Returns to Capital — A Randomised Test of Cash and Equipment Grants for Sri Lankan Microenterprises

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Quality score: 52/100

Evidence strength: Moderate

Summary

Researchers gave randomised cash or equipment grants to small Sri Lankan firms in the tsunami-hit south, then tracked profits. Average real return to capital was 4.6-5.7% a month, above market rates -- but held only for male-owned firms; female-owned firms saw no gain.

Key dimensions

Dimension	Score
Evidence of impact / measured results	3/3
Transferability / demonstrated replication	3/3
Scalability	1/3
Sustainability / continuity	1/3
Innovation	2/3
Inclusiveness / equity	0/3
Multi-stakeholder collaboration	1/3

Evaluated by C-NAPSE

Data sources

C-NAPSE web research — accessed 2026-08-25

University of California San Diego, Stanford University & World Bank (de Mel, McKenzie, Woodruff research team) — accessed 2026-08-25

Quarterly Journal of Economics -- citation record (EconPapers) — accessed 2026-08-25

World Bank Policy Research Working Paper 4230 (RePEc) — accessed 2026-08-25

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