PROJECT
WEAVE

DRIVING GROWTH & INNOVATION

- A Kululeko and Khulisa Social Solutions Partnership -



Kayamandi Project Weave Dialogue Circle Report

Ikhaya Elimnandi: Building the Home We Want

Dialogue Circle, 31 October 2026, with Community Voice Survey and participant evaluation

Khulisa Social Solutions and Sakhisizwe (a project of Kululeko NPC)

About this report. This report is published with the agreement of the Project Weave partners. It describes what the residents who took part told us, and does not represent every resident of Kayamandi. Findings are subject to confirmation with participants. Nothing in this report claims a reduction in crime. No individual is identifiable, and photographs are used only with the consent of the people shown.

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1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Project Weave, the Social Fibre Initiative, is a partnership between Khulisa Social Solutions and Sakhisizwe (a project of Kululeko NPC). It asks what connects and disconnects South Africans, and where trust, belonging and safety are strongest and weakest. Kayamandi is the third community to take part, after Alexandra and Tembisa, through a Dialogue Circle hosted by Songo.info on 31 October 2026.

This report brings three sources into one account: what residents said in the themed groups and plenary; a Community Voice Survey on safety completed by 46 residents; and evaluation forms completed by 33 participants.

Safety runs through every finding, even though the circle was designed around belonging and solutions rather than crime. Residents described hearing gunshots daily, parents who cannot sleep while their children are out, and one group could name nowhere safe except their workplaces. In the survey, 80% said something in the past year had made them or someone they know feel unsafe, 76% named gun violence, and 52% avoid going out at certain times.

The central finding is that the links between residents and the institutions meant to respond have broken down. Residents raised protection fees and distrust of the police, councillors who are not visible, services they do not know about, and reports that go unanswered: "You do report but nothing happens." The deepest gap is information and follow-through, rather than the absence of help.

Kayamandi also has real strengths: families and neighbours, crèches and aftercare, sports clubs, churches, local NGOs, social workers, street committees and the information centre at Songo.info. Residents proposed practical ideas, and 54% of survey respondents want to be involved or contacted. Every evaluation respondent felt safe to share their views, and 91% would take part again. However, only 58% know what will happen next, and those who do are far more hopeful (89% against 57%).

The way forward is therefore a clear six-month roadmap, from November 2026 to April 2027, set out in section 13. It starts by returning to residents on Saturday 28 November 2026, adds community mapping, community-led interviews and targeted transect walks so that what residents have said can be located on the ground, establishes a baseline on Impact Outcomes, and leads to a stakeholder forum at which residents present their own priorities. The proposed intervention, scope and budget will be dealt with separately.

2 ABOUT PROJECT WEAVE AND THIS REPORT

Project Weave

Physical fibre connects places; social fibre connects people, possibilities and opportunity. Project Weave sets out to understand the social fibre of South African communities: what holds people together, what pulls them apart, and how existing resources could work better for the people they serve. In Kayamandi, a new area of work for Khulisa, the theme Ikhaya Elimnandi echoes the meaning of the community's own name, "nice home", and asks what it would take for the place to live up to it.

One engagement, three sources

Source	What it asked	What it produced
Dialogue Circle, 31 October 2026	If Kayamandi were the home we want, what would be different, and how can we build it together with what we already have?	Findings from five themed groups and a plenary: experiences, blockages, assets and residents' own ideas
Community Voice Survey	Experience of crime, reporting, unsafe times and places, safety measures, involvement and communication	46 completed or partly completed forms

Source	What it asked	What it produced
Participant evaluation	How the process felt, what value it brought, hope, and clarity about what happens next	33 anonymous forms

The circle used a Systematic Inventive Thinking approach, which looks for solutions inside what already exists: the people, places, relationships and resources already present. This report also recommends transect walks as the next evidence step (section 11).

3 KAYAMANDI TODAY

Kayamandi lies on the northern edge of Stellenbosch in the Cape Winelands. It was founded in the early 1950s, under apartheid segregation, to house Black migrant men working on surrounding farms, and in the 1960s Black residents were moved there under the Group Areas Act . At the 2011 Census it had 24,645 residents on 1.54 square kilometres, 84.9% of whom spoke isiXhosa as their first language . These are the most recent published figures for Kayamandi as a separate place, and the population is widely understood to have grown considerably since.

The community has real social infrastructure, including about 27 registered pre-schools, more than ten registered organisations, four schools and more than 20 soccer teams . Housing and land remain contested . Informal settlement areas such as Zone O , Thubelitsha, Enkanini and Watergang have grown around the original township, and survey respondents named these same areas most often as places they feel unsafe.

2026 has been a year of serious violence. Local media reported repeated fatal shootings , and in August 2026 police arrested four people, including a serving constable, in connection with an alleged extortion racket targeting shops in Stellenbosch and Kayamandi . Kayamandi also sits beside some of the wealthiest neighbourhoods in the Winelands, a contrast residents raised themselves.

4 THE VALUE OF THE DIALOGUE CIRCLE

A Dialogue Circle is a structured, respectful conversation in which participants speak from their own experience, listen without judgement and look for solutions together. Songo.info, a trusted Kayamandi organisation working with children and young people, provided the venue and recruited residents. That trust made open conversation possible.

What surfaced that other methods would miss

- **Safety became the lens for everything.** The questions were about belonging and solutions, yet almost every group returned to safety.
- **Neighbourly protection has weakened.** "Here in Kayamandi you can get robbed while people are here and they're gonna just watch you getting robbed."
- **Families are the first door.** "Our families, they move quicker." Neighbours may not want to get involved, for their own safety.
- **Help exists, but people do not know about it.** One participant learned during the session that girls can collect free sanitary towels locally: "There's a lot of organisations that are helping people, but we have a lack of knowledge."
- **Community safe points are not yet credible.** Asked whether a shop, church or hall could become a safe point, one group answered "none of the above".
- **Residents want ownership.** They asked directly where their ideas would go: "You can speak and speak and speak, but implementation is very important."

Participants agreed that they had shared so much because the session was a safe space. This is the asset to protect as the process grows.

5 SAFETY IN KAYAMANDI: WHAT RESIDENTS TOLD US

Where insecurity is experienced

Place or time	What residents described	Source
Daily life	Gunshots every day, people walking in fear, robberies in plain view, parents unable to sleep	Dialogue Circle
After dark	52% avoid going out at certain times, against 28% who avoid certain places; too few street lights, and many not working	Survey; Dialogue Circle
Informal settlements	Thubelitsha, Zone O, Enkanini and Watergang named most often (names to be confirmed with local partners)	Survey
Shops, shebeens and taverns	"Even if you're standing next to the shops nowadays, you are not safe."	Survey; Dialogue Circle
Churches	Some do not feel safe, as robbers have entered churches to steal money	Dialogue Circle
Roads	Reckless driving; speed bumps requested	Dialogue Circle

The crime residents see

Types of crime seen or heard about	Respondents	Share
Gun violence or shootings	35	76%
Theft or robbery	23	50%
Housebreaking	20	43%
Drug-related activity	19	41%
Gender-based or domestic violence	15	33%
Physical assault	14	30%
Hijacking or vehicle crime	13	28%

Every respondent aged 18 to 24 named gun violence. A third raised gender-based or domestic violence, which is usually under-reported.

Extortion and confidence in policing

Residents raised protection fees and rumours that some police are involved, and many said they no longer trust the police. In the survey, 26% gave distrust of the police as a reason people do not report, and 13% feared what might happen to them. One participant wrote that police and security help them "all the time", a reminder that experiences differ. Residents also asked how drone and camera footage leads to arrests and prosecutions. These are participants' experiences rather than findings about any institution or person, and they call for a safe, agreed route for raising them.

What residents proposed

Proposal	What it builds on	What it needs
More street lights and repairs	Existing infrastructure	Fault reporting, maintenance and feedback
Speed bumps	Street committees	A petition to the municipality
Monitored cameras and visible patrols	Police, law enforcement and security companies	Monitoring, governance and a response
A trusted communication platform	WhatsApp and word of mouth	Safe design: an earlier group failed because criminals could join it
A community safety stokvel	Stokvel tradition and residents' willingness to contribute	Feasibility, legal structure, governance and a retaliation risk assessment
Outdoor gym and a weekend market	Fields, gyms, the information centre	A host, a site and local partners
Panic buttons and gunshot sensors (survey: 72% and 63% in favour)	Community networks	A response protocol, and clear information on how data is used

6 TRUST, ACCOUNTABILITY AND SOCIAL COHESION

If safety is the thread, trust is the knot. Residents described councillors seen mainly at election time, though views differed on committees: one group said ward committees do not play their role, while another described street committees as "very committed". Social workers are trusted for confidentiality, but residents described going to the wrong office and cases that "just stay there". Residents also raised concerns about how relief such as food parcels is allocated. They challenged why independent organisations, rather than government, are researching their problems.

The chain from concern to response

Stage	Where it breaks now	What would be measured
Know	People do not know which services exist or which office serves them	Residents who know where to go
Report	Fear, shame and "trust issues"; no safe way to share information	Reports through an agreed, safe channel
Refer	Organisations work in silos; there is no referral system	Referrals made and accepted
Respond	"We are coming", and cases stay where they are	Proportion acted on
Feedback	"This is how far we are with your case" is what residents ask to hear	Proportion who receive feedback

Social cohesion and belonging

Opinions were divided on whether Kayamandi still feels like home, yet residents spoke of togetherness as the true measure of success: "Not all of us want to leave the ghetto... Life is not always about materialism, but about safety." They want solutions from within the community, and they want more residents, NGOs and government in the room.

7 WHY PROBLEMS PERSIST: THE SYSTEMIC BLOCKAGES

No.	Blockage	What residents described
1	Extortion and compromised trust in policing	Protection fees, fear of sharing information, and doubt that reports or footage lead to prosecutions
2	Weak local accountability	Councillors and committees seen as not visible; concerns about fairness in relief; no feedback on reports or applications
3	Fragmented services and referral	Services are unknown, residents go to the wrong office, cases are not followed up
4	An information vacuum	No trusted, regular channel; children left out; reliance on word of mouth, which spreads fear
5	Few pathways for young people	Unemployment, idleness, drugs and alcohol, and limited safe recreation

"Once you disintegrate information within societies, fear creeps in and criminality takes over."

Three of the five blockages concern the flow of information. Until information moves safely between residents, organisations and institutions, other interventions will struggle to take hold.

8 WHAT ALREADY EXISTS: ASSETS, YOUNG PEOPLE AND LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

Residents moved the conversation from what is missing to what is already there. The question becomes how to make what exists work for the people who need it.

Asset residents value	What residents said	What it could become
Crèches and aftercare	Children's safe places while parents work	Safety and "who to tell" sessions for children
Holiday activity club, sports clubs and gyms	Keep children away from crime and drugs	Expanded, safe activities designed with young people
Information centre at Songo.info	Where residents heard about this session	A trusted information point and possible help desk
Local NGOs and social workers	Trusted, but stretched and fragmented	A referral network with follow-up
Churches and pastors	A trusted door, though some feel unsafe there	Support and mobilisation
Street committees	"Very committed", and report back	A link in the communication channel
Families and neighbours	The first line of help	Supported through parenting and family circles
WhatsApp and word of mouth	65% use WhatsApp	A managed channel, safely designed

Young people

Young people were described both as drawn into crime, drugs and alcohol and as needing more to do. The Pathways for Young People group's report-back was not captured in the recording, so young people's own voice needs to be gathered directly through a youth-only circle.

Local organisations

Songo.info works with about 150 children and young people each weekday afternoon, by its own report, and was central to the circle's success. Participants asked that future sessions reach beyond parents at Songo.info and include other NGOs and community leaders. Only 4% of survey respondents named NGOs as working on safety, which suggests that local organisations are present but not yet visible on this issue.

9 WHAT PARTICIPANTS TOLD US IN THE SURVEY AND EVALUATION

Both give a first quantitative picture alongside the qualitative findings. They describe the people who took part, not the whole of Kayamandi.

Community Voice Survey (46 respondents)

Measure	Result
Something in the past year made them or someone they know feel unsafe	37 of 46 (80%)
Avoid going out at certain times	24 of 46 (52%)
Would definitely wear a free panic button	33 of 46 (72%)
Support gunshot detection sensors	29 of 46 (63%)
See neighbours and community members as the main people working on safety	20 of 46 (43%)
See the ward councillor or local government working on safety	4 of 46 (9%)
Want to be involved or contacted	25 of 46 (54%)
Prefer WhatsApp for safety information; community meetings	43%; 33%

Participant evaluation (33 forms)

Statement	Agree	What it tells us
I felt safe to share my views	33 (100%)	The process created a safe space
I felt welcome and respected	32 (97%)	Strong experience of respect
Everyone in my group had a chance to speak	32 (97%)	All voices were heard
I learned something new about what Kayamandi already has	31 (94%)	Information was the most valued benefit
I would take part in a circle like this again	30 (91%)	Residents want to return
I feel more hopeful about Kayamandi after today	25 (76%)	A meaningful, if not universal, shift
Today was different from other meetings	23 (70%)	Many have been consulted before
I know what will happen next and when I will hear back	19 (58%)	Follow-through is the critical gap

82% rated the day very good or excellent, and no one rated it fair or poor. Participants who know what happens next were more likely to feel hopeful (89%) than those who do not (57%), although the numbers are small and indicative. The most common request was to invite more people, other NGOs, community leaders and government.

10 HOW THE THREE SOURCES FIT TOGETHER

Theme	Dialogue Circle	Survey	Evaluation
Violence shapes daily life	Daily gunshots; nowhere safe but work	80% affected; 76% name gun violence	Safety named as valuable to discuss
Trust in reporting is low	"We no longer trust police"	26% distrust police; 13% fear consequences	Requests that government listen
Reports go nowhere	"You do report but nothing happens"	20% say nothing happens	Only 58% know what is next
Information is missing	"We have a lack of knowledge"	9% do not know how to report	Information most valued
Neighbours carry the load	Family is the first line of help	43% name neighbours	Unity and care valued
Residents want to act	Stokvel, market, petitions	54% want to be involved	82% likely to act on their commitment

Gathered in different ways, the three sources point in the same direction. The barrier is not a lack of willing residents or local assets. It is the breakdown of the links between residents and those who should respond.

11 THE TRANSECT WALK: FROM WHAT RESIDENTS SAY TO WHERE IT HAPPENS

The Dialogue Circle and survey tell us what residents experience and what they prioritise. A transect walk takes a small group into the community to locate those priorities on the ground, test them against what can be seen, and add what was not mentioned. It is a structured, participatory walk along a planned route, with local residents, NGOs and community leaders, guided by three questions: What is here? Who uses it, owns it or is responsible for it? What could it become?

Why it matters in Kayamandi

What residents told us	What the walk would add
52% avoid certain times; too few street lights, many not working	Working and broken lights on the route, unlit stretches, and who is responsible for repair
Thubelitsha, Zone O, Enkanini and Watergang named as unsafe	Confirmed names and the general areas of concern, as seen by women and young people
Shops and taverns are points of risk	Where these sit in relation to routes used by learners and women
Safe points are not yet credible	What a credible place would need, and where one or two could be developed
Assets are valued but not connected	Assets located, verified and recorded: does each exist, function, and is it trusted and connected?
Information does not reach people	Sections without an active street committee or trusted information point

Proposed approach

A full walk across all of Kayamandi would be costly, time-consuming and carry safety risks. We therefore recommend short, targeted walks on routes chosen from the community mapping and residents' priorities, following the feedback session.

- **Who:** six to eight people, including Dialogue Circle participants, women, a young person, an older resident, a local organisation, a community leader or ward committee member, and a trader, with a Khulisa facilitator and a local guide.
- **How:** 60 to 120 minutes, in daylight, on a route agreed in advance, with ward structures informed. Nobody walks alone, and nobody is confronted.
- **Protecting people:** photograph places rather than people. Sensitive locations are recorded by general area only, and exact coordinates do not appear in any shared output.
- **Being clear:** the walk gathers evidence and does not promise projects. What is found is shared back.

What it will produce

- A community asset and risk map.
- A map of organisations already working in the area, and the missing connections.
- A register of opportunities, each linked to a place, an asset and a responsible partner.
- Baseline evidence on Impact Outcomes, including fixed photograph points that can be revisited.
- A one-page plain-language summary returned to participants.

12 THE ROLE OF AI AND IMPACT OUTCOMES

The circle's report-backs and plenary were recorded and analysed through Khulisa's InsightHub, which supports transcription and the identification of themes, blockages and assets. Khulisa analysts check and interpret the results: AI assists, people decide. Survey and evaluation forms were read from scanned handwritten forms.

Impact Outcomes brings community needs, assets, organisations, commitments, referrals and outcomes into one place-based view. In Kayamandi it can hold the commitments made to residents, the baseline from mapping, interviews and walks, and progress over time, so that partners and residents can see whether anything is changing.

13 FROM DIALOGUE TO ACTION: RECOMMENDATIONS AND A SIX-MONTH ROADMAP

Recommendations

Priority	What we recommend
Return and follow through	Share a plain-language summary; return to the same participants; give every commitment an owner and a date; keep residents informed
Listen more widely	Hold a youth-only circle; invite other NGOs and more residents, beyond parents at Songo.info, while keeping the space safe
Locate the evidence	Combine community mapping, community-led interviews and targeted transect walks into one verified picture
Close the information gap	Design with residents a safe communication channel, and a service directory showing which office serves which section
Make reporting safer	Promote anonymous routes such as Crime Stop (08600 10111); agree with partners how concerns about extortion and alleged police involvement are raised, including through oversight bodies such as IPID

Priority	What we recommend
Act on what is visible	Start with street-light faults and road safety, where residents can quickly see a response
Bring in those who can respond	Convene a forum at which residents present their own priorities to government departments, the municipality and other partners

Six-month roadmap: November 2026 to April 2027

The dates below are proposed, and will be confirmed with Sakhisizwe, Songo.info and residents.

When	What we propose to do	Key milestone
November 2026	Share a plain-language summary with participants by 20 November. Hold the feedback session on Saturday 28 November, with community safety mapping and community-led interviews. Align timing with the independent ISS household survey, so that residents are not over-surveyed.	Findings confirmed or corrected by residents; priorities ranked; first community map
December 2026	Capture maps, interviews and corrections on Impact Outcomes. Plan transect routes with residents. Confirm unclear place and organisation names.	Consolidated evidence; transect routes agreed
January 2027	Hold the youth-only circle when schools reopen. Carry out the targeted transect walks.	Young people's voice added; assets and risks located on the ground
February 2027	Complete the baseline. Hold the next feedback session to share verified findings and agree how, and by whom, they will be presented. Begin designing the communication channel and service directory with residents.	Baseline report; residents agree the presentation of their findings
March 2027	Convene the stakeholder forum, with the Department of Social Development, Stellenbosch Municipality and other partners, at which residents present their priorities. Introduce the WEAVE Skills and Active Citizenship Pathway, following the feedback session.	Forum held; responses and commitments recorded
April 2027	Review progress against the baseline and commitments, and report back to residents and partners. Confirm priorities for the next phase.	Six-month progress report; next phase agreed

This report stays focused on findings, recommendations and the roadmap. The proposed intervention, including its scope, implementation detail and budget, will be set out separately.

14 MEASURING PROGRESS

The measures below follow from what residents said would show improvement. They will be confirmed once the baseline is complete.

Outcome sought	Suggested indicator	Evidence and review
Residents feel safer	Residents who feel safe in their area by day and after dark	Questionnaire, repeated every six months
Follow-through on commitments	Commitments met on time; residents who know what happens next	Impact Outcomes; evaluation at each session
Better access to help	Residents who know where to report a concern and which office serves them	Questionnaire; referral records

Outcome sought	Suggested indicator	Evidence and review
Safer places	High-risk areas identified, and change after action; lighting faults reported and repaired	Repeat mapping, interviews and walks
Information reaches people	Residents connected to a safety communication channel	Network register
Young people involved	Young people taking part in design and decisions	Attendance and decision notes

15 RISKS AND HOW WE PROPOSE TO WORK

Residents trusted this process with sensitive information and real hope. A further consultation without visible follow-through could deepen the mistrust they described. To protect that trust, we suggest that the partners work in the following way as the roadmap unfolds:

- **Residents first.** Participants see and confirm the findings before they are shared more widely, and residents present their own priorities at the forum, as they were told they would.
- **People kept safe.** No one is identifiable in shared material. Before any public event or publication, the partners consider whether it could expose anyone to retaliation.
- **Sensitive concerns handled with care.** Concerns about extortion and alleged police involvement are not attributed to individuals or raised in public forums, and the partners agree a safe route for raising them.
- **Personal information protected.** Forms and contact details are stored securely in line with POPIA, and follow-up with anyone under 18 involves their parents or caregivers.
- **Honest about the evidence.** The limits of small samples are stated wherever findings are shared.
- **Realistic commitments.** We promise only what can be delivered, and report back even when a concern cannot be resolved immediately.
- **Non-partisan and jointly owned.** Sakhisizwe, Khulisa and Songo.info agree together what is shared, with whom and when.

Abuse and other protection concerns must be referred to qualified services immediately. A communication channel must be designed so that it cannot expose residents, and technology such as cameras or panic buttons needs feasibility, privacy and response checks before any commitment.

Limits of the evidence

- The Dialogue Circle findings rely on an automatically generated transcript of report-backs and plenary. The groups' written sheets were not available, Group 4 was not recorded, and some names need to be confirmed.
- The survey is a small, non-random sample of 46 residents, read from handwritten forms. Counts may differ by a few responses.
- The evaluation is based on 33 forms. Attendance was not recorded on the forms, so the response rate is unknown, and sub-group comparisons are indicative only.
- The 2011 Census figures are the most recent published for Kayamandi and understate the current population.

16 CONCLUSION

Kayamandi is a community whose sense of home has been badly damaged by violence, and whose trust in those meant to protect it is fragile. But it is not a community without resources or will. Residents spoke openly, named what they value, proposed practical solutions and asked to be involved.

The Dialogue Circle has shown what residents experience. The next six months will show where it happens, who can respond and whether anything changes. By returning to residents first, locating the evidence on the ground, and bringing residents and institutions together around their own priorities, Project Weave can help Kayamandi move closer to the home its name promises. What we keep connecting, we make stronger.