

Sygnia Money Market Fund Unit Trust

Fund commentary

Minimum disclosure document (MDD)

Class S2

South African - Interest Bearing - Money Market

2nd Quarter 2025

Market performance

Global markets rose strongly in June despite a cocktail of geopolitical tensions and policy risk and the potential for simultaneous supply shocks from tariffs, migration constraints and rising oil prices. Iran and Israel agreed to a ceasefire after 12 days of intense missile and drone strikes between Iran and Israel, and just one day after US operation “Midnight Hammer”, which “obliterated” Iran’s three uranium nuclear sites, including Fordow, a uranium-enrichment facility buried deep in a mountain. The ceasefire brought relief to the oil markets. While the conflict in the Middle East increases geopolitical risk, the ceasefire renders the impact of tariffs on US growth and inflation the greater uncertainty, with the 90-day tariff pause granted by the US expiring on 9 July. Trump has warned that countries will receive a “take-it-or-leave-it” letter detailing tariff terms, though the 15 countries already engaged in negotiations with the US may see this an extension to the deadline. Tariff pass-through inflation in the US was minimal in May, but corporates are likely to begin passing costs on to consumers, with inflationary consequences over the coming quarters reinforcing expectations of “higher for longer” interest rates and reduced growth. The World Bank concurred in its June outlook, downgrading its 2025 global growth forecast by 0.5 percentage points to 2.3%, projecting the weakest non-recessionary growth since 2008. Looking further ahead, average global growth in the 2020s is expected to settle around 2.5% – its slowest pace since the 1960s. Developed markets will bear the brunt of the growth downgrade and inflation increase, while emerging markets (EMs) will continue to offer a relatively resilient inflation–growth trade-off.

US inflation data for May offered a reprieve, rising by less than expected for the fourth consecutive month. While US firms have passed on some of the recent tariff costs – particularly on goods heavily exposed to China, such as appliances, electronics and household equipment – the full effect will take two to three months to unfold. In addition, CPI surprised to the downside due to price declines in recreational services and durable goods which signal growing consumer caution. Subdued inflation offers breathing room, but it is ultimately a function of softer economic activity. Weak May retail sales, falling consumer confidence and continued softness in manufacturing data indicate slowing demand. The Yale Budget Lab estimates that the current 15%+ effective tariff rate could reduce year-end employment by 375 000 jobs. Jobless claims have risen to a three-and-a-half-year high, while non-farm payroll growth outside two core categories has stalled.

The European Central Bank expects GDP growth of just 0.9% in 2025, but even that may be optimistic. Exports are weakening sharply, particularly as frontloading of US trade to avoid tariffs normalises, and the Russia-Ukraine war is continuing, sustaining geopolitical and energy-related pressures. Trump-era tariff risks are also escalating, with the US indicating that trade negotiations with the EU may not be resolved by the 9 July deadline. The EU’s slow pace of trade negotiation – seen clearly during Brexit – exacerbates the risk that the bloc may bear a disproportionate burden of any new US tariffs.

China’s economy is gaining traction, with early signs that policy stimulus is finally filtering through to the real economy: money growth is accelerating and May retail sales rose to a 17-month high. Beyond China, EMs are capitalising on trans-shipment opportunities, firm commodity prices, a weakening US dollar, low inflation and resilient earnings growth.

The gazetting in South Africa of new information technology (IT) procurement rules in June means that government departments can finally access IT services without having to use the State Information Technology Agency (SITA). In other good news, the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) has made an initial determination that SA’s 22-point action plan is complete, granting SA an on-site assessment and paving the way for SA to be removed from the so-called grey list at the FATF’s October plenary. However, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development note that Transnet and a general lack of reforms are causing SA to miss out on the commodity rally (“Q1.25 growth stalled at 0.1% qqsa as the ongoing incapacity at Transnet severely limits growth”). This was confirmed as mining production declined by a marked -7.7% y/y in April, following March’s -2.5% y/y contraction. Production faces a myriad of challenges, including heightened input costs, labour challenges, the effects of illegal mining and logistical bottlenecks. The pace of reforms will affect SA’s ability to break out of the 1% growth range.

The dollar is usually the beneficiary in times of fear, but it has not rallied with current geopolitical tensions. Rate cuts in Europe may end soon even as the Fed starts to cut, so the euro may find further short-term cyclical support relative to the dollar. Despite dollar weakness and global appetite for currency diversification, however, the euro is unlikely to deliver on its “reserve currency moment” for some time.

Overall, the global consumer remains in good shape, financial conditions have eased and US long-term inflation expectations are stable, so we still expect the US to avoid a recession. In addition, we expect the near-term fiscal thrust in Germany and China to be around 2% of GDP. However, markets are entering a precarious period in which geopolitical risk, trade fragmentation and supply shocks intersect.

A combination of domestic tailwinds, global supply chain realignment and policy flexibility is positioning EMs for stronger near-term performance. China’s cyclical rebound, coupled with opportunities in EM debt and equity, present a compelling case for diversified exposure in multi-asset portfolios. Global industrial metal prices are also benefiting from the rise in global defence spending, a further tailwind for commodities and emerging markets. We have switched some of our South African exposure to EMs given the better valuations, higher growth and greater diversification.

RISK PROFILE



TIME HORIZON



Fund performance

The Sygnia Money Market Fund (S2) returned 1.8% for the quarter, behind its benchmark, the Short-Term Fixed Interest Index.

No significant changes were made during the quarter, with the fund still positioned to maximise interest income, preserve capital and provide immediate liquidity.

The three-month Jibar floating reference rate ended the quarter at 7.3%, following the repo rate lower. Long-dated (twelve-month) treasury bills and negotiable certificates of deposit were also lower, yielding 7.8% and 7.7% respectively (on a twelve-month forward-looking basis).

The Fed kept their policy rate unchanged at 4.25–4.5% for the fourth consecutive meeting. Core personal consumption expenditure for May came in at 2.7%, slightly higher than April’s 2.5% print. The market still anticipates two additional cuts before the end of the year. Despite heightened volatility, the US 10-year treasury yield ended the quarter flat at 4.2%.

In a unanimous decision, the South African Reserve Bank (SARB) Monetary Policy Committee voted to cut the repo rate by 25 bps to 7.25% at its May meeting. South African inflation remains subdued and well below the SARB’s midpoint target, with headline CPI printing at 2.8% in May, unchanged from April. South African nominal bonds had a strong quarter, with the benchmark R2035 yield rallying from 10.6% to just under 10% by the end of June.

Disclaimer

Sygnia Collective Investments RF (Pty) Ltd is incorporated and registered under the law of South Africa and is registered under the Collective Investment Schemes Control Act, 2002 (Act No 45 of 2002). The company does not provide any guarantee with respect to the capital or return of the portfolio. Nothing in this document will be considered to state or imply that the collective investment scheme or portfolio is suitable for a particular type of investor.

Important information to consider before investing

Investment Objective & Strategy

The Sygnia Money Market Fund is a money market portfolio that seeks to maximise interest income, preserve the portfolio's capital and provide immediate liquidity. This is low risk money market fund aims to offer investors access to a well-diversified money market portfolio, which shall consist of short-term, highly liquid money market instruments with a maturity of less than thirteen months. It may also invest in interest rate swaps. The fund will be managed with prudential guidelines.

Balancing Risk and Reward

Collective Investment Schemes in Securities (unit trusts) are generally medium- to long-term investments. The value of units may go down as well as up and past performance is not necessarily an indicator of future performance. Unit trusts are traded at the ruling price and are allowed to engage in borrowing and scrip lending.

Annualised performance figures represent the geometric average return earned by the fund over the given time period. Unannualised performance represents the total return earned by the fund over the given time period, expressed as a percentage. Performance is calculated for the portfolio. Individual investor performance may differ as a result of initial fees, the actual investment date, the date of reinvestment and dividend withholding tax. Reinvestment of income is calculated on the actual amount distributed per participatory interest, using the ex-dividend date NAV price of the applicable class of the portfolio, irrespective of the actual reinvestment date.

Please note that the Sygnia Money Market Fund is a variable priced fund and therefore does not have a fixed unit price of R1.00 per unit. The price of a unit is a marked-to-market value. The yield is calculated monthly on a historic basis, based on the actual distributions declared over the relevant calculation period, divided by the average daily NAV price for the fund, expressed as a nominal annual rate. The total return to the investor is made up of interest received and any gain or loss made on any particular instrument. In most cases the return will merely have the effect of increasing or decreasing the daily yield, but in the case of abnormal losses it can have the effect of reducing the capital value of the portfolio.

The Fund may be exposed to credit risk where an Issuer of a non-equity security may not be able to make interest payments or repay the capital. This will impact the value of the Fund. There are regulations in place which limit the amount a unit trust may be exposed to each Issuer, thereby spreading the risk across various Issuers.

The Sygnia Money Market Fund is not a Bank Deposit Account. Excessive withdrawals from the Fund may place the Fund under liquidity pressure. Should this occur, a process of ring-fencing the withdrawal instruction and managing the pay-out over time may be allowed.

Fees

Sygnia charges an annual management fee comprised of applicable basis fees paid to underlying managers and Sygnia's annual service fee. The fund may invest in other unit trusts (underlying funds) that levy their own charges and which may charge performance fees in the event that the underlying fund's performance exceeds its benchmark. A schedule of fees and charges is available on request from Sygnia. Permissible deductions may include management fees, brokerage, levies, stamps, auditor's fees, bank charges and trustee fees. Sygnia does not provide advice and therefore does not charge advice fees.

What is the Total Expense Ratio (TER) and Transaction Costs (TC)?

The total expense ratio (TER) is the annualised percentage of the fund's average assets under management that has been used to pay the fund's actual expenses over the past three years. Transaction costs are a necessary cost in administering the fund and impact fund returns. They should not be considered in isolation as returns may be impacted by many other factors over time, including market returns, the type of financial product, the investment decisions of the investment manager and the TER. Since fund returns are quoted after the deduction of these expenses, the TER and Transaction Costs should not be deducted again from the published returns. A higher TER does not necessarily imply a poor return, nor does a low TER imply a good return.

How it works

The fund is suitable to investors who would like to make a meaningful difference in the South African landscape by supporting non-political organisations fighting corruption, both in the public and the private sector. Sygnia will donate its entire management fee to the following organisations: OUTA, the Black Sash, Corruption Watch, the Helen Suzman Foundation, the Council for Advancement of the SA Constitution, the Kgalema Motlanthe Foundation and the Ahmed Kathrada Foundation. You can invest as little as a once-off amount of R1 000, or a regular R500 per month, in the Sygnia Money Market Unit Trust. To be clear, this is an investment and not a donation. It is only the management fees that are being donated. You can withdraw your money at any stage.

How are unit prices calculated?

Unit prices are calculated on a net asset value basis, which is the total market value of all assets in the portfolio, including any income accruals and less any permissible deductions from the portfolio, divided by the number of units in issue. Forward pricing is used and Fund valuations take place at approximately 15:00 each business day. Purchases and redemption requests must be received by the manager by 14:00 each business day to receive that day's price. The price shown is specific to this class. The fund size represents the portfolio size as a whole. Unit prices are updated by 10:00 every business day and are available on our website, www.sygnia.co.za.

Cumulative Investment Performance

Cumulative investment performance is for illustrative purposes only. The investment performance is calculated by taking all ongoing fees into account for the amount shown, with income reinvested on the reinvestment date.

Disclaimer

The fund may be closed to new investments at any time in order to be managed in accordance with its mandate. Sygnia Collective Investments RF (Pty) Ltd is incorporated and registered under the laws of South Africa and is registered under the Collective Investment Schemes Control Act, 2002 (Act No 45 of 2002). Sygnia Asset Management (Proprietary) Limited (FSP Registration No. 873), an authorised financial services provider, is the appointed investment manager of the fund. Sygnia Collective Investments RF (Pty) Ltd does not provide any guarantee with respect to the capital or return of the portfolio. Nothing in this minimum disclosure document will be considered to state or imply that the collective investment scheme or portfolio is suitable for a particular type of investor.

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Additional information such as fund prices, brochures, application forms and a schedule of fees and charges can be requested via admin@sfs.sygnia.co.za or 0860 794 642 (0860 SYGNIA).

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Registration No. 2009/003063/07

A member of the Association for Savings & Investments SA

Minimum Disclosure Document - Issue Date: 06 Aug 2025

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