

DBN CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOP FOR SOUTHWEST NIGERIA



LAGOS WORKSHOP IMPACT REPORT

(26 - 28 November, 2025)

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I.0 Executive Summary

The DBN Capacity Building Workshop for Southwest Nigeria was held in Lagos from November 26 to 28, 2025, and was conducted by 8thGear Hub & Venture Studio under the DBN Entrepreneurship Training Programme 2025. The workshop brought together MSME operators, startup founders, and PFIs, focusing on becoming investment-ready, sales and marketing strategies, advanced money management, protecting their businesses legally, and innovation for business growth.

A total of over 40 participants engaged in hands-on sessions, assessments, and a final pitch competition for grants of up to ₦5 million. Technical assessments revealed moderate baseline understanding of investment readiness components such as pitch-deck preparation and funding application which the workshop further strengthened through practical sessions. Post-workshop ratings averaged 4.46 out of 5, with 84.8% confirming that the workshop enhanced networking and collaboration opportunities.

Participants reported significant improvements across key business areas, including business planning, development planning, marketing, identifying target audiences, sales and proper bookkeeping, legal binding agreements and even customer service. The operational lessons learned from the Ibadan workshop, particularly regarding venue and logistics, informed key preparatory recommendations that ensured a smoother and more efficient management of the Lagos workshop.

Overall, the Lagos workshop effectively strengthened the entrepreneurial and financial capacity of MSMEs in the Southwest, supporting DBN's mission to build a more resilient MSME ecosystem in Nigeria.

2.0 Workshop Overview

The DBN Capacity Building Workshop for Southwest Nigeria was organized as part of the Development Bank of Nigeria's (DBN) Entrepreneurship Training Programme 2025, executed in partnership with 8thGear Hub & Venture Studio.

The first workshop in this series was held in Ibadan, Oyo State, from October 2nd to 4th, 2025. The second and most recently concluded workshop took place in Lagos from 26 to 28 November 2025, with all three days hosted at 230, Herbert Macaulay Way, Alagomeji Yaba, Lagos.

The workshop brought together MSME operators, startup founders, business owners, and representatives of a PFI, Letshego MFB. The three-day workshop concluded with a pitch event, where participants presented their business ideas in hopes of securing grant funding of up to ₦5 million.

The workshop maintained steady attendance throughout its three-day duration. Participants, alongside 8thGear staff and facilitators, were present and actively contributed to the sessions. A representative from DBN was also in attendance for each day of the workshop..

Day 1 kicked off with participants' registration and an introduction by Oluwatobiloba Adebola from the 8thGear team, followed by the administration of a baseline technical assessment designed to capture participants' expectations and key business challenges ahead of the training sessions. Ahmed Umar, a representative of DBN, then delivered a welcome address.



Figure 1: Day I - Participants during the Sales and Marketing That Work session.



Figure 2: Day I - Ahmed Umar, a DBN representative addressing the participants.

3.0 Methodology

The impact evaluation for the DBN Capacity Building Workshop for Southwest (Lagos), Nigeria was designed to capture both quantitative and qualitative data that reflect participants' learning progress, satisfaction, and perceived value of the workshop. Data collection and analysis were conducted by 8thGear Hub using Google Forms before and after the training sessions.

The evaluation consisted of a baseline technical assessment and a post-workshop evaluation.

3.1 Limitations

While the assessments provided valuable insights into learning outcomes, there were slight variations in the number of participants who completed the technical baseline and endline assessments due to attendance fluctuations across workshop days. As such, comparative findings represent directional trends rather than one-to-one participant matches.

4.0 Key Findings (Participants' Expectations and Challenges)

4.1 Participants' Expectations

Many participants hoped to secure funding or be selected for the business pitch grant at the program's conclusion. This reflects a strong interest in financing opportunities that can help scale their businesses. An analysis of participants' expectations revealed five key recurring themes, as detailed below, with samples of captured expectations.

Table 1: Key Themes of Participants' Expectations

Themes	Representative Responses
Access to Funding	"To receive funding either in loans or grants." "Provision of Business Grant."
Learning and Knowledge	"My expectations for this workshop are to gain practical, actionable knowledge that can be immediately applied to my work and personal development. I hope to deepen my understanding of key concepts, learn new strategies, and sharpen my existing skills through hands-on activities and expert insights. I also look forward to engaging with other participants, sharing experiences, and building meaningful connections that could lead to future collaborations. Additionally, I expect the workshop to challenge my current perspectives, inspire fresh ideas, and provide clarity on areas where I need improvement. Overall, I anticipate a transformative, impactful, and enriching learning experience"
Pitching Experience and Confidence	"Pitch deck support" "To be more exposed and empowered in business strategies." "I look forward to gaining more details on investments pitching and business development"

Marketing And Networking	“Networking and Collaboration with other good professionals in business.” “To unlearn, relearn and connect with likeminded and secure partnerships” “I wish to gain valuable knowledge and understanding of how to effectively tailor our marketing strategies and efforts to maximize our return on investment (ROI). I wish to be selected amongst the top successful pitch decks presenters to secure this grant to scale up my business and stock up my business inventories to the needs of my customers.”
Business Expansion And Sustainability	“Looking forward to learning more about how to sustain a business beyond me, to see the business outlives me to the next generation with tangible impact. Will also love to pitch my business and hope for the grant award to expand our operations” “Here to learn and gain more insight to grow and scale a business while institutionalizing same”

4.2 Participants’ Challenges

Participants consistently cited inadequate financing, difficulty executing marketing strategies to incur sales, and cash flow shortages as the major barriers to growth. An analysis of participants’ challenges revealed four key recurring themes, as detailed below, with samples of captured challenges.

Table 2: Key Themes of Participants’ Challenges

Themes	Representative Responses
Funding	“Better and easier ways to access funds as a social enterprise for profit.”

	“The issue of lack of sufficient finance , our business is operational and we need funds to pay staff salaries and operational cost to keep the business running , seek out investors and market”
Sales And Marketing	“The top challenge I'm facing in my business has to do with the marketing of my business and funding to get Nafdak satisfaction.” “The ability to use storytelling to make sales.”
Bookkeeping And Financial Records	“One major challenge for our team has been building a credit model that is both safe and practical, especially because many MSMEs don't have structured financial records. It makes risk assessment harder and affects how we design a lending process that will work well on the platform.” “Hiring the right people and keeping proper records” “My main challenge is building the right structure to accommodate the growing demand for my fashion training. I want this workshop to help me improve my business systems, strengthen my financial management, and learn how to scale sustainably so I can train more youths and women”
Tax Filing	“Tax matters, computation and tax filling , CAC Annual returns filling”

5.0 Key Findings (Technical Assessment)

The technical assessment evaluated participants' understanding of core concepts in getting investment-ready, with a specific focus on their ability to interpret financial concepts, evaluate funding options, and align business operations with investor expectations. It also served as a means to gauge how well participants had absorbed knowledge from DBN's Learning Management System (LMS) modules before and during the workshop.

The technical assessment questions were grouped into three thematic areas to evaluate participants' understanding of key investment readiness concepts:

1. **Financial Knowledge & Valuation:** This covered their understanding of core financial concepts and strength of their financial documentation practices.

Sample Questions (Q7 & Q13): *"Rate your familiarity with financial management and record-keeping." "Have you accessed funding before?"*

2. **Investment Readiness & Funding Strategy:** This addressed the participants' preparedness to engage financiers, articulate their business value proposition and navigate the processes required to source external funding.

Sample Questions (Q8 & Q11): *"Rate your understanding of what funders/financiers look for in a pitch event." "Have you ever pitched your business before"*

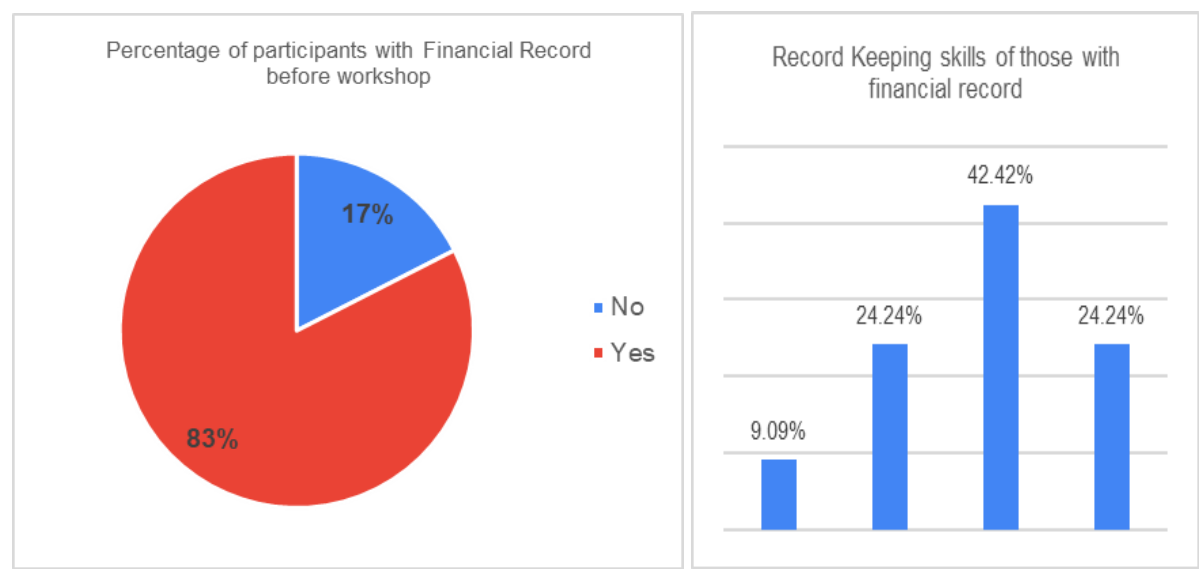
3. **Financial Risk & Bankability:** This assessed how MSME's extent to which participants operate in a financially structured, compliant, and low-risk manner that aligns with what banks and lending institutions require before providing credit.

Sample Questions (Q14 & Q4): *"Do you currently keep financial records?" "Rate your understanding of legal considerations for running an MSME."*

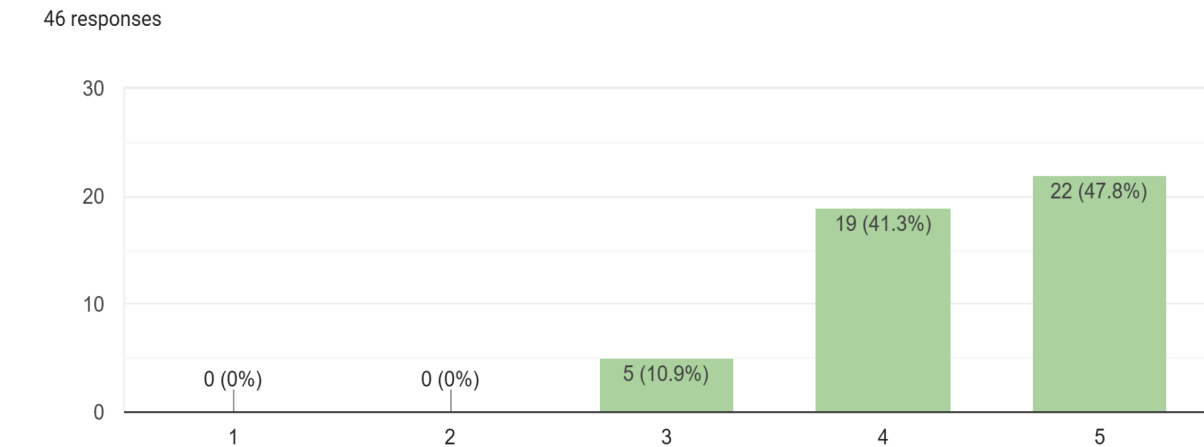
Assessments were conducted at both the baseline and endline. A total of 40 participants completed the baseline assessment, while between 46 participants responded at endline.

Despite differences in respondent numbers, the results (Figure 1) showed an overall improvement in investment-readiness knowledge, with the average correct responses increasing from 87.6% at baseline to 89% at endline.

Figure 3: Comparison of Baseline and Endline Technical Assessment Results



On a scale of 1-5, how well did this workshop meet your expectations? (Where 1 is the lowest rating and 5 is the highest rating).



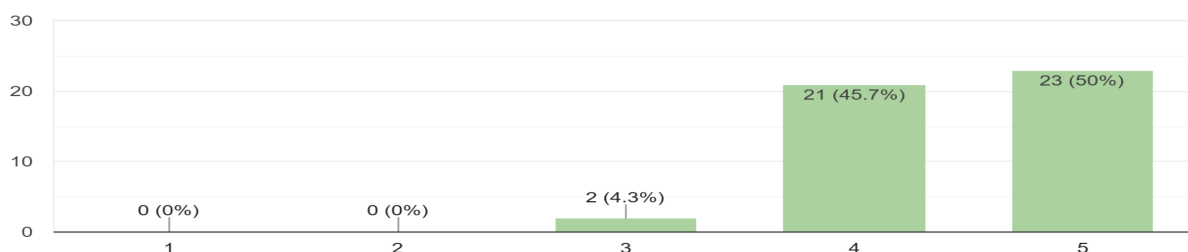
6.0 Post-Workshop Evaluation

A post-workshop evaluation was administered to assess the overall effectiveness and participant experience of the DBN Capacity Building Workshop for Southwest Nigeria.

Figure 4: Participant Rating of Workshop Value and Relevance

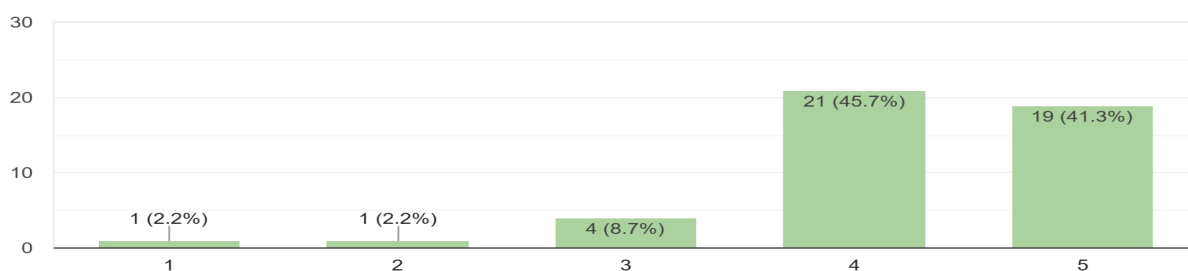
On a scale of 1-5, what is your overall rating of this workshop? (Where 1 is the lowest rating and 5 is the highest rating).

46 responses



On a scale of 1-5, how well did this workshop address the challenges you face in your business? (Where 1 is the lowest rating and 5 is the highest rating).

46 responses



Any other comment(s) for the organisers?

31 responses

The training has shifted my mindset from building just a business to building a business that will outlive me.

Fantastic organisers

The workshop was well-organized and highly impactful. I appreciate the facilitators' efforts and look forward to attending more sessions in the future.

A wonderful job was done

Appreciate to all the Organisers of this great cohort event, May Almighty God bless you all

I need the grant badly to upgrade my business please help me

You have done a great work, keep it up.

A big thank you to the team and all working behind the scene. Keep grinding. You all, rock.

6.1 Participants' Average Rating

Table 1: Participants' Average Rating Overview

Themes	1	2	3	4	5	Avg Rating
Alignment with expectation	0%	0%	10.9%	41.3%	47.8%	4.37%
Challenges Addressed	2.2%	2.2%	8.7%	45.7%	41,3%	4,22%
Facilitators Rating	0%	2.2%	2.2%	28.3%	67.4%	4.61%
Overall Satisfaction	0%	0%	4.3%	45.7%	50%	4.46%

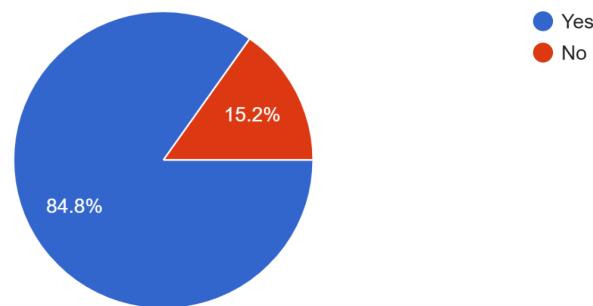
Participants consistently gave high ratings, with all metrics exceeding 4.2 out of 5. The facilitators earned the highest score (4.61), reflecting strong satisfaction with delivery quality and engagement. The overall satisfaction (4.46) and alignment with expectations and business challenges (4.37 and 4.22 respectively) show that the workshop was both relevant and impactful for the participants.

6.2 Usefulness of Workshop for Networking and Partnerships

Figure 5: Participants' evaluation on the Usefulness of the Workshop for Networking and Partnerships

Did this workshop help you build useful networks or partnerships?

46 responses



Regarding the usefulness of the workshop in building a network of partnerships, 84.8% of participants indicated that the workshop was helpful in building networks or partnerships, highlighting its significant role in fostering collaboration among entrepreneurs and other stakeholders.

6.3 Participants' testimonials

The following testimonials reflect the substantial impact of the DBN Capacity Building Workshop. Beyond knowledge gains, many entrepreneurs experienced renewed confidence, greater business clarity, and actionable strategies to grow and finance their ventures. The workshop also served as a collaborative platform, strengthening ties between MSMEs and financial institutions, and aligning participants with DBN's goal of fostering investment-ready businesses across Southwest Nigeria.

Table 2: Highlighted Participant Response

Representative Responses
“The workshop has introduced me to innovative ways to solve any challenges I can encounter with my business.” “This workshop has helped me identify key strategies to streamline my business operations and improve customer engagement, which I expect will lead to increased efficiency and growth.” “I find this to be a masterclass training for Entrepreneurs worth more than money can afford. From the facilitators of yesterday through till today.” “I was impacted by this workshop in the area of Business planning and development management, Marketing, Sales and proper Book Keep. And with this I may not need a Loan or Grant but Machines or Tools that can sustain my Business growth.”

7.0 Application of Learning

Participants shared clear and actionable ways they plan to apply the knowledge gained from the workshop to their businesses. Selected responses are outlined below.

Table 3: Summary of Participants' Plan To Apply Knowledge

Theme	Representative Responses
Record Keeping	"I will adapt to expected record keeping I learned from the workshop to my business" "Immediately I get back to my business, I plan to update my sales record, book keeping, and get up a business developer to work with me to set up structure"
Legal Measures and Investment Readiness	"By making sure we make all our agreements legal binding" "ensure there is a written agreement between I and my employees"
Sales and Marketing	"To increase sales and meet more customers to buy our products" "I plan to implement the digital marketing strategies discussed to reach a broader audience, apply the scaling techniques to optimize operations, and leverage my new network for collaborations" "To improve how we deliver and Market our Products"
Customer Service	"I plan to apply the new strategies by improving the way I serve customers, organizing my business operations better, and using the tools I learned to increase sales"

7.1 Future Learning Needs

Participants were asked to suggest topics and areas of support they would like to see addressed in future editions of the DBN Capacity Building Workshop. Their responses offer valuable guidance for designing follow-up interventions and ongoing learning opportunities.

Table 4: Summary of Participants' Future Learning Needs

Theme	Representative Responses
Access to Finance and Investment Readiness	"Investments and fundraising."
Digital Marketing and Financial Management	"Future workshops could focus on advanced digital marketing, financial management for small businesses, scaling strategies and practical case studies of successful businesses." "Storytelling" "social media management"
Operational Readiness	"Operational readiness. It is very key for me."
Technology Integration and Innovation	"How to incorporate AI in my business." "Business advice. Tech market trend and growth advisory"

Business Relations	“How to relate with colleagues in business.” “Staff retention strategies and customer management.”
Sustainability and Expansion	“In-depth on bookkeeping.” “How to build a sustainable minority business in this digital era.”
Tax and Tax compliance issues	“Taxation for SMEs. How to ensure proper filing of taxes. What an SME needs to know and do on taxes that relate to them.”

7.2 Other Comments from Participants

Participants were invited to share final thoughts and general feedback for the organizers.

Table 5: Additional Comments from Participants

Theme	Representative Comments
Overall Satisfaction and Appreciation	“Fantastic organisers.” “A wonderful job was done” “The workshop was well organized and highly impactful. I appreciate the facilitators' efforts and look forward to attending more sessions in the future.”
Welfare Improvements	“I would appreciate it if transport support could be incorporated.”
Venue and Logistics Suggestions	“More locations should be reached.”

8.0 Day 3: Pitch Event Highlights

Day 3 marked the final session of the workshop and was dedicated to the Pitch Competition. The session was held at the same location where Day 1 & 2 took place, 230 Herbert Macaulay, Yaba. The 8thGear team arrived early to set up the space, and make it conducive for the pitch competition with the help of the facility managers.

After evaluating the business plans prior to the workshop, 20 candidates were shortlisted for the pitch session. A key criterion for participation was that each candidate must have attended at least one of the two training days (Day 1 or Day 2). Absence from both days resulted in automatic disqualification and replacement by other qualified participants.

During the verification process, several applicants who were initially shortlisted were dropped due to their absence from the workshop training days. Attendance at either Day 1 or Day 2 was a prerequisite for pitching, and participants who did not meet this requirement were removed from the lineup and replaced with qualifying attendees.

The competition officially began at 9:30am with a welcome address from Mr. Ahmed Umar, the DBN representative, followed by a briefing on the pitch rules and roll call. It had earlier been decided that candidates absent at roll-call (those not present when the roll call was taken) would be disqualified; however, the judges pardoned this rule, and latecomers were eventually allowed to pitch.

Nineteen out of twenty entrepreneurs (one person was absent) proceeded to pitch their businesses individually. Refreshments were served during the session. After the pitches, the judges deliberated during a short break, after which they gave feedback to individual pitchers.

The session concluded with a Q&A and general feedback session, announcement of winners, and closing remarks from Mr. Ahmed Umar, the official representative from DBN.

Group pictures were taken with the winners, lunch was served to all attendees, and short interview sessions were conducted before departure at approximately 2:00 PM.



Figure 6: Pitch Session – Entrepreneur Presenting His Business



Figure 7: Judges Panel During the Pitch Competition

9.0 Challenges and Recommendations

9.1 Challenges

Despite strong initial interest and confirmations, actual attendance at the Lagos workshop was lower than projected. While the team sustained engagement through reminders and follow-up communication, a number of registered participants did not attend physically. A significant number of entrepreneurs either sent last-minute messages/emails stating they could no longer attend or simply did not show up without prior notice. This affected overall session participation levels but did not impact the delivery quality or workshop outcomes for those who attended.

9.2 Recommendations

For future cohorts, we recommend adopting smaller and more commitment-based selection methods, implementing a final 24-hour confirmation, and prioritizing entrepreneurs who have demonstrated consistent engagement across the LMS and previous DBN activities.