Vector Autoregression (VAR)

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Application: Estimating VAR model for monetary policy rule

In this workbook we will estimate a vector autoregression model (VAR) for three variables: inflation (π_t) , unemployment (u_t) , and the federal funds rate (i_t) . We will use quarterly data from 1960Q1 through 2019Q4. This file is available on Canvas as "var.csv". Figure 1 below plots these three variables:

1. First step is to test for stationarity for each variable, and determine if we need to difference our data to obtain stationarity. From Figure 1 it is clear that our data has no apparent trend and also the long run mean for each variable is non-zero. In this case it make sense to test for unit root using "drift" version of the ADF test. We find that all three variables are I(1), i.e., first difference stationary. Hence, we will estimate our model using first difference of each time series in our data.

lm(formula = z.diff ~ z.lag.1 + 1 + z.diff.lag)

Call:

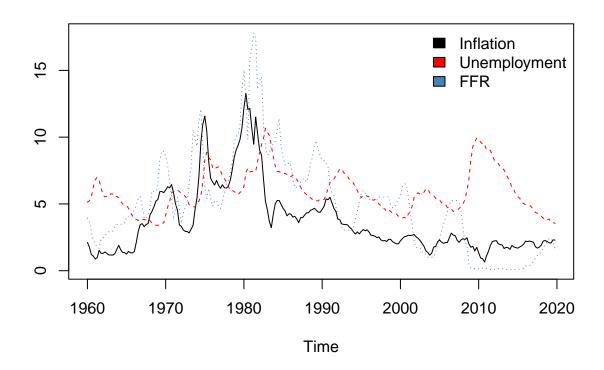


Figure 1: Inflation, Unemployment, and FFR

```
##
## Residuals:
                1Q Median
##
       Min
## -1.61224 -0.16247 -0.00995 0.15939 1.70351
## Coefficients:
             Estimate Std. Error t value Pr(>|t|)
## (Intercept) 0.09493
                      0.04966
                                1.911 0.05725 .
## z.lag.1
             -0.02455
                        0.01117 -2.197 0.02904 *
## z.diff.lag1 0.57998
                      0.06631
                                8.747 6.03e-16 ***
## z.diff.lag2 0.06055
                        0.07328
                                0.826 0.40952
                                 2.802 0.00553 **
## z.diff.lag3 0.20564
                        0.07338
## z.diff.lag4 -0.64675
                      0.07445 -8.687 8.93e-16 ***
## z.diff.lag5 0.35715
                        0.08318
                                4.294 2.64e-05 ***
## z.diff.lag6 0.08583
                        0.07363
                                1.166 0.24505
## z.diff.lag7 0.04734
                        0.07288
                                0.650 0.51667
## z.diff.lag8 -0.33032
                        0.07290 -4.531 9.66e-06 ***
## z.diff.lag9 0.16774
                        0.06642
                                 2.525 0.01227 *
## Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.001 '**' 0.05 '.' 0.1 ' ' 1
##
## Residual standard error: 0.3892 on 218 degrees of freedom
## Multiple R-squared: 0.4692, Adjusted R-squared: 0.4449
## F-statistic: 19.27 on 10 and 218 DF, p-value: < 2.2e-16
##
## Value of test-statistic is: -2.1975 2.4163
## Critical values for test statistics:
##
        1pct 5pct 10pct
## tau2 -3.46 -2.88 -2.57
## phi1 6.52 4.63 3.81
summary(ur.df(u,type="drift", lags=10 ,selectlags="AIC"))
## # Augmented Dickey-Fuller Test Unit Root Test #
## Test regression drift
##
##
## Call:
## lm(formula = z.diff ~ z.lag.1 + 1 + z.diff.lag)
##
## Residuals:
                1Q
                   Median
                                        Max
                                30
## -0.88126 -0.12419 -0.02254 0.10964 1.00881
##
## Coefficients:
              Estimate Std. Error t value Pr(>|t|)
##
## (Intercept) 0.191956 0.070719
                                 2.714 0.007172 **
## z.lag.1
            -0.032579
                        0.011477 -2.839 0.004960 **
## z.diff.lag1 0.676332 0.066131 10.227 < 2e-16 ***
```

```
## z.diff.lag2 0.061236
                         0.077793
                                 0.787 0.432039
## z.diff.lag3 0.059846
                         0.077902
                                 0.768 0.443188
                         0.077528 -2.361 0.019102 *
## z.diff.lag4 -0.183053
## z.diff.lag5 0.006242
                         0.078489
                                  0.080 0.936689
## z.diff.lag6 0.160703
                         0.076972
                                   2.088 0.037976 *
## z.diff.lag7 0.078135
                         0.077692
                                  1.006 0.315671
## z.diff.lag8 -0.262872
                         0.077572 -3.389 0.000833 ***
## z.diff.lag9 0.142716
                         0.066003
                                  2.162 0.031687 *
## ---
## Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.001 '**' 0.05 '.' 0.1 ' ' 1
## Residual standard error: 0.2296 on 218 degrees of freedom
## Multiple R-squared: 0.5088, Adjusted R-squared: 0.4863
## F-statistic: 22.59 on 10 and 218 DF, p-value: < 2.2e-16
##
##
## Value of test-statistic is: -2.8385 4.0649
## Critical values for test statistics:
        1pct 5pct 10pct
## tau2 -3.46 -2.88 -2.57
## phi1 6.52 4.63 3.81
summary(ur.df(ffr,type="drift", lags=10,selectlags="AIC"))
##
## # Augmented Dickey-Fuller Test Unit Root Test #
##
## Test regression drift
##
##
## lm(formula = z.diff ~ z.lag.1 + 1 + z.diff.lag)
##
## Residuals:
##
      Min
              1Q Median
                             3Q
                                    Max
## -2.6743 -0.2349 -0.0083 0.2521 6.2828
## Coefficients:
             Estimate Std. Error t value Pr(>|t|)
## (Intercept) 0.14954
                         0.09790
                                 1.527 0.12807
                         0.01597 -1.899 0.05882 .
## z.lag.1
             -0.03033
## z.diff.lag1 0.31372
                         0.06576
                                  4.771 3.34e-06 ***
## z.diff.lag2 -0.20776
                         0.06856
                                 -3.031 0.00273 **
## z.diff.lag3 0.22760
                         0.06921
                                  3.289 0.00117 **
                                 -0.485 0.62838
## z.diff.lag4 -0.03423
                         0.07062
## z.diff.lag5 0.18326
                         0.06945
                                  2.639 0.00891 **
## z.diff.lag6 -0.09098
                         0.06869
                                 -1.325 0.18669
                         0.06635 -2.732 0.00681 **
## z.diff.lag7 -0.18127
## ---
## Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.001 '**' 0.05 '.' 0.1 ' ' 1
## Residual standard error: 0.816 on 220 degrees of freedom
```

```
## Multiple R-squared: 0.2098, Adjusted R-squared: 0.181
## F-statistic: 7.3 on 8 and 220 DF, p-value: 1.356e-08
##
##
## Value of test-statistic is: -1.8994 1.8094
## Critical values for test statistics:
##
        1pct 5pct 10pct
## tau2 -3.46 -2.88 -2.57
## phi1 6.52 4.63 3.81
summary(ur.df(na.omit(diff(inf)),type="drift", lags=10, selectlags="AIC"))
## # Augmented Dickey-Fuller Test Unit Root Test #
## Test regression drift
##
##
## Call:
## lm(formula = z.diff ~ z.lag.1 + 1 + z.diff.lag)
## Residuals:
##
       Min
                1Q
                   Median
                                3Q
## -1.71725 -0.13774 0.01437 0.15478 1.72679
## Coefficients:
##
               Estimate Std. Error t value Pr(>|t|)
               ## (Intercept)
## z.lag.1
              -0.740019
                         0.122643 -6.034 6.88e-09 ***
                                   2.674 0.008062 **
## z.diff.lag1
               0.314182
                        0.117483
## z.diff.lag2
               0.362500
                        0.112838
                                  3.213 0.001517 **
## z.diff.lag3
              0.504831
                        0.102420
                                  4.929 1.65e-06 ***
## z.diff.lag4 -0.148690
                        0.102989 -1.444 0.150262
## z.diff.lag5
               0.239242
                         0.099336
                                   2.408 0.016861 *
## z.diff.lag6
               0.314226
                         0.094573
                                  3.323 0.001047 **
                         0.075931
                                   3.485 0.000596 ***
## z.diff.lag7
               0.264596
## z.diff.lag8 -0.043817
                         0.076316 -0.574 0.566464
## z.diff.lag9
               0.163756
                         0.071917
                                   2.277 0.023766 *
## z.diff.lag10 0.157096
                         0.066788
                                   2.352 0.019565 *
## ---
## Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.001 '**' 0.05 '.' 0.1 ' ' 1
##
## Residual standard error: 0.3877 on 216 degrees of freedom
## Multiple R-squared: 0.5012, Adjusted R-squared: 0.4758
## F-statistic: 19.73 on 11 and 216 DF, p-value: < 2.2e-16
##
## Value of test-statistic is: -6.0339 18.2053
##
## Critical values for test statistics:
        1pct 5pct 10pct
```

tau2 -3.46 -2.88 -2.57

```
## phi1 6.52 4.63 3.81
summary(ur.df(na.omit(diff(u)),type="drift", lags=10,selectlags="AIC"))
##
## # Augmented Dickey-Fuller Test Unit Root Test #
##
## Test regression drift
##
##
## lm(formula = z.diff ~ z.lag.1 + 1 + z.diff.lag)
##
## Residuals:
##
      Min
               1Q
                  Median
                                     Max
## -0.92158 -0.12877 -0.01645 0.11596 0.99050
## Coefficients:
##
             Estimate Std. Error t value Pr(>|t|)
## (Intercept) -0.003938  0.015508 -0.254  0.7998
            -0.415090 0.085519 -4.854 2.31e-06 ***
## z.lag.1
## z.diff.lag1 0.090873 0.087244 1.042
                                      0.2988
## z.diff.lag2 0.138802 0.086031 1.613 0.1081
## z.diff.lag3 0.181411
                     0.084151
                              2.156 0.0322
## z.diff.lag4 -0.028439 0.079238 -0.359 0.7200
## z.diff.lag5 -0.041926 0.072671 -0.577
                                      0.5646
## z.diff.lag6 0.109765 0.070143 1.565
                                      0.1191
## z.diff.lag7 0.173351
                      0.067942
                              2.551
                                      0.0114 *
## z.diff.lag8 -0.106454 0.066058 -1.612 0.1085
## ---
## Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.001 '**' 0.05 '.' 0.1 ' ' 1
## Residual standard error: 0.2338 on 218 degrees of freedom
## Multiple R-squared: 0.2516, Adjusted R-squared: 0.2207
## F-statistic: 8.144 on 9 and 218 DF, p-value: 2.09e-10
##
##
## Value of test-statistic is: -4.8538 11.7797
## Critical values for test statistics:
       1pct 5pct 10pct
## tau2 -3.46 -2.88 -2.57
## phi1 6.52 4.63 3.81
summary(ur.df(na.omit(diff(ffr)),type="drift", lags=10,selectlags="AIC"))
##
## # Augmented Dickey-Fuller Test Unit Root Test #
##
## Test regression drift
```

##

```
##
## Call:
## lm(formula = z.diff ~ z.lag.1 + 1 + z.diff.lag)
##
## Residuals:
##
                1Q Median
                                3Q
       Min
                                        Max
   -3.0022 -0.2359
                   0.0189
                            0.2898
                                    6.1627
##
## Coefficients:
##
                Estimate Std. Error t value Pr(>|t|)
## (Intercept) -0.005598
                           0.054480
                                     -0.103 0.918258
## z.lag.1
               -0.896181
                           0.134179
                                     -6.679 1.94e-10
## z.diff.lag1 0.199657
                           0.125990
                                      1.585 0.114471
                           0.120425
## z.diff.lag2 -0.021112
                                     -0.175 0.860994
## z.diff.lag3 0.194027
                           0.109312
                                      1.775 0.077284
## z.diff.lag4 0.145077
                           0.099389
                                      1.460 0.145800
                                      3.960 0.000101 ***
## z.diff.lag5
               0.310186
                           0.078321
## z.diff.lag6 0.202211
                                      3.064 0.002457 **
                           0.065996
## ---
## Signif. codes:
                  0 '***' 0.001 '**' 0.01 '*' 0.05 '.' 0.1 ' ' 1
##
## Residual standard error: 0.8226 on 220 degrees of freedom
## Multiple R-squared: 0.4736, Adjusted R-squared: 0.4569
## F-statistic: 28.28 on 7 and 220 DF, p-value: < 2.2e-16
##
##
## Value of test-statistic is: -6.679 22.3081
##
## Critical values for test statistics:
##
         1pct 5pct 10pct
## tau2 -3.46 -2.88 -2.57
## phi1 6.52 4.63 3.81
### create differenced data and drop missing observation
d_inf=na.omit(diff(inf))
d_u=na.omit(diff(u))
d_ffr=na.omit(diff(ffr))
```

2. Step 2 is to select the optimal number of lags for our VAR model. Do this we first have to declare an **ordering**. In this example I assume the following ordering for Cholesky decomposition: inflation, unemployment, ffr. This implies, inflation is the most "exogenous" variable followed by unemployment, and then ffr. Using SC criterion (which is the same is BIC) we find that the best model is VAR(4). We store the estimation result in an object named "varmodel". You can use "summary(varmodel)" to see estimated coefficients for each equation. We will use these coefficients to generate relevant output later.

```
library(vars)

### declare vector of y:
yvector= ts.union(d_inf,d_u,d_ffr)

## select optimal lag:
VARselect(yvector,lag.max=8,type=c("const"))
```

\$selection

```
## AIC(n) HQ(n) SC(n) FPE(n)
##
      8
            4
                   4
##
## $criteria
                             2
                  1
## AIC(n) -5.148960013 -5.333639960 -5.479863267 -5.657504739 -5.669709412
## HQ(n) -5.076832907 -5.207417525 -5.299545502 -5.423091645 -5.381200989
## SC(n) -4.970133119 -5.020692895 -5.032796032 -5.076317333 -4.954401836
## FPE(n) 0.005805499 0.004826739 0.004170577 0.003492465 0.003451167
                  6
                             7
                                         8
## AIC(n) -5.724291239 -5.685951264 -5.796020257
## HQ(n) -5.381687486 -5.289252181 -5.345225845
## SC(n) -4.874863493 -4.702403347 -4.678352169
## FPE(n) 0.003269318 0.003399204 0.003047398
## estimate VAR(4)
varmodel=VAR(yvector,p=4, type=c("const"))
summary(varmodel)
##
## VAR Estimation Results:
## =========
## Endogenous variables: d_inf, d_u, d_ffr
## Deterministic variables: const
## Sample size: 235
## Log Likelihood: -301.313
## Roots of the characteristic polynomial:
## 0.8124 0.8124 0.7868 0.7868 0.7742 0.7742 0.7045 0.6171 0.6171 0.5466 0.5445 0.5445
## Call:
## VAR(y = yvector, p = 4, type = c("const"))
##
##
## Estimation results for equation d_inf:
## d_inf = d_inf.l1 + d_u.l1 + d_ffr.l1 + d_inf.l2 + d_u.l2 + d_ffr.l2 + d_inf.l3 + d_u.l3 + d_ffr.l3 +
##
##
           Estimate Std. Error t value Pr(>|t|)
## d_inf.11 0.388015 0.064750 5.993 8.26e-09 ***
         -0.182179   0.113201   -1.609   0.10896
## d u.l1
## d_ffr.l1 0.165884 0.035924 4.618 6.57e-06 ***
## d_inf.12 0.097274 0.067633 1.438 0.15177
## d_u.12
          0.154877 0.129698 1.194 0.23370
## d_inf.13 0.104303 0.071026 1.469 0.14338
         -0.095865 0.130015 -0.737 0.46169
## d u.13
## d_ffr.13 0.195821 0.035813 5.468 1.22e-07 ***
-0.017824 0.111721 -0.160 0.87339
## d_u.14
## const
          0.002488 0.024010 0.104 0.91757
## Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.001 '**' 0.05 '.' 0.1 ' ' 1
##
##
## Residual standard error: 0.3675 on 222 degrees of freedom
```

```
## Multiple R-Squared: 0.5208, Adjusted R-squared: 0.4949
## F-statistic: 20.11 on 12 and 222 DF, p-value: < 2.2e-16
##
##
## Estimation results for equation d_u:
## ============
## d_u = d_inf.l1 + d_u.l1 + d_ffr.l1 + d_inf.l2 + d_u.l2 + d_ffr.l2 + d_inf.l3 + d_u.l3 + d_ffr.l3 + d
##
##
           Estimate Std. Error t value Pr(>|t|)
## d_inf.ll 0.133874
                    0.040600 3.297 0.00114 **
## d_u.l1
           0.600285
                     0.070981
                             8.457 3.69e-15 ***
## d_ffr.l1 -0.009796
                    0.022526 -0.435 0.66407
## d_u.12
          0.102806
                    0.081326 1.264 0.20751
                    0.024065 2.344 0.01995 *
## d_ffr.12 0.056415
## d_inf.13 0.024648
                    0.044536 0.553 0.58052
                    0.081524 1.552 0.12209
## d_u.13
           0.126525
## d_ffr.13 0.008983
                    0.022456 0.400 0.68951
## d_inf.14 -0.036478
                    0.039134 -0.932 0.35228
## d u.14
         -0.118944
                    0.070053 -1.698 0.09093
## d_ffr.14 0.003940
                    0.022855
                             0.172 0.86327
## const
          -0.006698
                    0.015055 -0.445 0.65683
## ---
## Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.001 '**' 0.05 '.' 0.1 ' ' 1
##
## Residual standard error: 0.2304 on 222 degrees of freedom
## Multiple R-Squared: 0.5113, Adjusted R-squared: 0.4849
## F-statistic: 19.36 on 12 and 222 DF, p-value: < 2.2e-16
##
##
## Estimation results for equation d_ffr:
## ===========
## d_ffr = d_inf.l1 + d_u.l1 + d_ffr.l1 + d_inf.l2 + d_u.l2 + d_ffr.l2 + d_inf.l3 + d_u.l3 + d_ffr.l3 +
##
##
           Estimate Std. Error t value Pr(>|t|)
## d inf.l1 -0.763440 0.129108 -5.913 1.26e-08 ***
          ## d_u.l1
## d_ffr.11 0.341338 0.071632
                             4.765 3.41e-06 ***
## d_inf.12 0.752875 0.134858 5.583 6.88e-08 ***
## d u.12
           0.092406
                    ## d_ffr.12 -0.239104
                    0.076527 -3.124 0.00202 **
## d_inf.13 0.010997
                    0.141622 0.078 0.93818
## d_u.13
         -0.402894
                    0.259245 -1.554 0.12158
## d_ffr.13 0.074955
                    0.071410 1.050 0.29502
## d_inf.14 -0.131013
                     0.124445 -1.053 0.29359
                             2.507 0.01289 *
## d_u.14
           0.558502
                    0.222767
## d_ffr.14 0.204245
                     0.072678 2.810 0.00539 **
                    0.047874 -0.162 0.87116
## const
          -0.007773
## Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.001 '**' 0.05 '.' 0.1 ' ' 1
##
## Residual standard error: 0.7328 on 222 degrees of freedom
```

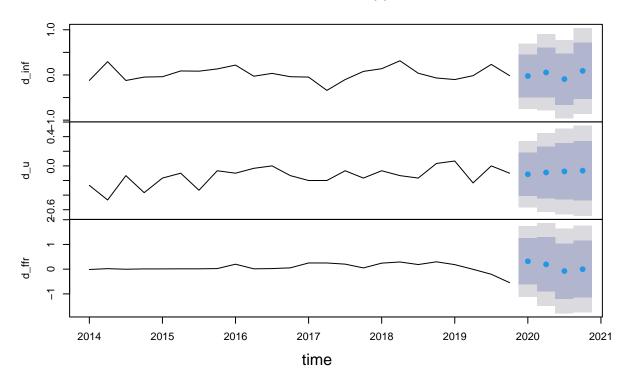
```
## Multiple R-Squared: 0.3592, Adjusted R-squared: 0.3245
## F-statistic: 10.37 on 12 and 222 DF, p-value: 3.688e-16
##
##
##
## Covariance matrix of residuals:
           d inf
                       d u
                              d ffr
## d_inf 0.135071 0.005545 0.07640
## d_u 0.005545 0.053106 -0.05353
## d_ffr 0.076405 -0.053528 0.53702
## Correlation matrix of residuals:
          d_{inf}
                     d_u
                          d_ffr
## d_inf 1.00000 0.06547 0.2837
       0.06547 1.00000 -0.3170
## d_u
## d_ffr 0.28369 -0.31696 1.0000
```

3. We can use our estimated model to describe our data. Below we use our model to test for Granger-causality, as well as for computing forecast for next 4 quarters for each variable. I also show how to manually compute RMSE for each forecast (in-sample accuracy measure).

```
causality(varmodel,cause="d_inf")$Granger
```

```
##
##
   Granger causality HO: d_inf do not Granger-cause d_u d_ffr
##
## data: VAR object varmodel
## F-Test = 7.6808, df1 = 8, df2 = 666, p-value = 7.197e-10
causality(varmodel, cause="d_u")$Granger
##
##
   Granger causality HO: d_u do not Granger-cause d_inf d_ffr
##
## data: VAR object varmodel
## F-Test = 4.0378, df1 = 8, df2 = 666, p-value = 0.0001061
causality(varmodel,cause="d_ffr")$Granger
##
   Granger causality HO: d_ffr do not Granger-cause d_inf d_u
##
## data: VAR object varmodel
## F-Test = 7.251, df1 = 8, df2 = 666, p-value = 2.993e-09
library(forecast)
fcast = forecast(varmodel, h = 4)
plot(fcast,include=24)
```

Forecasts from VAR(4)



```
### residuals for each variable of the var model
e=residuals(varmodel)

### manually compute RMSE-insample for each variable
sqrt(colMeans(e^2))
```

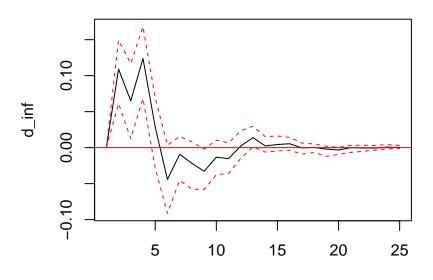
```
## d_inf d_u d_ffr
## 0.3572096 0.2239837 0.7122595
```

4. We can also compute impulse response functions using our varmodel. Below, I show the impulse response functions for inflation and unemployment for orthogonal shock to FFR of size 1. Note that R only codes positive shock, and hence this is an example of a contractionary monetary policy where the FED is raising the FFR.

```
### compute response for 24 quarters to an orthogonal shock to ffr
impulse_inf=irf(varmodel,impulse="d_ffr",ortho = TRUE, n.ahead=24, response=c("d_inf"))
impulse_u=irf(varmodel,impulse="d_ffr", ortho=TRUE, n.ahead=24, response=c("d_u"))

## plot IRF
plot(impulse_inf)
```

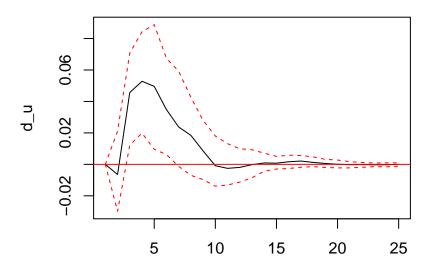
Orthogonal Impulse Response from d_ffr



95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

plot(impulse_u)

Orthogonal Impulse Response from d_ffr



95 % Bootstrap CI, 100 runs

5. Finally we can compute variance decomposition for each variable.

fevd(varmodel,n.ahead=12)

```
## $d_inf
##
             d_inf
                          d_u
    [1,] 1.0000000 0.00000000 0.00000000
##
    [2,] 0.8981289 0.03718522 0.06468585
##
    [3,] 0.8602072 0.05726245 0.08253039
##
   [4,] 0.7705285 0.09537619 0.13409528
##
    [5,] 0.7255697 0.14964626 0.12478404
    [6,] 0.7203375 0.15123984 0.12842263
##
##
    [7,] 0.7155638 0.15668277 0.12775346
    [8,] 0.7201577 0.15338904 0.12645328
##
    [9,] 0.7148129 0.15592931 0.12925778
   [10,] 0.7140539 0.15631267 0.12963340
   [11,] 0.7122080 0.15769104 0.13010098
   [12,] 0.7116119 0.15886764 0.12952047
##
##
  $d_u
##
               d_inf
                           d_u
                                       d ffr
    [1,] 0.004286249 0.9957138 0.0000000000
##
    [2,] 0.044564601 0.9548888 0.0005465932
##
##
   [3,] 0.082514447 0.8937163 0.0237692641
##
   [4,] 0.096492999 0.8540469 0.0494600699
   [5,] 0.108172152 0.8208444 0.0709834110
##
   [6,] 0.109060265 0.8095169 0.0814228796
```

```
## [7,] 0.108378001 0.8054457 0.0861763377
## [8,] 0.107808811 0.8034022 0.0887889653
## [9,] 0.108917138 0.8020112 0.0890716739
## [10,] 0.109682961 0.8013571 0.0889599690
## [11,] 0.109854620 0.8011559 0.0889895121
## [12,] 0.109923211 0.8010651 0.0890117349
## $d_ffr
##
             d_inf
                         d_u
                                 d_ffr
##
  [1,] 0.08047974 0.1130697 0.8064506
  [2,] 0.12822328 0.2072577 0.6645190
  [3,] 0.12394656 0.2087824 0.6672711
  [4,] 0.12894879 0.2276674 0.6433838
## [5,] 0.13413906 0.2274240 0.6384370
## [6,] 0.13329299 0.2260663 0.6406407
## [7,] 0.13305101 0.2275967 0.6393523
## [8,] 0.13300708 0.2256277 0.6413652
## [9,] 0.13553895 0.2254947 0.6389664
## [10,] 0.13514005 0.2248825 0.6399774
## [11,] 0.13554487 0.2248215 0.6396336
## [12,] 0.13598977 0.2246462 0.6393640
```