Imizamo Yethu

Where social impact meets
financial sustainability —
a model that pays back and
pays forward



AUHF 2025: The Blender

UrbanThinkTank
EMPOWER

UTTE is implementing a ground-breaking public housing model in Cape Town, South Africa. We are a team of architects, quantity surveyors, community facilitators and economists who have developed a proven, real-world alternative to our nation’s failing housing programme .




Transform from this.....

To this.....






Empowering Communities
Goal 2 Zero hunger
Goal 3 Good health and Well-being
Goal 6 Clean water and sanitation
Goal 7 Affordable and Clean Energy
Developing Infrastructure
Implementing Urban Farming practices and infrastructure.
Providing work opportunities and supporting sustainable economic activities through communities.
Goal 1 No Poverty
Goal 8 Decent work and Economic Growth
Implementing socio-economic and environmentally sustainable systems to support residents.
Generating renewable energy to empower communities, clean and available access to water and self-services to improve sanitation and health, while considering the overall social amenities vital to a community.
Empower Ecosystem
UTTE aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations by implementing sustainable practices in all the communities we work with.
Building homes, developing infrastructure and implementing food security practices ensures that the communities become self-sufficient
Educating community leaders to implement sustainable models for lasting safety and democratic stability.
Training local labourers to build low-carbon structures integrated with green spaces for carbon sinks and reduced heat-island effect, while creating community farms for food security.
Goal 17 Partnerships of the Goals
Goal 9 Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure
Building dignified, safe and sustainable affordable housing across the country.
Creating a family asset to truly empower residents, while reaffirming a sense of belonging and security within the city through ownership models.
Cultivating Resilience
Goal 16 Peace Justice and Strong Institutions
Goal 13 Climate Action
Goal 11 Sustainable Cities and Communites
Goal 10 Reduced Inequalities
Building Homes

Part 1






POSITIVE - CREATIVE - HAPPY -
UNRESTRICTED - AUTHENTIC - STRONG -
ADVENTUROUS - INTUITIVE - AWARE -
VISIONARY - SOCIABLE - OPTIMISTIC

The Site: Hout Bay on the City Scale



Imizamo Yetho
Population 715
Units | Households 129

Cape Town CBD

Table Mountain



Community 1
Khayelitsha
Site C | BT Saweto
Population 428
Units | Households 72



Community 2
Khayelitsha
Site C | BBT Vukani
Population 381
Units | Households 68

Imizamo Yethu Context





Master plan



Master plan implementation



Master plan


HOUT BAY MAIN ROAD
MAIN ROAD
O.R Tambo Road
Luthuli Avenue (8m Road)
Mkokelo Street (10m Road)
Mkhumalo Street (10m Road)
A Bosland (10m Road)
N.R Mandela (16m Road)
Mawayi Avenue (10m Road)
Steward Street
Chimbodzi
Mandela Avenue
W. Sangaqiso Street
W. Sikuhlwa Street
Protea Street
Phakati Avenue
Mandela Avenue
Mandela Avenue
Mandela

Imizamo Yethu - Phase 1



Imizamo Yethu – Artist's impression

Total Investment: $7.5m (ZAR 135m)



155 New Homes	**470** Individuals Impacted
910 Jobs Created	**11** Shops


Promoting Food Security
Establishing urban farms and providing community-led training to create sustainable food sources
Health and Safety
Ensuring healthy communities by providing clean water, adequate sanitation and hygiene facilities for every home
UTTE
UTTE Strategic Goals
Ensuring families remain in their communities while upgrading living conditions with safe dignified housing
Building Climate Resilience
Incorporating renewable energy and eco-friendly construction materials to create sustainable, future proof housing
Security of Tenure
Offering innovative finanacial models that enable home-ownership and long-term community stability
Advancing Social Justice
Creating opportunities that uplift women through access to resources, skills and leadership roles

Imizamo Yethu - Artists impression

Site 1-2: Views - Retail street



Imizamo Yethu - Artists impression

Site 1-2: Views - Retail street



Imizamo Yethu - Artists impression

Site 1-2: Views - Inner courtyard



Imizamo Yethu - Artists impression

Site 1-2: Views - Inner courtyard



Imizamo Yethu - Artists impression

Site 1-2: Views - Roof terrace



Blended model

A blended-finance model that combines donor grants, impact investment, and end-user financing to make dignified home ownership accessible to low-income families

Grant Funding (30%)	Impact Investment (70%)	End-User Finance
- Donor capital (non-repayable) - Lowers construction cost - Improves affordability	- 7% concessional loan (7-year term) - Interest serviced via rentals - Repaid through deposits, subsidies, mortgages	- Rent-to-buy pathway - 20% of rent builds deposit - FLISP subsidies & mortgages

Process flow

01

Rent

Rent to buy owners pays rental for the 4-year rent-to-buy term

02

Save

A portion of the rental income is regarded as a ‘Deposit Saver’ .

03

Training & Mentorship

mbf
my budget fitness

04

Homeowner education

Consumer Housing Education

05

Subsidy

The FLISP subsidy

06

Mortgage

07

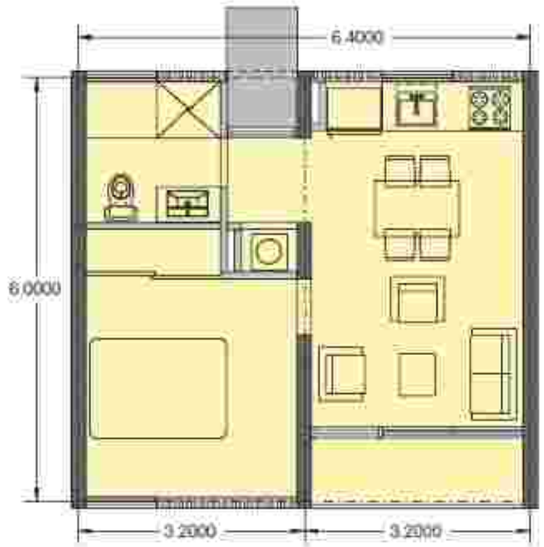
Home Ownership

Subsidised sales prices

One bedroom unit

39m²

R490,000 or $28,000



1 BEDROOM APARTMENT
Int. 35.54 sqm
Ext. 38.88 sqm

Two bedroom unit

59m²

R700,000 or $40,000



2 BEDROOM APARTMENT
Int. 54.42 sqm
Ext. 58.72 sqm

Three bedroom unit

79m²

R950,000 or $54,400



3 BEDROOM APARTMENT
Int. 73.35 sqm
Ext. 78.98 sqm

Evaluating Impact

Example: One bedroom unit

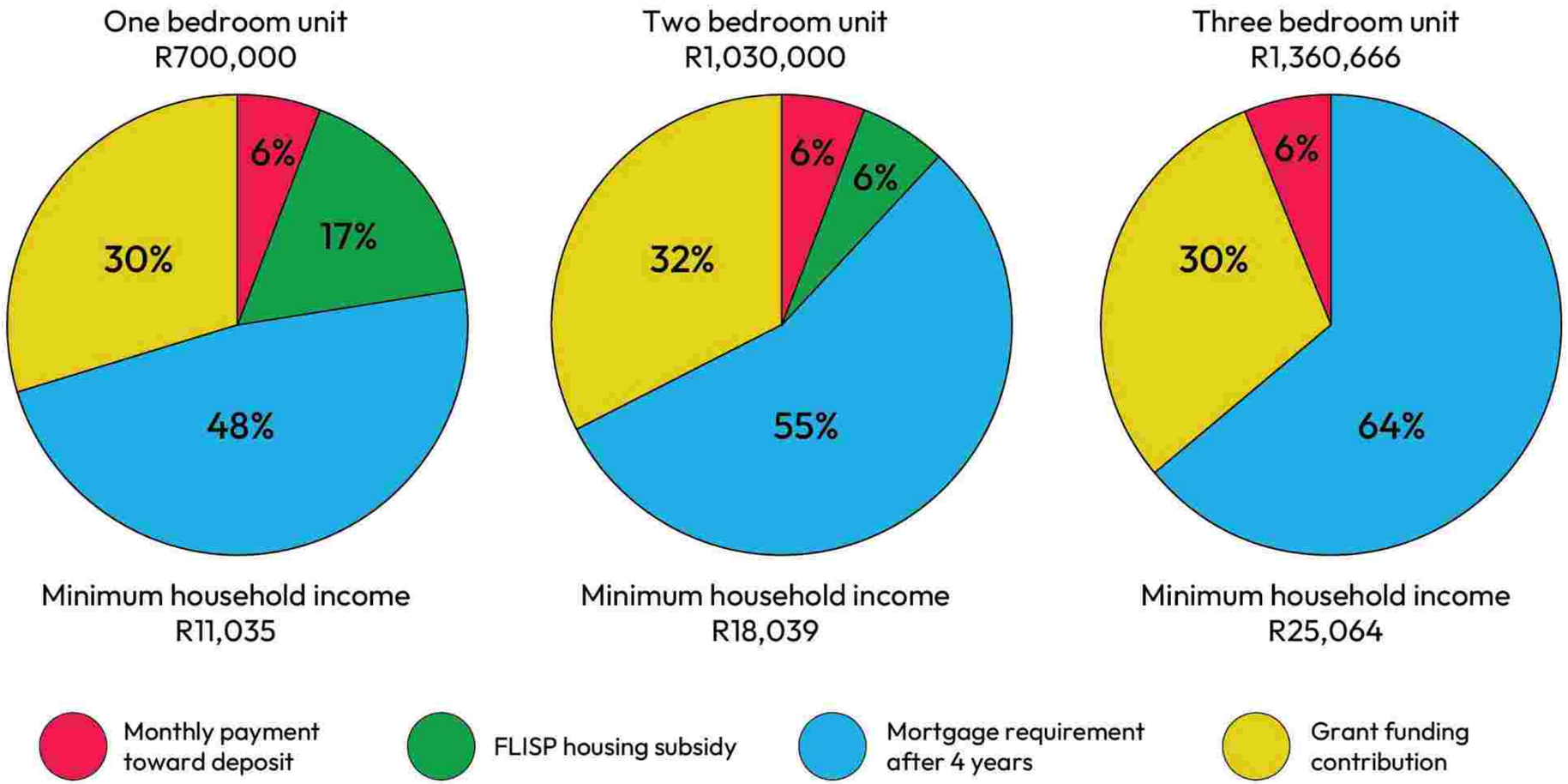
Rental Income + Deposit Saver + FLISP Subsidy + Smaller Affordable Mortgage = Increased affordability to homeownership

Purchase price	R700 000
Grant Funding Contribution	R210 000
Subsidised Selling Price	R490 000 ($27.2k)
To Qualify for a mortgage on R490 000, a monthly income of R14 940 ($830) is required	

Less FLISP Subsidy Applicable	R115 661
Less Deposit Saver	R41 000
Balance home loan require	R332 960 ($18,50k)
Mortgage affordability improved and salary requirement to homeownership reduced to R11 035 ($613)	

Evaluating impact

Rental income + Deposit saver + FLISP subsidy + Smaller affordable mortgage = Increased affordability to homeownership



Mortgage Payback over 20 years at 10.5% interest

Unit Type	Mortgage Amount	Monthly Instalment	Payback Amount	Annual rental at year 4
1 Bed Unit	R333 000	R 3 325	R798 000	R 4 630
2 Bed Unit	R570 000	R5 690	R 1 366 000	R 7 293
3 Bed Unit	R867 000	R8 656	R2 077 000	R 9 261

Impact Investment

Funding Requirement	
Total Capital Development Costs	R135 000 000 ($7.5m)
Minus 30% grant funding	R45 000 000 ($2.5m)
Funding Gap	**R90 000 000 ($5m)**

Consider an investment of R90 000 000 at an interest rate of 6% pa with only interest service during the initial 4 year rental period.

Total interest over 6 years= **R27 000 000 ($1.5m)**

Repayment Sources	
Mortgage Income	R 71 650 364 ($3.98m)
FLISP Subsidies	R 13 614 537 ($756k)
Deposit Savers	R 8 206 000 ($456k)
Rental Income	R 26 256 316 ($1 459m)
Total Income	**R 119 726 316 ($6.65m)**

Total repayment requirement	**R117 000 000 ($6.5m)**

Why invest in Empower IY?

Empower offers an opportunity to achieve a **blended triple return** — financial performance, social transformation, and scalable impact. It's a de-risked, revenue-backed investment that turns housing challenges into long-term, sustainable solutions.

Low-Risk, Structured Repayment
•The impact loan is fully **secured by real assets** — 155 completed homes in a growing urban market.



High Social & Environmental Impact
•155 families transition from informal settlements into permanent, energy-efficient homes.
•Local construction creates **500+ jobs** and builds community skills.
•**Financial inclusion and generational wealth**.

Every rand invested multiplies its impact — socially, economically, and environmentally.

Scalable and Replicable
•This pilot establishes a **revolving fund** that can be reinvested into future Empower projects.
•The model is **modular**, ready to replicate across South Africa and other African markets with similar housing deficits..



Project partners

Empowering families to build equity, stability, and a future they can own.

Meyer De Waal Inc

Legal & Financial Advisor

OKRA

Landscape architecture
& Urbanisme
Utrecht | The Netherlands

Moba

Argentinan Construction
System Advisor

U-TT Design LCC + FAARQ

Conceptual architectural designers

CITY OF CAPE TOWN
ISIXEKO SASEKAPA
STAD KAAPSTAD

Urban-A


MAY 13, 2019
TIME
The World's Most Unequal Country
Johannesburg, South Africa, suburbs Primrose, left, and Makause
time.com



UrbanThinkTank
EMPOWER

utte.co.za | delana@utte.co.za

Urban Think Tank Empower | NPO 284-599
76 Church Street, 8002, Cape Town, South Africa