Entreprenant Status Formalisation Trial — Cotonou's Randomised Test of Helping Informal Firms Go Formal

City Innovation Library · Good practice · Benin

Quality score: 52/100

Evidence strength: Moderate

Summary

A randomised trial with 3,596 informal Cotonou firms showed that personal help raised take-up of Benin's free 'entreprenant' status by 16.3 points, but formalised firms saw no gains in sales or profits, at US$1,200–2,200 per firm formalised. A cautionary case.

Key dimensions

Dimension	Score
Evidence of impact / measured results	2/3
Transferability / demonstrated replication	2/3
Scalability	1/3
Sustainability / continuity	1/3
Innovation	2/3
Inclusiveness / equity	1/3
Multi-stakeholder collaboration	2/3

Evaluated by C-NAPSE

Data sources

C-NAPSE web research — accessed 2026-11-20

Government of Benin with the World Bank (Benin Investment Climate project, DIME/DECRG) and PEDL — accessed 2026-11-20

World Bank CPIE brief: Benin impact evaluation of the Entreprenant status — accessed 2026-11-20

PEDL Research Note: Enhancing the Benefits of Formalization (Benhassine, McKenzie, Pouliquen, Santini) — accessed 2026-11-20

World Bank Data Catalog: Impact Evaluation of the Entreprenant Status in Benin 2014–2016 — accessed 2026-11-20

UK R4D: Does Inducing Informal Firms to Formalize Make Sense? (J. Public Economics 2018) — accessed 2026-11-20

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