

# Health Impact Assessment in the Federal Impact Assessment Process: A Value Added



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# Outline

- Overview of the federal IA process in Canada
  - Tailored Impact Statement Guidelines
  - Engagement / Consultation
- Aligning HIA in the IA process:
  - HIA steps
  - Other relevant studies
- Description of Webequie Supply Road (WSR) Project
- Overview of the WSR HIA
- Challenges and Opportunities



# Health Impact Assessment (HIA)

*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.”*

*(WHO, 1999)*

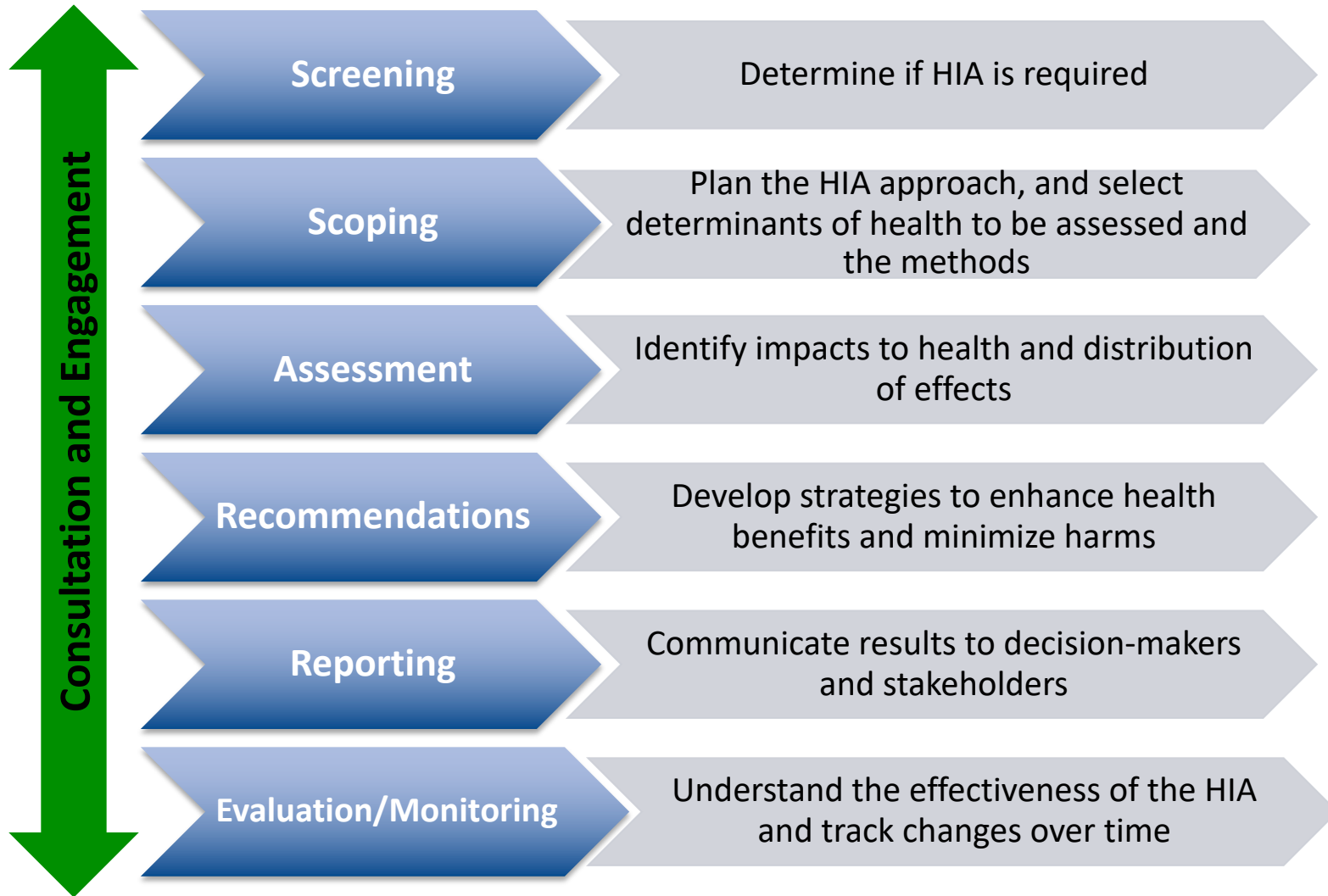
*“Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease and infirmity”.*

World Health Organization (WHO), 1948



- HIAs are:
  - evidence-based multi-disciplinary assessment
  - evaluate the potential positive or negative impacts that a project, policy, or program could have on public or community health
  - distribution of those effects within the community or population

# Health Impact Assessment (HIA) Process



# The Impact Assessment (IA) Process



**HIA Steps**

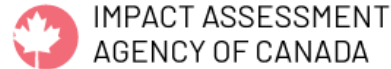
## KEY PARTICIPANTS IN THE IMPACT ASSESSMENT SYSTEM



PROPONENT



INDIGENOUS GROUPS



IMPACT ASSESSMENT AGENCY OF CANADA



OTHER JURISDICTIONS



REVIEW PANEL



FEDERAL AUTHORITIES



MINISTER



GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL



PUBLIC

# Planning – an overview of (potential) HIA activities

- Initial Project Description – proponent
- Summary of Issues – the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (the Agency or IAAC)
- Response to Summary of Issues – proponent
- Detailed Project Description – proponent
- \*\*The Agency determines if an Impact Assessment is required\*\*
- Draft Tailored Impact Statement Guidelines (TISG) – the Agency (this is where (initial) HIA requirements, if any, will be listed)
- Final TISG – the Agency
- Notice of Commencement – the Agency

Timing

 UP TO  
180 DAYS

# Impact Statement – an overview of HIA activities

Timing

 UP TO  
3 YEARS

- The Proponent collects information and conducts studies, as described in the TISG
  - HIA conducted along with other IA study streams, e.g., air quality study, noise study, social study, economic study, etc.
- The Proponent continues to engage Indigenous Peoples and the public to inform its Impact Statement
  - Engagement with stakeholders and rightsholders an important element of the HIA process
  - Use engagement with affected stakeholders and rightsholders to determine the focus of the HIA as well as the boundaries of the assessment, and the methods and data to be used
- The Proponent develops an Impact Statement containing the information and studies outlined in the TISG and submits it to the Agency.

**Proponent-led step**

# Rightsholder/Stakeholder engagement in HIA

- Engagement with Indigenous rightsholders and stakeholders is a key component of HIA and should be started as soon as possible.
- The Agency's Interim Guidance on Indigenous participation in IA states that:  
*“the Planning Phase objectives include enabling early discussions and fostering greater collaboration between proponents, Indigenous peoples, stakeholders, the public and the Crown (Government of Canada) from the start. Ideally, early planning will identify the key issues, including potential impacts on Aboriginal and treaty rights, which will be the focus of problem-solving efforts during the subsequent phases of the impact assessment.”*
- The Agency has also established policy and guidance on Meaningful Public Participation in the IA process (IAAC, 2019).



# Rightsholder/Stakeholder engagement in HIA

- Identifying rightsholders/stakeholders to be engaged/consulted with for the HIA (apply a GBA Plus lens):
  - Indigenous peoples and governance bodies
  - Members of the general public potentially affected by the project
  - Proponents
  - Community-based organizations
  - More – such as academics
- Establishment of an HIA Steering Committee
  - Representative input and feedback into the scope, methods and boundaries of the assessment.

# HIA and Other Studies in the Impact Statement

<b>HIA – Examples of Other Discipline Reports Needed</b>		
<b>Determinant of Health Assessed</b>	<b>Relevant IA Section</b>	<b>Other Sources of Info</b>
Air quality and climate change	Atmospheric, acoustic, and visual environment	SLHHRA Results, literature
Noise levels and vibrations	Atmospheric, acoustic, and visual environment	Literature
Addition of active transportation elements and levels of physical activity	Effects to Valued Components – Social – Land Use sub-section	Publicly available info from: Public Health Units, Stats Can, NCCEH/DH, PHAC, literature

HIA includes information from:

- Physical and environmental sciences
- Social sciences and humanities – including GBA+
- Health and medicine
- Traditional and community knowledge

# The Webequie Supply Road (WSR) Project

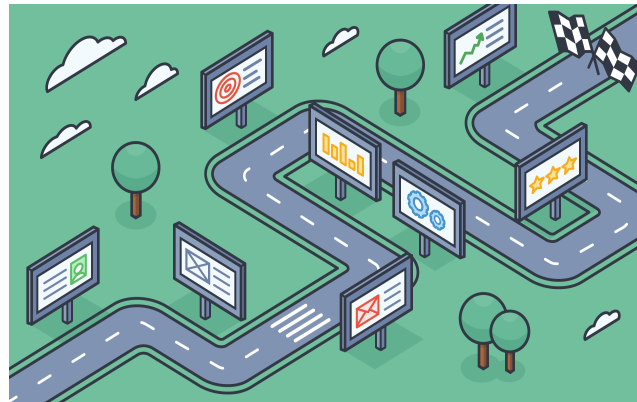
- The Webequie First Nation (WFN) is proposing a 107-kilometre all-season road connecting Webequie Airport and the McFaulds Lake area in northern Ontario (the WSR).
- The proposal includes the construction, operation and maintenance of the road, which would be approximately 35 metres wide and accommodate a two-lane gravel surface industrial supply road and potentially allow future infrastructure development, including transmission lines and broadband.
- The WSR Project would connect the WFN to existing mineral exploration activities and potential future mineral development within the Ring of Fire area of Ontario.
- The Project could also become part of a future all-season road network connecting the WFN and the Ring of Fire area to the provincial highway system in Nakina and/or Pickle Lake.

# Objectives of the WSR HIA

- The objective of the WSR HIA is to provide a transparent understanding of the potential benefits and harms of the WSR Project to the overall health and wellbeing of the WFN.
  - ❑ The HIA will rely on sound evidence (where available), traditional knowledge and **input from the WFN.**
  
- Provide recommendations based on the results of the assessment.

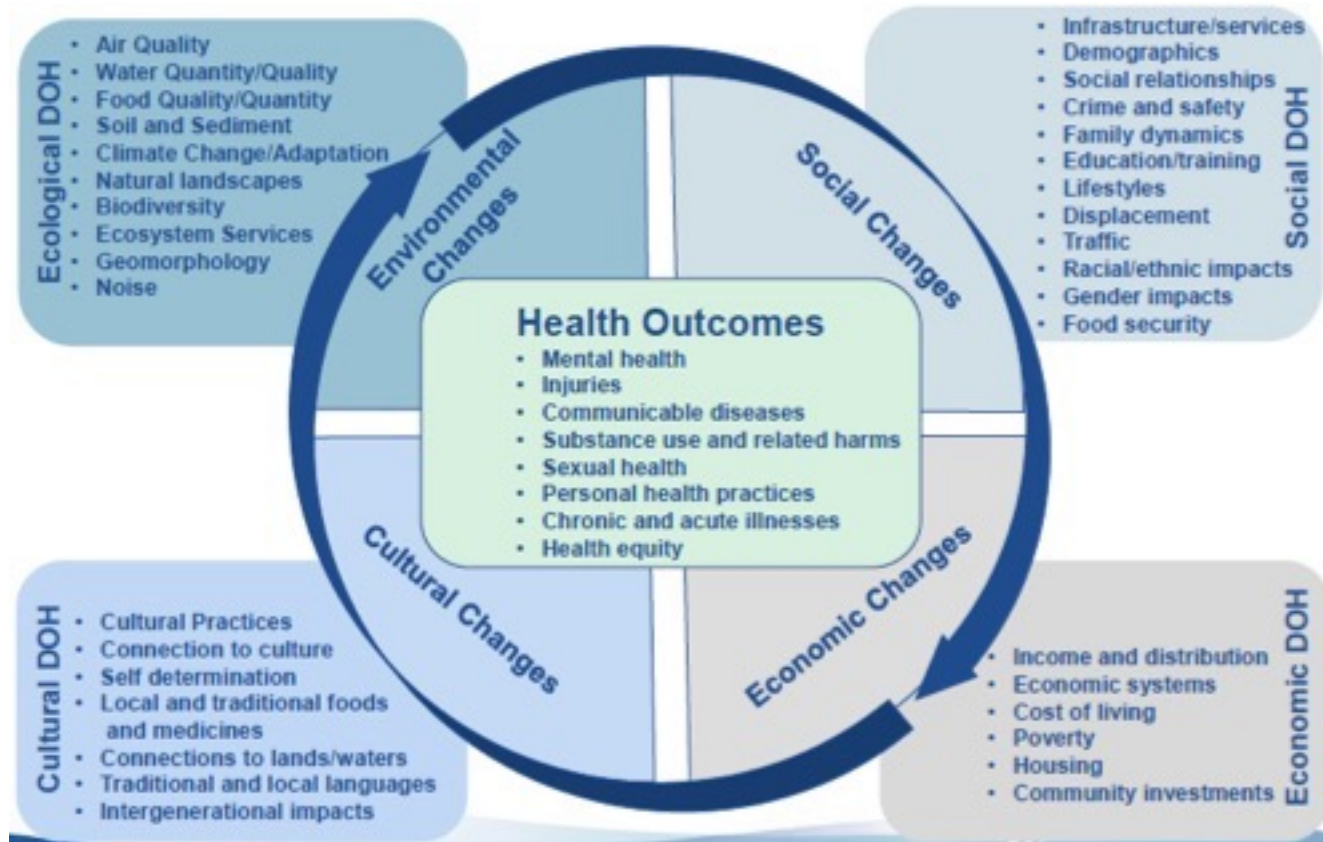
# Scoping

- The scoping phase provides the road map for the HIA.
- Goal: To engage with the WFN and find out which health issues are of most concern to the FN, with respect to the WSR
  - ❑ identify the methods, data and information that can be used to conduct the HIA.



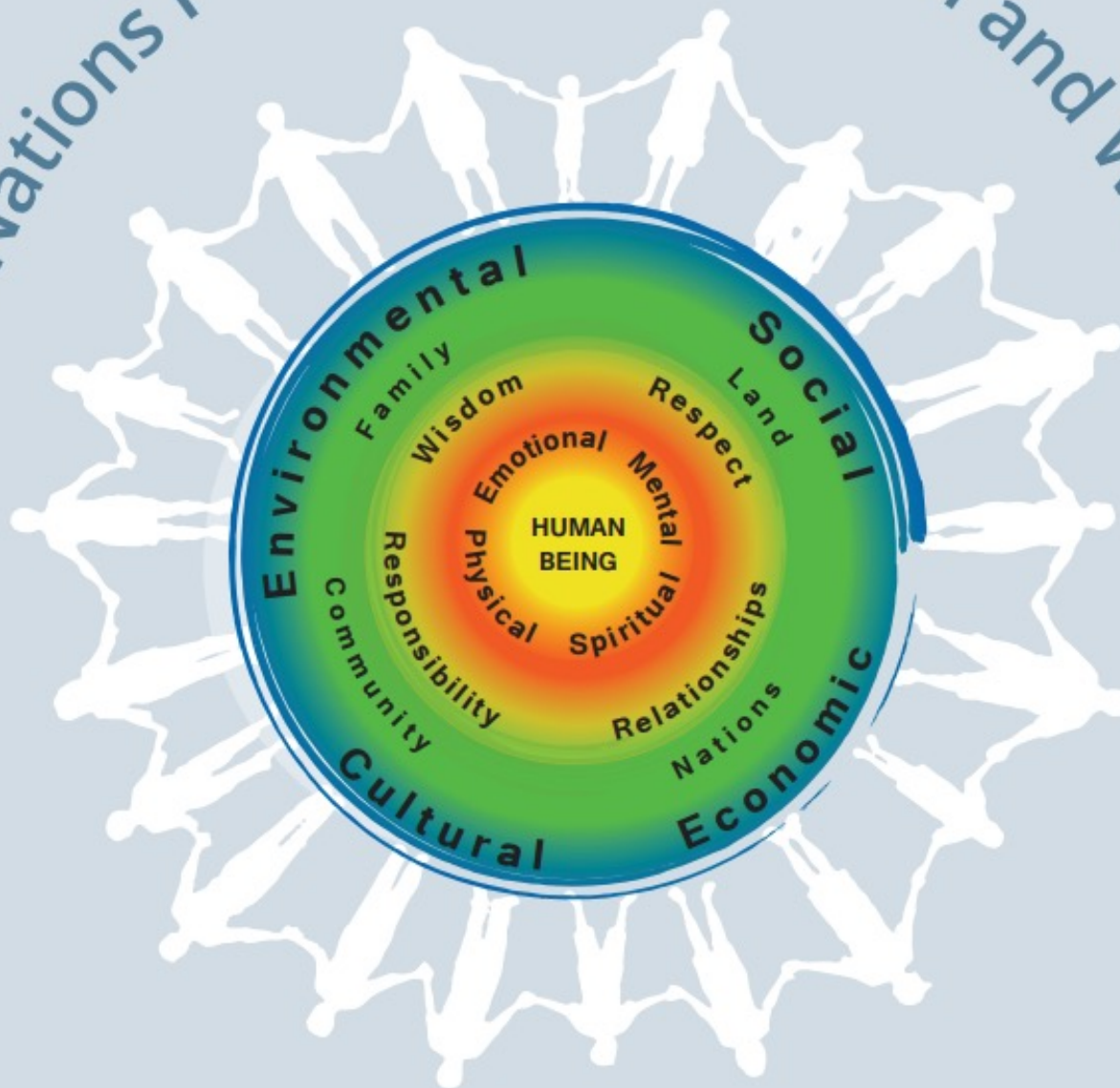
**THE ROAD MAP**

# Scoping – Determinants of Health



The Determinants of Health (Northern Health, 2019)

# First Nations Perspective on Health and Wellness



- ❖ Physical
- ❖ Emotional
- ❖ Mental
- ❖ Spiritual
- ❖ Respect
- ❖ Relationships
- ❖ Responsibility
- ❖ Wisdom
- ❖ Family
- ❖ Land
- ❖ Nations
- ❖ Community
- ❖ Environmental
- ❖ Social
- ❖ Economic
- ❖ Cultural

First Nations Health Authority:

<http://www.fnha.ca/wellness/wellness-for-first-nations>

# Rightsholder Engagement in the WSR HIA

- Multi-pronged approach:
  - i. The WFN (HIA Survey)
  - ii. The HIA Steering Committee
  - iii. Focus groups
  - iv. Key-person interviews
  - v. The IA Team



- Engage with the WFN throughout the HIA process.



# Potential WSR HIA Scope

There are several potential health areas that could be considered in the scope of this HIA. As described in the **Tailored Impact Statement Guidelines**, a tiered approach to the determinants of health has been taken, where:

- **Level 1 determinants of health** include health-related behavioural and biological factors, physical environments, employment, education, etc.;
- **Level 2 determinants of health** include access to services and social, cultural and economic factors; and
- **Level 3 determinants of health** include structural and equity factors, including racism and colonialism.

# Recommendations

- For each health issue assessed, as well as any overall recommendations
- Health-specific, above and beyond what is already mentioned in the IA
- The goal is to reduce potential harmful effects and further enhance the benefits resulting from project activities, where possible.
- Incorporate feedback and input from rightsholders/stakeholders, subject matter experts, community-based organizations, etc.
- Well-chosen, feasible and effective in the short- and long-term
- Aim to protect the health of the FN and ensure the IA has covered all bases with respect to the non-physical aspects of health: social, mental, cultural and mental well-being

# Challenges and Opportunities

- Find the right balance in rightsholder/stakeholder engagement and demonstrating how this information shaped and informed the HIA
  - From the initial stages, and thorough meaningful engagement
- Balance the scope and timeline of the assessment with the available budget
- Available data
- Timeline constraints, as you wait for data/information from other IA study streams
- Collaborate with other teams
- Meaningful engagement – incorporate feedback and input from rightsholders/stakeholders, community-based organizations, etc.
- Vehicle to listen to and address community concerns
- Improve overall health

# THANK YOU!

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