

Preface

This book is intended to give the reader a comprehensive view of health impact assessment (HIA) as it is practiced in the USA today, as well as some practical tools that are useful in conducting, commissioning or evaluating HIAs. It reinforces the what, why, and how of HIA through reference to US and international case studies of completed HIAs. The book is structured in four parts:

Part I discusses HIA and its integration into public health, planning, and policy development. Part II introduces the core concepts of HIA and provides case studies from both the US and other countries. Part III discusses each of the six steps of HIA in detail, describing the purpose, the methodology and the outputs of each step. Part IV discusses how HIA has developed in the USA.

This book is written so that the reader develops an in-depth understanding of the concepts and methods that are the foundation of HIA. It is our hope that the book is also a step-by-step guide to conducting HIA and an introduction to other impact assessment methodologies that may be used in conjunction with HIA. As well as the need to discuss and make clear the health implications of policies, programs, and projects, there is a need for the development of methodologies and strategies to make these implications explicit. We hope this book makes a small contribution to that effort.



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