

ESHIA – Factsheet 2

The Environmental, Social, and Health Impact Assessment (ESHIA) process

Approaches for conducting an ESHIA may vary between projects and contexts, but the process generally goes through a similar sequence of key steps, from initial screening to final submission to national competent authorities – who may issue an approval, a favourable opinion or other form of regulatory response. These steps are not necessarily linear and often involve iterations, overlaps, and feedback loops.



Key steps of the ESHIA process

1

Screening – Is an ESHIA needed?

Led by: Project proponent (Target Malaria / Project team), sometimes with national competent authorities

What: In some countries, Target Malaria may need to submit a brief description of the proposed project/activity to the national authorities, who then decide if an ESHIA is legally required – depending on the nature and scale of the project, its risks and potential impacts; In other contexts, screening may be optional or undertaken internally by the project team to align with good practice

Result: Decision whether a Project requires a full ESHIA; possibly a screening report

2

Scoping – What issues will be assessed in the ESHIA?

Led by: ESHIA consultants and Project team

What: Identifying key issues that the assessment should address and defining its geographic, thematic and temporal boundaries; Determining and justifying which topics should be included or excluded from the ESHIA (scope); Outlining the methods that will be used to assess each issue or impact

Result: The Terms of Reference (ToR) sets the framework for how the ESHIA will be carried out. Where required by national regulations, the ToR are submitted to the relevant competent authorities (e.g. National environmental agency or Ministry of Environment) for review and may result in an approval, a favorable opinion, or guidance for revisions

3

Baseline studies – What issues will be assessed in the ESHIA?

Led by: ESHIA consultants, including local experts

What: Collecting data on current environmental, social, and health conditions to establish a reference point; This may involve literature reviews, fieldwork, stakeholder and community members interviews, and specialised studies such as ecological assessments, gender baseline studies, community mapping, risk perception studies, and labour market assessments

Result: A comprehensive baseline report used to assess project impacts; while it forms a dedicated section within the ESHIA report, in some cases, it may also be required by competent authorities as a standalone document

4

Impact assessment – How might the project affect communities and the environment?

Led by: ESHIA consultants, including local experts

What: Describing and evaluating the significance or importance of impacts based on criteria such as extent, duration, intensity, likelihood and reversibility; this includes identifying who or what may be affected, and distinguishing from positive and negative, and direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts

Result: A detailed analysis of potential environmental, social and health impacts -both positive and negative – along with their significance or importance

5

Impact management planning – What actions are needed to mitigate negative impacts and maximise positive ones?

Led by: ESHIA consultants, with input from the project team

What: Developing strategies to prevent, reduce, or compensate negative impacts, or maximise positive ones; Translating findings into operational measures, with assigned responsibilities, budgets, and timelines

Result: An Environmental, Social and Health Management Plan (ESHMP) outlining how impacts will be mitigated or enhanced, including monitoring strategies to track implementation and effectiveness of mitigation measures. The ESHMP serves as a roadmap for implementing the ESHIA's commitments

6

Report consolidation

Led by: ESHIA consultants

What: Compiling and documenting findings, analysis, and proposed management measures. The report must be comprehensive yet accessible to both technical reviewers, stakeholders, affected communities and the public at large

Result: Draft and final ESHIA reports reviewed by Target Malaria / project team and ready for submission to national competent authorities

7

Final submission, public consultation and decision

Led by: ESHIA consultants and project proponent (Target Malaria / Project team)

What: The first version of the ESHIA report is submitted to national competent authorities and/or made public for comment. In some countries, a public consultation is coordinated by national authorities after submission, as part of the official review process; in other cases, consultation with community and stakeholders may be organised by the project proponent and the ESHIA consultants before the draft report is formally submitted; sometimes both processes take place, ensuring feedback is gathered at multiple stage of the assessment

Result: Permits may be granted with specific conditions or commitments that must be fulfilled by the project proponent (Target Malaria / project team)

The ESHIA serves multiple purposes: it supports regulators in making permitting or policy decisions; it guides the project team in refining project or protocol design, and managing impacts; and it ensures communities and stakeholders perspectives have been heard and integrated into the project design.

Key steps of the ESHIA process

Community and stakeholder engagement is a key pillar of Target Malaria research approach. While Target Malaria's ongoing engagement focuses on building relationships and discussing the broader research program, the ESHIA process integrates its own specific consultation and participation activities. These parallel engagement streams must be carefully coordinated to avoid duplication, prevent consultation fatigue, and ensure consistency in information sharing.

Engagement occurs throughout the ESHIA, as an iterative process rather than a linear path. It serves different purposes at each key step:

- **During scoping**, ensuring that the assessment focuses on the most relevant issues or impacts that matter to communities and stakeholders
- **During baseline data collection**, gathering local knowledge about environmental, social and health conditions
- **During impact assessment**, identifying community and stakeholder perspectives about potential impacts – both positive and negative
- **Before finalising management measures**, seeking input on proposed mitigation measures for negative impacts and enhancement measures for positive impacts, ensuring that they are realistic, culturally appropriate, and effective
- **During draft review**, validating assessment findings with affected communities and stakeholders.

ESHIA consultants, with the support of the project team, typically employ a combination of methods, such as:

- **Focus groups** with stakeholders or community members to explore specific impact areas and topics including perceived benefits, concerns, expectations, community priorities, and vulnerable group perspectives
- **Individual interviews** with authorities, traditional authorities, religious leaders, health workers, women's group leaders and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO) representatives to discuss specific considerations that may require confidentiality or specialised knowledge
- **Public consultations** where potential impacts and proposed management measures are presented for community and stakeholder feedback
- **Additional feedback mechanisms** that allow ongoing input as the assessment progresses.

National ESHIA regulations often mandate specific public disclosure periods during which draft findings must be made available for public review and comment. These formal consultations differ from earlier engagement activities as they fulfil specific legal requirements for transparency and public participation. Feedback received must be documented and addressed in the final ESHIA report before submission to competent national authorities.

Once approved by authorities, the final ESHIA report, or its non-technical summary, is made available to the public. This public disclosure ensures transparency about the identified impacts, proposed mitigation measures, and monitoring commitments.

