



Social Experiments versus Action Research for Evidence-based Decision Making

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The social science technique of "social experimentation" is receiving a lot of attention as a way to acquire scientific evidence for making policy decisions. However, the method has a number of well-known drawbacks. Moreover, it is not clear what decision makers are actually hoping to obtain from social experiments. Ethnographic research techniques such as participatory action research are also well-established techniques for building scientific evidence regarding policies and technologies for creating better societies. I will introduce both methods and discuss their advantages and disadvantages. Then I hope that we can have an open discussion about the pros and cons of the two approaches for building scientific evidence to achieve a sustainable society.

Time: November 16th (Fri.), 2012 15:30-17:00
Place: 6th Floor Lounge, Environment Bldg.