

The Story of 1for50

The concept of 1for50 was born out of the first Global Children's Forum (GCF) in 2008 in Wheaton, Illinois. About 50 leaders from nations around the world gathered to ask the question, "What might God be asking us to do together (that we could not do alone), to reach the world's 2.2 billion children?"

Many wonderful ideas were suggested as they dreamed and prayed together. A training group discussed the possibility of a massive training initiative – one that would multiply training to churches and neighborhoods, going all the way "to the edges". The idea of 1for50, a collaborative training and networking initiative seeking to equip one local children's leader for every 50 children all around the world, began.

Esther Zimmerman, Bible Centered Ministries (BCM), and Sylvia Foth, Kidzana Ministries, served as the first facilitators to begin to flesh out the dream. They spent two years in listening and development mode: forming a facilitation team, taking a global survey of children's ministry training needs and getting feedback from 80 different nations, creating a strategic plan, and writing and field-testing the first 1for50 CORE training module.

Early on, they realized that to be successful, this movement would need to catch the attention of pastors and mission leaders, something beyond their control. Then, in 2009, the 4/14 Window movement was birthed, and 1for50 leaders were included in the whirlwind of growth.

In September and October of 2010, during a 6-week period, 1for50 was launched globally at the first gcmEQUIP Conference in Lebanon, the Lausanne Congress in Cape Town, and 4/14 Window Summit in New York. Within a few months, 1for50 activity was taking place in at least 50 nations. Beyond imagination!

As simple as 1for50 might seem, from the very beginning, we have seen God shape 1for50 as a tool in his hand to help reach more children (and their families) for Christ. Our emphasis has always been on both **quantity** ("we need more trained workers") and **quality** ("we must focus on lasting impact rather than short term results"). Our dream has always been less about the numbers (1 for 50) and more about the dream for **every child in every community** to have **someone** to help them know Christ and grow in him. Saturation. Taking the gospel "to the edges." Mission.

1for50 is a training and networking movement – not an organization. We have no president, board or office. 1for50 has no official budget, but has grown spontaneously, with people “running with the vision” to train more people. And God has done incredible things!

What has already been accomplished?

In the years since the global launch of 1for50, we have seen and heard of individuals, churches, denominations, organizations and nations that have embraced the vision. As a movement, we are not able to capture and measure all the activity that is taking place. But we know that hundreds of thousands of children’s leaders are being trained, and are aware of activity in over 110 nations. That means that millions of children are being reached with the gospel and disciplined in meaningful ways.

In the last seven years God has allowed us to:

- Develop TWO Core training programs and TWO Next Step modules, with other curriculum projects in draft form
- Translate parts or all of the Core training programs into at least 15 languages
- Present hundreds of vision and training events to tens of thousands of people in at least 110 nations
- Facilitate 500+ known multiplication events visioning, equipping and supporting leaders on six continents from 2012-2017
- Gather a growing library of training and advocacy resources ready to be shared digitally through our resource-sharing platform
- Engage 500+ organizations and denominations with the 1for50 dream
- Collaborate with growing community of 1000+ global and regional implementers who have attended annual global retreat or regional summits
- Focus our goal on empowering children to become Kingdom Champions

While difficult to measure, our ultimate outcome is for every child to know and follow Christ for a lifetime, becoming influential Kingdom Champions. With great joy, we have heard story after story of individual **children who have received Christ**, families who have been transformed by outreach activities, churches with new and vibrant children’s ministries, denominations that have changed their focus toward children and seen growth and energy return to their churches, and children that are empowered to be influencers in their world. And we’ve seen tens of thousands of local leaders encouraged to “go” and **reach more kids with the love of Jesus**. This continues today.



Where are we now?

The 1for50 dream is not yet realized. We have not yet multiplied equipping “to the edges,” to every community. While we are growing, there are still millions of children who have not yet heard about Jesus, millions more that need to be discipled and mentored to become Kingdom Champions. There is much to be done. But God is with 1for50 and its people as we mobilize, equip and connect leaders to reach, disciple and empower the next generation.