



Institutional Reform and Diaspora Entrepreneurs: The In-Between Advantage

Jennifer M. Brinkerhoff

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Institutional Reform and Diaspora Entrepreneurs: The In-Between Advantage Jennifer M. Brinkerhoff Externally-promoted institutional reform, even when nominally accepted by developing country governments, often fails to deliver lasting change. Diasporans-immigrants who still feel a connection to their country of origin-may offer an In-Between Advantage for institutional reform, which links problem understanding with potential solutions, and encompasses vision, impact, operational, and psycho-social advantages.

Individuals with entrepreneurial characteristics can catalyzing institutional reform. Diasporans may have particular advantages for entrepreneurship, as they live both psychologically and materially between the place of origin they left and the new destination they have embraced. Their entrepreneurial characteristics may be accidental, cultivated through the migration and diaspora experience, or innate to individuals' personalities.

This book articulates the diaspora institutional entrepreneur In-Between Advantage, proposes a model for understanding the characteristics and motivational influences of entrepreneurs generally and how they apply to diaspora entrepreneurs in particular, and presents a staged model of institutional entrepreneur actions. I test these frameworks through case narratives of social institutional reform in Egypt, economic institutional reform in Ethiopia, and political institutional reform in Chad.

In addition to identifying policy implications, this book makes important theoretical contributions in three areas. First, it builds on existing and emerging critiques of international development assistance that articulate prescriptions related to alternative theories of change. Second, it fills an important gap in the literature by focusing squarely on the role of agency in institutional reform processes while still accounting for organizational systems and socio-political contexts. In doing so, it integrates a more expansive view of entrepreneurism into extant understandings of institutional entrepreneurism, and it sheds light on what happens in the frequently-invoked black box of agency. Third, it demonstrates the fallacy of many theoretical frameworks that seek to order institutional change processes into neatly definable linear stages.



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