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Africa's Growth Tragedy: Policies and Ethnic Divisions

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Abstract

Explaining cross-country differences in growth rates requires not only an understanding of the link between growth and public policies, but also an

understanding of why countries choose different public policies. This paper shows that ethnic diversity helps explain cross-country differences in public policies and other economic indicators. In the case of Sub-Saharan Africa, economic growth is associated with low schooling, political instability, underdeveloped financial systems, distorted foreign exchange markets, high government deficits, and insufficient infrastructure. Africa's high ethnic fragmentation explains a significant part of most of these characteristics.

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