

***Differentiating 'housing' in Indigenous housing policy and housing assistance programs***

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# Main Message

- ‘Housing’ can be understood in terms of four aspects - tenure, location, design and home life
- These four aspects of housing provides a useful frame to gain a holistic understanding of Indigenous housing
- Some aspects of housing are more prominent than others in current research –policy discussions:
  - CSHA
    - Recital K
    - Recital L
    - Guiding Principle 4
  - Building a Better Future: Indigenous Housing to 2010 (BBF)

# *Four Aspects of Housing*

1. **Tenure** mainly concerns the way a physical dwelling is occupied and the rights or entitlements that determine the used made, and legally allowed, of the dwelling

2. **Location** refers to housing within a specific geographical context, or neighbourhood, or the spatial organisation of dwellings within their locality

3. **Dwelling** is the physical structure of housing and includes the appropriateness and quality accommodation, dwelling size, type, maintenance costs and aesthetics features that express social standing, and prestige (i.e. housing to symbolise status)

4. **Home Life** refers to housing as the site of affective relations in households and domestic activities. This includes the dynamic of domestic relations, the division of labour in the home especially care work

# Tenure

- The issue of tenure informs a considerable part of research and policy about Indigenous housing.
- Indigenous people have a different tenure pattern compared with the non-Indigenous community. Indigenous rates of home ownership are increasing, however this is occurring from a very low base. In 2001, 32% of Indigenous households lived in a dwelling that they owned or were purchasing

## *Tenure cont.*

- AHURI project (80234), *‘Indigenous access to mainstream public and community housing’*, has shown how mainstream public and community housing provides an accessible housing options for many Indigenous households, but steps are required to build on current initiatives by jurisdictions to measure and enhance levels of Indigenous access.
- How sustainable are Indigenous tenancies in mainstream housing assistance, what program elements enable them to be sustained, and how might mainstream housing assistance be reformed to improve such outcomes?

## *Location*

- The location of Indigenous housing informs a considerable part of research and policy about Indigenous housing.
- Location issues were highlighted in the second report prepared by the Productivity Commission on key indicators of Indigenous disadvantage

## *Location cont.*

- For example, the AHURI project (20260), '*Indigenous mobility in discrete and rural settlements*', has examined the residential mobility of Indigenous people in selected discrete and rural communities in order to quantify and contextualize their mobility patterns; in particular to distinguish between circular regional mobility and extra-regional mobility.
- Indigenous housing careers – urban focus but to include mobility patterns

# *Dwelling*

- The issue of dwellings informs a considerable part of research and policy about Indigenous housing.
- Much Indigenous housing research is about the quantity, quality and the design appropriateness of dwelling stock.
- The quantity of Indigenous dwellings was highlighted in the NT discussion paper presented to the HMAC on 10 December 2004.

## *Dwelling cont.*

- For example, AHURI project (80234), '*Indigenous access to mainstream public and community housing*' shows how jurisdictions have increased efforts to better match households to the appropriate dwelling type. But a boost to the stock of larger dwellings is required to reduce overcrowding for Indigenous households in mainstream public housing, which are above corresponding rates for the non-Indigenous tenant.
- How do Indigenous households use dwelling spaces? To what extent do current housing design practices meet the housing aspirations of Indigenous households and communities?

# Home Life

- For example, AHURI project (40158) '*Sustainable tenancy for indigenous families: what services and policy supports are needed?*', shows how there is an identified incompatibility between European concepts of 'home' and Indigenous cultural norms such as sleeping, cooking and eating outdoors in public spaces, and legislation that prohibits this.
- Reveals gender difference in the sense of home, with Indigenous men tending to emphasise ownership, while women stress a place of safety to raise their children.
- Women in this study identified that they wanted their housing to be appropriate, safe, secure, stable and close to services.

# Home Life cont.

- European-based *understandings of 'home'*, grounded in the notion of 'private space' that is contrasted with 'public space', inform the concept of homelessness in housing policy and research.
- AHURI project (40158) '*Sustainable tenancy for indigenous families: what services and policy supports are needed?*' found that approaches to providing stable housing and sustaining tenancies for Indigenous women are affected by their high mobility and poor service access, and compounded by differences between the structures and definitions of current services and perceptions of 'homelessness' by Indigenous women.

# Indicative Questions

## 1. Tenure

- How to expand a range of tenure options?
- What housing assistance support is required?

## 2. Location

- What is the differences in tenure?

## 3. Dwelling

- What is the effect of tenure on dwelling style and quality?

## 4. Home Life

- How does different tenure affect home life and domestic arrangements/obligations?

