



Exploring the Utility of HIA as a Participatory Approach within Health in All Policies

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Photo credit: Stakeholder Participation in HIA Working Group of the 2010 HIA of the Americas Workshop, 2011



Background: Helsinki Statement on Health in All Policies

Assessment of the impact of future policies:

- health impact assessment
- health lens analysis
- tools and checklists

Participation of wider society in the development/implementation of public policies:

- citizen juries
- health assemblies
- deliberative meetings
- community town hall discussions
- online and social media forums



HIA as a participatory process

- Gothenburg Consensus: democracy, emphasizing the right of people to participate in a transparent process for the formulation, implementation and evaluation of policies that affect their life, both directly and through the elected political decision makers
- Guidance and practice standards for participation within HIA



Table 3: North American HIA Practice Standards Relating to Stakeholder Participation by HIA Stage^a

HIA Standards for Practitioners		Section
Process Oversight: <i>Intended to be used throughout all the stages of the HIA</i>		
Essential	Accept and utilize diverse stakeholder input.	1.5
Recommended	Have a specific engagement and participation approach that utilizes available participatory or <i>deliberative methods</i> suitable to the needs of stakeholders and context.	1.6
Screening Stage: <i>Deciding whether an HIA is needed, feasible, and relevant</i>		
Essential	Understand stakeholder concerns in order to determine potential health effects.	2.2.3
	Identify and notify stakeholders of decision to conduct a HIA.	2.3
Recommended	Identify stakeholders to potentially partner with a HIA.	
	Seek diverse stakeholder participation in screening the target policy or HIA plan.	
Scoping Stage: <i>Deciding which health impacts to evaluate and evaluation methodology</i>		
Essential	Use input from multiple perspectives to inform <i>pathways</i> (between the policy, plan or project and key health outcomes). Use multiple avenues to solicit input (from stakeholders, affected communities, decision makers).	3.1
	Ensure a mechanism to incorporate new feedback from stakeholders on the scope of the HIA.	3.7
Recommended	Work with diverse stakeholders to prioritize key elements of analysis.	
	Seek feedback from stakeholders on HIA scope.	
Assessment Stage: <i>Using data, research, and analysis to determine the magnitude and direction of potential health impacts</i>		
Essential	Use local knowledge as part of the evidence base.	4.2.1
		4.2.4
Recommended	Work to engage all stakeholders in data collection.	
	Seek feedback from stakeholders on draft findings.	
Recommendations: <i>Providing recommendations to manage the identified health impacts and improve health conditions</i>		
Essential	Use expert guidance to ensure recommendations reflect effective practices.	5.2
Recommended	Work with community and other stakeholders to identify and prioritize recommendations.	
	Seek input on recommendations.	
Reporting & Communication: <i>Sharing the results, recommendations</i>		
Essential	Summarize primary findings and recommendations to allow for stakeholder understanding, evaluation, and response.	6.2



The Rhetoric of Participation

- Benefits of participation in HIA:
 - Democratic innovation
 - Equity
 - Empowerment
 - Integration of citizen knowledge and values
 - More sustainable recommendations





Organisational obstacles - financial and human resources



Process obstacles - reaching and representing participants



Political obstacles - decision makers afraid that citizens will block decisions

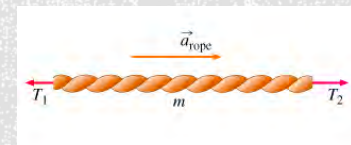


Theoretical tensions - HIA as a democratic innovation vs HIA as an impact measurement tool

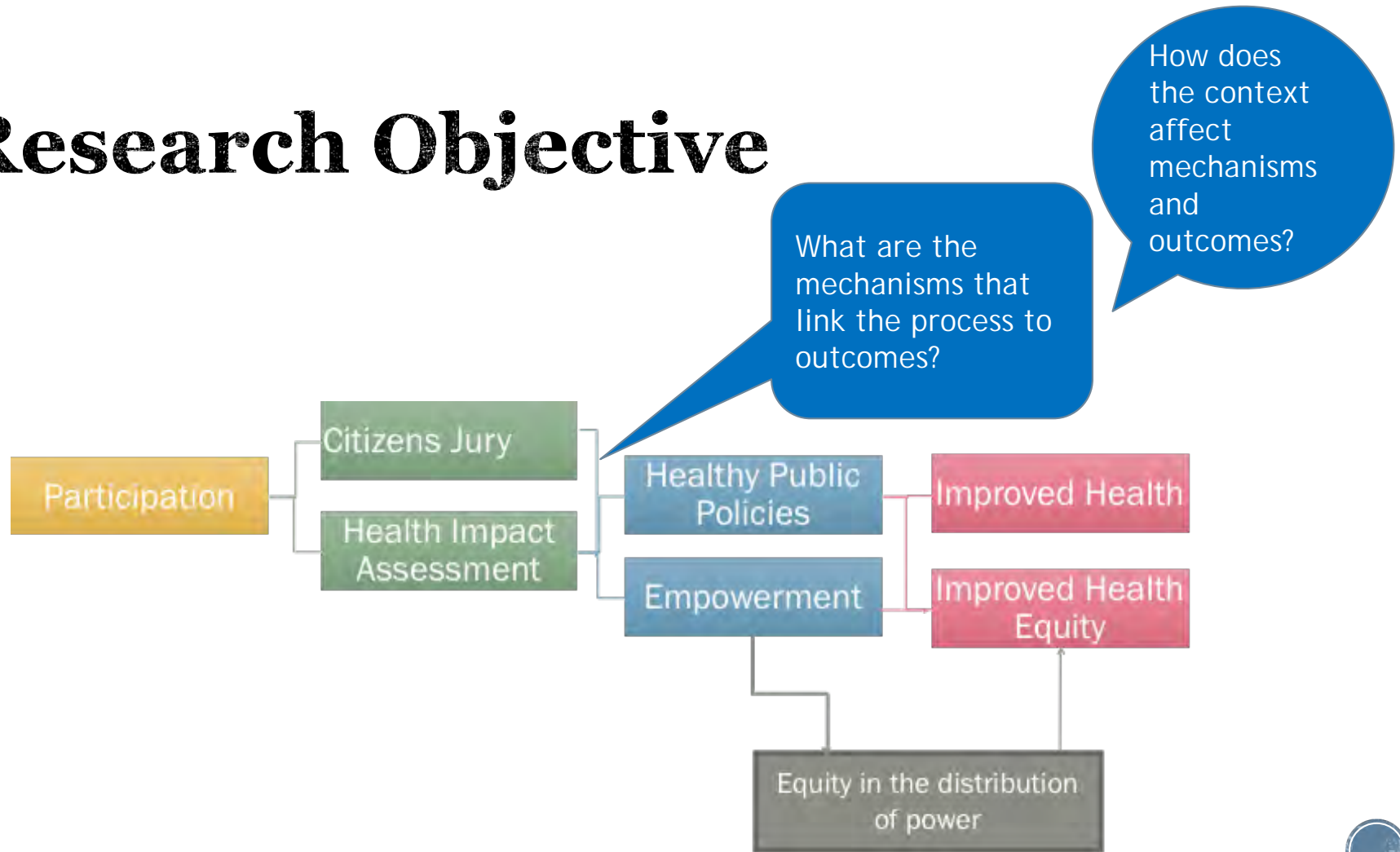


Incoherence with HIA typologies - HIA within EA vs community-led HIA

Tensions of participation in HIA

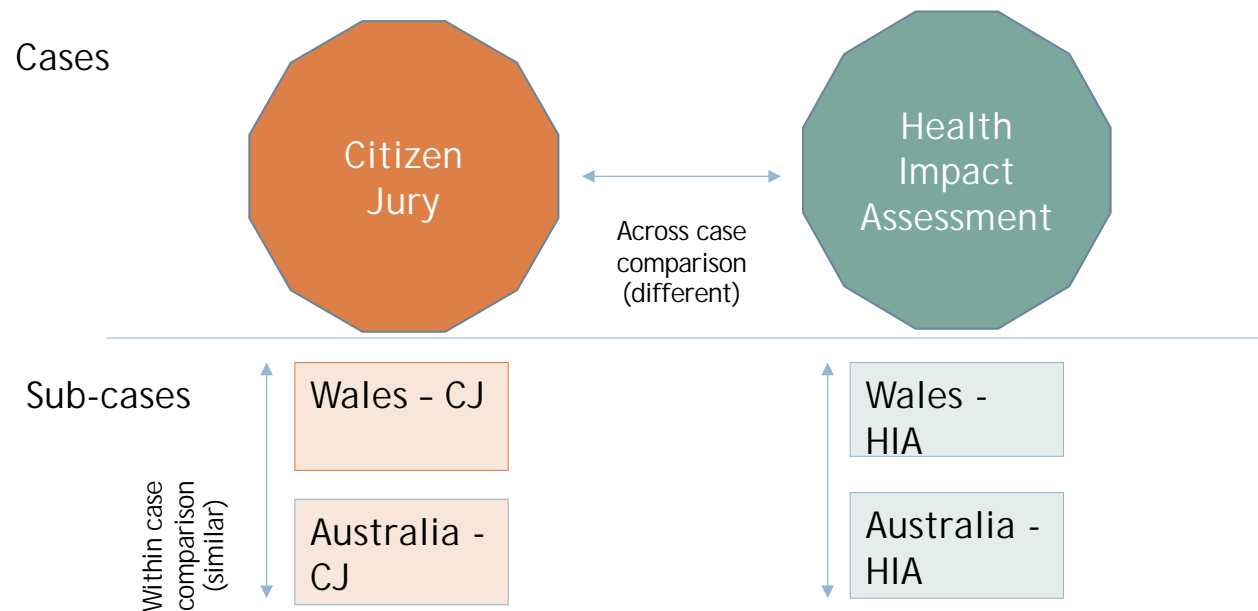


Research Objective



Methods

- Multi-case comparison
- Australia and Wales
- Key informant interviews
- Document Review
- Critical realist informed comparative analysis



Stage 1 Fieldwork: Australia



Health Impact Assessment of Social Housing Renewal Project

- 2016
- Focus on town centre for social housing estate
- Historically low SES area, in greater western Sydney suburbs
- HIA engaged community residents and stakeholders through involvement in conducting the HIA and providing input for the HIA (such as at the scoping workshop) ~24 people
- Recommendations were provided to the developer and Council
- Interviews completed in February 2019
- Total 11 interviews



Findings: Social Housing Estate Renewal HIA

Key Outcomes

- Informed the decision
- Health benefits
- Community Pride
- Legitimacy
- Learning
- Empowerment

I think because it let us come up with our ideas of what should be here, and informing them and then having the report...to back up what we were saying, and that gave us validity, to say to them 'this needs to be included.' They still get the final say. But they're listening to us.

"knowing they've been heard"

- Not being ignored
- Knowing what to say
- Developing confidence
 - Having a say
- Getting to tell decision makers what to do



Enablers

- Long history of engaged residents
- Willingness between residents and decision makers to listen to each other and work together
- Having support from other agencies
- Community members directory involved

"you'd want to do right by them"

"Because if, if you're constantly banging heads with the local community, some of the project's not going to work too well. So it's good to, to have that working relationship with the community. To know that, yes, we're on the right page, or no we're we're completely opposite."



Mechanisms

"And we let people sit and talk about why they thought what they thought"

"So I think this stands out as something that really was able to get the community's voice heard early on, you know, be it whether that cynicism is justified or not, I'm not really here to answer that. But the perception that it's, they've had an impact and an input early on in the process and have produced something that's informing the development decisions, is something stands out to me as is impactful, at least for the community"

"Yes, we're not just saying, 'Oh, we want this. And we want that.' We've got documented proof to say why we want this."

"Warrants a response"

- Dialogic process
- Reflective process
- Evidence-gathering process
- Representative process
- Proscriptive process
- Formal process

Challenges and Opportunities for using HIA as a participatory approach within HiAP

- Case selection - Unwilling to allow research due to:
 - Existing evaluation processes
 - Not wanting to over-fatigue participants/decision makers
 - Internal conflicts
 - Non-systematic engagement (lack of participant information)
- Participation with HIA - Horses for Courses
 - Use of HIA as a participatory process may depend on and should be designed to fit within policy contexts

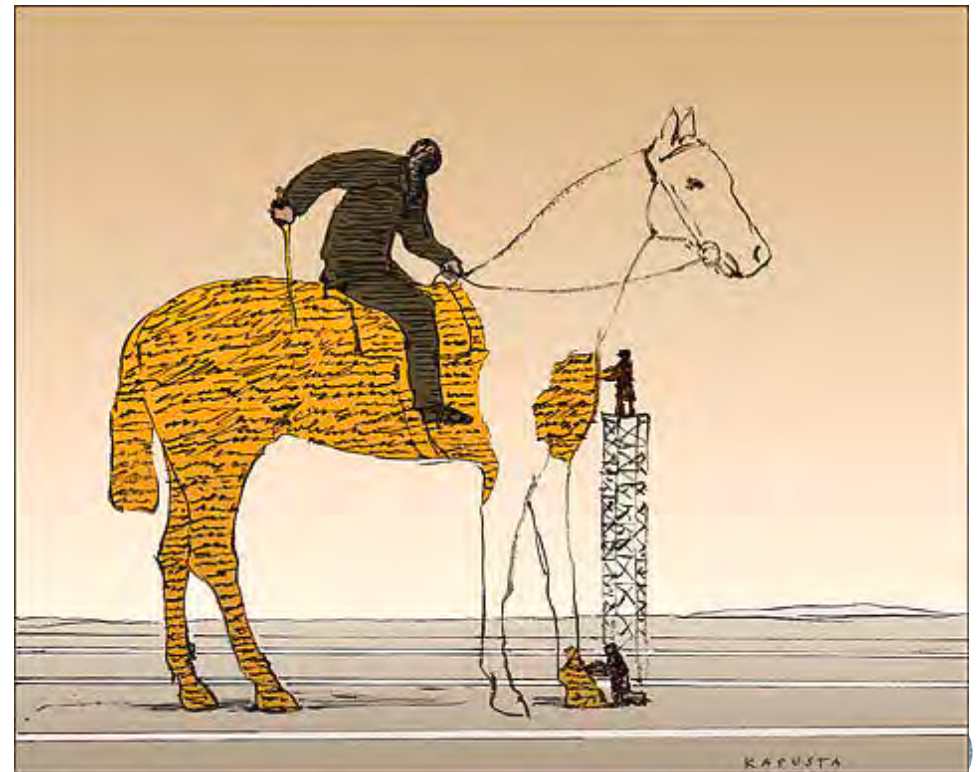


Image credit: Janusz Kapusta

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