When is the rigorous impact evaluation of development projects a luxury, and when is it a necessity?

Description

Tweet

by Michael Clemens and Gabriel Demombynes, Centre for Global Development, 10/11/2010
Download (PDF, 733 KB)

â??The authors study one high-profile case: the Millennium Villages Project (MVP), an experimental and intensive package intervention to spark sustained local economic development in rural Africa. They illustrate the benefits of rigorous impact evaluation in this setting by showing that estimates of the projectâ??s effects depend heavily on the evaluation method.

Comparing trends at the MVP intervention sites in Kenya, Ghana, and Nigeria to trends in the surrounding areas yields much more modest estimates of the projectâ??s effects than the before-versus-after comparisons published thus far by the MVP. Neither approach constitutes a rigorous impact evaluation of the MVP, which is impossible to perform due to weaknesses in the evaluation design of the projectâ??s initial phase. These weaknesses include the subjective choice of intervention sites, the subjective choice of comparison sites, the lack of baseline data on comparison sites, the small sample size, and the short time horizon. We describe how the next wave of the intervention could be designed to allow proper evaluation of the MVPâ??s impact at little additional cost.â?•

See responses to this paper here:

- Evaluating the Millennium Villages: A response to Clemens and Demombynes and
- A response to Michael Clemensâ?? on evaluating the Millennium Villages and
- Millennium Villages: donâ??t work, donâ??t know or donâ??t care? by Laura Freschi
- Attested development By Tim Harford, Financial Times, 16 Oct 2010
- Rigorous Impact Evaluation Is Not a Luxury: Scrutinizing the Millennium Villages by Michael Clemens, senior fellow at the Center for Global Development Posted: October 15, 2010 04:26 PM

Category

1. Uncategorized

Tags

1. MDGs
2. RCT

Date
15/10/2026
Date Created
14/10/2010
Author
admin