

# Redwheel Next Generation EM Equity Fund

## Monthly Commentary - August 2024

Global equity markets recovered from a sharp sell-off caused by profit-taking in Japan and the technology sector in the first week of August 2024, ending the month in the green. The MSCI Frontier Emerging Markets Index rose +3.4% in the month, compared to the Redwheel Next Generation Emerging Markets Equity Fund's return of +2.0%.

One of the best performing markets in the NGEN universe was the Philippines, which gained +10.4% as the country was buoyed by the start of monetary policy easing, the successful issuance of US\$2.5bn of dollar sovereign bonds and the opening of the digital banking sector to new entrants. Thailand was up +9.2% as it avoided a political crisis following the legal disqualification of former PM Srettha Thavisin, with an even larger coalition supporting the new PM Paetongtarn Shinawatra. Regardless of who may be PM, the legal cases against Srettha and Paetongtarn's father, Thaksin Shinawatra, demonstrate the ongoing influence of the military in the Thai political system. The largest market in the MSCI Frontier Index, Vietnam, rose +3.9% in the month as the World Bank raised its GDP growth forecast to +6.1% from its previous estimate of +5.5%, underlining the country's position as one of the fastest-growing economies in Asia. Many off-index countries also performed well during August. Argentina rebounded +12.9% as monthly inflation in July slowed to 4.0%, its lowest level since 2022. This reinforced the popularity of President Milei, whose economic adjustment is seen to be making positive progress. Indonesia rallied +9.9% after its parliament reversed proposals to change eligibility rules that would have favoured incumbent legislators as candidates in the November 2024 regional elections, thereby defusing large-scale protests.

Several stocks made strong contributions to the fund's performance in August. Indonesian banks Mandiri, Rakyat and Syariah rose +17.1%, +15.9% and +7.2%, respectively on the back of an improving domestic outlook. The banking sector's deposit growth has started to pick up albeit more slowly than loan growth. In Thailand, the energy company, Bangchak Corp, and the bank, TTB, rose +24.5% and +15.3%, respectively on the back of better investor sentiment. Argentine oil company YPF advanced +18.7% thanks to increased hydrocarbon production, the divestment of non-core fields and the tender for some of its outstanding debt.

The Turkish equity market struggled in August, falling -10.0% following the maintenance of a hawkish bias in the central bank policy rate amid slowing economic growth. This restrictive stance is necessary for long-term policy credibility to be re-established after years of unorthodox rate-setting, but a short-term disappointment for pro-growth investors while the control of inflation is prioritized. Inflation peaked at 76% YoY in May, dropping to 72% in June and 62% in July, with core inflation also dropping from 75% to 60% over that period. Food retailer Bim fell -16.1% while the Turkish conglomerate Sabanci was down -13.9%. Additionally, Latin American healthcare company Auna dropped -25.2% when it missed profit estimates due to weak trends in Mexico.

#### **CONTACT US**

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

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