the input data provided by management with independent data sources, supporting documents and information;
 - (ii) challenging management's assumptions such as, the timing, amounts and future growth of the cash flows by obtaining an understanding of the relevant activities of the business and determining whether there may be variations to the contractual cash flows expected.
- We engaged our internal valuation specialist to evaluate the application of valuation methodology and the reasonableness of the assumptions used in determining the discount rate, by comparing the discount rate with published market and industry data and other relevant information.
- We tested the mathematical accuracy of the cash flows projection and the adequacy and appropriateness of the Company's disclosures against the requirements of IFRS 13, *Fair Value Measurement*.



INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT (CONTINUED)

To the Members of
STERLING INVESTMENTS LIMITED

Key Audit Matters (continued)

Valuation of investment securities

Key audit matter

IFRS 9 *Financial Instruments*, requires the Company to measure expected credit losses on a forward-looking basis reflecting a range of future economic conditions. Significant management judgement is used in determining the economic scenarios and management overlay.

We therefore determined that the impairment of investments has a high degree of estimation uncertainty.

How the matter was addressed in our audit

We performed the following procedures:

- Obtained an understanding of the model used by management for the calculation of expected credit losses.
- Agreed the investment listing with the investments included in the model to determine whether all debt securities were included.
- Agreed the inputs used to calculate the probability of default (PD) and Loss Given Default (LGD) to external sources such as external rating agencies.
- Agreed inputs, including maturity date, credit rating and interest rate to source documents.
- Recalculated the amortised cost for the investment securities, which is the Exposure at Default (EAD).
- We involved our internal specialists to evaluate the appropriateness of the Company's methodology for incorporating Forward Looking Information (FLI) by comparing management's FLI with industry benchmark.
- Assessed the adequacy of the disclosures of the key assumptions and judgements.



INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT (CONTINUED)

To the Members of
STERLING INVESTMENTS LIMITED

Other Information

Management is responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Company's annual report but does not include the financial statements and our auditors' report thereon. The annual report is expected to be made available to us after the date of this auditors' report.

Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and we will not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information identified above when it becomes available and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

When we read the Company's annual report, if we conclude that there is a material misstatement therein, we are required to communicate the matter to the Board of Directors.

Responsibilities of Management and Board of Directors for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with IFRS, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the Company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Company or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

The Board of Directors are responsible for overseeing the Company's financial reporting process.



INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT (CONTINUED)

To the Members of
STERLING INVESTMENTS LIMITED

Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditors' report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Company's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Company's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditors' report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditors' report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Company to cease to continue as a going concern.



INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT (CONTINUED)

To the Members of
STERLING INVESTMENTS LIMITED

Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements (continued)

- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with the Board of Directors regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

We also provide the Board of Directors with a statement that we have complied with relevant ethical requirements regarding independence, and communicate with them all relationships and other matters that may reasonably be thought to bear on our independence, and where applicable, actions taken to eliminate threats or safeguards applied.

From the matters communicated with the Board of Directors, we determine those matters that were of most significance in the audit of the financial statements of the current period and are therefore the key audit matters. We describe these matters in our auditors' report unless law or regulation precludes public disclosure about the matter or when, in extremely rare circumstances, we determine that a matter should not be communicated in our report because the adverse consequences of doing so would reasonably be expected to outweigh the public interest benefits of such communication.

The engagement partner on the audit resulting in this independent auditors' report is Lisa Brathwaite.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'KPMG'.

Chartered Accountants
February 26, 2021

Castries, Saint Lucia

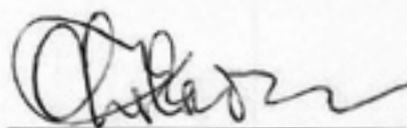
STERLING INVESTMENTS LIMITED

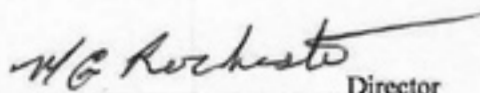
Statement of Financial Position

As at December 31, 2020 (Expressed in Jamaican Dollars)

	<u>Notes</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
Assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	4	1,453,509	2,079,139
Accounts receivable	5	27,119,580	44,061,124
Income tax recoverable		125,628	201,332
Investment securities	6	<u>1,894,584,365</u>	<u>1,587,657,599</u>
Total assets		<u>1,923,283,082</u>	<u>1,633,999,194</u>
Liabilities			
Margin loans payable	7	531,800,766	350,839,368
Other payables	8	28,525,817	13,058,853
Due to related company	9(c)(i)	23,864,487	41,445,974
Manager's preference shares	10	<u>10,000</u>	<u>10,000</u>
Total liabilities		<u>584,201,070</u>	<u>405,354,195</u>
Equity			
Share capital	11(ii)	909,347,746	905,042,146
Prepaid share reserve	12	221,733	316,841
Fair value reserve	13	56,910,319	52,990,498
Retained earnings		<u>372,602,214</u>	<u>270,295,514</u>
Total equity		<u>1,339,082,012</u>	<u>1,228,644,999</u>
Total liabilities and equity		<u>1,923,283,082</u>	<u>1,633,999,194</u>

The financial statements on pages 7 to 48 were approved for issue by the Board of Directors on February 26, 2021 and signed on its behalf by:


 _____ Director
 Charles Ross


 _____ Director
 Maxim Rochester

STERLING INVESTMENTS LIMITED

Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income

Year ended December 31, 2020 (Expressed in Jamaican Dollars)

	<u>Notes</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
Revenue			
Interest income calculated using the effective interest method	14	120,294,499	98,299,266
Foreign exchange gain		79,153,974	43,867,988
Net gain on sale of debt investment securities at FVOCI		19,230,511	4,336,249
Net gain on sale of equity investment securities at FVTPL	14	<u>1,076,804</u>	<u>1,869,517</u>
	14	<u>219,755,788</u>	<u>148,373,020</u>
Expenses			
Interest		(11,414,398)	(12,872,969)
Impairment (loss)/gain on financial instruments	19(a)(v)	(2,922,765)	1,184,399
Unrealised fair value (loss)/gain on equity investment securities at FVTPL		(11,170,000)	9,651,783
Other operating expenses	15	<u>(37,825,562)</u>	<u>(37,739,363)</u>
		<u>(63,332,725)</u>	<u>(39,776,150)</u>
Operating profit		156,423,063	108,596,870
Other income		459,598	423,958
Manager's preference share interest expense	9(c)(ii)	<u>(21,624,845)</u>	<u>(7,225,475)</u>
Profit before taxation		135,257,816	101,795,353
Taxation	16	<u>(918,215)</u>	<u>(629,229)</u>
Profit for the year		<u>134,339,601</u>	<u>101,166,124</u>
Other comprehensive income			
Items that are or may be reclassified subsequently to profit or loss:			
Movements in fair value reserve			
Realised gain on sale of FVOCI debt investment securities reclassified to profit or loss		(17,681,582)	(5,799,592)
Change in fair value of FVOCI debt investment Securities, net		<u>21,601,403</u>	<u>116,177,282</u>
Total other comprehensive income for the year		<u>3,919,821</u>	<u>110,377,690</u>
Total comprehensive income for the year		<u>138,259,422</u>	<u>211,543,814</u>
Earnings per stock unit			
Basic and diluted earnings per stock unit	17(a)	<u>0.36¢</u>	<u>0.28¢</u>

STERLING INVESTMENTS LIMITED

Statement of Changes in Equity

Year ended December 31, 2020 (Expressed in Jamaican Dollars)

	Share capital [note 11(ii)]	Prepaid share reserve (note 12)	Fair value reserve (note 13)	Retained earnings	Total
Balances at December 31, 2018	<u>699,274,387</u>	<u>43,321</u>	<u>(57,387,192)</u>	<u>203,609,320</u>	<u>845,539,836</u>
Comprehensive income:					
Profit for the year	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>101,166,124</u>	<u>101,166,124</u>
Other comprehensive income:					
Fair value reserve					
Realised gains on sale of FVOCI debt instrument securities reclassified to profit or loss	-	-	(5,799,592)	-	(5,799,592)
Change in fair value of FVOCI debt instrument securities, net	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>116,177,282</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>116,177,282</u>
Total other comprehensive income	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>110,377,690</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>110,377,690</u>
Total comprehensive income	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>110,377,690</u>	<u>101,166,124</u>	<u>211,543,814</u>
Transactions with owners:					
Shares issued during the year	205,767,759	-	-	-	205,767,759
Transfer of prepayment of shares	-	(43,321)	-	-	(43,321)
Prepayments for share	-	316,841	-	-	316,841
Dividends (note 18)	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(34,479,930)</u>	<u>(34,479,930)</u>
Total transactions with owners	<u>205,767,759</u>	<u>273,520</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(34,479,930)</u>	<u>171,561,349</u>
Balances at December 31, 2019	<u>905,042,146</u>	<u>316,841</u>	<u>52,990,498</u>	<u>270,295,514</u>	<u>1,228,644,999</u>
Comprehensive income:					
Profit for the year	-	-	-	134,339,601	134,339,601
Other comprehensive income:					
Fair value reserve					
Realised loss on sale of FVOCI debt instrument securities reclassified to profit or loss	-	-	(17,681,582)	-	(17,681,582)
Change in fair value of FVOCI debt instrument securities, net	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>21,601,403</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>21,601,403</u>
Total other comprehensive income	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>3,919,821</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>3,919,821</u>
Total comprehensive loss					
Transactions with owners:					
Shares issued during the year	4,305,600	-	-	-	4,305,600
Transfer of prepayment of shares	-	(316,841)	-	-	(316,841)
Prepayments for share	-	221,733	-	-	221,733
Dividends (note 18)	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(32,032,901)</u>	<u>(32,032,901)</u>
Total transactions with owner	<u>4,305,600</u>	<u>(95,108)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(32,032,901)</u>	<u>(27,822,409)</u>
Balances as at December 31, 2020	<u>909,347,746</u>	<u>221,733</u>	<u>56,910,319</u>	<u>372,602,214</u>	<u>1,339,082,012</u>

STERLING INVESTMENTS LIMITED

Statement of Cash Flows

Year ended December 31, 2020 (Expressed in Jamaican Dollars)

	<u>Notes</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
Cash flows from operating activities			
Profit for the year		134,339,601	101,166,124
Adjustments for:			
Interest income		(120,294,499)	(98,299,266)
Interest expense		11,414,398	12,872,969
Impairment loss/(gain) on investment securities	19(a)(v)	2,922,765	(1,184,399)
Unrealised fair value loss/(gain) on quoted equities at FVTPL		11,170,000	(9,651,783)
Taxation	16	918,215	629,229
Manager's preference share interest expense	9(c)(i)	<u>21,624,845</u>	<u>7,225,475</u>
		62,095,325	12,758,349
Changes in:			
Accounts receivable		170,331	1,832,568
Margin loans payable		180,961,398	14,610,156
Other payables		3,227,690	(731,551)
Due to related company		<u>(17,581,486)</u>	<u>23,948,424</u>
		228,873,258	52,417,946
Interest received		137,065,711	95,974,154
Interest paid		(11,414,398)	(12,872,969)
Tax paid		<u>(842,510)</u>	<u>(737,854)</u>
Net cash provided by operating activities		<u>353,682,061</u>	<u>134,781,277</u>
Cash flows from investing activity			
Investment securities, being net cash used by investing activity		<u>(317,099,710)</u>	<u>(304,696,184)</u>
Cash flows from financing activities			
Issue of ordinary shares, net		1,743,919	202,436,110
Complementary share purchase programme		(95,108)	273,520
Manager's preference shares interest paid		(9,385,571)	(3,047,900)
Dividends paid	18	<u>(29,471,221)</u>	<u>(31,148,281)</u>
Net cash (used)/provided by financing activities		<u>(37,207,981)</u>	<u>168,513,449</u>
Decrease in cash and cash equivalents		(625,630)	(1,401,458)
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year		<u>2,079,139</u>	<u>3,480,597</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year	4	<u>1,453,509</u>	<u>2,079,139</u>

Notes to the Financial Statements

Year ended December 31, 2020 (Expressed in Jamaican Dollars)

1. Identification

Sterling Investments Limited (“the Company”) is incorporated in Saint Lucia under the International Business Companies Act. Its registered office is located at 20 Micoud Street, Castries, Saint Lucia. The principal activities of the Company are holding and trading of securities and other investments. The Company is listed on the Jamaica Stock Exchange.

The Company’s activities are administered by Sterling Asset Management Limited to which management fees are paid [note 9(c)(ii)].

2. Statement of compliance and basis of preparation

(a) Statement of compliance

The financial statements are prepared in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards (“IFRS”).

(b) Functional and presentation currency

The financial statements are presented in Jamaican dollars, which is the functional currency of the Company, unless otherwise stated.

(c) Use of estimates and judgements

The preparation of the financial statements in conformity with IFRS requires management to make estimates, based on assumptions, and judgements. The estimates and judgements affect the reported amounts of, and disclosures relating to, assets, liabilities, contingent assets and contingent liabilities at the reporting date and the income and expenses for the year then ended. Actual amounts could differ from those estimates.

The estimates, and the assumptions underlying them, are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised and future periods if the revision affects both current and future periods.

Judgements and estimates made by management in the application of IFRS that have a significant effect on these financial statements and/or have a significant risk of material adjustment in the next financial year are set out below:

(i) Judgements

For the purpose of these financial statements, which are prepared in accordance with IFRS, judgement refers to the informed identification and analysis of reasonable alternatives, considering all relevant facts and circumstances, and the well-reasoned, objective and unbiased choice of the alternative that is most consistent with the agreed principles set out in IFRS.

STERLING INVESTMENTS LIMITED
Notes to the Financial Statements (Continued)
Year ended December 31, 2020 (Expressed in Jamaican Dollars)

2. Statement of compliance and basis of preparation (continued)

(c) Use of estimates and judgements (continued)

(i) Judgements (continued)

(1) Classification of financial assets:

The assessment of the business model within which the assets are held and assessment of whether the contractual terms of the financial asset are Solely Payments of Principal and Interest (SPPI) on the principal amount outstanding requires management to make certain judgements on its business operations.

(2) Impairment of financial assets:

Establishing the criteria for determining whether credit risk on the financial asset has increased significantly since initial recognition, determining methodology for incorporating forward-looking information into measurement of expected credit loss (ECL) and selection and approval of models used to measure ECL requires significant judgement.

(3) Determination of fair values:

The Company's accounting policies and disclosures require the measurement of fair values for financial assets. The determination of whether a security's fair value may be classified as 'Level 1' in the fair value hierarchy (note 20) requires judgement as to whether a market is active.

When one is available, the Company measures the fair value of an instrument using the quoted prices in an active market for that instrument. A market is regarded as active if transactions for the asset take place with sufficient frequency and volume to provide pricing information on an ongoing basis.

If there is no quoted price in an active market, then the Company uses valuation techniques that maximise the use of relevant observable inputs and minimise the use of unobservable inputs. The chosen valuation technique incorporates all of the factors that market participants would take into account in pricing a transaction.

STERLING INVESTMENTS LIMITED
Notes to the Financial Statements (Continued)
Year ended December 31, 2020 (Expressed in Jamaican Dollars)

2. Statement of compliance and basis of preparation (continued)

(c) Use of estimates and judgements (continued)

(i) Judgements (continued)

(3) Determination of fair values (continued)

Fair values are categorised into different levels in a fair value hierarchy based on the inputs used in the valuation techniques, as follows:

Level 1: quoted market prices (unadjusted) in active markets for identical assets or liabilities.

Level 2: inputs other than quoted prices included in Level 1 that are observable for the asset or liability, either directly (i.e. as prices) or indirectly (i.e. derived from prices).

Level 3: inputs for the asset or liability that are not based on observable market data (unobservable inputs). The valuation techniques include the fair value of net asset and discounted cash flows model in addition to the weighted average cost of capital and marketability discount factors for which an observable market exist. The objective of the valuation techniques is to arrive at a fair value measurement that reflects the price that would be received to sell the assets in an ordinary transaction between market participants at the measurement date.

In the absence of quoted market prices, the fair value of a significant proportion of the Company's assets was determined using Bloomberg. Considerable judgement is required in interpreting market data to arrive at estimates of fair values. Although management believes that its estimates of fair value are appropriate, the use of different methodologies or assumptions could lead to different measurements of fair values. Consequently, the estimates arrived at may be significantly different from the actual price of the instrument in an arm's length transaction.

(ii) Key assumptions concerning the future and other sources of estimation uncertainty

Allowance for impairment losses

In determining amounts recorded for impairment of debt investment securities, management makes assumptions in determining the inputs to be used in the ECL measurement model, including probability of default and the incorporation of forward-looking information. The use of assumptions make uncertainty inherent in such estimates.

STERLING INVESTMENTS LIMITED
Notes to the Financial Statements (Continued)
Year ended December 31, 2020 (Expressed in Jamaican Dollars)

2. Statement of compliance and basis of preparation (continued)

(d) Basis of measurement

The financial statements have been prepared on the historical cost basis, except for the inclusion of investment securities at fair value.

3. Significant accounting policies

(a) Financial instruments – Classification, recognition and derecognition, measurement and impairment

A financial instrument is any contract that gives rise to a financial asset of one entity and a financial liability or equity instrument of another entity. In these financial statements, financial assets comprise cash and cash equivalents, accounts receivable, and investment securities. Financial liabilities comprise margin loans payable, other payables, due to related company and manager's preference shares.

(i) Recognition and initial measurement

Financial instruments are classified, recognised and measured in accordance with the substance of the terms of the contracts as set out herein.

The Company recognises a financial instrument when it becomes a party to the contractual terms of the instrument. The Company initially recognises receivables and debt securities on the date when they are originated. All other financial assets and financial liabilities are initially recognised when the Company becomes a party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

A financial asset (unless it is a receivable without a significant financing component) or financial liability is initially measured at fair value plus, for an item not at FVTPL; transaction costs that are directly attributable to its acquisition or issue. A receivable without a significant financing component is initially measured at the transaction price.

(ii) Classification and subsequent measurement

Financial assets

On initial recognition, a financial asset is classified as measured at: amortised cost; fair value through other comprehensive income; FVOCI – debt investment; FVOCI – equity investment; or fair value through profit or loss (FVTPL).

STERLING INVESTMENTS LIMITED
Notes to the Financial Statements (Continued)
Year ended December 31, 2020 (Expressed in Jamaican Dollars)

3. Significant accounting policies (continued)

(a) Financial instruments – Classification, recognition and derecognition, measurement and impairment (continued)

(ii) Classification and subsequent measurement (continued)

Financial assets (continued)

A financial asset is measured at amortised cost if it meets both of the following conditions and is not designated as at FVTPL:

- it is held within a business model whose objective is to hold assets to collect contractual cash flows; and
- its contractual terms give rise on specified dates to cash flows that are solely payments of principal and interest on the principal amount outstanding (SPPI).

A debt investment is measured at FVOCI if it meets both of the following conditions and is not designated as at FVTPL:

- it is held within a business model whose objective is achieved by both collecting contractual cash flows and selling financial assets; and
- its contractual terms give rise on specified dates to cash flows that are solely payments of principal and interest on the principal amount outstanding (SPPI).

On initial recognition of an equity investment that is not held for trading, the Company may irrevocably elect to present subsequent changes in fair value in other comprehensive income. This election is made on an investment-by-investment basis.

All financial assets not classified as measured at amortised cost or FVOCI are measured at FVTPL. On initial recognition, the Company may irrevocably designate a financial asset that otherwise meets the requirements to be measured at amortised cost or at FVOCI, as at FVTPL if doing so eliminates or significantly reduces an accounting mismatch that would otherwise arise.

Business model assessments:

The Company makes an assessment of the objective of the business model in which a financial asset is held at a portfolio level because this best reflects the way the business is managed and information is provided to management. The information considered includes:

STERLING INVESTMENTS LIMITED
Notes to the Financial Statements (Continued)
Year ended December 31, 2020 (Expressed in Jamaican Dollars)

3. Significant accounting policies (continued)

- (a) Financial instruments – Classification, recognition and derecognition, measurement and impairment (continued)
- (ii) Classification and subsequent measurement (continued)

Financial assets (continued)

Business model assessments (continued):

- The stated policies and objectives for the portfolio and the operation of those policies in practice. These include whether management’s strategy focuses on earning contractual interest income, maintaining a particular interest rate profile, matching the duration of the financial assets to the duration of any related liabilities that are funding these assets or realising cash flows through the sale of the assets;
- How the performance of the portfolio is evaluated and reported to the Company’s management;
- The risks that affect the performance of the business model (and the financial assets held within that business model) and how those risks are managed;
- How managers of the business are compensated – e.g. whether compensation is based on the fair value of the assets managed or the contractual cash flows collected; and
- The frequency, volume and timing of sales of financial assets in prior periods, the reasons for such sales and expectations about future sales activity. However, the information about sales activity is not considered in isolation, but as part of an overall assessment of how the Company’s stated objective for managing the financial assets is achieved and how cash flows are realised.

Financial assets that are held for trading or managed and whose performance is evaluated on a fair value basis are measured at FVTPL because they are neither held to collect contractual cash flows nor held both to collect contractual cash flows and to sell financial assets.

Assessment whether contractual cash flows are solely payments of principal and interest:

For the purposes of this assessment, ‘principal’ is defined as the fair value of the financial asset on initial recognition. ‘Interest’ is defined as consideration for the time value of money and for the credit risk associated with the principal amount outstanding during a particular period of time and for other basic lending risks and costs (e.g. liquidity risk and administrative costs), as well as a profit margin.

STERLING INVESTMENTS LIMITED
Notes to the Financial Statements (Continued)
Year ended December 31, 2020 (Expressed in Jamaican Dollars)

3. Significant accounting policies (continued)

- (a) Financial instruments – Classification, recognition and derecognition, measurement and impairment (continued)
- (ii) Classification and subsequent measurement (continued)

Financial assets (continued)

The Company's objective is achieved by both collecting contractual cash flows and selling financial assets.

In assessing whether the contractual cash flows are solely payments of principal and interest, the Company considers the contractual terms of the instrument. This includes assessing whether the financial asset contains a contractual term that could change the timing or amount of contractual cash flows such that it would not meet this condition. In making this assessment, the Company considers the following:

- contingent events that would change the amount or timing of cash flows;
- terms that may adjust the contractual coupon rate, including variable-rate features;
- leverage features, that modify consideration of the time value of money such as periodic reset of interest rates;
- prepayment and extension features; and
- terms that limit the Company's claim to cash flows from specified assets (e.g. non-recourse features).

A prepayment feature is consistent with the solely payments of principal and interest criterion if the prepayment amount substantially represents unpaid amounts of principal and interest on the principal amount outstanding, which may include reasonable additional compensation for early termination of the contract. Additionally, for a financial asset acquired at a discount or premium to its contractual par value, a feature that permits or requires prepayment at an amount that substantially represents the contractual par amount plus accrued (but unpaid) contractual interest (which may also include reasonable additional compensation for early termination) is treated as consistent with this criterion if the fair value of the prepayment feature is insignificant at initial recognition.

STERLING INVESTMENTS LIMITED
Notes to the Financial Statements (Continued)
Year ended December 31, 2020 (Expressed in Jamaican Dollars)

3. Significant accounting policies (continued)

(a) Financial instruments – Classification, recognition and derecognition, measurement and impairment (continued)

(ii) Classification and subsequent measurement (continued)

Reclassifications

Financial assets are not reclassified subsequent to their initial recognition, except in the period after the Company changes its business model for managing financial assets, in which case all affected financial assets are reclassified on the first reporting period following the change in business model.

(iii) Embedded derivatives

Derivative may be embedded in another contractual arrangement (a host contract). The Company accounts for an embedded derivative separately from the host contract when:

- the host contract is not an asset in the scope of IFRS 9;
- the host contract is not itself carried at FVTPL;
- the terms of the embedded derivative would meet the definition of a derivative if they were contained in a separate contract; and
- the economic characteristics and risk of the embedded derivative are not closely related to the economic characteristics and risk of the host contract.

Separated embedded derivatives are measured at fair value, with all changes in fair value recognised in profit or loss unless they form part of a qualifying cash flow or net investment hedging relationship. Separated embedded derivatives are presented in the statement of financial position together with host contract.

(iv) Identification and measurement of impairment

The Company recognises loss allowances for ECL on financial instruments that are not measured at FVTPL, in financial assets that are debt Instruments. No impairment loss is recognised on equity investments.

The Company measures loss allowances at an amount equal to 12-month ECL on the debt investment securities that are determined to have low credit risk at the reporting date and other financial instruments on which credit risk has not increased significantly since their initial recognition.

The Company considers a debt investment security to have low credit risk when its credit risk rating is equivalent to the globally understood definition of 'investment grade'. The Company does not apply the low credit risk exemption to any other financial instruments.

STERLING INVESTMENTS LIMITED
Notes to the Financial Statements (Continued)
Year ended December 31, 2020 (Expressed in Jamaican Dollars)

3. Significant accounting policies (continued)

(a) Financial instruments – Classification, recognition and derecognition, measurement and impairment (continued)

(iv) Identification and measurement of impairment (continued)

12-month ECL are the portion of ECL that result from default events on a financial instrument that are possible within the 12 months after the reporting date. Financial instruments for which a 12-month ECL is recognised are referred to as ‘Stage 1 financial instruments’.

Life-time ECL are the ECL that result from all possible default events over the expected life of the financial instrument. Financial instruments for which a lifetime ECL is recognised but which are not credit-impaired are referred to as ‘Stage 2 financial instruments’.

Measurement of ECL

ECL are a probability-weighted estimate of credit losses. They are measured as follows:

- *financial assets that are not credit-impaired at the reporting date:* as the difference between the present value of all cash shortfalls (i.e. the difference between the cash flows due to the entity in accordance with the contract and the cash flows that the Company expects to receive) and;
- *financial assets that are credit-impaired at the reporting date:* as the difference between the gross carrying amount and the present value of estimated future cash flows.

Credit-impaired financial assets

At each reporting date, the Company assesses whether financial assets carried at amortised cost and debt financial assets carried at FVOCI are credit-impaired (referred to as ‘Stage 3 financial assets’). A financial asset is ‘credit-impaired’ when one or more events that have a detrimental impact on the estimated future cash flows of the financial asset have occurred.

Evidence that a financial asset is credit-impaired includes the following observable data:

- significant financial difficulty of the borrower or issuer;
- a breach of contract such as a default or past due event;
- the restructuring of a loan or advance by the Company on terms that the Company would not consider otherwise;

STERLING INVESTMENTS LIMITED
Notes to the Financial Statements (Continued)
Year ended December 31, 2020 (Expressed in Jamaican Dollars)

3. Significant accounting policies (continued)

(a) Financial instruments – Classification, recognition and derecognition, measurement and impairment (continued)

(iv) Identification and measurement of impairment (continued)

Credit-impaired financial assets (continued)

Evidence that a financial asset is credit-impaired includes the following observable data (continued):

- it is becoming probable that the borrower will enter bankruptcy or other financial reorganisation; or
- the disappearance of an active market for a security because of financial difficulties.

In making an assessment of whether an investment in sovereign debt is credit-impaired, the Company considers the following factors.

- The market's assessment of creditworthiness as reflected in the bond yields.
- The rating agencies' assessments of creditworthiness.
- The country's ability to access the capital markets for new debt issuance.
- The probability of debt being restructured, resulting in holders suffering losses through voluntary or mandatory debt forgiveness.
- The international support mechanisms in place to provide the necessary support as 'lender of last resort' to that country, as well as the intention, reflected in public statements, of governments and agencies to use those mechanisms. This includes an assessment of the depth of those mechanisms and, irrespective of the political intent, whether there is the capacity to fulfil the required criteria.

Presentation of allowance for ECL in the statement of financial position

Loss allowances for ECL are presented in the statement of financial position as follows: *financial assets measured at amortised cost*: as a deduction from the gross carrying amount of the assets

Debt instrument measured at FVOCI; no loss allowance is recognised in the statement of financial position because the carrying amount of these assets is fair value. However, the loss allowances are disclosed and recognised in the fair value reserve.

STERLING INVESTMENTS LIMITED
Notes to the Financial Statements (Continued)
Year ended December 31, 2020 (Expressed in Jamaican Dollars)

3. Significant accounting policies (continued)

- (a) Financial instruments – Classification, recognition and derecognition, measurement and impairment (continued)

- (iv) Identification and measurement of impairment (continued)

Write off

Loans and debt securities are written off (either partially or in full) when there is no reasonable expectation of recovering a financial asset in its entirety or a portion thereof. This is generally the case when the Company determines that the borrower does not have assets or sources of income that could generate sufficient cash flows to repay the amounts subject to the write-off. This assessment is carried out at the individual asset level.

Recoveries of amounts previously written off are included in ‘impairment losses on financial instruments’ in the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income.

- (b) Cash and cash equivalents

Cash comprises cash in hand and demand deposits. Cash equivalents comprise short-term highly liquid investments that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash, are subject to an insignificant risk of changes in value, and are held for the purpose of meeting short-term commitments (these investments include short-term deposits where the maturities do not exceed three months from the acquisition date). Cash and cash equivalents are measured at amortised cost and are subject to an insignificant risk of changes in their carrying value.

- (c) Accounts receivable

Accounts receivable is measured at amortised cost, less impairment losses.

- (d) Margin loans payable and other payables

Margin loans payable and other payables are measured at amortised cost.

- (e) Interest

- (i) Interest income and expense are recognised in profit or loss by using the effective interest method. The “effective interest rate” is the rate that exactly discounts the estimated future cash receipts through the expected life of the financial instruments to its gross carrying amount.

STERLING INVESTMENTS LIMITED
Notes to the Financial Statements (Continued)
Year ended December 31, 2020 (Expressed in Jamaican Dollars)

3. Significant accounting policies (continued)

(e) Interest

(i) (Continued)

Effective interest rate

When calculating the effective interest rate for financial instruments other than purchased or originated credit impaired assets, the Company estimates future cash flows considering all contractual terms of the financial instrument, but not ECL. For purchased or originated credit-impaired financial assets a credit-adjusted effective interest rate is calculated using estimated future cash flows including ECL.

The calculation of the effective interest rate includes transaction costs and fees and points paid or received that are an integral part of the effective interest rate. Transaction costs include incremental costs that are directly attributable to the acquisition of a financial asset.

Amortised cost and gross carrying amount

The 'amortised cost' of a financial asset or financial liability is the amount at which the financial asset or financial liability is measured on initial recognition minus the principal repayments, plus or minus the cumulative amortisation using the effective interest method of any difference between that initial amount and the maturity amount and, for financial assets, adjusted for any expected credit loss allowance.

The 'gross carrying amount of a financial asset' is the amortised cost of a financial asset before adjusting for any expected credit loss allowance.

Calculation of interest income and interest expense

The effective interest rate of a financial asset or financial liability is calculated on initial recognition of a financial asset. In calculating interest income, the effective interest rate is applied to the gross carrying amount of the asset (when the asset is not credit-impaired). The effective interest rate is revised as a result of periodic re-estimation of cash flows of floating rate instruments to reflect movements in market rates of interest.

However, for financial assets that have become credit-impaired subsequent to initial recognition, interest income is calculated by applying the effective interest rate to the amortised cost of the financial asset. If the asset is no longer credit-impaired, then the calculation of interest income reverts to the gross basis.

STERLING INVESTMENTS LIMITED
Notes to the Financial Statements (Continued)
Year ended December 31, 2020 (Expressed in Jamaican Dollars)

3. Significant accounting policies (continued)

(e) Interest (continued)

(i) (Continued)

Calculation of interest income and interest expense (continued)

For financial assets that have become credit-impaired on initial recognition, interest income is calculated by applying the credit adjusted effective interest rate to the amortised cost of the asset. The calculation of interest income does not revert to the gross basis even if the credit risk of the asset improves.

Presentation

Interest income calculated using the effective interest method presented in the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, includes interest on financial assets and financial liabilities measured at amortised cost, and interest on debt instruments measured at FVOCI.

Interest expense presented in the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income includes financial liabilities measured at amortised cost.

(ii) Gain or loss on holding and trading securities

Gain or loss on securities trading is recognised when the Company becomes a party to a contract to dispose of the securities, or, in the case of financial assets measured at fair value, upon remeasurement of those assets.

(f) Foreign currencies

Foreign currency balances at the reporting date are translated at the foreign exchange rates ruling at that date. Transactions in foreign currencies are converted at the foreign exchange rates ruling at the dates of the transactions. Gains and losses arising from fluctuations in exchange rates are recognised in profit or loss.

(g) Share capital

(i) Ordinary stock units

Incremental costs directly attributable to the issue of ordinary stock units are recognised as deduction from equity.

(ii) Preference shares

The Company classifies capital instruments as financial liabilities or equity instruments in accordance with the substance of the contractual terms of the instrument. In the case of its preference share capital, it is classified as:

STERLING INVESTMENTS LIMITED
Notes to the Financial Statements (Continued)
Year ended December 31, 2020 (Expressed in Jamaican Dollars)

3. Significant accounting policies (continued)

(g) Share capital (continued)

(ii) Preference shares (continued)

- Equity if it is non-redeemable, or redeemable only at the Company's option, and any dividends are discretionary; in such a case, dividends thereon are recognised as equity distributions on approval by the Company's stockholders.
- Liability if it is redeemable on a specific date or at the option of the stockholders, or if dividends are not discretionary; in such a case, dividends thereon are recognised as interest in profit or loss as accrued.

The Company's preference shares bear contractual entitlements to dividends that are cumulative, and not at the discretion of the directors. Accordingly, they are presented as a financial liability.

(h) Income tax

Income tax on the profit or loss for the period comprises current and deferred tax. Income tax is recognised in profit or loss except to the extent that it relates to items recognised directly in other comprehensive income, in which case it is recognised in other comprehensive income.

Current income tax is the expected tax payable on the taxable income for the period, using tax rates enacted at the reporting date, and any adjustment to income tax payable in respect of previous years.

(i) Segment reporting

An operating segment is a component of the Company that engages in business activities from which it may earn revenues and incur expenses; whose operating results are regularly reviewed by the entity's Chief Operating Decision Maker (CODM) to make decisions about resources to be allocated to the segment and assesses its performance; and for which discrete financial information is available.

The Company's activities are limited to revenue earned from investment securities, operating in a single segment, therefore no additional segment information is provided.

STERLING INVESTMENTS LIMITED
Notes to the Financial Statements (Continued)
Year ended December 31, 2020 (Expressed in Jamaican Dollars)

3. Significant accounting policies (continued)

(j) New and amended standards and interpretations that are not yet effective

At the date of authorisation of these financial statements, certain new and amended standards and interpretations have been issued which were not effective for the current year and which the Company has not early-adopted. The Company is assessing them and has determined that the following are relevant:

Amendments to IAS 1 *Presentation of Financial Statements*, will apply retrospectively for annual reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2023. The amendments promote consistency in application and clarify the requirements on determining if a liability is current or non-current.

Under existing IAS 1 requirements, companies classify a liability as current when they do not have an unconditional right to defer settlement of the liability for at least twelve months after the end of the reporting period. As part of its amendments, the requirement for a right to be unconditional has been removed and instead, now requires that a right to defer settlement must have substance and exist at the end of the reporting period. A company classifies a liability as non-current if it has a right to defer settlement for at least twelve months after the reporting period. It has now been clarified that a right to defer exists only if the company complies with conditions specified in the loan agreement at the end of the reporting period, even if the lender does not test compliance until a later date.

With the amendments, convertible instruments may become current. In light of this, the amendments clarify how a company classifies a liability that includes a counterparty conversion option, which could be recognised as either equity or a liability separately from the liability component under IAS 32. Generally, if a liability has any conversion options that involve a transfer of the Company's own equity instruments, these would affect its classification as current or non-current. It has now been clarified that an entity can ignore only those conversion options that are recognised as equity when classifying liabilities as current or non-current.

The Company does not expect the amendment to have a significant impact on its financial statements.

4. Cash and cash equivalents

	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
Cash	3,000	3,000
Demand deposit accounts	<u>1,450,509</u>	<u>2,076,139</u>
	<u>1,453,509</u>	<u>2,079,139</u>

Demand deposit accounts includes \$24,890 (2019: \$10,245) [notes 11(iii)(a) and 12] received from stockholders as prepayments for the purchase of the Company's stock units.

STERLING INVESTMENTS LIMITED
Notes to the Financial Statements (Continued)
Year ended December 31, 2020 (Expressed in Jamaican Dollars)

5. Accounts receivable

	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
Interest receivable	27,027,324	43,798,536
Other	<u>92,256</u>	<u>262,588</u>
	<u>27,119,580</u>	<u>44,061,124</u>

Accounts receivable is stated net of impairment provision of \$Nil (2019: \$Nil) and is due as follows:

	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
Due within twelve (12) months	27,027,324	23,610,111
No specific maturity	<u>92,256</u>	<u>20,451,013</u>
	<u>27,119,580</u>	<u>44,061,124</u>

6. Investment securities

	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
Debt investment securities measured at FVOCI		
(i) Corporate bonds US\$9,883,968 (2019: US\$8,997,000)	1,400,657,077	1,205,022,115
(ii) Municipal bonds US\$1,660,280 (2019: US\$1,641,324)	235,278,211	232,064,366
(iii) Sovereign bonds US\$523,220 (2019: US\$Nil)	<u>74,145,506</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>1,710,080,794</u>	<u>1,437,086,481</u>

Equity investment securities measured at FVOCI

(iv) Unquoted ordinary shares US\$653,544 (2019: US\$500,000)	<u>92,613,720</u>	<u>66,265,000</u>
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Investment securities designated as at fair value through profit or loss

(v) Structured note US\$500,000 (2019: US\$300,000) Quoted ordinary equities	70,672,194	39,760,000
	<u>21,217,657</u>	<u>44,546,118</u>
	<u>91,889,851</u>	<u>84,306,118</u>
	<u>1,894,584,365</u>	<u>1,587,657,599</u>

(i) Corporate bonds earn interest at rates ranging from 6.125% to 12% (2019: 6.50% to 12.75%) per annum and mature over the period 2022 to 2049.

(ii) Municipal bonds earn interest at rates ranging from 6.05% to 7.625% (2019: 6.05% to 7.625%) per annum and mature over the period 2029 to 2040.

(iii) Sovereign bonds earn interest at 7.125% to 8.95% (2019: Nil%) per annum and mature on 2032 and 2038.

STERLING INVESTMENTS LIMITED
Notes to the Financial Statements (Continued)
Year ended December 31, 2020 (Expressed in Jamaican Dollars)

6. Investment securities (continued)

- (iv) The Company now holds 4.93% (2019: 5.88%) of ordinary shares in Sterling Development (SKN) Limited (“SDL”), a related party [note 9(c)(i)].

The fair value of the investment in SDL’s shares was determined using the net asset approach, which was based on the valuation of SDL’s underlying assets using the discounted cash flows. The significant and unobservable inputs used in the valuation of the underlying assets include its expected net cash flows, the weighted average cost of capital ranging from 13% to 14% (2019: 13% to 14%) and marketability discount rate ranging from 25% to 30%. (2019: 25% to 30%). An increase in any of these variables will have a downward impact on the fair value of the unquoted ordinary shares, if all other factors are held constant.

- (v) Structured notes represent investments in BBVA Global Markets B.V. and Credit Suisse Medium term note which will mature on June 25, 2021 and January 21, 2026 respectively.
- (vi) Investment securities are used to collateralise margin loans with brokers (note 7).
- (vii) The maturity profile of investments, in relation to the reporting date are shown as follows:

	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
Due within twelve (12) months	42,831,545	-
Due after twelve (12) months	1,737,878,611	1,437,086,481
No specific maturity	<u>113,831,377</u>	<u>150,571,118</u>
	<u>1,894,584,365</u>	<u>1,587,657,599</u>

7. Margin loans payable

These are margin loans due to overseas brokers of US\$3,752,740 (2019: US\$2,647,245). The loans bear interest at rates ranging from 2.05% to 3.58% (2019: 3.00% to 4.41%) per annum, have no set repayment date and are collateralised by securities purchased from the brokers with the loan proceeds [note 6(vi)].

STERLING INVESTMENTS LIMITED
Notes to the Financial Statements (Continued)
Year ended December 31, 2020 (Expressed in Jamaican Dollars)

8. Other payables

	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
Manager's preference shares interest payable [US\$152,599 (2019: US\$54,520)] [note 9(c)(i)]	21,624,845	7,225,475
Other payables and accruals	<u>6,900,972</u>	<u>5,833,378</u>
	<u>28,525,817</u>	<u>13,058,853</u>

Other payables are due to be settled within twelve (12) months of the reporting date.

9. Related party balances and transactions

(a) Definition of related party

A related party is a person or entity that is related to the Company.

(i) A person or a close member of that person's family is related to the Company if that person:

- (1) has control or joint control over the Company;
- (2) has significant influence over the Company; or
- (3) is a member of the key management personnel of the Company or of a parent of the Company.

(ii) An entity is related to the Company if any of the following conditions applies:

- (1) The entity and the Company are members of the same group (which means that each parent, subsidiary and fellow subsidiary is related to the others).
- (2) One entity is an associate or joint venture of the other entity (or an associate or joint venture of a member of a group of which the other entity is a member).
- (3) Both entities are joint ventures of the same third party.
- (4) One entity is a joint venture of a third entity and the other entity is an associate of the third entity.
- (5) The entity is a post-employment benefit plan for the benefit of employees of either the Company or an entity related to the Company.
- (6) The entity is controlled, or jointly controlled by a person identified in (i).

STERLING INVESTMENTS LIMITED
Notes to the Financial Statements (Continued)
Year ended December 31, 2020 (Expressed in Jamaican Dollars)

9. Related party balances and transactions (continued)

(a) Definition of related party (continued)

(ii) An entity is related to the Company if any of the following conditions applies (continued):

- (7) A person identified in (i)(1) has significant influence over the entity or is a member of the key management personnel of the entity (or of a parent of the entity).
- (8) The entity, or any member of a group of which it is a part, provides key management personnel services to the Company or the parent of the Company.

A related party transaction is a transfer of resources, services or obligations between the Company and a related party, regardless of whether a price is charged.

(b) Identity of related parties

The Company has related party relationships with its directors, investment manager and other entities under the common control of its investment manager.

(c) Related party amounts

(i) The statement of financial position includes balances with related parties, arising in the ordinary course of business, as follows:

	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
	\$	\$
Entity with common stockholders and directors		
Unquoted ordinary shares [note 6 (iv)]	92,613,720	66,265,000
Interest receivable (note 5)	<u>-</u>	<u>20,451,013</u>
Total	<u>92,613,720</u>	<u>86,716,013</u>
Investment manager		
Interest payable on Manager's preference shares (note 8)	(21,624,845)	(7,225,475)
Due to related company	<u>23,864,487</u>	<u>(41,445,974)</u>

The amounts due to the Investment manager and related company are unsecured, interest-free and are repayable within twelve (12) months from reporting date.

STERLING INVESTMENTS LIMITED
Notes to the Financial Statements (Continued)
Year ended December 31, 2020 (Expressed in Jamaican Dollars)

9. Related party balances and transactions (continued)

(c) Related party amounts (continued)

- (ii) The statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income includes income earned from, and expenses incurred in, transactions with related parties, in the ordinary course of business, as follows:

	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
	\$	\$
Entity with common stockholders		
Investment manager		
Interest on Manager's preference shares		
(note 8)	(21,624,845)	(7,225,475)
Management fees (note 15)	(23,864,487)	(23,437,033)
Directors' fees (note 15)	<u>(3,976,109)</u>	<u>(2,937,370)</u>

10. Manager's preference shares

- (a) This represents 10,000 manager's cumulative preference shares (see note 11). The terms and conditions of these shares include the following:
- (i) The block of manager's cumulative preference shares, at all times, regardless of the number of ordinary stock units issued and held, enjoy voting control to the extent of 51% of such votes as may be cast by stockholders of the Company with respect to any and all decisions by such stockholders;
- (ii) The manager's cumulative preference shares rank *pari passu* as between and among themselves;
- (iii) The manager's cumulative preference shares are entitled to a cumulative annual preference dividend of twenty five per cent (25%) of the Company's return on equity earned in excess of the hurdle rate (computed in accordance with the formula set out in the terms and conditions of issue) applied to the United States dollar value of the Company's profit and equity. The return on equity is calculated as the profit for the year of the Company divided by the value of the Company's average equity as at the end of the financial year, expressed in United States dollars and substantiated by the audited financial statements;
- (iv) Apart from the right to the cumulative annual preference dividend, the manager's cumulative preference shares have no economic rights or entitlements save for the right in a winding up to the repayment of the capital paid thereon on a *pari passu* basis with the capital paid on the ordinary stock units; and

STERLING INVESTMENTS LIMITED
Notes to the Financial Statements (Continued)
Year ended December 31, 2020 (Expressed in Jamaican Dollars)

10. Manager's preference shares (continued)

(a) (Continued)

(v) In the event that an entity which is (or becomes) the investment manager subsequently ceases to be the investment manager in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Company's Articles of Association, each of the manager's cumulative preference shares held by that entity shall thereupon automatically be converted into a fully paid ordinary stock units in the Company.

(b) The dividend payment is recorded as interest on manager's preference shares in the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income.

11. Share capital

	<u>Number of units</u>	
	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
(i) Authorised:		
Ordinary stock units of no par value	2,000,000,000	2,000,000,000
Manager's cumulative preference shares of no par value	<u>10,000</u>	<u>10,000</u>
	<u>2,000,010,000</u>	<u>2,000,010,000</u>

(ii) Issued and fully paid:

	<u>Number of units</u>		<u>Total</u>	
	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
Ordinary stock units				
Balance at beginning of year	<u>375,611,791</u>	<u>307,131,640</u>	<u>905,042,146</u>	<u>699,274,387</u>
Issued during the year:				
Dividend Reinvestment Programme [note 11(iii)(a)]	808,173	789,299	2,561,681	3,331,649
Complementary Share Purchase Programme [note 11(iii)(b)]	576,150	727,810	1,743,919	2,444,319
Rights issue [note 11(iv)]	-	66,963,042	-	206,193,803
Less transaction costs	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(6,202,012)</u>
Net proceeds from issuance	<u>898,340</u>	<u>68,480,151</u>	<u>4,305,600</u>	<u>205,767,759</u>
Balance at end of year	376,510,131	375,611,791	909,347,746	905,042,146
Manager's cumulative preference shares	<u>10,000</u>	<u>10,000</u>	<u>10,000</u>	<u>10,000</u>
	376,620,131	375,621,791	909,357,746	905,052,146
Less: Manager's preference shares reclassified to liability (note 10)	<u>(10,000)</u>	<u>(10,000)</u>	<u>(10,000)</u>	<u>(10,000)</u>
	<u>376,510,131</u>	<u>375,611,791</u>	<u>909,347,746</u>	<u>905,042,146</u>

STERLING INVESTMENTS LIMITED
Notes to the Financial Statements (Continued)
Year ended December 31, 2020 (Expressed in Jamaican Dollars)

11. Share capital (continued)

(iii) Dividend Reinvestment and Complementary Share Purchase Programme

The Company operates two (2) share incentive programmes as follows:

(a) Dividend Reinvestment Programme

Under the Dividend Reinvestment Programme (DRIP), the stockholders of the Company may elect to reinvest their dividend in new ordinary stock units, rounded down to the nearest stock unit at the closing price applicable on the record date and without incurring fees. Residual unallocated dividends as at December 31, 2020 amounted to \$24,890 (2019: \$10,245) (note 4) and are included in other payables and accruals.

During the year, 808,173 (2019: 789,299) stock units were issued to the stockholders, under this programme.

(b) Complementary Share Purchase Programme

Under the Complementary Share Purchase Programme (CSPP), the stockholders of the Company may purchase new ordinary stock units at the closing price applicable for the last day of the relevant quarter and without incurring fees.

Funds received are recorded as prepaid share reserve (note 12) and transferred to share capital when the stocks are issued.

During the year, 576,150 (2019: 727,810) stock units were issued to the stockholders, under this programme.

(iv) Rights issue

On October 8, 2018 a Board resolution was passed for a renounceable rights issue of 2 additional stocks for every 3 stocks owned by existing stockholders of the Company at a subscription of \$3.08 per stock and record date of December 27, 2018. Ordinary stock units of 66,963,042, were issued on January 4, 2019.

12. Prepaid share reserve

This represents funds received from stockholders during the last quarter of the previous financial year to purchase Company's stock units under the CSPP [note 11(iii)(b)]. Subsequently, stock units were issued on January 20, 2021 at a stock unit price of US\$0.03.

STERLING INVESTMENTS LIMITED
Notes to the Financial Statements (Continued)
Year ended December 31, 2020 (Expressed in Jamaican Dollars)

13. Fair value reserve

This represents the cumulative net change in the fair value of debt securities measured at FVOCI until assets are derecognised or reclassified, net of expected credit loss.

14. Revenue

This represents income earned from holding and trading investment securities.

15. Other operating expenses

	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
Management fees [note 9(c)(ii)]	23,864,487	23,437,033
Auditors' remuneration	4,702,494	4,259,054
Directors' fees [note 9(c)(ii)]	3,976,109	2,927,370
Travel	-	1,235,015
Public relations	95,000	102,059
Stock exchange listing	2,362,500	2,085,913
Professional fees	594,320	1,063,930
Other	<u>2,230,652</u>	<u>2,628,989</u>
	<u>37,825,562</u>	<u>37,739,363</u>

16. Taxation

The Company elected to be charged at the rate of 1% (2019: 1%) as allowed under the International Business Companies Act. However, the effective tax rate is 0.49% (2019: 0.62%).

	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
Profit before taxation	<u>135,257,816</u>	<u>101,795,353</u>
Computed "expected" tax charge at 1% (2019: 1%)	1,352,578	1,017,954
Tax effect of differences between profit for financial statements and tax reporting purposes:		
Unrealised foreign exchange loss	(791,540)	(438,680)
Unrealised loss/(gain) on revaluation of investment securities	111,700	(96,518)
Impairment loss on debt investment securities	29,229	74,218
Manager's preference share interest expense	<u>216,248</u>	<u>72,255</u>
Current tax charge, being total taxation charge	<u>918,215</u>	<u>629,229</u>

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Notes to the Financial Statements (Continued)
Year ended December 31, 2020 (Expressed in Jamaican Dollars)

17. Earnings per stock unit

(a) Basic earnings per stock unit

Basic earnings per stock unit is calculated by dividing the profit attributable to stockholders by the weighted average number of ordinary stock units in issue during the year.

	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
Profit attributable to ordinary stockholders	<u>134,339,601</u>	<u>101,166,124</u>
Weighted average number of ordinary stock units in issue	<u>376,355,163</u>	<u>367,080,940</u>
Basic earnings per stock unit	<u>0.36</u>	<u>0.28</u>

(b) Diluted earnings per stock unit

Diluted earnings per stock unit is calculated by dividing the profit attributable to ordinary stockholders by the weighted average number of ordinary stock units outstanding after adjustment for the effects of all dilutive potential ordinary stock units. The effect of conversion of convertible preference shares, the only potential ordinary stock units, is excluded from the computation as it is antidilutive; thus, the diluted earnings per stock unit is equal to the basic earnings per stock unit of \$0.36 (2019: \$0.28).

18. Dividends

	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
Distribution to ordinary stockholders at \$0.0872 (2019: \$0.0908) per stock unit	<u>32,032,901</u>	<u>34,479,930</u>

During the year, certain stockholders elected to reinvest their dividends earned of \$2,561,681 (2019: \$3,331,649) [note 11(iii)(a)].

19. Financial risk management

The Company has exposure to credit, liquidity and market risks from its use of financial instruments. The Company's affairs are administered by the Investment Manager, a related company, which, together with the Board of Directors, has overall responsibility for the establishment and oversight of the Company's risk management framework. The risk management policies are established to identify and analyse the risks faced by the Company, to set appropriate risk limits and controls, and to monitor risks and adherence to limits. Risk management policies and procedures are reviewed regularly to reflect changes in market conditions, products and services offered.

STERLING INVESTMENTS LIMITED
Notes to the Financial Statements (Continued)
Year ended December 31, 2020 (Expressed in Jamaican Dollars)

19. Financial risk management (continued)

(a) Credit risk

Credit risk is the risk of financial loss to the Company that one party to a financial instrument will fail to discharge its contractual obligations, and arises principally from the Company's investment securities. The Board of Directors is responsible for oversight of the Company's credit risk, including formulating policies, establishing the authorisation structure for the approval of credit facilities, reviewing and assessing credit risk, and limiting concentration of exposure to counterparties. Additionally, the Investment Manager reports to the Board of Directors on a regular basis about credit quality, and the appropriate action is taken.

The Board of Directors is responsible for oversight of the Company's credit risk, including formulating policies, establishing the authorisation structure for the approval of credit facilities, reviewing and assessing credit risk, and limiting concentration of exposure to counterparties. Additionally, the Investment Manager reports to the Board of Directors on a regular basis about credit quality, and the appropriate action is taken.

(i) Investments in debt securities:

The Company manages the exposure to credit risk in the following way:

It maintains cash and cash equivalents with major financial institutions which management regards as strong. These financial institutions are continually reviewed by the Investment Manager. Investments are held substantially in United States of America Government Agency and corporate securities.

Total credit exposure is the total of receivables and investment securities recognised in the statement of financial position, as there are no other credit exposures.

Credit quality

The Company identifies changes in credit risk by tracking published external credit ratings. To determine whether published ratings remain up to date and to assess whether there has been a significant increase in credit risk at the reporting date that has not been reflected in published ratings, the Company supplements this by reviewing changes in bond yields together with available press and regulatory information on issuers.

Twelve (12)-month and lifetime probabilities of default are based on historical data supplied by each credit rating and are recalibrated based on current bond yields. Loss given default (LGD) parameters generally reflect an assumed recovery rate of percent except when the security is credit-impaired, in which case the estimate of loss based on the instrument's current market price and original effective interest rate.

STERLING INVESTMENTS LIMITED
Notes to the Financial Statements (Continued)
Year ended December 31, 2020 (Expressed in Jamaican Dollars)

19. Financial risk management (continued)

(a) Credit risk (continued)

(i) Investments in debt securities (continued):

The following table sets out the credit quality of debt investment securities based on Standard and Poor's and Moody's ratings as follows:

	2020			
	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Total
Debt investment securities at FVOCI				
AA	-	-	-	-
AA-	27,722,019	-	-	27,722,019
A+	-	-	-	-
A	-	-	-	-
A-	-	-	-	-
BBB+	71,767,046	-	-	71,767,046
BBB	173,238,349	-	-	173,238,349
BBB-	633,570,106	-	-	633,570,106
BB+	143,185,456	-	-	143,185,456
BB	316,330,022	-	-	316,330,022
BB-	74,145,506	-	-	74,145,506
B+	101,685,994	-	-	101,685,994
B	149,572,071	-	-	149,572,071
C	-	15,402,959	-	15,402,959
D	-	-	3,461,267	3,461,267
Total gross carrying amount	<u>1,691,216,569</u>	<u>15,402,959</u>	<u>3,461,267</u>	<u>1,710,080,795</u>
Loss allowance	<u>(5,194,192)</u>	<u>(310,615)</u>	<u>(53,652,907)</u>	<u>(59,157,714)</u>
	2019			
	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Total
Debt investment securities at FVOCI				
AA	28,457,504	-	-	28,457,504
AA-	116,623,087	-	-	116,623,087
A+	66,720,903	-	-	66,720,903
A	126,253,379	-	-	126,253,379
A-	81,034,143	-	-	81,034,143
BBB+	359,732,806	-	-	359,732,806
BBB-	324,289,380	-	-	324,289,380
BB+	72,761,621	-	-	72,761,621
BB	66,136,048	-	-	66,136,048
BB-	63,386,448	-	-	63,386,448
B+	98,357,140	-	-	98,357,140
B	13,915,650	-	-	13,915,650
CC	-	14,609,047	-	14,609,047
D	-	-	4,809,326	4,809,326
Total gross carrying amount	<u>1,417,668,109</u>	<u>14,609,047</u>	<u>4,809,326</u>	<u>1,437,086,482</u>
Loss allowance	<u>(3,174,152)</u>	<u>(2,042,692)</u>	<u>(47,326,900)</u>	<u>(52,543,744)</u>

STERLING INVESTMENTS LIMITED
Notes to the Financial Statements (Continued)
Year ended December 31, 2020 (Expressed in Jamaican Dollars)

19. Financial risk management (continued)

(a) Credit risk (continued)

(ii) Cash resources

Cash resources are held with reputable banks and other financial institutions counterparties.

(iii) Concentration of credit risk

The Company monitors concentration of credit risk by issuer and by geographic location. An analysis of concentrations of credit risk at the reporting date is shown below:

	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
Issuer:		
Corporate – unrelated parties	1,492,023,499	1,263,457,277
Corporate – related party [note 9(c)(i)]	-	20,451,013
Municipals	240,284,528	236,737,727
Bahamas	75,472,284	-
Banks	<u>1,453,509</u>	<u>2,079,139</u>
Total financial assets	<u>1,809,233,820</u>	<u>1,522,725,156</u>
	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
Location:		
Europe	561,161,398	613,529,310
North America	495,904,492	512,786,495
Caribbean	274,846,572	99,561,645
South America	<u>477,321,358</u>	<u>296,847,706</u>
Total financial assets	<u>1,809,233,820</u>	<u>1,522,725,156</u>

(iv) Settlement risk

The Company's activities may give rise to settlement risk at the time of settlement of trades and other transactions. Settlement risk is the risk of loss due to the failure of a party to honour its obligation to deliver cash, securities or other assets as contractually agreed.

For certain types of transactions, the Company mitigates this risk by conducting settlements through its broker to ensure that a trade is settled only when both parties have fulfilled their contractual settlement obligations.

STERLING INVESTMENTS LIMITED
Notes to the Financial Statements (Continued)
Year ended December 31, 2020 (Expressed in Jamaican Dollars)

19. Financial risk management (continued)

(a) Credit risk (continued)

(v) Impairment

Inputs, assumptions and techniques used for estimating impairment.

See accounting policy at note 3(a)(iv).

Significant increase in credit risk

When determining whether the risk of default on a financial instrument has increased significantly since initial recognition, the Company considers reasonable and supportable information that is relevant and available without undue cost or effort. This includes both quantitative and qualitative information and analysis, based on the Company's historical experience and third party policies including forward-looking information.

The objective of the assessment is to identify whether a significant increase in credit risk has occurred for an exposure by comparing:

- the remaining lifetime probability of default (PD) as at the reporting date; with
- the remaining lifetime PD for this point in time that was estimated at the time of initial recognition of the exposure (adjusted where relevant for changes in prepayment expectations).

Significant increase in credit risk

The Company uses three criteria for determining whether there has been a significant increase in credit risk:

- quantitative test based on movement in PD;
- qualitative indicators; and
- the 30 day past due backstop indicator.

Credit risk grades

The Company allocates each exposure to a credit risk grade based on a variety of data that is determined to be predictive of the risk of default and applying experienced credit judgement. Credit risk grades are defined using qualitative and quantitative factors that are indicative of risk of default. These factors vary depending on the nature of the exposure and the type of borrower.

STERLING INVESTMENTS LIMITED
Notes to the Financial Statements (Continued)
Year ended December 31, 2020 (Expressed in Jamaican Dollars)

19. Financial risk management (continued)

(a) Credit risk (continued)

(v) Impairment (continued)

Each exposure is allocated to a credit risk grade on initial recognition based on available information about the borrower. Exposures are subject to ongoing monitoring, which may result in an exposure being moved to a different credit risk grade. The monitoring typically involves use of the following data:

- Data from credit reference agencies such as standards and Poor and Moody's, press articles, changes in external credit ratings.
- External data from credit reference agencies, including industry-standard credit scores.
- Existing and forecast changes in business, financial and economic conditions.

Definition of default

The Company considers a financial asset to be in default when:

- the borrower is unlikely to pay its credit obligations to the Company in full, without recourse by the Company to actions such as realising security (if any is held);
- the borrower is more than 90 days past due on any material credit obligation to the Company;
- it is becoming probable that the borrower will restructure the asset as a result of bankruptcy due to the borrower's inability to pay its credit obligations.

In assessing whether a borrower is in default, the Company considers indicators that are:

- qualitative: e.g. breaches of covenant;
- quantitative: e.g. overdue status and non-payment on another obligation of the same issuer to the Company; and
- based on data obtained from external sources.

Inputs into the assessment of whether a financial instrument is in default and their significance may vary over time to reflect changes in circumstances.

Incorporation of forward-looking information

The Company incorporates forward-looking information into both the assessment of whether the credit risk of an instrument has increased significantly since its initial recognition and the measurement of ECL.

For 2020, forward-looking information was incorporated in the ECL computation by use of a management overlay. Based on the economic factors a proxy of 1.08 (2019: 1.07) times ECL was determined to be appropriate.

STERLING INVESTMENTS LIMITED
Notes to the Financial Statements (Continued)
Year ended December 31, 2020 (Expressed in Jamaican Dollars)

19. Financial risk management (continued)

(a) Credit risk (continued)

(v) Impairment (continued)

Definition of default (continued)

The economic scenarios used as at December 31, 2020 assumed no significant changes in key indicators within the next year.

Measurement of ECL

The key inputs into the measurement of ECL are the term structure of the following variables:

- probability of default (PD);
- loss given default (LGD); and
- exposure at default (EAD).

ECL for exposures in Stage 1 is calculated by multiplying the 12-month PD by LGD and EAD. Lifetime ECL is calculated by multiplying lifetime PD by LGD and EAD. They are calculated on a discounted cash flow basis using the effective interest rate.

LGD is the magnitude of the likely loss if there is a default. The Company estimates LGD parameters based on the history of recovery rates of claims against defaulted counterparties. The LGD model consider the structure, collateral, seniority of the claim, counterparty industry and recovery costs of any collateral that is integral to the financial asset. They are based on published reports of the major rating agencies: S&P Global and Moody's.

EAD represents the expected exposure in the event of a default. The Company derives the EAD from the current exposure to the counterparty and potential changes to the current amount allowed under the contract and arising from amortisation. The EAD of a financial asset is its gross carrying amount at the time of default.

As described above, and subject to using a maximum of a 12-month PD for Stage 1 financial assets, the Company measures ECL considering the risk of default over the maximum contractual period (including any borrower's extension options) over which it is exposed to credit risk, even if, for credit risk management purposes, the Company considers a longer period.

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Notes to the Financial Statements (Continued)
Year ended December 31, 2020 (Expressed in Jamaican Dollars)

19. Financial risk management (continued)

(a) Credit risk (continued)

(v) Impairment (continued)

Loss allowance

The loss allowance recognised is analysed as follow:

	2020			
	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Total
Debt investment securities:				
Balance at January 1, 2020	<u>3,174,152</u>	<u>2,042,692</u>	<u>47,326,900</u>	<u>52,543,744</u>
Exchange loss/(gains)	219,786	(1,395,562)	4,866,981	3,691,205
Net re-measurement of loss allowance	<u>1,800,254</u>	<u>(336,515)</u>	<u>1,459,026</u>	<u>2,922,765</u>
	<u>2,020,040</u>	<u>(1,732,077)</u>	<u>6,326,007</u>	<u>6,613,970</u>
Balance at December 31, 2020	<u>5,194,192</u>	<u>310,615</u>	<u>53,652,907</u>	<u>59,157,714</u>
	2019			
	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Total
Debt investment securities:				
Balance at January 1, 2019	4,507,315	2,349,402	51,223,146	58,079,863
Exchange gains	(713,496)	(155,603)	(3,482,621)	(4,351,720)
Net re-measurement of loss allowance	<u>(619,667)</u>	<u>(151,107)</u>	<u>(413,625)</u>	<u>(1,184,399)</u>
Balance at December 31, 2019	<u>3,174,152</u>	<u>2,042,692</u>	<u>47,326,900</u>	<u>52,543,744</u>

(b) Liquidity risk

Liquidity risk is the risk that the Company will encounter difficulty in raising funds to meet commitments associated with financial instruments. Liquidity risk may result from an inability to sell a financial asset quickly at, or close to, its fair value. Prudent liquidity risk management implies maintaining sufficient cash and marketable securities, and ensuring the availability of funding through an adequate amount of committed facilities.

Management of liquidity risk

Due to the dynamic nature of the underlying business, the Company manages this risk by monitoring its cash needs and obtaining liquidity support from custodian brokers and related companies.

STERLING INVESTMENTS LIMITED
Notes to the Financial Statements (Continued)
Year ended December 31, 2020 (Expressed in Jamaican Dollars)

19. Financial risk management (continued)

(b) Liquidity risk (continued)

Management of liquidity risk (continued)

The Company's approach to managing liquidity is to ensure, as far as possible, that it always has sufficient liquidity to meet its liabilities when due, under both normal and abnormal conditions, without incurring unacceptable losses or risking damage to the Company's reputation.

The daily liquidity position is monitored and regular liquidity testing is conducted under a variety of scenarios covering both normal and more severe market conditions. The Company maintains the daily balances from the bank and broker accounts in order to ensure that sufficient funds are available to meet the liability demands.

The following table presents the undiscounted cash flows payable (both interest and principal cash flows) based on contractual repayment obligations:

	2020			Gross outflow	Carrying value
	Within 3 months	3 to 12 months	No specific maturity		
Margin loans payable	531,800,766	-	-	531,800,766	531,800,766
Other payables	28,525,817	-	-	28,525,817	28,525,817
Due to related company	-	23,864,487	-	23,864,487	23,864,487
Manager's preference shares	-	-	10,000	10,000	10,000
	<u>560,326,583</u>	<u>23,864,487</u>	<u>10,000</u>	<u>584,201,070</u>	<u>584,201,070</u>
	2019			Gross outflow	Carrying value
	Within 3 months	3 to 12 months	No specific maturity		
Margin loans payable	350,839,368	-	-	350,839,368	350,839,368
Other payables	13,058,853	-	-	13,058,853	13,058,853
Due to related company	-	41,445,974	-	41,445,974	41,445,974
Manager's preference shares	-	-	10,000	10,000	10,000
	<u>363,898,221</u>	<u>41,445,974</u>	<u>10,000</u>	<u>405,354,195</u>	<u>405,354,195</u>

There has been no change in the Company's exposure to liquidity risk or the manner in which it measures and manages risk.

(c) Market risk

Market risk is the risk that changes in market prices, such as interest rate, equity prices, foreign exchange rates and credit spreads will affect the Company's income or the value of its holdings of financial instruments. The objective of market risk management is to manage and control market risk exposures within acceptable parameters, while optimizing the returns for the given level of risk accepted.

STERLING INVESTMENTS LIMITED
Notes to the Financial Statements (Continued)
Year ended December 31, 2020 (Expressed in Jamaican Dollars)

19. Financial risk management (continued)

(c) Market risk (continued)

Market risk relevant to the Company includes interest rate risk and foreign currency risk and the manner in which it measures and manages them are as follows:

(i) Interest rate risk

Interest rate risk is the risk that the fair value of future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate due to change in interest rates.

The following table summarises the carrying amounts of financial assets and financial liabilities to arrive at the Company's interest rate sensitivity gap, based on the earlier of contractual repricing and maturity dates:

	2020					Total
	Within 1 year	1 - 5 year	Over 5 year	No specific maturity	Non-rate sensitive	
Financial assets						
Cash and cash equivalents	1,453,509	-	-	-	-	1,453,509
Accounts receivable	-	-	-	-	27,119,580	27,119,580
Investment securities	42,831,545	47,190,441	1,690,731,002	-	113,831,377	1,894,584,365
	44,285,054	47,190,441	1,690,731,002	-	140,950,957	1,923,157,454
Financial liabilities						
Margin loans payable	531,800,766	-	-	-	-	531,800,766
Other payables	-	-	-	-	28,525,817	28,525,817
Due to related company	-	-	-	-	23,864,487	23,864,487
Manager's preference Shares	-	-	-	10,000	-	10,000
	531,800,766	-	-	10,000	52,390,304	584,201,070
Total interest rate sensitivity gap	(487,515,712)	47,190,441	1,690,731,002	(10,000)	88,560,653	1,338,956,384
Cumulative gap	(487,515,712)	(440,325,271)	1,250,405,731	1,250,395,731	1,338,956,384	
	2019					Total
	Within 1 year	1 - 5 year	Over 5 year	No specific maturity	Non-rate sensitive	
Financial assets						
Cash and cash equivalents	2,079,139	-	-	-	-	2,079,139
Accounts receivable	-	-	-	-	44,061,124	44,061,124
Investment securities	-	156,987,749	1,319,858,731	-	110,811,119	1,587,657,599
	2,079,139	156,987,749	1,319,858,731	-	154,872,243	1,633,797,862
Financial liabilities						
Margin loans payable	350,839,368	-	-	-	-	350,839,368
Other payables	-	-	-	-	13,058,853	13,058,853
Due to related company	-	-	-	-	41,445,974	41,445,974
Manager's preference shares	-	-	-	10,000	-	10,000
	350,839,368	-	-	10,000	54,504,827	405,354,195
Total interest rate sensitivity gap	(348,760,229)	156,987,749	1,319,858,731	(10,000)	100,367,416	1,228,443,667
Cumulative gap	(348,760,229)	(191,772,480)	1,128,086,251	1,128,076,251	1,228,443,667	

STERLING INVESTMENTS LIMITED
Notes to the Financial Statements (Continued)
Year ended December 31, 2020 (Expressed in Jamaican Dollars)

19. Financial risk management (continued)

(c) Market risk (continued)

(i) Interest rate risk (continued)

Profile

At year-end, the interest rate profile of the Company's interest-earning financial instruments, are as follows:

	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
Fixed interest rates		
Financial assets		
Corporate bonds	1,400,657,077	1,205,022,115
Municipal bonds	235,278,211	232,064,366
Structured notes	70,672,194	39,760,000
Sovereign bond	<u>74,145,506</u>	<u>-</u>
	1,780,752,988	1,476,846,481
Financial liability		
Margin loans payable	(<u>286,296,084</u>)	(<u>291,456,752</u>)
	<u>1,494,456,904</u>	<u>1,185,389,729</u>
Variable interest rates		
Financial liability		
Margin loans payable	<u>245,504,682</u>	<u>59,382,616</u>

Sensitivity analysis

The following table indicates the sensitivity to interest rate movements at the reporting date, in terms of the effect on the Company's profit and stockholders' equity of a reasonably probable change in interest rates at the reporting date. The analysis assumes that all other variables, in particular, foreign currency rates, remain constant.

	<u>2020</u>		<u>2019</u>	
	Effect on <u>profit</u> \$	Effect on <u>equity</u> \$	Effect on <u>profit</u> \$	Effect on <u>equity</u> \$
Change in basis points:				
-100bps (2019: -100bps)	3,841,373	115,297,365	593,826	129,271,689
+100bps (2019: +100bps)	<u>(3,780,953)</u>	<u>(103,190,425)</u>	<u>(593,826)</u>	<u>(111,572,689)</u>

STERLING INVESTMENTS LIMITED
Notes to the Financial Statements (Continued)
Year ended December 31, 2020 (Expressed in Jamaican Dollars)

19. Financial risk management (continued)

(c) Market risk (continued)

(ii) Foreign currency risk

Foreign currency risk is the risk that the fair value or future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate due to changes in foreign exchange rates. The Company is exposed to foreign currency risk on transactions that it undertakes, or balances denominated, in foreign currencies.

The main foreign currencies giving rise to this risk is the United States dollar (US\$). The Company ensures that the risk is kept to an acceptable level by monitoring its foreign currency exposure and, when necessary, adjusting its foreign currency positions in response to fluctuations in exchange rates.

At the reporting date, exposure to foreign currency risk was as follows:

	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
Assets:		
Cash and cash equivalents	7,793	13,792
Accounts receivable	191,374	330,480
Investment securities	<u>12,131,967</u>	<u>11,438,324</u>
	<u>12,331,134</u>	<u>11,782,596</u>
Liabilities:		
Margin loans payable	3,752,739	2,647,245
Other payables	<u>48,698</u>	<u>42,897</u>
	<u>3,801,437</u>	<u>2,690,142</u>
Net foreign currency assets	US\$ <u>8,529,697</u>	<u>9,092,454</u>

The foreign exchange rates as at the reporting date was as follows: US\$1: J\$141.71 (2019: US\$1: J\$132.53).

Sensitivity to foreign exchange rate movements

This sensitivity is computed by simulating the effect on profit and equity of a different but reasonably probable rate at the reporting date.

A weakening or strengthening of the Jamaica dollar against the United States dollar at the reporting date would, respectively, increase or decrease profit by the amounts shown in the table below. The analysis assumes that all other variables, in particular, interest rates, remain constant.

		<u>2020</u>	
	<u>% Change in</u>	<u>Effect on</u>	<u>Effect on</u>
	<u>Currency rate</u>	<u>profit</u>	<u>equity</u>
Currency:			
USD	2% Revaluation	(24,174,864)	(24,174,864)
USD	6% Devaluation	<u>72,524,593</u>	<u>72,524,593</u>

STERLING INVESTMENTS LIMITED
Notes to the Financial Statements (Continued)
Year ended December 31, 2020 (Expressed in Jamaican Dollars)

19. Financial risk management (continued)

(c) Market risk (continued)

(ii) Foreign currency risk (continued)

Sensitivity to foreign exchange rate movements (continued)

	<u>% Change in Currency rate</u>	<u>2019</u>	
		<u>Effect on profit</u>	<u>Effect on equity</u>
Currency:			
USD	4% Revaluation	(48,200,918)	(48,200,918)
USD	6% Devaluation	<u>72,301,378</u>	<u>72,301,378</u>

There has been no change in the Company's exposure to market risk or the manner in which it measures and manages risk.

20. Fair value of financial instruments

Fair value is the price that would be received to sell an asset or paid to transfer a liability in an orderly transaction between market participants at the reporting date.

The Company's accounting policies and disclosures require the measurement of fair values for financial assets and liabilities.

The techniques used to estimate fair values, together with the input used, are described below. The use of assumptions and estimates means that the estimates arrived at may vary significantly from the actual price of the instrument in an arm's length transaction.

Basis of valuation

<u>Financial instrument</u>	<u>Method of estimating fair value</u>
(i) Municipal, corporate, Sovereign bonds	Estimated using bid-prices published by major overseas brokers/dealers or reputable pricing services such as Bloomberg.
(ii) Unquoted ordinary shares	Discounted cash flows using an appropriate risk-adjusted discount rate.

STERLING INVESTMENTS LIMITED
Notes to the Financial Statements (Continued)
Year ended December 31, 2020 (Expressed in Jamaican Dollars)

21. Impact of COVID-19 pandemic (continued)

In response to the pandemic, the Investment Manager has adopted several measures specifically around financial risk management. These measures include:

1. Enhanced monitoring of market movement by the Trading and Research which tracks of the impact.
2. The management team meets to discuss strategies and plans around managing the liquidity of the Company.

NOTES

A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing notes.

STERLING INVESTMENTS LIMITED

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