The Pakistan Credit Rating Agency Limited

Rating Report

NRSP Microfinance Bank Limited

Report Contents

Rating History

Dissemination Date	Long Term Rating	Short Term Rating	Outlook	Action	Rating Watch
15-May-2024	A-	A2	Stable	Maintain	Yes
14-Dec-2023	A-	A2	Negative	Maintain	Yes
14-Dec-2022	A-	A2	Negative	Downgrade	Yes
29-Apr-2022	A	A1	Negative	Maintain	Yes
30-Apr-2021	A	A1	Stable	Maintain	Yes
23-Oct-2020	A	A1	Stable	Maintain	Yes
27-Apr-2020	A	A1	Negative	Maintain	Yes
28-Oct-2019	A	A1	Negative	Maintain	-
29-Apr-2019	A	A1	Negative	Maintain	-
06-Nov-2018	A	A1	Stable	Maintain	-

Rating Rationale and Key Rating Drivers

NRSP confronted challenges as a result of prevailing industry conditions, with many players feeling the impact of multiple factors. However, with strategic planning and support from key sponsors, the management devised a comprehensive plan to navigate the bank through these difficulties. NRSP Bank has experienced growth, serving an expanding customer base and solidifying its position in the industry, boasting approximately 6.6% share in the total gross loan portfolio as of Dec'23. The peer universe is also evolving speedily, sustenance and growth in relative position would remain imperative. The bank's gross loan portfolio (GLP) reached approximately PKR 33.4bln by the end of Dec'23 compared to (Dec'22 ~ PKR 32.3bln). On the financial profile side, the bank reported a profit after tax of PKR ~910mln by the end of Dec'23, compared to a huge loss after tax of PKR ~4,218mln in Dec'22. The bank also expects profit growth in the future based on improved fundamentals which will play a pivotal role in the stabilization of equity and resultantly on CAR. On this basis, PACRA revise the Bank's outlook from negative to stable while maintaining the rating watch to monitor compliance with the minimum regulatory requirement of CAR. NRSP has injected PKR 1 billion as share deposit money against the equity injection plan, in this regard other investors have also expressed intention for an equity injection, NRSP would inject the matching share. The Bank's equity amounted to PKR ~2bln at the end of Dec'23, a significant rise from approximately PKR 92mln recorded at the end of Dec'22. This increase in equity is attributed to the injection of funds by NRSP (Parent Co). The Bank continues to grapple with meeting CAR (Capital Adequacy Ratio) requirements. As of Dec'23, the CAR stood at (-6.02%), from (-11.5%) in June'23 and (-13.2%) at the end of Dec'22. Management anticipates bridging the remaining gap to achieve regulatory compliance by June 2025, driven by their performance trajectory. The capital injection plan is currently in development, and the equity injection plan is part of the whole business strategy of the bank, In this regard, the process of hiring external consultants to evaluate the feasibility of the business strategy has been successfully concluded.
The sponsor has reassured their support, both in technical and financial forms, to the bank historically with an expression of explicit intention from NRSP to provide financial support in the form of capital injection, as and when required.

The ratings are dependent upon the bank’s ability to steer out of the current challenges while improving the risk profile.

Disclosure

Name of Rated Entity	NRSP Microfinance Bank Limited
Type of Relationship	Solicited
Purpose of the Rating	Entity Rating
Applicable Criteria	Methodology | Correlation Between Long-term & Short-term Rating Scales(Jul-23),Methodology | Financial Institution Rating(Oct-23),Methodology | Microfinance Institution Rating(Oct-23)
Related Research	Sector Study | Microfinance(Sep-23)
Rating Analysts	Madiha Sohail | madiha.sohail@pacra.com | +92-42-35869504

Profile

Structure NRSP Microfinance Bank Limited ('The Bank') was incorporated as a public unlisted company in October 2008 under Section 32 of the Companies Ordinance, 1984 (now the Companies Act, 2017). The bank commenced nationwide operations in March 2011

Background The Bank builds on the experience of its parent institution - National Rural Support Program (NRSP) which in 2008, spun-off its Micro Enterprise Development Programme (MEDP) into a separate bank.

Operations The Bank currently operates with its head office in Bahawalpur, a key district in Southern Punjab, which places it closer to its target market. The Bank is operational through a countrywide branch network of 135 branches including 37 Islamic branches as of Sept, 2023. A wide range of financial services is offered by the bank including micro-lending, micro-insurance, Islamic banking products, and deposits to the financially excluded individuals living in both ur-ban and rural areas of Pakistan

Ownership

Ownership Structure The Bank is a subsidiary of the National Rural Support Program (NRSP) with a shareholding of 57.40%. Other institutional shareholders include International Finance Corporation (IFC) (16.02%), PROPARCO (15.91%), and Acumen (10.68%). Continued sponsor support accompanied by a stable ownership pattern, since inception, bodes well for the bank. The good financial position of sponsors strengthens the financial muscle of the bank.

Stability Continued sponsor support accompanied by a stable ownership pattern, since inception, bodes well for the bank.

Business Acumen NRSP – a nonprofit organization – established in 1991, is an autonomous body limited by a government guarantee. It is the largest Rural Support Program in the country in terms of out-reach, staff, and development activities. Other sponsors include; IFC - a member of the World Bank Group and Acumen - incorporated in 2001, share the common purpose of developing underprivileged societies of developing economies and encouraging financial inclusion

Financial Strength Good financial position of sponsors strengthens the financial muscle of the bank

Governance

Board Structure The overall control of the Bank vests in a nine-member board of directors (BOD), including the CEO. The Chairman of the Board is Mr. Rashid Bajwa and Mr. Riaz Bangash is the CEO/President of the bank. Two independent directors are part of the Board. The directors are experienced professionals having exposure to various sectors, including the microfinance industry

Members' Profile The directors are experienced professionals having exposure in various sectors, including the microfinance industry.

Board Effectiveness The Board of Directors is branched into four sub-committees namely (i) Audit (ii) Remuneration & Compensation and (iii) Operational Risk and Policy (iv) Information and Technology . These committees ensure effective over-sight of the bank's affairs and strengthen the Board's governance role.

Transparency M/S Yousuf Adil & Co. are the external auditors of the bank. The auditor has expressed a unqualified conclusion on the financial statements of CY23.

Management

Organizational Structure The bank has divided its organizational structure into ten departments with each department head reporting directly to the CEO, while the head of the internal audit department reports to the Audit Committee

Management Team The Chairman of the Board is Mr. Rashid Bajwa and Mr. Riaz Bangash is the CEO/President of the bank. Two independent directors are part of the Board. The directors are experienced professionals having exposure to various sectors, including the microfinance industry.

Effectiveness To ensure the effectiveness of the operations, the bank has three management committees in place, namely; i) Operations and Risk Management Committee (ORMC), ii) Asset Liability Committee (ALCO) and iii) IT Steering Committee

MIS Detailed MIS reports are generated to support the senior management in timely and effective decision-making. MIS includes reports about disbursements, repayments, recoveries, deposits, and compliance

Risk Management Framework The bank has instituted policies for assessing credit worthiness of loan applicants, which is par-amount to its business model. Recently, the bank has particularly steered its focus toward consolidating its position by adopting more stringent and efficient risk control mechanisms.

Technology Infrastructure The bank uses Oracle Flexcube as its core banking software; implemented since 2012. A back-to-back support contract from Oracle is directly in place to ensure a smooth system run

Business Risk

Industry Dynamics The microfinance Bank's asset quality witnessed significant impairment due to multiple factors, the high inflationary environment amidst a slowdown in the economy and high interest rate. In Microfinance sector the Microfinance Banks (MFBs) maintained the highest share of the total GLP at ~77%, while NBMFCs (including MFIs and RSPs) made up the remaining ~23% during CY23. MFBs' bottom line experienced a negative growth of ~52.7% (CY22: ~112.3%). Thereby, MFBs' equity continued to decline in CY23 by ~14.5%. Rising NPLs have been a major sign of concern for the MFBs sector. This issue not only stems from the fresh portfolio disbursed, but also due to carried-forward loan portfolio against the deferments allowed during pandemic breakout. In CY23, the MFBs' NPLs increased to ~9.5% (~8.8% in CY22). Due to persistent losses and equity erosion, the MFBs sector capital structure also reflects a deteriorated outlook with overall CAR of the sector falling way below the regulatory benchmark of 15.0% to ~7.6%in CY23. The Sector's Gross Loan Portfolio (GLP) clocked in at PKR~408bln as at End-Dec'23, up ~12.8% since End-Dec'22, when it recorded at PKR~361bln. However, during CY23, the sector's NPLs increased by ~12.3%, which is lower than the increase in NPLs during CY22 when the growth rate stood at ~61.8%. In terms of GLP, top 3 microfinance banks during 1HCY23 were Habib MFB, Khushhali MFB and U MFB with ~21.0%, ~20.0% and ~20.0% shares respectively. In terms of deposits, U MFB , Khushhali MFB and Habib MFB are the top 3 microfinance Banks with each having a share of ~19.0%.

Relative Position The bank catered to 3.3% of the borrowers in the microfinance industry (including MFIs, RSPs, and other projects) as of the end of Dec 23, grabbing a 6.7% share of the market in terms of Gross Loan Portfolio (GLP).

Revenue The interest/Mark income of the Bank increased by 134% to PKR 9,803mln during CY23 (CY22: PKR 4,187mln).

Profitability During CY23, the bank's net profitability increased manifold to report a profit of PKR ~910mln (CY22: Loss of PKR -4,218mln)

Sustainability The microfinance industry has notably absorbed the effect of macroeconomic instabilities in its portfolio in the shape of slumped growth and elevated Portfolio at Risk (PAR). NRSP MFBs, in terms of affect absorption, have been on the higher end, due to their product mix concentration and other factors.

Financial Risk

Credit Risk The bank's loan book is primarily concentrated on non-collateralized loans. As of end-Dec'23, the GLP reported at PKR 33,480mln (end-Dec'22: PKR 32,386mln). Advances continued to be dominated by Agri Input Loans, followed by Micro-Enterprise Loans and Livestock Loans. The bank's infection ratio total to 3.6% in Dec'23 (End-Dec'22: 16%), mainly as a result of a marginal decrease in NPLs to PKR 1,216mln on Dec'23 (End Dec'22: PKR 5,169mln).

Market Risk As of end-Dec'23, the Bank's investment book increased by 130% to PKR 5,605mln (End-Dec'22: PKR 2,436mln).

Funding The bank's funding is majorly fueled through deposits, which primarily consist of time deposits (52.2%).

Cashflows & Coverages Liquidity profile\during CY23 as the bank's liquid assets to deposits and short-term borrowings ratio reported to 33.3% (End-Dec'22: 26.6%)

Capital Adequacy The central bank required microfinance banks to maintain CAR at a minimum of 15%. As at end-Dec'23, the bank is CAR non-compliant

PKR mln

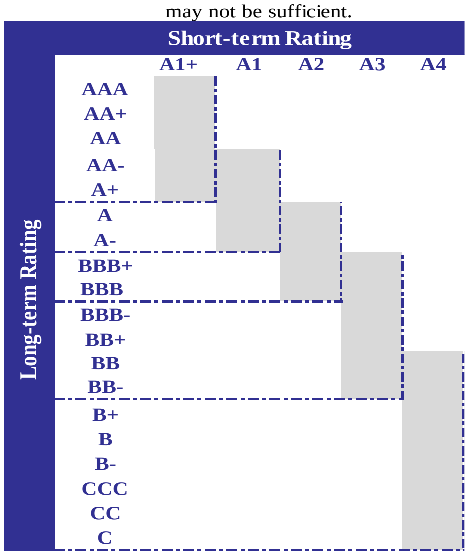
NRSP Microfinance Bank Public Unlisted	Dec-23 12M	Dec-22 12M	Dec-21 12M	Dec-20 12M
A BALANCE SHEET				
1 Total Finances - net	32,264	27,217	28,726	28,048
2 Investments	5,606	2,436	6,782	8,638
3 Other Earning Assets	6,732	4,611	7,703	7,320
4 Non-Earning Assets	10,393	9,116	9,717	9,271
5 Non-Performing Finances-net	(377)	811	(1,547)	(115)
Total Assets	54,617	44,191	51,381	53,161
6 Deposits	39,570	32,444	34,127	39,285
7 Borrowings	6,093	6,587	8,378	4,068
8 Other Liabilities (Non-Interest Bearing)	6,910	5,067	4,597	4,298
Total Liabilities	52,574	44,098	47,102	47,651
Equity	2,044	89	4,274	5,498
B INCOME STATEMENT				
1 Mark Up Earned	9,804	4,188	7,989	8,852
2 Mark Up Expensed	(5,748)	(3,973)	(3,790)	(3,929)
3 Non Mark Up Income	2,523	1,518	1,086	1,077
Total Income	6,579	1,733	5,286	6,000
4 Non-Mark Up Expenses	(3,401)	(3,364)	(3,160)	(3,115)
5 Provisions/Write offs/Reversals	(2,192)	(4,591)	(3,988)	(1,741)
Pre-Tax Profit	986	(6,222)	(1,862)	1,144
6 Taxes	(75)	2,004	631	(351)
Profit After Tax	911	(4,218)	(1,232)	793
C RATIO ANALYSIS				
1 Performance				
Portfolio Yield	28.1%	12.2%	24.8%	31.1%
Minimum Lending Rate	34.4%	37.7%	36.3%	30.7%
Operational Self Sufficiency (OSS)	108.7%	47.8%	83.0%	113.0%
Return on Equity	85.3%	-193.0%	-25.2%	15.6%
Cost per Borrower Ratio	14,650.9	N/A	N/A	N/A
2 Capital Adequacy				
Net NPL/Equity	-18.4%	875.7%	-36.2%	-2.1%
Equity / Total Assets (D+E+F)	3.7%	0.2%	8.3%	10.3%
Tier I Capital / Risk Weighted Assets	-6.0%	-13.2%	7.8%	13.6%
Capital Adequacy Ratio	-6.0%	-13.2%	11.1%	16.4%
Capital Formation Rate [(Profit After Tax - Cash Dividend) / Equity]	1023.8%	-98.7%	-22.4%	16.9%
3 Funding & Liquidity				
Liquid Assets as a % of Deposits & Short term Borrowings	33.3%	26.6%	47.5%	41.8%
Demand Deposit Coverage Ratio	180.9%	221.5%	461.0%	562.4%
Liquid Assets/Top 20 Depositors	109.1%	71.3%	134.0%	114.6%
Funding Diversification (Deposits/(Deposits+Borrowings+Grants))	86.7%	83.1%	80.3%	90.6%
Net Advances to Deposits Ratio	80.6%	86.4%	79.6%	71.1%
4 Credit Risk				
Top 20 Advances / Advances	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%
PAR 30 Ratio	3.6%	16.0%	6.9%	4.2%
True Infection Ratio	3.6%	16.0%	6.9%	4.2%
Risk Coverage Ratio (PAR 30)	131.0%	84.3%	172.9%	109.3%

Credit Rating

Credit rating reflects forward-looking opinion on credit worthiness of underlying entity or instrument; more specifically it covers relative ability to honor financial obligations. The primary factor being captured on the rating scale is relative likelihood of default.

Long-term Rating	
Scale	**Definition**
AAA	**Highest credit quality.** Lowest expectation of credit risk. Indicate exceptionally strong capacity for timely payment of financial commitments
AA+ **AA** **AA-**	**Very high credit quality.** Very low expectation of credit risk. Indicate very strong capacity for timely payment of financial commitments. This capacity is not significantly vulnerable to foreseeable events.
A+ **A** **A-**	**High credit quality.** Low expectation of credit risk. The capacity for timely payment of financial commitments is considered strong. This capacity may, nevertheless, be vulnerable to changes in circumstances or in economic conditions.
BBB+ **BBB** **BBB-**	**Good credit quality.** Currently a low expectation of credit risk. The capacity for timely payment of financial commitments is considered adequate, but adverse changes in circumstances and in economic conditions are more likely to impair this capacity.
BB+ **BB** **BB-**	**Moderate risk.** Possibility of credit risk developing. There is a possibility of credit risk developing, particularly as a result of adverse economic or business changes over time; however, business or financial alternatives may be available to allow financial commitments to be met.
B+ **B** **B-**	**High credit risk.** A limited margin of safety remains against credit risk. Financial commitments are currently being met; however, capacity for continued payment is contingent upon a sustained, favorable business and economic environment.
CCC **CC** **C**	**Very high credit risk.** Substantial credit risk "CCC" Default is a real possibility. Capacity for meeting financial commitments is solely reliant upon sustained, favorable business or economic developments. "CC" Rating indicates that default of some kind appears probable. "C" Ratings signal imminent default.
D	Obligations are currently in default.

Short-term Rating	
Scale	**Definition**
A1+	The highest capacity for timely repayment.
A1	A strong capacity for timely repayment.
A2	A satisfactory capacity for timely repayment. This may be susceptible to adverse changes in business, economic, or financial conditions.
A3	An adequate capacity for timely repayment. Such capacity is susceptible to adverse changes in business, economic, or financial
A4	The capacity for timely repayment is more susceptible to adverse changes in business, economic, or financial conditions. Liquidity may not be sufficient.



**The correlation shown is indicative and, in certain cases, may not hold.*

Outlook (Stable, Positive, Negative, Developing) Indicates the potential and direction of a rating over the intermediate term in response to trends in economic and/or fundamental business/financial conditions. It is not necessarily a precursor to a rating change. 'Stable' outlook means a rating is not likely to change. 'Positive' means it may be raised. 'Negative' means it may be lowered. Where the trends have conflicting elements, the outlook may be described as 'Developing'.

Rating Watch Alerts to the possibility of a rating change subsequent to, or, in anticipation of some material identifiable event with indeterminable rating implications. But it does not mean that a rating change is inevitable. A watch should be resolved within foreseeable future, but may continue if underlying circumstances are not settled. Rating watch may accompany rating outlook of the respective opinion.

Suspension It is not possible to update an opinion due to lack of requisite information. Opinion should be resumed in foreseeable future. However, if this does not happen within six (6) months, the rating should be considered withdrawn.

Withdrawn A rating is withdrawn on a) termination of rating mandate, b) the debt instrument is redeemed, c) the rating remains suspended for six months, d) the entity/issuer defaults., or/and e) PACRA finds it impractical to surveill the opinion due to lack of requisite information.

Harmonization A change in rating due to revision in applicable methodology or underlying scale.

Surveillance. Surveillance on a publicly disseminated rating opinion is carried out on an ongoing basis till it is formally suspended or withdrawn. A comprehensive surveillance of rating opinion is carried out at least once every six months. However, a rating opinion may be reviewed in the intervening period if it is necessitated by any material happening.

Note. This scale is applicable to the following methodology(s):

a) Broker Entity Rating
b) Corporate Rating
c) Debt Instrument Rating
d) Financial Institution Rating
e) Holding Company Rating
f) Independent Power Producer Rating
g) Microfinance Institution Rating
h) Non-Banking Finance Companies Rating

Regulatory and Supplementary Disclosure
(Credit Rating Companies Regulations,2016)

Rating Team Statements
(1) Rating is just an opinion about the creditworthiness of the entity and does not constitute recommendation to buy, hold or sell any security of the entity rated or to buy, hold or sell the security rated, as the case may be | Chapter III; 14-3-(x)

2) **Conflict of Interest**
i. The Rating Team or any of their family members have no interest in this rating | Chapter III; 12-2-(j)
ii. PACRA, the analysts involved in the rating process and members of its rating committee, and their family members, do not have any conflict of interest relating to the rating done by them | Chapter III; 12-2-(e) & (k)
iii. The analyst is not a substantial shareholder of the customer being rated by PACRA [Annexure F; d-(ii)] Explanation: for the purpose of above clause, the term “family members” shall include only those family members who are dependent on the analyst and members of the rating committee

Restrictions
(3) No director, officer or employee of PACRA communicates the information, acquired by him for use for rating purposes, to any other person except where required under law to do so. | Chapter III; 10-(5)
(4) PACRA does not disclose or discuss with outside parties or make improper use of the non-public information which has come to its knowledge during business relationship with the customer | Chapter III; 10-7-(d)
(5) PACRA does not make proposals or recommendations regarding the activities of rated entities that could impact a credit rating of entity subject to rating | Chapter III; 10-7-(k)

Conduct of Business
(6) PACRA fulfills its obligations in a fair, efficient, transparent and ethical manner and renders high standards of services in performing its functions and obligations; | Chapter III; 11-A-(a)
(7) PACRA uses due care in preparation of this Rating Report. Our information has been obtained from sources we consider to be reliable but its accuracy or completeness is not guaranteed. PACRA does not, in every instance, independently verifies or validates information received in the rating process or in preparing this Rating Report | Clause 11-(A)(p).
(8) PACRA prohibits its employees and analysts from soliciting money, gifts or favors from anyone with whom PACRA conducts business | Chapter III; 11-A-(q)
(9) PACRA ensures before commencement of the rating process that an analyst or employee has not had a recent employment or other significant business or personal relationship with the rated entity that may cause or may be perceived as causing a conflict of interest; | Chapter III; 11-A-(r)
(10) PACRA maintains principal of integrity in seeking rating business | Chapter III; 11-A-(u)
(11) PACRA promptly investigates, in the event of a misconduct or a breach of the policies, procedures and controls, and takes appropriate steps to rectify any weaknesses to prevent any recurrence along with suitable punitive action against the responsible employee(s) | Chapter III; 11-B-(m)

Independence & Conflict of interest
(12) PACRA receives compensation from the entity being rated or any third party for the rating services it offers. The receipt of this compensation has no influence on PACRA´s opinions or other analytical processes. In all instances, PACRA is committed to preserving the objectivity, integrity and independence of its ratings. Our relationship is governed by two distinct mandates i) rating mandate - signed with the entity being rated or issuer of the debt instrument, and fee mandate - signed with the payer, which can be different from the entity
(13) PACRA does not provide consultancy/advisory services or other services to any of its customers or to any of its customers’ associated companies and associated undertakings that is being rated or has been rated by it during the preceding three years unless it has adequate mechanism in place ensuring that provision of such services does not lead to a conflict of interest situation with its rating activities; | Chapter III; 12-2-(d)
(14) PACRA discloses that no shareholder directly or indirectly holding 10% or more of the share capital of PACRA also holds directly or indirectly 10% or more of the share capital of the entity which is subject to rating or the entity which issued the instrument subject to rating by PACRA; | Reference Chapter III; 12-2-(f)
(15) PACRA ensures that the rating assigned to an entity or instrument is not be affected by the existence of a business relationship between PACRA and the entity or any other party, or the non-existence of such a relationship | Chapter III; 12-2-(i)
(16) PACRA ensures that the analysts or any of their family members shall not buy or sell or engage in any transaction in any security which falls in the analyst’s area of primary analytical responsibility. This clause shall, however, not be applicable on investment in securities through collective investment schemes. | Chapter III; 12-2-(l)
(17) PACRA has established policies and procedure governing investments and trading in securities by its employees and for monitoring the same to prevent insider trading, market manipulation or any other market abuse | Chapter III; 11-B-(g)

Monitoring and review
(18) PACRA monitors all the outstanding ratings continuously and any potential change therein due to any event associated with the issuer, the security arrangement, the industry etc., is disseminated to the market, immediately and in effective manner, after appropriate consultation with the entity/issuer; | Chapter III | 17-(a)
(19) PACRA reviews all the outstanding ratings periodically, on annual basis; Provided that public dissemination of annual review and, in an instance of change in rating will be made; | Chapter III | 17-(b)
(20) PACRA initiates immediate review of the outstanding rating upon becoming aware of any information that may reasonably be expected to result in downgrading of the rating; | Chapter III | 17-(c)
(21) PACRA engages with the issuer and the debt securities trustee, to remain updated on all information pertaining to the rating of the entity/instrument;| Chapter III | 17-(d)
Probability of Default
(22) PACRA´s Rating Scale reflects the expectation of credit risk. The highest rating has the lowest relative likelihood of default (i.e., probability). PACRA´s transition studies capture the historical performance behavior of a specific rating notch. Transition behavior of the assigned rating can be obtained from PACRA´s Transition Study available at our website. (www.pacra.com). However, actual transition of rating may not follow the pattern observed in the past; | Chapter III | 14-3(f)(vii)
Proprietary Information