



# Health Impact Assessment An Overview

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National Collaborating Centre  
for Healthy Public Policy

Institut national  
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Québec

# Plan

- Speaking of HIA
  - Definition
  - State of HIA practices around the world
  - Consensual features
  - Various models of practice
- Presenting the standard steps of HIA



# Health Impact Assessment

Main concepts  
and suggested approach



European  
Centre for Health Policy



Brussels, 1999

# Definition

**A combination of procedures, methods and tools that systematically judges the potential, and sometimes unintended, effects of a policy, plan, program 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.**

(International Association for Impact Assessment, 2006)

September 2006  
Special publication series No. 7

**IAlA**  
International Association for Impact Assessment

**Health Impact Assessment  
International Best Practice Principles**

HEALTH IMPACT ASSESSMENT MAY BE DEFINED AS A COMBINATION OF PROCEDURES, METHODS AND TOOLS THAT SYSTEMATICALLY JUDGES THE POTENTIAL, AND SOMETIMES UNINTENDED, EFFECTS OF A POLICY, PLAN, PROGRAMME OR PROJECT ON THE HEALTH OF A POPULATION AND THE DISTRIBUTION OF THOSE EFFECTS WITHIN THE POPULATION. HIAs IDENTIFY APPROPRIATE ACTIONS TO MANAGE THOSE EFFECTS.  
(CITING FROM WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION, 1999)

**The underpinning concept of HIA**

Individual and population health status is largely the result of the social, cultural and physical environments in which we live. Factors such as the nature of our environment, access to resources to meet our basic needs, our exposure to risks and capacity to cope with them, our income and education level, and our social network of relationships with friends, family and neighbours all have considerable impacts on health and well-being.

Human health and the physical and social environment are inextricably linked. Human health has a number of dimensions that are beyond traditional therapeutic approaches in health care:

1. **Determinants related to the individual:** genetic, biological, physiological and/or psychological.
2. **Social and environmental determinants:** physical, community conditions and/or socio-economic.
3. **Individual determinants:** the capacity, capabilities and limitations of public sector institutions and the wider public policy framework supporting the services they provide.

**What is Health Impact Assessment?**

Health Impact Assessment (HIA) aims to identify how developments induce environmental changes in health determinants and resulting changes in health outcomes. HIA provides a route to proactively address any other concerned with health hazards. HIA also addresses health responsiveness opportunities in developments. Health hazards, risks and opportunities also may be addressed explicitly in environmental assessments.

Development planning is typically conducted outside the health sector and is concerned with social and economic development, not disease, injury, agriculture, industry and transport. With a corresponding larger proportion of resources at their disposal, and with a responsibility for actions that may change environmental and social health determinants significantly, major actors among the health sector or the generalist in effect, private and public provision health.

Development planning without adequate consideration of human health may pose hidden "risks" or to affected communities, in the form of an increased burden of disease and reduced well-being. These at major points of view, is to other marginalized and disadvantaged groups who

who  
time  
HIA  
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**IMPROVING  
HEALTH  
IN THE  
UNITED STATES**

The Role of  
Health Impact Assessment

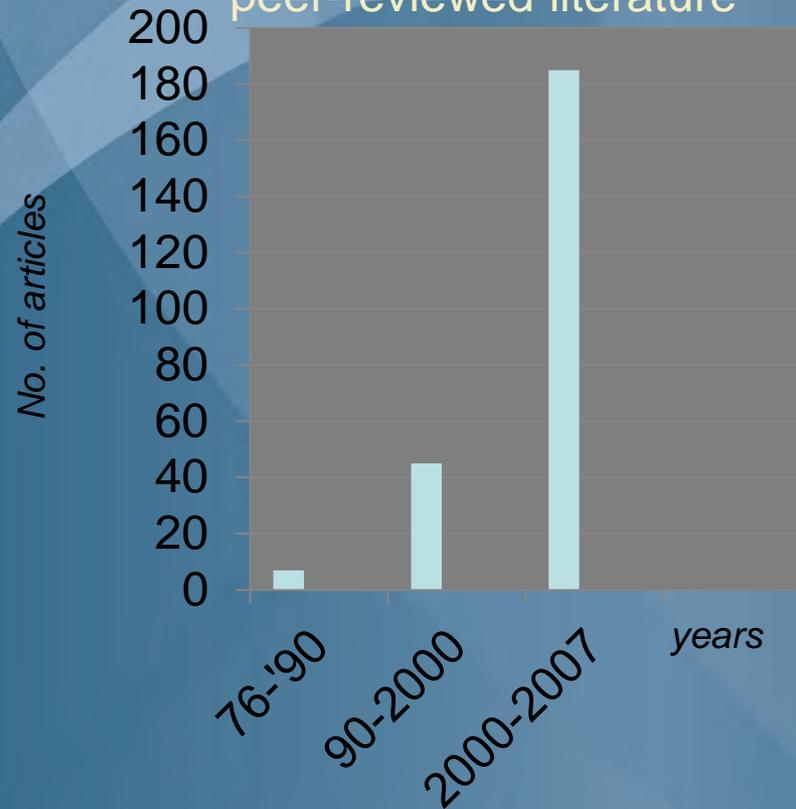
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# Interest in HIA is growing



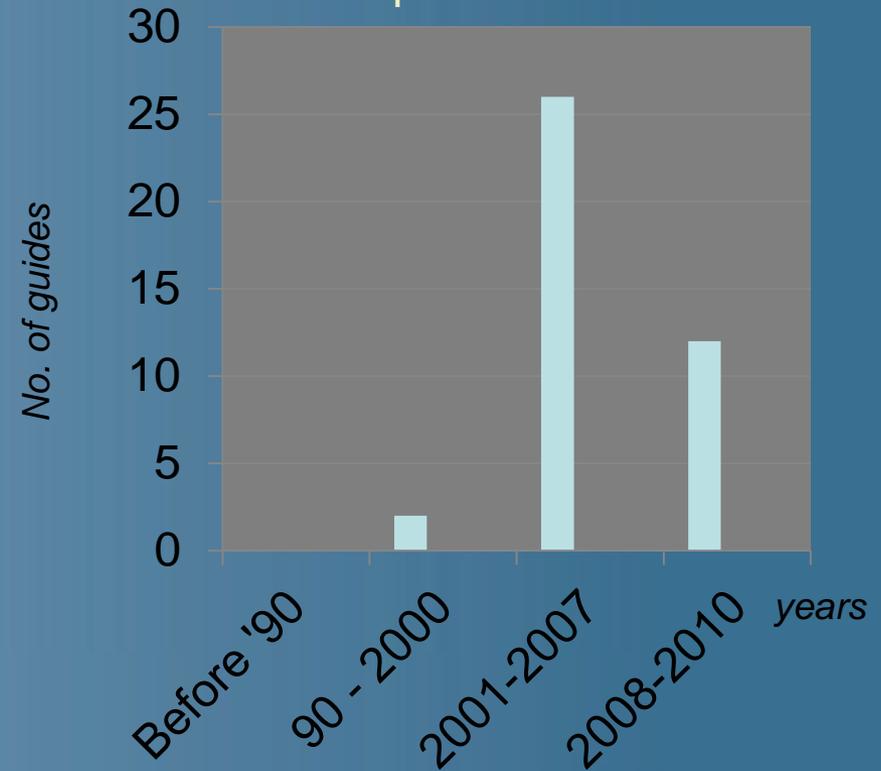
# Interest in HIA is growing

Number of articles published on HIA in peer-reviewed literature



Erlanger et al (2008)

Number of HIA guides published



Dannenberg et al (2011)

# In the public sector

# And in the private sector



Managing the public health impacts of **natural resource extraction activities**

A framework for national and local health authorities



Discussion Draft

Guide pratique  
**ICMM**  
International Council on Mining & Metals

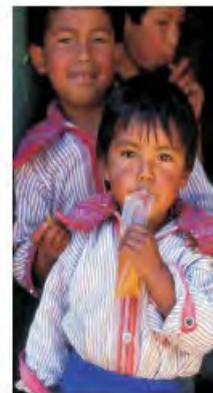
## Good Practice Guidance on Health Impact Assessment



Guidance 2010-1



Introduction to Health Impact Assessment

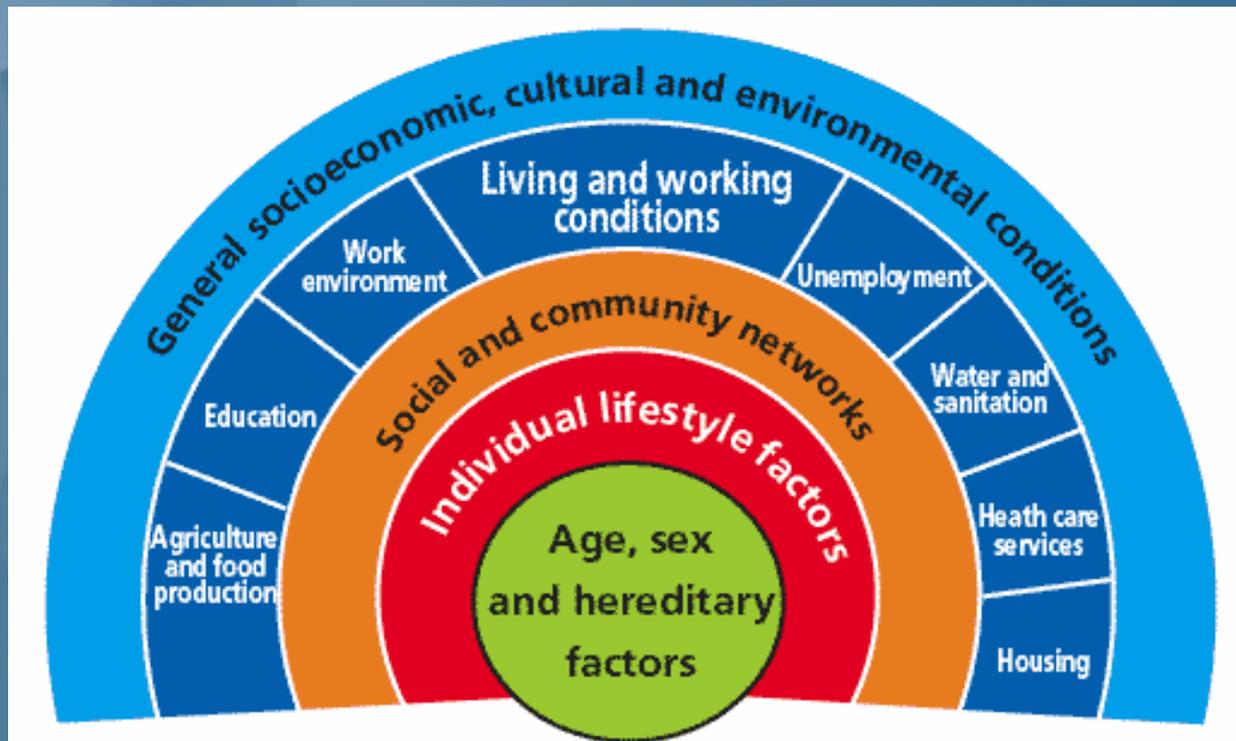


# Several points of consensus have been established

According to a study on current HIA guides used across the world (N=42)

<b>% of guides</b>	<b>that highlighted the following features</b>
98%	<b>Encourages community engagement</b>
95%	<b>Considers equity/ inequalities across population</b>
88%	<b>Includes a list/ diagram of health determinants</b>
74%	<b>Recommends prospective HIA only</b>
74%	<b>Voluntary approach/ not tied to policy</b>

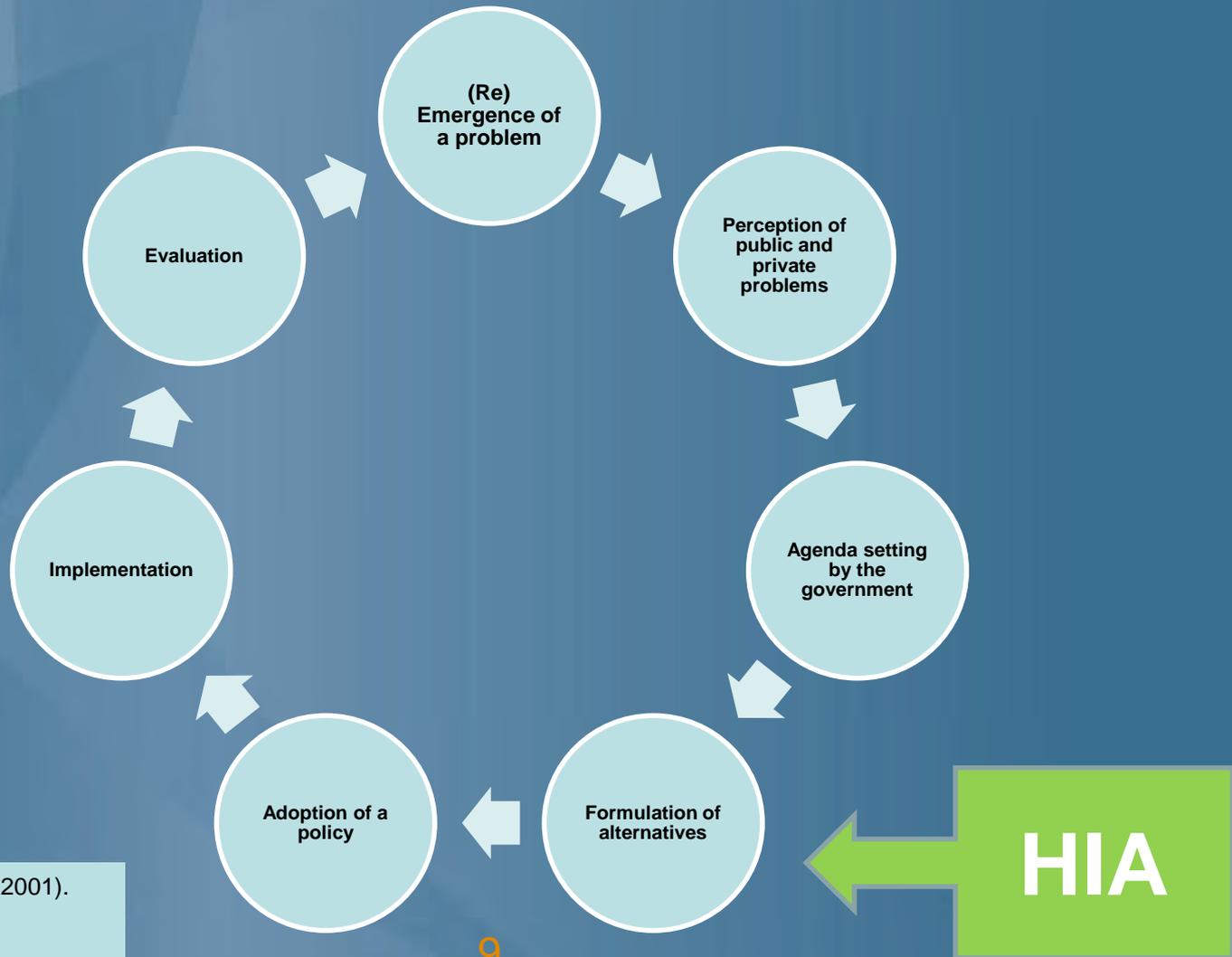
# A broad perspective of health determinants



Source: Dahlgren & Whitehead. (1991)

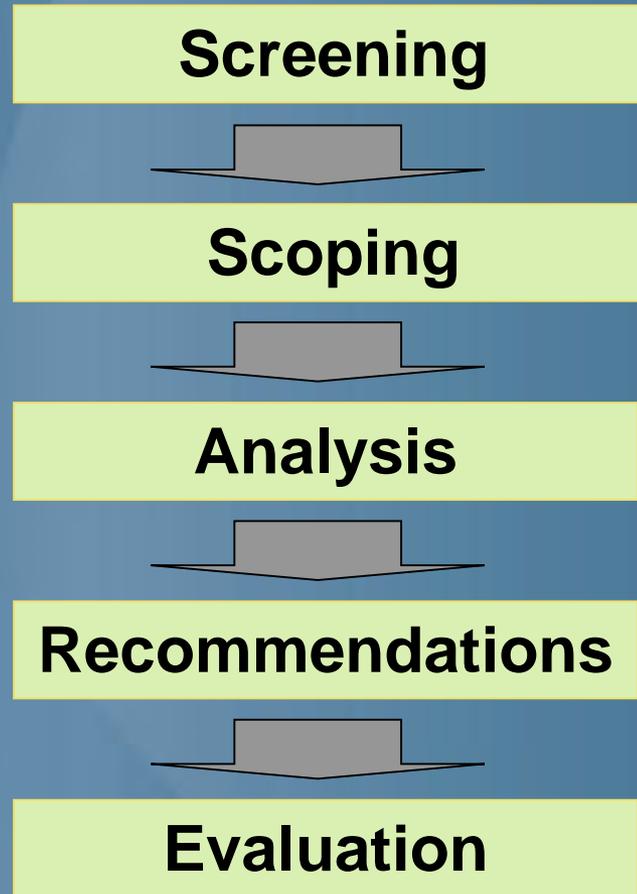


# HIA in the policy-making cycle



Adapted from: Knoepfel, et al. (2001).

# A systematic process



# But various models of practice

Models	Mandated	Decision-support	Advocacy	Community-led
Description	By public health experts	On voluntary basis by or with the agreement of the proponent	By organization or groups to promote a specific option	By potentially affected communities
Purpose	Meeting statutory requirement	Improving decision-making	Ensuring under-recognized health concerns are addressed	Ensuring the community's health-related concerns are addressed. Empowerment
Focus	Negative impacts	Positive and negative impacts	Positive and negative impacts	Positive and negative impacts
Vision of health	Environmental health	Environmental health, social view of health health equity	Social vision of health, health equity	Social vision of health, health equity

# HIA process



Screening

Scoping

Analysis

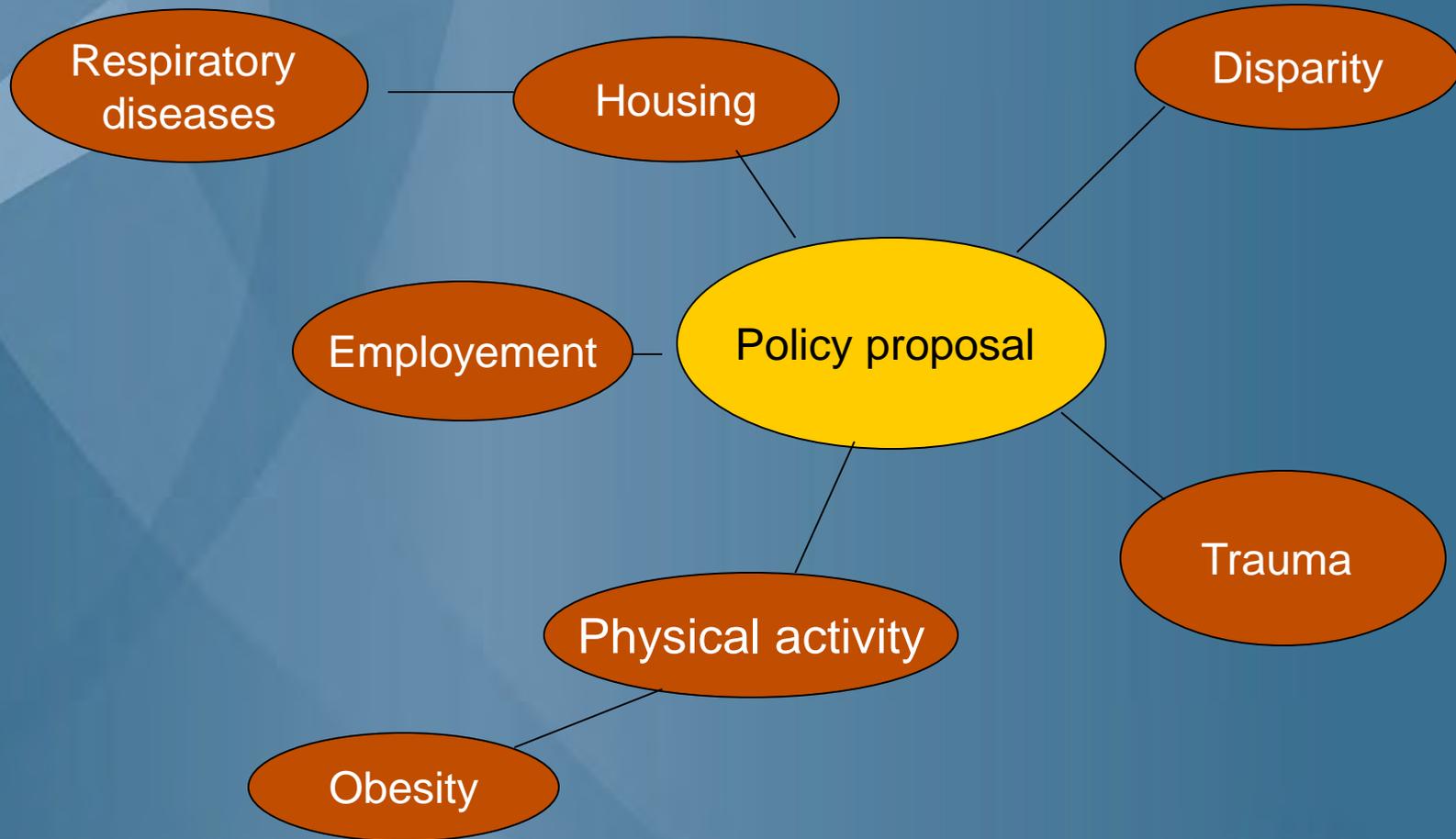
Recommendations

Evaluation

# Screening

- 1. Reading the policy context:  
Is it possible to influence the  
draft policy?**
- 2. Preliminary reading of the  
potential impacts:  
Positive and negative impacts?  
Significant enough to go  
further?**

# Which determinants?



Screening

Scoping

Analysis

Recommendations

Evaluation

# Scoping

What?

For whom?

How?

By whom?

When?

How much?

Ownership of the report



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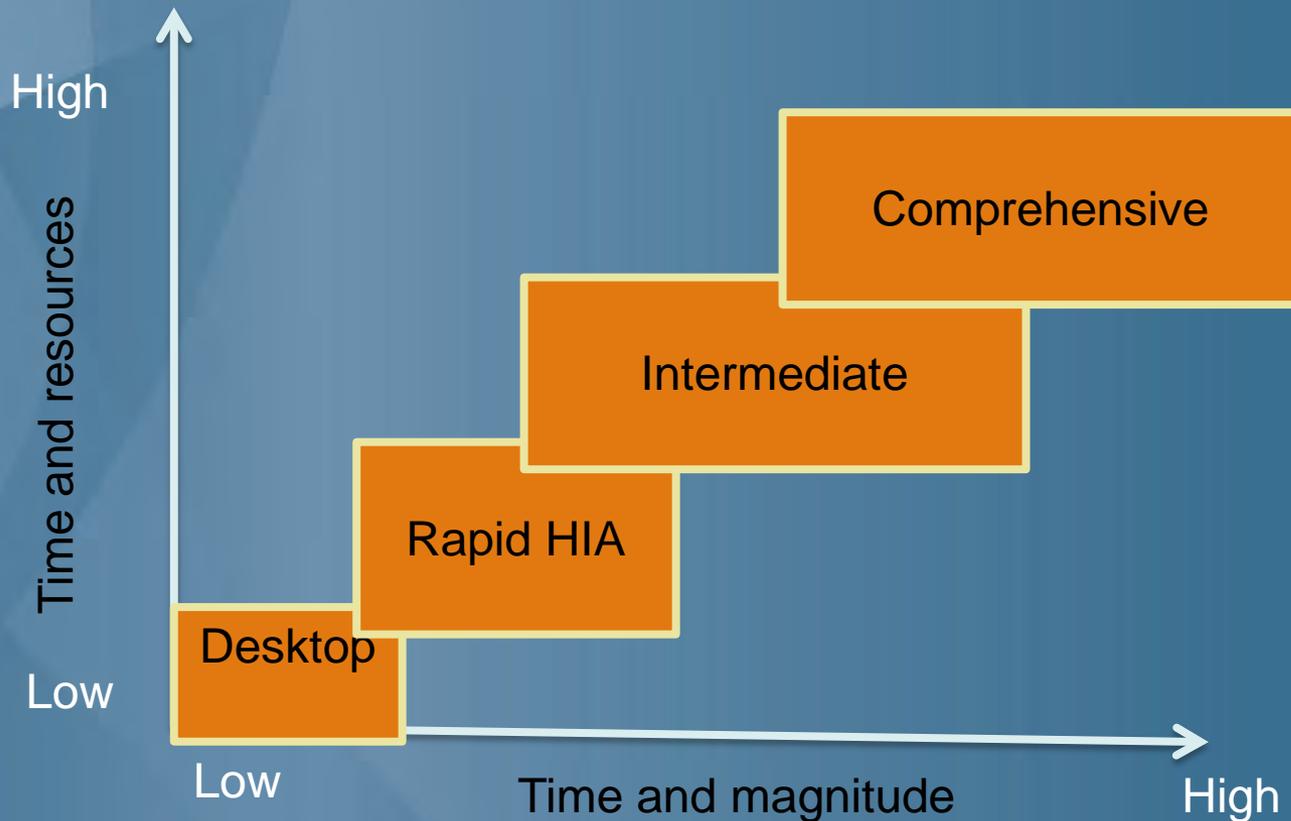
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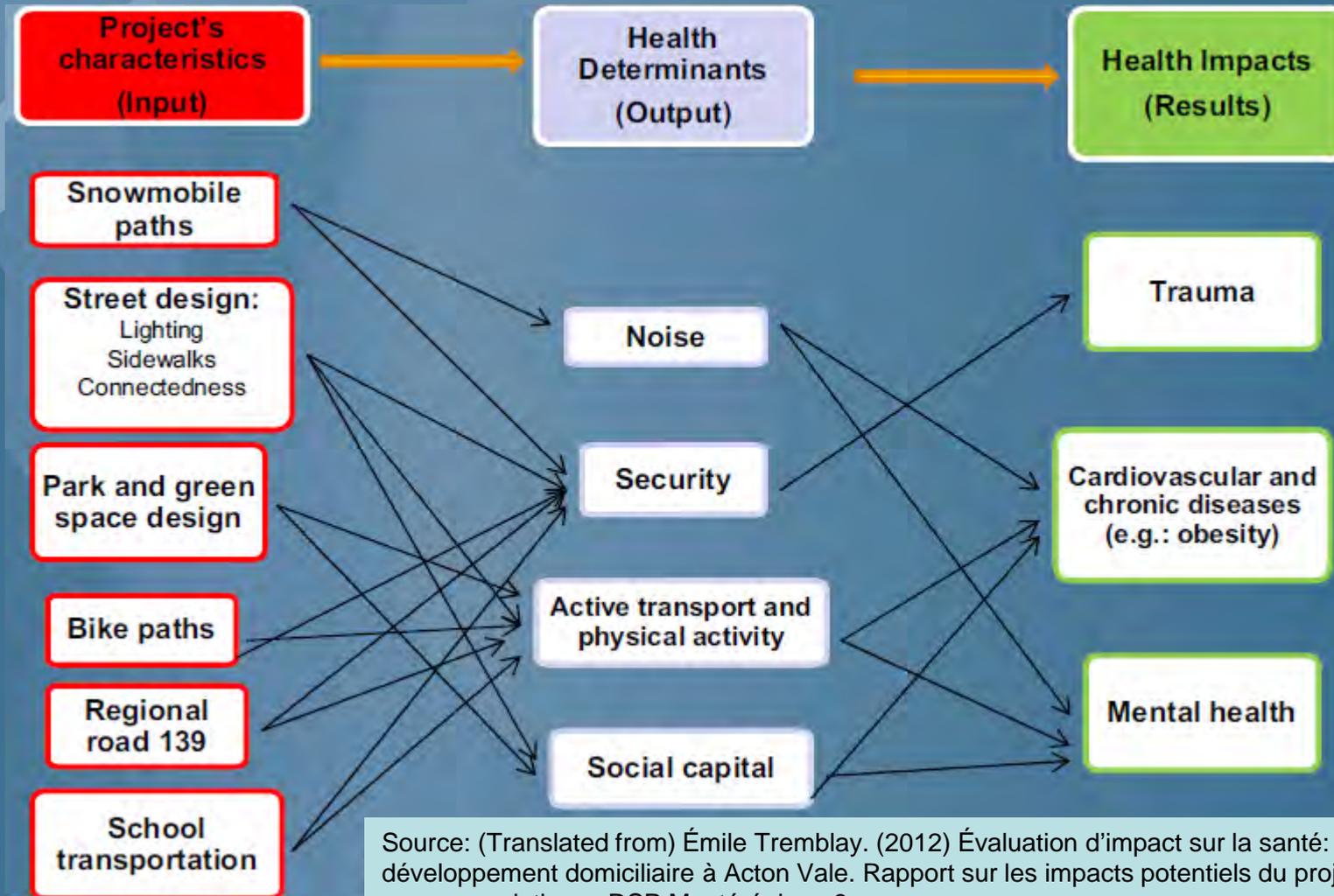


# Type of HIA



# Logical framework

Possible causal pathways between a housing project and health outcomes



Source: (Translated from) Émile Tremblay. (2012) Évaluation d'impact sur la santé: projet de développement domiciliaire à Acton Vale. Rapport sur les impacts potentiels du projet et recommandations. DSP Montérégie. p.8

Screening

Scoping

Analysis

Recommendations

Evaluation

# Analysis

- Community profile
- Literature review
- Experts and stakeholders consultations
- Citizens' consultation (to contextualize data)



Screening

Scoping

Analysis

Recommendations

Evaluation

# Recommendations



**Recommendations on the best scenarios considering population health**

**Transparency regarding choices made**

**Easy to read**



# Example

## Recommendations according to the affected determinants

Air quality	Water quality	Housing	Transport	Social connectedness
Promote active and public transport			Actively promote active and public transport	Ensure an efficient public transport system
Promote energy efficient housing		Strengthen local building codes		Prioritize low cost housing that is highly efficient and sustainable
Develop intersectoral working groups	Integrate water management with urban planning supported by cross sectoral steering group including Aboriginal communities			Involve residents in the design of new communities



# Example 2

Recommendations according to the features of the proposal

Features of the proposal	Affected determinants	Recommendations
Street design	<i>Security, Active transportation, Social capital</i>	→
Recreational park design	<i>Physical activity, Social capital</i>	→
Near primary school	<i>Security, Active transportation</i>	→
Bicycle path	<i>Security, Active transportation</i>	→
Near regional highway	<i>Security, Active transportation</i>	→
Near snowmobile trail	<i>Noise, Security</i>	→

Source: (Translated from) Émile Tremblay. (2012) Évaluation d'impact sur la santé: projet de développement domiciliaire à Acton Vale. Rapport sur les impacts potentiels du projet et recommandations. DSP Montérégie.

Screening

Scoping

Analysis

Recommendations

Evaluation

# Evaluation and monitoring

## Evaluation

### Process

E.g.

- Resources used
- Timeframe
- Partners' satisfaction
- How the choices were made

### Effects

E.g.

- Awareness
- Cross-sectoral collaboration
- Capacity building

## Monitoring

When possible

**The actual impacts  
on health**

**The implementation  
of the measures  
suggested**

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# SCREENING EXERCISE

Using the case study provided, try to answer the following questions:

- 1. What are the likely determinants of health that could be changed by the proposal?**
- 2. Are there groups of people who may be affected differently ?**
- 3. Does this first reading of the situation allow you to conclude whether you should continue the HIA process ?**

