

The “Follow-Up Checks” of Poverty Alleviation: An Empirical Analysis of Chinese Government Behavior in Policy Implementation

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Abstract

Soon after China reportedly achieved the goal of poverty alleviation in most regions ahead of schedule, a campaign of “follow-up check” of the deviations in policy implementation became a key task for local governments from 2019 to 2020. A case study of town H in province M during the “follow-up check” period revealed that local governments at various levels enjoy different authorities in goal setting, inspection, and incentive provision. However, the campaign-styled “follow-up checks” cannot meaningfully overcome the problem of inefficient governance. As the work of poverty alleviation comes to an end, local governments are under time pressure to solve protracted problems, uncertain about whether the higher-level government over them will exercise its authority in inspection and job acceptance. Local governments tend to displace the original goal with new and additional work targets to ensure successful acceptance of their jobs by the upper-level government. This study observes the practice of “follow-up checks” of poverty alleviation and provides an explanation for different governmental behavior taken in campaign-styled governance.

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