

Redwheel Next Generation EM Equity Fund

Monthly Commentary – July 2024

Global equity markets made modest gains in July 2024, peaking in the middle of the month but retreating in the second half as concerns over the durability of global growth pushed the 10-year Treasury bond yield from over 4.4% towards 4.0%. The MSCI Frontier Emerging Markets Index was one of the best-performing regional equity indices in July, rising 2.4%. The Redwheel Next Generation Emerging Markets Equity Fund returned +1.7% in the month, underperforming its benchmark index by 0.7%.

In Asia, the Philippines was up +4.4%, helped by the shift to the expectation of rate cuts as early as August, possibly pre-empting the US Federal Reserve. Vietnam's market continued its gradual fall that began in the spring, losing -0.6% in the month. The American government has deferred its decision to classify Vietnam as a 'market economy', leaving its designation as a 'non-market economy', and delaying the country's exporters easier access to the US market. Furthermore Nguyen Phu Trong, General Secretary of the Communist Party died in July and was succeeded by To Lam, former Minister of Public Security.

Although Eastern European equities generally performed well, Poland was an exception, down -4.3%, with rate cut expectations dashed by hawkish comments and worse inflation forecasts from the central bank governor. Turkey dropped -1.5% in July as the TRY weakened 1.2% against the USD. June inflation fell, with headline CPI easing to 61.8% year on year from 71.8%. Moody's also raised Turkey's credit rating by two notches, from B1 to B3, in line with the other two major rating agencies. It was Moody's first increase of Turkey's credit rating in more than ten years and reflects continued improvement in Turkish economic and financial performance. South Africa continued to move higher, up +5.2%, with a confluence of higher gold prices and improved sentiment surrounding the Government of National Unity (GNU). The GNU came into focus in July, with President Ramaphosa opening parliament with the traditional State of the Nation address focusing on service delivery, policy execution and the capable state.

Greek Banks were significant contributors to the Fund's performance in July with Piraeus Bank and the National Bank of Greece up +17.6% and +9.9%, respectively. Both banks reported better than expected results and raised full year guidance. In the UAE, Aldar Properties was up +18.1% on the back of robust growth in the first half of the year, increasing its revenues by 73% y/y, EBITDA by 61%, and net profit by 49%, capitalizing on strong development sales in 2023/24 and acquisitions of gross leasable area (GLA) in the UAE. SP Setia, one of Malaysia's largest property companies, rose +19.0% with expectations of new property launches in the second half of the year.

There were single stock detractors to the Fund's performance during the month. Thai oil producer, Bangchak Corp was down -13.5% on account of weaker energy prices while Kazakh airline operator, Air Astana, declined -13.6%. The latter fell because of market concerns around weak demand seen across some European airlines. However, Air Astana Group has not yet experienced declines in demand and fares. Demand for flying in Kazakhstan remains strong, and the company reiterated midterm guidance.

CONTACT US

Please contact us if you have any questions or would like to discuss any of our strategies.

E invest@redwheel.com | W www.redwheel.com

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