

State of the BAM Movement

2020/21 Report

Eido
RESEARCH

Introduction

Business as Mission is “a movement of businesses transforming people and nations – for God’s glory”. BAM Global serves this movement by creating intellectual and social capital, and connecting human and financial capital. Their mission is to invigorate the Business as Mission movement globally, but there is limited data on the current global reach or impact of the movement.

In April 2021, BAM Global hosted their 8-year Global Congress event. In the buildup to this event, BAM Global engaged Eido Research on some pro-bono research on the ‘State of the BAM Movement’. The goal was to understand the reach and maturity of the movement, listen to participants’ needs and pain points in order to shape the conference content, and to gain high-level insights on the social and spiritual issues being addressed by companies in the movement. Eido sent a short survey to all attendees of the event, and again afterwards as well.

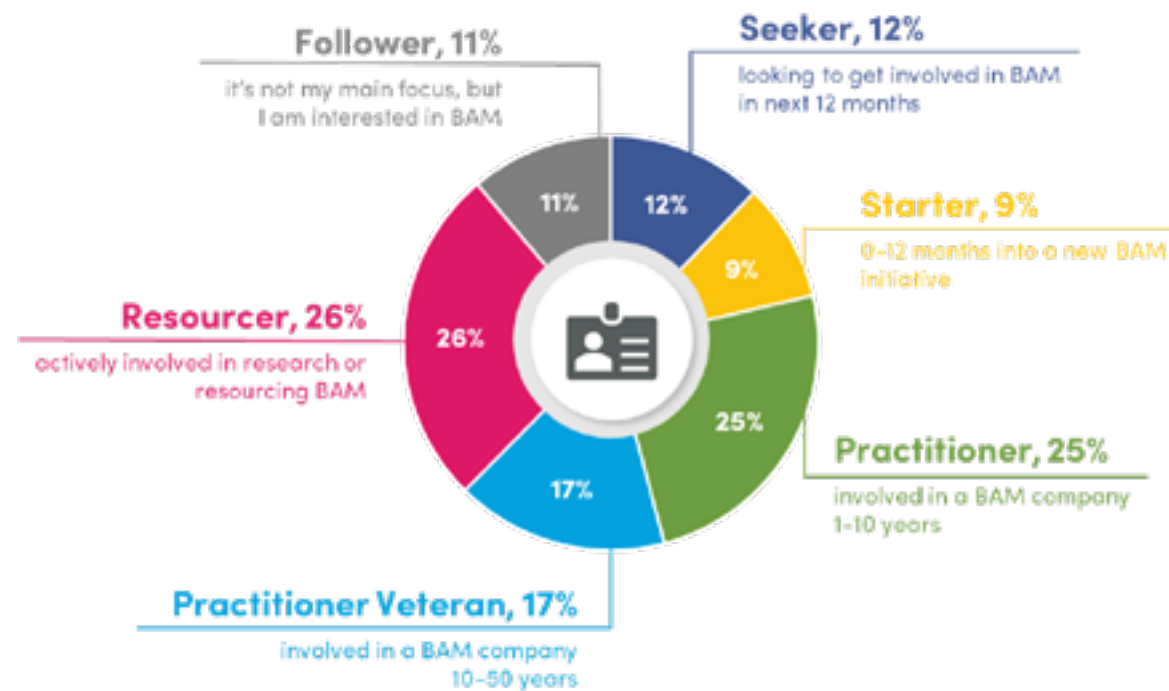
The following report is a summary of the key findings from this survey. There is much more that could be discussed here and there is much scope for further research on the impact of the movement, but this gives a powerful snapshot of the state of the BAM movement and baseline of impact occurring.

Background

The survey was taken by 470 respondents, with over 75% of those completing all of the answers. BAM Global has a large reach, but even for the 7000 individuals on their mailing list, this is a representative sample size.



What role or stage in the BAM journey do respondents represent?



The graph shows that about 50% of this community are actively running businesses right now. Of those, 9% are in their first 12 months, 25% have been running between 1 and 10 years, and 17% for over 10 years.

This is still an emerging movement therefore, with the majority of companies less than ten years old, and a good additional number (12%) looking to start business soon.

The largest other group are 'Resourcers', at 26%.

Where are BAM businesses located?



Source: Eido Research - Kingdom Impact Framework • Created with Datawrapper

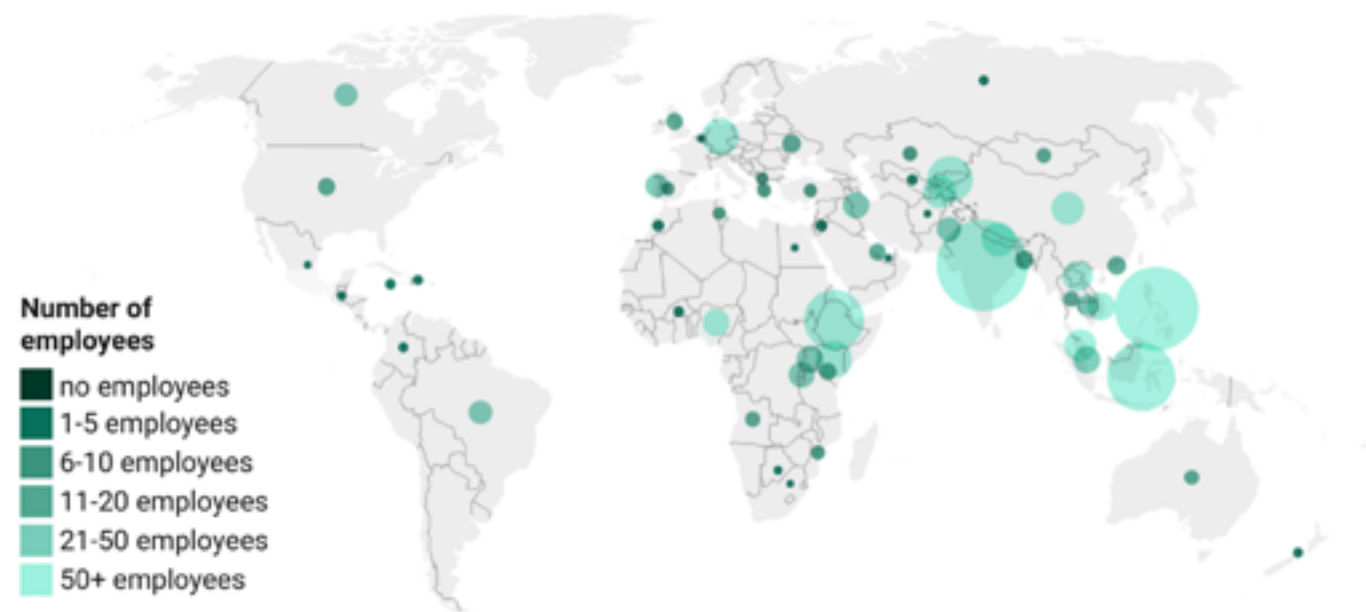
The global map above shows the distribution of active BAM businesses, according to their turnover. Each dot represents a country, the size of the dot represents the number of businesses in that country, and the colour represents the average turnover.

Firstly, it is clear that this is a global movement, with businesses on nearly every continent.

Secondly, there are a few countries where there is a real concentration of BAM businesses, namely India, Indonesia, and the United States. These countries had 20, 12 and 28 active businesses respectively, out of the total 175.

Thirdly, there are a different set of countries that have businesses with high turnover. The countries that had an average business turnover of near to, or over \$1 million were Malaysia, Hong Kong and the territory of Kurdistan.

Fourthly, the majority of BAM businesses have a turnover between \$250k and \$1m. We see these all over the world but notably throughout the middle east and Asia.



Source: Eido Research - Kingdom Impact Framework • Created with Datawrapper

When we look at the global distribution of businesses by their number of employees, we see that there are again a few countries with businesses hiring many people.

Countries with businesses hiring on average more than 100 employees include the Philippines, Germany, and Kenya.

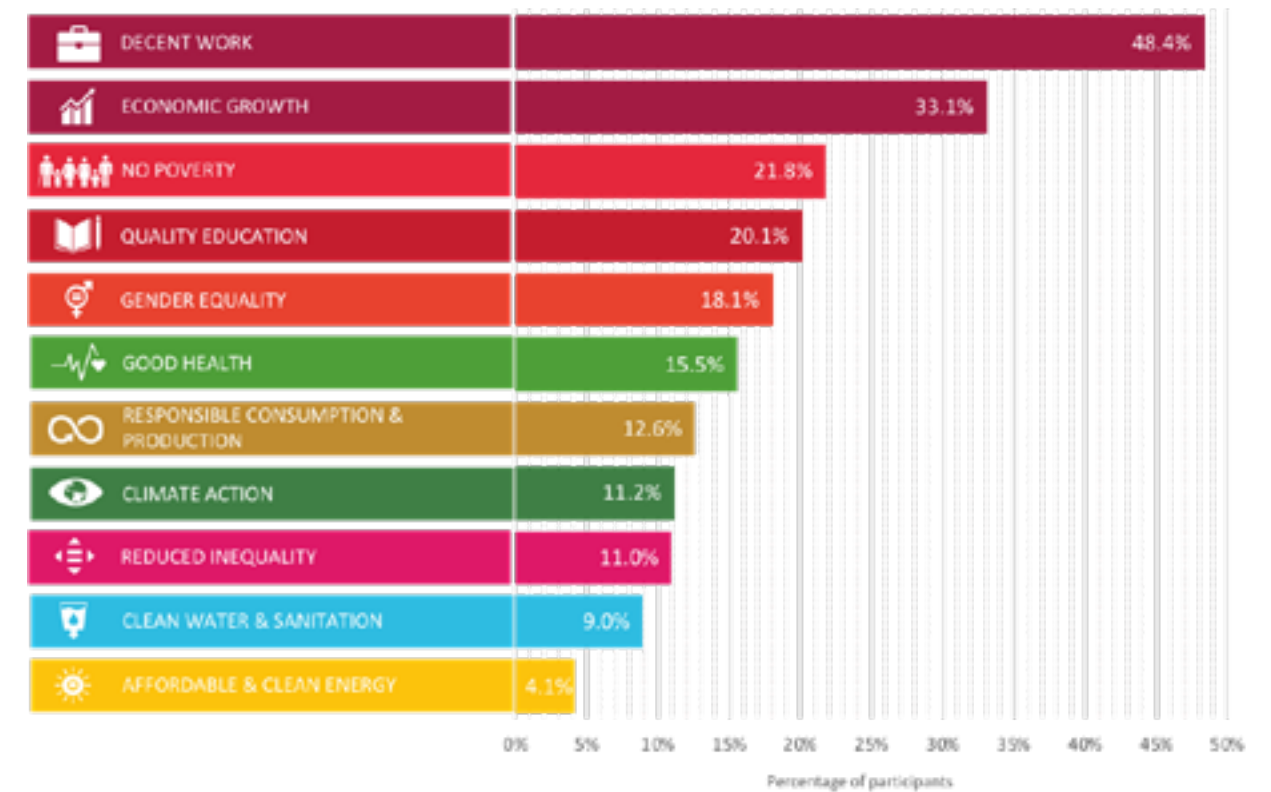
A number of other countries hire in total hundreds of employees in their businesses. These include India, Indonesia, Ethiopia, and the Kyrgyz Republic.

Lastly, overall 57% of BAM businesses hire between 0 and 10 staff, 26% between 11 and 50, and 16% over 50 staff.

What social issues are being addressed?

We asked the question: “To what extent is your business intending to impact, or already impacting, the following social, economic, and environmental issues...”, and gave respondents an adapted list of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The following graph shows the percentage of businesses who “have activities and are seeing significant impact” in those areas:



We also wanted to know the range of action that businesses are taking, and so this graph includes the percentage responses according to four different levels of action:



We see that:

- The main social issues that BAM businesses are addressing, and already seeing impact in, are: creating decent work for people (50% of businesses), impacting economic growth (33%), and poverty alleviation (22%).
- The spread of social issues where companies are already seeing impact is quite impressive including, in addition to the three above: quality education, gender equality, good health, climate action and reduced inequality.
- There are a number of social issues that BAM businesses aren't really addressing however. The two with little engagement are affordable and clean energy (68% with no intention to address), and clean water and sanitation (58%).

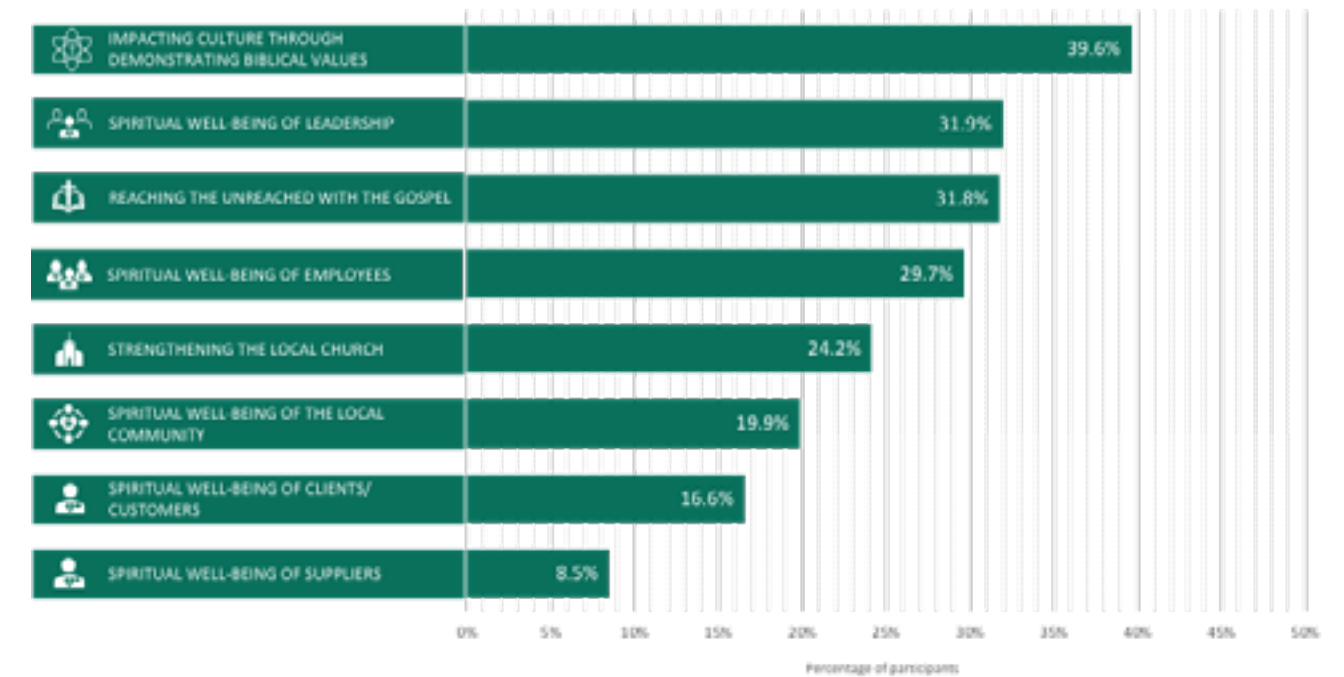
There were a number of additional social issues that respondents mentioned. These include:

- Addressing human trafficking, employment for survivors of exploitation, character development, elderly care, orphan and refugee care.

Which spiritual issues are being addressed?

We also wanted to know the extent to which BAM businesses are having spiritual impact. We therefore asked to what extent they are intending, or already seeing impact according to the categories of spiritual impact shown below. There is no set of spiritual impact categories as clearly defined as the SDGs, so we created the following list from BAM literature and an understanding of the movement.

As for social impact, the following graph shows the percentage of businesses who “have activities and are seeing significant impact” in those areas:



Again it is helpful to understand the range of actions that businesses are taking according to these spiritual impact areas; so this graph includes the percentage responses according to four different levels of action:



These results show that:

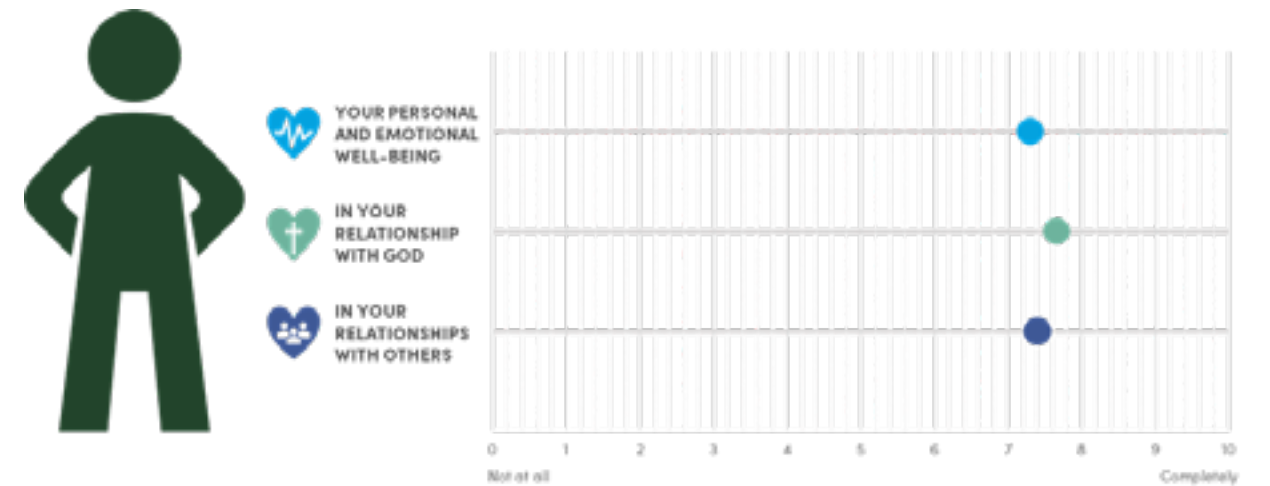
- The issue where the greatest percentage of companies are already seeing spiritual impact is ‘impacting culture through demonstrating biblical values’ (40%). We would caveat that this is a challenging issue to measure.
- At least 30% of businesses are seeing impact in three other issues as well: the spiritual well-being of leadership, reaching the unreached with the gospel, and the spiritual well-being of employees.
- Different to social impact, what is clear is that almost all businesses surveyed intend to impact most of the issues mentioned. Only 20% of businesses said they had no intention to impact the spiritual well-being of suppliers.
- Furthermore, for most issues at least 50% of businesses already have activities or programmes addressing the issue or are seeing impact. This is different to social impact, where there are a number of issues with little intention or activity.

There were a number of additional spiritual issues that respondents mentioned. These include:

- Building unity and collaboration amongst believers, church planting, and the spiritual well-being of investors.

Are BAM business leaders thriving?

In order to understand whether individuals are thriving in the work that they are doing, we asked the question, “On a scale of 1-10, to what extent are you ‘thriving’ in the following areas?” Results include individuals running BAM businesses as well as those in the wider ecosystem.



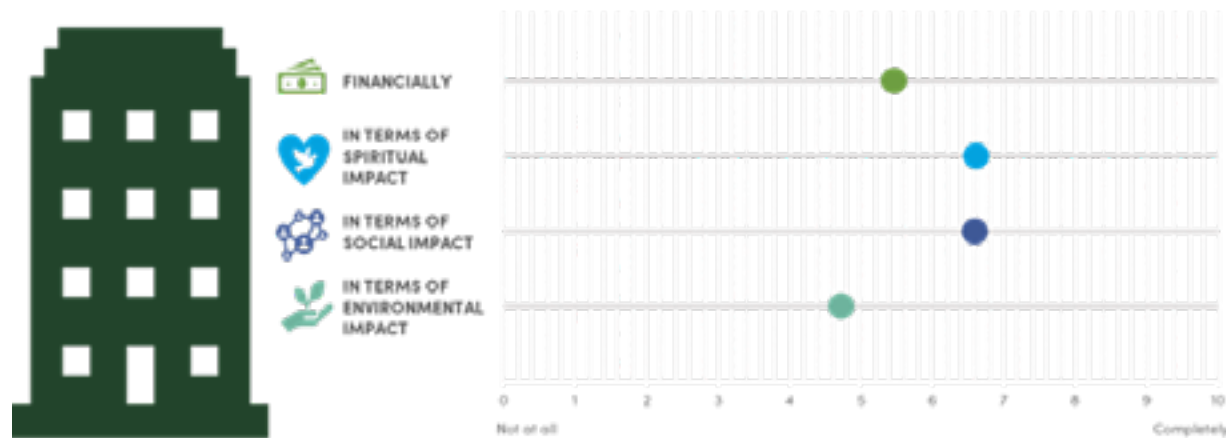
Overall, individuals are ‘moderately’ thriving emotionally, spiritually and relationally. Scores were slightly higher for individuals’ relationship with God, on average 7.7 out of 10 compared to 7.3 for personal and emotional well-being, and 7.4 for relationship with others.

More specifically:

- 57% are truly thriving personally, scoring at least 8 out of 10.
- 64% are thriving spiritually, and
- 53% are thriving relationally.

Are BAM Businesses thriving?

We also wanted to understand to what extent respondents felt that their businesses were thriving, so we asked the same question about the companies' financial well-being, and in terms of spiritual impact, social impact, and environmental impact.



In terms of the financial health and impact these businesses are reporting, we see more of a mixed picture:

- Overall, businesses are not doing that well financially, scoring on average 5.5 out of 10. Only 24% scored 8 out of 10 or higher.
- Spiritual and social impact are reported more strongly, at 6.6 and 6.5 respectively. However still only 30% of businesses scored 8 or higher for spiritual impact, and 32% for social impact.
- Environmental impact is also not reported highly, scoring on average 4.7 out of 10, with only 16% scoring above 8 out of 10

Do thriving leaders have thriving businesses?

This data also allowed us to ask some interesting questions about the relationship between leaders' (self-reported) health and the (self-reported) health of their businesses.

Firstly there are very strong relationships between individuals' personal, spiritual, and relational well-being.

Second, the relationship between leaders' own well-being and the health of their business was moderately strong. But most interestingly, the most significant relationships (statistically) are between:

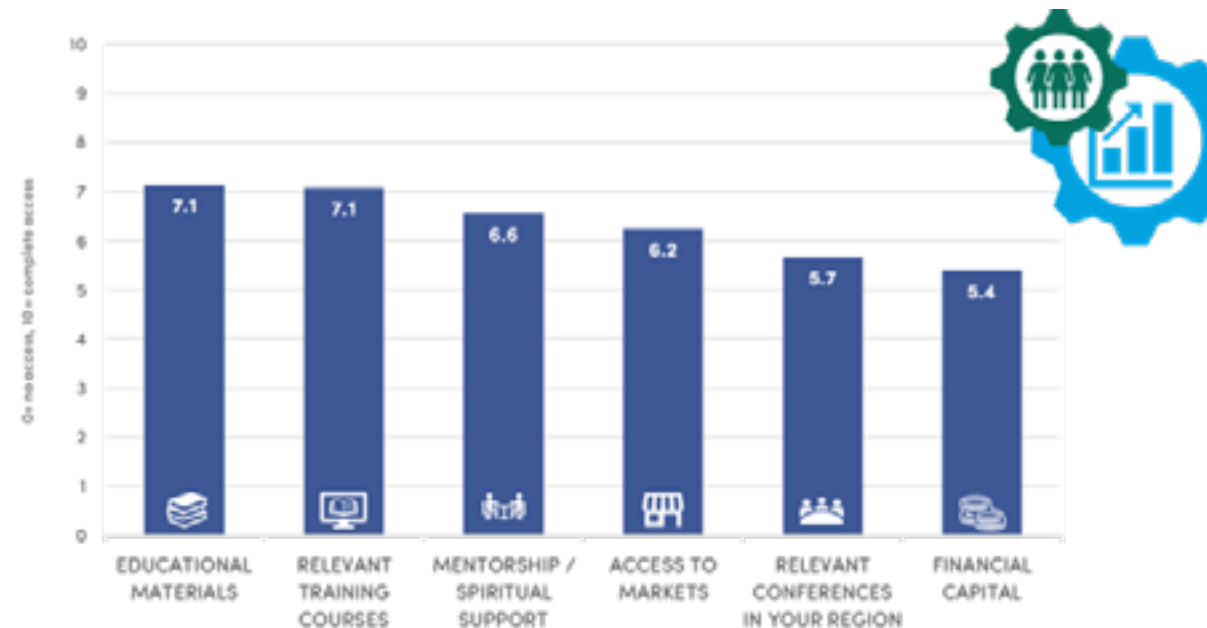
- Leaders' personal well-being, and the businesses' finances, and
- Leaders' spiritual well-being and the spiritual impact of the business.

Leaders' combined well-being also strongly associated with all areas of impact, except environmental.



What do they need help with?

Finally, we wanted to understand to what extent these businesses have access to the key ingredients often necessary to success as a BAM business, and their specific 'pain points'. The following graph shows responses to the question: "On a scale of 0-10, to what extent do you have access to the following?"



BAM business leaders have moderate access to most of the key ingredients, but least of all financial capital (5.4 out of 10). Only 27% stated that they have good access to financial capital (8 out of 10 or higher).

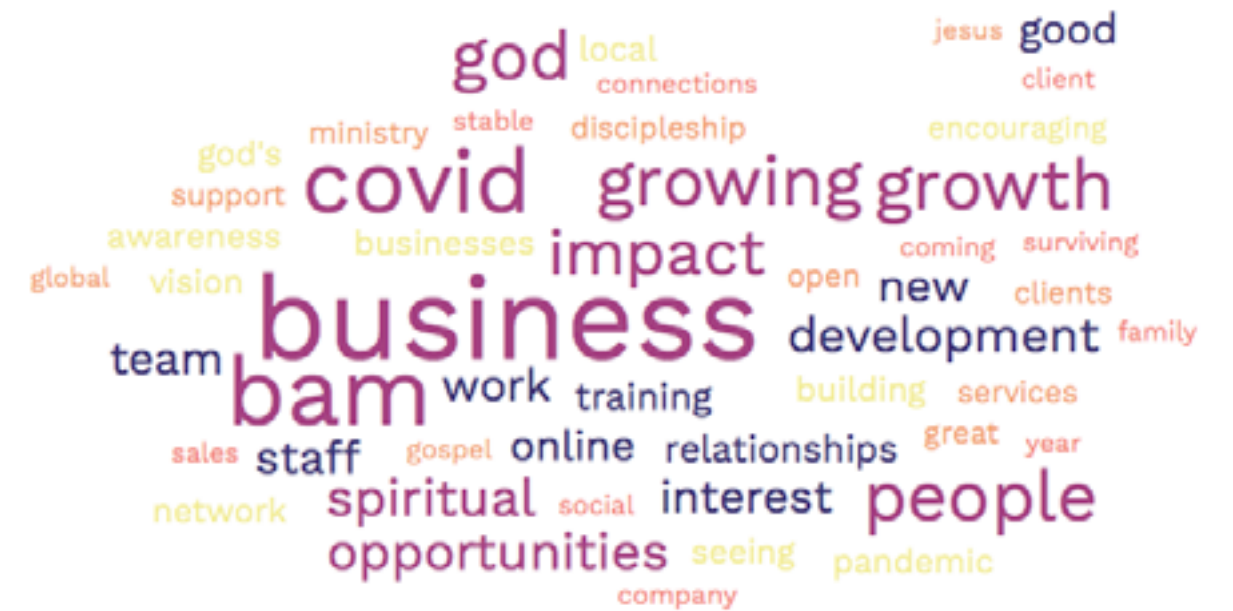
The flip side to this result is that BAM businesses have a broad range of needs, covering each of the areas above.

Turning to specific “resource gaps, felt needs or pain points”, there was again a large range of issues mentioned. These ranged from needing mentorship, accountability, experienced staff, various capital requirements, and the COVID pandemic affecting business.

While a thematic analysis of each of this was outside the scope of this report, the following word cloud gives a strong sense of individuals' specific pain points:



Similarly, we asked “What is going well or encouraging right now?” and the results are visualised below:



Conclusion

This report has demonstrated a geographically diverse, still emerging, and already impactful BAM Global movement. For perhaps the first time, we have gathered baseline data on the global reach, maturity, impact focus, spiritual health, and needs of the movement.

This current snapshot shows a movement that is overall relatively 'young' with the majority of businesses surveyed less than ten years old, and a significant number (12% of those surveyed) looking to start soon. This is a real opportunity for its future impact, and degree to which the movement can currently be influenced and shaped.

The movement is geographically diverse. Current BAM businesses span nearly every continent, and there is an exciting number and size of businesses in the developing world, especially in Southeast Asia. South America and Africa are less well represented and could be areas of focus for future development and catalysing the movement.

The main social issues already being impacted through the movement are in the creation of decent work, economic growth and reduction of poverty. Environmental issues are less well represented by the movement, which could be a topic of discussion for future focus and encouragement.

While we caveat that this is purely based on self-reported subjective responses, the movement appears to also be having significant spiritual impact in the realm of impacting culture through demonstrating biblical values, the spiritual well-being of leadership, reaching the unreached with the gospel, and the spiritual well-being of employees especially. From Eido Research's perspective, this is encouraging given the recent launch of our Kingdom Impact Framework for Business tool, which focuses on the spiritual well-being of leadership, employees and culture.

In short, leaders within the BAM movement are thriving while their businesses are often struggling in some areas, mainly in achieving financial sustainability. Leaders report reasonable access to various elements of support for BAM businesses, but financial capital remains a pain point for many. Moreover, a number of business leaders reported specific 'types' of capital (such as patient capital and values-aligned investors) as felt needs, which could be something the movement helps to address going forward.

Much is going well however! There were some wonderful anecdotes about partnerships strengthening, businesses surviving lockdown, leaders experiencing greater intimacy with God, and individuals being impacted by the BAM Startup course. Three quotes particularly stood out:

“Overall everything is going very well, beyond what we dreamed, planned and prayed for. It’s a blessing to be a part of God using BAM to teach and impact the nations.”

“We are seeing incredible fruit spiritually and socially. We are making a bigger impact than our previous non-profit ventures.”

“Unlike others, COVID has actually helped the e-Comm world so our business is thriving. We are seeing God open many doors with new clients and can’t hire fast enough to keep up. I am having to slow down growth. Even though I have been away for a year now we are still going good and the company feels like a family.”

There is certainly much more work that could be done to understand the state of the Business as Mission movement, and the impact of BAM Global. Future work could include assessing progress towards the Big Hairy Audacious Goals (BHAGs) of BAM Global and the specific areas in which they are invigorating the movement.

It would also be incredibly useful to start gathering objective data on the impact these businesses are having across the four bottom lines. Eido Research is keen to support in this regard, especially as our database of findings from KIF-B assessments continues to grow, and we continue to support several funds to build indicator frameworks.

These initial results should give great encouragement about what is already happening in the movement and the areas of opportunity moving forward.

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