

# IM4DC

# Action Research Report

## SUMMARY

**Researchers:**

Sharon Parker, Daniela Andrei, Lena Wang,  
Melissa Pearce & Andrew Chapman

**School/Centre:**

Accelerated Learning Laboratory

**University/Institutions:**

University of Western Australia

**Key themes:**

Operational effectiveness

**Key countries:**

Algeria, Gambia, Ghana, Indonesia, Kenya,  
Mongolia, Nigeria, Peru, Uruguay and Zambia

**Completion:**

September 2013

**Research aims:**

The aim of this Action Research was to:

- Analyse the engagement of participants from developing countries in an intensive training course in OSH, in order to inform future IM4DC course design and delivery
- Collect interview data after participants returned to work, to understand how to enhance the transfer of training and implementation of return-to-work plans

**For further information on this action research:**

Contact person: Sharon Parker  
[sharon.parker@uwa.edu.au](mailto:sharon.parker@uwa.edu.au)

## Facilitating Learning and Development During IM4DC Short Courses

During November – December 2012, the Accelerated Learning Laboratory @UWA worked closely with IM4DC to design and deliver a 4-week intensive training course in Organisational Health and Safety for a group of 18 participants. The participants came from 10 developing countries that are of strategic priority to IM4DC.

This action research project had two aims:

1. To conduct a rigorous analysis of the daily engagement data collected from each participant during the program, as well as observational data, in order to inform the future design and delivery of effective training programs at IM4DC. The primary measures of engagement in learning during workshops included:
  - High levels of voice (speaking out / asking questions)
  - Low levels of silence (withholding ideas, questions, or opinions)
  - High levels of perceived training effectiveness (e.g., perceiving the session as useful)
2. To collect additional interview data post participants' return, for the purpose of understanding how to better enhance the transfer of training back to the work place, including the implementation of return-to-work plans.

Results from these multiple forms of data collections suggested that participants were highly engaged in the program from the outset. Participants' voice, or their active speaking-up during classes, started and continued at a high level throughout the course. Meantime, levels of silence (defined as withholding ideas, views or questions) decreased as the course progressed. The participants' perception of training effectiveness was rated as high for the majority of sessions, with the lowest rated sessions being those that appeared to have less opportunity for interaction. An important predictor of perceived training effectiveness was participants' emotional responses to the sessions. Some types of personality, as well as English competence, predicted voice, lack of silence, and training effectiveness.

Follow up interviews were conducted in order to assess the perceived impact of the OSH course on those who participated in it. Results from interviews with a sample of participants showed that they felt their involvement in the OSH course was of great value and led to a change from a reactive mindset to a proactive mindset. The major barrier to the implementation of learnt skills and knowledge that was identified was financial resources. One recommendation from participants to enhance transfer is to extend the time in courses engaged in hands-on learning and with people from industry.

Key recommendations are provided in the Executive Summary.