

JANUARY 12-15, 2025

2025 EXECUTIVE SECRETARIES WORKSHOP

Evaluation Report



PREPARED BY: ASEC MONITORING & EVALUATION UNIT

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Acknowledgements

This report was prepared by the Monitoring & Evaluation Unit within the African Sisters Education Collaborative at Marywood University.

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On the Cover: 2025 Executive Secretaries Workshop attendees at Mestil Hotel in Kampala, Uganda, January 2025.

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ASEC Executives Secretaries Workshop

Evaluation Key Outcomes (May 2025)



3 WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES



Provide national conference/association representatives **greater knowledge about ASEC and its programs.**



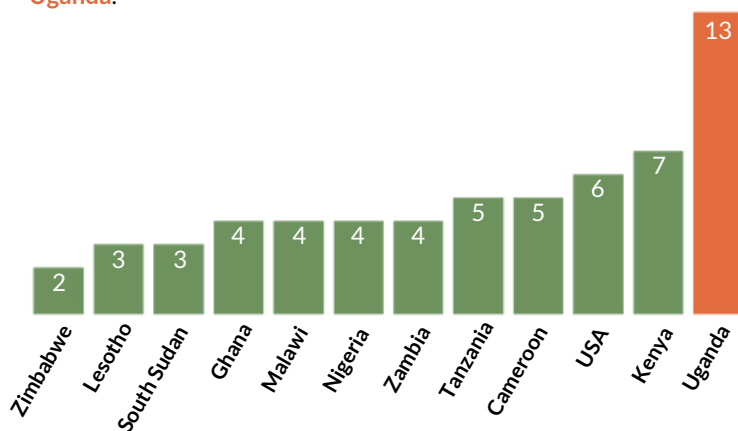
Create a **space for sharing and learning** about SLDI Phase VII.



Facilitate learning and networking among national conference/association representatives to **enhance their leadership skills.**

Under the theme Igniting Hope, Building Bridges, Creating Impact, representatives of ASEC's partner national conferences/associations **gathered in Kampala, Uganda to participate in the 2025 Executives Secretaries Workshop** held January 12-15, 2025.

In total, 61 individuals from 12 countries, including Zimbabwe and the United States, attended. The highest participation was from **Uganda.**



WORKSHOP OUTCOMES

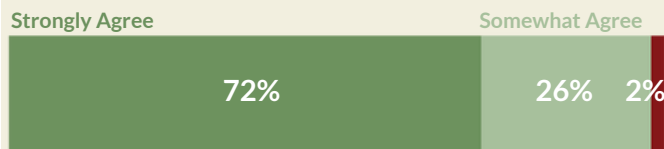
100% (n = 54) of attendees agreed that the purpose of ASEC's programs are clear and that they understand ASEC's partnership expectations, program evaluation, and impact.

100% (n = 54) of attendees reported there was sufficient time to network with others, that they made new connections, and they gained knowledge and insight on effective leadership.

98% (n = 53) of attendees agreed that they understand ASEC's background, programs, and the SLDI Phase VII implementation plan.

96% (n = 52) of attendees reported that they understand the SLDI program structure.

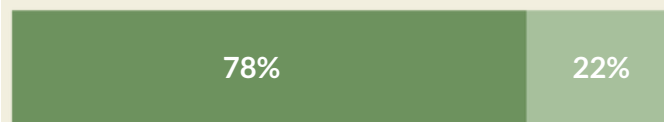
2025 EXECUTIVE SECRETARIES SURVEY RESULTS



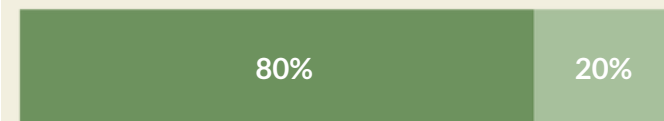
ASEC alumnae are able to serve with greater expertise, skill, & confidence after completing ASEC programs (n = 54).



ASEC alumnae have an increased capacity to address local & global challenges (n = 54).



ASEC alumnae are able to act as change agents in the society(s) they serve (n = 54).



ASEC alumnae take up leadership positions in their ministries (n = 54).

Dr. Carol Zinn, SSJ

Executive Director, Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR), United States

Dr. Carol Zinn, a Sister of St. Joseph from Chestnut Hill, Philadelphia, PA, USA, currently serves as the Executive Director of LCWR. She has taught on all levels (pre-K through post-graduate) and has worked in the areas of educational leadership, religious education, sacramental coordinator, and music minister. Dr. Zinn has also served on her congregation's leadership team and in the Presidency of LCWR for a three-year term, 2012-2015.

At the 2025 Executive Secretaries Workshop, Dr. Zinn facilitated two virtual sessions—*Consecrated Religious Life and Leadership: Living Now and Into the Future with Hope and Meaning* and *Religious Conferences*—both of which were well received by all in attendance.



FEATURED FACILITATOR

ASEC Executives Secretaries Workshop

Executive Summary (May 2025)



For the first time, an SLDI Executive Secretaries Workshop, specifically for ASEC's national conference/association partner representatives, was held January 12-15, 2025 at the Mestil Hotel & Residences in Kampala, Uganda. An SLDI Partners Workshop is generally held in the second year of each three-year SLDI phase. However, in Phase VI, a workshop was held for SLDI facilitators only in Year 2 and plans were made to hold a separate workshop for executive secretaries in Year 3. It was determined that separate workshops would be ideal in Phase VI given the distinct needs and objectives of each group of individuals. The unprecedented Executive Secretaries Workshop afforded ASEC a unique opportunity to collect more extensive data at the national conference/association level.

National conferences/associations of women religious are organizations consisting of the leaders of institutes of women religious in a particular country. These conferences/associations provide a platform for leaders to collaborate, share resources, and advocate for issues affecting religious life and society.

The 2025 SLDI Executive Secretaries Workshop was designed to meet three objectives:

1. Provide the national conference/association of women religious representatives with greater knowledge about ASEC as an organization and the different ASEC programs;
2. Create a space for sharing and learning about the SLDI Phase VII implementation in order to enrich the program for the benefit for SLDI participants and those they serve;
3. Facilitate learning and networking among national conferences/associations of women religious representatives to enhance the leadership of their conferences/associations and its members.

Individuals in attendance included representatives of each national conference/association (i.e., the executive secretary and other individuals in leadership positions) within ASEC's 11 countries of operation, as well as a representative from the United States Leadership

KEY TAKEAWAYS

61

Workshop Attendees

12 Countries:
28 ASEC Staff
33 National Reps

6

Sessions Increase Knowledge

Facilitators:
4 by ASEC Staff
2 by Consultant

2

Team Building Events

Events:
Storytelling
Shrine Visit

SLDI Workshops

- Content is valuable for addressing societal needs
- Participants gain self-confidence
- Some topics need more time allocated
- Applicants need basic knowledge to participate
- Congregational leaders need to be more involved in recruitment
- Funds should be raised by sisters/congregations prior to program participation to cover incidental costs

Graduation Testimonial

- Receptive to implementation
- Will validate their acquired knowledge and skills
- Encourages participants and assists in evaluation

Laptops

- Valued by sisters as they help increase professionalism
- Are commonly used in ministry, studies/education, exploratory work, and virtual meetings
- Are a community tool that helps make vital connections, especially in rural areas
- Some congregations reclaim laptops and do not use them as intended
- Laptops are preferred over other devices (i.e., tablets)

Advanced Web Design Track

- Provided significant gains, particularly in financial competence
- Income opportunities for graduates has not been strong in comparison to other tracks
- Laptops are essential for this track
- Interest expressed in expanding the track offering to other countries



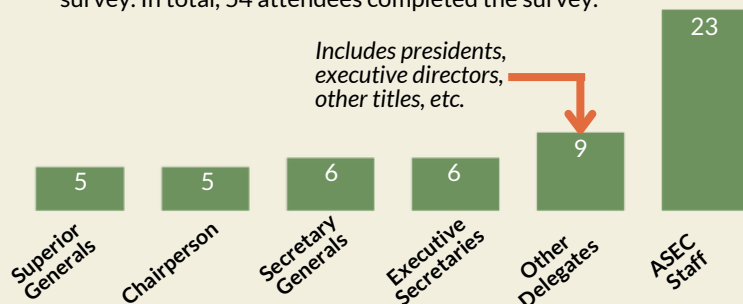
ASEC Executives Secretaries Workshop

Executive Summary Cont'd



EXECUTIVE SECRETARIES SURVEY

Valuable information was collected from workshop attendees via survey. In total, 54 attendees completed the survey.



Conference of Women Religious (LCWR) and ASEC staff. Further, of the 61 individuals attending, 54 completed the ASEC Executive Secretaries Survey.

Workshop attendees reported that partnering with ASEC has significantly enhanced the vibrancy and vitality of national conferences/associations of women religious across various countries. The collaboration has provided sisters with valuable educational opportunities, empowering them with skills that are directly applied in their ministries. This empowerment has led to increased income, improved self-confidence, and greater effectiveness in their roles.

Challenges encountered during the workshop included: delayed luggage and with no access to an emergency travel allowance, lack of effective audio/visual technology for presenters, and insufficient time allocation for certain activities. Some attendees expressed concern for implementing the skills learned given limited funding and available resources.

However, feedback provided on the 2025 SLDI Executive Secretaries Meeting was largely positive, with many participants expressing satisfaction with the organization and content of the meeting. Suggestions for improvement included: scheduling more personal time in the agenda, including more interactive opportunities, extending the length of the workshop, and integrating more sessions utilizing the storytelling event format.

The 2025 SLDI Executive Secretaries Workshop was successful in achieving all of its objectives and was positively received by all in attendance. The workshop provided an opportunity for the national conference/association of women religious representatives to come together, in person, to learn about ASEC, which will undoubtedly strengthen partnerships in the future. Lastly, this workshop led to profound learning about effective leadership of a national conference/association of women religious through inspired sessions led by Dr. Carol Zinn.

FEATURED STORYTELLERS

Realizing the Dream: Empowering Women in Uganda

ASEC Alum: Sr. Veronica Takola Biribawa, MCESM

ASEC Program Details: HESA, Bachelor of Social Work & Management, University of Kisubi, Uganda, Graduated April 2022

Beneficiary: Angelina Akoth, HESA Alum Beneficiary, Uganda

Angelina Akoth, a woman in Uganda, has lived a life marked by a series of personal tragedies. Out of desperation, Angelina began stealing mangos and bananas from a nearby convent. This is where Angelina caught the attention of Sr. Veronica Takola Biribawa, MCESM. After an incident of theft, Sr. Veronica followed Angelina back to her village and learned of her story. Sr. Veronica invited Angelina to participate in her program aimed at empowering women to start businesses.

Sr. Veronica developed a training program called the Masese III Empowerment Initiative (MEI), aimed at empowering women to start businesses. The initiative has grown to serve over 500 participants, including Angelina, initially focusing on women but later expanding to include men to address and reduce domestic violence. Participants are organized into groups of ten, and the program offers one-on-one support for small businesses, including microloans. The program has led to a noticeable decrease in domestic violence.

Angelina and Sr. Veronica were featured storytellers at ASEC's 2025 Executive Secretaries Workshop held in Uganda in January 2025. After sharing their stories, Angelina conducted a live demonstration of the process of making brichet (charcoal) using all available natural ingredients, which captivated and left the audience in awe.

