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WEBINAR

Making Grants Work

Rethinking How Grant Financing Can Better Support Businesses

Date: Wednesday, 14, October 2026
Time: 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM EAT
Format: Virtual Webinar (Microsoft Teams)
Registration link: https://bit.ly/FXYWEBINAR2026

Please check your spam/junk folder if you don't receive the registration confirmation email.

1. Background

Development finance is changing. Across the world, development partners, governments, investors and financial institutions are under increasing pressure to make limited public and concessional resources work harder. At the same time, there is growing emphasis on using development finance to mobilize private capital and support markets and businesses that remain underserved by commercial finance.

This challenge is particularly significant in **Africa**, where access to finance remains a major constraint to business growth. The OECD's *Africa Capital Markets Report 2025*, drawing on World Bank Enterprise Survey data across 23 African countries, identifies access to finance as the **single largest obstacle to business for 31% of firms**, compared with a global average of 17%. Smaller businesses are particularly affected. The scale of the financing challenge is also evident at the MSME level. The IFC[1] estimates that **70% of MSMEs in emerging markets lack adequate financing to thrive and grow**, contributing to a multi-trillion-dollar financing gap. Across Africa, this gap varies considerably between markets.

For many African businesses, the challenge is not simply the availability of capital, but the **appropriateness of the finance available**. Smaller and growing businesses can face high borrowing costs, limited collateral, short repayment periods and financing requirements that do not reflect their stage of development or the markets in which they operate. This can leave businesses caught between grant funding that may be limited or highly competitive and commercial finance that may be difficult or costly to access. The World Bank[2] similarly identifies access to finance as one of the most significant constraints facing SMEs across African markets.

Grants therefore continue to have an important role in the African enterprise ecosystem. They can help businesses and programs address market failures, build capacity, test new approaches, develop innovative business models, reduce risk and prepare enterprises to access other forms of finance. They can be particularly relevant in sectors and markets where commercial capital alone may not yet adequately

[1] https://www.ifc.org/en/what-we-do/sector-expertise/financial-institutions/msme-finance
[2] https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/099103108152438721

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serve businesses, including climate-related enterprises, women-led businesses, early-stage ventures and underserved markets.

However, as development finance becomes increasingly focused on **mobilizing private capital and demonstrating measurable development outcomes**, an important question emerges: **how can grant financing work better?** The OECD[3] notes that development finance is increasingly being used to improve the risk-return profile of investments and mobilize private finance, with **US$77 billion in private finance mobilized through development interventions in 2024**. Yet financing remains insufficient relative to the scale of development needs.

The "***Making Grants Work***" webinar will therefore provide an **international platform for dialogue on how grant financing can better support African businesses**, while exploring how development finance can evolve from short-term funding towards financing approaches that strengthen enterprise resilience, unlock additional capital and contribute to sustainable business growth.

The discussion will draw on Finding XY's **experience** implementing more than 20 projects supporting MSMEs across enterprise development, climate action, investment readiness and access to finance. Finding XY will bring practical lessons from this work into the discussion and share selected insights from its **2025–2026 Annual Report**, highlighting lessons from its engagement with businesses, development partners, financial institutions and other ecosystem actors.

Read the report in detail: https://shorturl.at/KqemA

1. Objectives of the webinar

The overall objective of the webinar is to facilitate a practical dialogue on **how grant financing can be designed, accessed, and used more effectively to create sustainable outcomes for businesses.** The event aims to:

i. Examine the equitable management and access to grant financing, e.g. time required to raise grants, qualifications required, and deployment.
ii. Explore how grant-funding can be made more sustainable and how to improve the design and deployment of grants.
iii. Share experiences and lessons from development partners and investors in deploying grants as a form of alternative financing.
iv. Examine the essence of timing in measuring the impact of grant financing.

2. Anticipated Outcomes

[3] https://www.oecd.org/en/topics/mobilising-private-finance-for-development.html

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- Improved understanding of how grant financing can be designed and deployed to de-risk businesses, strengthen investment readiness and mobilize additional private capital.
- Practical lessons on improving the design, timing and deployment of grants to strengthen enterprise resilience and generate sustainable development outcomes.
- Increased capacity among businesses to access, use and leverage grant financing as part of a broader strategy for growth and access to appropriate finance.
- Greater insight into policy and financing approaches that can improve access to appropriate capital and strengthen the effectiveness of public and development finance.

3. Target Participants

The webinar will bring together an international audience of stakeholders involved in development finance and enterprise development, including; SMEs, Development partners, financial service providers, Investors, Government representatives and policymakers, Business Development Service providers, Entrepreneurial Support Organizations**,** and other stakeholders working to strengthen enterprise growth and access to finance.

4. Structure of the Event

The webinar will combine a brief presentation of Finding XY's work and Annual Report insights with a panel discussion focusing on the grant financing and its contribution to sustainable business growth.

Time	Session	Topic / Description	Lead
10:00–10:10	Welcome & setting the scene	Welcome participants and setting the webinar context	Finding XY
10:10–10:20	Opening Remarks	High-level presentations by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MoFPED)	Rep. From MoFPED
10:20–10:25	Finding XY: A Year of Learning from the SME Ecosystem	Selected insights, achievements, partnerships, and lessons from Finding XY's 2025–2026 work and Annual Report.	Finding XY
10:25–11:10	Making Grants Work Better	Panel Discussion	***Panel***: • GIZ • Investisseurs et Partenaires (I&P) • Pearl Capital Partners (PCP)
11:10–11:45	Knowledge pieces	High-level presentations from partners on available opportunities/developments	• Collaborative for Frontier Finance (CFF)

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			• Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) • Adelphi • Kenya Climate Ventures (KCV)
11:45–12:00	Audience Q&A	Reactions from audience & closure	Finding XY

5. About Finding XY

*Finding XY is an **innovation center, investment and business advisory firm** that supports **SMEs** and **ecosystem** builders in Africa through services such as project design and management, business advisory, investment readiness and access to finance. To date, Finding XY has supported more than **10,000** MSMEs with capacity building. We have implemented over **20 projects** addressing climate change and creating social-economic impact in partnership with **development partners** such as the EU, UNIDO, GIZ, Mastercard Foundation, and USAID. These projects have helped MSMEs raise capital and accelerate groundbreaking impacts on our ecosystem. The companies we have supported have raised over **USD 10 million** and created over **50,000** jobs.*

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