

## **HIA Report Guide – December 2010**

*Prepared by Human Impact Partners for Health Impact Project HIA grantees*

The following information is meant to provide a basic structure for your HIA report including the types of information that, at a minimum, should be included. Some notes about the document:

- While the structure can be revised to match your HIA's needs, the content included below should be discussed in one way or another.
- Please also refer to your HIA training materials and the HIA Practice Standards (<http://www.humanimpact.org/doc-lib/finish/11/9>) for other types of information you may want to discuss in the report. While the Practice Standards are meant to guide the HIA process, they may also provide additional categories of information to include in the report itself.
- Consider how you frame and communicate your findings and consult with the Health Impact Project and their communications consultant, Burness Communications, as needed.
- HIAs can range in length; the page numbers listed below are suggested and assume that a full HIA process (rather than a rapid HIA process) has been conducted.
- For examples of HIAs that mostly conform to this structure, see:
  - A Health Impact Assessment of the California Healthy Families, Healthy Workplaces Act of 2008 – report: <http://www.humanimpact.org/component/jdownloads/finish/5/72> and summary: <http://www.humanimpact.org/component/jdownloads/finish/5/74>
  - Child Health Impact Assessment of the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program: <http://www.hiaguide.org/sites/default/files/HIAofhousingrentalvoucherschildhealth.pdf>

<b>Report Front Items</b>	<p>List of report authors/contributors.  List of report reviewers (if any).  Acknowledgement (including the Health Impact Project).  Suggested citation.  Table of contents.  List of tables, maps and figures.</p>
---------------------------	---

<b>Section I. Key Findings / Executive Summary (2-3 pages)</b>	<p>Briefly describe the proposal being assessed.</p> <p>Provide brief background on what led to the decision to do this HIA, who will be affected, and a summary of the proposal’s importance to health and health disparities.</p> <p>List the primary scoping categories (e.g., health determinants)/research questions that were the focus of the HIA.</p> <p>List (if any), any particularly prominent stakeholder concerns that are addressed.</p> <p>Make a clear and concise statement on the overall finding/s of the HIA – e.g., “The HIA finds that the proposal being assessed would have significant positive and/or negative impacts on health.”</p> <p>Include bulleted list of findings by “highly likely impacts”, “likely impacts”, and “plausible, but not well-supported impacts.”</p> <p>Create a summary table of impacts. The following is intended as an example, and can be adapted:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="407 1352 1430 1619"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="5"><b>HIA Impact Analysis - Summary of Findings</b></th> </tr> <tr> <th><b>Health Outcome/ Determinant</b></th> <th><b>Direction and Extent</b></th> <th><b>Likelihood</b></th> <th><b>Distribution</b></th> <th><b>Quality of Evidence</b></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><i>Direction and Extent of Impact</i> (combine direction, magnitude and severity into one measure):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Severe impact on many = ▲▲▲▲ or ▼▼▼▼</li> <li>• Severe impact for few or small impact on many = ▲▲▲ or ▼▼▼</li> <li>• Moderate impact on medium number = ▲▲ or ▼▼</li> <li>• Small impact on few = ▲ or ▼</li> </ul>	<b>HIA Impact Analysis - Summary of Findings</b>					<b>Health Outcome/ Determinant</b>	<b>Direction and Extent</b>	<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Distribution</b>	<b>Quality of Evidence</b>															
<b>HIA Impact Analysis - Summary of Findings</b>																										
<b>Health Outcome/ Determinant</b>	<b>Direction and Extent</b>	<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Distribution</b>	<b>Quality of Evidence</b>																						

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uncertain = ?</li> <li>• No effect = “No effect” or “None”</li> </ul> <p><i>Likelihood of Impact:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Likely = it is likely that impacts will occur as a result of the proposal</li> <li>• Possible = it is possible that impacts will occur as a result of the proposal</li> <li>• Unlikely = it is unlikely that impacts will occur as a result of the proposal</li> <li>• Uncertain = it is unclear if impacts will occur as a result of the proposal</li> </ul> <p><i>Distribution of Impact:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Name subpopulation impacted more (e.g., “low-income residents impacted more”; “Blacks impacted more”) or “equal impacts”</li> </ul> <p><i>Strength/Quality of Evidence:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• *** (e.g., many strong studies)</li> <li>• ** (e.g., one or two good studies)</li> <li>• * (e.g., no clear studies, but generally consistent with principles of public health)</li> </ul> <p>List the top recommendations stemming from the HIA.</p> <p>Include a concluding statement about the HIA and intended next steps.</p>
--	---

<p><b>Section II. Introduction (2-3 pages)</b></p>	<p>Describe in greater detail the proposal being assessed and the changes that might be anticipated if the proposal is implemented.</p> <p>If necessary, briefly explain the significance of the proposal from a national, state, and/or local perspective. For example, does the proposal build on existing legislation and/or planning efforts or does the proposal reflect the culmination of some campaign?</p> <p>Briefly describe why conducting an HIA would add value to the debate around the proposal, considering, for example, what new information the HIA brought compared with other components of the planning process.</p> <p>Name the key partners that came together to conduct the HIA, including individual partners and any steering or stakeholder advisory committees.</p> <p>Provide the dates when the HIA was conducted.</p> <p>Walk through what each section of the HIA report includes.</p>
--	---

<p><b>Section III. Background and Screening (3-4 pages)</b></p>	<p>Provide a brief explanation of what HIA is, including the steps of HIA.</p> <p>If not addressed adequately above, describe in detail the proposal being addressed, background on the topic, why it is being pursued, proposal decision-makers and other stakeholders who may have jurisdiction or input on the decision, relevant laws or policies, a timeline for the decision-making process, and how the world would be different if the proposal was implemented (e.g., who, what, when, where, why).</p> <p>Include any relevant statistics on the proposal that highlight its salience and why it's a relevant topic on which to conduct an HIA, such as, for example, number of jobs anticipated, change in community revenues, change in traffic, contribution to local air pollution.</p> <p>Discuss who was involved in making the decision to conduct the HIA.</p> <p>Include a section on Screening (or, "The Case for HIA") where the following questions are answered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the proposal associated with potentially significant health impacts/ disparities that would otherwise be unconsidered or undervalued by decision-makers?</li> <li>• Is it feasible to conduct a relevant and timely analysis of the health impacts of the proposal?</li> <li>• Are the proposal and its decision-making process potentially open and receptive to the findings and recommendations of a health impact analysis?</li> </ul> <p>Include a clear statement that, based on responses to the above (and any other relevant screening questions), it was decided that an HIA should be conducted. Clearly state all the decision alternatives considered in the HIA. Include any other relevant information here that was not discussed above.</p> <p>List the partners in the HIA and their roles, including the funder/sponsors of the HIA.</p> <p>List any conflicts of interest or potential sources of bias. For example, funding for the HIA by any organization or individual with a stake in the outcome of the decision; publicly stated positions on the outcome of the decision by any of the participating organizations; or political mandates that restrict the scope, findings, or recommendations made by the HIA team (particularly relevant for public agencies).</p>
---	---

<p><b>Section IV. HIA Scope (3-4 pages)</b></p>	<p>List the goals of the HIA.</p> <p>Describe the process you went through to come up with the HIA scope – start with a discussion of how broad impacts were considered and then narrowed down.</p> <p>Describe, if any, the stakeholder input process into the HIA Scope.</p> <p>Describe, if any, the role of stakeholder or technical advisory or steering committees.</p> <p>Identify issues that you considered but decided not to address in the HIA (for example, if you did not focus on environmental health because you lacked expertise in this area, or because an analysis of impacts to environmental health is already being conducted outside the HIA process).</p> <p>Identify who will be affected by the decision.</p> <p>Describe any vulnerable populations that were considered as part of the HIA.</p> <p>Describe the geographic area that is the focus of the proposal and the assessment.</p> <p>Describe the potential health effects. Include pathway diagrams and describe them briefly in words.</p> <p>List the prioritized research questions and/or scoping categories (i.e., health outcomes; social, environmental, and economic health determinants) that guided the HIA and the process for prioritizing these.</p> <p>Describe the research/assessment methods and significant data sources used in the HIA (e.g., secondary data analysis, quantitative forecasting, primary analysis of existing dataset, new survey data collected, focus groups, interviews, surveys, etc.).</p> <p>Describe any data gaps that have been identified and, if any, your plans to address them.</p> <p>If necessary, explain the selection or exclusion of particular methodologies and data sources (i.e., acknowledge when available methods were not utilized and why).</p> <p>Include the final scope as an appendix to the HIA.</p>
---	--

**Section V.  
Assessment  
Findings  
(15-30  
pages)**

The assessment section is the meat of the HIA report. At a minimum, this section should include for each specific scoping category/research question analyzed:

- A profile of existing conditions, including of health outcomes and health determinants disaggregated by income, race, gender, age, and/or place.
- An assessment of potential health impacts to these baseline conditions by the proposal and any alternatives under consideration.

There are several different approaches you could take to organizing this information in the report:

*Option 1 – Organized by baseline conditions and impact assessment:*

- First, include a section on baseline conditions for demographics and health determinants and outcomes (i.e., scoping category / research questions). Report findings using quantitative and qualitative data (e.g., in the form of narrative, tables, graphs, maps, quotes, etc.) and literature review findings for each scoping category / research question.
- Second, include a separate section discussing predicted impacts to baseline conditions. Discuss impacts based on direction, magnitude, severity, likelihood, and distribution (see below sample table and definitions).

*Option 2 – Organized by health outcomes and determinants (i.e., scoping categories / research questions):*

- Include an initial section on demographics for the geographic areas of concern.
- Include a separate section for each health determinant and outcome (i.e., scoping category / research question).
- Within each of these categories, report consecutively on:
  - baseline conditions/literature review findings (e.g., in the form of narrative, tables, graphs, maps, quotes, etc.), and
  - impact analysis findings; make sure to report on direction, magnitude, severity, likelihood, and distribution (see below sample table and definitions).

For both approaches:

Explain how the indicators selected answer the research questions you are addressing. There will likely be multiple indicators used to describe each scoping category and answer each research question. It is important to explain how these were selected, and why they are good indicators to measure the effect you are describing. Literature review findings are often most important here as they make the connection between some specific indicator and the broader issue it's meant to reflect.

The impact analysis process requires critical thinking about how baseline conditions of interest may be impacted. See below for sample table for impact analysis findings, including categories of information to include. Some helpful hints in this process:

- Impacts can be based on quantitative and/or qualitative predictions. Use your understanding of public health theory, interpretation of the baseline conditions data, stakeholder concerns, and your experience/expertise in making these predictions
  - One potential process for doing this, if quantitative methods are not available, is bringing together experts/stakeholders to discuss baseline conditions, literature, and the proposal and use a consensus process to develop predictions.
  - In some cases, there may be conflicting inputs on a single health outcome or indicator. For example, a new light rail station could place low-income families under financial strain as property values increase, at the same time as creating new employment opportunities for the same families. In this case, it may be adequate to simply identify and describe both the positive and negative pathways: although this does not result in a clear picture of whether the net impact will be positive or negative, identifying impact pathways can facilitate management strategies that maximize the benefits and minimize the risks.
- Consider evidence that supports and refutes health impacts. Note: it is important not to simply cite studies that support one conclusion if there are other studies that have conflicting results.
- Consider differential impacts by income, race, gender, age, pre-existing health conditions, and/or place.
- Be cautious with generalizations.
- Acknowledge assumptions and limitations.
- The lack of formal, scientific, quantitative or published evidence should not preclude reasoned predictions of health impacts based on experience, expert opinion and accepted principles of public health.

Regardless of the analytic method(s) used, create a table (**see below for example**) that clearly articulates impacts to various scoping categories, including direction of impact, magnitude of impact, severity of impact, likelihood of impact, and distribution of impact. See definitions for these variables below. Note: this would be a longer version of the impacts analysis table included in the Executive Summary.

- If proposal impacts differ based on proposal phase (e.g., construction, production, decommissioning), create separate impacts table for each phase and label them with the appropriate proposal phase.
- If possible, in a narrative format, also speak to:
  - Nature of impacts (e.g., are impacts direct or indirect?)
  - Geographical variations in impacts (e.g., localized, community-

	<p>wide)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Strength and quality of evidence (e.g., high quality quantitative and/or qualitative evidence, not very good quality evidence)</li> <li>○ Duration of impact (e.g., permanent, temporary)</li> </ul> <p>Consider also including a section on limitations of your Assessment process and findings. For example, identify data gaps that prevented an adequate or complete assessment of potential impacts and describe the uncertainty in any predictions.</p>
--	---

**HIA Impact Analysis Summary of Findings**

Health Outcome/ Determinant	Direction	Magnitude	Severity	Likelihood	Distribution

Responses to use in above table:

- Direction of Impact:
  - Positive = Changes that may improve health
  - Negative = Changes that may detract from health
  - Uncertain = Unknown how health will be impacted
  - No effect = No effect on health
- Magnitude of Impact:
  - Low = Causes impacts to no or very few people
  - Medium = Causes impacts to wider number of people
  - High = Causes impacts to many people
  - *Note that this is relative to population size*
- Severity of Impact:
  - Low = Causes impacts that can be quickly and easily managed or do not require treatment
  - Medium = Causes impacts that necessitate treatment or medical management and are reversible
  - High = Causes impacts that are chronic, irreversible or fatal
- Likelihood of Impact:
  - Likely = it is likely that impacts will occur as a result of the proposal
  - Possible = it is possible that impacts will occur as a result of the proposal
  - Unlikely = it is unlikely that impacts will occur as a result of the proposal
  - Uncertain = it is unclear if impacts will occur as a result of the proposal
- Distribution of Impact:
  - Name subpopulation impacted more (e.g., “low-income residents impacted more”; “Blacks impacted more”) or “equal impacts”

<p><b>Section VI. Recommendations (2-3 pages)</b></p>	<p>Start this section by providing a bulleted list of findings by “highly likely impacts”, “likely impacts”, and “plausible, but not well-supported impacts” – this could be the same list as is included in the Executive Summary.</p> <p>The report should include specific recommendations to manage the health impacts identified, including alternatives to the decision, modifications to the proposal, or mitigation measures. Order identified recommendations, mitigations, and alternatives in one of the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Based on impacts of highest concern (i.e., based on magnitude and certainty) to lowest concern.</li> <li>•Based on scoping category, from highest concern to lowest concern.</li> <li>•Based on feasibility of implementing the recommendation.</li> </ul> <p>For each recommendation, identify appropriate indicators (either health outcomes or health determinants), a suggested plan for monitoring them, an appropriate agency or entity to undertake the monitoring, and potential funding sources for monitoring.</p> <p>In writing recommendations, pay attention to the legal and policy context in which they will need to be implemented. To the extent possible, for recommendations that would be implemented through regulation or formal government policy, draft recommendations that could be implemented within the applicable policy context.</p> <p>Be transparent about whether there was a lack of consensus among HIA participants about the recommendations, and the method by which decisions were made.</p> <p>While there may be many recommendations for all of the HIA findings, prioritize 3 – 6 recommendations to highlight in the Executive Summary.</p>
---	---

<p><b>Section VII. Monitoring (1-2 pages)</b></p>	<p>Describe your monitoring plan including indicators to be monitored, by whom, when, how, and methods for reporting monitoring findings.</p> <p>If you have an evaluation plan, consider including it here.</p>
---	--

<p><b>Section VIII. Conclusion (1 page)</b></p>	<p>Reiterate the value of conducting the HIA and its contribution to debate around the proposal.</p> <p>Highlight any anticipated next steps.</p>
---	---

<b>Section IX. References</b>	Include full list of references cited in the HIA report.
-----------------------------------	--

<b>Section X. Appendices</b>	Include the following types of information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Methodological explanations of data analysis</li><li>• More detailed focus group/survey write-ups</li><li>• Sample surveys and/or focus group protocols</li><li>• Lists of stakeholders who participated in the HIA process</li><li>• Background materials on the proposal</li><li>• HIA scoping grids/worksheets</li></ul>
----------------------------------	---