

Disciple-Making Survey of the WEA Community

Summary Report

The survey reflects the perspective of 163 participants in the WEA General Assembly in Jakarta in November 2019. Most of the respondents were leaders either of Evangelical Alliances (37%), of organizations (49%) or of denominations (17%), a third (3%) also being pastors. Only 9% were 35 or under and only 21% were women. All regions were represented. The non-Western world was 72%, principally Asians (39%) and Africans (19%); Western participants were Europeans (15%) and North Americans (14%).

A significant majority (68%) said that in their context discipling was understood as central for every believer, while a smaller number said it was understood primarily for new converts (21%) or a good option for people serious about growing (8%). Despite the majority's understanding, most people felt that **relatively few Christians were being intentionally disciplined**: almost no one (2%), less than 10% of Christians (38%) or 10-25% of Christians (38%). **Those making disciples dropped further**. Eighty-five percent said this was 25% or less of Christians; almost two-thirds of these saying it was less than 10%.

Asked to identify the three main reasons among a list of six **main reasons why Christians don't disciple**, more than half chose three: 1) disciple-making is not taught as the normal Christian life (65%), 2) people think only pastors or appointed leaders should disciple (59%); and, 3) they don't know how to do it (57%).

Perhaps the most significant survey results were revealed in asking the participants for **the three factors which could most help develop a disciple-making culture** in their EA. As we enter the WEA Decade of Disciple-Making (2020-2030), over three-fifths highlighted three areas:

1. Holistic models in which disciple-making is extended to every sphere of life (62%)
2. Training in developing a disciple-making lifestyle and culture (62%).
3. The leadership practicing and modeling a disciple-making culture (60%)

These were followed by a strong vote for two other areas:

4. A passionate leader with a clear calling to develop a disciple-making culture (51%)
5. A clear process that helps everyone move forward in disciple-making (35%).

It was somewhat surprising that a sixth reason, funding to have a dedicated coordinator, fell way behind (11%). This is encouraging since it indicates that the Alliances can move ahead without depending on significant funding.

As regards their **personal lives**, participants were asked to score themselves from zero to five in seven basic disciplines of a disciple. A significant majority scored themselves as four or five in five areas: fellowship (78%), service (75%), the Word (66%), prayer (63%) and being discipled (57%). This fell to about two-fifths of the participants in the two other areas: soul care (42%) and witness (40%). Sharing the Gospel with non-Christians and taking care of one's soul and health are two clear areas of growth for most of the respondents

Clearly the leaders see themselves as demonstrating well a disciple's lifestyle. This is confirmed in **91% of them having people whom they are discipling** and discipling well on at least three counts: praying, meeting regularly and interacting significantly outside formal meetings. The weakest area is concluding meetings with specific action steps (55%).

A great majority use both small group approaches (73%) and one-on-one approaches (77%). Relatively few use a classroom setting (16%) or a set curriculum (17%) suggesting that most people have a strong life-on-life understanding of disciple-making. For almost a third (31%) this happens through on-line meetings.

A majority disciple their leadership team or staff (58%) and their children (54%), while about two-fifths disciple leaders of organizations and/or denominations (42%) and pastors (40%). This is heartening as it suggests a **large buy-in to discipling pervading our culture from top to bottom.**

The three things that would most help the respondents **to be better disciple-makers** were 1) learning effective models of disciple-making (58%), 2) reorganizing their schedules to better prioritize disciple-making (56%) and 2) discipling being practiced by their leaders (45%). Asked to indicate their motivation for discipling, 74% scored themselves 4 or 5 on a scale of five. 61% of the respondents indicated **they would like to take an active part in advancing a disciple-making movement** as indicated by giving their names and contact information.