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DEVELOPING A CITIZEN-PARTICIPATION STRATEGY FOR HEALTH IMPACT ASSESSMENT

PRACTICAL GUIDE | SEPTEMBER 2013

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DEVELOPING A CITIZEN-PARTICIPATION STRATEGY FOR HEALTH IMPACT ASSESSMENT

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INTRODUCTION

Health Impact Assessment (HIA) is a practice that has generated much interest since its emergence in the 1990s. HIA can be defined as "a combination of procedures, methods and tools by which a policy, program or project may be judged as to its potential effects on the health of a population, and the distribution of those effects within the population" (European Centre for Health Policy, 1999, p. 4). The goal of HIA is to project, with the help of scientific and contextual information, the potential impacts of policies on population health, so as to minimize the negative and maximize the positive effects.

Definition of HIA

Health Impact Assessment (HIA) can be defined as a combination of procedures, methods and tools by which a policy, program or project may be judged as to its potential effects on the health of a population (European Centre for Health Policy, 1999, p. 4).

The founding documents of HIA, and in particular the Gothenburg Consensus paper (European Centre for Health Policy, 1999), identify citizen participation as one of its cornerstones. In fact, some practitioners and researchers maintain that an HIA remains incomplete without the effective and concrete participation of the community (Dannenberg et al., 2006, p. 266). However, there seems to exist a significant gap between rhetoric and practice. In fact, not only are participatory HIA practices still limited in scope and number (Gagnon, St-Pierre & Daignault-Simard, 2010), but the very idea of citizen participation in HIA also seems poorly articulated and is sometimes called into question (Mahoney, Potter & Marsh, 2007; Wright, Parry & Mathers, 2005).

Definition of citizen participation

Citizen participation refers to all of the means that are used to involve, whether actively or passively, citizens or their representatives in an HIA process.

Some HIA researchers and practitioners attribute these problems, in part, to the absence of a theoretical framework or guidelines that can help orient them with respect to citizen participation (Bauer & Thomas, 2006, p. 512). Similarly, the absence of a proven method for its inclusion seems to feed criticism of citizen participation, which some view as an intangible practice and an unattainable goal (Elliott & Williams, 2008, p. 1112).

This guide is intended as a response to some of these problems. In it, we propose a framework for reflection to assist HIA practitioners who are trying to determine whether it is relevant for them to develop a citizen-participation strategy and, if so, what form this should

take. Our framework for reflection is based on a review of the literature on HIA[1] and on key documents examining citizen participation. More specifically, it will allow practitioners to:

1. Analyze the context within which an HIA is being carried out.
2. Determine the following elements:
   - the objectives of the citizen-participation strategy;
   - which citizens should be involved;
   - the step(s) during which citizens should be involved;
   - the degree of influence that citizens should exercise.

Who might benefit from this guide?

This guide is intended for HIA practitioners who are trying to determine whether it is relevant for them to develop a citizen-participation strategy and, if so, what form this should take.

Thus, the idea is not to propose a single model of citizen participation, but rather to equip practitioners to reflect on which approach would be the most appropriate given a particular context and set of objectives. Finally, we propose a framework for evaluating the success of a citizen-participation strategy.

[1] Four databases indexing scientific journals covering public health and the social sciences were consulted for our literature review: PubMed, OvidSP, EBESCO Host and CSA Illumina. Searches were carried out using predetermined terms and were aimed at identifying all of the relevant publications published before July 2009, in both French and English. Initial searches led to the identification of 443 potentially relevant articles. The title and abstract of each article were analyzed to determine their relevance, and duplications were eliminated. All articles examining citizen participation in other sectors were eliminated (e.g., environmental impact assessment (EIA)). The relevant articles were then analyzed in greater depth, along with their references, in order to locate other publications of interest. Our final inventory led to the selection of 51 articles focused on citizen participation in HIA.

1 ASSESSING THE RELEVANCE AND FEASIBILITY OF CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

1.1 WHEN SHOULD DECISIONS ABOUT CITIZEN PARTICIPATION BE MADE?

We recommend reflecting on this question, ideally before undertaking the first step in the HIA process, that is, before screening, in order to determine the role that citizens can play in each of the five steps in the process.[2] In fact, proponents of citizen participation in HIA maintain that it is important to involve citizens as early as possible so that they can participate in defining issues and in establishing the parameters of the HIA process (Lock, 2000; Winters, 2001; Harris-Roxas & Harris, 2007; Milner, Bailey & Deans, 2003). Certain authors recommend involving citizens or their representatives as early as the screening stage, not only to gain a citizen perspective on the related issues and perceived risks, but also to develop a citizen-participation strategy that takes into account their values, preferences, needs and experiences (Lock, 2000; Winters, 2001; Harris-Roxas & Harris, 2007; Milner, Bailey & Deans, 2003). This participation can take various forms, involving mechanisms such as a multidisciplinary committee comprising experts and (if possible) civil society actors (e.g., citizens, elected officials, representatives of community organizations) who can productively reflect on these matters (St-Pierre, 2009). In the following section, we present a series of questions essential to guiding reflection on the relevance and feasibility of citizen participation.

[2] To review or to become familiar with the various steps in the HIA process, readers may consult *Introduction to HIA*, available at http://www.ncchpp.ca/133/publications.ccnpps?id_article=302.

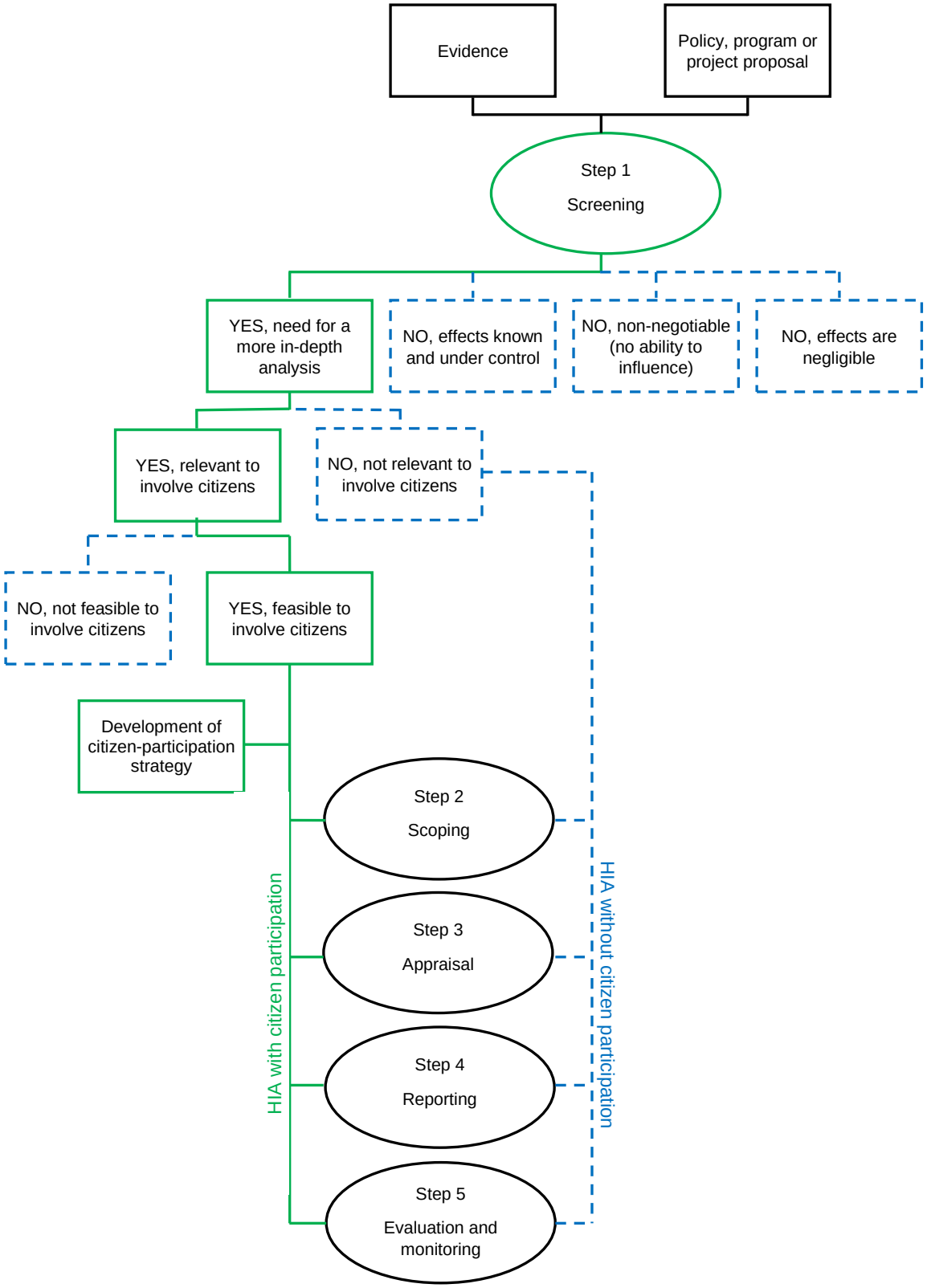

Figure 1 Decision tree for assessing the relevance and feasibility of citizen participation in an HIA (Inspired by Diallo, 2010)

1.2 IS IT RELEVANT AND FEASIBLE TO INVOLVE CITIZENS?

Although some researchers and practitioners maintain that an HIA remains incomplete without the effective and concrete participation of the community, it must be acknowledged that, in practice, the context within which an HIA is carried out does not always allow for such participation. We invite you therefore to analyze the context of your HIA (and, potentially, your citizen-participation strategy) before making a decision. Again, you are encouraged to reflect on these questions within the context of a multidisciplinary committee that includes civil society actors.

Begin by reflecting on the objectives that citizen participation in the HIA process could fulfill. Ask if involving citizens would support one or more of the four core values of HIA, namely democracy, equity, sustainable development, and the ethical use of evidence (Stakeholder Participation Working Group of the 2010 HIA in the Americas Workshop, 2012). Table 1 presents a series of statements intended to guide this reflection. You are invited to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement. There is no ideal score; the Likert scale (here containing seven choices) is considered to be simple and easy to use, while allowing space for expressing one's opinion (Robson, 1993; Neuman, 2000).

Table 1 Analyzing the relevance of participation based on the cornerstones of HIA[3]

DEMOCRACY	**Completely disagree**	**Disagree**	**More or less disagree**	**Don't know**	**More or less agree**	**Agree**	**Completely agree**
Involving citizens would democratize the HIA and the decision-making processes.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Involving citizens would strengthen community empowerment.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other:	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
EQUITY	**Completely disagree**	**Disagree**	**More or less disagree**	**Don't know**	**More or less agree**	**Agree**	**Completely agree**
Involving citizens would give a voice to individuals/groups often marginalized or excluded from traditional decision-making processes.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other:	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT	**Completely disagree**	**Disagree**	**More or less disagree**	**Don't know**	**More or less agree**	**Agree**	**Completely agree**
Involving citizens would make it possible to formulate sustainable recommendations.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Involving citizens would lead to a better understanding of the current and future needs of the community.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other:	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

[3] In order to make this guide as practical as possible, we have extracted this table in a standalone version you can use. The table is available at: http://www.ncchpp.ca/docs/EIS_HIA_PartCit_Table1.doc

Table 1 Analyzing the relevance of participation based on the cornerstones of HIA (cont.)

ETHICAL USE OF EVIDENCE	Completely disagree	Disagree	More or less disagree	Don't know	More or less agree	Agree	Completely agree
Involving citizens would allow the values and knowledge of citizens to be integrated into the HIA as valid and legitimate evidence.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other:	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Having established the relevance of citizen participation, it is important to analyze the context within which the HIA will be carried out, to determine whether it is feasible to involve citizens. Again, simply as a guide, Table 2 presents a series of statements to help you reflect on the feasibility of a citizen-participation strategy. These statements highlight different contextual factors that can influence how citizen participation is implemented, how it functions and the impact it has (Abelson, Montesanti, Li, Gauvin & Martin, 2010). Also highlighted are certain prerequisites for genuine citizen participation (Smith, 1984).

Table 2 Analyzing the feasibility of citizen participation in an HIA[4]

DECISION-MAKING CONTEXT	Completely disagree	Disagree	More or less disagree	Don't know	More or less agree	Agree	Completely agree
The policy arouses scientific controversy and, consequently, the HIA would benefit from a citizen perspective.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The policy arouses political controversy and, consequently, the HIA would benefit from a citizen perspective.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The policy raises an ethical and/or social dilemma and, consequently, the HIA would benefit from a citizen perspective.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The decision-making timeline allows for the implementation of a citizen-participation strategy.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other:	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEXT	**Completely disagree**	**Disagree**	**More or less disagree**	**Don't know**	**More or less agree**	**Agree**	**Completely agree**
The organization conducting the HIA has a specific mandate to include citizen participation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The organization conducting the HIA has the necessary autonomy for developing a citizen-participation strategy.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Access-to-information legislation would not interfere with a citizen-participation strategy.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The organization conducting the HIA has the necessary human resources for developing a citizen-participation strategy.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

[4] In order to make this guide as practical as possible, we have extracted this table in a standalone version you can use. The table is available at: http://www.ncchpp.ca/docs/EIS_HIA_PartCit_Table2.doc

Table 2 Analyzing the feasibility of citizen participation in an HIA (cont.)

ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEXT (cont.)	Completely disagree	Disagree	More or less disagree	Don't know	More or less agree	Agree	Completely agree
The organization conducting the HIA has the necessary financial resources for implementing a citizen-participation strategy.	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
The organization conducting the HIA has the necessary expertise for implementing a citizen-participation strategy.	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
The leadership within the organization conducting the HIA supports development of a citizen-participation strategy.	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
Other:	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
COMMUNITY CONTEXT	**Completely disagree**	**Disagree**	**More or less disagree**	**Don't know**	**More or less agree**	**Agree**	**Completely agree**
Civil society actors are asking (or are likely to ask) to be involved in the HIA process.	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
A participatory culture exists within the community.	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
Other:	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
POLITICAL CONTEXT	**Completely disagree**	**Disagree**	**More or less disagree**	**Don't know**	**More or less agree**	**Agree**	**Completely agree**
The political leadership supports development of a citizen-participation strategy.	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
Historically, a relationship of trust exists between the government and the community.	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
Other:	□	□	□	□	□	□	□

Clearly, this list is not exhaustive and the statements do not appear in any order of importance. Moreover, not all of these issues will carry the same weight in your assessment of the feasibility of a citizen-participation strategy. The multidisciplinary committee must weigh the various issues and determine whether it is feasible to establish a strategy for citizen participation within the current context.

2 DEVELOPING A CITIZEN-PARTICIPATION STRATEGY

2.1 FIVE-STEP PROCESS

Your multidisciplinary committee has determined that it is relevant and feasible to involve citizens. Next, the committee must reflect on what form the citizen-participation strategy will take, before continuing on with the HIA process. To guide this reflection, we propose a series of five questions (Figure 2):

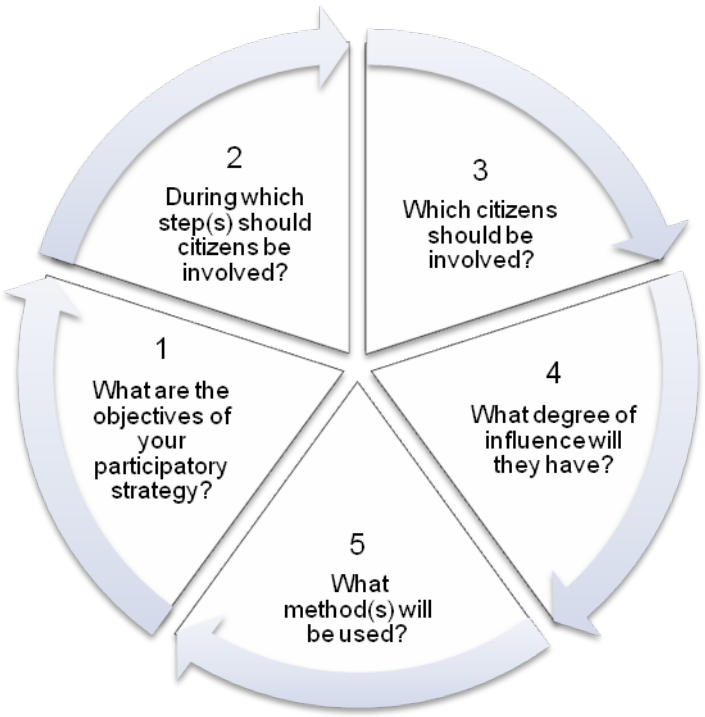

Figure 2 Questions guiding the development of a citizen-participation strategy

Question 1 - (Re)defining the objectives

Your reflections should be guided by the dictum that *form should follow function* (Bishop & Davis, 2002, p. 18). In other words, your citizen-participation strategy must be determined by the objectives you are trying to achieve by involving citizens in the HIA process. It is thus essential to develop a common vision of objectives within your multidisciplinary committee. No HIA practitioner can afford to forego this prior reflection. Implementing a citizen-participation strategy without having clearly stated one's objectives means running the risk of creating misunderstandings and tension between your organizing committee, citizens and other stakeholders involved in the HIA. Therefore, in order to avoid any misunderstanding, it is essential that objectives be clearly communicated to all stakeholders involved, throughout the HIA process.

You have already reflected on the objectives of citizen participation and, more specifically, on how it will support one of the four core values of HIA, namely, democracy, equity, sustainable development and the ethical use of evidence. It is now important to clearly restate within the

committee whether the participation process is targeting one or more of these overarching objectives (Table 3).

Table 3 Objectives of citizen participation in an HIA[5]

GENERAL OBJECTIVES	YES	NO
DEMOCRACY		
Involving citizens would democratize the HIA and decision-making processes.	□	□
Involving citizens would strengthen community empowerment.	□	□
Other:	□	□
EQUITY		
Involving citizens would give a voice to individuals/groups often marginalized or excluded from traditional decision-making processes.	□	□
Other:	□	□
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT		
Involving citizens would make it possible to formulate sustainable recommendations.	□	□
Involving citizens would lead to a better understanding of the current and future needs of the community.	□	□
Other:	□	□
ETHICAL USE OF EVIDENCE		
Involving citizens would allow the values and knowledge of citizens to be integrated into the HIA as valid and legitimate evidence.	□	□
Other:	□	□

These general objectives are intended to guide your reflections. The next series of questions aims to identify the step or steps in the HIA process during which this citizen participation will be the most effective or genuine, and thus allow the general objectives to be met. You will then be ready to identify the more specific objectives of your strategy.

Question 2 - Determining during which step(s) to involve citizens

Once the general objectives have been clearly stated, it is time to ask which are the step(s) in the HIA process in which citizens should be involved. In answering this question, you can refer to practical HIA guides, which generally present it as a process comprising five successive steps (St-Pierre, 2009). Note that when you embark on the screening step, you are right at the beginning of the HIA process and it is desirable to plan your citizen-participation strategy for all of the steps, as presented in Table 4 below.

[5] In order to make this guide as practical as possible, we have extracted this table in a standalone version you can use. The table is available at: http://www.ncchpp.ca/docs/EIS_HIA_PartCit_Table3.doc

As was mentioned previously, the literature on citizen participation in HIA generally recommends involving citizens in every step of an HIA, beginning, if possible, with the screening and scoping steps (Mahoney, Potter & Marsh, 2007; Douglas, Conway, Gorman, Gavin & Hanlon, 2001; Mindell, Boltong & Forde, 2008). However, some authors recommend first involving citizens during appraisal or during the formulation of recommendations, or even at the very end, to follow up on and evaluate the HIA process (Quigley & Taylor, 2003, p. 416). According to some authors, however, involving citizens only at the end can prove a futile endeavour, since the citizens will not be able to significantly influence the HIA process (Bauer & Thomas, 2006, p. 511). By failing to involve citizens early in the process, you risk failing to frame the HIA from a citizen perspective and failing to examine the right issues or ask the right questions.

Your decision will largely depend on the objectives that you hope to fulfil through citizen participation in the HIA and on certain contextual factors, including, in particular, the decision-making timeframe and the resources available to you. If, for example, the goal is to strengthen community empowerment, then participation is desirable at every step in the HIA. If, on the other hand, the goal is to consult with citizens to validate information obtained from the literature review, their participation would perhaps be more desirable at the appraisal stage.

Table 4 The five steps in the HIA process[6]

STEPS IN THE HIA	EXAMPLES OF SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	
STEP 1 – Screening		
The screening stage is aimed at answering two central questions: Does the project, program or policy include elements that are likely to have negative (to be avoided) or positive (to be maximized) effects on the population's health? If so, does the significance of these effects justify a more in-depth analysis? If the answer to these two questions is positive, it is then justifiable to pursue the process and go on to the next step.	By involving citizens during this step, you could: - determine, from a citizen perspective, if the policy includes elements that are likely to have negative (to be avoided) or positive (to be maximized) effects on the population's health; - define the problem and the perceived risks; - establish which determinants will be analyzed; - analyze the context; - other.	 □ □ □ □ □
STEP 2 – Scoping		
The scoping step consists of clearly defining the guidelines for the HIA and of answering the following questions: What information is needed to estimate the scope of the potential effects of the elements identified during the screening step? By whom, when, how and with whom will the collection and analysis of this information be carried out? How much time is available to carry out the impact assessment?	By involving citizens during this step, you could: - define the guidelines/parameters for the HIA; - determine what information is needed; - define the objectives of the subsequent steps; - identify sources of required information; - other.	 □ □ □ □ □

[6] In order to make this guide as practical as possible, we have extracted this table in a standalone version you can use. The table is available at: http://www.ncchpp.ca/docs/EIS_HIA_PartCit_Table4.doc

Table 4 The five steps in the HIA process (cont.)

STEPS IN THE HIA (cont.)	EXAMPLES OF SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES (cont.)	
STEP 3 – Appraisal		
The third step consists of the impact study as such. It includes two types of activities: data collection and data analysis. The data to be collected generally fall into four categories: (i) information about the characteristics of the project, program or policy; (ii) information of a scientific nature obtained by reviewing the literature and consulting with experts about the potential effects of the project, program or policy; (iii) the profile of the population that is likely to be affected; and (iv) information of a contextual nature, obtained from the population likely to be affected, about the potential effects of the project, program or policy.	By involving citizens during this step, you could: - gain an understanding of the potential impacts from a citizen perspective; - gather data (e.g., values, needs, expectations, knowledge of citizens); - validate or invalidate information gathered from the literature review; - obtain experiential and qualitative information; - other.	□ □ □ □ □
STEP 4 – Recommendations		
The results of the screening, scoping and appraisal steps are usually the subject of a written report. The recommendations formulated by the team conducting the HIA are also recorded in this report. Thus, it is possible to recommend the elimination of certain elements of the project, program or policy that could have harmful consequences; the modification of some elements to avoid negative effects or intensify positive effects on the population's health; or the inclusion of protective measures, if it is not possible to modify the measures that are likely to produce negative consequences. Since the HIA is aimed at supporting decision making, the team conducting the HIA must also consider the economic, social and political feasibility of their recommendations.	By involving citizens during this step, you could: - formulate recommendations in consultation with citizens; - validate recommendations; - communicate the recommendations to citizens; - ensure the recommendations are feasible, well understood and acceptable (thus facilitating the policy's implementation); - other.	□ □ □ □ □
STEP 5 – Evaluation and monitoring		
The literature on HIA highlights two possible functions of this final step: (i) evaluation of the HIA process and its ability to influence the decision-making process; and (ii) evaluation of the real effects of implementing the project, program or policy, to verify whether the recommendations have helped to mitigate the negative effects.	By involving citizens during this step, you could: - define the criteria for success; - gather information for understanding the process and its impacts from a citizen perspective; - formulate recommendations for future HIAs; - other.	□ □ □ □

Question 3 - Determining which citizens to involve

Who, among citizens, should you choose to involve? Who represents the community? (Cole, Shimkhada, Fielding, Kominski & Morgenstern, 2005, p. 384). The literature on HIA remains vague on this point, stating that "ordinary" citizens, the entire community, marginalized groups, key informants, and all other stakeholders should be allowed to participate. Such questions are complex and raise issues related to power dynamics, representation and legitimacy.

In order to structure your reflection on this subject, we propose classifying citizens into two categories:

1. **Citizens who are likely to be significantly affected by a project, program or policy**
   They are said to have "concentrated" interests (Stone, 2001, pp. 222-227). Their lives are likely to be directly affected (positively or negatively) by the proposed policy. Moreover, it is generally expected that these citizens will have more of a tendency to mobilize and organize themselves if they feel that an issue will intensely affect them in terms of costs and benefits (Wilson, 1995). However, marginalized or vulnerable groups are sometimes more difficult to mobilize, even if they are likely to be intensely affected. This can be explained by their lack of resources, by the complex functioning of institutions, or by the fact that they often find decision-making processes inaccessible.

2. **Citizens who are unlikely to be significantly affected by a project, program or policy**
   They are said to have weak or "diffuse" interests (Stone, 2001, pp. 222-227). These citizens can nevertheless play a role in the HIA process. They can bring a neutral citizen-oriented perspective to the HIA process, since their interests are not affected by the policy. However, given the weakness of these citizens' interests, it is generally expected that they will be more difficult to mobilize (Wilson, 1995).

HIA practitioners can also consider whether they wish to involve citizens as individuals (that is, as "Average Citizens") or through their representatives (e.g., elected representatives, community organizations, citizens' associations). This type of decision can have practical implications related not only to participant recruitment and selection procedures, but also to the resources allocated for the support of participants' involvement.

It should also be stressed that it is not easy to determine which citizens are, or are not, likely to be affected by a project, program or policy. It is often a question of perception, and also of power dynamics. For example, some citizens or groups may wish to enhance their power or legitimacy within the HIA process by claiming loudly and clearly that they represent the affected citizens, even if this is not the case.

Ultimately, it falls to your multidisciplinary committee to establish guidelines for the recruitment and selection of participants. It is your prerogative to formulate your citizen-participation strategy and to focus more attention on some citizens than on others (Wilcox, 1994; Barnes, Newman, Knops & Sullivan, 2003). Still, it remains important for you to ensure that the participatory process is representative, that is, that the citizens likely to be affected by the project, program or policy have the opportunity to make their voices heard. It is equally important to avoid letting co-option and exclusion occur, as these could call into question the legitimacy of the HIA process. This is particularly important when marginalized or vulnerable groups are likely to be affected by the policy in question. To this end, it is crucially important to provide the resources and incentives needed to support those who are "willing but unable" to participate, as well as those who are "able but unwilling" to participate (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 2009).

Question 4 - Determining the degree of influence of citizens

The literature on citizen participation acknowledges that citizens can exert varying degrees of influence (Arnstein, 1969). Several organizations in Canada and elsewhere have developed different participation typologies that highlight the varying degrees of decision-making power or influence held by citizens. This is the case for the typologies of Health Canada (2000), of the International Association for Public Participation (2007) and of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (2001). Certain authors working in the field of HIA have also developed typologies for distinguishing different forms of participation. For instance, Blau and colleagues (Blau et al., 2006, p. 220) suggest three forms of participation: being informed, being heard and having the ability to decide. This typology underlines the possibility of setting up mechanisms not only for engaging citizens and allowing them to express themselves, but also for informing them about the HIA process and the proposed policies.

Mahoney and colleagues (2007, p. 236) have proposed a typology that highlights four types of HIA, ranging from those with the lowest to those with the highest level of participation:

1. Non-participatory HIA: Citizens are not at all involved in the HIA.
2. Consultative HIA: Citizens are asked to provide feedback on the impact analysis, on proposals and/or on the decisions made.
3. Participatory HIA: Citizens are involved during all steps in the HIA.
4. Community HIA: Citizens control all aspects of the HIA and are responsible for the final decision.

These last two typologies constitute promising efforts to clarify the concepts and terms used to discuss citizen participation in HIA. However, they have certain limitations. Although they can generally qualify the citizen-participation strategy of an HIA, they cannot be used to characterize the level of citizen participation during each step in the HIA, for the different types of citizens involved. In reality, it is quite possible that, during some steps in an HIA, more active involvement of certain types of citizens will be needed than during other steps. Thus, the level of participation can vary throughout an HIA, according to the type of citizen.

Consequently, we have developed a new typology for citizen participation in HIA (Figure 3). This typology draws on the literature on HIA, as well as on other recognized typologies (Health Canada, 2000; Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 2002; International Association for Public Participation, 2007). Each level illustrates the degree to which citizens participate in (or can influence) an HIA:

Table 5 Scale of citizen participation in the HIA process

Delegate
At the highest level, the aim is to delegate to citizens control over a step, several steps, or the entire HIA process. One may think of examples such as HIAs that are conducted by or for citizen associations, or citizen juries who are delegated the power to make certain decisions. At this level, citizens have a very high degree of influence.
Engage
The fourth level of involvement allows citizens to be actively involved in the HIA process, and also, to discuss and deliberate among themselves. At this level, citizens have a strong degree of influence over the HIA process.
Discuss
The mechanisms associated with the third level of involvement enable discussion between citizens and the team conducting the HIA. However, such mechanisms generally do not encourage discussion among citizens themselves. At this level, citizens generally have a limited degree of influence. They can express themselves and give their opinion, but they cannot directly influence the HIA process.
Gather information
The participatory mechanisms associated with the second level of involvement are above all aimed at gathering information from citizens. Information exchange is uni-directional, that is, from citizens to the team conducting the HIA.
Inform and educate
At this level, a mechanism is set up to inform and educate citizens about a project, program, or policy and/or an HIA process. If this is the only mechanism put in place, then citizens will have no influence over the HIA process. That said, such mechanisms can be combined with other participatory mechanisms associated with a higher level. After all, as Creighton points out, (2005, p.89), “inside every public participation program is a good public information program.” This means that there can be no authentic participation without informed citizens.
No participation
At this level, citizens are not at all involved in the HIA.

Question 5 - Determining the participatory methods

Once you have determined the degree of influence that citizens can expect to exert at different stages of the HIA process, you can determine which methods will allow you to operationalize your strategy (Table 6). This is not an exhaustive list, but rather a collection of a few examples intended to inspire your reflections. Various works that review participatory methods can be particularly useful in expanding your toolbox (Creighton, 2005, p. 89).

Table 6 Mechanisms associated with levels of participation

Delegate
Example: citizens' committees with decision-making power and citizens' juries.
Engage
Example: dialogue in the context of community health impact assessment, citizens' panels, consensus conferences, deliberative polling and other deliberative processes.
Discuss
Example: bilateral meetings, public assemblies and hearings, public meetings and other consultative methods.
Gather information
Example: interviews, opinion polls, focus groups, online publication of working documents that invite citizens' comments (via internet, email or fax) and other methods of data collection.
Inform and educate
Example: publication of public advisories or of documents on the Internet (websites, Facebook, Twitter, and other social networks), organization of campaigns to raise awareness through conventional media (radio and television), open houses, 1-800 numbers, or the distribution of information briefs.
No participation
No method.

2.2 USING A MAP OF CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN HIA

To integrate the various dimensions of citizen participation considered here, we propose the use of a map of citizen participation in HIA. We hope that this visual tool will serve to support the reflections of practitioners planning a citizen-participation strategy within the context of an HIA (Figure 3).

The map of citizen participation has two main axes. The vertical axis represents the five steps of an HIA, with each step presenting opportunities for citizen involvement. The six levels of participation are represented on the horizontal axis. Citizens are divided into four categories: individual citizens or representatives of citizens, and likely or unlikely to be intensely affected by the impacts of the policy, program or project. Each category of citizen is represented by a coloured square. The coloured squares can be positioned so as to indicate which citizens will be involved in each step of the HIA and what their level of involvement will be.

STEPS	LEVELS OF PARTICIPATION					
	No participation	Inform and educate	Gather information	Discuss	Engage	Delegate
Screening						
Scoping						
Appraisal						
Recommendations						
Evaluation and monitoring						

PARTICIPANTS		
	Individual citizens	Individuals, groups or entities who are likely to be intensely affected by the impact of the policy ('concentrated' interests)
	Citizens' representatives (e.g., elected officials, community organizations, citizens' groups)	
	Individual citizens	Individuals, groups or entities who are not likely to be intensely affected by the impact of the policy ('diffuse' interests)
	Citizens' representatives (e.g., elected officials, community organizations, citizens' groups)	

Figure 3 Conceptual map of citizen participation in HIA[7]

[7] In order to make this guide as practical as possible, we have extracted this figure in a standalone version you can use. The figure is available at: http://www.ncchpp.ca/docs/EIS_HIA_PartCit_Figure3.doc

To illustrate how this conceptual map may be used, we discuss below the citizen-participation strategies adopted for two HIAs: an HIA of the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow (Scotland) in 2014 (McCartney et al., 2010) and an HIA of an economic development plan for a neighbourhood in Sheffield (England) (Greig, Parry & Rimmington, 2004).

Figure 6 is a map representing the citizen participation that occurred within the context of the HIA of the upcoming 2014 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow, Scotland (McCartney et al., 2010; Glasgow City Council, 2009). The goal of this HIA was to influence the planning and the consequences of the Commonwealth Games, so as to maximize the positive effects on the population's health and to minimize the negative impacts. Of central concern was the involvement of the community and of stakeholders, specifically at the scoping and appraisal stages. The team conducting the HIA organized an event that brought together 120 participants (including elected representatives, community organizations, citizens' associations, government decision makers and researchers) to discuss the scoping of the HIA. Within the context of this event, interactive workshops were organized to discuss the potential impacts of the Games and to prioritize these impacts. Unlike the scoping step, the appraisal step relied more heavily on the participation of the general public. The citizen-participation strategy comprised five components:

1. Presentations and the distribution of information leaflets to community groups aimed at informing and educating them about the HIA and the ways to get involved;
2. Questions about the Games added to the Glasgow Household Survey, a routine survey conducted twice yearly that surveys 1000 residents to gather their opinions;
3. 18 interactive workshops assembling a total of 350 citizens as well as representatives of community groups;
4. A questionnaire ("Have Your Say") aimed at gathering information about public opinion, which was accessible in electronic form on the city's website and in printed form in various service locations (including in doctors' and dentists' offices, through community organizations, in cultural and community centres, and in public buildings); and
5. Five public assemblies that were organized to allow citizens and their representatives to discuss the preliminary results of the HIA.

The final report was made accessible on the Internet and at various service locations to inform and educate citizens and their representatives about the recommendations formulated within the context of the HIA. Following the report's publication, the team conducting the HIA carried out an evaluation of the process, including the citizen-participation strategy, as well as an evaluation of the impact of the recommendations of the HIA. This evaluation, scheduled to be completed in 2014, will gather information from groups representing citizens to learn about and to share citizens' opinions of the HIA process. This evaluation will then be made accessible to the public through means that have yet to be determined.

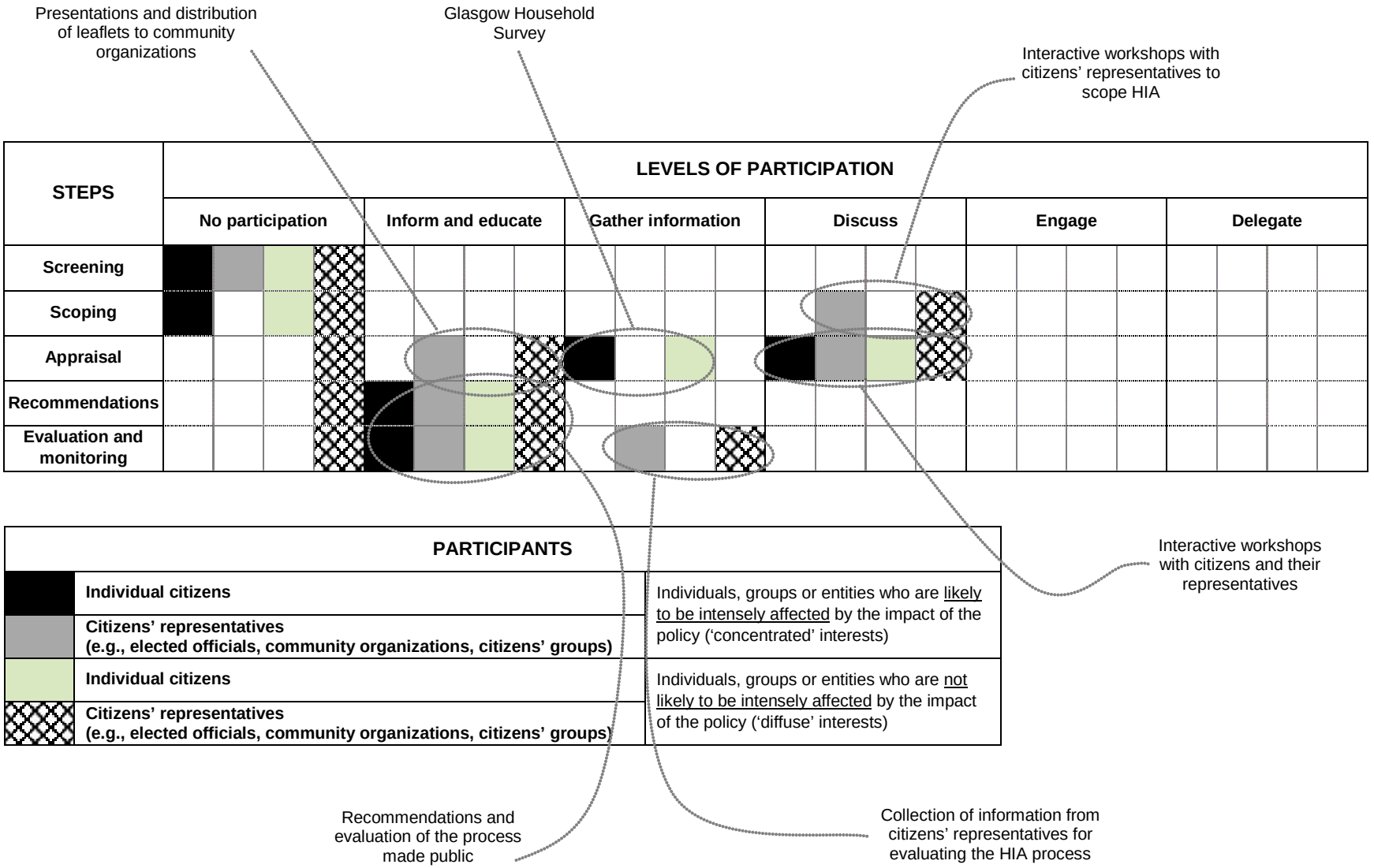

Figure 4 Conceptual map of citizen participation in the HIA of the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow (Scotland)

The second map (Figure 5) represents citizen participation that occurred in an HIA on the economic development of neighbourhoods in Sheffield (England). The main objective of this HIA was to promote the sustainable development of these neighbourhoods through the participation of local communities in the process leading to decisions that would affect their quality of life. According to the writings of Greig and colleagues (2004), citizens and their representatives were involved during three steps in the HIA: the appraisal, the drafting of recommendations, and the evaluation of the process. Surveys and individual interviews were conducted to gather information about the concerns of residents regarding the potential impacts of the development plan on the environment and on health. Bilateral meetings were also held with community groups (sometimes with more than 60 people) to determine and prioritize the actions needed to improve the quality of life in the neighbourhoods. Such meetings were also held to discuss and debate the preliminary recommendations formulated by the team conducting the HIA. Finally, individual interviews were conducted with representatives of community organizations to evaluate the impact of the HIA. According to Greig and colleagues (2004, p. 260), the expertise of citizens enhanced understanding of the direction and distribution of impacts on the population's health. They conclude that supporting and encouraging the participation of community members is one of the main factors that allows an HIA to provide relevant and useful support to decision making and action taking.

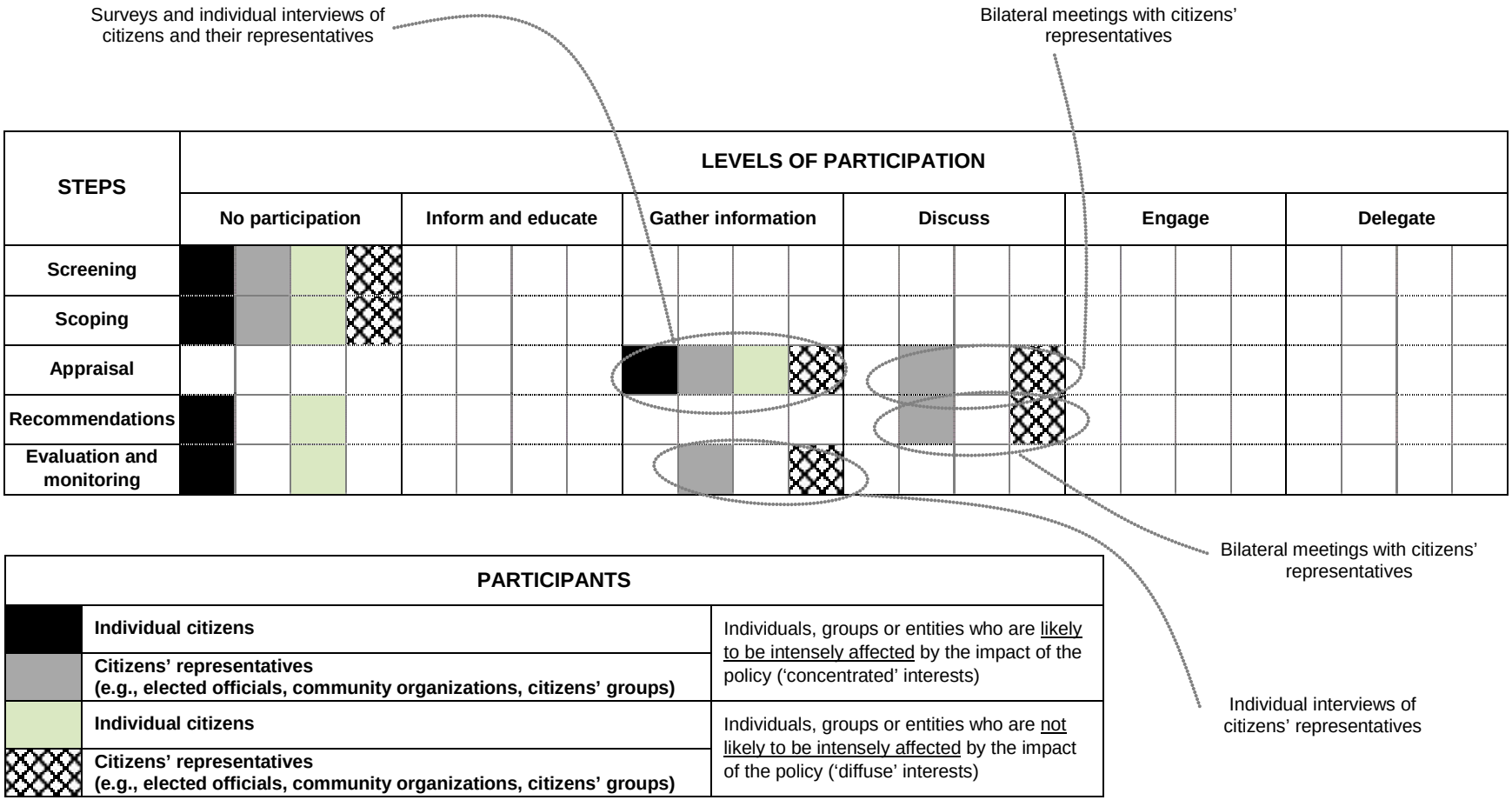

Figure 5 Conceptual map of citizen participation in an HIA on the economic development of neighbourhoods in Sheffield (England)

Of course, the conceptual map as we are using here has limitations in terms of its ability to represent a complex and dynamic environment, as it may present a rather static and linear portrait of citizen participation in the HIA process. To cite the dictum of the scientist Alfred Korzybski, “the map is not the territory” (1939). Nevertheless, we believe that such a conceptual map can assist practitioners in reflecting on the various ways in which citizens can be involved in the HIA process, and in explicitly describing the form such citizen participation will take. In addition, it allows for the systematic comparison of participatory HIA practices.

3 EVALUATING THE CITIZEN-PARTICIPATION STRATEGY

You have developed your citizen-participation strategy and are implementing it. It may therefore be relevant to evaluate this strategy to ensure that appropriate use is made of public and institutional resources, to determine whether the strategy works, to learn from this experience, to determine whether the process was fair and equitable, or to assess the impact that citizens were able to have on the HIA process and on decision making (Abelson & Gauvin, 2006).

It is important for such an evaluation to place as much emphasis on the process as on the outcome. A process evaluation explores how the citizen-participation strategy was implemented and what problems were encountered. This type of evaluation is particularly useful for monitoring the implementation of a strategy and for determining the changes that can be made to improve it. For example, you may be interested in evaluating whether the strategy was conducted in a manner that was fair and equitable to vulnerable groups, or whether citizens had access to the appropriate resources required for genuine participation.

An outcome evaluation, on the other hand, allows you to measure changes in specific indicators and to establish whether or not the strategy effectively allowed you to achieve your objectives. Such an evaluation can only be undertaken if the objectives are clearly stated, if the appropriate indicators are measured, and if there are valid and reliable mechanisms for collecting the relevant data. For example, you may wish to measure certain changes in citizens (e.g., did the strategy increase participants' knowledge, enhance their ability to participate in the HIA process, or raise their level of trust in the HIA process?). You may also wish to measure changes in the HIA process or in the decision-making process (e.g., did the participatory strategy lead to a decision that was more consensual or more responsive to citizens' needs?).

In recent years, experts in citizen participation have highlighted certain normative criteria for judging the success of a citizen-participation strategy and have developed evaluation tools and frameworks. The evaluation framework of Rowe and Frewer (2004) is one of those most frequently cited in the literature. This framework targets nine criteria that a participatory process should necessarily meet to be judged "effective" (Figure 8). On the basis of these criteria, the authors have developed a toolkit including: (i) a 58-item questionnaire for participants; and (ii) a checklist for evaluators observing the participatory process.

Table 7 Rowe & Frewer (2004) Evaluation Framework

Representativeness	The public involved should comprise a broadly representative sample of the population affected by the decision.
Independence	The participatory process should be conducted in an unbiased manner.
Early involvement	The participants should be involved as early as possible in the process.
Influence	The outcome of the process should have a genuine impact on policy decisions.
Transparency	The participatory process should be transparent so that the population affected can see what is going on and how decisions are being made.
Resource accessibility	Participants should have access to the appropriate resources to enable them to participate meaningfully.
Task definition	The nature and scope of the participatory process should be clearly defined.
Structured decision making	The participatory process should use appropriate mechanisms for structuring the decision-making process and presenting it to the public.
Cost-effectiveness	The participatory process should be perceived by the organizers to be cost effective.

Whichever approach is chosen, several methods can be used to collect data for evaluating a participatory process: self-completed questionnaires, polls, interviews, discussion groups, non-participatory observation, documentary analysis, etc. It is important to reflect on the evaluative component early in the process to ensure that the necessary data are collected in a rigorous manner and to avoid trying to carry out a retrospective analysis with only partial data.

CONCLUSION

To sum up, the idea of citizen participation rests on the foundational values and principles of HIA practice, namely democracy, equity, sustainable development, and the ethical use of evidence. There is no single model of citizen participation, but rather a multitude of ways to involve citizens in an HIA process.

When considering which citizen-participation strategy would be most appropriate, keep in mind the following three key messages:

1. Context should not be ignored
It is important that the citizen-participation strategy be sensitive to the context in which the HIA will take place. For example, if there are insufficient resources or if the decision timeframe is too short, it may be preferable to forego citizen participation. Or, if it is necessary to involve marginalized groups or those with low levels of literacy, it would then be necessary to adapt the citizen-participation strategy accordingly.

2. Form should follow function
The form a citizen-participation strategy takes should be determined not only by context, but also by its objectives within the HIA.

3. Different citizens, different steps, varying levels
Different citizens may be involved at varying levels, and they may be involved at different stages of the HIA. It is important to note that not all citizens are willing or able to be involved at all levels and during all the stages of such a process (Wilcox, 1994).

We hope that this reflective framework will shed new light on the issues related to citizen participation in HIA. We invite you to adapt the various concepts and tools proposed by enriching them with your own knowledge and experience. While the framework presented here highlights certain theoretical principles and certain practical ideals, the reality is often more complex than the theory. It is by bridging the gap between theory and practice that we will be able to develop effective citizen-participation strategies for HIA.

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