



DROPPING OFF THE EDGE 2021

KEY FINDINGS:

- Disadvantage is concentrated in a small number of communities within the Northern Territory.
- Eight areas, about 13% of locations, accounted for 46% of the most disadvantaged rank positions across all indicators.
- These communities experience a complex web of disadvantage that make it challenging to improve life opportunities.
- All of the top 10 disadvantaged areas in the Northern Territory were outside Darwin, despite only one third of all SA2s being located outside Greater Darwin.

ABOUT 13% OF LOCATIONS, ACCOUNTED FOR 46% OF THE MOST DISADVANTAGED RANK POSITIONS ACROSS ALL INDICATORS.

LOCATIONAL DISADVANTAGE IS CONCENTRATED

A limited number of communities account for a disproportionate number of 'top ranked' (ie most disadvantaged) positions across the various indicators:

- Eight areas, about 13% of locations, accounted for nearly half (46%) of the most disadvantaged rank positions across all indicators.
- Three areas, about 5% of locations, accounted for 25% of the most disadvantaged rank positions across all indicators. This is a five-fold overrepresentation, indicating the heavy burden of disadvantage borne by a limited section of the community.

...AND OCCURS ON MULTIPLE FRONTS

Disadvantage is difficult to shift when it occurs across multiple areas of life, as these challenges combine to create what can seem to be insurmountable hurdles.

- There were eight areas in the Northern Territory that ranked as “most disadvantaged” on at least five indicators.
- Two locations in the Northern Territory had 11 or more indicators in the highest 5% across the Territory.

Different areas ranked highly on different indicators, highlighting the diversity of disadvantage between communities and the need to explicitly consider the individual community context when designing programs to address disadvantage and the impacts of disadvantage.

Place-based approaches that recognise the multi-faceted nature of disadvantage, and the particular types of disadvantage prevalent in any community, will have better prospects of success.

There is immense social and economic cost to the entire community as a result of sustained disadvantage, which perpetuates inequality and constrains life opportunities for significant sections of society.

THERE IS IMMENSE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC COST TO THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY AS A RESULT OF SUSTAINED DISADVANTAGE.



ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS CAN PLAY A SIGNIFICANT ROLE IN DISADVANTAGE

Dropping off the Edge included environment indicators for the first time in 2021. These considered aspects such as heat vulnerability, air pollution and lack of green canopy. While environmental factors are often not front of mind when we consider disadvantage, it is clear from the data that there is correlation between less healthy environments and other indicators of disadvantage. Particulate matter, a measure of air pollution, was an issue in some areas, most likely due to local mining operations as well as sand/dust in remote areas.

INTERGENERATIONAL DISADVANTAGE

The research also examined indicators of intergenerational disadvantage for the first time. These indicators - teenage pregnancies and families that reported neither parent in employment – frequently coexisted with other forms of disadvantage.

DROPPING OFF THE EDGE INCLUDED ENVIRONMENT INDICATORS FOR THE FIRST TIME IN 2021



HEAT VULNERABILITY



AIR POLLUTION



GREEN CANOPY

CASE STUDY

LOCATION: ATITJERE (HARTS RANGE)

Atitjere (Harts Range) is an Indigenous community located 215 km north-east of Alice Springs on the Plenty Highway. Indicators identified within the DOTE Index for the case study in Atitjere (Harts Range) highlight the diversity of contributors of disadvantage. Low family income was recorded at 2.5 times the national average, proportion of homes with no internet at home 3.8 times the national average, and proportion of people experiencing overcrowding 7.2 times the national average. Notwithstanding these challenges, participants spoke of a connected community.

“It is nice and quiet here, people don’t drink here like in Alice Springs or Mt Isa. The people are nice and I can yarn with people.”

Disadvantage is hard to shift due to the lack of employment opportunities in remote communities which affects household income. The Community Development Program (CDP) is a program in remote Australia that means those who are unemployed are required to contribute to their communities through a range of activities. But community members spoke of the failings of the program and the missed opportunity to build skills and improve outcomes.

“ There’s just no help and support. We’ve got this [Community Development Program] here, it’s meant to be an employment service. I don’t know what they do, but they don’t go out and support anybody on the outstations. [People] have to come in and do an activity ... here when they [are] meant to be doing it outreach.”

“This community needs...hope. Everybody’s frustrated. A lot of people don’t have jobs.”

PLACE-BASED APPROACHES

Place-based approaches tailored to address particular types of complex and interrelated disadvantage in place will have a better chance of achieving sustained change. The voices from the

case study community illustrate and reinforce the importance of solutions based in local experiences of both community disadvantage and community strengths.



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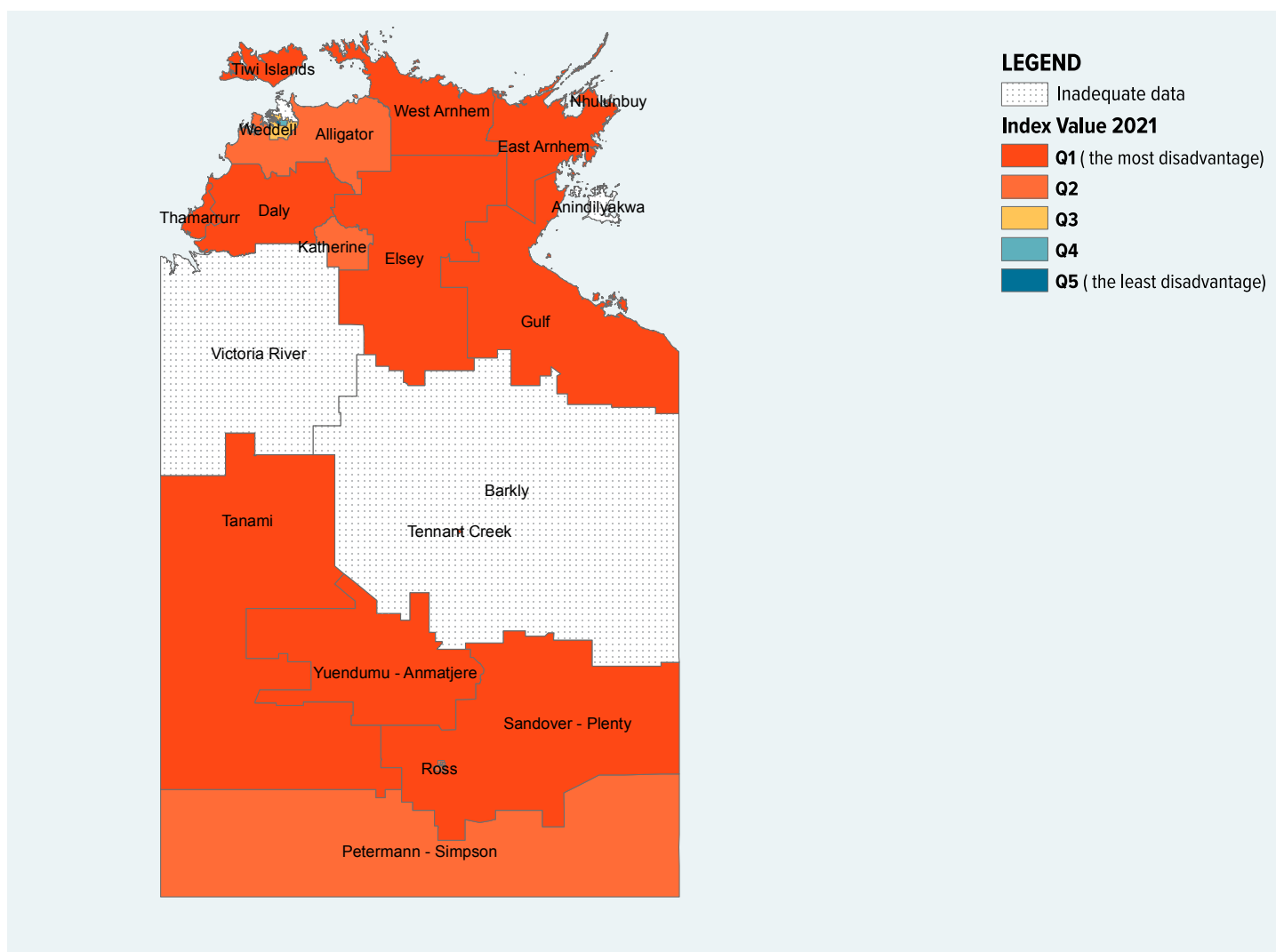
MOST DISADVANTAGED POSTCODES IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

(Bands illustrate the severity of disadvantage experienced by a location with Band 1 being most severe. Locations listed alphabetically within bands.)

List of 10 most disadvantaged locations in the Northern Territory


BAND	SA2 NAME	POPULATION	LOCATION
MOST DISADVANTAGED LOCATIONS			
1	East Arnhem	8,559	Rest of NT
	Eley	2,650	Rest of NT
	Gulf	4,731	Rest of NT
	Sandover - Plenty	4,553	Rest of NT
	Tanami	3,265	Rest of NT
	Tennant Creek	3,302	Rest of NT
	Thamarrurr	2,912	Rest of NT
	Tiwi Islands	2,743	Rest of NT
	West Arnhem	5,508	Rest of NT
	Yuendumu - Anmatjere	2,407	Rest of NT

MAP OF INDEX FOR THE NT








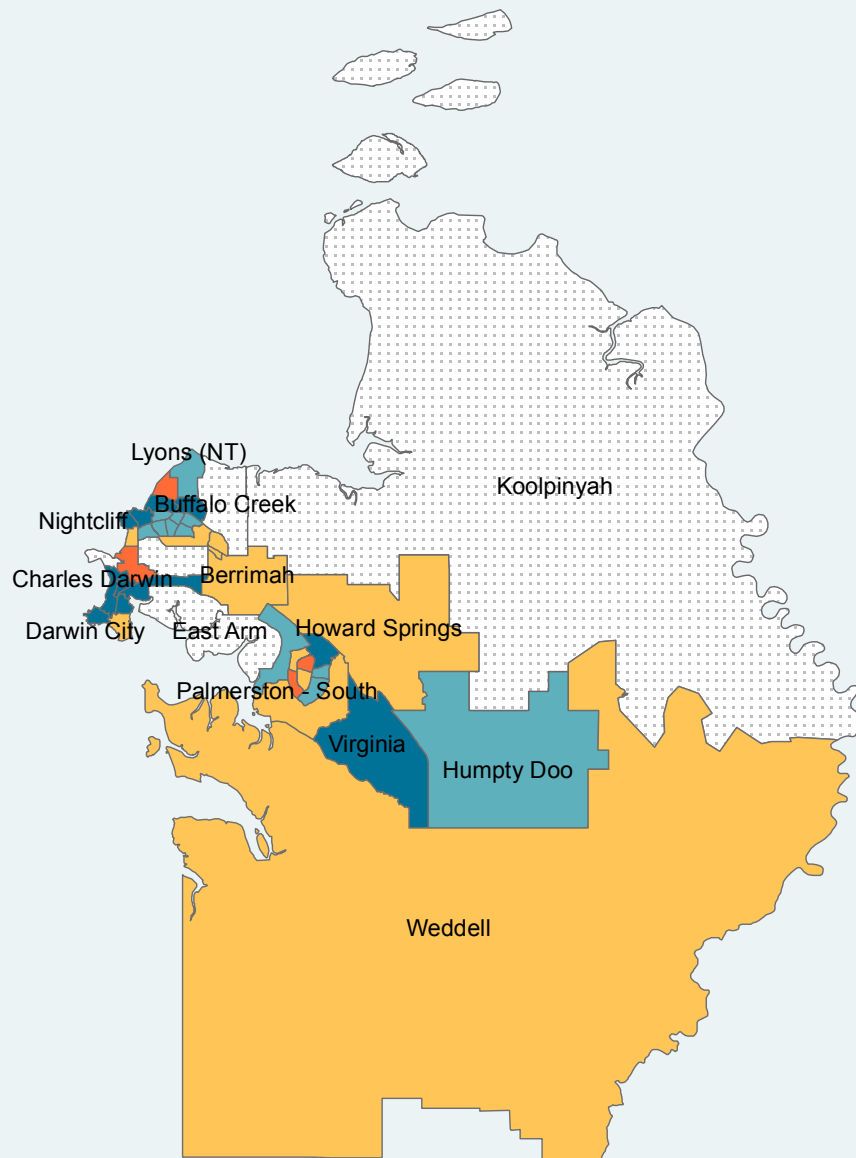
MAP OF INDEX FOR DARWIN

LEGEND

 Inadequate data

Index Value 2021

-  Q1 (the most disadvantage)
-  Q2
-  Q3
-  Q4
-  Q5 (the least disadvantage)



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examines 68 locations (SA2s or “statistical areas”) in the Northern Territory across 37 different **indicators of disadvantage**. The indicators, based on statistics collected from a number of government agencies, reflect factors that may limit life opportunities in the broad areas of social wellbeing, health, community safety, economic factors and education. In addition, for the first time, the 2021 report also includes environment indicators and indicators of intergenerational disadvantage.

An index was created that lists areas in bands according to their level of disadvantage. For each area we are able to identify the key drivers of disadvantage.

The report also considers every indicator separately, paying special attention in the Northern Territory to locations with five or more single indicators where the area ranked in the top 5% of disadvantage. In the Northern Territory this equates to just three areas. These areas are grappling with disadvantage on **multiple fronts**, and we can identify what those fronts are.

Qualitative analysis of disadvantaged communities – Atitjere (Harts Range) in the Northern Territory – has been incorporated in the latest report to add to the quantitative analysis.

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builds on similar reports released in 2015, 2007, 2004 and 1999.