# Phillip allocator

## MONTHLY INVESTMENT ALLOCATOR



### MARKET OUTLOOK

Following a robust performance in July, global markets in general experienced a decline in August. MSCI APxJ lost -6.4% in August, underperforming MSCI World that declined -2.6%. HK headed the list of the worst performing markets, with Hang Seng Index registering negative returns of -8.5%. Dismal macroeconomic data, signs of deflation, record youth unemployment, and persistent liquidity challenges in the debt-laden property sector have collectively undermined confidence in China's economic outlook. Within ASEAN, Thailand gained +0.6% for the month. Optimism appears to be driven by the resolution of political deadlock after May-23's general election, with the confirmation of Srettha Thavisin as the new Prime Minister. Separately, Indonesia traded higher +0.3%, while Philippines and Singapore declined -6.3% and -4.2% respectively.

With Country Garden missing recent debt payments, investors have raised concerns about the recovery in the housing market and the broader economy. Given this situation, it becomes imperative for regulatory authorities throughout the Chinese government to accelerate efforts aimed at revitalising demand within the real estate sector, which constitutes approximately one-fifth of China's total gross domestic product. Furthermore, the government pledged further easing of property measures following its Politburo meeting in late July. And in late August, the government unveiled further easing of its mortgage policies which allow more buyers to qualify for lower minimum down-payment and mortgage rates to support housing demand.

On a separate note, Chinese securities regulators halved the 0.1% stamp duty on stock trades for 1st time since 2008 to invigorate the capital market and boost investor confidence. Besides the latest efforts in capital market, the central bank also unveiled measures to bolster the economic recovery. Since August, the PBoC cut its 1-year prime loan prime rate (LPR) by 10bps to 3.45% while keeping the 5-year LPR status quo at 4.20%. Earlier, the PBoC cut the rate of the one-year medium-term lending facility (MLF) by 15 basis points from 2.65% to 2.50%.

On the domestic front, with the state elections conclude with status quo, and the next general elections are still four years away, we believe an improved policy outlook in Malaysia is likely to result in increased clarity and continuity of policies. Separately, recent Q2 results were less encouraging with mixed performance across different sectors. Nevertheless, with first and second quarter upticks in operational costs (including electricity tariffs and minimum wages) now seemingly absorbed by the market, attention is shifting towards the latter half of the year and beyond. Externally, the action of the Fed is a factor to look at – If the Fed's tightening policy is coming to an end and the US dollar has peaked and is softening further, it will be beneficial for emerging economies and currencies, including Malaysia. Another aspect to watch is China, which is an important economic partner for Malaysia. Finally, attractive valuation, robust economic fundamentals and low foreign shareholding will continue to support the local market.

## EQUITY

After a good rally in July, FBMKLCI declined slightly by -0.5% MoM to close at 1,451.94 points in August. The Small Cap Index registered a positive return of +3.1% while the Mid 70 Index gained +2.4%. Looking at the trading participants for the month, foreign investors and local institutions were the net buyers, buying MYR140.8 million and MYR291.4 million worth of shares. Local retailers were the net sellers, selling MYR432.2 million worth of shares. For year-to-date (YTD), foreign investors and local retailers were the net sellers, selling MYR2,637.0 million and MYR525.7 million worth of shares, while the local institutions were net buyers, buying MYR3,162.7 million worth of shares.

Sector wise, top performers were Property, Utilities and Construction, rising by 12.3%, 10.8% and 7.1% MoM, respectively. Laggards were Healthcare, Plantation, and Telco, declining by -6.2%, -3.5% and -1.4% MoM, respectively.

#### BOND

In August, the yield for the Malaysian Government Securities (MGS) for the 3-year, 5-year, 7-year and 10-year changed by -4bps, -1bps, -2bps and 0bps, closing at 3.45%, 3.59%, 3.74% and 3.84% respectively.

### **COMMODITIES & CURRENCIES**

WTI crude oil and Brent oil up +2.2% and +1.5% respectively to close at \$83.6/barrel and \$86.9/barrel. Crude palm oil closed higher at RM3,860MT, registering a gain of 1.8%; while spot gold declined 1.2%, ending the month at \$1,947.00/oz. Currency wise, the Malaysian Ringgit depreciated 2.8% against the greenback to RM4.64/USD. Meanwhile, Dollar Index gained 1.7% to 103.6.



## Market review

Thailand

Indonesia

Malaysia

Japan

S&P 500

Nasdaq

India

Korea

Taiwan

Europe

Singapore

Philippines

MSCI APxJ

China (CSI300)

**Dow Jones** 

MSCI World

August 2023 Global Market Performance

0.6%

0.3%

-0.5%

-1.7%

-1.8%

-2.2%

-2.4%

-2.5%

-2.6%

-2.9%

-3.0%

-3.9%

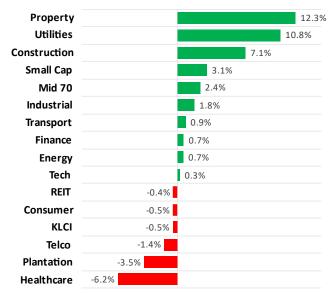
-4.2%

-6.2%

-6.3%

-6.4%

#### August 2023 Malaysia Market Performance



Source: Bloomberg, compiled by PCM

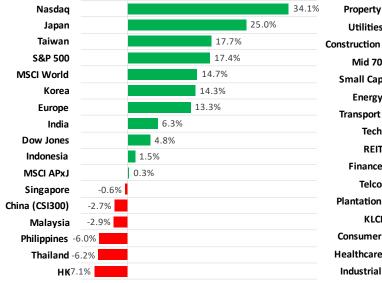
-8.5%

ΗК

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## Market review

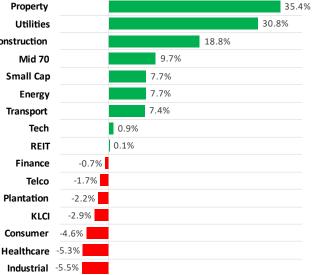
YTD 2023 Global Market Performance



Source: Bloomberg, compiled by PCM, YTD denotes return up to end-August 2023



#### YTD 2023 Malaysia Market Performance

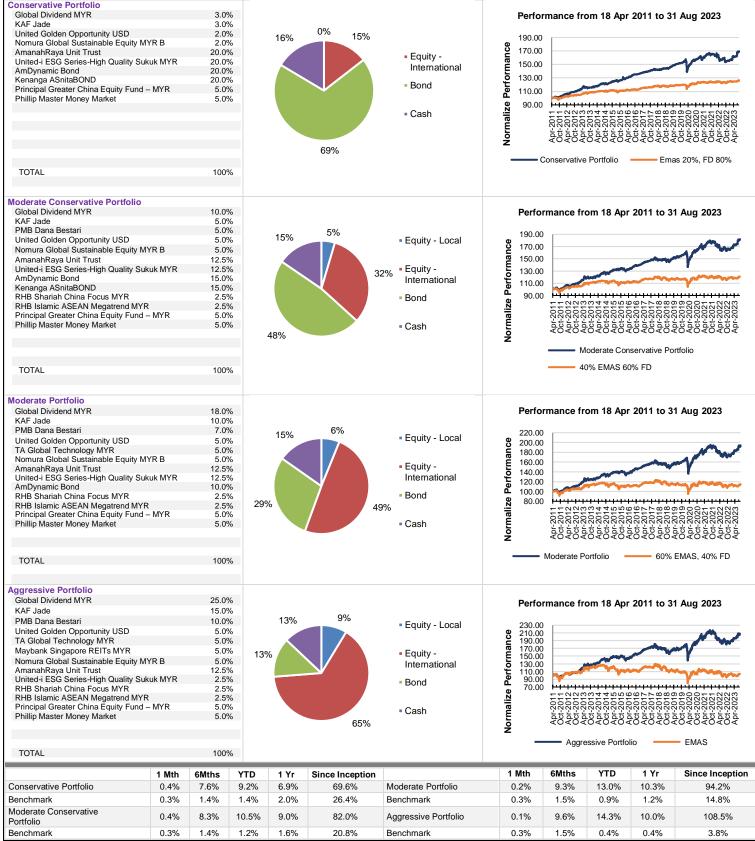




**CONVENTIONAL MODEL PORTFOLIO** 

Commentary

In Aug, Conserv. and Mod Conserv. ports outperformed the benchmark, while Moderate and Aggressive ports underperformed the benchmark, due to high China's exposure. Nevertheless, our portfolios are +ve in Aug and YTD. Global Dividend MYR (+1.25%) & United Golden Opportunity (+1.73%) were the top performers; Principal Greater China Equity MYR (-3.64%); RHB Shariah China Focus MYR (-3.50%) & RHB Islamic ASEAN Megatrend MYR (-1.66%) were the laggards.

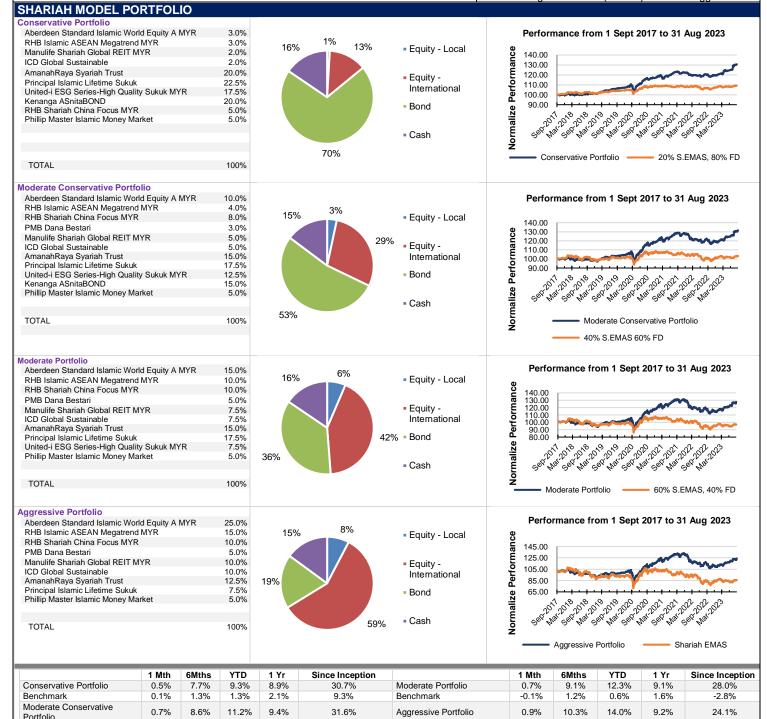


Source: Lipper



Commentary

In Aug, all ports outperformed the benchmark helped by its global exposure, despite having some China exposure. Our portfolios are +ve in Aug and YTD. abrdn Islamic World Equity A MYR (+0.89%) & Manulife Shariah Global REIT MYR (+1.57%) were the top performers (+0.58%); RHB Shariah China Focus MYR (-3.50%) & RHB Islamic ASEAN Megatrend MYR (-1.66%) were the laggards.



#### Benchmark Source: Lipper

0.0%

1.3%

1.0%

1.9%

3.1%

Benchmark

-0.3%

1.1%

-0.2%

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1.0%

-14.3%