

September 02, 2022

Spandana Sphoorty Financial Limited: Provisional [ICRA]A+(SO) assigned to PTC Series A1 issued by NIMBUS 2022 MFI HAWKEYE, backed by a pool of microloan receivables

Summary of rating action

Trust Name	Instrument*	Current Rated Amount (Rs. crore)	Rating Action
NIMBUS 2022 MFI HAWKEYE	PTC Series A1	97.06	Provisional [ICRA]A+(SO); Assigned

*Instrument details are provided in Annexure-1

Rating in the absence of the pending actions/documents	No rating would have been assigned as it would not be meaningful
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Rationale

ICRA has assigned a provisional rating to the pass-through certificates (PTCs) under a securitisation transaction backed by microloan receivables originated by Spandana Sphoorty Financial Limited (SSFL) (rated [ICRA]A-; ratings placed under watch with developing implications). The PTCs are backed by a pool of Rs. 128.15 crore microfinance loan receivables (underlying pool principal of Rs. 110.93 crore).

The provisional rating is based on the strength of the cash flows from the selected pool of contracts and the credit enhancement available in the form of (i) a cash collateral (CC) of 7.25% of the pool principal to be provided by the originator, (ii) over-collateralisation of 12.50% of the pool principal for PTC Series A1, and (iii) subordination of the entire excess interest spread (EIS) in the structure. The provisional rating is also based on the integrity of the legal structure. The provisional rating is subject to the fulfilment of all the conditions under the structure and the review of documentation pertaining to the transaction by ICRA.

Key rating drivers

Credit strengths

- Availability of credit enhancement in the form of Excess Interest Spread (EIS), over-collateralisation/subordination and CC
- No overdue contracts in the pool as on the cut-off date
- Moderate pre-securitisation amortisation of ~30% of the pool as on the cut-off date

Credit challenges

- Geographical concentration with top 3 states contributing around 50% to the initial pool principal amount
- Performance of pool would also remain exposed to natural calamities that may impact the income-generating capability of the borrower, given the marginal borrower profile; pool's performance would also be exposed to political and communal risks
- Pool's performance will remain exposed to any fresh disruptions that may arise due to Covid-19 pandemic

Description of key rating drivers highlighted above

The first line of support for PTC Series A1 in the transaction is in the form of over-collateralisation (i.e. subordination) of 12.50% of the pool principal. Further credit support is available in the form of an EIS of 10.28% and a CC of 7.25% of the initial pool principal (i.e. Rs. 8.04 crore) to be provided by SSFL.

As per the transaction structure, the monthly cash flow schedule comprises the promised interest payment to PTC Series A1 at the predetermined interest rate on the principal outstanding. The principal repayment to PTC Series A1 is promised on the last payout date. During the tenure of PTC Series A1, the collections from the pool, after making the promised interest payouts, will be used to make the expected principal payouts to PTC Series A1. This principal payout is not promised and any shortfall in making the expected principal payment to PTC Series A1 would be carried forward to the subsequent payout. The EIS, if any, shall flow back to the originator on every payout date after making all the payouts to PTC Series A1 as per the Waterfall Mechanism. Also, in the event of a shortfall in meeting the promised PTC payouts during any month, the trustee will utilise the CC to meet the shortfall.

There are no overdues in the pool as on the cut-off date. The pool consists of loans that are moderately seasoned with a weighted average seasoning of ~8 months with pre-securitisation amortisation of ~30%. The geographical concentration of the loan contracts in the current pool is moderate with the top 3 states constituting 50% of the pool principal. The performance of the pool would be exposed to political and communal risks and natural calamities that may impact the income-generating capability of the borrower. Also, it would remain exposed to any fresh disruptions that may arise due to the pandemic.

Performance of past rated pools: In the past, ICRA has rated 29 microloan receivable pools originated by SSFL and all the pools have matured. None of the pools has seen CC utilisation and while delinquency numbers were higher for some of the pools originated immediately prior to nationwide lockdown and those rated in FY21.

Key rating assumptions

ICRA's cash flow modelling for rating asset-backed securitisation (ABS) transactions involves the simulation of potential delinquencies, losses (shortfall in principal collection during the tenor of the pool) and prepayments in the pool. The assumptions for the loss and coefficient of variation (CoV) are arrived at after taking into account the performance of the originator's portfolio as well as the characteristics of the specific pool being evaluated. Additionally, the assumptions may be adjusted to factor in the current operating environment and any industry-specific factors that ICRA believes could impact the performance of the underlying pool contracts.

After making these adjustments, the expected mean shortfall in principal collection during the tenure of the pool is estimated at 4.5-5.5% of the initial pool principal, with certain variability around it. The prepayment rate for the underlying pool is estimated in the range of 6.0-9.0% per annum.

Liquidity position: Strong

As per the transaction structure, only the interest amount is promised monthly to PTC Series A1 while the entire principal amount is promised on the scheduled maturity date of the transaction. The collections from the pool and the available credit enhancement are expected to be comfortable to meet the promised payouts to the PTC investors. The available CC would meet the promised interest payouts for twelve months even in the unlikely scenario of no collections in the pool.

Rating sensitivities

Positive factors – The sustained strong collection performance of the underlying pool of contracts (monthly collection efficiency >95%), leading to lower-than-expected delinquency levels, and an increase in the cover available for future investor payouts from the credit enhancement would result in a rating upgrade.

Negative factors – The sustained weak collection performance of the underlying pool of contracts (monthly collection efficiency <90%), leading to higher-than-expected delinquency levels and higher credit enhancement utilisation levels, would result in a rating downgrade.

Analytical approach

The rating action is based on the analysis of the performance of SSFL's portfolio till July 2022, the key characteristics and composition of the current pool, the performance expected over the balance tenure of the pool, and the credit enhancement co available in the transaction.

Analytical Approach	Comments
Applicable Rating Methodologies	Rating Methodology for Securitisation Transactions
Parent/Group Support	Not Applicable
Consolidation/Standalone	Not Applicable

Pending actions/documents required to be completed for conversion of the provisional rating into final

The assigned ratings are provisional and would be converted into final upon the execution of:

1. Trust deed
2. Assignment agreement
3. Legal opinion
4. Trustee letter
5. Power of Attorney
6. Chartered Accountant's (CA) certificate
7. Any other documents executed for the transaction including for the CC

Validity of the provisional rating

The Trust is expected to complete the pending actions/execute the pending documents in the near term. However, in case of continued pendency of the actions/documents beyond one year of this publication, the provisional rating would be withdrawn for the transaction even if the instrument has been issued.

Risks associated with the provisional rating

In case the issuance is completed, but the pending actions/documents are not completed for the transaction within one year (validity period) from the assignment of the ratings, the provisional rating will be withdrawn in accordance with ICRA's Policy on Provisional Ratings available at www.icra.in.

About the company

Spandana Sphoorty Financial Limited (SSFL) was incorporated in 2003 as a non-banking financial company (NBFC) and it took over the microfinance operations of Spandana, a non-governmental organisation started by Ms. Padmaja Reddy in 1998. The company was classified as a non-banking financial company – microfinance institution (NBFC-MFI) in 2015. Following the microfinance crisis in Andhra Pradesh (AP), the company entered into a master restructuring agreement (MRA) as a part of the corporate debt restructuring (CDR) with its lenders in September 2011. It exited the CDR in April 2017 after a fresh equity investment led by Kedaara Capital Investment Managers Limited (Kedaara Capital) and fresh funding from three banks. SSFL completed its initial public offering (IPO) in August 2019.

Key financial indicators (audited)

Spandana Sphoorty Financial Limited	FY2020	FY2021	FY2022
Total Income	1,217.0	1,365.0	1,392.0
Profit after Tax	336.7	129.0	47.0
Assets under Management	6,660.8	7,736.0	6,214.0
Gross Non-performing Assets (NPA)%	0.4%	5.8%	14.20%
Net NPA%	0.1%	3.2%	6.24%

Note: Amounts in Rs. crore; All ratios as per ICRA calculations

Status of non-cooperation with previous CRA: Not applicable

Any other information: None

Rating history for past three years

Sr. No	Trust Name	Current Rating (FY2023)				Chronology of Rating History for the past 3 years			
		Instrument	Amount Rated (Rs. crore)	Amount Outstanding (Rs. crore)	Date & Rating in FY2023	Date & Rating in FY2022	Date & Rating in FY2021	Date & Rating in FY2020	
					September 02, 2022	-	-	-	
1	NIMBUS 2022 MFI HAWKEYE	PTC Series A1	97.06	97.06	Provisional [ICRA]A+(SO)	-	-	-	

Complexity level of the rated instrument

Instrument	Complexity Indicator
PTC Series A1	Moderately Complex

The Complexity Indicator refers to the ease with which the returns associated with the rated instrument could be estimated. It does not indicate the risk related to the timely payments on the instrument, which is rather indicated by the instrument's credit rating. It also does not indicate the complexity associated with analysing an entity's financial, business, industry risks or complexity related to the structural, transactional or legal aspects. Details on the complexity levels of the instruments are available on ICRA's website: www.icra.in

Annexure-1: Instrument details

Trust Name	Instrument	Date of Issuance / Sanction	Coupon Rate	Maturity Date*	Amount Rated (Rs. crore)	Current Rating
NIMBUS 2022 MFI HAWKEYE	PTC Series A1	August 2022	10.10%	May 2024	97.06	Provisional [ICRA]A+(SO)

* Scheduled maturity date at transaction initiation; may change on account of prepayments

Source: Company

Annexure-2: List of entities considered for consolidated analysis

Not applicable

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About ICRA Limited:

ICRA Limited was set up in 1991 by leading financial/investment institutions, commercial banks and financial services companies as an independent and professional investment Information and Credit Rating Agency.

Today, ICRA and its subsidiaries together form the ICRA Group of Companies (Group ICRA). ICRA is a Public Limited Company, with its shares listed on the Bombay Stock Exchange and the National Stock Exchange. The international Credit Rating Agency Moody's Investors Service is ICRA's largest shareholder.

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