DBN CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOP FOR SOUTHWEST NIGERIA

Ibadan Workshop Impact Report

(2 – 4 October 2025)

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1.0 Executive Summary

The DBN Capacity Building Workshop for Southwest Nigeria was held in Ibadan from October 2 to 4, 2025, and was conducted by 8thGear Hub under the DBN Entrepreneurship Training Programme 2025. The workshop brought together MSME operators, startup founders, and PFIs, focusing on investment readiness, access to finance, and business sustainability.

A total of over 60 participants engaged in hands-on sessions, assessments, and a final pitch competition for grants of up to ₦5 million. Technical assessments recorded an improvement in participants' understanding of investment readiness from 87.6% at baseline to 89% at endline. Post-workshop ratings averaged 4.4 out of 5, with 96.3% confirming that the workshop enhanced networking and collaboration opportunities.

Participants reported increased confidence, practical business insights, and a clearer understanding of financial management and market access. The workshop also revealed operational lessons, notably challenges related to venue and logistics, which informed key recommendations for future events.

Overall, the 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.

The first workshop in this series was held in Ibadan, Oyo State, from October 2nd to 4th, 2025. For the first two days, the venue was Lekan Are ICT Center, St. David's Cathedral, Kudeti, Ibadan while for day 3, the venue was Lagos Business School.

The workshop brought together MSME operators, startup founders, business owners, and representatives of DBN’s participating financial institutions (PFIs). The three-day workshop concluded with a pitch event, where participants presented their business ideas for a chance to secure grant funding of up to ₦5 million.

The workshop recorded strong attendance across all three days, with 59 participants on Day 1, 63 on Day 2, and 54 on Day 3, including representatives from 8thGear (10 staff) and DBN (1 staff) each day.

Day 1 kicked off with participant registration and an introduction by Oluwatobiloba Adebola from the 8thGear team, followed by the administration of a Slido survey designed to capture participants’ expectations and key business challenges ahead of the training sessions.

3.0 Methodology

The impact evaluation for the DBN Capacity Building Workshop for Southwest 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 structured tools (Slido, Google Forms, and Excel) before, during, and after the training sessions.

The evaluation consisted of baseline and endline technical assessments, as well as 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

Access to funding and grant opportunities	**Improved business and financial knowledge**
"To pitch my business and meet new investors, and have the opportunity to win a grant for implementation of my business plan."	"To learn more about financial literacy and management."
"To get the grant and funding for my business."	"To understand my business more."
"To be one of the winners."	"To learn more about business plans and forecasting."

Networking and collaboration

"To network, get a mentor, and also to get all the support to grow my business."

"To connect with business tycoons worldwide through this workshop and to be part of those chosen to pitch their business."

"Networking, improve knowledge, and access to finance."

Exposure to practical entrepreneurial strategies

"To gain practical knowledge and strategies I can apply to strengthen my business operations."

"To gain insights and valuable skills to scale my business to the next phase."

"To gain practical knowledge, improve my skills, and learn strategies I can apply effectively in my business."

Visibility and business growth

"To take my business to the next level and become a topmost brand in Nigeria."

"To see sitepulse be recognized nationwide for the solution of visibility to SMEs."

4.2 Participants' Challenges

Participants consistently cited inadequate financing, difficulty accessing loans, 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

Limited Access to Funding and Working Capital	**Market Access and Customer Acquisition**
"My major challenge is capital because demand is higher than supply due to low capital to invest." "Funding constraints make it difficult to expand or manage unexpected expenses."	"The challenge of customer acquisition – it has been very expensive to get customers." "How to get access to market and develop funding for business."
Business Structure and Financial Management Gaps	**Brand Visibility and Competitive Positioning**
"Poor knowledge of writing a good business plan and poor record keeping." "Difficulty structuring my business to meet lenders' requirements."	"Improving brand visibility in a competitive market." "Visibility to investors and customers."

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:

- **Financial Knowledge & Valuation (Q1–Q3):** This covered scalable Customer Acquisition Cost (CAC) and Lifetime Value (LTV), and valuation.

Sample Question (Q1): *“A potential investor for a Nigerian fintech startup insists on seeing a verifiable, scalable CAC and LTV. Why is this data more important than the founder's passion for the product?”*

- **Investment Readiness & Funding Strategy (Q4–Q6):** This addresses governance, funding types, and capital sourcing.

  Sample Question (Q5): *“What is the fundamental difference in the relationship between an SME and an Equity Investor (e.g., Angel, VC) compared to a Debt Lender (e.g., Bank)?”*

- **Financial Risk & Bankability (Q7–Q10):** This covered loan requirements, covenants, and risk management.

  Sample Question (Q10): *“A commercial bank agrees to lend a textile factory N100 million but imposes a covenant stating that the factory's Debt-to-Equity ratio must not exceed 2:1. What is the bank's primary purpose for imposing this restriction?”*

Assessments were conducted at both the baseline and endline. A total of 28 – 36 participants completed the baseline assessment, while between 43 and 57 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.

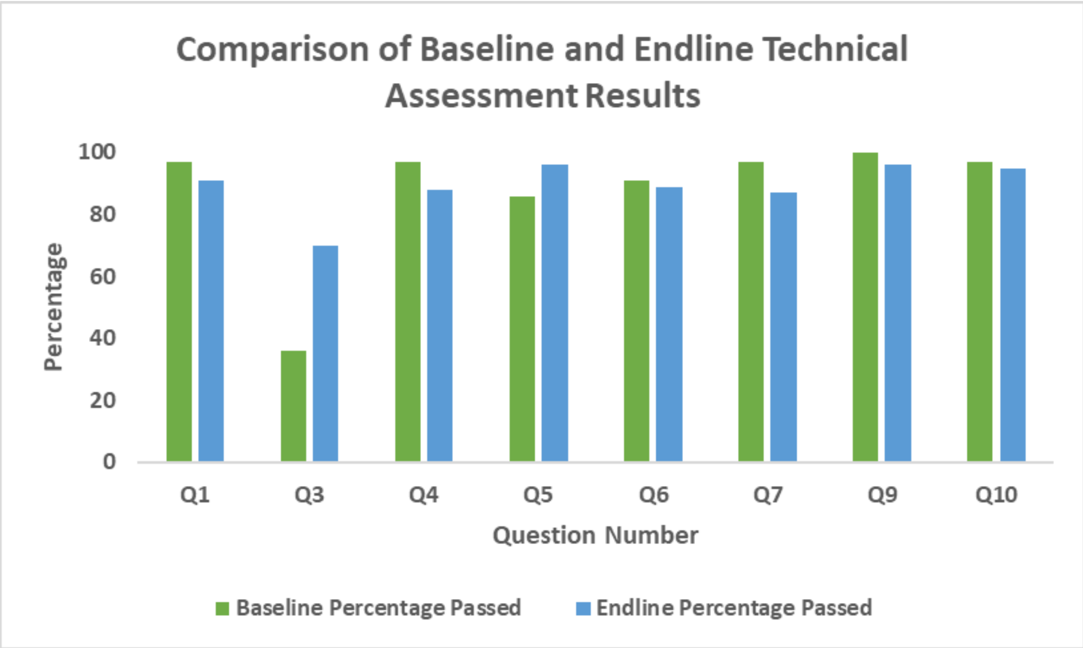

Figure 1: Comparison of Baseline and Endline Technical Assessment Results

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.

6.1 Participants' Average Rating

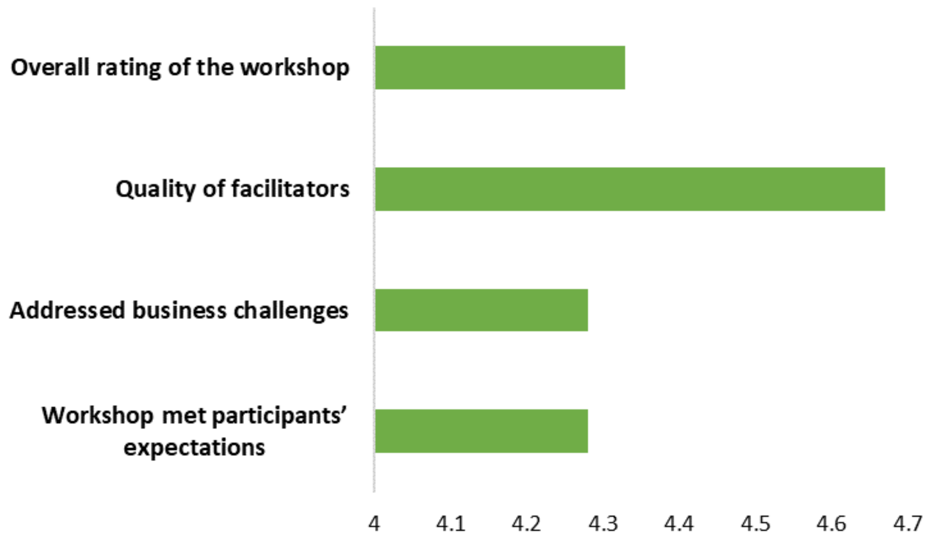

Figure 2: Participants' average ratings of the DBN Capacity Building Workshop

(1 = Lowest rating, 5 = Highest Rating)

Participants consistently gave high ratings, with all metrics exceeding 4.2 out of 5. The facilitators earned the highest score (4.67), reflecting strong satisfaction with delivery quality and engagement. The overall satisfaction (4.33) and alignment with expectations and business challenges (4.28 each) show that the workshop was both relevant and impactful for the participants.

6.2 Usefulness of Workshop for Networking and Partnerships

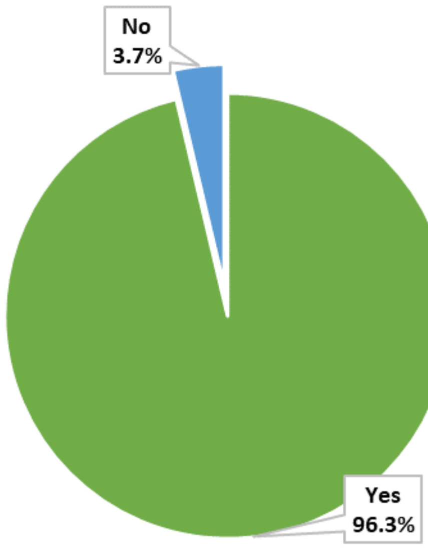

Figure 2: Participants' evaluation on the Usefulness of the Workshop for Networking and Partnerships

Regarding the usefulness of the workshop in building a network of partnerships, 96.3% 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.

This workshop has impacted me by giving me more confidence to present my business idea clearly and professionally. I now understand how to structure my pitch and engage my audience effectively.

I've gained practical skills to improve my business operations and increase productivity. The sessions were very insightful and hands-on.

It has helped me clearly identify my target audience and understand promotional and marketing strategies to scale my business.

The workshop gave me confidence that I can scale up my business and make it sustainable even without grants, while also showing me opportunities with other banks willing to partner.

One powerful way this workshop has impacted me is by changing how I see my farm—not just as a source of food, but as a nutrition-driven business model. I've learned how to structure PandBay Farms as a scalable enterprise that can attract funding and measure social impact.

I met new people, shared business ideas, and learned from others' experiences—networking alone made it worth attending.

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.

- "I plan to apply what I learned by strengthening my financial discipline and keeping accurate business records. This will help me track profits and position my business for growth."
- "I will start branding my egg cartons and chicken packaging so customers can easily recognize and trust Santodab Farms products."
- "My immediate action plan from this workshop is to collect feedback from my customers and identify where we can innovate and do better."
- "I plan to apply the business model canvas and proper documentation in my business as at when due."
- "I intend to look into my business with a new perspective and carry out the necessary research to innovate and grow."
- "I'm going back to the table to restrategize and inject all the takeaway learning into our operations."

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 Response
Access to Finance and Investment Readiness	"In future workshops, I would love to see more focus on access to finance and investment readiness, especially practical steps on securing grants, loans, and equity funding."

Digital Marketing and E-Commerce	"I would like future workshops to cover digital marketing and business branding strategies."
Business Valuation, Planning, and Management	"How to properly evaluate your business and create sustainable growth strategies."
Technology Integration and Innovation	"I'd like to learn about farm automation, disease management, and best practices for scaling poultry production."
Sustainability and Expansion	"Knowledge on bookkeeping, financial management, and business planning."

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	"Thank you for the well-organised program, I really enjoyed it." "The facilitators did a great job."
Accommodation and Welfare Improvements	"Accommodation should be included because many people came from far places for the event." "The feeding was underwhelming." "The lunch portion can be improved on."
Venue and Logistics Suggestions	"Using more conducive venues and better public address systems."

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 Ibadan Business School, following a venue change to create a more conducive environment for pitching and judging. The 8thGear team arrived early to set up the space, with some participants already on ground.

Before the commencement of activities, two participants who were not shortlisted for the pitch expressed dissatisfaction with the selection outcome, citing the distance they traveled. The team managed the situation calmly to prevent any negative sentiment from spreading.

A review of the shortlisted pitchers revealed that two of the selected participants were a married couple running separate businesses. To maintain transparency and fairness, the 8thGear Team Lead had a conversation with the couple, after which the husband voluntarily stepped down, allowing his wife to pitch.

The competition officially began with a welcome address from Ms. Joy Esogu, the DBN representative, followed by a briefing on the pitch rules. A roll call was conducted, and two participants were disqualified for being absent.

Seventeen entrepreneurs proceeded to pitch their businesses individually. Light refreshments were served during the session. After the pitches, the judges deliberated during a short break, during which group photographs were taken.

The session concluded with a Q&A and feedback session, announcement of winners, and closing remarks from Mr. Damilola Obidairo, Project Lead at 8thGear. Lunch was served to all attendees, and short interview sessions were conducted before departure at approximately 3:00 PM.

8.0 Challenges and Recommendations

8.1 Challenges

While the workshop successfully achieved its objectives, a few logistical and environmental challenges were experienced during the first two days:

- The available projector setup at Lekan Are ICT Center, St. David's Cathedral, Kudeti, Ibadan had limited visibility due to lighting and positioning issues, which reduced the effectiveness of visual presentations.
- The use of Lekan Are ICT Center, St. David's Cathedral, Kudeti, Ibadan presented discomfort due to heat and background noise from school activities, affecting participant concentration.
- The need for a more conducive learning environment led to a venue change on the final day (pitch event) to Ibadan Business School for improved comfort and delivery.

8.2 Recommendations

To ensure smoother delivery and improved participant experience in future workshops, the following measures are recommended:

- Advance Venue Assessment and Technical Setup Testing
- Enhanced Participant Comfort and Logistics Planning
- Use of Professional Training Facilities