REFRAMING HEALTH-
HOW CAN ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORKS
BETTER SERVE THE NEEDS OF
TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS?

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What is Impact Assessment?

“the process of identifying the future consequences of a current or proposed action”

A procedural tool that assesses specific factors that benefit, mitigate, or exacerbate the ecosystem and human health.
Research questions

1) What variables are missing from conventional impact assessments that would improve their applicability to Indigenous populations?

2) How do impact assessments address cultural, spiritual, environmental, and community health concerns?
How are Impact Assessments failing to address tribal health?

1) Health determinants are often focused on biophysical health or environmental outcomes (e.g. exposure assessment)
2) Impact assessments that explicitly include culture focus on tangible/physical aspects of culture such as gravesites
3) Limited assessment of the interconnectedness of environment, health and culture: environment, health, culture are compartmentalized

Primary problem → Does not include Indigenous definitions of health
"Our culture depends on the existence of a healthy environment to sustain the habitat for our fish, birds, deer and other traditional animals."

Swinomish Chairman, Brian Cladoosby, spi-spá?c

"Of the 400 images, 393 (98.2%) did not include humans, 4 (1%) had humans within the ecosystem, and 3 (0.8%) had humans outside looking in."

-Medin and Bang
The Indigenous Health Indicators (IHI) are a set of community-scale, non-physical aspects of health that are integral to Coast Salish health and wellbeing. The IHI reflect deep connections between humans, the local environment and spirituality. IHI provide a template for resource-based communities to tailor in order to suit their own, unique connections and health priorities.
Measuring use of impact assessments

11 Impact Assessments Evaluated:
- Environmental Impact Assessment
- Health Impact Assessment
- Public Health Assessment
- Ecological Risk Assessment
- Community Health Assessment
- Social Impact Assessment
- Cultural Impact Assessment
- Strategic Environmental Assessment
- Human Health Risk Assessment
- Human Rights Impact Assessment
- Integrated Environmental Impact Assessment

**Methods**: PubMed search for 11 identified impact assessments identified. Query: "name of assessment"; date range: 1/1/2008-12/31-2017
Relative use of impact assessments

Creating a Code Book of health indicators

Methods:
- Review of literature to identify the determinants of human and/or environmental health considered by each of the 11 impact assessments
- Used the compiled list of determinants to create a Code Book.
- Code Book contains 44 codes based on the determinants

Example code:

**Theme:** Health Outcomes, Behaviors, and Care  
**Sub-theme:** Health services  
**Code:** Health services - Accessibility - Cultural relevance

**Definition of code:** Ability of a population to receive medical care that is cultural relevant or appropriate. Cultural barriers faced by patients.

**Inclusion criteria:** Care provided by doctor, nurse or other medical personnel is impacted by cultural barriers other than language. May include health literacy of target population.

**Inclusion example:** Female Muslim patients are uncomfortable seeking care because the only available provider is male.

**Exclusion criteria:** Access to care is impacted by language of doctor, nurse, or patient.

**Exclusion example:** A lack of translators available to serve patients leads to a decrease in the number of patients seen (Code: Health Services – Accessibility – Language)
6 main emergent themes of 43 health determinants

- **Biophysical Environment:** Natural Environment, Human Exposure, Built Environment, Sustainability
- **Public Resources & Services:** Public & Social Services, Infrastructure, Education
- **Society & Culture:** Cultural Resources, Communication, Quality of Life
- **Health Outcomes, Behavior & Care:** Biologic Factors, Health Outcomes, Health Care Services, Health Behavior
- **Social & Economic Environment:** Occupational Environ., Resources, Social Conflict
- **Political Environment:** Contemporary Setting, Historic Setting, Self-determination
Describing the scope of Impact Assessments

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Overlap of determinants between IHIs and IAs

Biggest gaps:
- Lack of deep assessment of cultural impacts
- Lack of connectivity between environment, culture, health

Most overlap with Indigenous Health Indicators:
1) Human Rights Impact Assessment
2) Social Impact Assessment AND Health Impact Assessment
3) Community Health Assessment
4) Strategic Environmental Assessment
Future directions

• How effective is stakeholder engagement in the Impact Assessment process?

• Challenges in incorporating IHIs and Indigenous definitions of health

• What do IAs accomplish? Threshold at which action is taken? (i.e. a project is cancelled, an intervention is taken, etc.)
Questions?

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Highest use seen among IAs evaluating biological health and impacts to ecosystems, and use trending up.
Source Material for IA methodology and code development

Community Health Assessment:


Cultural Impact Assessment:


Ecological Risk Assessment:

Environmental Impact Assessment:


Health Impact Assessment:


UCLA. Health Impact Assessment checklist.

Human Health Risk Assessment:

Human Rights Impact Assessment:


Integrated Environmental Impact Assessment:

**Public Health Assessment:**

**Social Impact Assessment:**


**Strategic Environmental Assessment:**


Canadian Indigenous engagement and capacity building in health impact assessment

Roy E Kwiatkowski, Constantine Tikhonov, Diane McClymont Peace and Carrie Bourassa

Consultations with concerned stakeholders are a cornerstone to effective impact assessment, not only within Canada, but internationally as well. The environment is of paramount importance to Indigenous communities, as many continue to rely heavily on the land and natural resources for their subsistence, including their socio-economic, cultural, spiritual and physical survival. Indigenous communities want reassurances from governments and industry that negative impacts associated with projects, programs or policies in their territories will be minimized and that positive impacts will be maximized. Communities want to be involved in the development, implementation and interpretation of the impact assessment report to assure themselves of the environmental, social, spiritual and health impacts associated with the exploitation of the local natural resources. This paper presents efforts by the Environmental Health Research Division of the First Nations and Inuit Health Branch, Health Canada, to assist Indigenous communities in carrying out community-based research to improve health and well-being by building and supporting their capacity to identify, understand and control impacts associated with projects, programs or policies implemented within their territories.
Canadian Indigenous engagement and capacity building in health impact assessment

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Keywords: Indigenous communities, HIA capacity building, training, community engagement, research.

The accelerating industrialization of developing countries, particularly throughout Asia, is likely to compound the increasing demand for raw materials and energy needed to fuel the global economy. Canada’s wealth of natural resources (minerals, forest products and energy sources) positions Canada as a likely supplier for domestic and global industrial demands. As well, climate change has greatly increased access to

Canada’s far north, an area rich in oil and minerals. The challenges facing the federal, provincial and territorial governments is to find ways to support economic development that enhances the health and well-being of Canadians (population of 32 million) without adversely impacting the environment. Canada’s Indigenous population consists of approximately 500,000 First Nations (with about 60% living on reserves) and 35,000 Inuit. The 606 First Nations (FN) and 35 Inuit communities can be characterized as small, young, rapidly growing, and remote. Despite expectations of significant community benefits accruing from economic development, Indigenous communities continue to express concerns about the impacts that development projects are having on the environment and their health and well-being.

The environmental impact assessment (EIA) process, used by over 100 countries, is a comprehensive planning process to predict and assess the effects of a proposed development project, program or policy.

The Assessment Process

Process of a Māori cultural assessment

A Māori model for the cultural assessment of an individual is fundamental to ensuring that the process is successful and accurate. The recommended process is outlined in Appendix 1. This model is based on Māori traditions, values and belief systems that encompass the processes of mihimihutanga pōwhiri and karakia whakakawa. By using these processes it is envisaged that better information will be obtained that will lead to better outcomes for the person being assessed and for their whānau.

The interactive process of whānau meetings/hui is based on the principle of kanohi ki te kanohi or ‘face to face’ meetings. This gives the cultural assessor the best opportunity to be able to hui with the person being assessed and their whānau and listen to their concerns and involve them in the decision making process. Non-verbal cues offer insights to intent and meaning.

It is preferable if a whānau meeting or hui is carried out in the most accessible and appropriate place for the person and their whānau and conducted in a way that puts everyone at ease (within the bounds of the Privacy Act 1993 and Health Information Privacy Code 1994).

During this process it is important to find out how the person sees themselves within the whānau and hapū, which may be different from the way the whānau or hapū see them.

An important feature of the Māori cultural assessment process is that it must be flexible enough to be able to accommodate the particular needs of the individual and their whānau. For example some people may prefer a mihimihutanga instead of pōwhiri. The cultural assessor must try to establish what the protocol needs are before any meeting to be able to respond to cultural needs by carrying out karakia/prayers and mihi/greetings when required.

Having a Māori cultural assessment should always be a choice for a Māori person as part of identifying the care and support needed. If a cultural assessment is refused the assessor must respect the person’s choice.

If not conversant with tikanga or kawa, the compulsory care co-ordinator may invite kiaia and korona to mediate where whānau wish to be involved but the person has refused a cultural assessment.

The assessment process may be a stressful time both for the person being assessed and for their whānau. It is therefore important that the assessor ensures that the person and their whānau are adequately supported throughout this process.
Including INDIGENOUS health in climate change assessments: Overview of methods and results from Swinomish

Event Type: Online
Date: Tuesday, June 12, 2018
Event Website: https://nihb.webex.com/mw3300/mywebex/default.do?siteurl=nihb&service=6
Contact Name:
Contact Email:
Description:
Tuesday, June 12, 2018 3:00 pm Eastern Daylight Time

Many indigenous communities are at the forefront of developing and implementing plans to address climate change in their homelands. These plans vary in focus and content, but always remain rooted in the geography of the community’s homelands, making each plan unique.

One aspect of climate change planning that has been difficult to capture is potential impacts to indigenous health. The difficulty arises because mainstream evaluation methods focus primarily on physiological health, such as increased heat stroke or vector-borne diseases, while many indigenous communities see health as much more – such as complex relationships between humans, non-human beings, and the natural and spiritual worlds. These broader definitions of health do not fit in mainstream public health evaluation methods.

The Swinomish Indian Tribal Community, a Coast Salish Community in the Pacific Northwest, will discuss how they determined and evaluated projected public health impacts by tailoring the CDC’s “Building Resilience Against Climate Effects” (BRACE) public health framework to better fit Swinomish health priorities. Swinomish staff Dr. Jamie Donatuto will present an overview of the Swinomish Indigenous Health Indicators—aspects of health not seen in mainstream assessments—and how to evaluate them for use in climate change evaluations and planning. Results from the Swinomish project will be shared as well as next steps. Dr. Donatuto will discuss how the BRACE framework can be tailored by other Indigenous communities seeking to determine and evaluate their own unique aspects of health.