

# Benchmarking and Sovereign Risk

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## Abstract

This paper shows that the inclusion of an emerging-market country's local-currency sovereign bonds in global bond indices insulates asset prices from the transmission of shocks. Using a new classification of mutual funds based on their performance benchmarks, I document two facts: (1) funds invest in assets unrelated to the type of assets underlying their benchmarks; (2) funds benchmarking to a country's assets reduce the pass-through of the global risk factor to bond prices. These findings are consistent with a model in which fund managers are concerned with returns relative to their benchmark indices. A sovereign default model with creditors whose performance is benchmarked to bond indices further reveals the potency of insulation under different types of shocks.

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# 1 Introduction

This paper shows that the inclusion of a country's local-currency bonds in global bond indices reduces the transmission of exchange rate and output shocks to prices. These bond indices are used for performance benchmarking among mutual funds, which have been major creditors driving the internationalization of emerging markets' local bond markets. The finding of a stabilizing role for mutual funds benchmarking to a country's assets is surprising, given that opening capital accounts and, in particular, attracting capital inflows from mutual funds are typically associated with destabilizing effects on asset prices.

The overall finding is consistent with a mechanism known in micro-finance but not yet analyzed in any macroeconomic context, nor in studies that endogenize decisions on the degree of index presence at both the extensive and intensive margins. Sovereign bonds are no longer priced solely by default probabilities when risk-averse managers use index weights to guide portfolio decisions. Rule-based index weights may not be directly related to the default risk of the underlying bonds, making yields less responsive to global shocks. I empirically validate this channel. Guided by conditional moments from the empirical analysis, I then estimate a sovereign default model with this channel to examine the stabilizing role of benchmarking under different shocks.

To begin with, I introduce a binary classification of mutual funds based on their benchmark indices: funds whose benchmark indices include EM LC bonds, referred to as EM funds, and all other funds, referred to as dollar funds. In principle, mutual funds invest in assets that are consistent with their benchmark indices. As a result, a country's index inclusion and indices with EM LC bonds should only affect EM funds. However, I document that dollar funds with benchmarks entirely unrelated to EM LC bonds are still exposed to EM LC risk, using cross-sectional holding data from the universe of US-domiciled funds. Nearly all existing studies on the short-run impact of index weights on asset prices focus exclusively on EM funds. This approach overlooks the potential mechanism by which benchmarks influence bond holdings by EM funds, thereby affecting the overall composition of creditors between EM and dollar funds over time. Moreover, with hundreds of indices containing EM LC bonds, existing methods of analyzing the weights of specific one or two indices are unsuitable for scaling up to study aggregate effects. Leveraging this binary classification, my research design overcomes this challenge.

I develop a partial equilibrium model of the secondary bond market with rich creditor-side features. In this model, creditors derive utility from both the absolute return and the return relative to the LC bond index, whose weights are determined by an exogenous function estimated empirically. The model features two types of creditors who differ in their risk aversion and their choice of benchmark indices. The model predicts that a higher share of bonds held by EM funds leads to higher index weights and fewer bonds being re-priced under an increased default proba-

bility by risk-averse creditors during downturns. Therefore, ownership by EM funds mitigates the transmission of exchange rate shocks to the yields of local-currency bonds.

Empirically, I construct a sample of global funds' portfolios, classify funds based on their benchmark indices, and test the theoretical predictions. I address the sorting of funds into various benchmarks and countries into policies related to index presence by exploiting bond-level time-varying creditor compositions while controlling for bond and country-time fixed effects. The estimates suggest that ownership by EM funds reduces the impact of VIX on bond yields, as the model predicts. I also conduct a placebo test using Colombia's index inclusion event in 2014: the set of funds benchmarking only to Colombian Peso bonds after 2014 should not reduce the shock transmission prior to index inclusion. The estimates show that creditor ownership effects flip from positive values prior to inclusion to negative values thereafter. Explanations based on heterogeneous financial frictions and sticky portfolios are inconsistent with the results of the placebo test.

To examine EM debt policies, I integrate the above secondary market into a model of sovereign debt by allowing the demand from global funds in the primary market. The price of bonds in the secondary market changes due to exchange rate shocks and the announcement of an index inclusion. These features generate model moments comparable with a real index inclusion event and the regression used in the empirical analysis. Moreover, a country makes optimal decisions on index inclusion or exclusion. A country's index status switches to inclusion when it voluntarily opts for inclusion and an approval from index providers arrives with an exogenous probability.

In the model, benchmarking affects borrowing through two mechanisms. First, the behavior of tracking index weights increases the demand for sovereign bonds and increases the price in the primary market. Since index weight depends on outstanding bonds, a country considers the consequence of marginal gains on index weight in the primary market. This marginal change in weighting has an ambiguous effect on demand elasticity. A country could improve welfare when indices exist. Second, a novel equilibrium effect of reduced default risk arises when the welfare-improving effects exist for certain states: the set of states in which a country chooses to default becomes smaller in a world with indices than in that without. This equilibrium effect implies higher prices when creditors are risk neutral. When creditors are risk averse, higher expected return due to lower default risk is offset by increased volatility of returns. A sufficient condition exists to guarantee a higher price. This second mechanism offers an explanation of repaying debt fundamentally different from the existing answer based on risk sharing and the fear of "punishment" due to the cost of default. Index inclusion is a reward for repaying debt because it overcomes the frictions in developed markets.

I calibrate the model to match the macro moments of the Colombian economy as well as the reduction in yields upon Colombia's index inclusion. The estimated quantitative model confirms the rise in bond prices under a country index status. In the quantitative exercise, I analyze the

transmission of exchange rate and output shocks. I decompose the transmission of these two shocks in the secondary market by considering two counterfactual cases: one where the country, compared to the baseline under index inclusion, has a zero index weight, and another without benchmarking. These two cases differ in the amount of debt a country carries into the secondary market, as the quantity of debt outstanding affects the propagation of shocks in the secondary market. Benchmarking is more potent at insulating against output shocks, while it has limited, though positive, effect on insulating exchange rate shocks. The reason behind this divergence is that global shocks to the exchange rate directly reduce the country's index weight as the index weight often follows market value. Output shocks have no direct effect on the index weight.

**Related literature** This paper builds on an extensive finance literature and recent macroeconomic studies on benchmarking and mutual fund capital flows, particularly those that use changes in benchmark weights for identifications (Broner et al., 2021; He and Beltran, 2022; Pandolfi and Williams, 2019; Moretti et al., 2024). Rather than focusing on index rebalancing or inclusion events, I investigate how indices affect sovereign risk.

My empirical approach extends research analyzing mutual fund credit supplies and asset prices, including studies on funding shocks across different types of funds (Calomiris et al., 2022), capital allocations (Chari et al., 2022; Chari, 2023; Raddatz et al., 2017), and the transmission of funding shocks to asset prices (Jotikasthira et al., 2012; Zhou, 2023). Unlike most of these works with the exception of Zhou (2023), I conduct a bond-level analysis with a particular focus on EM LC markets.

The model employs a reduced-form approach where asset managers derive utility from both absolute returns and returns relative to a benchmark, following studies that provide micro-foundations for benchmarking behavior (Kashyap et al., 2018, 2020; Duffie et al., 2014). I extend results from microfinance research on benchmarks to local-currency debt markets, which have been extensively studied regarding sovereign risk (Du et al., 2017; Ottonello and Perez, 2019; Engel and Park, 2022; Lee, 2022). Previous studies have not analyzed the impact of benchmark indices on EM LC risk. My creditor-centered analysis is related to studies on banks and sovereign risk (Bocola, 2016; Morelli et al., 2022; Perez, 2015). In contrast to these studies that focus on amplification mechanisms, I find that benchmarking acts as a stabilizing mechanism in the context of EM LC bonds.

**Structure of the paper.** In Section 2, I introduce a new classification of mutual funds and present a new stylized fact on capital flows to emerging market bond markets using this classification. Section 3 presents a model with benchmarking and derives a testable prediction. In Section 4, I construct a dataset and empirically test the model's prediction. Section 5 quantifies the degree of insulation provided by benchmarking. Conclusions are drawn in Section 6. The Appendix contains

further evidence of emerging markets’ index-related policies and analytical derivations.

## **2 A new stylized fact on benchmarking and capital flows**

### **2.1 A brief background of indices**

Mutual funds supply more credit to emerging market local currency bond markets than other types of private creditors, such as deposit-taking banks, pension funds, insurance firms, and hedge funds<sup>1</sup>. Moreover, mutual funds ubiquitously use performance benchmarks—indices that measure the performance of market portfolios whose underlying constituents and portfolio weights follow rules set by index providers.

Index providers set country- and bond-specific eligibility criteria. The most commonly used indices that include EM LC bonds are the FTSE Global Bond Index, the Bloomberg Global Aggregate Index, the JP Morgan Government Bond Index-Emerging Market Global Diversified (GBI-EM), along with their variants. The first two are global indices because they include developed-market sovereign bonds and corporate bonds. The JP Morgan GBI-EM index only includes EM LC sovereign bonds. Variants of these indices arise from tightening or loosening some eligibility criteria so that the index becomes broader for gauging overall market performance or narrower for replication by investors.

Income levels and market access hurdles, such as capital controls and liquidity, are two important criteria for country eligibility. A country may experience index inclusion or exclusion when its income changes. For example, the JP Morgan GBI-EM Broad Diversified included Czech Republic in February 2017 after JP Morgan reclassified it as an emerging market country based on GNI per capital (Broner et al., 2021). Index providers require certain degree of market “liquidity”. This condition differentiates all-inclusive broad market indices from narrowly defined indices for replication.

Moreover, indices set bond-level criteria related to maturity, issuance size, and coupon types<sup>2</sup>. For example, in the JP Morgan GBI-EM Broad Diversified index, the size is greater than \$1 billion for domestic bonds and \$500 million for global bonds, the residual maturity is greater than two and half years, and the coupon type is restricted to fixed-rate non-inflation-index coupons. Once index providers select a set of bonds, they often use market values to determine portfolio weights. Providers may fulfill a diversification objective by capping a country’s index weight<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup>See Appendix B for a comparison of mutual fund EM LC bond holdings with the holdings from other types of creditors using ECB and U.S. TIC data.

<sup>2</sup>Interested readers may refer to Arslanalp et al. (2020) for more details of these rules.

<sup>3</sup>For more on exploiting this feature to construct capital flow shocks that may be exogenous to a country’s fundamentals, I refer interested readers to Pandolfi and Williams (2019), He and Beltran (2022), and Moretti et al. (2024).

## 2.2 A new stylized fact

I propose a binary classification of mutual funds based on their performance benchmarks. I classify funds based on whether or not their performance benchmark indices include emerging market local-currency denominated sovereign bonds. I refer to these funds as EM and dollar funds.

I validate this classification by showing that funds whose benchmarks exclude EM LC bonds are actively exposed to EM LC risk. I apply this classification to portfolios reported between December 2019 and February 2020 from the universe of mutual funds domiciled in the US. I use portfolio data from mutual funds' mandatory filings in Form N-PORT-P<sup>4</sup>. Form N-PORT-P is used by investment companies to disclose their portfolios to the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission. The data are accessible and free to the public. I describe this dataset in Appendix A.2.

Table 1 lists the EM local-currency credit supplied by US fixed-income mutual funds in Q4 2019, based on mandatory filings in N-PORT-P. This binary classification detects investment strategies that deviate from the benchmark index at the extensive margin. The key insight from the table is that over 40% of credit supplied to EM local-currency bond markets is unrelated to the asset type underlying mutual fund performance benchmarks. Moreover, index funds, whether they are ETFs or not, all have active strategies in the U.S. and have discretion over country weights and the degree of benchmark index tracking errors. That is why index funds are exposed to \$160 million in local-currency bonds issued by countries which are absent from widely used indices.

Appendix Table A.2 summarizes non-benchmark driven credit across different categories of mutual funds, such as allocation, alternative, and equity funds. EM and dollar allocation funds hold EM LC bonds with market values \$1.14 billion and \$0.77 billion respectively. The empirical evidence in existing studies has not yet documented the size of EM LC holdings from allocation funds. The total size of credit to EM LC markets is small from US allocation funds, and this fact motivates me to focus on fixed-income funds throughout my analysis.

To provide further context on non-benchmark related capital flows, existing studies have almost exclusively focused on EM funds. Studies such as He and Beltran (2022) and Pandolfi and Williams (2019) that examine the effect of changing country weights on benchmarks have focused only on funds whose benchmarks are related to the asset class they study. An exception is Calomiris et al. (2022), which analyzes EM corporate bond holdings by funds which mainly invest in bonds issued by developed markets. Another exception is Arslanalp et al. (2020). It mentions benchmark-driven funds versus those tracking global bond indices, termed unconstrained funds due to small portfolio weight in EM countries.

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<sup>4</sup>See Sikorskaya (2023) for another application of the data from Form N-PORT-P.

**Table 1:** Characters of US bond funds holding (USD bn) EM LC sovereign debts reported between 12/2019 and 02/2020

Fund benchmarks	Total	Common EM countries		Other developing countries	
		Non-index fund	Index fund	Non-index fund	Index fund
Include EM LC bonds ( <i>EM fund</i> )	46.95	29.40	12.67	4.72	0.16
Exclude EM LC bonds ( <i>Dollar fund</i> )	33.67	27.77	0.01	5.89	0

Notes: This table summarizes the distribution of local-currency sovereign bond holdings across the universe of U.S. fixed-income funds. Common EM countries are those that have ever been included in EM LC bond indices. They are Argentina, Brazil, Chile, China, Colombia, Czechia, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Hungary, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Romania, Russian, South Africa, Thailand, and Turkey. Other countries are Costa Rica, India, Kazakhstan, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Uruguay, Ukraine, and Venezuela.

### 3 The transmission of global shocks with benchmarking creditors

I present a model that includes benchmark indices and creditor portfolio decisions. Despite its simplicity, the model provides insights into the determinants of how secondary market prices respond to shocks.

#### 3.1 Global asset managers

A unit mass of two types of asset managers are domiciled in the developed economy and are managing mutual funds. Mutual funds publish the indices used as performance benchmarks. The binary classification of benchmark indices divides funds into EM and dollar funds. Throughout this paper, I use the  $j \in \{\text{EM fund, Dollar fund}\}$  to denote the type of manager or fund. Each type of managers receives funding  $D_0$ . The mass of managers managing EM fund is  $\mathcal{M}_{\text{EM fund}} = 1 - \mu$ . The risk-bearing ability of managers  $\gamma_j \in \{\gamma_L, \gamma_H\}$  with  $\gamma_L < \gamma_H$  characterizes their investment strategies. I assume that managers of EM and dollar funds have risk aversions of  $\gamma_L$  and  $\gamma_H$ , respectively.

A market index prescribes a portfolio whose weights follow a specific rule. EM funds use an index that includes EM LC bonds, while dollar funds use an index that excludes them. Index providers construct indices for EM funds according to a rule summarized by the function  $\Omega(\cdot)$ .

Time-varying weights depend on the market value of EM bonds, denoted as  $s_t^{-1}q_t B_{t+1}$ .  $q_t$  is the price of the bond denominated in local currency.  $B_{t+1}$  is principal value of a one-period EM LC bond issued at time  $t$  and maturing at time  $t + 1$ .  $S_t = (Y_t, s_t)$  is tuple of output  $Y_t$  and the real exchange rate  $s_t$ . A rising  $s_t$  means depreciation. I summarize the weight of EM LC bonds  $w_j^b$  in the benchmark index for a fund of type  $j$  below.

$$w_{j,t}^b = \begin{cases} \Omega(s_t^{-1}q_t B_{t+1}) & \text{if } j = \text{EM Fund} \\ 0 & \text{if } j = \text{Dollar Fund} \end{cases} \quad (1)$$

The manager of type  $j$  chooses a portfolio consisting of claims  $b_{j,t+1}^{DM}$  on developed market risk-free bonds and local-currency bonds  $b_{j,t+1}$ . Managers have a mean-variance utility based on a weighted sum of the absolute return,  $W_{j,t+1}$ , and the return relative to the portfolio prescribed by their benchmark index,  $W_{j,t+1} - W_{j,t+1}^b$ . The weight assigned to the absolute return is  $\alpha \in (0, 1)$ . The portfolio problem for the manager of type  $j$  is:

$$\begin{aligned} \max_{b_{j,t+1}^{DM}, b_{j,t+1}} \quad & \mathbb{E}_t(\alpha W_{j,t+1} + (1 - \alpha)(W_{j,t+1} - W_{j,t+1}^b)) - \frac{\gamma_k}{2} \text{Var}_t(\alpha W_{j,t+1} + (1 - \alpha)(W_{j,t+1} - W_{j,t+1}^b)) \\ \text{s.t.} \quad & D_0 = q_t^{DM} b_{j,t+1}^{DM} + s_t^{-1} q_t b_{j,t+1} \\ & W_{j,t+1} = b_{j,t+1}^{DM} + s_{t+1}^{-1} (1 - d_{t+1}) b_{j,t+1} \end{aligned} \quad (2)$$

where  $q_t^{DM}$  is the price of risk-free developed market bonds  $b_{t+1}^{DM}$ , and  $q_t$  is the local-currency price of EM bonds.  $1 - d_{t+1}$  is the fraction of principal value in local currency term recovered upon the bond matures.  $d_{t+1} = 1$  means default, and  $0 < d_{t+1} < 1$  means partial default.

### 3.2 Discussion of managers' utility function

The main assumption regarding asset managers is that the relative returns influence their decisions. This functional form is directly from Kashyap et al. (2020), which derives the optimal benchmark compensation contract between investment firms and asset managers of mutual funds. A higher  $1 - \alpha$  implies more frictions in the asset management industry. Investment firms, on behalf of savers, use compensation contracts to overcome two frictions. One is managers' private portfolio-management costs for risky assets, which are borne by asset managers and not shared with other agents. The other friction is unobserved portfolios. As a result, investors cannot directly instruct managers to hold an optimal portfolio, as would be the case in a frictionless world.

The main difference between this paper and Kashyap et al. (2020) is the introduction of heterogeneous asset managers and the assumption that they have different benchmarks. Kashyap et



al. (2020) considers the contract for only one representative asset manager and leaves the question of why manager's benchmarks differ from one another.

In Appendix C.4, I address this question by extending Kashyap et al. (2020) with two additional assumptions. I assume that the private cost of management depends on the type of asset under management. Moreover, investment firms cannot punish managers based on positive returns relative to benchmarks.

A final note on the utility function is that benchmarking under a CRRA preference implies benchmarking alters the risk aversion of managers.  $\alpha$  affects risk aversion so that the risk tolerance becomes  $\gamma_k/\alpha$ . I formalize this point in Appendix C.

### 3.3 Market equilibrium

Secondary markets operate between  $t$  and  $t + 1$ . I assume exchange rate and the recovery rate of the bond are driven by an exogenous risk factor  $z$ . An exogenous change in the risk factor  $z$  divides the timeline in the secondary market into two phases: the first half prior to the shock and the second half after the shock. Throughout this section, I use the yield to maturity  $y$  derived from the secondary market price. The timeline in the secondary market is:

1. The government issues debt  $B$  in local currency in the primary market. Secondary market opens. Market participants, along with the government, observe the exchange rate  $s_0$ . The yield corresponding to the secondary market clearing price is  $y_0$ . The expected value of repayment per unit of bond at time  $t + 1$  is  $\psi_0 \equiv s_{t+1}^{-1}(1 - d_{t+1})$ . The index weight is  $w_0^b$ . Bond ownership by the EM fund is denoted as  $\theta_0$ ,

$$\theta_0 \equiv \frac{\text{Market value of bonds held by EM Fund}}{\text{Total market value}}$$

2. A shock to the risk factor  $z$  occurs. The exchange rate unexpectedly changes to  $s_1$  and the expected value of repayment is  $\psi_1$ . Creditors adjust their portfolios. The secondary market clears, and the new yield is  $y_1$ .

The asset market clearing conditions in two sub periods in the secondary market are

$$D_0 \sum_{j \in J} \mathcal{M}_j w_j(s_\nu, B, z_\nu) = s_\nu^{-1} q(s_\nu, B, z_\nu) B, \quad \nu = 0, 1 \quad (3)$$

The equilibrium in the secondary market consists of prices and portfolio weights derived from the first order conditions of portfolio problems and clear the market.

To understand how benchmarks affect prices, I derive the portfolio of EM funds prior to the

shock.

$$w_{\text{EM Fund},0} = \frac{\frac{\mathbb{E}(\mathcal{E}')}{q_0(1+r^f)} - 1}{\gamma_L(1+r^f)D_0 \text{Var}\left(\frac{\mathcal{E}'}{q_0(1+r^f)}\right)} + (1-\alpha)w_{\text{EM Fund}}^b(s_0^{-1}q_0B) \quad (4)$$

where the expected value of repayment prior to the risk factor shock is

$$\mathcal{E}' = \frac{s_0}{s_{t+1}} \times (1 - d_{t+1}) \equiv s_0\psi_0 \quad (5)$$

Throughout the analytical derivations, I use the approximation  $\text{Var}\left(\frac{\mathcal{E}'}{q_0(1+r^f)}\right) \approx \text{Var}(s_0\psi_0)$ . This approximation omits the second-order effect of prices when the difference between the EM bond yield and risk-free rate is small. The portfolio weight for dollar funds has a similar expression. The price of bonds in local currency is

$$q_0 = \frac{\mathbb{E}(s_0\psi_0)/(1+r^f)}{\underbrace{E_\gamma^{-1} \text{Var}(s_0\psi_0)(1+r^f)D_0}_{(1)} \underbrace{\left(\frac{s_0^{-1}q_0B}{D_0} - (1-\mu)(1-\alpha)w_0^b\right) + 1}_{(2)}} \quad (6)$$

where the term for average risk aversion is  $E_\gamma = \frac{1-\mu}{\gamma_L} + \frac{\mu}{\gamma_H}$ . The price depends on two components: (1) the average risk aversion of creditors; and (2) the bond supply in excess of benchmark weights.

An observation from the above pricing equation is that the price under a positive index weight is always higher than that without index weight. Appendix C.1 equation 28 shows the proof. This observation is consistent with a rise in prices around a tight window of unanticipated announcements of index inclusion.

### 3.3.1 Creditor compositions and the transmission of shocks

I analyze the impact of a risk factor shock that results in an unexpected currency devaluation, represented by a rising  $s_0$ , and lower expected value of repayment, represented by falling  $\psi_0$ . I perform a first-order approximation of the market clearing condition. I use  $\wedge$  to denote the log deviation from the initial value in the secondary market. To simplify notations, I define the following variables:  $V_0 \equiv (1+r^f)D_0 \text{Var}\left(\frac{s_0(1-d_1)}{s_1}\right)$ ,  $R_0 \equiv \mathbb{E}\left(\frac{s_0(1-d_1)}{s_1}\right)$ ,  $w_0 \equiv \frac{s_0^{-1}B}{y_0D_0}$ , and  $\epsilon^b \equiv \frac{\partial w^b}{\partial (s_0^{-1}B/y_0)} \cdot \frac{s_0^{-1}B}{y_0}$ .

The impact consists of supply-side effects through the devaluation of the dollar value of the debt, both directly due to the risk factor shocks on the exchange rate and indirectly through the response of bond prices, as shown in (1) in equation 7. This effect includes changes in the value of

outstanding bonds (a) and the benchmark weight (b).

$$\begin{aligned}
\left[1 + \frac{(1+r^f)V_0}{R_0 y_0 E_\gamma} \underbrace{\left( \underbrace{w_0}_{(a)} - \underbrace{\epsilon^b(1-\mu)(1-\alpha)}_{(b)} \right)}_{(1)} \right] \hat{y}_0 &= \underbrace{-\Phi_R}_{(2)} \hat{z}_0 + \\
&\Phi_v \hat{z}_0 \frac{(1+r^f)V_0}{R_0 y_0 E_\gamma} \underbrace{\left( w_0 - (1-\mu)(1-\alpha)w_0^b \right)}_{(3)} + \\
&\Phi_s \hat{z}_0 \frac{(1+r^f)V_0}{R_0 y_0 E_\gamma} \left( -w_0 + \epsilon^b(1-\mu)(1-\alpha) \right)
\end{aligned} \tag{7}$$

On the demand side, the risk factor shock affects bond through direct impacts on the expected value in part (2) and indirect effects on risk premium of active portfolios (3). Risk factor shocks have direct impacts on the risk premium, as in  $\Phi_v \equiv \frac{z_0}{V_0} \frac{\partial V_0}{\partial z_0}$ , the expected return, as in  $\Phi_R \equiv \frac{z_0}{R_0} \frac{\partial R_0}{\partial z_0}$ , and the exchange rate, as in  $\Phi_s \equiv \frac{z_0}{s_0} \frac{\partial s_0}{\partial z_0}$ . The key effect of creditor composition works in part (3): a higher  $\theta_0$  implies a higher  $w_0^b$  and hence the risk factor shock affects less outstanding debt. Rewriting the above expression by substituting  $w_0^b$  with  $\theta_0$  yields the following result.

**Proposition 1** *The following relationship holds in the secondary market*

*If  $w^b > 0$ , then*

$$\hat{y}_0 = -\Phi_s \hat{z}_0 + \Phi_1 (-\Phi_R + \Phi_s + \Phi_v \Phi_2) \hat{z}_0$$

where  $\Phi_1 = \left( 1 + \frac{w_0 - \epsilon^b(1-\mu)(1-\alpha)}{\phi + \frac{E_\gamma}{(1+r^f)V_0}} \right)^{-1}$ ,  $\Phi_2 = \frac{\phi}{\phi + \frac{E_\gamma}{(1+r^f)V_0}}$ , and  $\phi \equiv (1-\theta_0)w_0(1 + \frac{(1-\mu)\gamma_H}{\mu\gamma_L})$ . The term  $\Phi_1$  and  $\Phi_2$  are decreasing in  $\theta_0$  when  $w_0 > \epsilon^b(1-\mu)(1-\alpha)$ .

*If  $w^b = 0$ , then  $\phi = w_0$  and  $\theta_0$  does not enter into the term  $\Phi_1 (-\Phi_R + \Phi_s + \Phi_v \Phi_2)$ .*

Appendix C.2 shows the proof.

If a rising  $z_0$  represents a negative shock that depreciates the currency, lowers the expected repayment, and raises the yield, then

$$\frac{\partial \hat{y}_0}{\partial \hat{z}_0} = -\Phi_s + \Phi_1 (-\Phi_R + \Phi_s + \Phi_v \Phi_2) > 0$$

Currency devaluation implies that  $\frac{\partial s}{\partial z} > 0$  and  $-\Phi_s < 0$ . Given that  $\Phi_1 > 0$  under the assumption  $w_0 > \epsilon^b(1-\mu)(1-\alpha)$ . The term  $(-\Phi_R + \Phi_s + \Phi_v \Phi_2)$  must be greater than zero for the yield to rise.

The above proposition implies the following

$$\frac{\partial^2 \hat{y}_0}{\partial \hat{z}_0 \partial \theta_0} \begin{cases} \frac{\partial \Phi_1}{\partial \theta_0} (-\Phi_R + \Phi_s + \Phi_v \Phi_2) + \Phi_1 \Phi_v \frac{\partial \Phi_2}{\partial \theta_0} < 0, & \text{if } w^b > 0, \Phi_v > 0, \text{ and } w_0 > \epsilon^b(1 - \mu)(1 - \alpha) \\ = 0, & \text{if } w^b = 0 \end{cases} \quad (8)$$

A prediction of the current model with benchmarks is that the higher  $\theta_0$  is, the smaller the changes in bond yields. Other than the requirement of the weighting function, the prediction only requires that the shock to the risk factor increases the volatility of the expected return, which depends on changes in the exchange rate  $s_0$  and the expected value of repayment  $\psi_0$ . This condition is likely to be met when the risk factor shock generates a large currency deviation.

When the valuation effect on index weight is small ( $w_0 - \epsilon^b(1 - \mu)(1 - \alpha) > 0$ ), as the EM fund creditor share  $\theta_0$  increases, the coefficients  $\Phi_1$  and  $\Phi_2$  decrease<sup>5</sup>. Therefore, exchange rate shocks have less impact on bond yields when  $\theta_0$  is high. Another feature is the term  $w_0$  enters the expression  $\Phi_1(-\Phi_R + \Phi_s + \Phi_v \Phi_2)$ . This suggests an empirical strategy to construct the empirical counterpart of  $w_0$  when testing the model's prediction. The second part of the proposition says that  $\theta_0$  would not affect the transmission of the exchange rate shocks to bond yields if benchmarks were irrelevant to portfolio decisions. This is intuitive because the creditor composition reflects the current risk factor driving expected return and should not predict future shocks, which determines changes in yields.

## 4 Testing the stabilizing role of benchmarking

### 4.1 Constructing samples of global fund holdings and identifying non-benchmark driven credit

I describe a procedure to identify EM LC positions from EM and dollar funds based on the accessible commercial data from Morningstar. My focus is on fixed-income funds due to the presence of small positions in U.S. allocation funds, which invest in both stocks and bonds, as observed in public filings. I compile a list of funds domiciled in developed markets, including Canada, developed European countries, Hong Kong, Japan, Singapore, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Morningstar categorizes funds into over 200 detailed categories based on their investment objectives and locations. I identify Morningstar categories mostly likely containing funds exposed to EM LC bonds and extract the positions from all the funds within these categories.

I proceed in two steps. First, using Form N-PORT-P filing data, which covers the universe of U.S. funds between 2019 and 2022, I identify Morningstar categories containing funds exposed

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<sup>5</sup>  $\epsilon^b < \tilde{\epsilon}$  and  $\epsilon^b$  is generally small. See footnote 16.

to EM LC bonds. I then identify the corresponding categories for EU funds. I exclude seven U.S. categories with the least exposure—representing 3.7% of the total U.S. fund exposure in Q4 2019—and their corresponding non-U.S. fund categories.

Moreover, Morningstar calculates the percentage of fixed-income holdings in different currencies over time for each fund. Their calculation has a good coverage for surviving funds. I compile a list of all the fixed-income funds domiciled in Luxembourg and Ireland and calculate the share of bonds denominated in EM currencies in their portfolios. After identifying funds with exposure to EM currencies, I obtain a list of the Morningstar categories to which they belong. I then find the corresponding categories for funds domiciled in Canada, Singapore, Hong Kong, Japan, and other EU countries.

These two steps result in 61 Morningstar categories, 6200 funds, and 160,000 quarterly portfolios. I download portfolios from Morningstar Direct, add bond characteristics by merging a dataset from Bloomberg, and identify EM LC positions.

The primary and secondary benchmarks of funds that have ever been exposed to EM LC bonds yield approximately 1,000 unique indices. I proceed with my country-level binary index classification using publicly available documentation from index providers. Appendix Table D.6 lists historical country inclusion and exclusion events in major indices. Appendix A.4 outlines the steps taken to clean fund holdings data. Appendix A.1 details the procedure for identifying unique bonds and constructing a dataset of bond characteristics and yields using Bloomberg Terminal.

The creditor composition  $\theta_{it}$  for bond  $i$  from country  $c(i)$  measures the proportion of a bond's face or market values held by mutual funds benchmarked to indices which include the issuer's country, relative to the total face or market values held by global funds.

$$\theta_{it} = \frac{\sum_{f|c(i) \in \mathcal{B}_{ft}} H_{ift}^m}{\sum_f H_{ift}^m}$$

where  $H_{ift}^m$  is the local-currency face value ( $m = \text{face}$ ) or dollar market value ( $m = \text{market}$ ) of a bond held by mutual fund  $f$ . A fund is benchmarked to bonds issued by country  $c$  at time  $t$  if its performance benchmark  $\mathcal{B}_{ft}$  includes LC bonds from country  $c$ . A related variable  $I_{\text{fund},it}$  measures the proportion of the market value of a bond held by global funds relative to the total net assets of the funds holding it. This measure is the direct analog of  $w_t = s_t^1 q_t B_t / D_0$ , the market value relative to the funding  $D_0$ , in the model.

$$I_{\text{fund},it} = \frac{\sum_f H_{ift}^{\text{market}}}{\sum_f \text{Net Asset}_{f(i)t}} \quad (9)$$

Table 2 presents the summary statistics of key variables: bond-level funding,  $I_{\text{fund},it}$ , and EM fund share,  $\theta_{it}$ . On average, the share of a bond held by EM funds is 58.5%. This finding aligns

Table 2: Bond-level summary statistics

	Funding ( $I_{\text{fund},it}$ ) (%)	EM fund share ( $\theta_{it}$ ) (%)
Mean	0.81	58.5
Median	0.76	59.4
Std Dev	0.36	19.2

Note: This table summarizes the measures of funding,  $I_{\text{fund},it}$ , and EM fund share,  $\theta_{it}$ . Statistics are computed at the bond level, then averaged across bonds. The sample includes 664 bonds denominated in the following currencies: BRL, CLP, COP, CZK, HUF, IDR, ILS, MXN, MYR, PEN, PLN, RON, THB, TRY, and ZAR.

with the notion that mutual funds often invest in assets outside of their performance benchmarks' underlying asset class.

I describe two key facts unique to my setting with benchmarks.

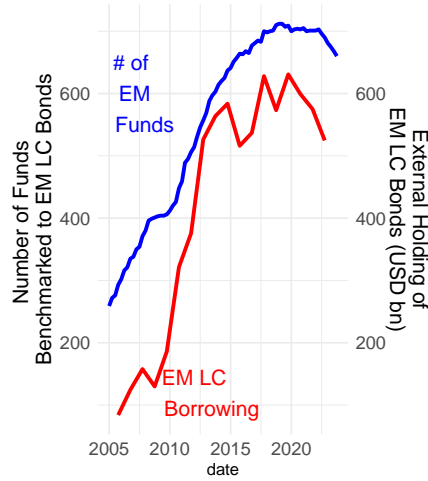
**Entries of EM funds and globalization of local-currency sovereign bonds.** Figure 1 compares the number of EM funds with the total face value of externally held EM LC bonds over past two decades. The two statistics show a correlation: the stagnation in fund entries around the 2008 crisis corresponded with a decline in borrowing, and both the number of EM funds and the borrowing plateaued in 2018 before subsequently declining. Given that the net assets of EM funds have remained stable over time, this correlation suggests that the sorting of funds as EM funds contributes to the fluctuations in EM LC borrowing.

**Extensive margin responses.** To further examine the extensive margin responses, I use current bond ownership status to predict future status within two years. Specifically, I estimate at the bond level with and without conditional on a fund's survival. I estimate

$$D_{if,t+h} = \alpha_i + \alpha_{c(i)t} + \beta D_{if,t} + \gamma D_{if,t} \times \mathbf{1}\{i(c) \in \mathcal{B}_{ft}\} + \epsilon_{ift}$$

where the asset ownership indicator  $D_{if,t}$  switches on if fund  $f$  holds bond  $i$  at time  $t$ . The indicator  $\mathbf{1}\{i(c) \in \mathcal{B}_{ft}\}$  is 1 if an EM fund holds bond  $i$ .  $\beta$  indicates the persistence of the asset ownership, while  $\gamma$  indicates the difference in ownership between EM and dollar funds.  $D_{if,t+h}$  for  $1 \leq h \leq 8$  may switch from 1 to 0 when a fund sells a bond or when a fund is liquidated. To examine the contribution of mutual fund exits to observed positions, I estimate the model conditional on the fund not being liquidated during the entire period from  $t$  to  $t+h$ . Appendix Figure E.5 shows estimates unconditional on fund liquidation. After two years, the probability of holding a bond is only 20% for dollar funds, whereas EM funds have a slightly higher probability of holding the

Figure 1: Benchmark usages and EM LC borrowing



Notes: To measure the number of EM funds over time, I obtain a list of EM funds based on the binary classification of their benchmark indices. Given that each fund has multiple share classes, I use the earliest inception and the latest obsolete dates among share classes as a fund's surviving period. The total EM LC borrowing is summing the total externally held debts from EM countries (BR, CO, CL, CZ, HU, ID, IL, MY, MX, PE, PH, PL, RO, RU, TH, TR, ZA) using the data from Onen et al. (2022). In the borrowing data, the valuation is the face value of debts in dollars whenever the data exists.

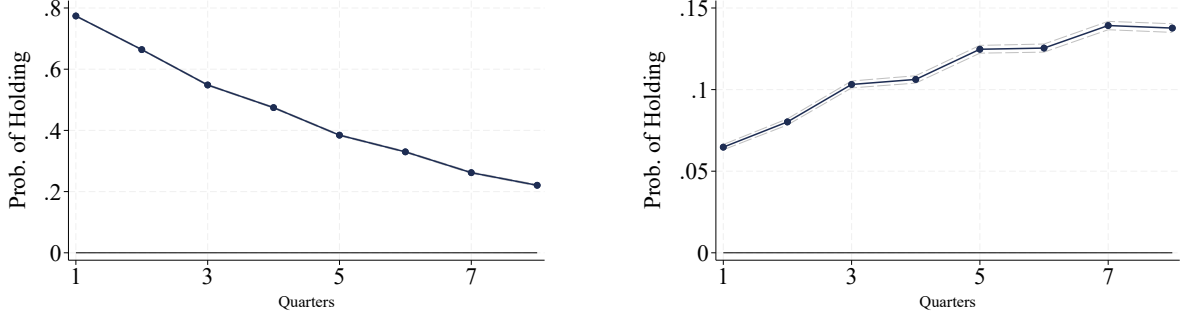
same bond. Fund exits play a minimal role in this observed pattern.

## 4.2 Empirical results of creditor benchmarking and the pass-through of global shocks to LC bond yields

The main challenge in testing the model implication of asset ownership is the sorting of creditors into benchmark indices and the selection of countries into policies that ultimately affect their index presence based on unobserved variables. I address this issue by using time-varying creditor compositions at the bond level by controlling for country-time fixed effects. Given that shocks at the bond level affect trading and ultimately bond prices, sorting at the bond level would not be a concern if the following assumptions hold: a global fund does not select an EM LC index as its performance benchmark upon inception, or a country does not implement a policy related to its index presence because a single bond experiences relatively lower trading costs and relatively higher expected returns compared to other bonds from the same country.

I use the pass-through of the global risk factor VIX to secondary-market yields  $y_{it}$  to test the model implications from Section 3. I use VIX because it is a widely used approximation of the

Figure 2: Extensive margin of fund holdings



(a) Extensive margin, fund holding effect

(b) Extensive margin, benchmarking effect

Notes: For a bond currently in a fund's portfolio, these two graphs show the hazard rate that a fund continues holding this bond for two years conditional on the date being one year before a fund's liquidation. The estimation controls bond and country-time fixed effects. The first graph shows the hazard rate of dollar funds, and the second shows the difference in hazard rates between dollar and EM funds.

global risk factor in the literature (Miranda-Agrippino and Rey, 2021). The estimation equation is:

$$\begin{aligned} \log(1 + y_{it+h}) - \log(1 + y_{it-1}) = & \beta^h \Delta \log(\text{VIX}_t) \times I_{\text{fund},it-1} + \gamma^h \Delta \log(\text{VIX}_t) \times I_{\text{fund},it-1} \times \theta_{it-1} \\ & + \alpha_i^h + \alpha_{c(i)t}^h + \Gamma^h \mathbf{X}_{it} + \epsilon_{it}, \quad h = 0, 1, \dots, 8 \end{aligned} \quad (10)$$

The focus is on the coefficient  $\gamma$ —the effect of creditor composition towards EM funds on the pass through of global shocks to yields. The vector  $\mathbf{X}_{it}$  includes  $I_{\text{fund},it-1}$ ,  $\theta_{it-1}$ , and bonds' residual maturities. Figure 3 shows that a 1 percentage point increase in VIX raises bond yields, with the peak effect of 0.09 percentage points occurring three quarters after the impact. The credit ownership by EM funds is associated with a smaller impact of VIX on bond yields, with the reduction peaking at 0.11 percentage points four quarters after the impact. Both estimates are significant at the 90% confidence level under robust standard errors.

To map the empirical specification to the model with exchange rate and output shocks developed in the next section, I use VIX to predict the real devaluation  $s_{ct}$ , the log difference of real exchange rates<sup>6</sup>, at the country level:

$$s_{ct} = \alpha_c + \beta \Delta \log(\text{VIX}_t) + \epsilon_{ct}$$

I estimate the above specification using the predicted nominal devaluation. The re-scaled estimates

<sup>6</sup>CPI series come from IMF's IFS and exchange rates come from FRED and central banks.



in Panels c) and d) have an interpretation that matches exactly with the model: bond ownership by EM funds is associated with 1.4 percentage point smaller rise in yields for a 1 percentage point currency depreciation shock compared to cases where dollar funds are the only creditors. These estimates are significant at the 90% confidence level.

I also check robustness using face values to construct  $I_{fund,it}$  and  $\theta_{it}$ .  $I_{fund,t}$  represents the proportion of the face amount in local-currency units of a bond held by funds relative to the total issuance in local-currency units:

$$I_{fund,it} = \frac{\sum_f H_{ift}^{face}}{\text{Amount Issued}_i}$$

Figure E.6 confirms that a higher creditor ownership share from EM funds is associated with a lower pass-through of the VIX to bond yields. Moreover, within this specification, I divide bonds based on whether they are issued in the global or domestic market. Panels c) and d) in Figure E.6 show that the response of global bonds is much more pronounced.

The potential limitation comes from portfolio decisions of many sovereign bonds at the same time: the yield of bond  $i$  depends on the ownership and the funding related to this bonds and *all other bonds*. Therefore, estimates may be biased due to time-varying omitted variables at the bond level.

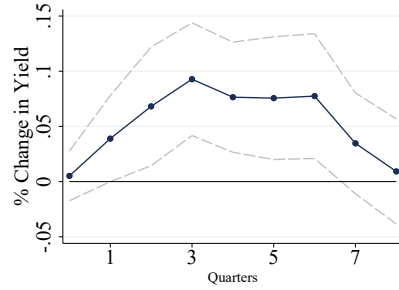
To access the degree of this limitation, I check the robustness of the empirical test by interacting  $\Delta \log(\text{VIX}_t)$  with two additional time-varying controls:  $\bar{I}_{fund,c(-i)t-1}$  and  $\bar{I}_{fund,c(-i)t-1} \times \bar{\theta}_{c(-i)t-1}$ .  $\bar{I}_{fund,c(-i)t}$  averages the fund credit supplies across all bonds issued by country  $c$ , excluding bond  $i$  at time  $t$ . The same method is applied to construct a leave-one-out average of EM fund ownership,  $\bar{\theta}_{c(-i)t}$ . These two controls capture the influence of all other bonds issued by the same issuer country. Appendix Figure E.6 panels e) and f) show that the creditor ownership effect becomes slightly more negative, with a peak reduction of 0.12 percentage points.

Another minor limitation is that, at the bond level, my classification does not distinguish whether an index includes specific bonds. I address this issue by selecting sovereign bonds eligible for the JP Morgan GBI-EM index, which is likely to have a more stringent eligibility criteria than other indices with EM LC bonds.

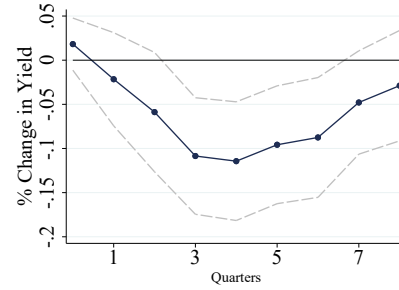
### 4.3 Robustness to alternative explanations

This section addresses the concern that the empirical finding may stem from other types of heterogeneity between EM and dollar funds, rather than their differences in the use of benchmark indices.

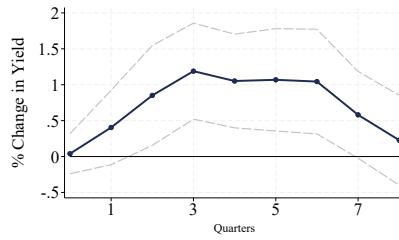
Figure 3: Effect of benchmarking on transmission shocks



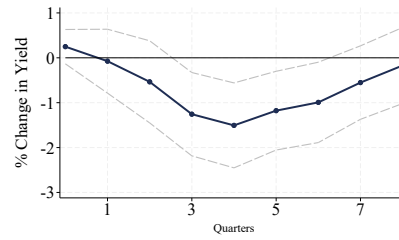
(a) VIX, fund holding effect (market value measures)



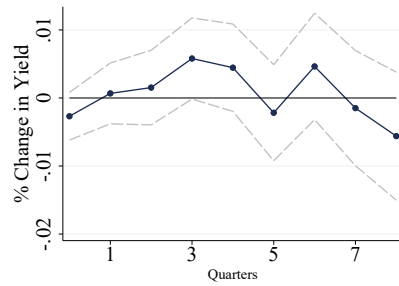
(b) VIX, benchmarking effect (market value measures)



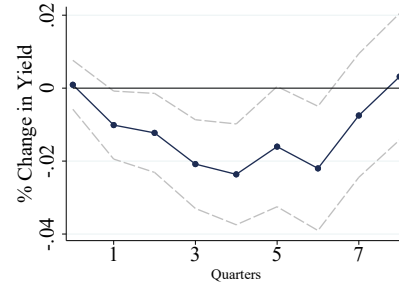
(c) Exchange rate, fund holding effect (market value measures)



(d) Exchange Rate, benchmarking effect (market value measures)



(e) VIX, fund holding effect (face value measures)



(f) VIX, benchmarking effect (face value measures)

Notes: These figures show the direct effect of bond holdings by global funds and the interaction effect from the creditor composition of funds. The sample of bonds is restricted to bonds with issuance greater than one billion dollars and residual maturities greater than two years. Currencies are BRL, CLP, COP, CZK, HUF, IDR, ILS, MXN, MYR, PEN, PLN, RON, THB, TRY, ZAR. Dotted lines plot the 90% robust standard error bands.

**Models with alternative interpretations of VIX’s impact on EM borrowing.** The VIX correlates with a global risk factor and common components of EM exchange rates. However, the VIX is not a well-identified shock. Funding shocks (or creditor wealth shocks) among dollar funds could be an alternative structural shocks generating previous results: the VIX correlates more strongly with larger funding shocks among dollar funds than among EM funds. I indirectly address this concern by presenting results from short-term LC interest rate shocks originated in individual countries. Since the main mechanism of benchmarking is equivalent to reducing the quantity of assets subject to shocks, ownership of long-term bonds by EM funds would imply a smaller impact of rising short-term bond yields on long-term yields.

I use identified EM monetary policy shocks as proxies for short-term interest rate shocks. These shocks are identified using changes in forward premiums around monetary policy announcements. I collect the dates of EM monetary policy press releases from central banks and measure changes in the one-year forward premium within a four-day window around each release, specifically the difference between the two-day average before and after the release. Short-term LC interest rates  $y_t^{LC}$  depend on the CIP wedge  $\lambda_t$ , the U.S. short-term rate  $y_{US,t}^{\$}$ , and the forward premium  $fp_{c,t,t+1} = \frac{F_{lc/\$,t,t+1}}{E_{lc/\$,t}}$ , as shown below. The identifying assumption is that the unexpected component of the monetary policy does not affect the CIP wedge or U.S. interest rates. Witheridge (2024) empirically assesses this assumption and demonstrates this high-frequency approach identifies EM monetary policy shocks.

$$y_t^{LC} \times \lambda_t = y_{US,t}^{\$} \frac{F_{lc/\$,t,t+1}}{E_{lc/\$,t}} \quad (11)$$

Let  $\Delta \tilde{y}_t^{LC}$  denote the monetary policy shock. I calculate changes in bond yields  $\Delta \log(1 + y_{ict})$  as the difference between the 7-day average yields before and after the monetary policy press release. I then estimate how short-term borrowing rates are passed through to the actual borrowing costs of long-term bonds  $y_{it}$  across different bonds using the baseline specification, which includes country-time and bond fixed effects.

The estimates in Table 3 show that bond ownership by EM funds reduces the pass-through of short-term interest rate shocks to long-term bond yields. The overall point estimate of the interaction term with creditor composition measure is negative.

**Models with financial frictions and sticky portfolios.** Another explanation for the existing results is that dollar funds face tighter financial constraints than EM funds. Possible financial frictions include the costs of raising funds from households and value-at-risk type constraints from risk management. These frictions suggest that EM funds are likely to maintain a sticky portfolio of EM LC bonds, thereby dampening the transmission of shocks through their bond ownership. If this explanation holds true, then EM funds’ bond ownership would reduce shock transmission even

Table 3: Pass through of EM short-term interest rate shocks

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
$\Delta \log(1 + y_{ict})$	All	Brazil	Colombia	Mexico	Peru	Philippines	Turkey
$\Delta \tilde{y}_{c,t}^{lc} \times I_{fund,it-1}$	2.361** (0.893)	0.849 (1.692)	-1.913 (1.075)	3.812*** (1.085)	1.386 (1.726)	1.465* (0.696)	4.897 (6.278)
$\Delta \tilde{y}_{c,t}^{lc} \times I_{fund,it-1} \times \theta_{i,t-1}$	-2.222* (0.943)	3.058 (4.692)	9.688 (17.45)	-3.782*** (1.103)	7.725 (4.020)	-1.354 (0.883)	-5.309 (9.152)
Obs	8438	371	951	1440	1043	3112	1521

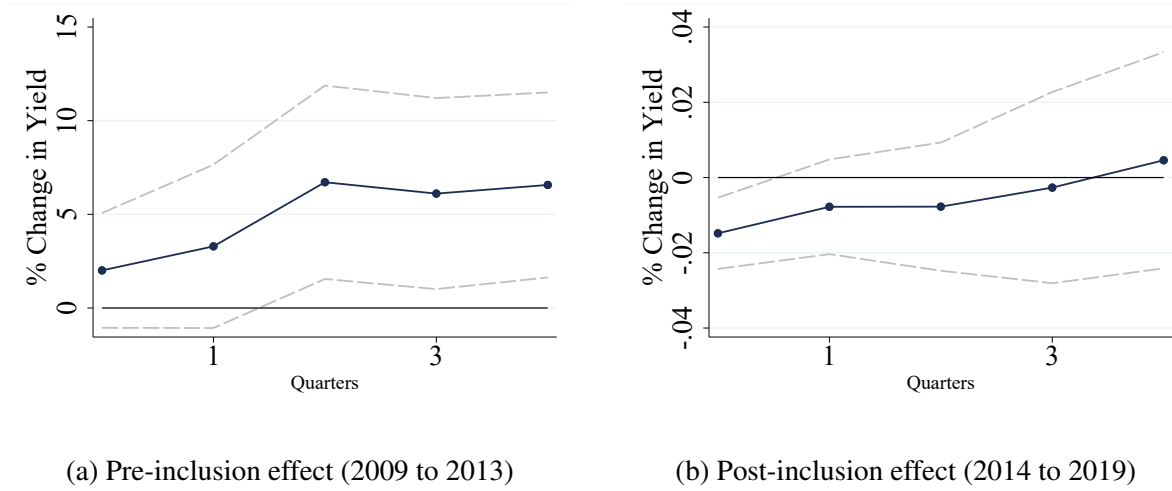
Notes: All specifications include country-time and bond fixed effects. Time-varying controls are residual maturities, the amount held by global funds, and the share held by EM funds. \*  $p < 0.1$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$  \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$

before a country's index inclusion. I use Colombia's inclusion in the JP Morgan GBI-EM index to test another prediction of benchmarking effects. Specifically, the bond ownership by global funds benchmarked to the GBI-EM index should not affect shock transmission before Colombia's index inclusion in 2014, whereas the same ownership should reduce the transmission after the index inclusion.

Colombia is an ideal case study due to its significant post-inclusion index weights and consistent domestic current account policies over the past two decades. Despite having foreign capital gains withholding taxes, Colombia did not impose explicit capital flow controls. The proportion of LC bonds held externally by global funds exceeded 20% even before 2014. The next big index inclusion event for Colombia was its inclusion in the Bloomberg Global Aggregate Index in September 2020. Therefore, I focus on global funds benchmarked to JP Morgan GBI-EM indices and analyze the period between 2009 and 2019 to avoid the impact of two global crisis and its second major index inclusion event.

Unlike the baseline, I use the face value of holding to construct  $I_{fund,it}$  and  $\theta_{it}$ , as in Figure 3 panels e) and f). Figure 4 graphs the cumulative impact of creditor composition on yields over a year for the pre-inclusion period  $2009q1 \leq \{t + h|h, t\} < 2014q1$  and the post-inclusion period  $2014q1 \leq \{t + h|h, t\} < 2020q1$ . The point estimates change sign from positive to negative between the two periods. Existing theories based on financial frictions cannot explain why the same types of funds would pass through more of the shocks before Colombia's index inclusion but dampen the shock thereafter.

Figure 4: Falsification test using pre-inclusion periods



Notes: This graph come from estimating the baseline specification for Colombia. To construct creditor composition measure, I use a sub sample of EM funds whose benchmarks include JPM GBI-EM family indices. The graph present a 90% confidence band from robust standard errors.

## 5 A sovereign debt model with bond benchmarks

I use a model-based approach to address two questions difficult to be answered empirically. Previous results show that benchmarking reduces the impact global risk factor VIX on local bond market. Changes in VIX imply a combination of shocks. I examine the stabilizing role of benchmarking under different shocks. Moreover, the supply-demand framework of sovereign bonds implies that the quantity of bonds outstanding in the secondary market affects the transmission of shocks. I endogenize the quantity of bonds in the secondary market by introducing a primary bond market a la Eaton-Gersovitz style model of sovereign default. The counterfactual experiment allows me to disentangle the direct effect due to benchmarking from the equilibrium effect of changing the quantity of debts carried into the secondary market. With a secondary market holding the quantity of bonds constant between primary markets, the model is capable of generating moments that align with the empirical analysis and facilitate further quantitative analysis.

### 5.1 Model environment

### 5.1.1 Primary bond market

The emerging market is modeled as a single representative country. Identical households with the following preference populate the country.

$$\mathbb{E}_0 \sum_{t=0}^{\infty} \beta_{EM}^t u(c_t) \quad (12)$$

where  $u(\cdot)$  is increasing and concave,  $c_t$  denotes consumption of the representative EM household in period  $t$ , and  $\beta_{EM} \in (0, 1)$  is the subjective discount factor of EM households.

Each period, EM households receive an endowment of tradable goods  $Y_t$ . After the realization of exchange rate  $s_t$  and the current index status  $h$ , households choose whether to repay their debt or to default, where default is indicated by  $d_t = 1$ . Bonds are interpreted as local-currency bonds auctioned in the domestic market.

Upon default, households are unable to raise additional funds from private foreign investors, and consumption becomes  $c_t = Y_t - \mathcal{L}(Y_t)$ , where  $\mathcal{L}(\cdot)$  represents losses associated with default. I assume an exogenous capital account policy such that, following a default, foreign capital re-enters with a probability of  $\phi_{market}$ .

If the country chooses not to default, it borrows local-currency index eligible bonds, denoted  $B_{t+1}$  which are due in the next period  $t + 1$ .

Once the country has an open capital account, it chooses whether to join global bond indices ( $k = 1$ ) or to refrain from satisfying index inclusion criteria by choosing the policy  $k = 0$ . At the end of the period, the index provider has a probability  $\phi_{index}$  of including a country committed to inclusion ( $k = 1$ ) when its initial index status is  $h = 0$ . Similarly, the index provider excludes this country from the index if  $k = 0$ , even if the initial index status is  $h = 1$ .

### 5.1.2 Secondary market

Denote  $\mathbf{S} = (Y, s)$  as the tuple representing the current state of output and exchange rate. A secondary market consisting of three stages opens for outstanding bonds before the next period. Stage 0 inherits the states  $(\mathbf{S}, B')$  and has outcomes identical to the primary market. In Stage 1, new endowment and exchange rate are observed. Asset managers adjust their portfolios based on the default probability revealed by the new state. The price  $q_{sm,1}$  clears the market. At this point, if a country has exclusion status and opts for index inclusion, then Stage 2 begins. The index provider announces the country's inclusion with probability  $\phi_{index}$  and updates  $h'$  to 1. Otherwise,  $h'$  remains at 0. After Stage 2, the secondary market ends, and agents observe a new state in the next period. Table 4 summarizes the sequence of events.

Global asset managers enter EM local bond markets and can purchase any bonds issued or

Table 4: Timing of events

Current period				Next period
Primary market	Secondary market			Primary market
	Stage 0	Stage 1	Stage 2 (if $h = 0, k = 1$ )	
–Observe states $(S, h)$	– Identical to the primary market	–Observe state $S_{sm}$	–Announce $h'$	–Observe
–Inherit state $B$		–Inherit states $B'$	$Pr(h' = 1) = \phi_{\text{index}}$	states $(S', h')$
–Decide to default or not		–Market clearing at	–Market clearing at	–Inherit state $B'$
–If not, decide $k$ and borrow $B'$		$q_{sm1}$	$q_{sm2}$	
– Market clearing at $q$				

traded there. Their problem is identical to that described in Section 3.1.

## 5.2 Discussion of assumptions

**“Defaulting” domestically issued local-currency bonds.** Unlike outright default on hard-currency denominated bonds, countries can suspend, delay, or defer coupon or principal payments on domestically issued bonds held by foreign creditors. Sovereigns may implement these policies through capital outflow or currency exchange controls. In this context, “defaulting” refers to any of these actions, which can be potentially costly for mutual funds<sup>7</sup>. For example, in 2014, JP Morgan justified Nigeria’s exclusion from the index due to its currency exchange controls and reduced liquidity in its currency markets (Mu’azu, 2015). Iceland forced foreign investors to reinvest capital gains in local bonds instead of allowing the funds to leave the country (Bianchi and Lorenzoni, 2021; Central Bank of Iceland, 2021).

Moreover, accumulating interest and principal arrears or deferring coupon payments on local-currency denominated bonds was common during the COVID-19 pandemic. U.S. mutual funds report whether or not a bond is in default in their Form N-PORT-P filings<sup>8</sup>. Appendix Table D.5 summarizes reported cases of defaults or deferred interest/principal payments, most of which have an average market value of about \$1 million. Overall, empirical evidence supports modeling LC defaults similarly to defaults on hard-currency denominated debt.

**Optimal policies related to index presence.** I argue that sovereigns have policy instruments to influence a country’s eligibility for index inclusion and the degree of its presence. Capital controls influence a country’s eligibility, and the characteristics of bonds influence a country’s

<sup>7</sup>Beers et al. (2023) reports that domestic LC debt in arrears accounted for 2.5% of the total arrears in 2022.

<sup>8</sup>The form asks, “Currently in default?” and “Are there any interest payments in arrears or have any coupon payments been legally deferred by the issuer?”

index weights. Appendix Section B.2 provides narrative and quantitative evidence of issuing index-eligible bonds to support this argument.

**Omitting domestic index ineligible bonds and foreign-currency bonds.** If the EM country chooses the optimal portfolio of index-eligible and ineligible bonds, then index-eligible and ineligible bonds issued by a country included in the index should have an identical price. However, these two bonds are still imperfect substitutes because they face different demand elasticities<sup>9</sup>. Therefore, depending on the index weight, the channel in the model gives rise to endogenous portfolios of bonds with different index status. In fact, I show in Appendix Section B.2.3 that for countries persistently in the index, the issuance of index-eligible bonds relative to the total domestic debt is procyclical: countries tilt away from index-eligible bonds during global downturns. Depending on benchmark weights, the model could generate this result qualitatively.

Existing studies have extensively analyzed dollar-denominated bonds underwritten in developed markets and long-term bonds. Given that these studies focus on the trade-off between defaulting and repaying, they do not directly interact with the operative mechanism of sovereign benchmarks explored here. Nonetheless, long-term bonds could introduce new mechanisms with bond benchmarks: countries may swap index ineligible bonds with index eligible ones when the index status changes.

**Further discussion.** The model is designed to examine the transmission of shocks in the secondary market. However, it is silent on how realized shocks and capital inflows thereafter in the secondary market affect future debt policies. Given the nature of forward-looking prices, anticipated changes in future debt policies would be reflected in prices. The answer to the question in this paper may be different when considering changes in future debt policies.

Broner et al. (2021) suggest capital flows related to index inclusion and alternating weights affect exchange rate and could have distributional effects across sectors. Although the aggregate effect remains an open question, the model shuts off any feedback channels.

How secondary market prices affect *future* debt policies and borrowing cost in the primary market<sup>10</sup> is still an open research agenda. The consensus view is that prices in primary and secondary markets are linked. The detailed transmission channel across these two markets remains elusive.

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<sup>9</sup>The coexistence of two bonds with identical prices in a standard Eaton-Gersovitz class of model requires adding bond-specific default costs. Dellas and Niepelt (2016) analyzes a country's portfolio of private and official loans, which have identical prices because a country cannot selectively default on one type of creditor. They argue that additional default costs of official creditors explain the coexistence of both debts.

<sup>10</sup>Analyzing primary market is not a common theme in the sovereign debt literature. Some papers examining the frictions in the primary markets are Cole et al. (2022) and Cole et al. (2024). An alternative view of the secondary market is that the functioning of the secondary market determine nature of the default. Broner and Ventura (2016) argue that creditors do not expect the country to default when foreign creditors are able to trade with domestic creditors in the secondary market.



Zhou (2023) analyzes how prices in primary and secondary markets are linked for 41 cases where new issues have identical characteristics between the two markets in the appendix of his paper. In fact, he shows the price in the primary market is lower than in the secondary market. The most widely recognized and analyzed linkage is through liquidity in the secondary market (Chaumont, 2020).

### 5.3 Recursive equilibrium

I characterize a Markov perfect equilibrium. The state space is summarized by the tuple  $(\mathbf{S}, h, B)$ .  $\mathbf{S}$  is the tuple of current exogenous states  $(Y, s)$ , where  $Y$  is the endowment and  $s$  is the exogenous exchange rate.  $h$  is the country's index inclusion status, taking values 1 or 0.  $B$  is the bond issued and due in the current period.

If the government has an open capital account, it chooses the policy  $d$ , deciding whether to default ( $d = 1$ ) or not ( $d = 0$ ).

$$V(\mathbf{S}, h, B) = \max_{d \in \{0,1\}} \{V^r(\mathbf{S}, h, B), V^d(\mathbf{S})\} \quad (13)$$

When the government repays, it chooses the optimal level of debt  $B'$  and consumption. If the country is currently in the index ( $h = 1$ ), then it can choose to be excluded  $k = 0$ . The state of the index status in the primary market and in stages 0 and 1 depend on  $h \times k$ . It means that the index status is inclusion when index providers approve (i.e. inheriting an index status  $h = 1$ ) and the actual optimal policy is inclusion ( $k = 1$ ).

$$\begin{aligned} V^r(\mathbf{S}, h, B) = \max_{c, B', k} u(c) + \mathbb{E}_{\mathbf{S}_{sm}|\mathbf{S}} V^{sm}(\mathbf{S}_{sm}, h \times k, B', k) \\ \text{s.t. } c = Y + q(\mathbf{S}, h \times k, B', k)B' - B \end{aligned} \quad (14)$$

During the secondary market, the value function and the index status are updated according to exogenous processes and the updating rule:

$$\begin{aligned} V^{sm}(\mathbf{S}_{sm}, h \times k, B', k) = \beta_{EM} \mathbb{E}_{\mathbf{S}'|\mathbf{S}_{sm}} (V(\mathbf{S}', h', B')) \\ \text{s.t. } h' = \begin{cases} 0, & \text{if } h = 0, k = 0 \\ 1, & \text{if } h = 1, k = 1 \\ 0, & \text{if } h = 1, k = 0 \end{cases} \\ \Pr(h' = 1) = \phi_{\text{index}}, \text{ if } h = 0, k = 1 \end{aligned} \quad (15)$$

If the country is currently excluded from the index ( $h = 0$ ), then it remains excluded by choosing

the optimal policy  $k = 0$ . If the government defaults, then

$$V^d(\mathbf{S}, 0, 0) = u(Y - \mathcal{L}(Y)) + \beta_{EM} \mathbb{E}_{\mathbf{S}'|\mathbf{S}}(\phi_{market} V(\mathbf{S}', 0, 0) + (1 - \phi_{market}) V^d(\mathbf{S}', 0)) \quad (16)$$

The first order condition of the portfolio choice problem of asset manager type  $j$  during the primary market is

$$w_j(\mathbf{S}, h \times k, B', k) = (1 - \alpha) w_j^b(\mathbf{S}, h \times k, B', k) + \frac{\mathbb{E}_{\mathbf{S}', h'|\mathbf{S}, h, k}(\Delta R')}{(1 + r^f) D_0 \gamma_j \text{Var}_{\mathbf{S}', h'|\mathbf{S}, h, k}(\Delta R')}, \quad j = \{\text{EM fund, Dollar fund}\} \quad (17)$$

where the expression of expected depreciation adjusted for default and the excess return are:

$$\mathcal{E}' = \frac{s}{s'} \times (1 - d'(\mathbf{S}', h', B')), \quad \Delta R' = \frac{\mathcal{E}'}{q(\mathbf{S}, h \times k, B', k)(1 + r^f)} - 1$$

The weighting function accounting for a country's index status is:

$$w_j^b = \begin{cases} \Omega(s^{-1} q B') & \text{if } j = \text{EM Fund, } h \times k = 1 \\ 0 & \text{if } j = \text{Dollar Fund, or } j = \text{EM Fund, } h \times k = 0 \end{cases}$$

The secondary market starts with Stage 0, where the clearing price is identical to that in the previous primary market. In Stage 1, once asset managers observe the new state  $\mathbf{S}_{sm} = (Y_{sm}, s_{sm})$ , the portfolio choice is

$$w_{j,sm1}(\mathbf{S}_{sm}, h \times k, B', k) = (1 - \alpha) w_{j,sm1}^b(S_{sm}, h \times k, B', q_{sm1}) + \frac{\mathbb{E}_{\mathbf{S}', h'|S_{sm}, h, k}(\Delta R'_{sm})}{(1 + r^f) D_0 \gamma_j \text{Var}_{\mathbf{S}', h'|S_{sm}, h, k}(\Delta R'_{sm})}, \quad j = \{\text{EM fund, Dollar fund}\} \quad (18)$$

where the expression of expected depreciation adjusted for default in the secondary market and the excess return in the secondary market are

$$\mathcal{E}'_{sm} = \frac{s_{sm}}{s'} \times (1 - d'(\mathbf{S}', h', B')), \quad \Delta R'_{sm} = \frac{\mathcal{E}'_{sm}}{q(\mathbf{S}_{sm}, h \times k, B', k)(1 + r^f)} - 1$$

When an index inclusion announcement occurs in the Stage 2 in the secondary market, the

portfolio choice is

$$w_{j,sm2}(\mathbf{S}_{sm}, 1, B') = (1 - \alpha)w_{j,sm2}^b(\mathbf{S}_{sm}, 1, B', q_{sm2}) + \frac{\mathbb{E}_{\mathbf{S}'|\mathbf{S}_{sm}}\left(\frac{\frac{s_{sm}}{s'} \times (1 - d'(\mathbf{S}', 1, B'))}{q_{sm2}(\mathbf{S}_{sm}, 1, B')(1 + r^f)} - 1\right)}{(1 + r^f)D_0\gamma_j \text{Var}_{\mathbf{S}'|\mathbf{S}_{sm}}\left(\frac{\frac{s_{sm}}{s'} \times (1 - d'(\mathbf{S}', 1, B'))}{q_{sm2}(\mathbf{S}_{sm}, 1, B')(1 + r^f)} - 1\right)}, \quad j = \{\text{EM fund, Dollar fund}\} \quad (19)$$

The asset market clearing in the primary market is

$$D_0 \sum_{j \in J} \mathcal{M}_j w_j(\mathbf{S}, h \times k, B', k) = s^{-1} q(\mathbf{S}, h \times k, B', k) B' \quad (20)$$

When the new state  $\mathbf{S}_{sm}$  is realized, the market clearing condition for Stage 1 is

$$D_0 \sum_{j \in J} \mathcal{M}_j w_{j,sm1}(\mathbf{S}_{sm}, h \times k, B', k) = s_{sm}^{-1} q_{sm1}(\mathbf{S}_{sm}, h \times k, B', k) B', \quad (21)$$

If the announcement of index inclusion occurs in the secondary market, then the market clearing condition for Stage 2 is

$$D_0 \sum_{j \in J} \mathcal{M}_j w_{j,sm2}(\mathbf{S}_{sm}, 1, B') = s_{sm}^{-1} q_{sm2}(\mathbf{S}_{sm}, 1, B') B', \quad (22)$$

A Recursive Markov equilibrium consists of exogenous states  $\{\mathbf{S}(Y, s), \mathbf{S}_{sm}(Y_{sm}, s_{sm}), h\}$ , value functions  $\{V(\cdot), V^r(\cdot), V^{sm}(\cdot), V^d(\cdot)\}$ , policy functions  $\{d(\cdot), B'(\cdot), k(\cdot), \{w_j(\cdot)\}_{j=\{\text{EM fund, Dollar fund}\}}\}$  in the primary market and bond pricing function  $q(\cdot)$  in the primary market such that:

1. Taking as given the bond price function  $q(\cdot)$ , the government's policy functions  $B'(\cdot)$  and  $k(\cdot)$ , and choices of default  $d(\cdot)$  solve the optimization problem in equations (13), (14), and (16).  $V(\cdot)$ ,  $V^r(\cdot)$ , and  $V^d(\cdot)$  are the associated value functions. Value functions  $V^{sm}(\cdot)$  and  $V(\cdot)$  are consistent with equation (15).
2. Given  $d(\cdot)$  and  $B'(\cdot)$ , the bond price  $q(\cdot)$ , portfolio choices in the primary market  $\{w_j(\cdot)\}$  solve equation (17).
3. The primary market clears as in equation (20).

Additional policy functions of the portfolio choices are denoted  $\{w_{j,sm\nu}(\cdot)\}_{j=\{\text{EM fund, Dollar fund}\}, \nu=\{1,2\}}$  in the secondary market, and prices  $\{q_{sm\nu}\}_{\nu=\{1,2\}}$  in the secondary market such that given  $d(\cdot)$  and exogenous states, the secondary market clears as in equations (21) and (22).

## 5.4 Calibration

I calibrate the model at a quarterly frequency in two steps. First, I fix a subset of parameters to standard values from the literature or based on the business cycle statistics of Colombia. I estimate the remaining parameters using macro moments, changes in the yields during Colombia's index inclusion, and the coefficients from the reduced-form regression.

I assume that EM households' utility function is  $u(c) = \frac{c^{1-\sigma}}{1-\sigma}$ . I set the inter-temporal elasticity of substitution  $\sigma$  at 2, as is standard in the literature. I set the quarterly risk-free rate at  $r^f = 0.01$ , which is consistent with the average real risk-free rate observed in the U.S. For the risk aversion parameter of dollar fund managers, I fix  $\gamma_H = 21$ , following the value used by Kekre and Lenel (2024) for the risk-bearing capacity of U.S. households. I pick the risk averse  $\gamma_L = 14$  for managers of EM funds. I choose the initial wealth of mutual funds  $D_0 = 1.5$  which is aligning with the existing sovereign debt literature using risk averse creditors (Lee, 2022; Aguiar et al., 2016).<sup>11</sup>

There is no evidence so far on the average duration of exclusion from the domestic market. Therefore, I conservatively set this duration at 4 years, based on empirical studies (Richmond and Dias, 2009; Gaston Gelos et al., 2004) focused on dollar debts. This corresponds to a re-entry probability of 0.0613. I also assume a conservative value for the exclusion from the index. According to Fick (2015), a country is not eligible for reentry into JP Morgan indices for one year after its exclusion. In practice, Egypt has faced an exclusion spell of 8 years, and Nigeria has been excluded since 2015. I set the index inclusion probability equal to the market re-entry probability.

I assume a multivariate AR(1) process for output and the (real) exchange rate of Colombia<sup>12</sup>. I log-linearly detrend quarterly real GDP and exchange rate values from Q1 2000 to Q3 2023. I assume that exogenous states follow the same processes in the primary and secondary markets. The transition from the secondary market at  $t-1$  to the primary market at  $t$  and the transition from primary market to the secondary market at  $t$  are:

$$\begin{bmatrix} \ln(Y_t) \\ \ln(s_t) \end{bmatrix} = A \begin{bmatrix} \ln(Y_{t-1,sm}) \\ \ln(s_{t-1,sm}) \end{bmatrix} + \epsilon_t, \text{ and } \begin{bmatrix} \ln(Y_{t,sm}) \\ \ln(s_{t,sm}) \end{bmatrix} = A \begin{bmatrix} \ln(Y_t) \\ \ln(s_t) \end{bmatrix} + \epsilon_{t,sm}, \text{ where } \Sigma_{\epsilon_t} = \Sigma_{\epsilon_{t,sm}} \equiv \Sigma \quad (23)$$

The shock to the primary and secondary market both follow the same variance-covariance matrix  $\Sigma$ .

I adjust the variance-covariance matrix to ensure that it is consistent with the primary and the secondary markets each occupying half of a period. I first estimate a multivariate AR(1) using

<sup>11</sup>Lee (2022)'s model implicitly implies  $D_0 = 1$ . In Table 10, Aguiar et al. (2016) set the wealth of investors to be 2.5-2.7 times the average endowment.

<sup>12</sup>Colombia's quarterly real GDP is from its central bank. I obtain the nominal exchange rate from FRED and adjust it by CPI inflation from IFS.

quarterly data from Colombia to obtain an estimate of the transition matrix  $A$  and a variance-covariance matrix  $\hat{\Omega}$ .

$$\hat{A} = \begin{bmatrix} 0.704, -0.047 \\ 0, 0.986 \end{bmatrix}, \text{ and } \hat{\Omega} = 10^{-4} \times \begin{bmatrix} 5.33, -2.53 \\ -2.35, 27.13 \end{bmatrix}$$

I estimate the variance-covariance matrix  $\Sigma$  to ensure that:

$$\text{Var} \left( \begin{bmatrix} \ln(Y_{t+1}) \\ \ln(s_{t+1}) \end{bmatrix} \middle| \begin{bmatrix} \ln(Y_t) \\ \ln(s_t) \end{bmatrix} \right) = \hat{A}\Sigma\hat{A}^T + \Sigma = \hat{\Omega} \Rightarrow \hat{\Sigma} \approx 10^{-4} \begin{bmatrix} 3.5, -1.0 \\ -1.0, 13.8 \end{bmatrix}$$

Output costs take the form  $L(y_{EM}) = \max\{0, a_1 y_{EM} + a_2 y_{EM}^2\}$  as in Chatterjee and Eyigungor (2012).

For the mass of EM funds, I use the full sample of funds downloaded from Morningstar. I identify the EM funds using my classification methodology. I estimate the proportion of their net assets relative to the net assets of all the funds in my sample. Specifically, I approximate each fund's net assets by dividing the market value of its holdings by the portfolio share. Next, I sum over two groups of funds each quarter. This approach is consistent with the procedure in Section 4, where I estimate the funding from global funds. I then take the average across time. The value  $\mu = 0.63$  reflects the dollars funds, on average, have 63% funding in the mutual fund industry.

I choose the following functional form for the benchmark weighting function  $\Omega(d) = \frac{d}{d+\kappa}$ . This functional form is motivated by the real-world practice of benchmark indices including multiple countries, where  $\kappa$  represents the outside assets in indices.

I select the remaining five parameters  $\{\beta_{EM}, a_1, a_2, \kappa, \alpha\}$  to match five moments, with three macro moments and two moments from the secondary market. I create a time series of secondary market prices and bond ownership between EM and dollar funds. Let  $\Delta \log(s_{sm,t})$  be defined as  $\log(s_{sm1,t}) - \log(s_{sm0,t})$  and  $\Delta \log(y_{sm,t})$  as  $\log(y_{sm1,t}) - \log(y_{sm0,t})$ . Using model-simulated EM fund share  $\theta$ , I estimate the reduced-form equation:

$$\Delta \log(y_{sm,t}) = \alpha + \beta \Delta \log(s_{sm,t}) + \gamma \Delta \log(s_{sm,t}) \times \theta_{sm0,t-1} + \Gamma X_t + \epsilon_t \quad (24)$$

where the controls  $X_t$  include  $\theta_{sm0,t}$  and the change in output,  $\log(Y_{sm1,t}) - \log(Y_{sm0,t})$ , in the secondary market. I choose parameters so that the sign of  $\hat{\beta}$  is positive and the sign of  $\hat{\gamma}$  is negative. This regression aims to capture the panel regression in the main text. However, the limitation is that the model only has one bond and does not allow for fixed effects. I still target the relative size  $\gamma/\beta$  to align with the empirical measure. I target the peak effects of the corresponding estimates 1

and  $-1.4$  in Figure 3 Panels c) and d), from the empirical specification in equation (10).

**Table 5:** Parameter values of the baseline calibration

Panel A: Fixed Parameters			Panel B: Calibrated Parameters		
Param.	Description	Value	Param.	Description	Value
$\sigma$	Risk aversion—EM households	2.00	$\beta_{EM}$	Discount rate of EMs	0.73
$\phi_{\text{market}}$	Market re-entry probability	0.0613	$a_1$	Default cost—level	-0.30
$\phi_{\text{index}}$	Index re-entry probability	0.0613	$a_2$	Default cost—curvature	0.325
$D_0$	Funding	1.5	$\alpha$	Compensation-absolute return	0.65
$r^f$	Risk-free interest rate	0.01	$\kappa$	Weighting rules— other assets	5.0
$\gamma_H$	Risk aversion—Dollar funds	21			
$\gamma_L$	Risk aversion— EM funds	14			
$\mu$	Mass of dollar funds	0.63			

I use Colombia’s index inclusion event (see Appendix B.2.2 for a discussion of the event and Colombian debt policies). I calculate the average changes in the yields of index-eligible bonds in a two-week window around the announcement of Colombia’s bonds in the JP Morgan GBI-EM index. I define an elasticity term  $\eta$  as follows<sup>13</sup>:

$$\eta = \frac{\Delta y}{\Delta \text{debt}/GDP} \times \frac{1}{y} = \frac{-0.51\%}{\text{COL\$ } 86.75 \times 10^{12} / \text{COL\$ } 191 \times 10^{12}} \frac{1}{6.95\%} = -0.16 \quad (25)$$

I identify outstanding bonds qualified for inclusion  $\Delta \text{debt}$  into the JP Morgan GBI-EM index. I choose parameters so that the simulation features index inclusion events and the model-implied elasticity aligns with Colombia’s case. Colombia is not the only country with index inclusion events, Appendix F.1 discusses why Colombia’s case is better than other inclusion event used for calibrating the model.

I use macro data from Q1 2005 to Q1 2021 from Colombia to construct three moments. Two of these moments are the mean and volatility of the LC bond spreads. For the spread, I use the five-year LC interest and US interest rate complied by Du and Schreger (2016). I use external LC debt data from Onen et al. (2022) to calculate the average of externally held LC debt to GDP for Colombia. These three moments are commonly used in the literature to calibrate the subjective discount factor and the cost of default (Uribe and Schmitt-Grohé, 2017).

<sup>13</sup>I do not multiply the term  $\text{debt}/GDP$  in the expression as in the usual definitions of elasticity, since the model does not include index-ineligible bonds during a country’s inclusion period.  $\Delta \text{debt}$  presents the sum of principal values in COP and  $GDP$  is the annualized nominal GDP in COP for Q4 2014

**Discussion.** Table 5 lists all the fixed and calibrated parameters. The discount factor of the emerging market country  $\beta_{EM} = 0.73$ , which is very low but not uncommon in the sovereign debt literature. Table 6 compares five empirical moments used for calibration and their counterparts from simulation. The model matches data well except for the volatility of spread. Existing literature tweaks the emerging market discount factor and two parameters governing the cost of default to adjust the first and the second moments of spreads. The goal of endogenously generating episodes of index inclusion poses additional challenges. For example, raising  $\beta_{EM}$  reduces the volatility of spread and lowers the probability of default, as agents assign higher values to future consumption and avoid costly defaults. Given fixed parameters and the functional form of weight, index inclusion is always beneficial. As a result, a country does not choose to be excluded from the index. Generating index inclusion episodes relies on episodes of default followed by the index thereafter in the simulation. A lower probability of default under a higher  $\beta_{EM}$  results in no observed default and index inclusion. Since the elasticity  $\eta$  is informative on two deep parameters  $\alpha$  and  $\kappa$  related to benchmarking, the current calibration chooses to sacrifice the match of the volatility of the spread in favor of the index inclusion elasticity.

Table 6: Moments

Target	Description	Data	Model
$\mathbb{E}[SP]$	EM LC bond spreads— average	5.1%	5.2%
$\sigma(SP)$	EM LC bond spreads— volatility	2.0%	7.9%
$\mathbb{E}[B/Y]$	External LC debt to output	18.7%	18.4%
$\eta$	Index inclusion yield elasticity	-0.16	-0.27
$\hat{\gamma}/\hat{\beta}$	Relative Coeff.	-1.4	-1.9 (-42.6/22.3)

Notes: The spread ( $SP$ ) is the difference between annualized yields of Colombian and US Treasury bonds at a 5-year tenor. The data is from Du and Schreger (2016).  $\eta$  is defined in equation 25. Empirical estimates of  $\hat{\beta}$  and  $\hat{\gamma}$  correspond to the results from estimating the pass-through of exchange rates driven by VIX on yields, as in specification 10. Their simulations correspond to estimating specification 24 using simulated data.

## 5.5 Mechanisms and their quantitative importance

Under the supply-demand framework in the model, the quantity of bonds affects the transmission of shocks in the secondary market. To see this, I extend the analysis of the impact of the risk factor

$z_0$  on yield  $y_0$  in Section 3.3.1 to the outstanding bond  $B$ :

$$\frac{\partial^2 \hat{y}_0}{\partial \hat{z}_0 \partial B} \propto \phi + (w_0 - (1 - \mu)(1 - \alpha)\epsilon^b) \left(1 - \frac{1}{(1 + r^f)V_0}\right)$$

where  $w_0 - (1 - \mu)(1 - \alpha)\epsilon^b$ ,  $\phi$  and  $V_0$ , as defined in Section 3.3.1, are positive. The quantity of bonds has ambiguous effects on the transmission, but when the exchange rate is very volatile (larger  $V_0$ ), the relationship is likely to be positive. Benchmarking could affect the outstanding debt in the secondary market in equilibrium, and this motivates me to analyze mechanisms during the primary market.

I omit the secondary market and analyze model mechanisms in a two-period model, followed by their quantitative relevance based on previous calibration. At  $t = 1$ , the government inherits a legacy debt  $B_{01}$  and observes the state  $\mathbf{S}_1$  and the index status  $h$ . It decides to repay the legacy debt or not. If it repays, it can borrow using a one-period bond  $B$  due at  $t = 2$ . After observing the new state  $\mathbf{S}_2$  at  $t = 2$ , the government decides to repay or default. The value functions are  $V_t(\mathbf{S}_t, h)$ . I assume a log utility function  $u(c) = \ln(c)$ .

### 5.5.1 Benchmarking changes prices and demand elasticity

I analyze when a country benefits from index inclusion. I conduct a hypothetical experiment. Suppose that a country with an open capital account is under index exclusion ( $h = 0$ ). The direct effect of index inclusion is raising the price, that is  $q(\mathbf{S}_1, h = 1) - q(\mathbf{S}_1, h = 0) > 0$ <sup>14</sup>. Let  $B^*$  and  $q^*$  be the optimal borrowing and the bond price for a given state  $\mathbf{S}_1$ . Welfare improvement requires the inequality below when prices and their derivatives are evaluated at  $B^*$ :

$$\begin{aligned} & (Y_1 - B_{01})(q(\mathbf{S}_1, h = 1) - q(\mathbf{S}_1, h = 0)) \\ & + (Y_1 - B_{01})B \left( \frac{\partial q(\mathbf{S}_1, h = 1)}{\partial B} - \frac{\partial q(\mathbf{S}_1, h = 0)}{\partial B} \right) \\ & + B \left( q(\mathbf{S}_1, h = 0) \frac{\partial q(\mathbf{S}_1, h = 1)}{\partial B} - q(\mathbf{S}_1, h = 1) \frac{\partial q(\mathbf{S}_1, h = 0)}{\partial B} \right) > 0 \end{aligned}$$

Given that  $q(\mathbf{S}_1, h = 1) - q(\mathbf{S}_1, h = 0) > 0$ , the third line in the above inequality being greater than zero is a sufficient condition for a welfare improvement under index inclusion. The proposition below summarizes this.

**Proposition 2** *Given a downward sloping bond demand, a sufficient condition, which depends on the elasticity of the benchmark weighting, exists to ensure the following holds:*

$$V_1(\mathbf{S}_1, h = 1) \geq V_1(\mathbf{S}_1, h = 0), \text{ and } B(\mathbf{S}_1, h = 1) > B(\mathbf{S}_1, h = 0)$$

<sup>14</sup>See equation 28 in Appendix C.1 for the derivation. Section 3.3 also discusses this effect.



Appendix C.3 shows the proof.

Under the assumption of a downward sloping demand, a country improves its welfare by joining the index because creditors' asset demand is more elastic. The deeper reason is that benchmarking overcomes the private cost of asset managers. Underinvestment in risky assets occurs when managers are compensated only by their absolute returns. Awarding performance relative to benchmark returns reduces underinvestment and potentially improves the welfare of EM countries<sup>15</sup>.

To further characterize this sufficient condition, I denote the index weight upon inclusion, if the government continues to borrow at the previous optimal  $B^*$ , as  $w^{b*} \equiv w^b(s_1^{-1}q^*B^*)$ . Let  $w^* \equiv \frac{s_1^{-1}q^*B^*}{D_0}$  denote the bond market value normalized by the funds' funding level  $D_0$ , and  $\tilde{\epsilon}(q^*, B^*) \equiv \frac{\partial w^b}{\partial(s_1^{-1}qB^*)} \times \frac{s_1^{-1}q^*B^*}{w^{b*}}$  denote the sensitivity of the index weight to changes in bond market values. This sufficient condition is the following

$$\frac{(1+r^f)D_0 \text{Var}\left(\frac{s_1(1-d_2)}{s_2}\right)}{\left(\frac{1-\mu}{\gamma_L} + \frac{\mu}{\gamma_H}\right)} \left((1-\mu)(1-\alpha)w^{b*} - w^*(2-\tilde{\epsilon})\right) > 3(1-\tilde{\epsilon})$$

The aggregate effect of index inclusion depends on the sensitivity of the index weights to bond market values, summarized by  $\tilde{\epsilon}$ . One real world interpretation of the index weight is that it is a weighted average of the country's weight across all existing indices that include this country. I want to remind readers that  $0 \leq \tilde{\epsilon} < 1$  as long as indices use market-value weighting rules<sup>16</sup>. If indices are constructed in this way, then the above sufficient condition cannot hold. However, many indices deviate from simple market-value weighting. For example, the JP Morgan GBI-EM index imposes a ceiling on country weights to ensure diversification. A country's index inclusion may also come at the expense of lowering the weight of other countries.

**Quantitative relevance.** Figure 5 plots the difference in prices between index inclusion and exclusion for a “good” state (high  $y$  and low  $s$ ). Higher prices under index inclusion align with

<sup>15</sup>Credit ratings, another bond market institution, also operate through price-based disciplines (Yang, 2023). Unlike bond benchmarks, which support more borrowing, price-based disciplines often imply that a country borrows less.

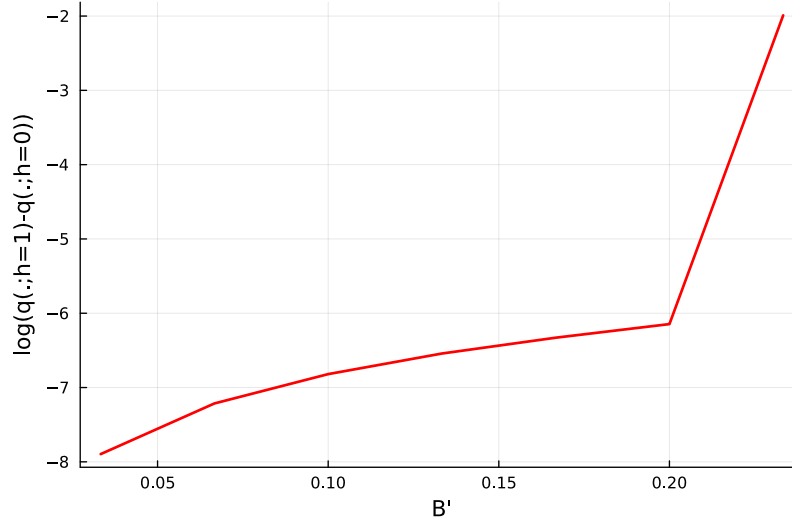
<sup>16</sup>The proof is straightforward. The set of indices that include a country's LC sovereign bonds consists of  $N$  indices. Each index includes other assets, such as LC bonds from other EM countries, sovereign bonds from developed markets, or corporate bonds.  $b_{EM}$  denotes the market value of LC bonds from country  $c$  and  $b_{o/t,n}$  denotes the market value of other assets in the index  $n$ .  $w^b \equiv \sum a_n \frac{b_{EM}}{b_{EM}+b_{o/t,n}}$ , where arbitrary weights  $a_n$  satisfy  $\sum_{n=1}^N a_n = 1$ . Then  $\tilde{\epsilon} = \left(\sum a_n \frac{b_{o/t,n}}{(s^{-1}q^*B^*+b_{o/t,n})^2}\right) \times \frac{s^{-1}q^*B^*}{w^b}$ . Given that real-world values  $s^{-1}q^*B^* + b_{o/t,n} > 2 \forall n$ , the following inequalities hold

$$\tilde{\epsilon} < \left(\sum a_n \cdot \frac{b_{o/t}^{max}}{(s^{-1}q^*B^*+b_{o/t}^{max})^2}\right) \times \frac{s^{-1}q^*B^*}{s^{-1}q^*B^*/(s^{-1}q^*B^*+b_{o/t}^{max})} < \frac{b_{o/t}^{max}}{s^{-1}q^*B^*+b_{o/t}^{max}} < 1$$

where  $b_{o/t}^{max} \equiv \max\{b_{o/t,n} : n = 1 \dots N\}$ .

the analytical results, but the difference is small. However, this difference increases as borrowing levels rise.

**Figure 5:** Difference in prices ( $\log(q(\cdot, h = 1) - q(\cdot, h = 0))$ ) under a “good” state



Notes: This graph plots the log difference in the pricing function with respect to future borrowing when the country has an output above average and an exchange rate below average (i.e., a “good” state for the country).

### 5.5.2 Benchmarking changes the probability of default

Let the set of states  $\mathbb{S}$  be the combination of output and the exchange rate such that the country is indifferent between repaying and defaulting under index exclusion:

$$\mathbb{S} = \{\mathbf{S} : V_1(\mathbf{S}, B_{01}, h = 0) = V_1^d(\mathbf{S}, h = 0)\}$$

If the Proposition 2 holds for at least one element in the set  $\mathbb{S}$ , meaning that a country improves its welfare through index inclusion, then

$$\exists \mathbf{S} \in \mathbb{S} \text{ s.t. } V_1(\mathbf{S}, B_{01}, h = 1) > V_1^d(\mathbf{S}, h = 1)$$

In other words, the country does not default under index inclusion for states that would otherwise lead to default under index exclusion. Benchmarking reduces the set of states in which the country chooses to default.

I provide a concrete example here. Suppose that value function under any index status is monotone decreasing in output for a given exchange rate  $\tilde{s}_1$ . Then, there is a unique cutoff out-

put level  $Y_1^{\min}$ , below which the country defaults at  $t = 1$  under index exclusion. When a country benefit from index inclusion under the state  $(Y_1^{\min}, \tilde{s}_1)$ , according to the proposition above,  $V_1(Y_1^{\min}, \tilde{s}_1, B_{01}, h = 1) > V_1(Y_1, \tilde{s}_1, B_{01}, h = 0)$ . The monotone relationship between the output and the value function implies that the cutoff output for default under  $h = 1$  must be smaller than  $Y_1^{\min}$ . This relationship means that prior to the realization of  $Y_1$ , the country is expected to be less likely to default and could withstand a worse output shock.

Shrinking the set of states a country chooses to default increases the prices when creditors are risk-neutral. However, the higher expected return is offset by higher volatility of the return for risk-averse creditors here. As a result, the overall effect of lowered probability of default on prices is ambiguous.

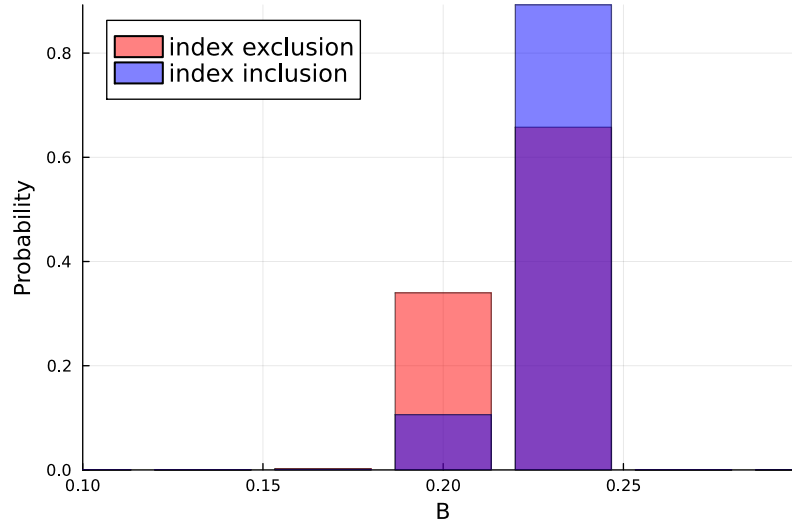
The classic answer to why countries borrow in the first place relies on international risk-sharing. This answer cannot fully explain the subsequent question of why countries repay their debt quantitatively. To explain the large size of borrowing while the probability of default remains low, almost all literature on sovereign debt relies on the cost of default in addition to the inability to engage in risk-sharing. The model of benchmarking offers a novel alternative explanation to the above questions: repaying debt is rewarded with potentially beneficial index inclusion. In other words, committing to repaying may have benefits beyond risk-sharing.

**Quantitative relevance.** Conditional on a country choosing to default, Figure 6 shows the distribution of default probability across different levels of current debt for the country under index inclusion or exclusion. When the economy is under index inclusion, defaults are pushed to higher debt levels. In the current calibration, conditional on repayment, the value of index inclusion is higher in all possible states. Since the value when choosing to default is identical regardless of index status, the net cost of default is higher under index inclusion. Therefore, the country is more likely to choose to repay its existing debt.

## 5.6 Decomposing the transmission of shocks through benchmarking

I use the calibrated model to decompose the propagation of shocks into direct and equilibrium effects. Figures 7 and 8 plot the impulse response functions to one-standard-deviation shocks to the exchange rate and output. *Zero weight* refers to a counterfactual scenario where the country has a zero index weight while all else remains identical to the baseline case under index inclusion. The difference between this and the baseline case is the direct effect of benchmarking. *Index exclusion* refers to a counterfactual world where this country is excluded from the index. It is a counterfactual world without benchmarking for only one period in the primary market and the following secondary market, where the counterfactual experiment takes place. This case captures the equilib-

Figure 6: Distribution of default probability



Notes: Conditional on a country choosing to default in the current period, this plot shows the distribution of the probability of default across three different levels of debt the country defaults on under two cases: the country is under index inclusion or exclusion status in the current period. To construct the plot, I simulate the economy over 10 million periods and calculate the distribution of debt for periods when the country chooses to default under different index statuses.

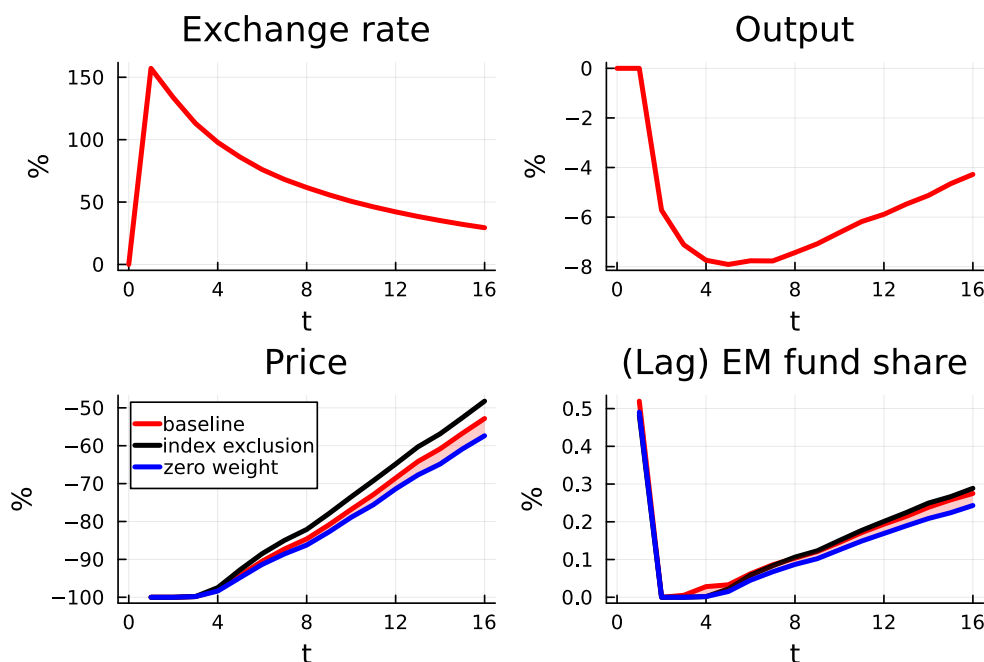
rium effect. It differs from *zero weight* by allowing the outstanding bonds in the secondary market to be optimally determined. When the outstanding bonds are identical under *index exclusion* and *zero weight*, the propagation of shocks is identical because they share the same pricing function.

Across all experiments, prices are lower under *zero weight*. This confirms the central message that benchmarking reduces the transmission of shocks to prices. However, benchmarking is more effective in insulating against output than exchange rate shocks, as exchange rate shocks directly reduce the benchmark weight. After 16 quarters, the price is about half of what it was prior to the shocks in the baseline, and benchmarking contributes to 8% of the total effect as the decline is 5 percentage points larger under *zero weight*. Figure 8 shows that benchmarking is effective at insulating against output shocks, as the price is 7.5% lower under the baseline compared with 15% under *zero weight*. Compared to exchange rate shocks, output shocks do not directly affect the index weight, and the stabilizing effect is preserved.

The experiment also reveals that the shock has a slightly smaller impact on prices from the second period onward in a world without benchmarking (*index exclusion*) relative to the baseline. The reason is that under *index exclusion*, the country reduces the amount of debt carried to the secondary market. The debt-to-output ratio is 18.7% in the baseline, whereas it is 4% lower under *index exclusion*.

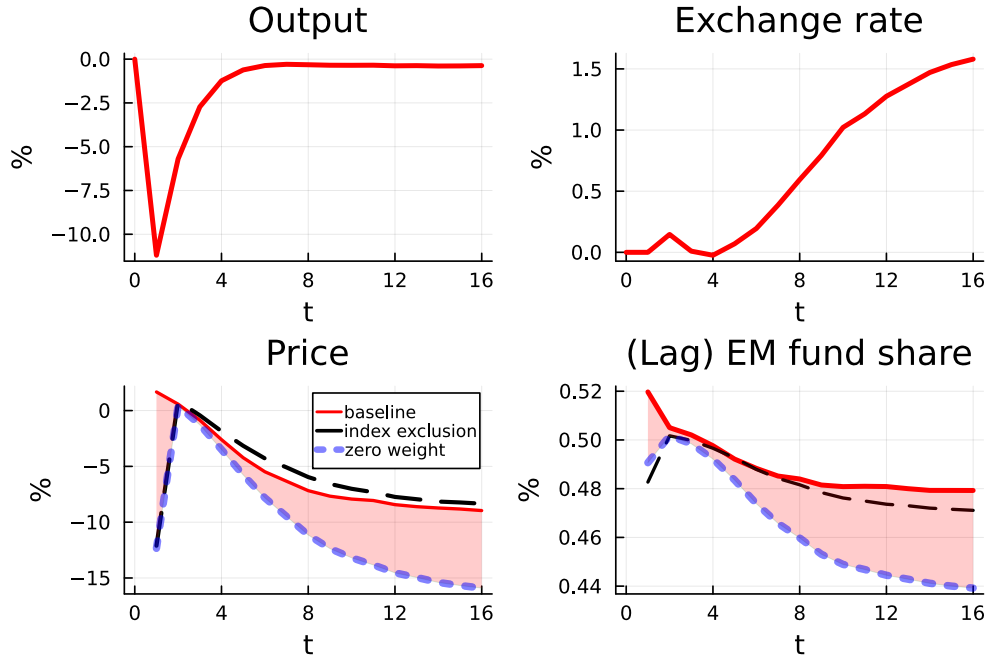
Benchmarking provides the most stabilizing on the impact of shocks. For a large exchange rate shock, the secondary market of sovereign bonds unravels: the price approaches zero. At this point, the difference in price between the baseline and the two counterfactual scenarios is indistinguishable. For an output shock, benchmarking almost completely insulates the shock in the baseline, while the price falls by 12.5% in two counterfactual cases.

Figure 7: Decomposing of the transmission of exchange rate shocks



Notes: Impulse response functions to a one-standard-deviation real exchange rate shock in the secondary market for the economy under index inclusion, the baseline case, and two counterfactual cases. The unconditional standard deviation is 0.226. Before the shock, the stochastic real exchange rate and output follow their underlying Markov processes. Upon the EM country's entry into the secondary market, the exchange rate shock occurs while output remains constant. For the following 15 periods in the same secondary market, both the exchange rate and output follow their Markov processes. The response functions of the exchange rate, output, and the price of bonds in local currency are the deviations from the levels prior to the shock. The lagged EM fund share refers to the share of sovereign bonds' market value held by EM funds in the previous period. The graph plots the response of the bond price and the EM fund share starting from  $t = 1$ . The response functions consider two alternative scenarios. *Zero weight* refers to the case where the EM country has a zero index weight, while the debt level in the secondary market is identical to the baseline case. *Index exclusion* refers to a counterfactual case where the country has an index exclusion status throughout the primary and secondary markets. This scenario differs from *zero weight* by allowing the outstanding bonds to be optimally determined prior to the shock. Responses are the average of 10,000 simulations.

Figure 8: Decomposing of the transmission of output shocks



Notes: Impulse response functions to a one-standard-deviation output shock in the secondary market for the economy under index inclusion, the baseline case, and two counterfactual cases. The unconditional standard deviation is 0.0436. Before the shock, the stochastic real exchange rate and output follow their underlying Markov processes. When the EM country enters into the secondary market, the output shock occurs while the real exchange rate remains constant. For the next 15 periods in the same secondary market, both the exchange rate and output follow their Markov processes. See the notes in Figure 7 for other details.

## 6 Conclusion

Benchmarking is evaluating the performance of mutual funds based on the return relative to benchmark indices. Credit from global mutual funds is the main driver of the internationalization of emerging market local sovereign bond markets. Many developing countries, such as China, Egypt, and India, implement market reforms and policies tailored for index inclusion. These policies are surprising because these mutual funds, particularly ETFs that closely follow indices, are often viewed as amplifying global shocks and increasing market volatility.

This paper shows the opposite: the inclusion of emerging market local-currency bonds reduces the transmission of shocks to their prices. I first propose a new binary classification of mutual funds based on whether or not their benchmark indices include EM LC bonds and present a new stylized fact that mutual funds whose benchmark indices are unrelated to EM LC bonds actively invest in EM LC bonds. Using this new fact, my empirical strategy compares the transmission under different asset ownerships based on the new classification. I achieve this by assembling

a bond-level dataset of sovereign bond holdings. A sovereign default model with benchmarking provides further analysis of the insulating role of benchmarking under different types of shocks.

The sovereign debt model with benchmarking developed here goes a long way to explain the globalization process of emerging markets' bond markets. Beyond the stabilizing role uncovered in this paper, it may be extended and offer an alternative view of capital controls: countries included in global bond indices have direct controls over the characters of bonds and the degree of presence in global indices, which ultimately affects a country's openness. Once the model is extended to include two local-currency bonds—one with and one without index status, benchmarking explains the imperfect substitution of bonds even though both local-currency bonds face identical credit and currency risk. The framework is qualitatively consistent with the pro-cyclical borrowing in bonds with characters that make them index eligible.

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# Appendix

## Benchmarking and Sovereign Risk

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October 31, 2024

### Table of Contents

<b>A</b>	<b>Data appendix</b>	<b>2</b>
A.1	Bloomberg data . . . . .	2
A.2	Form N-PORT-P data . . . . .	2
A.3	Colombian sovereign bond issuance . . . . .	3
A.4	Morningstar holdings data . . . . .	4
<b>B</b>	<b>Empirical result appendix</b>	<b>6</b>
B.1	Investment funds and EM LC globalization . . . . .	6
B.2	Additional evidence on borrowers' policy decisions on benchmark index presence	7
<b>C</b>	<b>Analytical appendix</b>	<b>13</b>
C.1	Deriving portfolios . . . . .	13
C.2	<b>Proof of Proposition 1.</b> . . . . .	15
C.3	<b>Proof of Proposition 2.</b> . . . . .	16
C.4	The relationship to the literature of benchmark contracts . . . . .	17
<b>D</b>	<b>Additional tables</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>E</b>	<b>Additional figures</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>F</b>	<b>Quantitative model appendix</b>	<b>25</b>
F.1	Index inclusion events . . . . .	25

## A Data appendix

### A.1 Bloomberg data

**Identifying duplicate bonds** Commonly used bond identifiers, such as CUSIP and ISIN, do not uniquely identify bonds in Bloomberg bond data. I describe a procedure to identify duplicate bonds by considering STRIPS (Separate Trading of Registered Interest and Principal of Securities), global offerings under Regulation S or 144A, and GDN (Global Depository Notes). Bloomberg Terminal offers a built-in function to consolidate duplicate bonds resulting from STRIP or Regulation S/144A. I download two lists of sovereign bonds, restricting the variable “BCLASS II” to “Treasury” or “Sovereign”, with and without consolidating duplicated bonds. The union of these two lists covers all CUSIP and ISIN identifiers that might be reported by mutual funds. Bloomberg also reports the status of bonds being “STRIP”, “Reg S/144A”, and “GDN”. I retrieve a list of these types of bonds and include the variable “DES Notes”, which provides additional descriptive information about a bond. From these notes, I obtain parent bond identifiers. I use ISIN to identify bonds whenever available, and resort to CUSIP when the corresponding ISIN cannot be found. Additionally, I reference to the GDN list from Citi Bank<sup>17</sup>.

**Bond yields.** I download bond bid yield to maturity data from the Bloomberg Terminal. I select BVAL as the pricing source whenever available<sup>18</sup>. The pricing source is mainly BGN for bond yields before 2010.

### A.2 Form N-PORT-P data

I create a dataset of U.S. mutual fund and ETF holdings of EM LC bonds using Form N-PORT-P from the U.S. Security Exchange Commission (SEC). The advantage of this dataset is that it is supposed to contain the universe of mutual funds in the U.S. Investment firms in the U.S. disclose fund-level portfolios to the SEC. SEC only releases filings to the public in the third month of the filers’ fiscal quarters. The disadvantage of this dataset is that the sample only covers 12 quarters, from Q2 2019 to Q2 2022.

To create this data, I compile a list of share class IDs of U.S. mutual funds from Morningstar and identify corresponding ones in the SEC Investment Firm directory. Then, I link CIKs between the SEC Investment Firm directory and SEC Filing Index, which allows me to identify the ID numbers of filings to download. Appendix Table A.1 shows the identifiers in each dataset.

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<sup>17</sup>See <https://depositoryreceipts.citi.com/adr/guides/uig.aspx?pageId=8&subpageid=34>. I also cross-check the GDN cases from Deutsche Bank ([https://www.adr.db.com/drwebrebrand/dr-universe/dr\\_universe\\_type\\_e.html](https://www.adr.db.com/drwebrebrand/dr-universe/dr_universe_type_e.html))

<sup>18</sup>See <https://data.bloomberglp.com/professional/sites/10/Fixed-Income-Cash-Pricing-Sources.pdf> for details of different pricing sources.

**Table A.1:** Identifiers in Morningstar and SEC data

Source	Morningstar	SEC Investment Firms	SEC Filing Index	Investment Firms	Form N-PORT-P
Usage	Identify tickers of relevant funds and managing firms	Using tickers to get CIKs	Getting directory of Form N-PORT		Getting holdings
Parent Firm ID (CIK)		✓	✓		✓
SEC Fund Series ID		✓			✓
Share Class ID (Ticker)	✓	✓			

Note: SEC filing index: <https://www.sec.gov/Archives/edgar/full-index/>; SEC Investment firms: [https://www.sec.gov/open/datasets-investment\\_company](https://www.sec.gov/open/datasets-investment_company). A sample of filing is [https://www.sec.gov/Archives/edgar/data/741350/000175272422215831/xslFormNPORT-P\\_X01/primary\\_doc.xml](https://www.sec.gov/Archives/edgar/data/741350/000175272422215831/xslFormNPORT-P_X01/primary_doc.xml)

I validate N-PORT-P data against official data. The credit supply of \$43.97 billion to EM local currency bond markets in Q2 2022 in the N-PORT-P data is comparable to \$40 billion reported by mutual funds in the U.S. Portfolio Holdings of Foreign Securities as of December 2022<sup>19</sup>. Similarly, the credit supply of \$65.66 billion in Q4 2020 and \$65.95 billion in Q4 2021 from the N-PORT-p data is comparable to \$69 billion in December 2020 and \$67 billion in December 2021 from the official data.

### A.3 Colombian sovereign bond issuance

I search for Colombian Peso denominated sovereign bonds from Bloomberg Terminal. The search criteria include asset classes categorized as "Government" (with consolidated duplicate bonds), BCLASS classification as "Treasury" and "Sovereign," maturity dates after January 1, 2005, and issuance dates prior to December 31, 2023. After removing duplicate bonds, such as those from Global Depository Notes (as described in Section A.1), and excluding bonds without information on the amount issued, this yield 309 individual bonds. The earliest bond in the sample was issued in 1997, and the latest maturity is in 2050. There is no coupon information available for floating-rate bonds, so their coupon payments are excluded from the analysis.

The discount rate used is the average annual short-term rate in Colombia from 2005 to 2023,

<sup>19</sup>See [https://ticdata.treasury.gov/resource-center/data-chart-center/tic/Documents/shca2022\\_report.pdf](https://ticdata.treasury.gov/resource-center/data-chart-center/tic/Documents/shca2022_report.pdf)

**Table A.2:** EM LC credit supplies (USD bn) in Q4, 2019 by US fund categories

Fund Category	Benchmarks Include EM LC bonds	Benchmarks Exclude EM LC bonds
Allocation	1.14	0.77
Alternative	0.01	0.26
Taxable Bond	46.95	33.67
Commodities		0.05
International Equity		0.62
Miscellaneous		0.01
Nontraditional Equity		0.00
Sector Equity		0.00
U.S. Equity		0.01

Notes: This table presents the market value (in USD billion) of EM local-currency bonds held by different categories of U.S. mutual funds, as reported in portfolios from Form N-PORT-P between December 2019 and February 2020. Fund categories are provided by Morningstar. The identification of EM local-currency sovereign bonds is based on reported currency denominations, issuer sectors (i.e., corporate versus treasury), and issuer countries. Benchmark information from Morningstar is also used. A fund is considered to include EM local-currency bonds if either its primary or secondary benchmark includes EM LC bonds.

sourced from the FRED series COLIR3TCD01STQ. For inflation-linked bonds, of which there are 57 in my sample, I use the Colombia Peso to UVR exchange rate published by the central bank<sup>20</sup>. I use the exchange rate on December 31 from 2005 to 2023 to calculate an average rate of exchange rate depreciation, and then use this rate to interpolate the level of exchange rates from 1997 up to 2050 to adjust the principal payment of inflation-linked bonds.

To further check the evolution of bond characters, I show the debt level of different bond characters below.

## **A.4 Morningstar holdings data**

Once I have a list of funds through the two-step procedure described in Section 4.1, I then download their portfolio reporting dates from Morningstar Direct. At this stage, I further restrict the sample to funds with consistent portfolio reporting. I then use the API from Morningstar Direct to directly download holdings.

<sup>20</sup><https://www.banrep.gov.co/es/estadisticas/unidad-valor-real-uvr>



A large number of holdings lack CUSIP or ISIN identifiers. For the purposes of this study, I extract issuer names, bond coupons, and bond maturities from the security description field in the holding data. These three pieces of information are the minimum required for matching a bond identifier. However, out of millions of positions I have downloaded, approximately 10,000 do not have reported bond identifiers but contain enough information in the bond description to assign an identifier using an external database. Since this small number is unlikely to affect the results, I delete these positions without bond identifiers.

I then clean the fund holdings data. First, I sum the weights of the bonds in each portfolio. I delete funds whose total reported weight in any quarter exceeds 100%. There is inconsistency and a lack of uniformity in how funds report the quantity of bonds in the “shares” field. Ideally, they should report the face value or the number of bonds in multiples of the par amount—the minimum face value of bonds auctioned in the primary market. I retrieve the exchange rates and calculate the implied market price of the bonds. Based on this price, I determine whether the quantity of the bond is reported in multiples of tens.

I illustrate the solution for cleaning reported face values using the SPDR Bloomberg Emerging Markets Local Bond UCITS ETF. I retrieve its portfolio on July 4th, 2024 from Morningstar Direct and validated using its public disclosure. It held the Brazilian bond—LETRA TESOURO NACIONAL 0 07/01/2026 (BRSTNCLTN848)—with reported shares of 89,300, a bond price of 0.8057, and a market value of \$13,096,800.92. Here, the fund reported the share in units of 1,000. The adjusted share should be 89,300,000. I account for this possibility in the reported shares in the data.

To calculate the total funding for a bond, I use the reported market value of the bond divided by the portfolio weight to get the net assets of the fund, representing the funding of the bond in dollars. Some funds, like PIMCO Income Funds, have net assets well over 100 billion USD. To handle extreme cases, I winsorize the data at the 10th to 90th percentile.

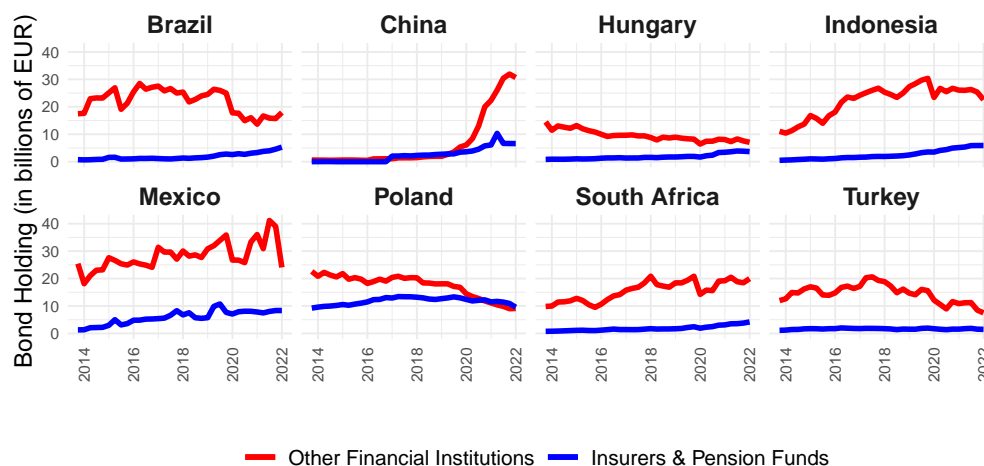
## B Empirical result appendix

### B.1 Investment funds and EM LC globalization

Many developing countries have globalized their domestic sovereign bond markets over the past two decades. Unlike hard-currency denominated debts, investment funds hold more local-currency denominated sovereign bonds than other types of non-official creditors who are crucial for their hard-currency borrowing, such as commercial banks, insurance companies, and pension funds.

To gauge the size of credit from investment funds, I use credit supply data by investor sectors from the ECB. I select non-developed countries which experienced local currency market development. As Figure B.1 shows, the investor sector “other financial institutions” which include European investment funds generally supply more credit than insurance and pension funds. Depository banks, extensively analyzed, supplied little credit to these countries. The visual inspection also reveals that the credit from “other financial institutions” are volatile. This fact is consistent with the discussion of flighty credit from investment funds.

Figure B.1: Credit supplied to emerging markets by investor sectors



Notes: Data comes from the European Security Holding Database. “Other financial intuitions” include mutual funds. It is referred to “Financial corporations other than money-issuing institutions, insurance corporations and pension funds” (sector code S12P) in the ECB data.

ECB data does not reveal details on finer divisions by currency and creditor types such as the credit supplied by hedge funds. For hedge funds, U.S. Treasury International Capital (TIC) System data indicates that the holdings by other financial firms which include hedge funds are \$8 billion, \$7 billion and \$16 billion in 2020, 2021 and 2022 respectively, comparing to an average of \$59 billion by mutual funds in these years.

## **B.2 Additional evidence on borrowers' policy decisions on benchmark index presence**

I present the following facts:

1. Countries have policy tools to influence their index presence;
2. Countries without explicit capital controls and that are persistently included in global indices tilt their LC borrowing away from index-eligible bonds during global downturns.

The model in the main text assumes the country only issues index eligible bonds. That model is consistent with these facts qualitatively, and the quantitative importance depends on the specific weighting function.

### **B.2.1 Narrative evidence**

China relaxed its capital controls specific to mutual funds in 2016 and subsequently gained index inclusion in the JP Morgan GBI-EM index (Clayton et al., 2022). Like China, India imposed discriminatory capital control policies across different types of creditors (Patnaik et al., 2013). Policies that removed capital controls and developed clearing technologies promoted India's inclusion in the JP Morgan GBI-EM index in 2023. Argentina and Nigeria are two cases where countries prioritized managing exchange rates and controlling capital flows. Facing economic downturns, these two countries restricted currency exchanges to stabilize the value of their currencies. Global index providers deemed this policy as reducing market liquidity and currency convertibility despite potential benefits. As a result, JP Morgan issued warnings but both countries responded by heightening currency exchange controls. Consequently, JP Morgan excluded Nigeria in 2013 and Argentina in 2019, just two years after the inclusion in 2017, from the GBI-EM Broad index.

Egypt is another recent example. It is a country with no explicit capital control to foreign investors. However, it imposes policies to borrow in index eligible bonds and fulfill index requirement to gain inclusion in JP Morgan's indices (Ministry of Finance Arab Republic of Egypt, 2022). Shortly after its 2022 inclusion, Egypt suffered an economic crisis in 2023, devalued its currency, and depleted its dollar reserves. JP Morgan excluded Egyptian domestic bonds in 2024. What complicates the Egyptian case are the divided views on index inclusion and exclusion from the perspective of emerging markets. Despite the expected small index weights, the finance minister tailored reforms to appeal to index providers and seek inclusion. The opposing view emerged when the exclusion occurs—arguing that Egypt's index weights are too small for any significant negative consequence from the exclusion (Abdel-Razek, 2024).

### B.2.2 A case study of Colombia

I further use Colombia to illustrate how the characteristics of bonds may influence index presence. Colombian global LC bonds were already in the index prior to full inclusion, representing about 0.3% in the JP Morgan GBI-EM Global Diversified index, JP Morgan rationalized the inclusion in domestically issued bonds as the “result of improved transparency and accessibility for international investors in the local TES market” (Broner et al., 2021). Colombia did not have any significant bond market or capital account policy changes prior to inclusion, but borrowing in index-eligible bonds may have been a precursor.

For each unique COP-denominated bond issued by the Colombian Treasury, I classify them as index-eligible or ineligible according to the criteria outlined in JP Morgan documentation. Given the different characteristics of bonds and varying maturities, I calculate the present value of expected interest and principal payments in Colombian Peso. This represents the debt level of the Colombian government. Historical coupon payment data is not available from commercial sources, so the estimates of the debt level omit interest payments for floating-rate and variable-rate bonds. The Colombian government experienced a significant increase in the debt level of eligible bonds prior to index inclusion. However, after inclusion, the government shifted away from issuing eligible bonds. I also decompose the debt level by other bond characteristics, such as coupon type, maturity, and issuance size, in Appendix A.3. Following the inclusion, the government borrowed more through short-term bonds.

Furthermore, I directly estimate the share of external local-currency bonds held by mutual funds using their aggregate positions up to 2017 from the Global Capital Allocation Project (Maggiore et al., 2027; Coppola et al., 2021). I construct the share of external local- and hard-currency sovereign bonds held by mutual funds. Figure B.2 shows that mutual fund shares reached 35% for local-currency denominated debt in 2017. More importantly, mutual fund shares of local-currency debt are consistently higher than those of dollar-denominated debt. Colombia was able to attract capital from global funds even with minimal index presence. This fact is consistent with the model.

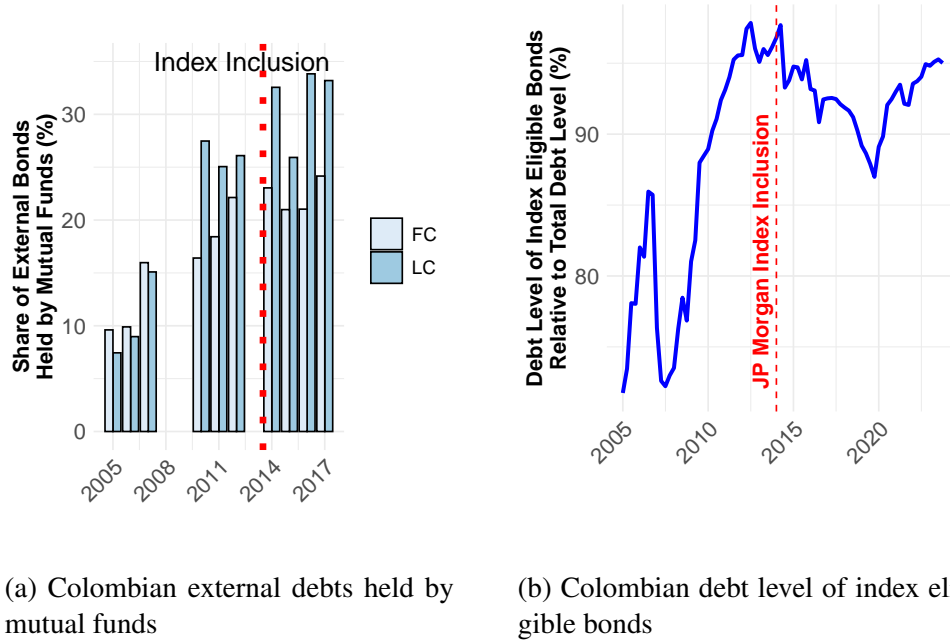
### B.2.3 Issuing index eligible bonds over the global financial cycle

The case study of Colombia shows that it borrows in both index-eligible and ineligible bonds and that the debt level of index-eligible bonds exhibits cyclical patterns. I further explore the cyclicity of issuing index-eligible bonds. I collect data from Bloomberg on local-currency sovereign bonds issued by common emerging market countries from 2005 to 2023. Similar to the case study, I use the bond eligibility of the JP Morgan GBI-EM Diversified index to identify index eligible bonds<sup>21</sup>.

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<sup>21</sup>Note that JP Morgan has discretion to decide which bonds are eligible. As mentioned above, liquidity could be a concern. To the best of my knowledge, there isn't any study of JP Morgan GBI-EM that analyzes exactly which bonds are eligible. All existing approaches focus on the country weight in the GBI-EM index. Using a snapshot

Figure B.2: A case study of Colombia's index inclusion: creditor and debt instrument compositions



Notes: Aggregate positions of mutual funds domiciled in Ireland, Luxembourg, and the U.S. are from: [www.globalcapitalallocation.com](http://www.globalcapitalallocation.com), based on the work of Maggiori et al. (2027) and Coppola et al. (2021). Foreign creditor holdings of domestic debts by currency are from Onen et al. (2022). Data for years 2008, 2009, and 2013 are missing because Colombian represented less than 1% of the total sovereign fixed income portfolios for Ireland, Luxembourg, and the US. As a result, the data omits Colombia. I estimate the present value of debt service payments. The discount rate is the average of Colombian short-term interest rate from 2005 and 2023. I retrieve the end-of-year Colombian Peso to UVR (the real value unit for inflation index bonds) exchange rate from the central bank. I use the average growth between 2005 and 2023 to interpolate for other years. When coupon payments are not available, the principal payment is used. See Appendix A.3 for more details on the construction.

After extracting the cyclical components of the VIX and the share of issuing index-eligible debt relative to total LC bonds at the annual frequency, I calculate their correlations.

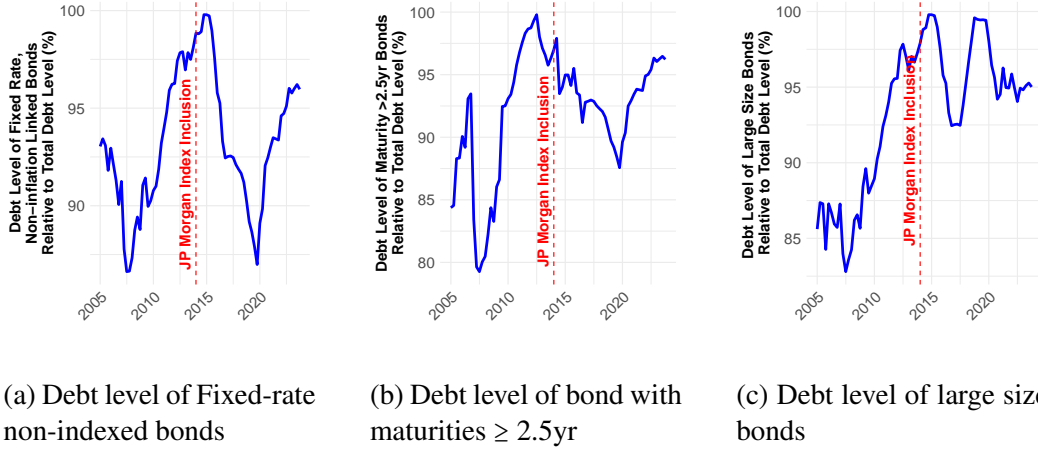
Table B.3 Panel A presents the cyclical pattern of these currencies, while currencies that experienced inclusion/exclusion events are shown in Panel B<sup>22</sup>. Countries persistently included in GBI-EM index tend to issue fewer index-eligible bonds when the VIX is high during global downturns. This negative correlation between the VIX and the issuance share of index-eligible bonds is present in nine countries, excluding Thailand and Poland.

Even though two bonds differ in their index status, they face identical credit risk. Index-eligible

of the publicly available index weights of individual bonds from the GBI-EM website, I verified using eligibility criteria and identified all but a few bonds in July 2023. The bond-level index weights can be assessed here: <https://www.jpmorgan.com/insights/global-research/index-research/composition>. However, historical index weights are not publicly available without a paid subscription.

<sup>22</sup>Table B.4 shows the correlations without detrending using the HP filter. The negative correlations among currencies in the GBI-EM index are still present.

Figure B.3: Colombian debt level



$B^{e'}$  and ineligible  $B^{o'}$  bonds issued by the same country included the index should have identical prices

$$q = \frac{\mathbb{E}\left(\frac{s(1-d')}{s'}\right)/(1+r^f)}{(1+r^f)D_0\left(\frac{1-\mu}{\gamma_L} + \frac{\mu}{\gamma_H}\right)\text{Var}\left(\frac{s(1-d')}{s'}\right)\left(\frac{s^{-1}q \times (B^{e'} + B^{o'})}{D_0} - (1-\mu)(1-\alpha)w^b(s^{-1}qB^{e'})\right) + 1} \quad (26)$$

If the demand is downward sloping ( $\frac{\partial q}{\partial B^{e'}} < 0$ ), then using the Implicit Function Theorem and differentiating the price with respect to the yields of each bond yields, I obtain:

$$\frac{\partial q}{\partial B^{e'}} - \frac{\partial q}{\partial B^{o'}} \propto \frac{\partial w^b}{\partial (s^{-1}qB^{e'})} s^{-1}q \geq 0 \quad (27)$$

Therefore, the demand for index-eligible bonds is always more elastic than that for ineligible bonds, given that the weighting is non-decreasing in the market value of bonds. When the model allows borrowing in index-ineligible bonds, the bond portfolio would depend on the relative demand elasticity.

**Table B.3:** Summary of the cyclical pattern of the debt issuance by currencies eligible for the GBI-EM index

Currency	Avg. index eligible share (%)	Corr. with VIX (%)
<i>Panel a: Currencies included since the index inception</i>		
BRL	7.22	-31.30
CLP	4.11	-2.60
HUF	16.08	-8.71
IDR	29.79	-18.99
MXN	12.98	-4.31
MYR	47.43	-13.25
PEN	23.64	-20.72
PLN	44.01	3.03
THB	8.71	14.67
TRY	29.09	-11.20
ZAR	15.68	-46.22
Average	21.70	-12.69
Median	16.08	-11.20
Std.Dev	14.54	16.62
<i>Panel B: Currencies with inclusion/exclusion events</i>		
ARS	0.23	5.62
CNY	54.52	-36.91
COP	53.40	48.85
CZK	10.19	10.96
DOP	2.16	21.33
EGP	9.17	14.11
ILS	22.31	-4.37
INR	27.87	10.25
PHP	35.98	-41.96
RON	55.65	7.30
RUB	18.58	32.22
Average	26.37	6.13
Median	22.31	10.25
Std.Dev	20.93	26.68

Notes: The index-eligible share refers to the proportion of index eligible bonds relative to the total LC bonds issued annually. The correlation between the VIX and the index eligible LC bond share refers to the relationship between the cyclical components of both the VIX and the share after 2005. I detrend both variables using the HP filter. The currencies in Panel A represent countries that have been included in the GBI-EM index since its inception and have not experienced any inclusion or exclusion events.

**Table B.4:** Summary of the level of debt issuance by currencies eligible for the GBI-EM index

Currency	Corr. with VIX (%)
<i>Panel a: Currencies included since index inception</i>	
BRL	-24.04
CLP	-10.85
HUF	-18.66
IDR	-18.72
MXN	5.09
MYR	-22.70
PEN	-15.24
PLN	-2.30
THB	12.50
TRY	-18.57
ZAR	-38.53
Average	-13.82
Median	-18.57
Std.Dev	14.34
<i>Panel B: Currencies with inclusion/exclusion events</i>	
ARS	-1.09
CNY	-27.79
COP	53.52
CZK	10.29
DOP	16.21
EGP	11.39
ILS	-6.31
INR	14.05
PHP	-38.04
RON	-15.04
RUB	27.27
Average	4.04
Median	10.29
Std.Dev	25.71

Notes: The share of index eligible bonds refers to the proportion of index eligible bonds relative to the total local currency (LC) bonds issued annually. The correlation between the VIX and the share of index eligible LC bonds refers to the correlation between the level of the VIX and the level of the share after 2005.



## C Analytical appendix

### C.1 Deriving portfolios

The portfolio weight  $w_{jt}$  for  $j = \{\text{EM fund, Dollar fund}\}$  is

$$w_{jt} = \frac{\frac{1}{q_t} \mathbb{E}_t \left( \frac{s_t(1-d_{t+1})}{s_{t+1}(1+r^f)} \right) - 1}{(1+r^f)D_0\gamma_j \text{Var} \left( \frac{s_t(1-d_{t+1})(1+r_t)}{s_{t+1}(1+r^f)} - 1 \right)} + (1-\alpha)w_{jt}^b \approx \frac{\frac{1}{q_t} \mathbb{E}_t \left( \frac{s_t(1-d_{t+1})}{s_{t+1}(1+r^f)} \right) - 1}{(1+r^f)D_0\gamma_j \text{Var} \left( \frac{s_t(1-d_{t+1})}{s_{t+1}} \right)} + (1-\alpha)w_{jt}^b$$

where the approximation is under a state without any currency and credit risk, that is  $1/q_t = 1+r_t \approx 1+r^f$ . The asset market clearing condition is

$$(1-\mu)D_0 \cdot w_{\text{EM Fund},t} + \mu \cdot D_0 \cdot w_{\text{Dollar Fund},t} = s_t^{-1}q_t B_{t+1}$$

The expression of bond price  $q_t$  is

$$q_t = \frac{\mathbb{E}_t \left( \frac{s_t(1-d_{t+1})}{s_{t+1}(1+r^f)} \right)}{(1+r^f)D_0 \left( \frac{1-\mu}{\gamma_L} + \frac{\mu}{\gamma_H} \right)^{-1} \cdot \text{Var} \left( \frac{s_t(1-d_{t+1})}{s_{t+1}} \right) \cdot \left( \frac{s_t^{-1}q_t B_{t+1}}{D_0} - (1-\mu)(1-\alpha)w_t^b \right) + 1}$$

To analyze the impact of index inclusion on prices, I use express the price using short-cut notations

$$K_t = q_t - \frac{a_0}{a_1 \left( \frac{s_t^{-1}B_{t+1}}{D_0} q_t - a_2 w_t^b \right) + 1}$$

$$\frac{\partial q_t}{\partial w_t^b} \Big|_{w_t^b=0} = - \frac{\partial K_t / \partial w_t^b}{\partial K_t / \partial q_t} = \frac{a_0 a_1 a_2}{(a_1 \frac{s_t^{-1}B_{t+1}}{D_0} q_t + 1)^2 + a_0 a_1 \frac{s_t^{-1}B_{t+1}}{D_0}} > 0 \quad (28)$$

which implies that index inclusion raises the price.

**Relationship to CRRA preference.** The managers' problem under a CRRA preference is

$$\max_{b_{j,t+1}^{DM}, b_{j,t+1}} \mathbb{E}_t \frac{(\alpha W_{j,t+1} + (1-\alpha)(W_{j,t+1} - W_{j,t+1}^b))^{1-\gamma_k}}{1-\gamma_k}$$

$$\text{s.t. } D_0 = q_t^{DM} b_{j,t+1}^{DM} + s_t^{-1} q_t b_{j,t+1}$$

$$W_{j,t+1} = b_{j,t+1}^{DM} + s_{t+1}^{-1} (1-d_{t+1}) b_{j,t+1} \quad (29)$$

The first order condition of the portfolio choice for type  $j$  fund is:

$$\mathbb{E}_t \left[ \left( \frac{s_t(1-d_{t+1})(1+r_t)}{s_{t+1}(1+r^f)} - 1 \right) \left( \alpha + \left( \frac{s_t^{-1}q_t B_{t+1}}{D_0} - (1-\alpha)w_t^b \right) \left( \frac{s_t(1-d_{t+1})(1+r_t)}{s_{t+1}(1+r^f)} - 1 \right) \right)^{-\gamma_j} \right] = 0$$

To derive the portfolio share, I expand  $\frac{s_t(1-d_{t+1})(1+r_t)}{s_{t+1}}$  around the risk-free rate  $1+r^f$  up to the second order. In other words, I solve the portfolio problem using the Taylor expansion around a state without any risk. The result for EM fund is below, and the expression of similar form applies for dollar funds.

$$\mathbb{E}_t \left( \frac{s_t(1-d_{t+1})(1+r_t)}{s_{t+1}(1+r^f)} - 1 \right) - \frac{\gamma_L}{\alpha} \left( \frac{s_t^{-1} q_t B_{t+1}}{D_0} - (1-\alpha)w_t^b \right) \mathbb{E}_t \left( \frac{s_t(1-d_{t+1})(1+r_t)}{s_{t+1}(1+r^f)} - 1 \right)^2 = 0$$

The portfolio weight  $w_{jt}$  for  $j = \{\text{EM fund, Dollar fund}\}$  is

$$w_{jt} = \frac{\frac{1}{q_t} \mathbb{E}_t \left( \frac{s_t(1-d_{t+1})}{s_{t+1}(1+r^f)} \right) - 1}{\frac{\gamma_L}{\alpha} \text{Var} \left( \frac{s_t(1-d_{t+1})}{s_{t+1}} \right)} + (1-\alpha)w_{jt}^b$$

The asset market clearing condition is

$$(1-\mu)D_0 \cdot w_{\text{EM Fund},t} + \mu \cdot D_0 \cdot w_{\text{Dollar Fund},t} = s_t^{-1} q_t B_{t+1}$$

The expression of bond price  $q_t$  is

$$q_t = \frac{\mathbb{E}_t \left( \frac{s_t(1-d_{t+1})}{s_{t+1}(1+r^f)} \right)}{\frac{\left( \frac{1-\mu}{\gamma_L} + \frac{\mu}{\gamma_H} \right)^{-1}}{\alpha} \cdot \text{Var} \left( \frac{s_t(1-d_{t+1})}{s_{t+1}} \right) \cdot \left( \frac{s_t^{-1} q_t B_{t+1}}{D_0} - (1-\mu)(1-\alpha)w_t^b \right) + 1}$$

I explain why bond prices do not enter in  $\text{Var}(\cdot)$ , as  $\mathbb{E}_t \left( \frac{s_t(1-d_{t+1})(1+r_t)}{s_{t+1}(1+r^f)} - 1 \right)^2 \approx \text{Var} \left( \frac{s_t(1-d_{t+1})}{s_{t+1}} \right)$ . Define  $\frac{1+r^f+r_{t+1}-r^f}{1+r^f} = 1 + \frac{r_{t+1}-r^f}{1+r^f} \equiv 1 + \Delta_t$  and  $\frac{s_0(1-d_{t+1})}{s_{t+1}} \equiv x_{t+1}$ . The original term can be written as

$$\begin{aligned} \mathbb{E}((1+\Delta_t)x_{t+1}-1)^2 &= \mathbb{E}(1+\Delta_t)^2 x_{t+1}^2 + 1 - 2\mathbb{E}(x_{t+1})(1+\Delta_t) \\ &= \text{Var}(x_{t+1}) + (\Delta_t^2 + 2\Delta_t) \mathbb{E}(x_{t+1}^2) + \mathbb{E}^2(x_{t+1}) + 1 - 2\mathbb{E}(x_{t+1})(1+\Delta_t) \end{aligned}$$

When  $\Delta_t \rightarrow 0$ ,  $\mathbb{E}((1+\Delta_t)x_{t+1}-1)^2 = \text{Var}(x_{t+1}) + \mathbb{E}^2(x_{t+1}) + 1 - 2\mathbb{E}(x_{t+1})$ . When  $\mathbb{E}_t(d_{t+1}) \rightarrow 0$  (i.e. the default probability is approaching zero) and the expected depreciation is 0 (i.e.  $\mathbb{E} \left( \frac{s_t}{s_{t+1}} \right) \rightarrow 1$ ), the above expression becomes  $\mathbb{E}((1+\Delta_t)x_{t+1}-1)^2 = \text{Var}(x_{t+1}) + 1 + 1 - 2 = \text{Var}(x_{t+1})$

## C.2 Proof of Proposition 1.

From the market clearing condition:

$$y_0 = (1+r^f) \left( \mathbb{E} \left( \frac{s_0(1-d_{t+1})}{s_{t+1}} \right) \right)^{-1} \left( \frac{(1+r^f)D_0 \text{Var} \left( \frac{s_0(1-d_{t+1})}{s_{t+1}} \right)}{E_\gamma} \left( \frac{s_0^{-1}B}{y_0 D_0} - (1-\mu)(1-\alpha)w^b \left( \frac{s_0^{-1}B}{y_0} \right) \right) + 1 \right)$$

Denote  $R_0 \equiv \mathbb{E}_0 \left( \frac{s_0(1-d_1)}{s_1} \right)$ ,  $w_0 \equiv \frac{s_0^{-1}B}{y_0 D_0}$ ,  $\epsilon^b \equiv \frac{\partial w^b}{\partial (s^{-1}B/y_0)} \frac{s_0^{-1}B}{y_0}$ ,  $V_0 \equiv (1+r^f)D_0 \text{Var} \left( \frac{s_0(1-d_1)}{s_1} \right)$ . I rewrite the market clearing condition as

$$y_0 = (1+r^f)R_0^{-1} \left( \frac{V_0}{E_\gamma} (w_0 - (1-\mu)(1-\alpha)w^b) + 1 \right)$$

I perform the first-order Taylor expansion of  $y_0$ ,  $R_0$ ,  $V_0$  and  $s_0$ .  $\wedge$  denotes the log-deviation from the initial value.

$$\begin{aligned} \left( 1 + \frac{(1+r^f)V_0}{R_0 y_0 E_\gamma} (w_0 - (1-\mu)(1-\alpha)\epsilon^b) \right) \hat{y}_0 &= -\hat{R}_0 + \\ &\hat{s}_0 \frac{(1+r^f)V_0}{R_0 y_0 E_\gamma} (-w_0 + (1-\mu)(1-\alpha)\epsilon^b) + \\ &\hat{V}_0 \frac{(1+r^f)V_0}{R_0 y_0 E_\gamma} (w_0 - (1-\mu)(1-\alpha)w^b) \end{aligned} \quad (30)$$

Define the creditor composition  $\theta_0$  as the market value of bond held by EM funds relative to the market value of the bond held among global mutual funds.

$$\theta_0 = \frac{\left[ \left( \frac{y_0 R_0}{1+r^f} - 1 \right) \frac{1-\mu}{\gamma_L V_0} + (1-\mu)(1-\alpha)w^b \right] D_0}{\frac{s_0^{-1}B}{y_0}} \Rightarrow (1-\mu)(1-\alpha)w^b = \theta_0 b_0 - \left( \frac{y_0 R_0}{1+r^f} - 1 \right) \frac{1-\mu}{\gamma_L V_0}$$

Using the definition of dollar fund ownership,

$$1 - \theta_0 = \frac{\left( \frac{y_0 R_0}{1+r^f} - 1 \right) \frac{\mu}{\gamma_H V_0} D_0}{\frac{s_0^{-1}B}{y_0}} \Rightarrow \frac{y_0 R_0}{1+r^f} - 1 = (1 - \theta_0) \frac{s_0^{-1}B}{y_0 D_0} \cdot \left( \frac{\mu}{\gamma_H V_0} \right)^{-1}$$

Using the above expressions, I rewrite terms with  $w^b$ .

$$w_0 - (1-\mu)(1-\alpha)w^b = (1-\theta_0)w_0 \left( 1 + \frac{1-\mu}{\mu} \frac{\gamma_H}{\gamma_L} \right)$$

Define the following

$$\begin{aligned}\hat{R}_0 &= \frac{\partial R_0}{\partial z_0} \frac{z_0}{R_0} \hat{z}_0 \equiv \Phi_R \hat{z}_0 \\ \hat{s}_0 &= \frac{\partial s_0}{\partial z_0} \frac{z_0}{s_0} \hat{z}_0 \equiv \Phi_s \hat{z}_0 \\ \hat{V}_0 &= \frac{\partial V_0}{\partial z_0} \frac{z_0}{V_0} \hat{z}_0 \equiv \Phi_v \hat{z}_0\end{aligned}$$

Finally, using above results, I rewrite equation 30.

$$\begin{aligned}\hat{y}_0 &= -\Phi_R \hat{z}_0 + \Phi_1 (-\Phi_R + \Phi_s + \Phi_v \Phi_2) \hat{z}_0, \\ \text{where } \Phi_1 &= \left( 1 + \frac{w_0 - \epsilon^b (1 - \mu)(1 - \alpha)}{(1 - \theta_0)w_0(1 + \frac{(1 - \mu)\gamma_H}{\mu\gamma_L}) + \frac{E_\gamma}{(1 + r^f)V_0}} \right)^{-1}, \\ \Phi_2 &= \frac{(1 - \theta_0)w_0(1 + \frac{(1 - \mu)\gamma_H}{\mu\gamma_L})}{(1 - \theta_0)w_0(1 + \frac{(1 - \mu)\gamma_H}{\mu\gamma_L}) + \frac{E_\gamma}{(1 + r^f)V_0}}\end{aligned}$$

**QED.**

### C.3 Proof of Proposition 2.

To show Proposition 2, I first use the first-order condition at  $t = 1$  when  $h = 0$ . The optimal choice of bonds  $B^* > 0$  satisfies the following at  $t = 2$  for a given state.

$$\frac{1}{Y_1 + q(h, B^*)B^* - B_{01}} \left( \frac{\partial q(h = 0)}{\partial B} \cdot B^* + q(h = 0) \right) + \beta_{EM} \frac{\partial E_1(V_2(s_2, B))}{\partial B} = 0$$

I first show when  $V_1(h = 1, B^*) > V_1(h = 0, B^*)$  could happen. I analyze if the first order condition still holds when the index status switches to inclusion,  $h = 1$ , when the amount of borrowing remains the same at  $B^*$ . Let  $q^0 \equiv q(h = 0, B^*)$  and  $q^1 \equiv q(h = 1, B^*)$ . Given that the price is higher under an index status, a sufficient condition is:

$$\frac{\partial q^1}{\partial B} q^0 - \frac{\partial q^0}{\partial B} q^1 \Big|_{B=B^*}$$

To characterize conditions under which above expression is greater than zero, I evaluate the first order condition at  $q^*(h = 0, B^*)$  and  $B^*$ . To simplify notations, I write down the market clearing condition as below.  $a_0 = \mathbb{E}_1(\mathcal{E}_2)$ ,  $a_1 = (1 + r^f)D_0 \text{Var}(\mathcal{E}_2)$ ,  $f^1(q(h = 1, B), B) = \frac{1}{E_\gamma}(\frac{s_1^{-1}qB}{D_0} - (1 - \mu)(1 - \alpha)w^b)$ , and  $f^0(q(h = 0, B), B) = \frac{1}{E_\gamma}(\frac{s_1^{-1}qB}{D_0})$ . I express the bond price using short-cut

notations as blow.

$$K = q - \frac{a_0}{a_1 f(q, B) + 1} \quad (31)$$

My goal is to analyze  $\frac{\partial q}{\partial B}|_{B^*, q^*}$  under index inclusion  $f^1 = f(q(h = 1, B), B)$  and under index exclusion  $f^0 = f(q(h = 0, B), B)$ . Define  $w = \frac{s_0^{-1} q^* B^*}{D_0}$ . Using the Implicit Function Theorem,

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{\partial q}{\partial B} &= -\frac{\partial K / \partial B}{\partial K / \partial q} = -\frac{\frac{(\partial f / \partial B) \cdot a_0 a_1}{(a_1 f + 1)^2}}{1 + \frac{(\partial f / \partial q) \cdot a_0 a_1}{(a_1 f + 1)^2}} = -\frac{a_0 a_1 \frac{\partial f}{\partial B}}{(a_1 f + 1)^2 + a_0 a_1 \frac{\partial f}{\partial q}} \\ \frac{\partial q^1}{\partial B} q^0 - \frac{\partial q^0}{\partial B} q^1 \Big|_{B=B^*} &> 0 \Leftrightarrow -q^0 \frac{\partial f^1 / \partial B}{(a_1 f^1 + 1)^2 + a_0 a_1 \frac{\partial f^1}{\partial q}} + q^1 \frac{\partial f^0 / \partial B}{(a_1 f^0 + 1)^2 + a_0 a_1 \frac{\partial f^0}{\partial q}} > 0 \end{aligned}$$

A sufficient condition for the above inequality to hold is

$$3(\tilde{\varepsilon} - 1) > \frac{(1 + r^f) D_0 \text{Var}(\mathcal{E}_1)}{E_\gamma} (w(2 - \tilde{\varepsilon}) - w^b(1 - \mu)(1 - \alpha))$$

where  $\tilde{\varepsilon} \equiv \frac{\partial w^b}{\partial (s_1^{-1} q B)} \times \frac{(s_1^{-1} q B)}{w^b}$ , which is evaluating the elasticity of the benchmark index  $w^b(s_1^{-1} q^* B^*)$  given the market value of borrowing under index exclusion at  $t = 1$ . This sufficient condition guarantees that

$$\frac{\partial V_1(h = 1, B)}{\partial B} \Big|_{B=B^*} > \frac{\partial V_1(h = 0, B)}{\partial B} \Big|_{B=B^*}$$

Given that the value function is concave in borrowing  $B$ , the borrowing under  $h = 1$  could increase so that the value function becomes lower until reaching the maximum and becoming zero.

**QED.**

## C.4 The relationship to the literature of benchmark contracts

I consider a realistic feature that is omitted in Kashyap et al. (2020), namely that an asset manager may invest in an asset class completely different from the asset class specified in the performance benchmark.

I consider a two-period CARA-normal model with two risky assets. The risky asset pays  $\tilde{D}_i \sim N(\mu_i, \sigma_i^2)$  per unit at date 1 for  $i = 1, 2$ . The exogenous gross interest rate of a risk free asset is normalized to 0. The aggregate supply of the risky asset is  $\bar{x}_i$ . I assume the pay-off depends on a common and an idiosyncratic component, that is  $\tilde{D}_i = \nu + \tilde{D}_{\epsilon, i}$  where the common shock  $\nu \sim N(0, \sigma_A^2)$  and specific shocks  $\tilde{D}_{\epsilon, i} \sim N(0, \sigma_{\epsilon, i}^2)$ . This implies a covariance  $\text{cov}(\tilde{D}_1, \tilde{D}_2) = \sigma_A^2$ .

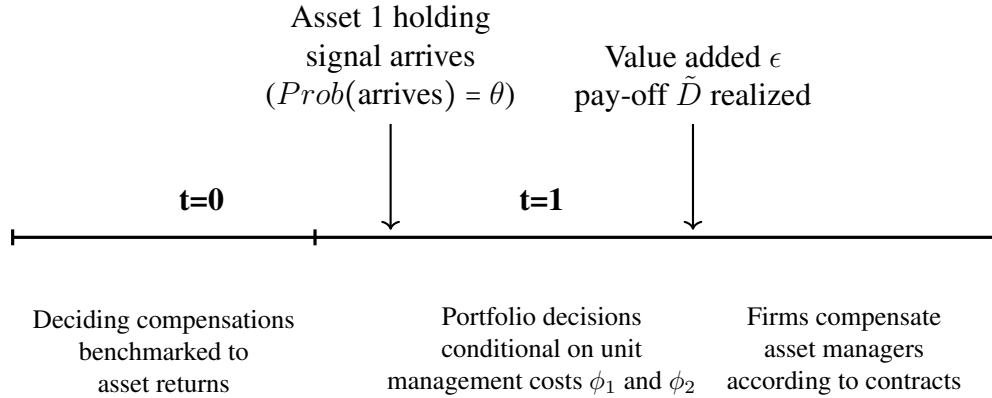
There is a unit mass of two types of agents: asset managers (indicated by M) and asset management firms (indicated by F). Both agents have an identical CARA preference over their wealth at date 1. I denote the risk tolerance by  $\gamma$ . The objective of the agents is to maximize the expected

utility  $\mathbb{E}(-\exp(-\gamma W_j))$  for  $j = F, M$ .

Asset management firms assign the asset manager the task of managing a risky asset 2. This is reflected by a wealth loss  $\phi_p$  of the firm per unit of asset 1 the manager invests. The manager has an lump-sum value added  $\epsilon \sim N(0, \sigma_\epsilon)$ . Managing assets incurs a private management cost (or negative values can be thought of as private benefits)  $\phi_i$  per unit for  $i = 1, 2$ . The manager may not commit to the task and may decide to invest in risky asset 1.

I divide the timeline into three stages and summarize it below. Figure C.4 also describes the timeline graphically. In the first stage, the asset management firm and the manager sign a compensation contract. The firm evaluates the manager's absolute return, and the return relative to assets 1 and 2. The contract  $(a, b, c)$  maximizes the welfare between the firm and the manager. Their expected utilities are  $U^F$  and  $U^M$ . Compensations depend on a fund's absolute return  $r_x$  and the return relative to benchmark indices with weights  $(a_0, a_1, a_2)$ , that is  $w = a_0 r_x + a_1 (r_x - r_1) + a_2 (r_x - r_2)$ . Alternatively, the compensation can be written as  $w = a r_x - b r_1 - c r_2$ . In the second stage, the signal of the manager investing in asset 1 arrives with a probability of  $\theta$ . The manager only invest in risky asset 1 when the signal arrives. Conditional on the arrival of the signal, the manager decides to hold  $x_1$  shares of asset 1 and  $x_2$  shares of asset 2. Asset prices clear the market. In the last stage, values added to the management  $\epsilon$  are realized. The pay-offs of assets are realized.

Figure C.4: Model Timeline



I solve the optimal compensation scheme when there aren't any asset 2 specific shocks (i.e.  $\sigma_{\epsilon_2}^2 = 0$ ). I focus on parameters satisfying  $1 > a^* > 0$ . I summarize key insights below. Moreover, following Kashyap et al. (2020), the compensation should be benchmarked to the indices if the optimal benchmark contract contains  $b > 0$  or  $c > 0$ .

The first result from the extension of the benchmark contract literature is that the optimal compensation may involve  $b^* < 0$  and  $c^* > 0$ .  $b^* < 0$  means that the manager is penalized even if

he generates positive returns relative to the index of risk asset 1. If this penalty is not allowed in a compensation contract, then  $b^*$  should be 0. In other words, the practice of benchmarking to dollar indices despite of their actions of investing EM LC bonds may be optimal.

Moreover, I analyze how privates costs affect the transmission of shocks. In this environment, I conduct an experiment on the how rising volatility affects the equilibrium prices.

**Proposition 3** *Let  $\rho_1 = \gamma(b^*\sigma_{\epsilon 1}^2 + c^*\sigma_A^2) + \theta(\phi_p + \phi_1)$  denote the price of risk of asset 1.  $\mathbb{E}_0(r_1) = \gamma\theta(1 - a^*)(\sigma_{\epsilon 1}^2 + 2\sigma_A^2)\bar{x}_1 + \rho_1$ , where the first term represents the quantity of risk. The following holds.*

1.  $\frac{\partial \rho}{\partial \sigma_{\epsilon 1}^2} > 0$ .
2.  $\frac{\partial \rho}{\partial \sigma_A^2} > 0$  or  $< 0$ . Specifically, when  $\frac{1-\theta}{\gamma a^*}(\frac{1}{a^*} - 1)\phi_1 > \phi_p + (3 + \theta)\sigma_{\epsilon 1}^2(2 - \frac{1}{a^*})\bar{x}_1$ ,  $\frac{\partial \rho}{\partial \sigma_A^2} < 0$ .
3. If  $\frac{\partial \rho}{\partial \sigma_A^2} < 0$  for any  $(\tilde{\phi}_1, \tilde{\phi}_2, \tilde{\phi}_p)$ , then  $\frac{\partial \rho}{\partial \sigma_A^2} < 0 \forall \phi_2 > \tilde{\phi}_2$ .

This proposition summarizes how specific volatility ( $\sigma_{\epsilon 1}^2$ ) and common shocks ( $\sigma_A^2$ ) affect the price of risk. Amplification through balance sheet channels implies that financial frictions increase the risk premia regardless of whether the shocks are aggregate or idiosyncratic. The first result describes an amplification mechanism, showing that the price of risk increases when asset 1 specific volatility rises. The second result reflects a key departure from the traditional channels: there is an ambiguous effect on the price of risk when common volatility of common shocks.

Surprisingly, common shocks may reduce the price of risk. To induce the manager to commit to investing in asset 2, the firm would share the risk of asset 2 and reduce the incentives of investing asset 1. When a common shock drives asset returns, this compensation scheme effectively reduces the impact of common shocks on the asset manager's wealth.

The third result highlights how stabilization could happen. These conditions occur when the private cost of investing asset 1  $\phi_1$  is small or even negative (i.e. there may be a private benefit.). Moreover, increasing the value of  $\phi_2$  may also produce this result.

**Summary.** 1) What dollar funds do in practice—investing in an out-of-benchmark asset— may be optimal given that the structure private costs cannot be internalized in the compensation contract. 2) Benchmarking changes the composition of risk when it is micro-founded. Benchmarking increases the impact of idiosyncratic volatility on expected returns, but it may mitigate the impact of common shocks. For the above result to hold, the manager must have different private benefits/costs when investing in different assets.

**Proof of Proposition 3.**

I solve the optimal compensation scheme  $(a^*, b^*, c^*)$  when  $\sigma_{\epsilon_2}^2 = 0$ .  $a^*$  satisfies

$$\gamma a^{*2} (2a^* - 1) \sigma_{\epsilon_1}^2 = \frac{1}{\sigma_A^2} \left( \frac{1}{a^*} - 1 \right) \phi_1 \phi_2 + \frac{1}{\sigma_{\epsilon_1}^2} \theta (\phi_1 - \phi_2) \left( \frac{\phi_p}{a^{*2}} + \left( \frac{1}{a^*} - 1 \right) (\phi_1 + \phi_p) \right) \quad (32)$$

The expected return of asset 1 is

$$E_0(r_1) = \gamma \theta (1 - a^{*2}) (\sigma_{\epsilon_1}^2 + 2\sigma_A^2) \bar{x}_1 + \gamma (b^* \sigma_{\epsilon_1}^2 + c^* \sigma_A^2) + \theta (\phi_p + \phi_1) \quad (33)$$

The term  $\gamma (b^* \sigma_{\epsilon_1}^2 + c^* \sigma_A^2) + \theta (\phi_p + \phi_1)$  can be thought as the price of risk. It depends on the returns relative to the benchmarks of asset 1 and 2 given the weights  $b^*$  and  $c^*$ . Under this special parameter case, the volatility of the common shock does not affect the value of  $a^*$ . Furthermore, the price of the risk is

$$\theta (\phi_p + \phi_1) + \theta a^* \gamma \frac{\sigma_{\epsilon_1}^2}{2\sigma_{\epsilon_1}^2 + (1 - \theta) \sigma_A^2} \left( \bar{x}_1 \left( 2 - \frac{1}{a^*} \right) (\sigma_{\epsilon_1}^2 + 2\sigma_A^2) + \frac{1}{\gamma a^*} \left( \phi_1 \left( \frac{1}{a} - 1 \right) - \phi_p \right) \right) \quad (34)$$

I can derive the Proposition 3 using equations 32 and 34.

**QED.**



## D Additional tables

Table D.5: Summary of reported defaulted local-currency bonds by country (06/2019-12/2021)

country	# of defaulted bonds	# of funds reported	average market value (USD M)
AR	7	16	0.19
BR	2	3	29.83†
CL	1	1	2.48
CN	1	1	1.41
CO	1	1	0.58
DO	1	1	1.17
TH	1	3	1.65
UY	2	3	1.36
ZA	2	2	1.85

Notes: This table tabulates the statistics of defaulted bond reported by US mutual funds from Form N-PORT-P filings.†:The extreme value comes from filings of two funds managed by Carillon Reams. For example, [Carillon Reams Unconstrained Bond Fund](#) reported that a Brazilian sovereign bond in BRL was in default in 04/2021.

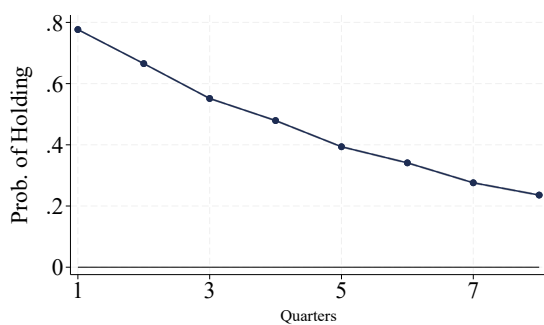
**Table D.6:** Benchmark index inclusion and exclusion events after index inceptions

Currency	Bloomberg EM LC	Bloomberg Global Aggregate	Bloomberg Pan-European Aggregate	FTSE International ILSI	FTSE WBIG	FTSE World ILSI	JPM GBI-EM	JPM GBI-EM Broad	JPM GBI-EM Global	Morningstar Global Treasury
COP		09/2020 in					03/2014 in†	03/2014 in†	03/2014 in†	
CZK			01/2005 in					02/2017 in	02/2017 in	
HUF		11/2013 ex 04/2017 in	11/2013 ex 04/2017 in							
IDR		06/2018 in								
ILS		01/2012 in			05/2020 in	05/2020 in				10/2022 in
MXN				12/2013 in	10/2010 in	12/2013 in				10/2022 in
MYR		01/2006 in			07/2007 in					10/2022 in
PEN		09/2020 in								
PLN				12/2013 in 02/2014 ex		12/2013 in 07/2021 ex				10/2022 in
RON	04/2013 in	09/2020 in	09/2020 in					01/2013 in	01/2013 in	
RUB	03/2022 ex	04/2014 in 03/2022 ex	04/2014 in 03/2022 ex							
THB		03/2007 ex 07/2008 in								
TRY		04/2014 in 10/2016 ex								
ZAR		05/2018 ex		12/2013 in	10/2012 in 05/2020 ex	12/2013 in 05/2020 ex				

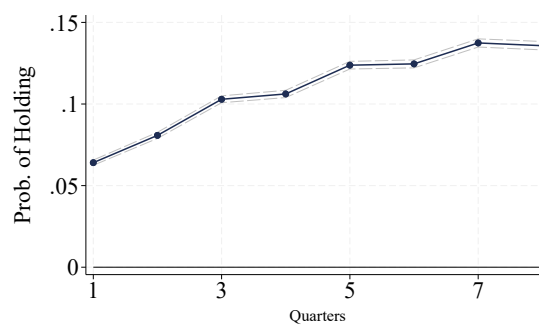
Notes: This table outlines the inclusion and exclusion events of countries following index inceptions. The event dates are sourced from publicly available index methodologies provided by index providers. Brazil has intermittently imposed explicit capital controls. According to He and Beltran (2022), Brazil experienced a brief period of exclusion from the JPM GBI-EM Global index. However, to the best of my knowledge, without a paid subscription to index providers, public news sources have not detailed Brazil's index exclusions. The symbol † denotes COP bonds (Colombian TES) issued in Colombian local markets.

## E Additional figures

Figure E.5: Extensive margin of fund holding



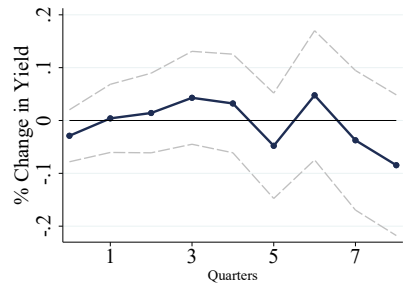
(a) Extensive margin, fund holding effect



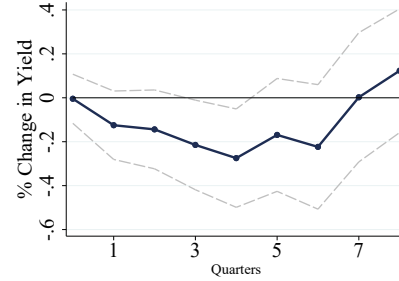
(b) Extensive margin, benchmarking effect

Notes: For a bond currently in a funds' portfolio, this two graphs show the hazard rate that a fund continues holding this bond in two years. A fund stops holding a bond may due to a fund doesn't report a bond in its holding or due to a fund's liquidation. The estimation controls bond and country-time fixed effects. The first graphs shows the hazard rate of dollar funds, and the second shows the difference in hazard rates between dollar and EM funds.

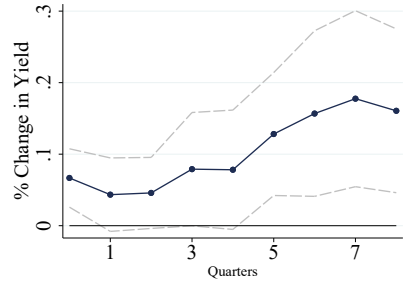
Figure E.6: Effects of benchmarking on transmission shocks



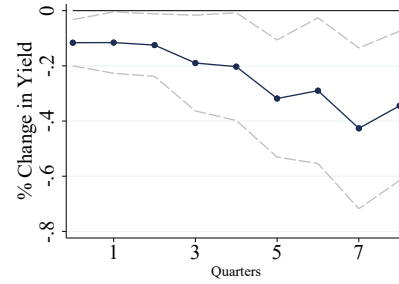
(a) Exchange rate, fund holding effect



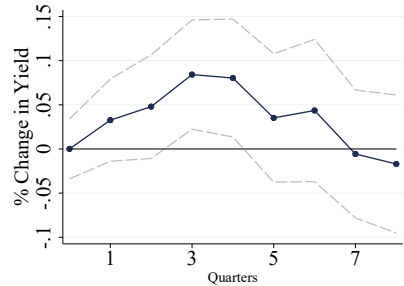
(b) Exchange rate, benchmarking effect



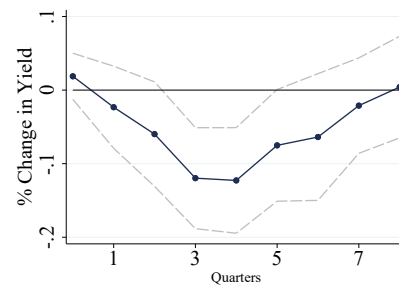
(c) VIX, fund holding effect (global LC bonds)



(d) VIX, benchmarking effect (global LC bonds)



(e) VIX, fund holding effect (additional controls)



(f) VIX, benchmarking effect (additional controls)

Notes: These figures show the direct effect of bond holdings by global funds and the interaction effect from the creditor composition of funds. It reports The sample of bonds is restricted to bonds with issuance greater than one billion dollars and residual maturities greater than two years. Countries are BRL, CLP, COP, CZK, HUF, IDR, ILS, MXN, MYR, PEN, PLN, RON, THB, TRY, ZAR. Dotted lines plot the 90% robust standard error bands.

## **F Quantitative model appendix**

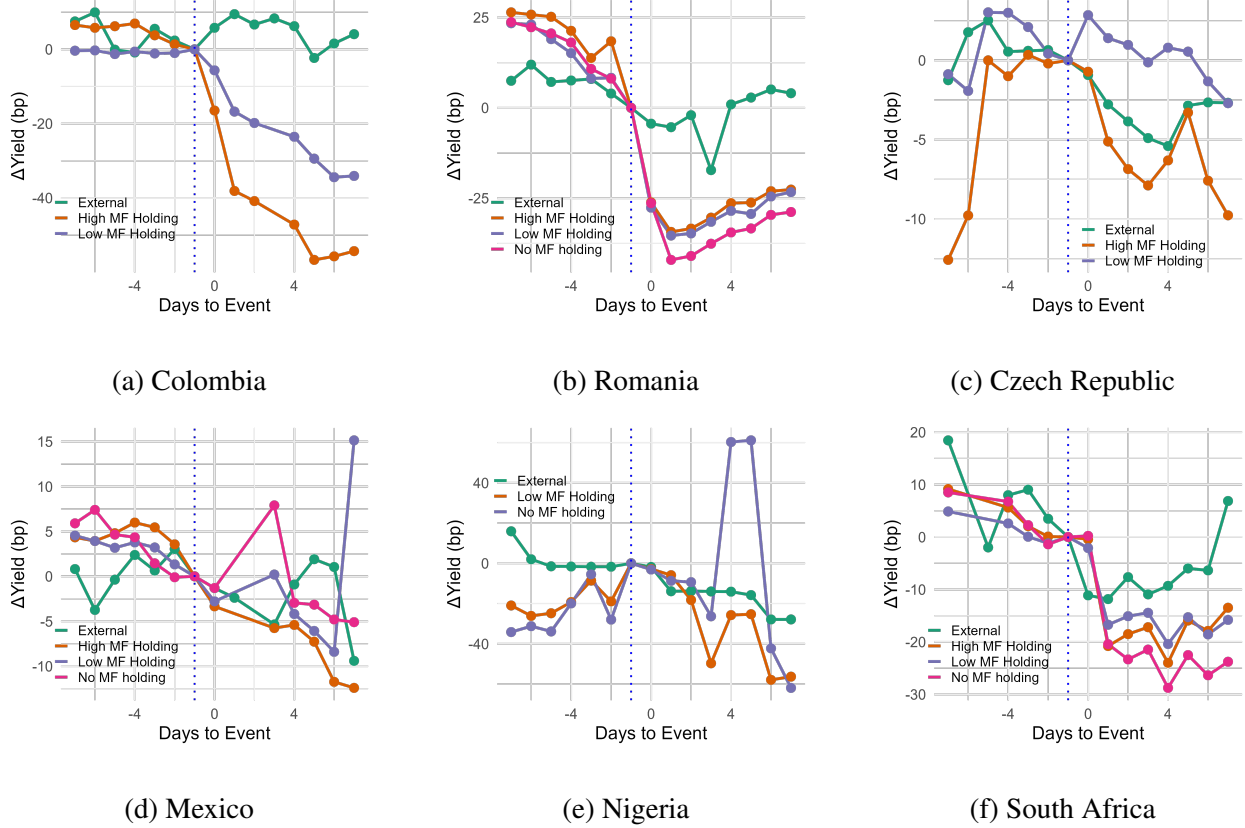
### **F.1 Index inclusion events**

I provide further evidence on how a country's benchmark inclusion affects bond prices. I focus on EM's inclusion in JP Morgan's GBI-EM Index and Citi's WBI local currency bond index. Broner et al. (2021) analyzed these index inclusion events.

Using Asset Ownership Database in Bloomberg Terminal, I count the number of investment companies domiciled outside these countries reported holding in the quarter prior to the announcement. I classify local currency bonds into three categories based on how many different investment companies hold a bond. Low mutual fund holdings mean that fewer than five global investment companies report holdings. External bonds are dollar-denominated bonds issued in the global markets.

Figure F.7 shows that index inclusion has an impact on bonds already held by mutual funds. It is surprising that for bonds not held by global mutual funds in Romania and South Africa, they experienced larger changes in yields than sovereign bonds directly affected by the funding supply shock. I have to note that standard theory cannot generate an overreaction if the supply shock only affects the quantity of bonds in the market. The co-movement of prices across bonds with different degrees of mutual fund ownership indicates a high substitution across bonds. The direct effect of index inclusion in the index-eligible bonds is attenuated. For this reason, examining the inclusion episode of Romania may underestimate the direct effect of inclusion.

Figure F.7: Effects of index inclusion on sovereign bond yields



Notes: This set of figures aims to replicate the analysis of the index inclusion events in Broner et al. (2021). I extend their study by including dollar-denominated bonds. Moreover, I use an alternative approach to measure the influence of the announcement of inclusion: index-eligible bonds are often widely held by global mutual funds even prior to the index inclusion events. The Security Ownership on Bloomberg Terminal, a database compared to Morningstar's mutual fund database, directly reports for each bond the number of global investment firms, the ultimate owners of mutual funds, holding. "Low MF Holding" refers to bonds with fewer than five investment firms domiciled outside of respective countries holding in the quarter prior to the announcement.