



Private Infrastructure  
Development Group

Impact survey findings

# Acorn Housing (Qwetu), Kenya

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## About the report

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**In line with PIDG's theory of change, the infrastructure projects we develop and invest in are expected to generate positive outcomes for people – by providing new or improved access for individuals and households to essential services such as energy, water, communications, transport, and housing.**

Therefore, as part of our impact management system, we systematically assess who the expected end-users are and what difference the PIDG supported infrastructure is expected to make on their lives – with an emphasis on gender outcomes and disability inclusion.

One way we do this, is by regularly conducting surveys of the end-users of our projects to hear more directly about the impact we aim to create for them. We do this in partnership with 60 Decibels, a tech-enabled social impact measurement and customer intelligence company, using their Lean DataSM approach to collect the sought after impact data through phone surveys.

**In 2021, PIDG Companies InfraCo Africa, EAIF and GuarantCo facilitated a deal to provide high quality purpose-built student accommodation that aimed to provide safe, sustainable and energy efficient student housing in Kenya.**

**This report summarises the main survey findings on this project and some of the tangible positive impacts the project has had on people.**

## Project summary

### Building energy efficient housing



Total commitment:

**\$78.2m**

Provided support across three companies to build energy efficient accommodation for 22.7k students with integrated gender and disability considerations.

**Kenya**  
LMIC and FCAS

InfraCo Africa / EAIF / GuarantCo

## Acorn

With PIDG's support, Acorn have raised \$78.2m in private sector investment to add beds for 22.7k students and build energy efficient housing units.

### Direct impact on people

**SDG Assessment: 11** – Ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing.

**Expected impact:** 22.7k students are expected to benefit. 48% are anticipated to be women. The largest impact will be felt by first time students or students currently living in worse conditions.

### Direct impact on planet

**SDG assessment: 13** – Climate change mitigation.

**Expected impact:** Buildings will comply with IFC EDGE, reducing their environmental impact by at least 20%.

### Market transformation

**Challenge:** At the time of this commitment, only one I-REIT has been established since 2015 in the country.

**Channel:** Demonstrate REITs offer a viable funding source for the affordable housing sector.

**Outcome:** Improved capital market efficiency through an increase in the number of REITs in the country that will be publicly listed, increasing overall flow of financing to eligible housing projects.

### PIDG TA

Provided \$212k to support the sub-national loan note issue and \$64k to cover legal advisory and exchange listing fees for the listing of the local currency green bond on the London and Nairobi Stock Exchanges.

### Mobilisation

GuarantCo/EAIF mobilised \$65.1m of domestic debt and equity.

### Climate risk

**Transition:** Paris aligned.

**Physical:** Risks considered and where possible mitigated.

### Gender

Acorn has developed solutions to ensure the safety and well-being of female students. This includes employing female housekeeping and security staff, having dedicated female floors and rooms, CCTV, improved lighting around the buildings and restricted access through biometric cards.

### Disability

Rooms have also been designed for prospective students with disabilities. Design features include lowered counter tops, beds and widened lifts and designated washrooms across communal areas.

## Summary of the survey and respondents

### Survey information:

Project: Acorn Holdings (Qwetu), Kenya

PIDG Company: InfraCo Africa / EAIF / GuarantCo

Theme: Social Infrastructure (Housing)

Region: Sub-Saharan Africa



Date of interview

**Nov 22**

Number of people interviewed

**136**

Response rate:

**86%**

Margin of error:

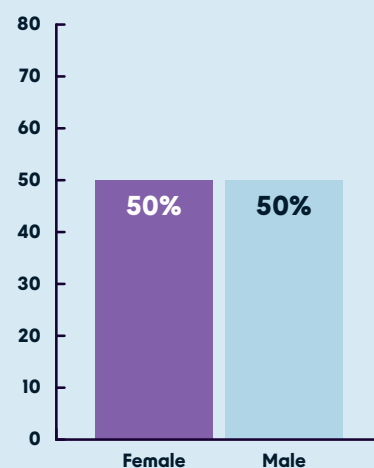
**~3%**

Language of interview:

**English**

### Profile of end-users

Gender:



## Impact on access and quality of life

### Access:

**90%**

% accessing product/ service for the first time (student housing).

**90%**

% without access to good alternative to Acorn (Qwetu) student housing.

**10%**

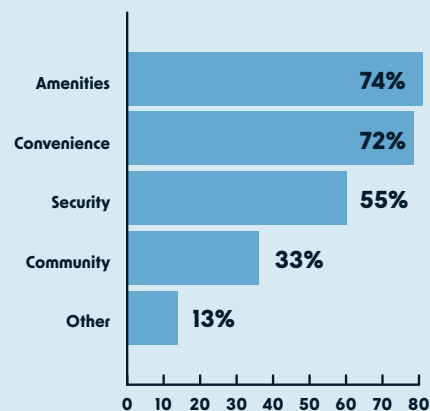
% had prior access to similar service (student housing).

Access to a purpose-built, quality student accommodation for most end-users who were accessing the product for the first time suggests that Acorn is providing a scarce product/service in Kenya. Also, the fact that 9 in 10 end-users could not easily find a good alternative suggests there's a scarcity of affordable student housing in the region.

### Key motivators:

Amenities, convenience, and community are key motivators for residents making the decision to move to Acorn's Qwetu residence.

Q: What motivated you to move into a Qwetu residence? (n=136)



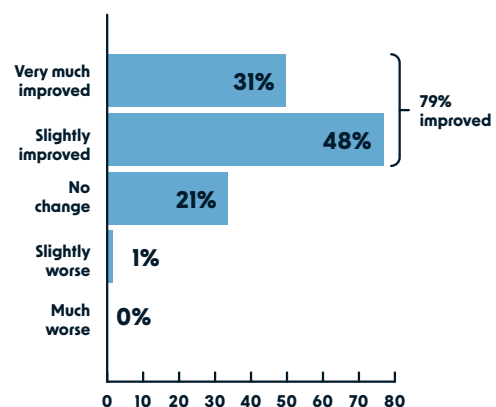
### Quality of life:

**79%**

% reporting improved quality of life due to Acorn (Qwetu) student housing

Improved social life and access to utilities are the top reasons given for improvements in quality of life.

### Perceived quality of life change:



## Impact on safety and social outcomes

### Personal safety:

**99%**

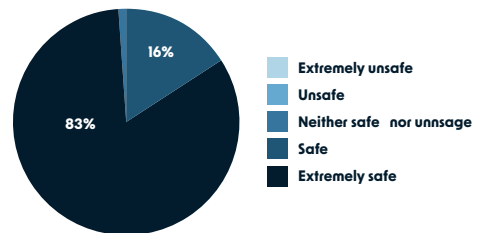
% improved personal safety.

Nearly all end-users report feeling safe living at Qwetu, of which 83% feel extremely safe living at Qwetu.

Presence of CCTV cameras, thorough security checks and a good security team are top causes for high sense of safety.

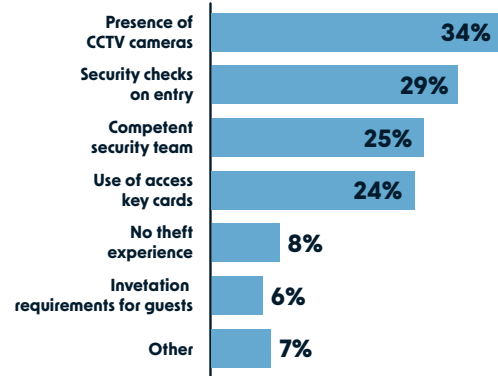
### Sense of safety, living at Qwetu

Q: How safe do you feel living at the Qwetu residence? (n = 136)



### Reasons for sense of safety

Q: Can you please explain why you feel that way regarding your safety at Qwetu? (n = 136)



### Social outcomes:

**85%**

% reporting increase in social network due to Acorn (Qwetu) student housing.

**79%**

% reporting increased self confidence due to Acorn (Qwetu) student housing.

**75%**

% reporting increased study hours for students due to Acorn (Qwetu) student housing.

Improved access to study areas and improvement in internet access sighted as top reasons for better learning outcomes.

## Impact on Gender inclusion

### Gender:

Data suggests that Acorn (Qwetu) Student Housing male and female residents report having a slightly different overall experience. With Qwetu's male residents reporting a more positive experience than their female counterparts, specifically for quality of life, networking opportunities and first time access.

Gender		Indicators
Male	Female	
84%	74%	Quality of life improvement due to Acorn (Qwetu)
82%	66%	Improvement in Ability to learn due to Acorn (Qwetu)
91%	79%	Improvement in network due to Acorn (Qwetu)
87%	72%	Improvement in Self confidence level due to Acorn (Qwetu)
94%	87%	First time access of student housing
79%	68%	Ease of use (% of customers experiencing no challenges)
37	59	Customer Effort Score (CES) (Ease of issue resolution and customer service of Acorn)
3.45	3.08	Net Promoter Score (NPS) (Customer satisfaction and loyalty to Acorn Student Housing)

## What our end-users said

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### Impact on quality of life:

"The fact that I don't have to worry about things like availability of water gives peace of mind and lets me focus on my studies. Also, the availability of internet at all times has contributed to a comfortable learning environment " – Male resident.

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"Well, it has improved my sense of independence. Being able to manage my time and have a balance between fun and study myself is an improvement for me." – Female resident.

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### Impact on social outcomes:

"It has been easier to do schoolwork because I am well connected to the Wi-Fi and constant electricity." – Male resident.

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"Meeting different people and making connections has really improved my confidence and social life" - Male resident

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### Impact on quality of life:

"I would definitely recommend it, mainly because of the amenities that it offers. I don't think that there's any other student accommodation that has a lounge, study area, gym, common room and events altogether. The price is definitely worth it when you look at it from that perspective." - Female resident