

Objective

Ensure that health and health inequities are considered in decision-making using an objective and scientific approach, and engage stakeholders in the process.

Essential Tasks

- **Screening:** Determines the need and value of an HIA
- **Scoping:** Determines which health impacts to evaluate, analysis methods, and a workplan
- **Assessment:** Provides 1) a profile of existing health conditions and 2) evaluation of potential health impacts
- **Recommendations:** Identifies strategies to address health impacts identified
- **Reporting:** Includes the development of the HIA report and communication of findings and recommendations
- **Monitoring:** Tracks impacts of the HIA on decision-making processes and the decision, as well as impacts of the decision on health determinants

Key Points

Health Impact Assessment is a combination of procedures, methods and tools that systematically judges the potential, and sometimes unintended, effects of a policy, plan, or project on the health of a population and the distribution of those effects within the population. HIA identifies appropriate actions to manage those effects.

HIA is used to assess a defined project, plan, or policy. The purpose of HIA is to inform decision-makers before they make a decision. An HIA is most often carried out before a decision is made or a proposal is implemented.

HIA address social determinants of health. HIA assesses how proposed projects, plans, and policies affect issues – such as housing, employment, transportation, access to public and retail services, social cohesion, education, and incarceration – and how those impacts affect health outcomes and health inequities.

Using a health frame can be persuasive. Health is a value we all share. We experience health personally and collectively. Health is one of the few indicators of quality of life and well-being. Inequities in health outcomes can lead to moral outrage.

The goals of HIA analysis and reporting are to:

- Judge the health effects of the proposed project, plan or policy
- Make health impacts more explicit
- Highlight health inequities
- Provide recommendations to improve the decision
- Shape public decisions and discourse

The goals of the HIA process are to:

- Build relationships and collaborations
- Build consensus around decisions
- Engage and empower communities
- Recognize lived experience in decision-making

Key Points (continued)

HIA has many benefits. It:

- Provides a comprehensive analysis of issues and helps identify trade-offs in decision-making
- Supports community engagement and legitimizes “unheard” voices
- Helps to provide input up-front in decision-making and build support for better outcomes
- Considers historical, cumulative and disparate impacts
- Includes a focus on communities experiencing the most significant policy externalities
- Speeds project approvals

HIAs have been conducted on:

- Land use and transportation plans and projects, including:
 - Comprehensive, general, and area plans
 - Mixed-use and residential development projects
 - Transit-oriented development plans
 - Port and freeway expansions
- Natural resource extraction projects
- Education, employment, energy, agriculture and housing policies

Resources

A Health Impact Assessment Toolkit: A Handbook to Conducting HIA, 2nd Edition. Developed by HIP, this toolkit introduces and defines HIA, describes each step of the HIA process, and discusses other aspects of HIA such as collaboration and when to use HIA. The toolkit also contains practice exercises for the reader.

www.humanimpact.org/component/jdownloads/finish/11/81

Minimum Elements and Practice Standards for Health Impact Assessment.

Version 2, November 2010. Created by the North American HIA Practice Standards Working Group, these minimum elements and standards were developed to provide practitioners of health impact assessment with a set of benchmarks to guide their own HIA practice, and to stimulate discussion about HIA content and quality in this emerging field.

www.humanimpact.org/component/jdownloads/finish/11/9

Human Impact Partners HIA Tools and Resources

www.humanimpact.org/hips-hia-tools-and-resources

HIA Case Studies

Jack London Gateway Rapid HIA
www.humanimpact.org/doc-lib/finish/8/14

Humboldt County General Plan HIA
www.humanimpact.org/doc-lib/finish/4/62

Other Websites

San Francisco Dept of Public Health
www.sfphe.org

Health Impact Project (Pew & RWJF)
www.healthimpactproject.org

UCLA HIA Clearinghouse
www.hiaguide.org

World Health Organization
www.who.int/hia/en

University of New South Wales
www.hiaconnect.edu.au

Objective

To decide whether an HIA is feasible, timely, and would add value to the decision-making process.

Essential Tasks

- Define the decision and its alternatives
- Decide who will be involved in screening
- Determine if potential partners are ready to work on an HIA
- Evaluate the project, plan, or policy based on screening criteria
- Make a decision about whether to conduct an HIA
- Notify stakeholders of your decision
- Document the screening process and outcomes

Key Points

HIA is used to assess a defined project, plan, or policy. The purpose of HIA is to inform decision-makers before they make a decision.

Have sufficient information about the decision. Vague plans or policy statements may provide too little substance for an HIA.

Establish the value of HIA. It is not possible or desirable to conduct an HIA on every public decision. Projects that benefit from HIA are those that have the potential to result in substantial effects on public health, where such an analysis might significantly protect or promote the health of a population and where partners are engaged in the HIA process and will use the results.

Assess feasibility. Decide whether an informative HIA can be conducted within the decision-making time frame and with available resources.

Evaluate decision openness. For HIA to have most value, the decision-making process should be open to new information.

Understand timing. Conducting an HIA early in the design and decision-making process offers the best opportunity for influencing the design of the project, plan, or policy. If the HIA occurs too late in the process, it risks confronting a fixed design or closed positions.

Be inclusive. Have community groups, public agencies and other potential HIA collaborators participate in the screening process. Participation of stakeholders in the HIA process at the earliest possible stage can help to ensure buy-in, constructive dialogue, and openness to HIA findings and recommendations.

Avoid redundancy. An HIA may be less useful if health effects related to the decision are already well established, or if another impact assessment or analysis will serve to comprehensively analyze health impacts.

Screening should be documented. The summary should include: description of the decision-making process and context; opportunities for the HIA to influence the decision; and the stakeholders included in the screening process.

Tools

The following questions may be answered in the screening process:

Project and Timing

- Has a project, plan or policy been proposed?
- Is there sufficient time to conduct an analysis before the final decision is made?

Health Impacts

- Does the decision have the potential to affect environmental or social determinants that impact health outcomes? If so, which determinants and which health outcomes?
- Would health inequities be impacted? In what ways?
- Are the proposal's impacts to health likely to be significant in terms of the number of people impacted, the magnitude, breadth and/or immediacy of impacts?
- Do evidence, expertise, and/or research methods exist to analyze health impacts of the decision?

Potential Impact of the HIA Process

- What are the potential impacts of the HIA process? (e.g., building relationships, empowering community members, demonstrating how health can be used in decision making)

Potential Impact of HIA Findings

- Is health already being considered in the proposal or as part of the decision-making process?
- Are the links between the proposal and health or health determinants clear?
- Is the decision-making process open to the HIA and/or recommendations for changes to design, mitigations and/or alternatives?
- If applied, would HIA findings and recommendations potentially improve the impact that the proposal has on health?

Stakeholder Interest and Capacity

- Have public concerns about the health impacts of the decision been voiced or documented?
- Who are the stakeholders and interest groups involved in the decision-making process?
- Do stakeholders have the interest to participate in the HIA?
- Do stakeholders have the capacity (e.g., resources, skills, etc.) to participate in the HIA?
- Would stakeholders use the HIA to inform or influence the decision-making process? How?

Resources

Human Impact Partners. 2009. Considerations for the Selection of Appropriate Policies, Plans, or Projects for Analysis using Health Impact Assessment. www.humanimpact.org/component/jdownloads/finish/12/20

Human Impact Partners. 2009. HIA Readiness Questions. www.humanimpact.org/component/jdownloads/finish/12/3

Taylor L. *et al.* 2003. Deciding if a Health Impact Assessment Is Required (Screening for HIA). NHS Health Development Agency. www.humanimpact.org/component/jdownloads/finish/12/13

Health Impact Assessment: A Screening Tool for the Greater London Authority, 2001. www.humanimpact.org/component/jdownloads/finish/12/25

Scott-Samuel A. *et al.* 2001. The Merseyside Guidelines for Health Impact Assessment. Second Edition. Published by the International Health Impact Assessment Consortium. www.humanimpact.org/component/jdownloads/finish/11/24

Objective

To create a plan and timeline for conducting an HIA that defines priority issues, research questions and methods and participant roles.

Essential Tasks

- Determine the individual or team responsible for conducting the HIA and their roles
- Establish goals for the HIA
- Develop a formal HIA scope and workplan

Key Points

Be inclusive. Health impacts to be studied in the HIA should be informed by literature as well as stakeholders including community groups and residents, public health and other government agencies, project proponents and decision makers. Broad participation reduces potential bias related to interests of particular groups.

Use diverse outreach methods to solicit feedback and participation from a variety of stakeholders by hosting a public meeting, receiving public comments, interviewing stakeholders and experts, or inviting input from local health experts.

To set the scope, determine:

- Decision alternatives to be evaluated
- Potential health impacts of the decision to be considered in the HIA
- Populations to be evaluated, including vulnerable populations defined by place, income, race, gender, or age
- Demographic, geographical and temporal boundaries for impact analysis
- Research questions, data sources, and analytic methods for analysis

- Timelines
- Draft plans for reporting and communications, monitoring and evaluation
- Participant roles and responsibilities

The scope should focus on impacts with the greatest potential significance, with regard to factors including but not limited to magnitude, certainty, permanence, stakeholder priorities and equity. Rationale for issues selected in the scope should be documented.

Resources required for assessment:

Least resources

Literature review

Analysis and mapping of existing data

Expert opinion

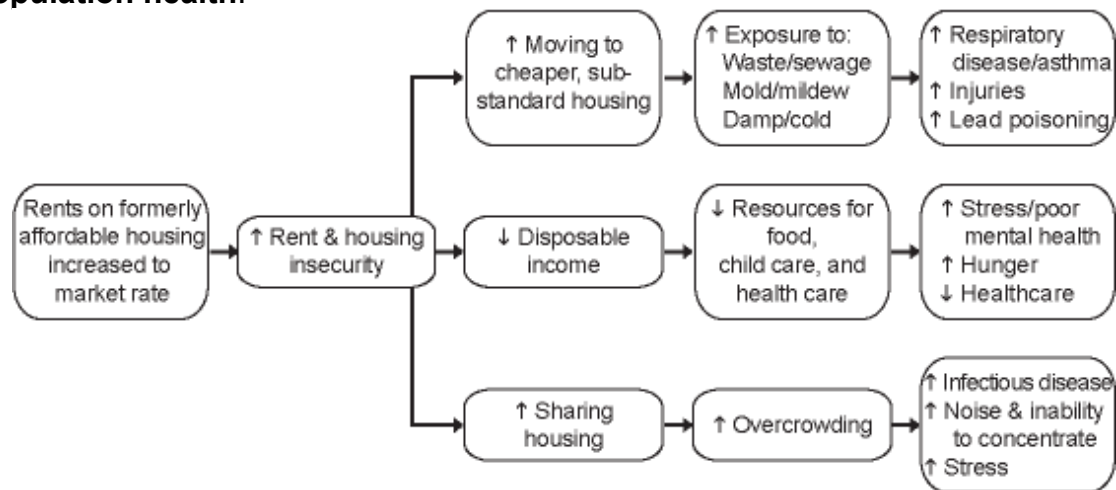
Application of quantitative forecasting methods

Interviews or focus groups

New quantitative data collection and analysis

Most resources

Using pathway diagrams, consider links between the proposed decision and population health.



Sample Scoping Questions.

- What are the existing/baseline conditions related to each health determinant?
- How will the project, plan, or policy impact baseline conditions?
- What indicators can be used to measure baseline conditions and impacts?
- Where will you find data for each indicator?
- What methods will be used to assess baseline conditions and predict impacts?
- How will you prioritize the research questions and/or indicators?

There is no “one size fits all” approach to HIA. HIAs vary based on resources and timelines available, opportunities to use the HIA findings and subject matter. Undertaking an HIA requires having the necessary technical capacity and resources to collect, analyze, and interpret data; the ability to coordinate involvement of stakeholders; and the ability to communicate findings to decision-makers. Resources or capacity limitations affecting the scope of the HIA should be documented as part of the HIA report.

Resources

See HIP’s Tools & Resources page for links to:

- HIP’s HIA Toolkit
- Examples of HIA scopes
- Examples of pathway diagrams
- HIP’s template scoping worksheet

www.humanimpact.org/hips-hia-tools-and-resources

Objective

To provide a profile of existing conditions data and an evaluation of potential health impacts.

Essential Tasks

- **Profile Existing Conditions**
Include data about health outcomes and determinants of health disaggregated by income, race, gender, age and place when possible
- **Evaluate Potential Health Impacts**
Using the best available evidence, an HIA should present reasoned predictions of the ways in which a proposed decision could impact population health

Key Points

Gather existing data and collect primary data when necessary. Utilize evidence from diverse sources, including:

- Empirical research
- Local knowledge and professional expertise
- Available social, economic, environmental and health measures and survey data
- Regulatory criteria, standards, checklists and benchmarks
- Focus groups and community surveys
- Neighborhood assessment tools

Don't start from scratch. Use tools and methods that already exist to assess health conditions and potential impacts.

It is necessary to profile baseline conditions in order to predict future conditions if a project, plan, or policy is enacted.

Conduct a literature review. Clarify the question of interest and data needs; develop criteria for included studies; identify literature databases; identify studies and reviews; evaluate studies; and document your findings.

Consider evidence that both supports and refutes your hypotheses.

Consider direction, magnitude, severity, likelihood and distribution of impacts within the population. Include assessments of the equity and certainty of impacts.

Predicting health impacts with absolute certainty is not possible. Make informed judgments of effects based on available information, analysis, expertise and experience. Be cautious with generalizations.

Acknowledge assumptions as well as strengths and limitations of data and methods used. Identify data gaps that prevent an adequate or complete assessment of potential impacts. Describe the uncertainty in predictions. Explicitly state assumptions or inferences made in the context of modeling or predictions.

Use qualitative analysis for issues that do not lend themselves to quantitative forecasting. Relationships between decisions and health effects are complex and quantification does not mean causal certainty.

Different approaches used together can support better judgments. Use lay and expert knowledge and analysis using different methods (such as GIS mapping and surveys) to draw conclusions.

Answer the following questions before pursuing quantitative forecasting:

- Is there a causal relationship?
- Does data allow for quantitative predictions?
- Would prospective predictions be valid?
- Is there available time and resources?
- Would quantification support the needs of the decision-making process?

The lack of formal, scientific, quantitative or published evidence should not preclude reasoned predictions of health impacts.

Allow stakeholders to critique the validity of assessment findings.

Tools

San Francisco Department of Public Health. Program on Health, Equity and Sustainability. Health Impact Assessment Tools.
www.sfpbes.org/HIA_Tools.htm

- Sustainable Communities Index
www.sustainablesf.org
- PEQI & BEQI
- Air Quality Measurement & Modeling
- The San Francisco Noise Model
- Neighborhood Completeness Indicator

Human Impact Partners. A Review of the Evidence Base for Planning Projects.
www.humanimpact.org/evidencebase

Resources

Human Impact Partners. A list of commonly used HIA data sources for baseline profiles of health.
www.humanimpact.org/component/jdownloads/finish/14/40

HIP's HIA report template, available on our Tools and Resources webpage, contains a framework for conducting and reporting on impact analysis.
www.humanimpact.org/hips-hia-tools-and-resources

Health Impact Assessment: A Guide for Practice, by Rajiv Bhatia, chapter 2.3 on Assessment of Health Effects.
www.humanimpact.org/hips-hia-tools-and-resources

See also Chapter 4 on “The Interface of Health and Environmental Impact Assessment” for more on HIA and EIA.

Sites where you can find HIAs with strong assessment methods:

SFDPH, Program on Health, Equity and Sustainability
www.sfpbes.org/resources/hia-tools

Human Impact Partners
www.humanimpact.org/projects

Metropolitan Area Planning Council (Boston)
www.mapc.org/resources/health-impact-assessment

STEP 4: RECOMMENDATIONS

Objective

To provide evidence-based recommendations to mitigate negative and maximize positive health impacts.

Essential Tasks

- For each impact identified, propose evidence-based recommendations gathered from experts and prioritized by HIA stakeholders

Key Points

Developing recommendations requires a clear understanding of the proposed project, plan, or policy, the decision making process, existing policy implementation design practices and mitigations.

Recommendations can include alternatives to the decision; modifications to the proposed policy; program or project; or mitigation measures.

Recommendations included in the final HIA report should document supporting evidence and stakeholder input.

Recommendations should be supported by evidence of feasibility, efficiency, cost-effectiveness and political acceptability. Communication with decision makers and other stakeholders can be used to gauge buy-in or feasibility.

Recommendations may require skills and expertise from outside the HIA team, consider inviting subject-area experts to provide input.

Recommendations should be relevant to concerns of impacted communities. Develop stakeholder outreach process to “test” recommendations

Ideally, an implementation plan should be developed for each recommendation presented in the HIA including, for example, the responsible agency and timeline.

Potential impacts of recommendations could also be assessed as part of the HIA. Recommendations should not introduce negative health impacts.

Ideally, every recommendation should be tied to indicators that can be monitored. This is also a great way to ensure that planning for monitoring is included in the HIA process.

Recommendations are not always appropriate. An HIA of a policy may simply state the potential benefits or harms without recommending changes if none are needed to promote positive health outcomes.

If resources are limited, the HIA should prioritize recommendations.

Criteria for prioritization could include relative health benefits, costs or feasibility. Prioritization should include decision-makers and other stakeholders to support buy-in and facilitate project implementation.

Some decisions may have significant adverse health effects even if recommendations are adopted. In these cases, the HIA should acknowledge that recommendations only offer partial relief from potentially negative health impacts.

Criteria for Thinking About Recommendations:

- Responsive to predicted impacts
- Specific and actionable
- Experience-based and effective
- Enforceable
- Can be monitored and enforced
- Technically feasible
- Politically feasible
- Economically efficient
- Do not introduce additional negative consequences
- Relative to the authority of decision-makers

Important Elements to Include when Writing Recommendations:

- Identify **Who** is responsible for implementing the recommendation
- Specify **When** the recommendation should be implemented
- Provide **Evidence** from the HIA findings to support the recommendation
- Consider listing recommendations by level of **Priority**
- Identify the **Cost** of implementing the recommendation, and include any information about funding sources that could apply to this cost

Resources

Examples of HIA recommendations can be found in HIP's HIA reports.

www.humanimpact.org/projects

San Francisco Department of Public Health. Program on Health, Equity and Sustainability. Sustainable Communities Index: Policy and Design Strategies.

www.sustainablesf.org

New York City's Active Design Guidelines: Promoting Physical Activity and Health in Design.

www.nyc.gov/html/ddc/html/design/active_design.shtml

Objective

To develop the HIA report and communicate findings and recommendations.

Essential Tasks

Develop the HIA Report

- Develop a consensus among stakeholders regarding key findings and recommendations
- Determine the format and structure of the report
- Write the report

Communicate HIA Findings and Recommendations

- Develop a communications plan
- Prepare communication materials to suit the needs of all stakeholders
- Use communication materials to inform stakeholders and decision-makers

Key Points

An HIA report summarizes key health issues the proposal could impact and provides recommendations to improve health outcomes and determinants. The report identifies:

- **The proposal being assessed**, including alternatives included in the analysis
- **Vulnerable populations and stakeholders likely to be impacted** and how they were involved in the HIA, as well as the HIA sponsor and funding source
- **The process** for each HIA step
- **For health issues analyzed**, the HIA details: available scientific evidence, data sources and analytic methods used, existing conditions, results, predicted health impacts and their significance corresponding recommendations for improving health and HIA limitations

The HIA report should be made readily accessible for public review and comment. HIA practitioners should address comments and criticisms formally and/or in report revisions before finalizing report.

HIA reports should be succinct, focusing on key information, but may include detailed technical appendices that provide the basis for judgments and recommendations.

When available, regulatory processes (e.g., Environmental Impact Assessment) can be used to report findings and recommendations.

Summarize the full report into clear, succinct messages that allow all stakeholders to understand, evaluate, and respond to findings and recommendations.

Frame messages to help people relate to the information. Frames help people make sense of information by triggering familiar concepts.

Interest groups and media can support effective translation of results into action.

HIA practitioners should work directly with stakeholders to ensure communication reflects the limitations of the HIA.

Good communication throughout the HIA process can engage stakeholders and lead to greater acceptance of findings and recommendations.

Report and communications formats include: formally structured written reports, comment letters on environmental impact assessments, letters to decision-makers, report summaries, fact sheets, public testimony, presentations to key audiences, panel discussions, press conferences and dialogue with decision makers.

Examples

Health Impact Assessment	Method of Communication
Humboldt County General Plan Update Health Impact Assessment www.humanimpact.org/doc-lib/viewcategory/4	Newsletter; Powerpoint presentation to Supervisors
Oakland BRT HIA www.humanimpact.org/projects#Oakland%20BRT	Letter to City Council
SFDPH Comment on the Scope of the Trinity Plaza Redevelopment Draft Environmental Impact Report www.sfphes.org/publications/comments/Comment_on_Trinity_DEIR_scope.pdf	EIR Comment Letter
Bhatia R, Katz M. 2001. Estimation of Health Benefits from a Local Living Wage Ordinance. <i>American Journal of Public Health</i> . 91(9) 1398-1402.	Peer-Reviewed Journal Article
2 nd Street HIA, Bernalillo County, New Mexico www.bcplacematters.com/2ndstreet/#ad-image-0	Website

Resources

A HIA report template is available on HIP's Tools and Resources webpage.

www.humanimpact.org/hips-hia-tools-and-resources

For examples of reports and other communication materials, see HIP's website

www.humanimpact.org/doc-lib

Fredsgaard et al. 2009. A Review Package for HIA Reports of Development Projects. Available at: www.apho.org.uk/resource/item.aspx?RID=72419

For information on framing and communications, see:

The California Endowment's Health Exchange Academy: Communicating for Change series
www.calendow.org/Article.aspx?id=3904

The Praxis Project
www.thepraxisproject.org/irc/media.html

Berkeley Media Studies Group
www.bmsg.org

The Frameworks Institute
www.frameworksinstitute.org/

STEP 6: HIA EVALUATION AND MONITORING

Objective

To evaluate the:

- Process of conducting the HIA (process evaluation)
- Impacts of the HIA on the decision-making process and implementation of the decision (impact evaluation)
- Impacts of the decision on health outcomes (outcome evaluation)

To monitor the data necessary to inform all levels of evaluation.

Essential Tasks

- Establish an evaluation plan
- Determine if the evaluation will be internal, external, or both, and who will take the lead
- Identify data sources, tools, methods for analysis, & parties responsible for data monitoring
- Ensure sufficient resources are available
- Conduct the data monitoring and evaluation plans
- Share results with others

Key Points

Evaluation is important for the quality of individual HIAs, and for the success of the HIA field as a whole.

Meaningfully include stakeholders in the evaluation, including selecting the evaluation questions, providing feedback, and tracking data.

For process evaluation, consider how to build monitoring into each step of the HIA process. Document the decision-making process, resources used, and challenges that were addressed.

Data sources that could be used include:

- Grant proposal narratives, workplans, scoping worksheets, meeting minutes and agendas, and email exchanges
- Surveys, focus groups, and/or key informant interviews with HIA partners and stakeholders

Evaluating the impact of the HIA is important to:

- Assess how recommendations were received and acted upon
- Build a better understanding of the value of HIA and demonstrate how HIA influenced decision-making

Evaluating outcomes can be challenging for many reasons, including extended timeframe and dedicating resources for that timeframe. Responsibilities can be shared with stakeholder groups to monitor indicators for health determinants, health behaviors, and health status.

Consider whether useful routine monitoring information is already being collected by agencies or organizations before proposing new monitoring plans.

Ongoing data monitoring can:

- Provide an early warning of unexpected consequences or unmet recommendations that could be addressed
- Test the validity and precision of health impact predictions

Tools

Example Process Evaluation Questions

Screening

- What were the reasons for conducting the HIA?

Scoping

- How were health issues identified and prioritized?

Assessment

- How were health impacts assessed and characterized?
- How were impacts to vulnerable populations assessed?

Recommendations

- How were recommendations prioritized?

Reporting

- How were stakeholders involved in reviewing and communicating findings?

HIA Process

- How much time and money was spent on each phase of the HIA?

Stakeholder Engagement

- How were affected populations involved?
- Did the HIA utilize community experience as evidence?

Example Impact Evaluation Questions

- How have policy/plan decisions changed as a result of the HIA?
- Describe any new collaborations or new decision-makers' awareness of health impacts as a result of the HIA process

Example Outcome Evaluation Questions

- How have policies or plans impacted conditions that impact health outcomes?
- Are there any indications that health outcomes have changed as a result of the plan or policy changes?

Resources

Taylor L, Gowman N, Lethbridge J, Quigley R. 2003. Deciding if a Health Impact Assessment Is Required. NHS Health Development Agency.

www.humanimpact.org/component/jdownloads/finish/12/13

Parry JM, Kemm J. 2005. Criteria for use in the evaluation of health impact assessments. *Public Health*. 119:1122-9.

Wismar M. 2004. The effectiveness of health impact assessment. *Eurohealth*. 10(3-4):41-3.

HIAs with model monitoring plans:

- HIA of the Hawai'i County Agricultural Development Plan
www.kohalacenter.org/research.html
- Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) HIA - www.humanimpact.org/projects#RAD

Examples of monitoring from other fields:

- National Ambient Air Quality Standards monitoring and planning under the Clean Air Act
- Mitigation monitoring under the California Environmental Quality Act
- Inspection procedures for compliance of building standards
- Notification requirements for compliance of labor laws

Example of Monitoring Indicators: 2011 Hawai'i County Agricultural Plan HIA

Indicator	Responsible Group or Agency	Timing
Increase in public/private financial support for school gardening programs in Hawai'i public schools	Hawai'i School Garden Hui	2012 - ongoing
Increase in Hawai'i Island farmers markets' acceptance and processing of EBT transactions	County of Hawai'i Department of Research & Development	2012 - ongoing
Hawai'i County establishes a farm-to-school working group	Hawai'i County Agriculture Advisory Committee	2012

Objective

Through the HIA process, actively and genuinely involve stakeholders, especially those currently facing health inequities, in making decisions about the factors that affect their lives, in formulating and implementing policies and in taking action to achieve change.

Essential Tasks

- Recruit a diverse group of stakeholders to participate and provide input at each stage of the HIA process
- Ensure that stakeholders have the necessary resources and capacity to meaningfully participate in the HIA
- Establish shared goals and objectives among stakeholders early in the HIA process

Key Points

Collaboration among diverse stakeholders in the HIA process can help to foster new relationships and meaningful alliances.

Stakeholders include those who have an interest in the health impacts of the proposal being considered (e.g., those likely to be directly impacted by it), and/or have influence in the decision-making process.

Examples of stakeholders include: community residents; community organizations; advocacy organizations; public agencies (e.g., public health, planning and economic development, transportation, etc); academics; elected officials; business, industry and developers; and service providers.

Impacted populations, particularly those that are most vulnerable, should have a leadership role in shaping the HIA process.

Stakeholder engagement at every stage of the HIA can enable stakeholders to better understand, contribute to and use HIA findings and recommendations.

Community and advocacy groups can play an important role in communicating findings and recommendations, complementing the sometimes limited abilities of other stakeholders to engage in advocacy.

Involvement of public agencies can assist data collection and analysis, and foster communication between stakeholders and decision-makers.

Participation of a project, plan or policy proponent in the HIA process can help to establish buy-in and support for HIA recommendations.

Decision-makers can weigh in on the scope of the HIA and the feasibility of HIA recommendations.

Consider the infrastructure of stakeholder engagement early. A Steering or Advisory Committee can increase legitimacy and offer vital decision-making and technical support.

Differences in the power brought by stakeholders involved in an HIA should be considered and accounted for when planning HIA activities and process.

Key Points (continued)

HIA findings can help to support the credibility of community and advocacy efforts. Communicating the findings of an HIA can help to build leadership and new collaborations.


Simply having public meetings to inform community members of policy, plan or project changes, or to gather input, does not lead to empowerment.

Community involvement in HIA can lead to empowerment. The World Health Organization states, "Any serious effort to reduce health inequities will involve political empowerment." Communities should play a role in shaping the factors that affect their lives, and ensure that the changes needed to improve well-being are implemented.

Resources

Best Practices in Stakeholder Engagement. 2011. The North American HIA Stakeholder Working Group.
www.humanimpact.org

Promoting Equity Through the use of Health Impact Assessment. 2013. Human Impact Partners, et al.
www.humanimpact.org

Control	Participant's Action	Examples
High	Has control	Organization asks community to identify the problem and make all key decisions on goals and means. Support for community at each step to accomplish goals.
	Has delegated authority	Organization identifies and presents a problem to community. Defines limits and asks community to make series of decisions which can be embodied in a plan which it will accept.
	Plans jointly	Organization presents tentative plan subject to change and open to change from those affected. Expects to change plan at least slightly and perhaps more subsequently.
	Advises	Organization presents a plan and invites questions. Prepared to change plan only if absolutely necessary.
	Is consulted	Organization tries to promote a plan. Seeks to develop support to facilitate acceptance or give sufficient sanction to plan so that administrative compliance can be expected.
	Receives information	Organization makes plan and announces it. Community is convened for informational purposes.
Low	None	Community told nothing.

Adapted from WHO – Community Participation in Local Health and Sustainable Development