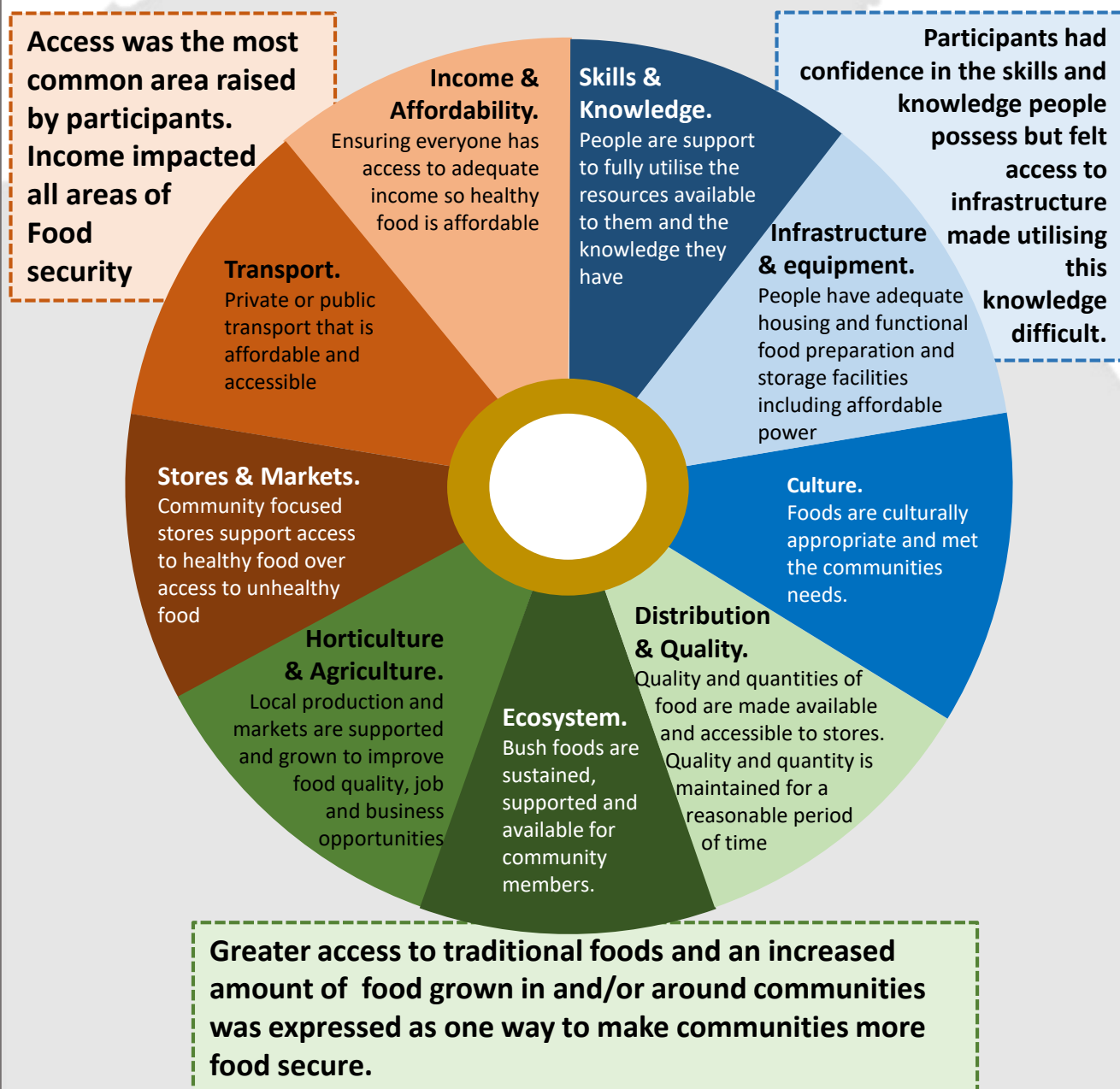


# FOOD SUMMIT 2021

## Consultation analysis and Discussion paper

In 2020-21 AMSANT undertook a series of consultation with Aboriginal community members and service provider to understand the issues and priorities in address food security issues.



*'Community controlled services means it is done how people want it run and what people need...Government always come in and takes over a program and stuffs it up. They don't run it right.'*

Aboriginal community member, Barkly region

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### GROCERY STORES & TRANSPORT

*In the remote communities in the region they all have ALPA stores and I know ALPA subsidise the freight so the fresh produce is sold at cost so they obviously have some strategies but I think at [remote community] they're not able to implement some of the strategies because of the competition from other privately owned stores. And those privately owned stores are not there to serve the community they are there to make a profit.*

**Health professional, Arnhem Land region**

**The cost of transport was a major factor contributing to the high cost of food for stores and reduced the amount of money available to households to purchase food.**

*The corner stores are super expensive so if you live in an area away from the centre of town and you don't have access to transport and you rely on the corner store then you're paying remote community prices anyway even though you're technically close to a Woolworths.*

**Policy Officer, Northern Territory wide**

*People drive into town for the shop. It's hard without a car. A taxi is \$60 one way but people do it... Previously we had a bus before shire took over. It was \$2 one way so you had more money for food.*

**Aboriginal community member, Central Australia region**

**Remote community stores were one of the most common topics raised by Aboriginal community members and seen as a key stakeholder in creating a food secure community.**

## DISCUSSION Questions

- How can Aboriginal communities in both regional and remote areas and remote community stores be better supported to have access to affordable and safe modes of transport to improve access to food?
- How can communities be supported to ensure they are able to have a significant and meaningful role in the governance and direction of community stores to ensure stores are supporting and delivering on community needs?
- What measures are necessary to ensure all stores are able to benefit from policy and logistics measures that can reduce the cost and availability of healthy foods within stores?

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### INCOME & AFFORDABILITY

*No jobs in community and the jobs there you need high education. We need more jobs for us to work in our communities.*

**Aboriginal community member, Katherine region**

*The cost of living has kept going up higher and higher over the last 20 years but income hasn't followed so people have less money...it costs more to buy food here, rents more, petrol is more, but income is the same. It costs more to live here...*

**Aboriginal community member, Barkly region**

**Programs like the BasicsCard and CentrePay often reduced the amount of available money for people to purchase cheaper and better quality products.**

*Often people even if they are on part time work and eligible for part welfare payments they often don't get it just because they find the paper work too hard. That's just showing that understanding of the system and navigating it and understanding what your rights are.*

**Policy Officer, Northern Territory wide**

**The high cost of living and limited job opportunities mean Aboriginal people are finding it harder to afford the high cost of healthy food. The affordability of food and limited income were the most common issues raised by Aboriginal people in the consultation.**

*A lot of people in Darwin access the healthier foods through markets because it's cheaper and better and fresh. But for people who are on Centrelink benefits as most of the stores [at local markets] are cash. People who are on income management can struggle to have access to money to shop in those markets.*

**Health profession, Darwin Region**

**Complicated systems that aren't user friendly or supported mean people are regularly not accessing all the support available to them.**

## DISCUSSION Questions

- What are the key priorities needed to address the gap between income and the cost of food for Aboriginal communities? Are there policies and program changes that can ensure community members have access to sufficient income to afford healthy food and that reduce the cost of living in all regions?
- What policy and program changes are needed to develop and support more job opportunities for Aboriginal people in both remote and regional centres?

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## TRADITIONAL FOODS & FOOD PRODUCTION

*We want farms in our own community so we can look after our people with fresh food.*

**Aboriginal community member, Katherine region**

**While service providers remained concerned about the long term viability of community gardens there was an interest to develop a model of food production that can support greater availability of fresh food in the Northern Territory.**

*People go hunting on the weekend and share the food with everyone. There is lots of bush foods but you need a car that works to go get it.*

**Aboriginal community member, Barkly region**

**There was strong interest from Aboriginal people to see great amounts of food grown in or around communities for improved access to healthy food and job opportunities. This included increasing access to traditional foods.**

*I'm yet to see a [community garden] supplying large quantities of food to communities. It doesn't seem to be quite working. There are setups in [developing countries] where they've really got them being productive but it just hasn't taken off in the North of Australia.*

**Horticulture/Agriculture, Northern Territory  
Wide**

**Restriction to guns and limited access to vehicles has made consumption of traditional foods less common. However, traditional foods are still a strong part of peoples lives and help keep communities food secure.**

### DISCUSSION Questions

- How can organisations and communities support community members to gain greater access to bush foods?
- How can the availability of bush foods be supported in all regions of the Northern Territory and what should be undertaken to ensure its ongoing accessibility and consumption for future generations?
- How can models of local food production be developed and who is best placed to collaborate and lead these initiative to ensure sustainability and strong community engagement?

# FOOD SUMMIT 2021

Consultation analysis and Discussion paper

## SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE & INFRASTRUCTURE

*People's ability to cook is good but getting people to cook at home is hard. People can follow recipes and have the skills... Barriers of having to ensure kitchen equipment and getting the whole family on board particularly if they are cooking for a lot of people. One fella has to cook for 10 plus people all the time which means having the skills and utensils to do that takes a lot more effort.*

**Social services, Katherine region**

**There was a strong belief that cooking skills and health knowledge was good in Aboriginal communities but that issues of infrastructure and overcrowding made it difficult for people to implement knowledge and skills at home.**

**There was a concern amongst community members and services that the quality of food prepared and provided by service providers was not always nutritionally and health appropriate.**

*Overcrowding means power is a big worry as we use more power meaning more money... The houses are too small for the families. When the houses were fixed up they put in new cupboards and storage which was smaller than before which makes it hard for people to store foods.*

**Aboriginal community member, Central Australia region**

*People will share with families. Both ways. People have been sharing for a long time ago. That's our way. People go to family members in the morning and say 'I don't have any food' and we share.*

**Aboriginal community member, Central Australia region**

**The culture of sharing was an important act that helped family who were experiencing food insecurity. Expand emergency food relief services was seen as a risk to community stores and already existing systems.**

## DISCUSSION Questions

- How can we support better health and nutrition outcomes for people receiving food through services?
- How can we increase the level of nutrition resources and support in Aboriginal communities?
- What would a successful collaborative, integrated and sustainable approach to food security by services look like and need?
- How can both formal and informal food relief systems be supported to ensure a collaborative, integrated and health supporting approach in the Northern Territory?