# Indigenous Health Impact Assessment

SIVARAM (RAM) VEMURI

School of Law and Business
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# Focus

- Indigenous
  - Health
  - Wellbeing
- HIA
- Working
  - Better
  - Smarter

# Indigenous Health

- **Health status of Indigenous people is a great concern**
  - **Needs are different to mainstream**
    - Higher overall levels of psychological distress
    - Higher rates of cardiovascular, respiratory and diabetic diseases as well as injuries
    - Prone to more risk factors for ill-health
  - **Contributing factors**
    - Social (dispossession, dislocation, discrimination)
    - Economic (Income and employment)
    - Physical/Environmental (Housing)
    - Sense of helplessness ( Failure of projects)

# Indigenous wellbeing

- **Caught in a vicious circle of poverty, disengagement and helplessness**
- **Indicators**
  - **Poverty**
  - **Employment**
  - **Health**
    - Alcohol and other drug misuse
    - Smoking
    - Nutrition
    - Obesity
    - Physical  inactivity

# HIA Philosophy

- **Reflects the very essence of observing impact on health of people whose health is affected through development initiatives where changes occur in:**
  - Environmental
  - Economic
  - Social
  - Cultural
  - Ecosystems
  - Climate
  - Etc.

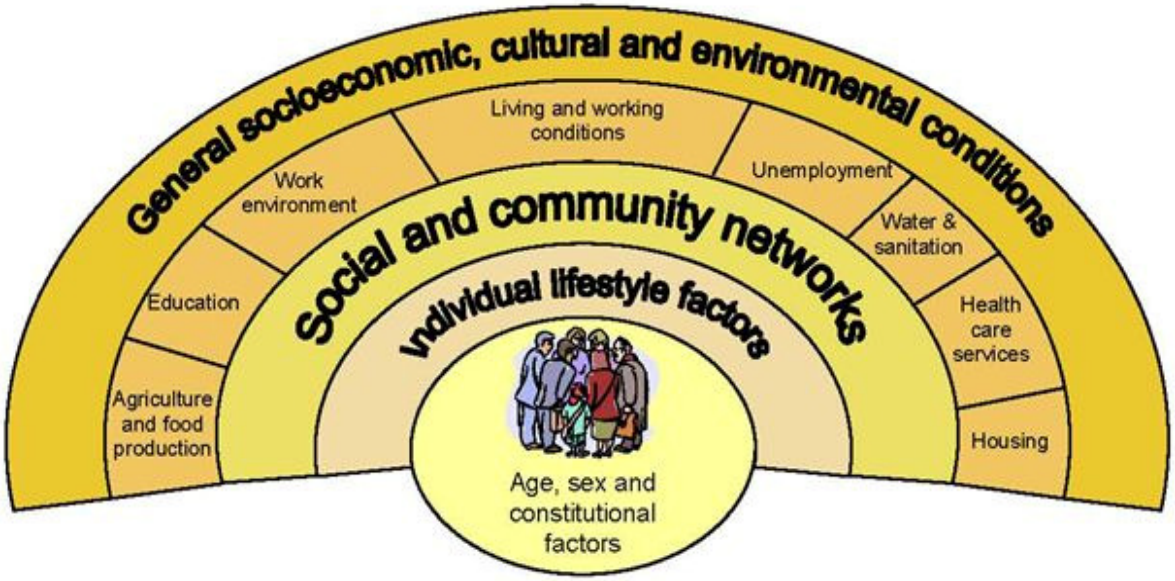
# HIA reality

- Scope creep
- Widening of the health rainbow
- Providing evidence for
  - Governance,
  - Leadership and
  - Management issues

# Scope Creep – Project to Policy

- **Learning occurs when several alternatives are considered and managed.** **(IAIA, Geneva, 2010)**
- **"A new advocacy and public health movement is needed urgently to bring together governments, international agencies, non-governmental organisations, communities, and academics from all disciplines to adapt to the effects of climate change on health."** **Managing the Health effects of Climate Change**
  **Launched in London, UK, May 13, 2009**

# Widening the health rainbow




Dahlgren, G. & Whitebread, M. (1991) *Policies and strategies to promote social equity in health* Institute for Futures Studies

GRAPH
CLIMATE DATA
VOTING INTENTIONS SURVEY
OPINION POLL
INKCINCT
19/02 2007-098 © John Ditchburn

# Working Better

- Embrace the notion of precaution
  - Recognise that this is not the same as the adoption of precautionary principle
  - Reconcile health with sustainable livelihoods
- Differentiate between projection and prediction
- Create an empowerment process that enables all parties involved in development projects to believe that health is the core issue of sustainable living

# Working Smarter

- Need to integrate experiences of transitions to transformations using the HIA framework.
- The theory and practice of assessing health impact assessments has undergone several refinements to such an extent that at present there is enough "guidance and support material available" on the technical side (The know what)
- Need to address how people contend with development- environment nexus and health (the trade-off)
- Recognise existence of an underlying methodology of how Indigenous people examine health impacts.

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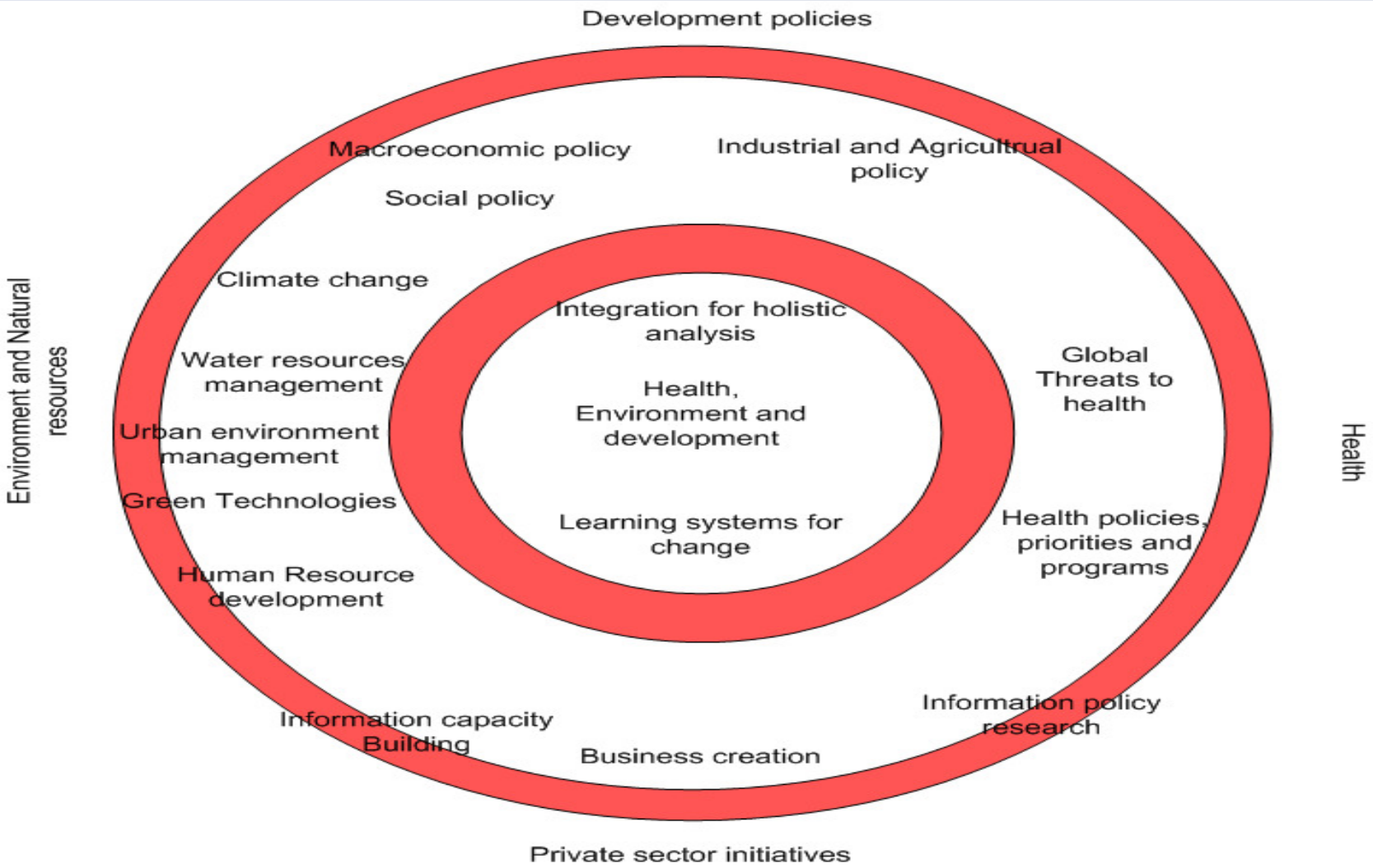


Adapted from Lalonde and Akhtar, "Traditional knowledge research for sustainable development", Nature and Resources, Vol. 30, No.2, 1994, p.23

# Features of IHIA

- Identification phase of
  - ✓ Stakeholders
  - ✓ Several effects which include failures
- Impact assessment that emphasises
  - ❖ Mental and emotional health
  - ❖ Integrated assessments that reflect <u>simultaneously</u> at several levels including individual, group, community, nation and globally.