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Special Issue: »Institutions in Development Research: Buzzword or Real Impact?«

Magdalene Silberberger and Joachim Zweynert (eds.)

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In recent years, economists and social scientists have (re-)discovered the impact of institutions on growth and development. A quickly growing empirical literature seems to provide ever more evidence that the quality of institutions is the key determinant of the wealth or poverty of nations. Moreover, the insight that »institutions matter« has become common wisdom also in development organizations and in politics.

At the same time, development research and practice have both seen a long chain of buzzwords and concepts which, for a certain period of time, were believed to provide the key to explaining the global problems of development. Sooner or later, however, all of these buzzwords went out of fashion and were replaced by new buzzwords and simple policy prescriptions based on these. The papers in this volume intend to shed light on the question whether »institution« is just a new buzzword or whether the inclusion of the institutional dimension of development provides real and politically relevant insights.

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