

# Indigenous Voice Community Consultation

## Consultation session details

Kardu Diminin and surrounding region,

Wadeye, 28 April 2021, 10.00 am

Number of participants: 152 across two sessions

## Key points raised

*Please note, this is a summary of the discussion and the views and opinions expressed by participants in consultation sessions. It is not intended to be an exhaustive summary of all points raised, but draws out the key points.*


Two sessions were conducted, one for men and one for women. The sessions was attended by 152 participants who were welcomed to country by Ralph Narbarup (men's session) and Margaret Perdjert (women's session). Both sessions were conducted in language, with interpreters supporting the co-design members. Key points discussed in both sessions are summarised below.

### *Overarching points*

- Participants expressed a view that too many programs are being changed by different governments even if they are successful, and Indigenous people are always providing input into what is needed but they don't get any recognition. It was felt that when programs don't work the Aboriginal people get blamed for their failure.
- There was discussion about policies being made by government at all levels, but without knowing what is needed in the community, and that Indigenous people are tired of being ignored.

### *Local and Regional Voice*

- Participants discussed a number of challenges facing the community. They supported the need for everyone to work together to address these problems, and saw the Local and Regional Voice as an opportunity to do so.
- Participants highlighted the need for all levels of government to listen to the regions and build partnerships to establish policy and deliver culturally tailored programs and create real jobs through input from the communities.
- A participant expressed concern about children being taken away to be placed in foster care, where foster parents don't speak their language nor know the culture, and emphasized 'we want our kids to be with us, that's what we want'.
- School attendance was also raised as important, so children can learn and get a good education, with positive comments about the community working together and supporting each other to be strong.
- Another participant talked about domestic violence issues, and asked how the community could get support, discussing how holding it in made them feel sick and sad. Concerns were also raised over the trouble between different groups and the women's safe house being stoned at times.

- 
- It was indicated said that support was needed so women could get help, stand on their feet, be strong, and be able to feed their children. It was felt that more help would be available if this was addressed as a group, rather than a single person.
  - Housing was identified as one of the biggest problems faced by the community, in particular housing repairs and maintenance, and overcrowding. It was stated that people sometimes had to wait for years after reporting damage. Another person talked about lack of maintenance over 15 years since moving to a new house, which was now overcrowded and getting old with everything falling down.
  - Other issues discussed included the need to help old people who don't want to go to aged care. A lack of emergency health care at the local clinic was also raised as a key concern, in particular after hours, as well as a lack of birthing facilities and care for mothers. This was felt to put community at high risk, for example if someone had a serious asthma attack after hours or there was a difficult birth.
  - The issue of a lack of training and jobs for young people was also discussed, and the need for them to have these opportunities as they were the future leaders. The importance of proper wages and permanent jobs was highlighted.
  - Concerns were raised about non-Indigenous people being in charge of local organisations and taking jobs in the community, leaving local people behind. It was felt community people have to be equal, and black and white Australians have to work as one.
  - There was discussion about challenges related to the community growing bigger, but with no equivalent increase in support and funding.
  - Participants felt that all these issues were something that a Local and Regional Voice could help to address, if the community worked together.
  - Participants discussed how many people should be selected for a regional level voice. 'Maybe ten people from each Palumpa, Peppimenarti, Emu Point. Our plan for voice is to get two Wannga reps, two Woogadi reps, two Chunba reps and work with Kardu Dimminin people in Wadeye.'
  - One participant stated it is all about a 'good strong voice in territory for our kids' and that 'our children are our future leaders'.
  - Pointing to young demographics in the community and recognising the importance of including women, participants felt female youth and young mothers should be encouraged to take on leadership roles, as well as senior women.
  - One participant said 'We can stand up and do this. We need to wake up, don't dream it do it.'
  - A participant remarked 'We need to select certain people to be representatives from clan groups, this is only the beginning, you mob come sit with us and work with us.'

### *National Voice*

- Participants supported the need for the National Voice. One participant stated 'we are sick of the same things going around in circles; this is a good opportunity to make another pathway.'
- There was also strong view that the National Voice needed to provide for real change by listening to the Aboriginal women and female youth as well as men.
- There was a view that two representatives from the NT is not enough, as there is large remote population here. It was suggested the NT should have two representatives from the city and two from the bush.