



# Establishing a sector data approach for urban community housing in the Northern Territory

## FINAL REPORT

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## For

NT Shelter

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## Acronyms and abbreviations used in this report

|       |                                                       |
|-------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| AHURI | Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute       |
| NHRP  | National Housing Research Program                     |
| ABS   | Australian Bureau of Statistics                       |
| ACCO  | Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation          |
| ACNC  | Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission   |
| AHURI | Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute       |
| AIHW  | Australian Institute of Health and Welfare            |
| AIS   | Annual Information Statement                          |
| ASB   | Anti-social behaviour                                 |
| CH    | Community housing                                     |
| CHOs  | Community housing organisations <sup>1</sup>          |
| CRA   | Commonwealth Rent Assistance                          |
| DSS   | Department of Social Services                         |
| FDV   | Family and domestic violence                          |
| HAFF  | Housing Australia Future Fund                         |
| ICH   | Indigenous community housing                          |
| ICHOs | Indigenous community housing organisations            |
| LGA   | Local government area                                 |
| NASHH | National Agreement on Social Housing and Homelessness |
| NRAS  | National Rental Affordability Scheme                  |
| NRSCH | National Regulatory System for Community Housing      |
| NT    | Northern Territory                                    |
| NTG   | Northern Territory Government                         |
| ORIC  | Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations    |
| PC    | Productivity Commission                               |
| RoGS  | Report on Government Services                         |
| SHS   | Specialist Homelessness Services                      |
| SPV   | Special purpose vehicle                               |
| TMS   | Tenancy Management System                             |

## Glossary

A list of definitions for commonly used terms is available on the AHURI website at [ahuri.edu.au/glossary](https://ahuri.edu.au/glossary)

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<sup>1</sup> The term community housing organisation (CHO) has been used in this report to align with national data collections. This is another term for community housing provider (CHP), which is more commonly used in the NT.

# Executive summary

NT Shelter engaged the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI) to establish a sector data approach for urban community housing in the Northern Territory (NT). The aim was to investigate how data can be used more effectively to demonstrate the capacity, performance and impact of the urban community housing (CH) sector in the NT. The project maps publicly available data, consults the CH sector on their current data holdings and reporting requirements, and makes recommendations for a more cohesive, sector-wide data approach.

The NT's urban CH sector has grown significantly since 2021 through public housing transfers. As of August 2025, NT community housing organisations (CHOs) managed 1,960 properties – approximately 780 dwellings were from NT Government transfers (NT Shelter 2025).

It is unlikely that government property transfers will continue in the immediate future. In November 2025, the NT Department of Housing, Local Government and Community Development informed CHOs that it would not proceed with a second round of transfers. A new NT Housing Strategy is due in July 2026.

Beyond this, the CH sector operates in a challenging environment shaped by acute housing shortages, high rates of homelessness, constrained service capacity and high operating costs. Overall, the sector's value proposition is not widely understood, and data collection remains largely compliance-driven and fragmented.

## Publicly available data

Publicly available data on the NT CH sector are uneven across the domains of capacity, performance and impact. Data on sector capacity, including the number of dwellings, funding volumes and organisation-level assets, are relatively comprehensive at a basic level. Performance and impact data are considerably more limited.

A significant gap is that NT-based community housing organisations (CHOs) did not contribute to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare's (AIHW) Community Housing Data Collection until 2024–25, meaning data on tenants, rental affordability and overcrowding were largely absent from national reporting prior to that year. The National Social Housing Survey – which is the primary national source for tenant satisfaction, wellbeing and dwelling condition data – is not conducted in the NT due to a lack of government funding<sup>2</sup> and difficulties meeting survey quotas. The National Regulatory System for Community Housing (NRSCH) collects comprehensive performance and impact data, but these are published at the national level only. NT-level data may be available by request to the Registrar.

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<sup>2</sup> The cost of conducting the National Social Housing Survey varies according to the scope of the collection, minimum response requirements, and the mode of delivery (i.e. mail out or face-to-face surveys), which are generally set by the state and territory housing authority who funds the survey.

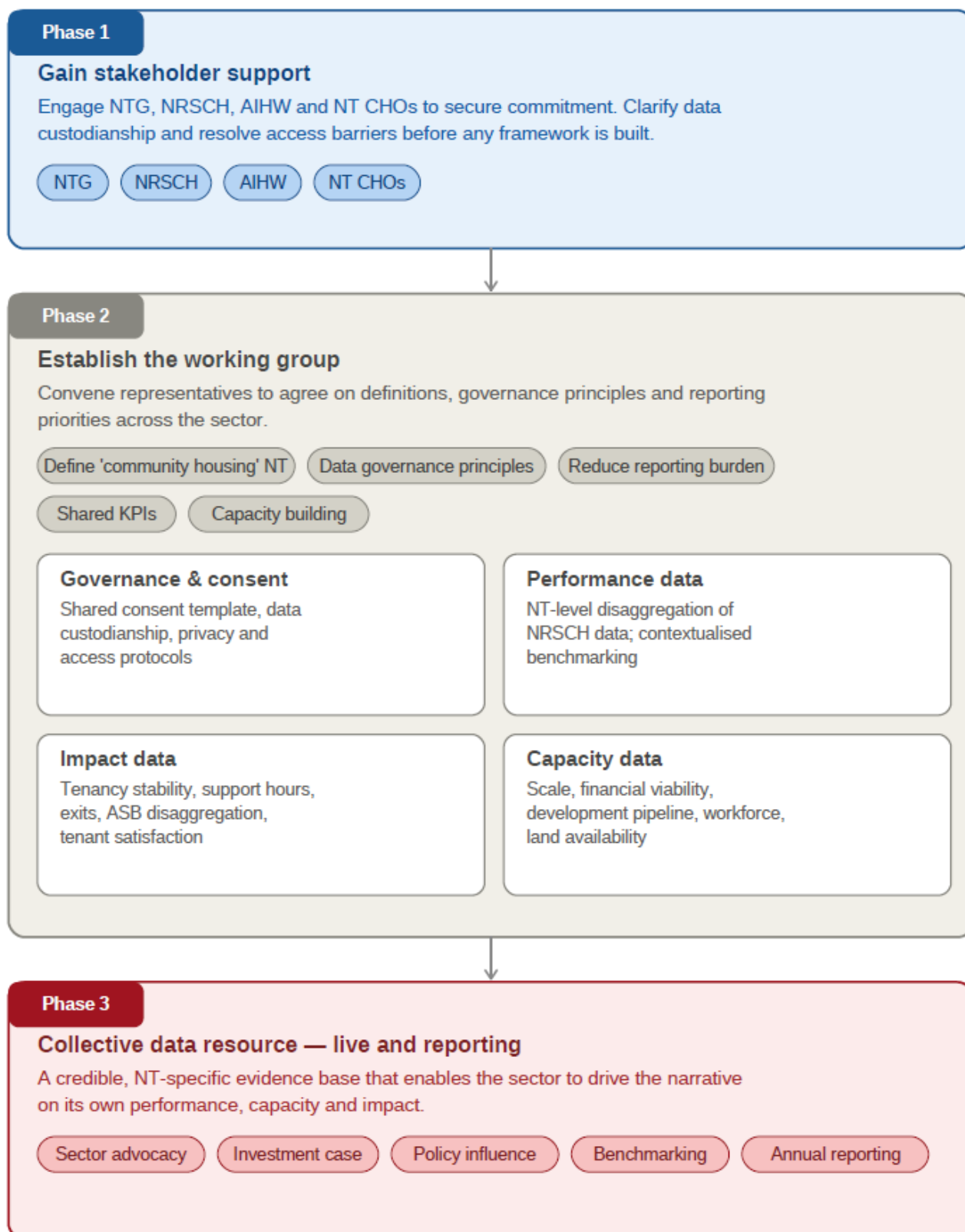
## Sector consultation findings

Consultations with CHOs, NTG and AIHW identified six key themes for establishing a shared data resource demonstrating CH sector capacity, performance and impact.

|   |                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|---|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | <b>Data systems are fragmented and largely compliance-driven</b>             | Most CHOs use multiple platforms that are not integrated with each other, requiring separate user input for each and making it difficult to prioritise or interpret what is collected. |
| 2 | <b>Reporting duplication is a significant burden</b>                         | Overlap between NRSCH and NTG reporting requires essentially the same information at different reporting periods.                                                                      |
| 3 | <b>ASB data are a credibility risk for the sector</b>                        | Reporting is reactive and does not distinguish by incident type or root cause, leaving the sector vulnerable to misinterpretation.                                                     |
| 4 | <b>The sector's most important contributions are the least well measured</b> | Tenant support, early intervention and community development are the most distinctive CHO contributions yet the least well reported.                                                   |
| 5 | <b>Standard metrics do not reflect NT system constraints</b>                 | Applying national benchmarks without contextual adjustment creates misleading comparisons given NT's unique structural constraints.                                                    |
| 6 | <b>Data governance is foundational to NT Shelter's stewardship role</b>      | CHOs support data sharing conditionally, requiring bounded purpose, CHO oversight, reduced reporting burden, and a credible framework.                                                 |

## Recommendations

The report makes 11 recommendations. Full recommendations are set out in the conclusion.



*Note: All data domain work in Phase 3 is coordinated through the working group established in Phase 2. The working group resolves definitions, governance, custodianship and reporting priorities before any data collection is activated.*

# 1. Introduction

NT Shelter engaged the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI) to undertake a research project investigating how data can be used more effectively to demonstrate the capacity, performance and impact of the urban community housing (CH) sector in the Northern Territory (NT). The project delivers:

- a map of publicly available data holdings, including an assessment of strengths, limitations and key gaps
- an overview of current data holdings and reporting requirements amongst NT-based community housing organisations (CHOs), based on consultations with the sector and the Northern Territory Government (NTG)
- an assessment of key data needs to credibly measure the CH sector's capacity, performance and impact for tenants and community.

The objective is to build awareness of available data and to identify potential improvements to collection and reporting practices. Ultimately, the research aims to inform a more cohesive, sector-wide data approach that supports engagement with policy, funding and public discussions. The report concludes with practical recommendations for NT Shelter regarding a potential stewardship role in overseeing shared sector intelligence.

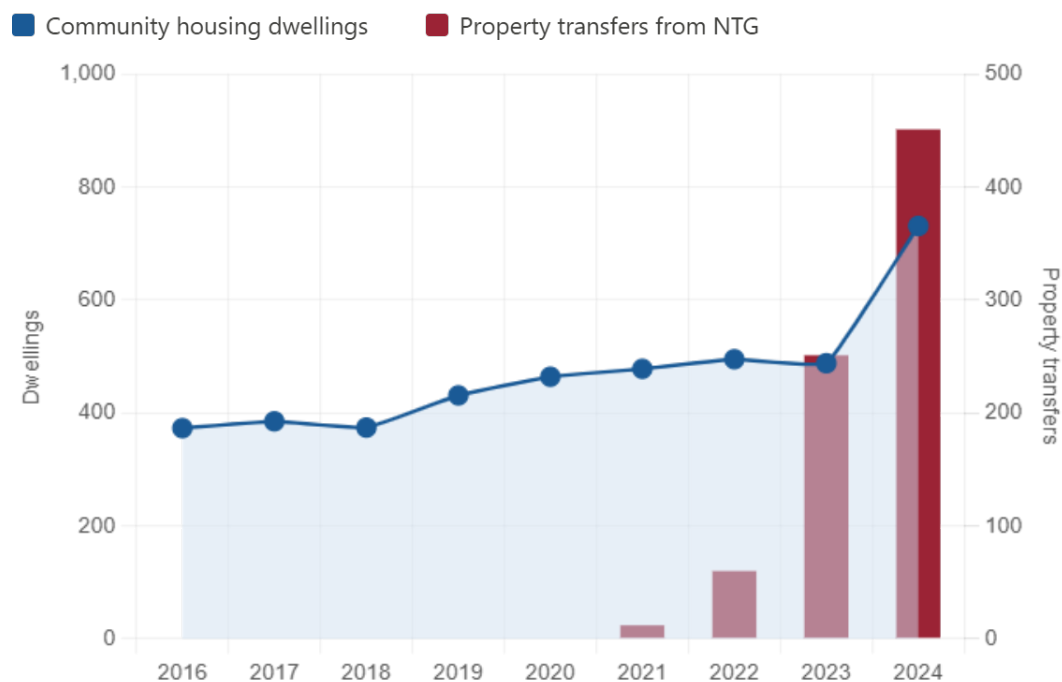
## 1.1 The NT urban community housing sector has grown through government property transfers, but these have recently stalled

Historically, the NT urban community housing sector lacked the large-scale public housing transfers and capital investment programs that have fuelled growth in other Australian jurisdictions over the last 20 years (Pawson et al. 2013).

While public housing transfers surged from the late 2000s in other Australian jurisdictions, transfers in the NT began in 2021 (12 properties; Productivity Commission 2026). Between 2021 and 2024, the transfer of government assets drove significant sector growth in the NT guided by the *NT Housing Strategy 2020-2025* and the *Community Housing Growth Strategy 2022-2032*. As of August 2025, NT CHOs managed 1,960 properties – approximately 780 dwellings were from NT Government transfers (NT Shelter 2025).

It is unlikely that government property transfers will continue in the immediate future. In November 2025, the NT Department of Housing, Local Government and Community Development informed CHOs that it would not proceed with a second round of transfers. A new NT Housing Strategy — due July 2026 — is currently in development.

**Figure 1. Long-run change in community housing dwellings and transfers in the NT**



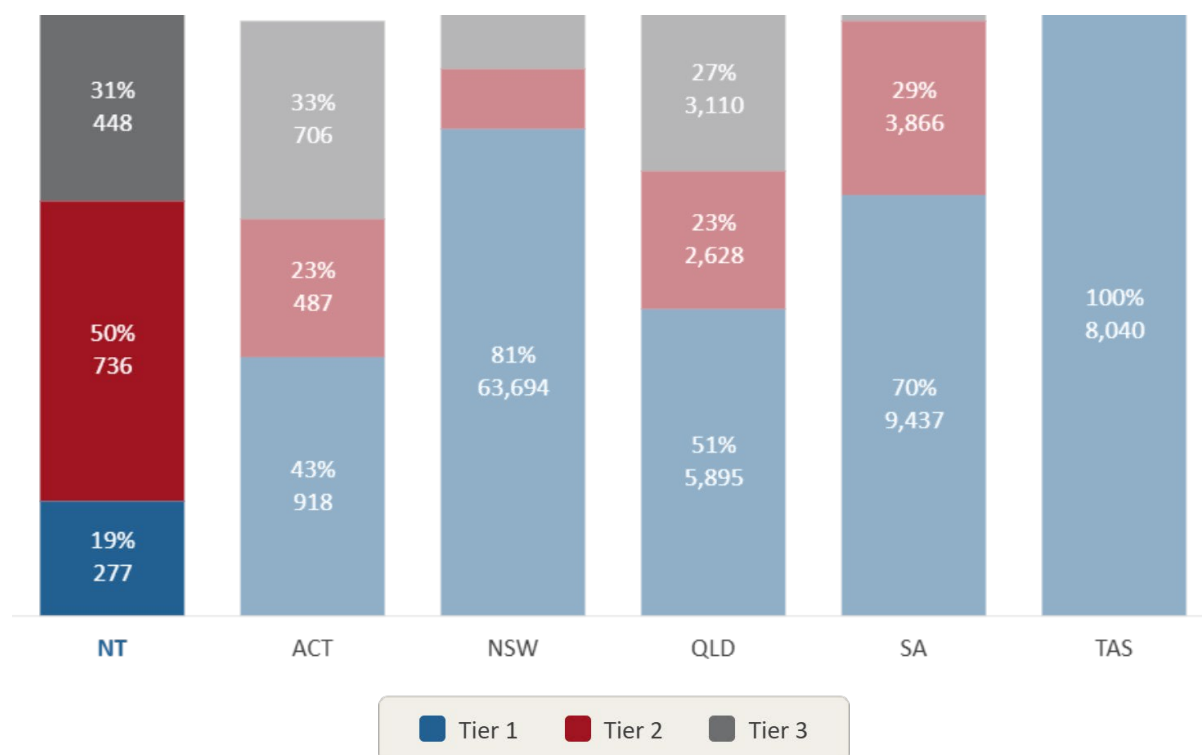
Source: Productivity Commission, Report on Government Services (2026), Tables 18.2 and 18.3.

*Note: Dwelling counts and property transfer data are compiled by the AIHW from state/territory housing authorities. Data are incomplete for some states and territories due to non-reporting or under-reporting, or due to definitional issues. In 2024, there were an additional 1,878 dwellings counted as Indigenous Community Housing in the NT.*

## 1.2 The NT community housing sector spans a range of providers and property types

The transfer of public assets has contributed to a variegated sector, with four large organisations and several smaller CHOs. CHOs are typically required to maintain a Tier 1 or Tier 2 registration under the National Regulatory System for Community Housing (NRSCH) to receive public housing management transfers. In 2024, approximately half of community housing tenancies were managed by Tier 2 organisations (Figure 2) with moderate-scale management activities (50-500 tenancies) and small-scale development activities (NRSCH 2025). This industry segment is large compared to other jurisdictions (Lawson et al. 2026). Tier 1 providers (more than 350 tenancies; ongoing development activities) comprise approximately one fifth of the NT’s community housing tenancies, much less than other states and territories (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Community housing tenancies by state/territory and category of registration, 2024



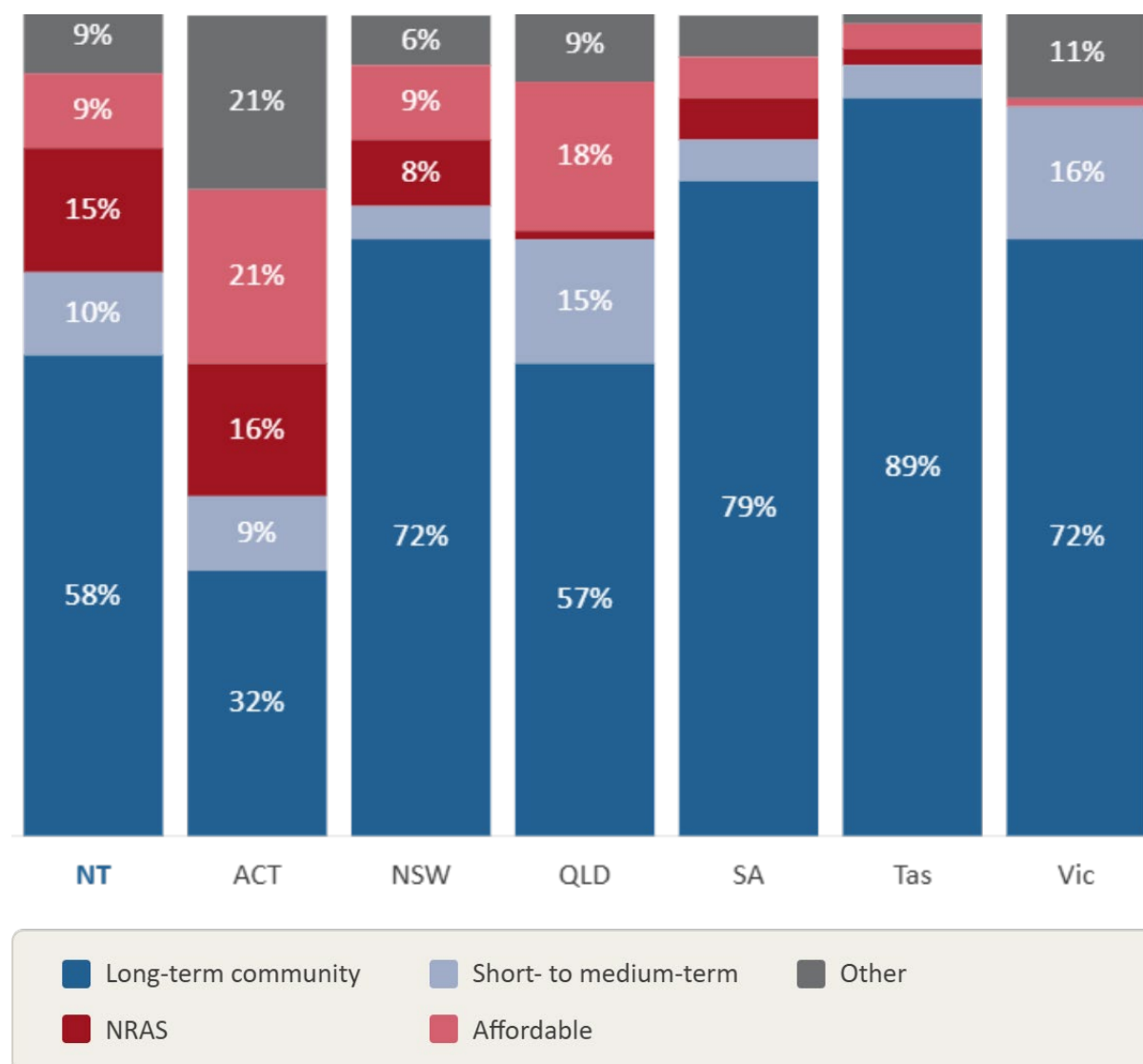
Source: Adapted from Lawson et al. (2026).

Note: Lawson et al. (2026) extracted data from the NRSCH Provider Register in 2024. Some national CHOs with operations in the NT are registered in other jurisdictions and may not be included (see Section 2.4).

CHOs manage a range of housing assets, including long-term community housing (i.e. social housing), short-to-medium term accommodation (i.e. housing with tenancies of up to 2 years), housing assets subsidised under the National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS) and other affordability schemes (which generally provide a discount on market rents), boarding or rooming house accommodation, amongst others.

In 2024, long-term community housing comprised 58 per cent of all registered housing in the NT, more than or comparable to the ACT and Queensland but lower than all other states (Figure 3). Housing assets subsidised under the NRAS made up 15 per cent of registered housing, larger than most other jurisdictions. Subsidies for many of these assets will end in 2026, which will adversely affect the supply of affordable housing in the NT.

Figure 3. Registered housing by state/territory and housing type, 2024



Source: Adapted from Lawson et al. (2026).

Note: Lawson et al. (2026) extracted data from the NRSCH Provider Register in 2024. Some national CHOs with operations in the NT are registered in other jurisdictions and may not be included (see Section 2.4). To improve legibility, 'Other' combines crisis, boarding, special disability, private and market rental accommodation. These housing types comprise a small individual proportion of community housing tenancy units in the NT – the largest being boarding accommodation with 77 tenancy units (6%).

### 1.3 Urban community housing organisations face systemic challenges

The NT urban CH system operates in a complex environment shaped by acute housing shortage, high rates of homelessness, constrained service capacity, and challenges around remoteness and environmental conditions.

New housing supply is inhibited by weak market conditions and limited private sector construction. In 2024-25, the NT had the lowest number of dwelling completions in the country, adding just five new homes for every 10,000 existing dwellings (ABS 2025).

The NT faces considerable challenges developing new community housing stock. While the sector has grown in recent years through public housing transfers most urban CHOs have struggled with high development costs, key worker shortages, and low population densities, especially outside of Darwin (Atkinson 2024). CHOs face high operating costs due to the age and poor condition of the housing stock, the higher service delivery costs in regional and remote areas, and the high level of tenancy needs (Rosewarne 2024). Maintenance challenges have also diminished the life of existing assets and contributed to high vacancy rates and turnaround times.

Structural challenges to housing delivery and maintenance have contributed to significant unmet demand for social housing, high rates of homelessness, and severe overcrowding:

- In December 2025, there were 5,413 applicants for public and community housing<sup>3</sup> across the NT's six urban centres, with wait times between four to 10 years depending on location and dwelling type. In contrast, only 167 applicants (4% of total applicants) were allocated public or community housing in the 2025 calendar year (NT Government 2026).
- In 2021, the rate of homelessness in the NT (564 per 10,000 people) was between 12 to 15 times higher than any other state or territory (ABS 2021).
- In 2024-25, four per cent of Territorians accessed specialist homelessness services (SHS), compared to one per cent nationally (AIHW 2025).
- In 2021, approximately three quarters (76% or 9,904 people) of Territorians experiencing homelessness lived in severely overcrowded housing that require four or more additional bedrooms (ABS 2021). Of these, 98 per cent (9,672 people) identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

Overcrowding and housing insecurity amongst Aboriginal communities in the NT is a direct and ongoing legacy of colonisation, rooted in historical dispossession and the imposition of Eurocentric housing standards (Birdsall-Jones et al. 2010). For many Aboriginal people, housing extended kinsfolk provides a sense of fulfilment and strength through shared cultural knowledge, rituals and caring duties. However, it also produces significant social, economic and health-related costs when coupled with a lack of affordable and culturally appropriate housing (Dockery et al. 2021). These costs are well documented, including the transmission of disease in overcrowded households, financial and food insecurity, psychological distress, family breakdown and violence, disruption to school attendance and employment, amongst others (Dockery et al. 2021; Lowell et al. 2018).

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<sup>3</sup> The number of applications for social housing is limited to those made to the Department of Housing, Local Government and Community Development. It excludes applications made directly to community housing providers.

The concentration of disadvantage and overcrowding in community housing can intensify day-to-day pressures and increase the likelihood of friction between neighbours, particularly around noise, visitors and shared spaces. As a frontline service operating at the interface of tenants and community, CHOs have borne much of the public frustration about anti-social behaviour (ASB). While CHOs have attempted to resolve these tensions through community engagement, tenant participation practices, and partnership arrangements, they face considerable pressure in a political environment that has shifted toward compliance and sanction-based responses to complaints. This has been a longstanding challenge for social housing providers in the Australian context, identified in AHURI research more than two decades ago:

Holistic policies informed by social justice perspectives are generally seen as the best forms of intervention in preference to the imposition of stricter sanctions and punitive measures ... However, the active engagement by housing managers in holistic approaches to ASB requires considerable time and expertise. It is therefore important that the necessary training and resources are made available if such policies are to succeed. (Jacobs and Arthurson 2003:ii)

## **1.4 The community housing sector's value proposition is not widely understood**

Due to the deep-rooted challenges outlined above, policy settings in the NT have gradually shifted away from enabling support toward short-term risk management. Public housing transfers have stalled and there is limited appetite for the policy objectives outlined in the *NT Community Housing Growth Strategy 2022-32*. Ultimately, this has limited the sector's ability to plan, invest and grow.

While the NTG and other regulatory bodies collect substantial information about the community housing sector, these collections are largely designed for compliance purposes rather than strategic development. Data collection and dissemination are not well coordinated, with varying definitions, coverage, and reporting periods. This creates reporting burdens for CHOs and complicates the design of data systems that support operations and client outcomes.

For these reasons, NT Shelter and the CH sector have identified a clear need for a more cohesive approach to data collection and dissemination. The aim is to move beyond compliance-based reporting and metrics toward a shared, credible evidence base that demonstrates CHOs' impact. This requires targeted foundational work, including an understanding of existing data collections, agreement over definitions and the scope of the CH sector, strengthened data governance and sharing arrangements, and the development of fit-for-purpose indicators that accurately convey the sector's value to funders, regulators and the public.

## **1.5 This report provides a first step toward a sector-wide data approach**

This report contributes to this foundational work. Specifically, it provides a detailed overview of available data and identifies potential improvements to collection and reporting practices through consultation with NT-based CHOs.

- Section 2 maps publicly available data relevant to the NT urban community housing sector, providing an assessment of strengths, limitations and key gaps. This is accompanied by a supplementary data catalogue with a detailed overview of individual datasets.
- Section 3 summarises findings from consultation with CHOs, the NT Government, and the AIHW, identifying sector priorities, systemic issues, reporting requirements and data holdings.
- Section 4 concludes with recommendations for key indicators, based on available data and sector priorities. It also provides practical next steps for NT Shelter regarding a potential stewardship role in developing a shared evidence base for the CH sector.

## 2. Mapping publicly available data

- Descriptive data relating to the capacity of the CH sector are relatively comprehensive, including the number of community housing properties (AIHW, Productivity Commission, NRSCH) and volume of grant funding (NRSCH).
- Some data are also available at the organisation-level, including information about providers' community housing asset portfolios (NRSCH) and number of employees (Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC)).
- However, data relating to the CH sector's performance and impact are less complete.
- Prior to 2024–25, NT-based CHOs did not contribute to the AIHW's Community Housing Data Collection, meaning data about community housing tenants, their level of need, rental affordability, and overcrowding were largely missing from the AIHW's Housing Assistance in Australia reports and the PC's Report on Government Services (RoGS).
- In 2024–25, the AIHW conducted the Community Housing Data Collection in the NT for the first time; however, the collection's scope is limited to six CHOs managing government-owned properties.
- Data from this collection are published in the 2025 RoGS with additional information available in the next edition of Housing Assistance in Australia (published June 2026).
- Publicly available data about tenancy sustainability and satisfaction are limited. These data are primarily collected by the AIHW through the National Social Housing Survey, which is not conducted in the NT due to budget constraints and difficulties around remoteness.
- The NRSCH collects detailed information on the CH sector's financial position, dwelling condition and maintenance, tenant outcomes and tenant satisfaction with CH services. NRSCH data are published at the national level but may be available at the NT level via request to the NT Registrar.
- A comprehensive overview of publicly available datasets can be found in the supplementary *Data Catalogue*.

This section maps publicly available data relevant to the NT urban community housing sector, including datasets held by the NTG, the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW), the Productivity Commission (PC), the National Regulatory System for Community Housing (NRSCH), the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), the Department of Social Services (DSS), the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC), and the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations (ORIC).

The subsections below provide an overview of the data published by each custodian, outlining data collection practices, accessibility, quality, and relevance to the NT urban community housing sector. The primary focus is on metrics relating to sector:

- **capacity:** the structure and governance of the CH sector, including funding, size of organisations, registration categories, number of dwellings, etc.
- **performance:** operations, including asset management, revenue streams, occupancy rates, tenancy turnaround, rent collected, etc.
- **impact:** tenant and community outcomes, including tenant satisfaction, rental affordability, arrears, evictions, tenancy mix, etc.

Figure 4 summarises available data for capacity, performance, and impact metrics. A detailed overview of individual publicly available datasets can be found in the supplementary *Data Catalogue*.

**Figure 4. Data availability and quality for the NT Community Housing sector**



Source: Authors.

Note: Some custodians hold multiple datasets for some metrics. Circles are divided into segments proportional to the number of datasets at each quality level. For additional detail on individual datasets, see the supplementary data catalogue.

## 2.1 Northern Territory Government

The NTG requires CHOs managing government-owned properties (i.e. CEO housing) to report key performance indicators on a quarterly and annual basis. Six CHOs are included in this collection:

- Venture Housing
- Mission Australia Housing NT
- Yilli Rreung Housing Aboriginal Corporation
- Community Housing Central Australia
- St Vincent de Paul
- TeamHealth

The NTG collects data quarterly on rents, arrears, tenancy exits, evictions, repairs, maintenance, inspections, vacancies, occupancy rates, turnaround times, complaints and incidents of anti-social behaviour. They also collect data annually on tenant demographics (e.g. gender, age, disability, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander), response rates to satisfaction surveys, access to support, and eligibility and receipt of Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA). Quarterly and annual reports are not publicly available but are largely based around indicators reported to the NRSCH.

The NTG also manages the social housing register and publishes data on its website. Data include social housing applications, wait times, allocations, and vacancies. Data are reported by region and bedroom requirements but are not disaggregated by social housing program.

The NTG supports *the Community and Indigenous Housing Data Collections* and the *National Regulatory System Community Housing data collection*. However, these are primarily managed by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (Section 2.2) and the NT and New South Wales Registrar (Section 2.4), respectively.

Table 1. Northern Territory Government, data availability

⚠ **Red text** = major limitation for measuring capacity, performance, or impact in the NT

| Use         | Indicators                                                                                                                                                                                   | Limitations                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|-------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Performance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⚠ <b>Wait times</b></li> <li>⚠ <b>Social housing applications</b></li> <li>⚠ <b>Social housing allocations</b></li> <li>⚠ <b>Vacancies</b></li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⚠ <b>Wait time and allocation data not disaggregated by social housing program</b></li> <li>⚠ <b>Number of applications excludes applications made directly to community housing providers</b></li> <li>⚠ <b>Number of vacant dwellings is limited to dwellings in the Tenancy Management System (TMS) and does not include all community housing providers</b></li> </ul> |

Note: **Red text and shading** indicates major limitations for measuring the capacity, performance and impact of the NT community housing sector. For additional detail on individual datasets, see the supplementary data catalogue.

## 2.2 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

The AIHW manages national data collections for various housing assistance programs, including community housing (CH) and Indigenous community housing (ICH).

The **Community Housing Data Collection** is sourced by state/territory housing authorities from CHOs and/or from government administrative systems. The annual data collection captures information about CHOs, the dwellings and tenancy rental units they manage, households on the waitlist, the tenants and households assisted, and financial information from the previous financial year. The collection defines CH as all tenancy rental units under the management of a CHO.<sup>4</sup>

In 2024-25, the AIHW collected information from NT-based CHOs for the first time. The scope of the NT *Community Housing Data Collection* was defined by the NTG and included six CHOs (organisations with management contracts for government-owned properties; see Section 2.1). All six CHOs provided unit record data (i.e. records for individual dwellings or tenancies). Prior to 2024-25, data were sourced from the NTG's administrative systems, which was more limited in scope and covered 40 organisations involved in delivering various housing services (e.g. transitional and crisis accommodation services; AIHW consultation, April 2026).

<sup>4</sup> It excludes tenancies managed by Indigenous CHOs, state/territory housing authorities, or specialist homelessness services agency. There are also additional jurisdiction-specific inclusions and exclusions based on differences in the definition of community housing in state/territory legislation, difficulties identifying organisations that are not registered or funded by the state/territory housing authority, and inconsistencies in reporting. For example, the NT collection excludes National Rental Affordability Scheme properties managed by CHOs, whereas these are included in some other jurisdictions. CHOs may be excluded from the collection for various reasons, including the size of the organisation or contractual arrangements.

The **Indigenous Community Housing Data Collection** captures information about Indigenous community housing organisations (ICHOs), the dwellings they manage, and tenants they assist. ICHOs include all organisations responsible for managing medium- to long-term housing for Indigenous people. Land councils, resource agencies and state and territory housing authorities are classified as ICHOs if they are responsible for managing ICH tenancies. Most data items within the Indigenous Community Housing Data Collection are only collected for ICHOs that received funding within the financial year. In the NT, funding for ICHOs only extends to the delivery of housing maintenance services to permanently occupied, communally owned dwellings in remote homelands and town camps that are not leased for public housing. ICH data are sourced via jurisdiction administrative systems, dwelling audits conducted by states and territories and from ICHOs through data collection tools managed by the AIHW.

Finally, the AIHW also conducts the **National Social Housing Survey**, which is conducted every two years with a random sample of tenants from social housing programs. The 2025 survey was conducted among tenants from CH programs in all jurisdictions except the NT. The AIHW does not conduct the survey in the NT due to a lack of government funding<sup>5</sup> and difficulties meeting survey quotas due to remoteness (AIHW consultation, April 2026).

AIHW data collections are reported in their annual *Housing Assistance in Australia* reports and the Productivity Commission's annual *Report on Government Services* (Section 2.3). The AIHW also publishes data tables in supplementary appendices (see Data Catalogue) and provides additional disaggregated data by request (subject to their confidentiality policy and the approval of the relevant state or territory government).

There are several gaps in AIHW reports for the NT due to the data collection issues outlined above (see also Table 2). Data reported by NT-based CHOs through the 2024-25 *Community Housing Data Collection* will be available in the next edition of *Housing Assistance in Australia* (published June 2026). Some information is available in the *Report on Government Services 2026* (see Section 2.3).

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<sup>5</sup> The cost of conducting the National Social Housing Survey varies according to the scope of the collection, minimum response requirements, and the mode of delivery (i.e. mail out or face-to-face surveys), which are generally set by the state and territory housing authority who funds the survey.

Table 2. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, data availability

⚠ **Red text** = major limitation for measuring capacity, performance, or impact in the NT

| Use         | Indicators                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Limitations                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|-------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Capacity    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of CH and ICH dwellings</li> <li>Size of CHO by tenancies managed</li> <li>⚠ <b>Number of household members in CH</b></li> </ul>                                                                                                                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One year publication lag (latest data available to 30th June 2024).</li> <li>⚠ <b>The number of household members in CH Information currently not available for the NT but will be reported in Housing Assistance in Australia 2026 (published mid 2026).</b></li> </ul> |
| Performance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tenantable CH properties</li> <li>Occupancy rates</li> <li>Overcrowding and under-utilisation</li> <li>New allocations to CH</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One year publication lag (latest data available to 30th June 2024).</li> <li>More recent data available via the RoGS (see Section 2.3).</li> </ul>                                                                                                                       |
| Impact      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⚠ <b>CH households in priority groups (e.g. homeless, low-income, with disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander)</b></li> <li>⚠ <b>Rental affordability for low-income community housing tenants</b></li> <li>⚠ <b>Tenancy length for CH households</b></li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⚠ <b>CH household and rental affordability data currently not available for the NT but will be reported in Housing Assistance in Australia 2026 (published mid 2026).</b></li> <li>Alternative data available via the RoGS (see Section 2.3).</li> </ul>                 |

Note: **Red text and shading** indicates major limitations for measuring the capacity, performance and impact of the NT community housing sector. Some data are collected for other jurisdictions but not available in the NT. For additional detail on individual datasets, see the supplementary data catalogue.

## 2.3 Productivity Commission

The Productivity Commission (PC) publishes the annual Report on Government Services (RoGS). The RoGS provides information on the equity, effectiveness and efficiency of government services in Australia, including housing and homelessness funding (approximately \$7.7 billion in 2024-25).

Part G, Section 18 presents data on the performance of governments in providing social housing, including CH and ICH. From 1 July 2024, Section 18 only reports on housing programs funded and delivered under the National Agreement on Social Housing and Homelessness (NASHH).

Part G, Section 18 primarily draws on the AIHW data collections, including the *Community Housing Data Collection*, the *Indigenous Community Housing Data Collection*, and the *National Social Housing Survey*. As discussed above, prior to 2025, CHOs in the NT did not contribute to the *Community Housing Data Collection* and data were sourced from NTG's administrative systems. In addition, the *National Social Housing Survey* is not conducted with CH tenants in the NT. Consequently, some data items are missing from the RoGS (see Table 3 and Data Catalogue).

**Table 3. Report on Government Services, data availability**

**⚠ Red text** = major limitation for measuring capacity, performance, or impact in the NT

| Use         | Indicators                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Limitations                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|-------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Capacity    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⚠ NTG expenditure on CH and ICH</li> <li>Value and number of property transfers</li> <li>Number of CH and ICH dwellings</li> <li>Number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households in community housing</li> </ul>                                                                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⚠ Expenditure data not reported for NT</li> <li>Does not disaggregate data into ownership and management only transfers</li> <li>Prior to 2025, CHOs did not contribute to the Community Housing data <u>collection</u> and data were sourced from NTG's administrative systems.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                      |
| Performance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⚠ Total rent charged by CHOs and ICHOs</li> <li>⚠ Dwelling condition and structural problems</li> <li>Tenantable CH properties</li> <li>Occupancy rates</li> <li>Overcrowding and under-utilisation</li> </ul>                                                                                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⚠ Total rent charged only available for 2023-24 for CH and 2019-20 for ICH</li> <li>⚠ Some dwelling condition data is recorded via tenant responses to the National Social Housing Survey, which is not conducted with CH tenants in the NT.</li> <li>Prior to 2025, CHOs did not contribute to the Community Housing data <u>collection</u> and data were sourced from NTG's administrative systems.</li> </ul> |
| Impact      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⚠ Tenant satisfaction with amenities and location</li> <li>⚠ Tenant wellbeing</li> <li>New households assisted in priority groups (e.g. homeless, low-income, with disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander)</li> <li>Rental affordability for low-income community housing tenants</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⚠ Tenant satisfaction and wellbeing indicators are based on the National Social Housing Survey, which is not conducted with CH tenants in the NT.</li> <li>Prior to 2025, CHOs did not contribute to the Community Housing data <u>collection</u> and data were sourced from NTG's administrative systems.</li> </ul>                                                                                            |

Note: **Red text and shading** indicates major limitations for measuring the capacity, performance and impact of the NT community housing sector. Some data are collected for other jurisdictions but not available in the NT. For additional detail on individual datasets, see the supplementary data catalogue.

## 2.4 National Regulatory System Community Housing

The National Regulatory System Community Housing (NRSCH) is a joint initiative of the Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments, drawing on data submitted by registered CHOs as part of their compliance assessments. Tier 1 and Tier 2 providers submit data annually, while Tier 3 providers are assessed for compliance every two years<sup>6</sup>. In 2024-25, data were available for Tier 1 and Tier 2 providers only.

In June 2024, there were 14 registered CHOs with their primary operations in the NT, including three in Tier 1, six in Tier 2, and four in Tier 3 (see Appendix 1 and Data Catalogue). Note that some of these organisations are special purpose vehicles (SPVs) or subsidiary entities, typically created to quarantine capital projects and partnerships for Housing Australia Future Fund (HAFF) developments. While SPVs and subsidiaries generally have a pipeline of anticipated development, they do not currently own or manage properties and are therefore not included in NTG and AIHW collections.

Some national CHOs with operations in the NT are registered in other jurisdictions. For example, Aboriginal Community Housing Limited are registered in New South Wales (R7775190628) and YWCA are registered in Queensland (R4410151113).

The Registrars for each participating jurisdiction jointly maintain the National Register. The New South Wales Registrar of Community Housing has undertaken assessment and monitoring of registration and compliance activities on behalf of the NT since 2016. In 2019, the NT Registrar entered a new contract to extend this arrangement.

NRSCH data is published in two annual reports: the ***NRSCH Sector Financial Performance Report*** and the ***NRSCH Non-Financial Sector Performance Report***. The reports present metrics primarily at the national level (Table 4). However, some individual jurisdictions produce tailored reports for the CH sector within their state or territory on request. Individual provider information can also be found via the **NRSCH provider register**, including entity type, registration category, and a summary of community housing assets (see Appendix 1 and Data Catalogue).

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<sup>6</sup> **Tier 1** providers must be incorporated under the Corporations Act as a company limited by shares or guarantee and face the highest level of regulatory scrutiny. **Tier 2** providers can be a wider range of body corporates, including cooperatives, incorporated associations, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporations and face moderate regulatory scrutiny. **Tier 3** providers have the broadest eligibility, adding other bodies corporate created through state or territory legislation to the Tier 2 entity types. They face the lightest oversight and only need to submit a compliance return every two years.

**Table 4. National Regulatory System Community Housing, data availability**

**⚠ Red text** = major limitation for measuring capacity, performance, or impact in the NT

| Use         | Indicators                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Limitations                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|-------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Capacity    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⚠ <b>Tenantable and untenable community housing units relet</b></li> <li>Funding via operating grants</li> <li>Number of properties/rental units, by owned/managed status</li> <li>Number of properties, by program type (e.g. long-term, short-term, HAFF, NRAS, etc.)</li> </ul>                                                                                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⚠ <b>Reletting data only reported at national level (may be available by request to NT Registrar).</b></li> </ul>                                                                                  |
| Performance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⚠ <b>Urgent and non-urgent repairs, requested and completed</b></li> <li>⚠ <b>Turnaround times for tenantable and untenable units</b></li> <li>⚠ <b>Days vacant for tenantable and untenable units</b></li> <li>⚠ <b>Occupancy rate</b></li> <li>⚠ <b>Expenditure on property and maintenance expenses</b></li> <li>⚠ <b>Earnings, assets, and debt metrics</b></li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⚠ <b>Except for housing assets, housing debt, and rent revenue data, all performance-related metrics only reported at national level (may be available by request to NT Registrar).</b></li> </ul> |
| Impact      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⚠ <b>Evictions</b></li> <li>⚠ <b>Rent arrears</b></li> <li>⚠ <b>Tenant satisfaction with housing services, maintenance, and property condition</b></li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⚠ <b>Evictions, rent arrears and tenant satisfaction data only reported at national level (may be available by request to NT Registrar).</b></li> </ul>                                            |

*Note: Red text and shading indicates major limitations for measuring the capacity, performance and impact of the NT community housing sector. Some data are collected for other jurisdictions but not available in the NT. For additional detail on individual datasets, see the supplementary data catalogue.*

## 2.5 Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission and the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations

The Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) is Australia's national regulator of charities. Registration is required for organisations seeking Commonwealth charity tax concessions, although registration itself is voluntary. Registered charities must submit an Annual Information Statement (AIS) within six months of the end of their reporting period, providing information on programs, workforce and finances.

While the ACNC web-based directory provides data on the performance and capacity of registered CHOs, its coverage of the NT community housing sector is incomplete. Some CHOs are registered interstate, and their statements do not differentiate between inter-state and NT-based operations (e.g. Aboriginal Community Housing Limited is registered in Victoria). Some CHOs are newly registered and yet to submit their first AIS (e.g. Community Housing [NT] Ltd). Some ACCOs fulfil their reporting requirements through the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations (ORIC), an independent statutory office that supports and regulates Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporations.

A more comprehensive search of the ACNC and ORIC requires the registration numbers of CH and ICH organisation.

**Table 5. Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission and the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations, data availability**

| Use                | Indicators                                                                                                                                                                         | Limitations                                                                                                   |
|--------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Capacity</b>    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Organisation-level operating grants</li> <li>- Organisation-level employee numbers</li> </ul>                                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Coverage of the NT community housing sector is incomplete</li> </ul> |
| <b>Performance</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Organisation-level expenditure</li> <li>- Organisation-level revenue from non-government sources (service provision, bequests)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Coverage of the NT community housing sector is incomplete</li> </ul> |

## 2.6 Australian Bureau of Statistics

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) conducts the Census of Population and Housing every five years. The Census asks households to identify their landlord type and includes an option for ‘community housing provider’. Using TableBuilder Pro, a range of information can be extracted about households who report this landlord type. Outputs include the number of households by demographic (e.g. Indigenous status, disability/health status, household composition) and by income and source of income. The Census also provides information about rental affordability, overcrowding and under-utilisation (see Data Catalogue). These data are available at the NT-level and smaller geographies, such as local government areas (LGAs).

Because Census data are self-reported, outputs may include errors due to respondents incorrectly categorising landlord type. The ABS also makes small, random adjustments to data counts in table outputs from TableBuilder to ensure confidential data about individuals are not identifiable. Taken together, these issues can diminish the precision of population counts, particularly for small population groups.

Table 6. Australian Bureau of Statistics, data availability

| Use                         | Indicators                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Limitations                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Capacity/<br/>Impact</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Demographics of community housing households</li><li>- Income bands and source of income of community housing households</li><li>- Number of community housing households where rent payments are more/less than 30% of household income</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Available every 5 years.</li><li>- Data are self-reported and may include errors due to respondents incorrectly categorising landlord type.</li></ul> |
| <b>Performance</b>          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Number of community housing households where extra bedrooms are needed or spare</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Available every 5 years.</li><li>- Data are self-reported and may include errors due to respondents incorrectly categorising landlord type.</li></ul> |

## 2.7 Department of Social Services Payment demographic data

Department of Social Services (DSS) does not directly hold data on the CH sector but is responsible for realising and maintaining the DSS Payment Demographic dataset. This comprises selected DSS payment data by geography (e.g. state/territory, local government area), demographic (e.g. age, sex and Indigenous/non-Indigenous), housing type and a range of other attributes.

The report includes a table with the number of income support recipients in different types of rental accommodation. Community housing is included in “other housing providers”. Data are reported at the national level but may be requested at the NT level from the Department of Social Services.

In March 2017, Commonwealth Rent Assistance by Payment type and Income Unit type was added to the DSS Payment Demographic dataset, including the number of income support recipients in CH.

**Table 7. Department of Social Services, data availability**

| ⚠ Red text = major limitation for measuring capacity, performance, or impact in the NT |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Use                                                                                    | Indicators                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Limitations                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Capacity                                                                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⚠ Number of income support recipients living in community housing, by payment type</li> <li>⚠ Commonwealth Rent Assistance recipients by suburb and local government area, time series</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⚠ Income recipients by rental type only reported at national level (may be available by request to DSS).</li> <li>⚠ CRA recipients by suburb/LGA does not include rental type information.</li> </ul> |

Note: Red text and shading indicates major limitations for measuring the capacity, performance and impact of the NT community housing sector. For additional detail on individual datasets, see the supplementary data catalogue.

## 2.8 Summary of data quality and limitations

Some areas are well covered by publicly available datasets:

- **Capacity:** Data relating to the number of CH properties (AIHW, PC, NRSCH) and volume of grant funding (NRSCH) are relatively comprehensive. Some data are also available at the organisation-level about providers' CH asset portfolio (NRSCH) and number of employees (ACNC/ORIC).
- **Performance:** The NRSCH publishes data on revenue at the NT level. Data relating to occupancy rates (AIHW, PC) and housing suitability (ABS, PC) are available at the NT level but are based on the AIHW's Community Housing Data Collection, which was conducted for the first time in 2024-25 with six CHOs managing government properties.
- **Impact:** Data relating to rental affordability are available via two data collections. The RoGS reports the proportion of household income spent on rent by low-income households in CH, based on administrative data from CHOs. The ABS reports the number of CH households where rent payments are more/less than 30 per cent of household income, based on tenant responses to the Census. The RoGS and ABS also publish a range of demographic data about CH tenants (Aboriginal status, disability status, low-income status), which can be used to assess the equity impacts of the CH sector.

However, existing datasets have several gaps and limitations:

- **Capacity:** Data relating to CH households are available from the RoGS, collected via the AIHW's Community Housing Data Collection. However, this only covers the six CHOs managing government properties and was first conducted in 2024-25. Household information is also covered in the Census, but this is only released every five years and is subject to reporting errors.

- **Performance:** The AIHW collects data on dwelling condition and maintenance through the National Social Housing Survey; however, this survey is not conducted in the NT due to a lack of government funding and difficulties meeting survey quotas due to remoteness. The NRSCH collects some data on the tenantable status of dwellings, repair and maintenance works, vacancies and turnaround times. These data are only published at the national level but may be available at the NT level via request to the NT Registrar.
- **Impact:** There are major data gaps around tenancy sustainability and satisfaction. These data are primarily collected by the AIHW through the National Social Housing Survey, which is not conducted in the NT. The NRSCH collates data on evictions and arrears, which may be available at the NT level via request to the NT Registrar.

### 3. Data needs and opportunities within the urban community housing sector

- Consultations were conducted with the NTG, the AIHW, and six CHOs – this included five out of the six CHOs managing government-owned properties (Section 2.1) and one large, Tier 1 provider managing its own properties.
- CHOs, the NTG and the AIHW were consulted about:
  1. What needs to be monitored to understand the capacity, performance and impact of CHOs in the NT?
  2. What data are currently held, by whom, and whether those data are accessible, reliable and useful in the NT context?
- Consultation findings support the need for a shared sector perspective on data that strengthens system understanding, supports proportionate effort, and will be credible in environments where findings may be subject to external scrutiny.
- A central challenge identified across all consultations is that a substantial volume of data is already collected about the CH sector (with a lot of duplication), but that there is no shared framework for prioritising or interpreting it.
- Current data collection is largely compliance-driven, fragmented across multiple systems, and poorly aligned to demonstrating CHOs' contributions to the social housing sector.
- There are significant data gaps, and there is no sector- or government-driven approach to gathering strategic data about the sector, either in relation to sector performance, capacity or impact.

The consultations identified six key themes, which are discussed in further detail below.

1. Data systems are fragmented and largely compliance-driven
2. Reporting duplication is a significant burden
3. ASB data are a credibility risk for the sector
4. The sector's most important contributions are the least well measured
5. Standard metrics do not reflect NT system constraints
6. Data governance is foundational to a sustainable stewardship role for NT Shelter.

### 3.1 Theme 1: Data systems are fragmented and largely compliance-driven

Across all six CHOs, data collection is oriented primarily around meeting external reporting obligations and meeting operational needs, rather than building system understanding. Most organisations use multiple platforms that are not integrated with each other, requiring separate user input for each. Some organisations use different systems for different housing types in the same organisation, which creates additional data challenges and, in some instances, requires data to be provided by NTG, rather than this being able to be raised internally. Financial and maintenance data are frequently managed through Excel spreadsheets.

Smaller organisations were candid that data collection is a by-product of conducting business rather than a deliberate analytical activity. Asset and facility management data are either absent or rudimentary across much of the sector. NTG confirmed this picture, noting that data gathered from the six CHOs managing CEO housing are collected primarily for compliance purposes, with limited appetite to use data strategically.

**System insight will require new data collections AND a clearer shared view of what information genuinely supports a narrative that demonstrates sector impact, capacity and performance.**

### 3.2 Theme 2: Reporting duplication is a significant burden

A consistent frustration across CHO interviews was the duplication of reporting between NRSCH and NTG. One CHO described the two reporting streams as requiring essentially the same information at different reporting periods. Multiple interviewees expressed the view that passing NRSCH should be sufficient evidence of performance without parallel NTG reporting. Some flagged that AIHW data may already exist within NTG's housing management system, making direct CHO reporting to AIHW potentially redundant, an observation that NTG's own account of data flows appears to support.

NTG does not engage with the NRSCH Registrar due to a potential conflict of interest, as NTG contracts CHOs and would otherwise be involved in regulating them. While this separation is structurally appropriate, it means NTG compliance data and NRSCH regulatory data operate in parallel without integration.

**Reducing duplication and clarifying which reporting streams genuinely add value should be a priority for any future data framework.**

### **3.3 Theme 3: Anti-social behaviour data are a credibility risk for the sector**

The current reactive and ad hoc reporting of anti-social behaviour (ASB) data is a risk factor for the sector. ASB was the most consistently and substantively discussed topic across all consultations, and its treatment in current data collections represents one of the clearest risks to the sector's credibility in external scrutiny environments. Current measures (police call-outs, ministerials, complaint counts) are blunt instruments that do not distinguish between incidents involving tenants, visitors, or uninvited parties. Multiple interviewees identified visitor management, not tenant behaviour, as the primary driver of ASB incidents. Without data that makes this distinction, the sector is vulnerable to misinterpretation and inappropriate comparison with NTG-managed and other properties.

Several interviewees observed that ASB data need to be disaggregated by root cause (mental health, domestic violence, substance use, behavioural issues) to build a picture that is both accurate and defensible. This would enable the sector to demonstrate that it manages ASB effectively. One CHO is rolling out a dedicated ASB module in their data collection management system later in 2026.

Interviewees stressed the importance of preventing ASB and that tenant selection and allocation processes are in themselves drivers of ASB risk. To mitigate this risk, it was proposed that CHOs participate in allocation panels to help match tenants to the right property and community, arguing this would produce more sustainable tenancies and reduce neighbourhood fatigue and ASB. NTG's reporting framework already includes ASB complaints and NTCAT hearings as distinct indicators, and the Common Terms of Agreement allow for flexibility to request additional data.

**There is opportunity to develop nuanced, consistent and contextual data to support a defensible narrative that the sector is managing ASB effectively.**

### **3.4 Theme 4: The sector's most important contributions are the least well measured**

Interviewees identified that tenant support, early intervention and community development were among the most important contributions that distinguished CHOs from other housing providers. NTG is specifically asking CHOs to demonstrate the difference they make to tenant outcomes beyond housing provision alone, yet reporting in this space is underdeveloped. **The data that would most credibly demonstrate what CHOs contribute in terms of community development, tenancy wellbeing, early intervention and wraparound support, are also the data that are most poorly collected.**

Interviews highlighted several issues in relation to these data.

**Community development and tenant wellbeing data are collected differently (or not at all) across organisations.** As noted in the previous section, the NT also does not participate in the National Social Housing Survey, which is the primary national source of dwelling condition and tenant satisfaction data, due to the cost of reaching remote communities.

**Tenant demographic data collection is shaped by Privacy Act obligations, consent frameworks and organisational history.** The degree to which CHOs collect tenant demographic information varied. One CHO interviewed has only rudimentary consent frameworks and relies primarily on demographic data held within NTG's housing management system rather than its own data collection. Some CHOs have structured consent procedures (e.g. Services Australia-approved Centrelink multiple consent form) that enable richer data collection from the outset of a tenancy. One CHO collects demographic data on a voluntary disclosure basis; one uses a conversational consent approach that is culturally appropriate; another CHO gathers data beyond current requirements in anticipation of future needs.

There is a strong argument for **reframing existing metrics positively**, for example, by measuring rent collected rather than arrears, tenancies maintained rather than evictions, length of tenancy as evidence of stable long-term housing, and repayment plans as evidence of proactive tenancy sustainment. Exit destination data are underutilised or not collected. Tenancy sustainability and early intervention were identified as the most important positive story the sector could tell, as supporting tenants and connecting them to supports is a key contribution of the sector. This includes knowing tenants by name, noticing when something is wrong, and linking them to help — aspects which are entirely absent from reporting.

Some of the most useful data are already within reach technically (e.g. time spent supporting clients) but have not been prioritised.

**There is opportunity to develop frameworks and systems to gather robust data on the sector's contribution, especially into outcomes beyond housing. These data would support a positive and defensible narrative of sector impact and would strengthen confidence in how CHO performance and impact are understood.**

### 3.5 Theme 5: Standard metrics do not reflect NT system constraints

**Key national data assets are either unavailable or unreliable for the NT context, which is a significant constraint on building a credible and defensible evidence base.** Several interviewees noted that applying standard performance metrics to the NT without contextual adjustment creates misleading comparisons and misrepresents system constraints. For example, turnaround time KPIs can be challenging due to the age and condition of the dwelling stock, and contractor lead times in regional and remote areas. Asset age and condition data, and geographic context, must accompany performance metrics to make them meaningful. Similarly, data on housing mix (the ratio of affordable to social housing by location) is essential for understanding ASB and community outcomes. One issue is that under programs like the HAFF, funding settings generally favour density and social mix and make dwellings larger than two bedrooms financially unviable. This limits CHOs' capacity to deliver dwelling types that meet the cultural needs of their predominantly Aboriginal tenants.

An additional reliability constraint is that **there is no national definition of community housing**. For example, NTG determines which CHOs are included in the AIHW collection (which feeds into RoGS). The current collection covers only the six CHOs that received management transfers, while the NRSCH data collection includes 14 registered CHOs.

A significant benchmarking gap is that CHOs are assessed only against each other and NRSCH accreditation standards, but not against public housing, which is not subject to the same regulations and reporting regimes. Some interviewees argued that community housing would likely compare favourably against public housing on most measures, yet no such comparison is possible or required. The situation is similar for support services, which receive significant public funding but are not required to undertake standardised reporting on tenancy outcomes, such as tenancies maintained. This absence of cross-sector benchmarking means the sector is assessed in a partial frame that excludes its most meaningful points of comparison. Sector-level supply metrics were also proposed, i.e. the CH sector's share of the total NT housing market, length of tenancy compared with the private rental market and public housing, and the HAFF development pipeline attributable to CHOs.

At a macro level, several interviewees pointed to structural constraints that standard metrics are not designed to capture: mining-driven population cycles and urban-remote population movement unique to the NT; construction cost pressures that affect not-for-profit builders differently from private developers; and the age of NT social housing stock, most of which is over 40 years old, diverting resources from new supply into maintenance. The NT CH sector is unlikely to meet HAFF targets due to land availability and planning approval constraints, putting further pressure on existing social housing. Any credible data framework for the NT must account for these contextual factors rather than applying national benchmarks that were not designed for this environment.

**The incompleteness and lack of comparability of current data are a significant constraint on the sector's ability to demonstrate its impact, capacity and performance in comparison to public housing, affordable housing and other housing types.**

### **3.6 Theme 6: Data governance is foundational to a sustainable stewardship role for NT Shelter, but appetite for data sharing is mixed**

Across the six CHO consultations, responses to the prospect of sector-wide data sharing ranged from conditional support to implicit hesitation. No organisation was openly opposed, but the conditions attached to support highlight the importance of clear governance arrangements and reservations about the reporting burden and duplication of data collection, as well as the need to be in alignment with internal organisational data collection and privacy requirements.

Governance requirements mentioned included: privacy and security policies at least equivalent to those held internally by contributing organisations; clearly defined and limited purposes for shared data; and collective governance requiring group-level decision-making for any change in data use. Additional concerns included the need to avoid further duplication of data gathering, clarifying data custodianship, and the need to ensure the purpose of data gathering is for shared insight.

Figure 5: Core principles of data governance

### Core principles of data governance

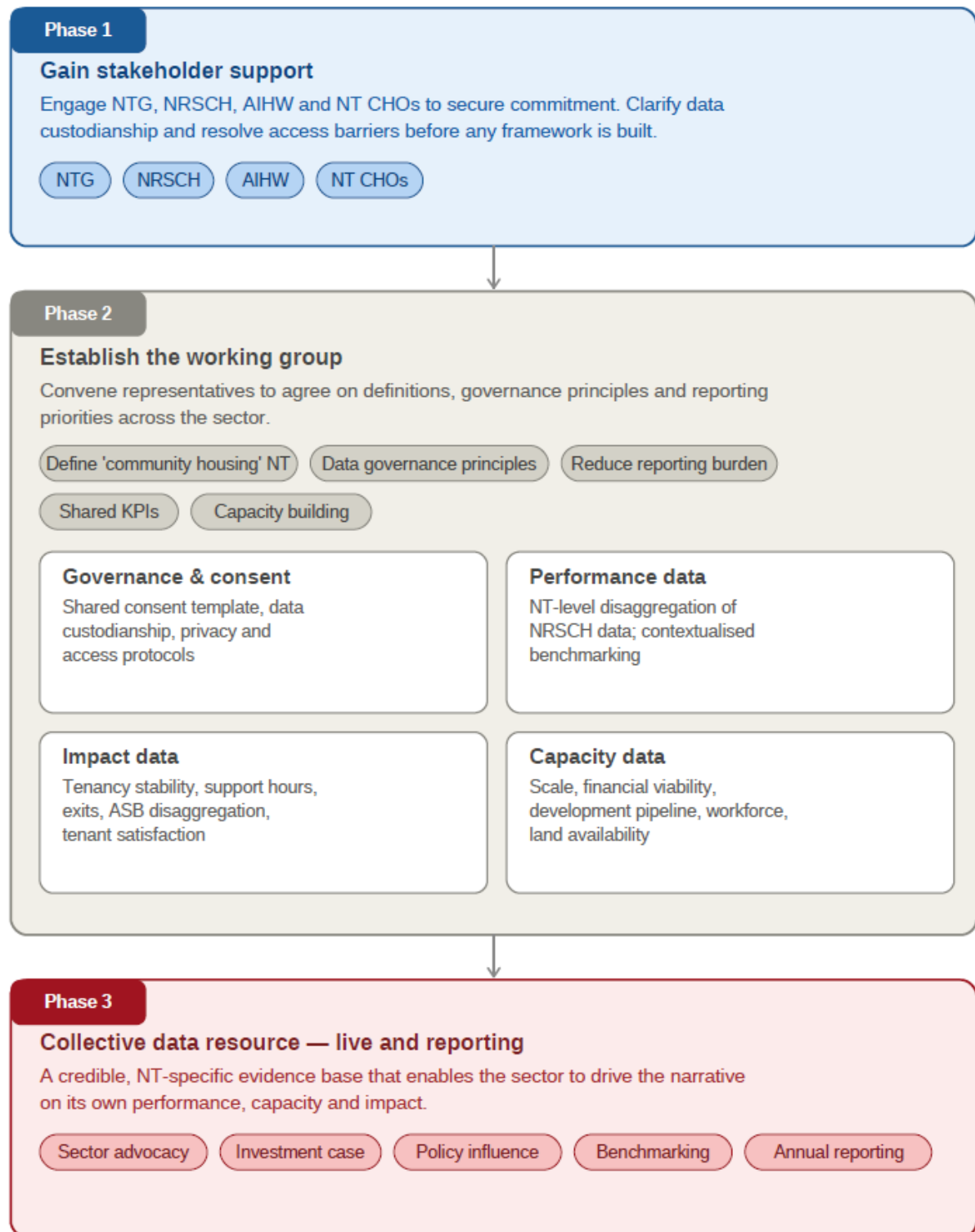
- Privacy and security policies to meet CHO requirements
- Clearly defined and limited purposes for shared data
- Meaningful CHO oversight over data use
- Commitment to reducing rather than adding to reporting burden
- Clear data custodianship

NT Shelter's proposed stewardship role would need to be clearly positioned in relation to the concerns outlined above. The governance principles articulated in the consultations provide a practical starting point for that design work. **The core requirements are a clearly bounded purpose; meaningful CHO oversight; a commitment to reducing rather than adding to reporting burden; and a framework that will be credible and defensible in the policy and funding environments where findings will be used.**

## 4. Developing a collective data resource for the urban community housing sector

- This section synthesises findings from the data mapping exercise and sector consultations.
- It provides recommendations on data collection and governance practices to support the development of a collective data resource for the NT urban community housing sector.
- A key insight is that at present, data systems are fragmented and largely compliance driven. Developing a shared data framework will enable the sector to gather strategic data that will support system insights and that is aligned with the NT context.
- The emphasis throughout is on data that are credible, defensible under external scrutiny, and enable the sector to drive the narrative around impact, performance and capacity.
- Getting the support of key stakeholders and developing principles for data governance underpin the successful development of the proposed data resource.

Figure 6. Developing a collective data resource – pathway overview



*Note: All data domain work in Phase 3 is coordinated through the working group established in Phase 2. The working group resolves definitions, governance principles, custodianship arrangements and reporting priorities before any data collection is activated.*

## 4.1 Key operational steps: garner stakeholder support and establish governance

Successful development of the proposed collective data resource will require several foundational operational steps.

This is important as key responsibilities and mandates around data governance, collection, use and custodianship rest with these stakeholders, and many of the recommendations outlined in the next section cannot be implemented without their support.

REC.  
**1**

**NT Shelter should work to secure the support of key stakeholders, including the NTG, AIHW, NRSCH and CHOs.**

This is important as key responsibilities and mandates around data governance, collection, use and custodianship rest with these stakeholders, and many of the recommendations outlined in the next section cannot be implemented without their support.

REC.  
**2**

**NT Shelter should establish a working group that includes representatives from key stakeholder organisations.**

The working group will need to address the following issues:

- Develop a consistent definition of community housing in the NT. This is important to facilitate consistent and representative data collection across the sector.
- Data governance is foundational to a sustainable stewardship role for NT Shelter, which should develop principles and processes for governing the collective data resource (see Figure 5).
- Much of the data on sector performance and capacity are already collected by the NTG, NRSCH and AIHW. However, these data are not available to NT Shelter or the sector in a disaggregated form that would allow for sector insights. It is therefore essential that the working group clarify and resolve issues around data custodianship to enable data that are already collected to feed into the proposed shared data resource.
- The working group will need to address issues around reporting burden and data duplication, including clarifying which reporting streams genuinely add value and should be a priority for any data framework.
- The proposed working group would allow members to share insights on appropriate tools, policies and procedures for data gathering. This is an important opportunity for capacity building across the sector, as some CHOs already have measures in place to gather important information around impact (e.g. ASB, support provided, community development), while other CHOs are still at the beginning of this journey.

- Work towards and agree on a shared view of key data needed to demonstrate sector impact, including what data should be collected and what KPIs should be used. This is further explored in the next section.

## 4.2 Key data requirements

Data on the NT community housing sector are uneven across the domains of capacity, performance and impact, and in many instances, where data exist, it is not shared in a format that facilitates system insights. This section identifies for each domain what needs to be measured, what data currently exist and their limitations, and what needs to be actioned.

### 4.2.1 Capacity

Capacity refers to the sector's scale, structure, financial sustainability and ability to grow, including its governance, workforce, housing assets and development pipeline.

#### What currently exists

Publicly available data on sector capacity are relatively comprehensive at a basic level. The NRSCH Provider Register records the number of dwellings, ownership and management status, and registration tier for each CHO. NRSCH financial performance reports provide revenue, asset and debt data, though only at national level. ACNC and ORIC annual information statements provide organisation-level financial and workforce data, but coverage of the NT sector is incomplete due to interstate registrations and inconsistent reporting. The AIHW Community Housing Data Collection provides dwelling counts, but only for the six CHOs managing NTG-transferred properties. NTG expenditure on community housing is not reported in the RoGS.

#### What is missing and why it matters

The sector does not have a consolidated, NT-level picture of its own scale, financial viability or development capacity. The CH sector's share of the total NT housing market is not known. HAFF pipeline data attributable to NT CHOs are not consolidated in any accessible form. Land availability and zoning constraints (consistently identified as major barriers to growth) are not tracked in relation to social housing development. Workforce capacity, skills and turnover are not measured. Without these data, the sector cannot credibly demonstrate its current scale or its capacity to absorb investment and grow.

A key limitation is that some of these data are provided to NTG, NRSCH and AIHW by individual providers, but are reported back in an aggregate form, or not at all.

## What needs to be actioned

REC.  
**3**

**Establish the relevance and importance of missing capacity data (e.g. HAFF pipeline, land availability and zoning constraints) and develop meaningful ways of gathering these data.**

### 4.2.2 Performance

Performance refers to how effectively CHOs manage their properties and tenancies — including asset condition, occupancy, maintenance, turnaround times and rent collection.

#### What currently exists

The NRSCH collects the most comprehensive performance data on the sector, covering turnaround times, vacancy rates, repair and maintenance, occupancy rates, and financial performance. However, NRSCH data are only published at the national level — NT-level data may be available on request to the Registrar but are not routinely accessible. NTG collects quarterly performance data from the six CHOs managing CEO housing (occupancy, turnaround, arrears, evictions) but does not publish these. Dwelling condition data are collected nationally via the National Social Housing Survey, which is not conducted in the NT. Asset age and forward maintenance liability are not collected systematically by any public data custodian.

#### What is missing and why it matters

NT-level performance data are either held by NTG and unpublished, or available only at the national level through the NRSCH. This means the sector cannot access a consistent NT-level performance picture for advocacy or benchmarking purposes. More fundamentally, the metrics that do exist (e.g. turnaround times, vacancy days, arrears rates) are applied without the contextual information needed to interpret them fairly (e.g. ability to access trades in a timely manner). CHOs are currently benchmarked only against each other and NRSCH standards, not against public housing, which makes genuine performance assessment impossible.

## What needs to be actioned

REC.  
**4**

**Work with data custodians and key stakeholders to address issues around sharing existing data in ways that allow for sector insights.**

For example, NT Shelter could work with stakeholders to identify all NT-based CHOs that are NRSCH-registered. They could then request an NT-level disaggregation of NRSCH performance data that they could routinely report to the sector.

REC.

5

**Expand AIHW/RoGS data collections beyond the current six CHOs to get a better picture of the sector as a whole.**

Expanding these data collections would require a shared definition of the sector, addressed under Recommendation 2.

#### 4.2.3 Impact

Impact refers to outcomes for tenants and community — including housing stability, tenant wellbeing, rental affordability, connection to support services, and the social outcomes of community development activity. **This is the domain where the gap between what is measured and what matters most is largest.**

##### What currently exists

Rental affordability data are available for the NT through two sources: the RoGS reports rent as a proportion of household income for low-income CH tenants (based on AIHW administrative data); and the ABS Census reports the number of CH households where rent exceeds 30 per cent of household income (available every five years). NRSCH collects eviction rates and tenant satisfaction data nationally; NT-level data may be available by request. The AIHW Community Housing Data Collection captures some household-level data (Aboriginal status, disability, homelessness status at entry) for the six CHOs managing CEO housing, but this collection was only established in 2024-25. Tenant satisfaction, dwelling condition and wellbeing data from the National Social Housing Survey are unavailable for the NT.

##### What is missing and why it matters

The data that would most credibly demonstrate what CHOs contribute in terms of tenancy stability, wraparound support, early intervention, community development, and connection to services are almost entirely absent from any formal collection. Existing impact metrics are framed around deficits: evictions, arrears, ASB incidents. The sector's most distinctive contribution, the sustained, relationship-based support that prevents tenancies from failing, is invisible in reporting. This is not primarily a systems problem: several CHOs have the technical capacity to collect these data within their existing platforms but have not activated it because no one has required it.

ASB data are present but analytically weak and reputationally dangerous in their current form. Incident counts that do not distinguish between tenants, visitors and uninvited third parties, or that lump together domestic violence, mental health crises and noise complaints under a single category, are not credible as impact measures and leave the sector exposed to misinterpretation.

The absence of exit destination data means there is no way to assess whether the sector is successfully supporting tenants into more stable housing or returning them to homelessness. Length of tenancy, a direct and powerful indicator of housing stability, is not reported anywhere.

## What needs to be actioned

### REC. 6

#### **Develop meaningful indicators and collect data around tenancy stability and outcomes.**

Examples of these indicators might include:

- Length of tenancy by household, tenancies maintained over 12 months as a proportion of total tenancies managed
- Tenancy exits by reason (voluntary, eviction, abandonment, transfer, other) and by destination (private rental, public housing, homelessness, supported accommodation, deceased)
- Repayment plans negotiated to avoid eviction, and outcomes of those plans
- Rental affordability (e.g. rent as a proportion of household income, by CHO and dwelling type)
- Tenant satisfaction as measured by the CHIA tenant satisfaction survey.

### REC. 7

#### **Work towards a consistent approach to gathering data on tenant demographics and need.**

This approach should be underpinned by a shared consent template and process so that data can be consistently gathered and shared for sector insights (see Recommendation 2).

### REC. 8

#### **Develop shared metrics that demonstrate support provision.**

Examples of these indicators might include:

- Number of tenants receiving direct housing support from CHO staff, by type of support
- Hours of tenancy support provided per tenant
- Number of referrals to and confirmed connections with external support services
- Number of tenants with active support plans.

REC.  
**9**

**Develop a shared and nuanced approach to gathering data on ASB and community safety.**

Key issues to be addressed include:

- ASB incidents disaggregated by party involved (tenant, household member, visitor, uninvited third party)
- ASB incidents by root cause category (domestic and family violence, mental health, substance use, overcrowding and visitor management, other)
- Responses taken and outcomes, including preventative actions and support referrals.

REC.  
**10**

**Develop a shared approach to evidencing tenant wellbeing and satisfaction.**

This could involve:

- NT participation in the National Social Housing Survey, which will require NTG funding and commitment; or
- Use of a standardised instrument to measure tenant satisfaction, such as the CHIA NSW tenant satisfaction survey.

REC.  
**11**

**Develop a shared approach to measuring and evidencing community development outcomes.**

Examples of these indicators might include:

- Number of community events held and number of participants
- community development outcomes
- Number of tenants engaged in tenant reference or advisory groups.

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# Appendix

## A1. NRSCH registered providers in the Northern Territory

| Provider Name                                                                       | Category of Registration | Registration Status        |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| <a href="#">Mission Australia Housing Northern Territory</a>                        | Tier 1                   | Registered - Approved      |
| <a href="#">Venture Housing Company Limited</a>                                     | Tier 1                   | Registered - Approved      |
| <a href="#">Community Housing (NT) Limited</a>                                      | Tier 1                   | Registered - Approved      |
| <a href="#">Venture Housing HAFF SPV Limited</a>                                    | Tier 1                   | Registered - Approved      |
| <a href="#">CHCA HAFF SPV Limited</a>                                               | Tier 2                   | Registered - Approved      |
| <a href="#">CatholicCare NT Resources Limited</a>                                   | Tier 2                   | Registered - Approved      |
| <a href="#">SVDP Housing NT Ltd</a>                                                 | Tier 2                   | Registered - Approved      |
| <a href="#">Central Australian Affordable Housing Company LTD</a>                   | Tier 2                   | Registered - Approved      |
| <a href="#">Yilli Rreung Housing Aboriginal Corporation</a>                         | Tier 2                   | Registered - Approved      |
| <a href="#">Anindilyakwa Housing Aboriginal Corporation</a>                         | Tier 2                   | Registered - Approved      |
| <a href="#">Anglicare N.T. Ltd</a>                                                  | Tier 3                   | Registered - Approved      |
| <a href="#">Aboriginal Enterprises Australia (NT) Pty Ltd</a>                       | Tier 3                   | Registered - Approved      |
| <a href="#">Top End Association for Mental Health Inc.</a>                          | Tier 3                   | Registered - Approved      |
| <a href="#">Ngurratjuta Wanka Wilurratja / Alturla Rinya Aboriginal Corporation</a> | Tier 3                   | Registered - Approved      |
| <a href="#">Julalikari Housing Incorporated</a>                                     | Tier 3                   | Not Registered - Cancelled |

Source: NRSCH Provider Search, <https://nrsch.my.salesforce-sites.com/providersearch/>

Note: Aboriginal Community Housing Limited are registered in NSW ([R7775190628](#)) and YWCA are registered in QLD ([R4410151113](#)).

## A2. CEO Housing providers

| Provider Name                               |
|---------------------------------------------|
| Venture Housing                             |
| Mission Australia Housing NT                |
| Yilli Rreung Housing Aboriginal Corporation |
| Community Housing Central Australia         |
| St Vincent de Paul                          |
| TeamHealth                                  |

Source: Northern Territory Government.



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