

Contributions from the RISE network: Evaluating the effectiveness of development policies

Eliana La Ferrara

This contribution will focus on how scientific methods of evaluation used by economics and other social sciences can improve our understanding of which anti-poverty policies are effective and which are not.

The need to establish rigorous causal link between specific interventions and their outcomes has spurred an incredible amount of research in recent years. This research exploits both “natural experiments” related to policy introduction in certain countries, and “randomized” interventions where the researchers themselves design and implement the program.

The talk will briefly review the methodological underpinnings for the different evaluation methods, and offer examples of how they have been implemented and what lessons have been learnt from their implementation.

Ultimately, the lessons learnt can be used to improve the design of future policies, highlighting the benefits of a strong interaction between the research community and the policy community.