



WORLD EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE STEWARDSHIP SURVEY

STEWARDSHIP, GENEROSITY, GIVING AND FUND MOBILISATION IN WORLD EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE MEMBERS

Biblical stewardship, generous living, Kingdom focused giving and God-honoring fund mobilization should become a way of life in the evangelical community. The responses to the World Evangelical Alliance Stewardship Survey indicate that though stewardship, generosity and giving are seen as very important to Christian life, this is not always reflected in teaching and preaching in local churches and theological institutions. This has an impact on actual giving. A better theological and practical engagement in the areas of stewardship, generosity, giving and fund mobilization as well as wealth and poverty might be needed. Stewardship, generosity, giving and fund mobilization training could be valuable in the World Evangelical Alliance community while the development of appropriate stewardship platforms in WEA members should also be considered.

Executive Summary

The World Evangelical Stewardship Survey indicates a broad agreement among WEA members (Evangelical Alliances, Associate Members and Denominational Members) that Biblical stewardship, generous living, Kingdom-focused giving and God-honouring fund mobilisation should be part of Christian, church and ministry life. 58 Evangelical Alliances, 25 Associate Members and 4 Denominational Members completed the Survey. Unfortunately the importance of stewardship, generosity and giving as a life-style is not always preached in churches and taught in theological institutions.

Though giving by Christians seems to be better than expected, giving to cross-cultural mission is very modest and even low. There seems to be a specific need to understand and practice Kingdom-focused giving. The most important obstacles to giving relate to issues around wealth and poverty, little integration of generosity and giving into whole life discipleship, disconnect between generous living and generous financial giving and issues around financial stewardship. Greed, materialism, financial planning (especially in the West where indebtedness is a major obstacle to giving) and poverty (especially in the Global South) should therefore be addressed to encourage giving.

There are significant differences in the perception of financial strength of churches and believers between different countries with nearly 50% of Evangelical Alliances indicated that the financial strength of churches and believers linked to their Alliances are either weak or very weak. Ways to support poorer evangelical churches and believers have to be looked into.

The Stewardship Survey responses indicate that there are already:

- 1 Evangelical Alliance stewardship officer;
- 2 WEA Denominational stewardship officers;
- 6 Evangelical Alliance stewardship working groups;
- 1 WEA Denominational stewardship working group;
- 1 WEA Denominational stewardship commission;
- 10 Evangelical Alliance fundraisers;
- 8 WEA Associate Member with full-time fundraisers;
- 8 WEA Associate Members with fundraising teams.

The Stewardship Survey responses also indicate that:

- 22 Evangelical Alliances have nobody in their Alliances who encourages giving
- 27 Evangelical Alliances and 3 WEA Denominational Members want to start stewardship working groups or commissions;
- 13 Evangelical Alliances and WEA Denominational Members want assistance in developing stewardship working groups or commissions;
- 34 Evangelical Alliances and WEA Denominational Members want to develop a generosity strategy;
- 37 Evangelical Alliances, WEA Associate Members and WEA Denominational Members want assistance in fundraising training;

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**HOW CAN THIS
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- 37 Evangelical Alliances, WEA Associate Members and WEA Denominational Members want assistance in generosity training;
- 32 Evangelical Alliances, WEA Associate Members and WEA Denominational Members want assistance in developing a fundraising culture in their Alliances, ministries and denominations.

The Survey shows the challenge to make Biblical stewardship, generous living, Kingdom-focused giving and God-honouring fund mobilisation part of the life-style of every evangelical Christian, church and ministry. The question is how such a vision could be encouraged in the World Evangelical Alliance community.

The Survey provides some direction on how this vision could become a reality through for example a stewardship, generosity, giving and fund mobilization culture and strategy throughout the World Evangelical Alliance community. Such a movement should be supported and enabled by the World Evangelical Alliance global leadership. The Survey also provides a platform for further support for WEA members, initiatives, commissions and global partners in the area of stewardship, generosity, giving and fund mobilisation. This will hopefully result in increased income for WEA members.

The WEA Stewardship Survey responses suggest theological challenges, specific focus areas for support and the need for a WEA Stewardship Commission that can catalyse a stewardship, generosity, giving and fund mobilisation strategy in the WEA community. As such it would be good for Evangelical Alliances, WEA Associate Members and WEA Denominational Members to reflect on the results of the Survey.

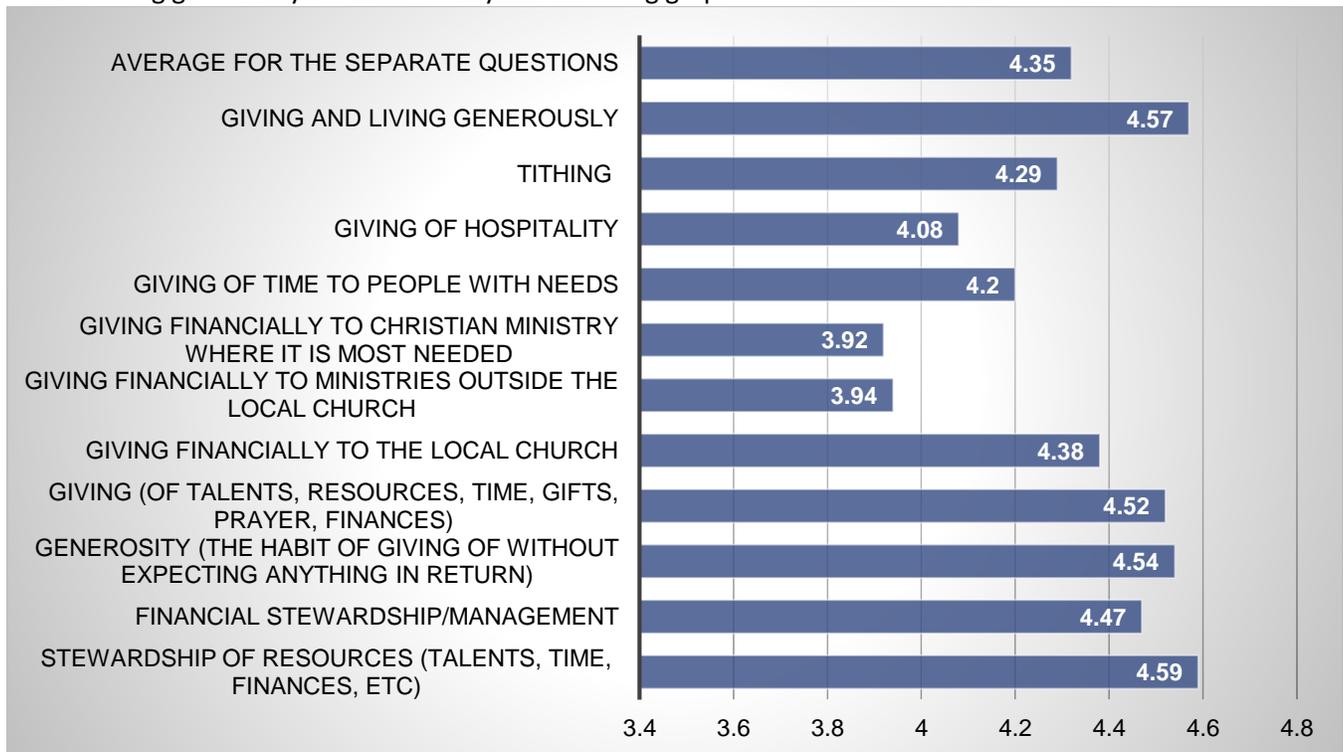
There are already a large number of stewardship, generosity, giving and fund mobilization resources at the following websites: <http://conversation.lausanne.org/en/resources/browse/category/Resource+Mobilization> and <http://community.generositymovement.org/en/resources>. One of them is the Generosity Resources List that can be accessed through the following link http://conversation.lausanne.org/en/resources/detail/13386#.UvACeBB_vul. WEA members can download, use and distribute these resources. For further information and assistance please send an e-mail to ggncoord@gmail.com.

Dr Sas Conradie
Coordinator Global Generosity Network
February 2014

Key findings and graphs

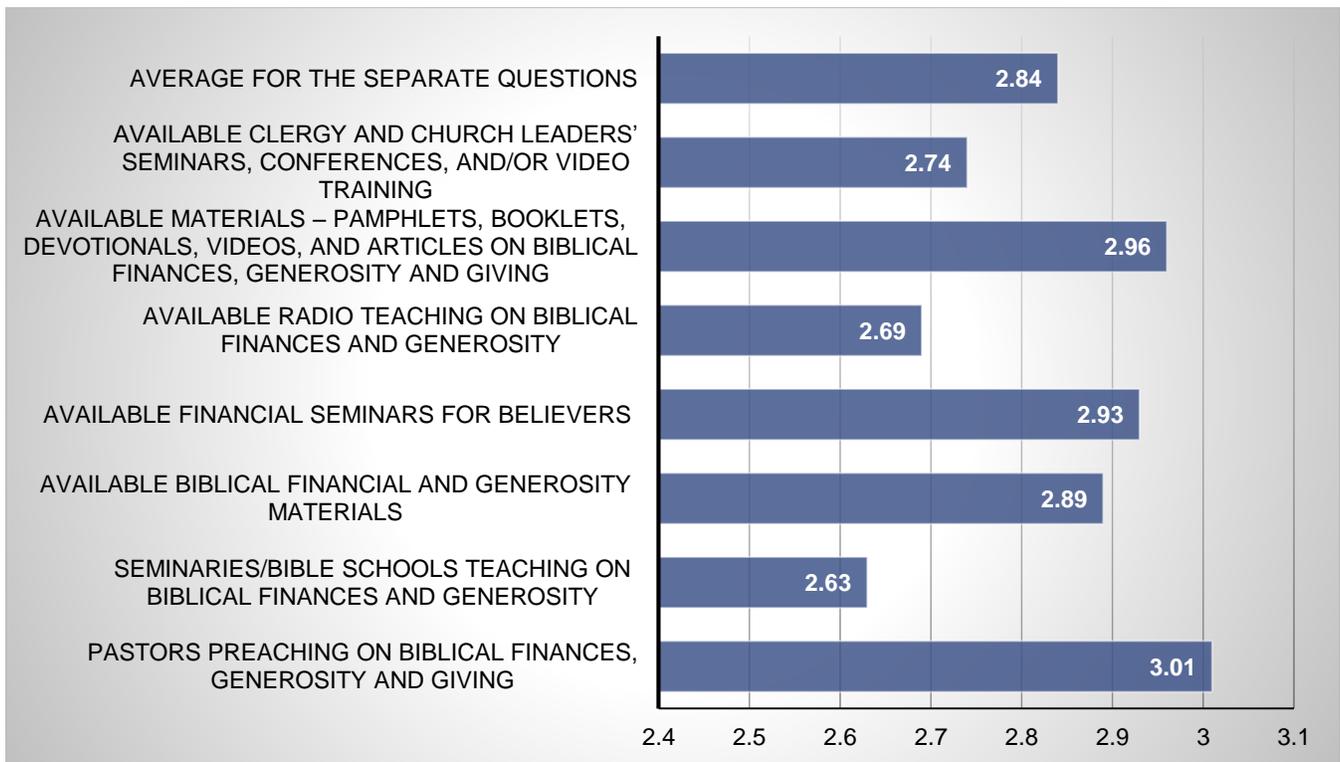
1) Importance of stewardship, generosity and giving in Christian life

Evangelical Alliances, WEA Associate Members and Denominational Members gave an average of 4.35 out of 5 for 11 questions on the importance of stewardship, generosity and giving in Christian life. The only 2 questions that received less than 4 out of 5 related to giving to ministries outside the local church and ministry where it is most needed. This was due to lower scores by especially Denominational Members. The highest scores were given to questions about stewardship of resources and giving and living generously as illustrated by the following graph:



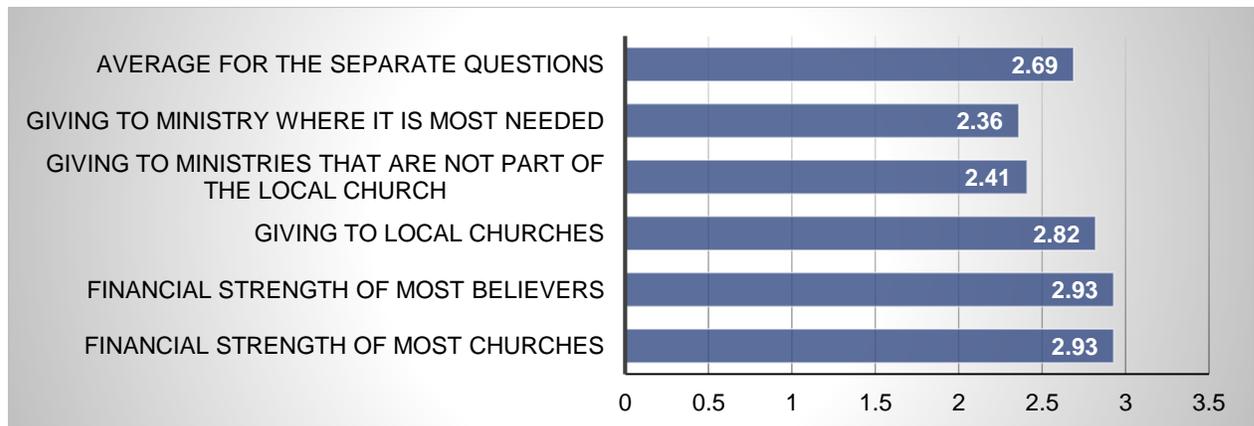
2) Perceptions about stewardship, generosity and giving teaching

Respondents gave an average score of 2.84 out of 5 to 7 questions about their perception of stewardship, generosity and giving teaching. As the graph shows, the highest score was given to pastors preaching about Biblical finances, generosity and giving. The lowest was given to seminaries and Bible Schools teaching on the themes with Denominational respondents specifically critical of the teaching in seminaries with a score of only 2 out of 5. In general Associate Members gave higher scores to the questions than Evangelical Alliances and Denominational Members.



3) Perceptions on local church giving

The relative low level of teaching and preaching might result in lower levels local church giving as is reflected in 5 questions related to local church giving. The average for the 5 questions was 2.69 with giving to ministries that are not part of the local church and giving to ministry where it is most needed scoring much lower than the questions on the financial strength of churches and believers as well as giving to local churches. It is interesting that the average scores for the financial strength of churches and believers are the same. That might indicate that most believers actually give close to their abilities to churches. The financial strength of believers might need to be increased to increase the financial strength of churches. What is not clear in the total figures, is the inequality between Christians and churches globally. Nearly half of Evangelical Alliances indicated that the financial strength of churches and believers are either very weak or weak. On the other side 7 indicated that the financial strength of churches and believers are either strong or very strong. This then has an impact on giving to local churches and ministries.

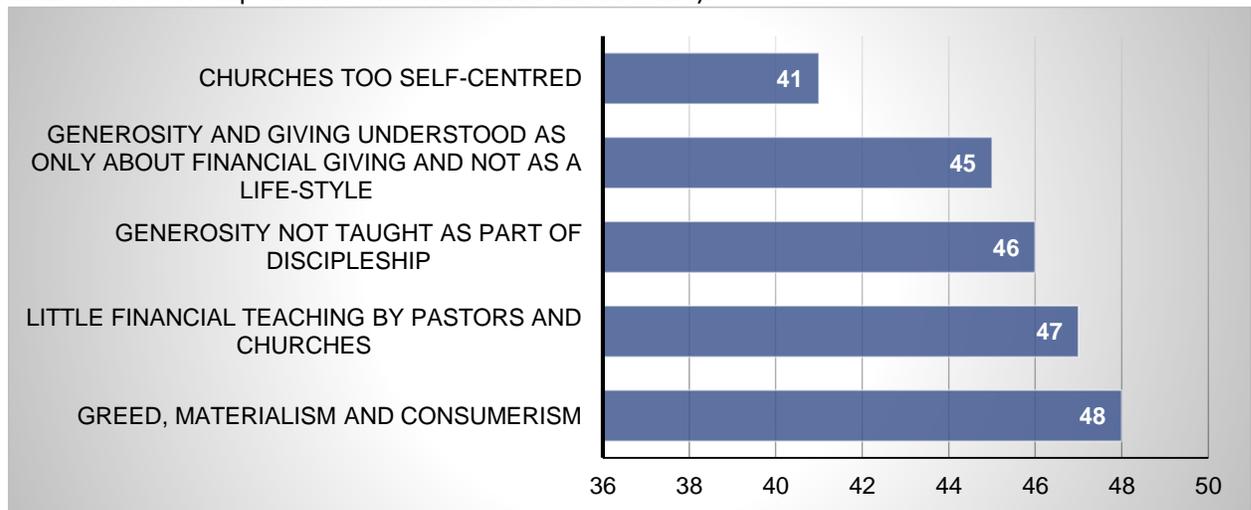


4) Existing perceived giving

An extremely difficult question to answer for most respondents, the best conclusion to the 4 sub questions might be that much more research is needed in the levels of church and cross-cultural mission giving. On the basis of the responses, it seems as if 10-25% of Christians tithe, they give about 5% or their income to Christian causes and give 3% of their giving to cross-cultural mission. However the denominational respondents estimate that their members give only 1-2% of their giving to cross-cultural mission. Local churches seem to give roughly 4% of their income to cross-cultural mission which is still very low and could be the result of a wrong theological understanding of the focus of giving as was observed in the first question.

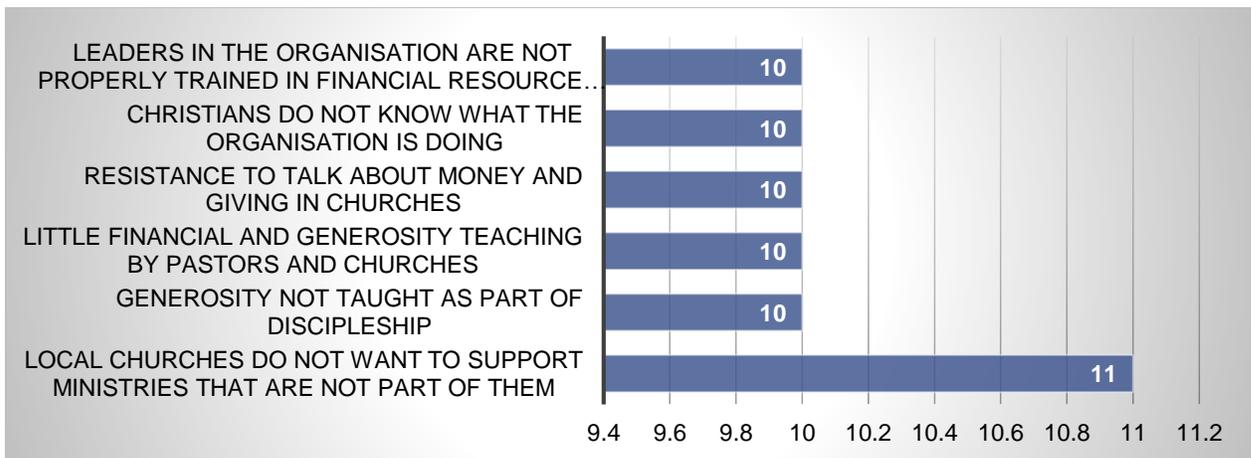
5) Obstacles to giving

Perhaps as expected, greed/materialism/consumerism was mentioned as the most important obstacle to giving. The lack of giving preaching and teaching and generosity not being part of discipleship were also mentioned as key obstacles to giving while it is clear that generosity and giving should be explained as a life-style and not just as financial giving. It is significant that denominations mentioned indebtedness as the most important obstacle to giving while poverty was mentioned by 25 Evangelical Alliances. The 5 most important obstacles to giving according to respondents are (the number is the total number of respondents that mentioned the obstacle):



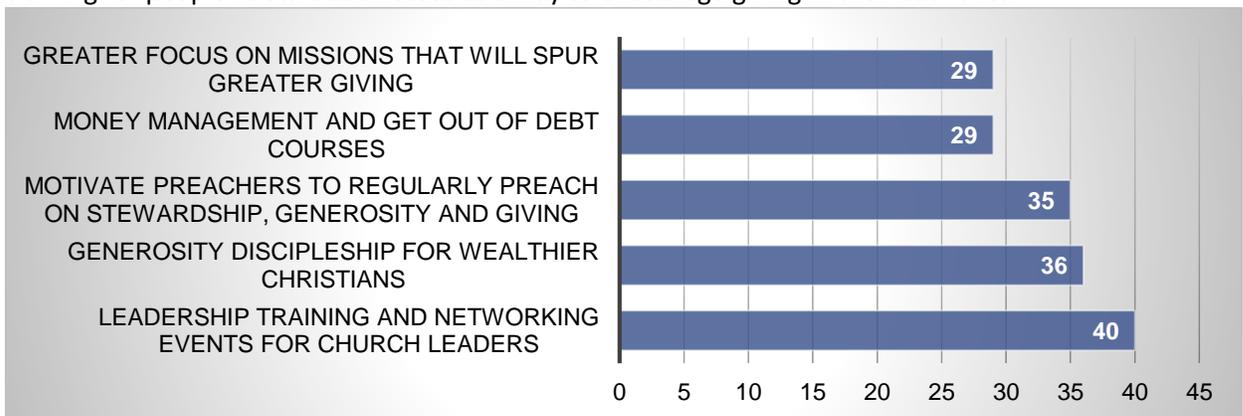
6) Obstacles to giving to Associate Members

In line with previous questions about giving to ministries that are not part of local churches, Associate Members mentioned local churches that do not want to support ministries that are not part of them as the greatest obstacle to giving to them (mainly large ministries). However obstacles such as leaders in the organization who are not properly trained in financial resource mobilization and Christians who do not know what the organization is doing return in later questions. The top 6 obstacles to giving to Associate Members are mentioned as:



7) Things that can be done to encourage stewardship, generosity and giving

Leadership training and generosity discipleship for wealthier Christians were the most important initiatives that respondents felt could be done to encourage stewardship, generosity and giving in their countries and denominations. In line with the view that indebtedness is the greatest obstacle to giving in their denominations, denominational leaders mentioned money management and get out of debt courses as potentially having the greatest impact on stewardship, generosity and giving. It is significant that a greater focus on missions that will spur greater giving is the joint fourth initiative as the graph of the 5 most important issues shows. Though understanding wealth and poverty was not in the top 5 initiatives, 20 Evangelical Alliances mentioned that as important to encourage giving. Wealth creation is also an important area to encourage giving for Alliances with 17 Evangelical Alliances mentioning training for people to start businesses as a way to encourage giving in their countries.



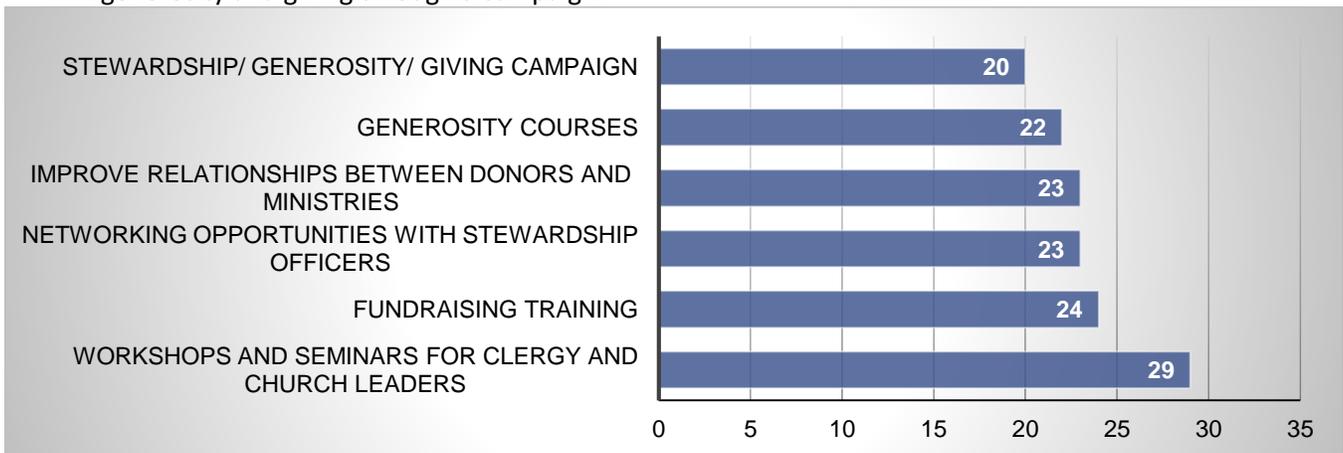
8) Who encourage giving

- 63 or 72.5% of respondents mentioned that at least somebody in the Alliance/organization/denomination encourages giving.
- That means 24 or 27.5% of the WEA members who responded do not have anybody who encourages giving. 22 Evangelical Alliances and 2 Associate Members indicated nobody in their Alliances and organisations encourage giving.
- Treasurers and financial administrators seem to be the most important in encouraging giving with 23 of respondents mentioning treasurers as encouraging giving although it was much higher in Evangelical Alliances with 18 out of the 55 respondents saying that Alliance treasurers encourage giving.
- The respondents mentioned 3 stewardship officers, 7 stewardship working groups, 1 stewardship commission, 20 Alliances/organisations with either full-time or part-time fundraisers, and 8 fundraising teams.

- It was significant that only 2 Associate Members mentioned that all their supporters encourage giving to the organization.

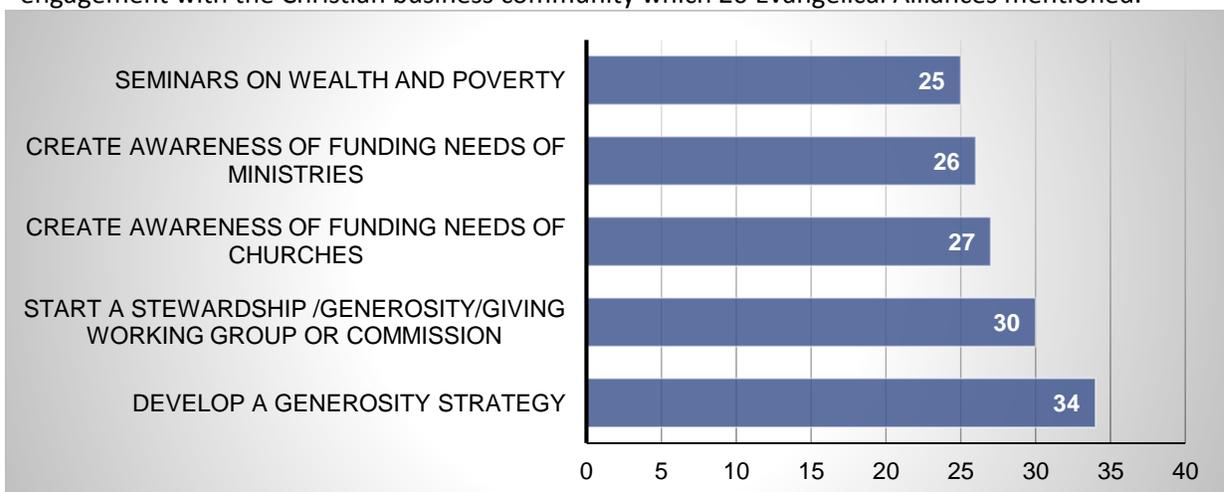
9) Most important things the Alliances/Denominations could do to help encourage stewardship, generosity and giving?

Evangelical Alliance and denominational leaders felt that the best way they could do to encourage stewardship, generosity and giving is through workshops and seminars for clergy and church leaders. Apart from the workshops, 13 said that they could be involved in generosity consultations to encourage stewardship. Live workshops and consultations are therefore the best engagement platform for Evangelical Alliances and denominations. It is significant that the top area of engagement for denominations that responded is to help improve relationships between donors and ministries. The importance of fundraising and generosity training is reflected again in the outside need mentioned while it is significant that 18 Alliances and 2 denominations indicated that they could encourage stewardship, generosity and giving through a campaign.



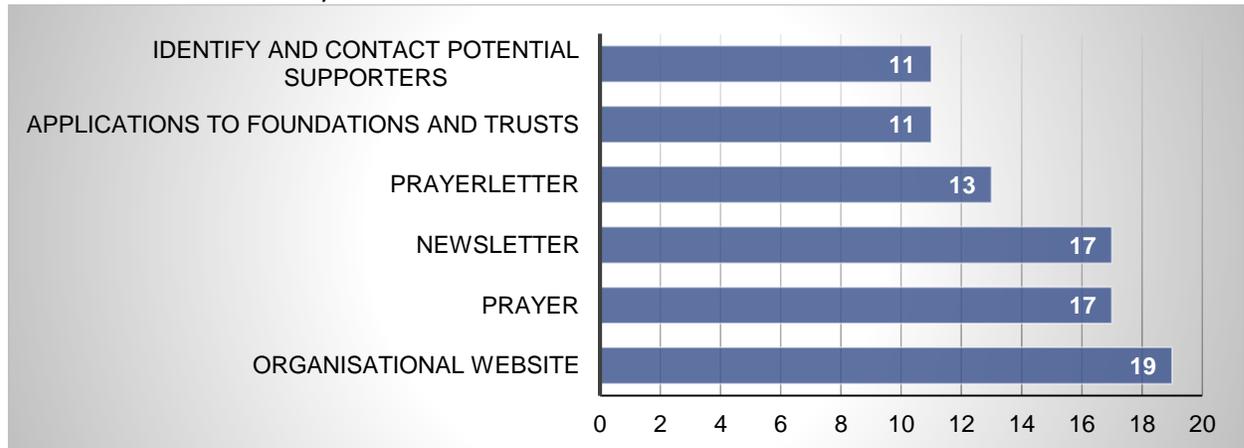
10) What else could the Alliance/Denomination do to encourage stewardship, generous living and giving

It is clear that Alliances and Denominations feel that there is a need to facilitate stewardship, generous living and giving on an operational level with 30 Alliances and 4 denominations mentioning the need for a generosity strategy and a total of 27 Alliances and 3 denominations mentioning the possibility of establishing either a stewardship working group or commission. They also clearly feel that creating awareness of needs of churches, ministries and people will encourage giving while it is significant that 24 Evangelical Alliances felt that seminars on wealth and poverty will facilitate giving. What does not come through in the most important ways to encourage stewardship, generous living and giving is the engagement with the Christian business community which 20 Evangelical Alliances mentioned.



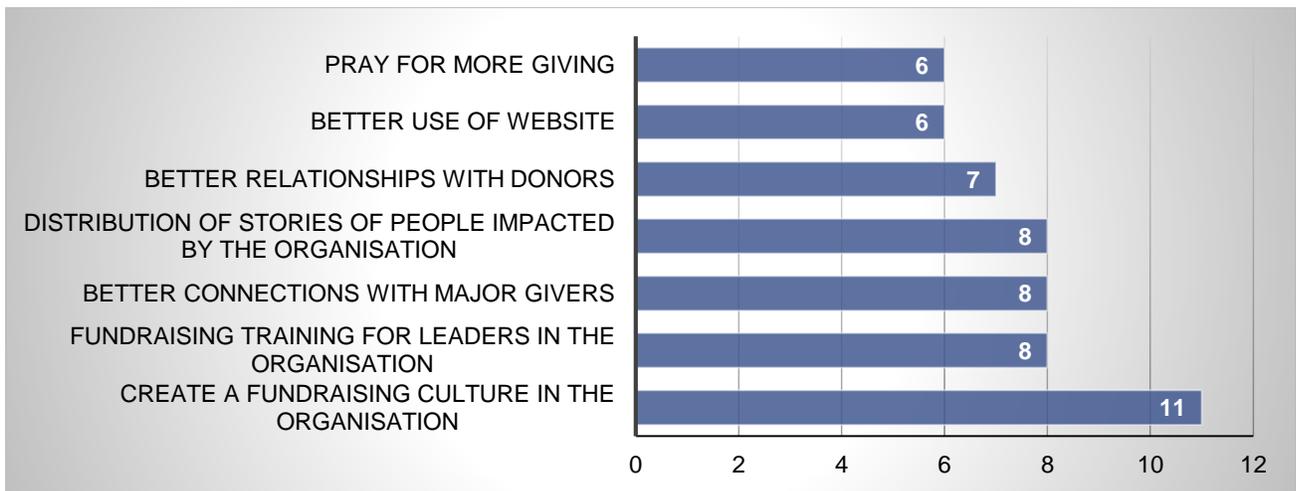
11) How does Associate Members encourage financial giving to their organisations

As perhaps expected WEA Associate Members use mainly websites, prayer, newsletters and prayerletters to encourage giving. It was a surprise that applications to trusts and foundations were mentioned as more important than speaking in churches, speaking to Christian business people and Christian professional fellowships or to speak at conferences or events. It was significant that only 7 respondents mentioned that they encourage their supporters to motivate their friends to give to the organization. That indicates that there is a potential barrier to envision and ask Christians to give more to the organizations. This could be a reason why Christians give less to ministries that are not part of local churches and ministry where it is most needed.



12) Most important additional things that can be done to encourage giving to Associate Members

Fewer Associate Members completed the question on additional things that can be done to encourage giving to their organisations than the question on what can be done. There could be a feeling among Associate Members that they already do enough to encourage giving to them despite deficiencies that appeared in the way they encourage giving. The majority of those who completed the question on additional things to encourage giving, mentioned the importance of creating a fundraising culture in the organization, fundraising training for leaders and better connections with major givers. It was again significant that better communication about what the organization is doing and better relationships with local churches were seen as less important. This confirms the trend that one of the most important reasons why there is not more giving to ministries outside the local church and where it is most needed might relate to the lack of envisioning and not necessarily a reluctance to give more. It is further significant that none of the respondents mentioned that providing opportunities for supporters to give their time to the organization and not only their money. In the context where one of the main obstacles to giving is that giving is only seen as financial giving and not as a life-style, it can be expected that organisations will have difficulty in encouraging giving to them if they do not create opportunities for personal engagement by donors.



13) Assistance needed from an initiative such as the Global Generosity Network

Fundraising and generosity training were definitely the most important assistance that respondents indicated they need. 30 Evangelical Alliances, 5 Associate Members and 2 Denominational Members mentioned fundraising training while 29 Evangelical Alliances, 6 Associate Members and 2 Denominational Members mentioned generosity training. Developing a fundraising culture, fundraising teams and stewardship working groups and commissions were also mentioned as key areas of support that might be needed. It was interesting that 3 of the 4 denominations that respondent mentioned research on generosity related issues as an important area of assistance that they need.

