PROJECT
WEAVE

DRIVING GROWTH & INNOVATION

- A Kululeko and Khulisa Social Solutions Partnership -



ABRIDGED REPORT

Tembisa Project Weave Dialogue Circle Report

Community Safety Dialogue Circle

Phomolong Recreational Hall, 27 October 2026, with participant evaluation

Khulisa Social Solutions and Sakhisizwe (a project of Kululeko NPC), with Get Informed | 7 November 2026

About this report. This abridged 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 Tembisa. The findings are subject to confirmation with participants, and the crime figures in section 3 come from secondary sources that have not been independently verified. 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. Tembisa followed Alexandra, through a Community Safety Dialogue Circle held with Get Informed Youth Development Centre at Phomolong Recreational Hall on 27 October 2026.

This is the abridged report. The full report contains the detailed findings, evaluation results and crime figures.

This report brings together what residents said in four themed groups and the wider discussion, and an evaluation questionnaire completed by 35 participants. It reads those findings against the Tembisa Security Fact Sheet of 7 October 2026 as context.

Safety runs through every finding. Residents described dark streets and unsafe passages, taverns open all night, drugs, gender-based violence, slow or absent police response, difficulty reporting abuse, especially for children, and unemployment that leaves young people and families vulnerable. Four in five respondents (83%) said that concern about physical danger often or sometimes stops them doing things. Six in ten do not feel able to speak openly without fear of intimidation, and half do not know where to seek support.

The central finding is that these problems reinforce one another. Improving safety requires a reliable connection between residents, community organisations, public services and economic opportunity, with clear responsibility for follow-through.

Tembisa also has real strength. Eight in ten respondents could identify people, organisations, skills or spaces that already exist, 86% believe these could be better connected, and no respondent said they had nothing to contribute. Between 80% and 89% rated the Dialogue Circle positively, and the most common request was for more.

The way forward is a clear six-month roadmap, from November 2026 to April 2027, set out in section 13. It starts by returning to residents and NGOs at the end of November 2026, then presents to local government and councillors for strategy and buy-in, adds targeted transect walks and a baseline on Impact Outcomes, and introduces accredited training linked to the priorities residents confirm. 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.

One session, two main sources

Source	What it asked	What it produced
Dialogue Circle, 27 October 2026	What is blocked? Why does it stay blocked? What already exists that could unblock it? What could participants and institutions do, with what evidence of progress?	Findings from four themed groups and a wider discussion, with blockages, assets and residents' own ideas
Evaluation questionnaire	Physical and emotional safety, inclusion and belonging, community strengths, and feedback on the circle	35 responses

Source	What it asked	What it produced
Context: Tembisa Security Fact Sheet, 7 October 2026	What do available crime and service figures show?	Secondary data, not independently verified

The partners each play a part. Khulisa led the dialogue process, analysis and report-back. Sakhisizwe supports continued engagement. Get Informed, a local partner with whom Khulisa has worked for over 13 years, works in psychosocial support, GBV prevention and referrals, economic activation, digital literacy and mentorship. This report also recommends transect walks as the next evidence step (section 11).

3 TEMBISA TODAY

Khulisa has worked in Tembisa, in Ekurhuleni, for over 20 years. Before the dialogue, Khulisa prepared a fact sheet from publicly available sources. These figures are station-level or district-level data from secondary sources. They give context but are not findings of the dialogue, and should be verified against original sources before public use.

Tembisa police station, 2025/26	Recorded	Change
Total crime	8,434	+7.2%
Drug-related crime	1,146	+290 cases
Aggravated robbery	994	-146 cases
Kidnapping	196	+9 cases
Rape	139	-8 cases
Murder	90	+1 case

The fact sheet describes Tembisa as a priority GBV station and among the country's highest-ranking stations for contact crime and kidnapping. It also records policing resource constraints, a series of killings of women across Ekurhuleni in 2026, protests over water and electricity, and district unemployment of 34.6%. Station areas differ, and figures for neighbouring stations should not be added together.

Why this work is critical

The scale of crime and fear in Tembisa means that no single project or organisation can respond alone. A lasting response needs a shared strategy with local government and councillors, and active buy-in from those responsible for services. That is why the presentation to local government is a central step in this roadmap.

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. Between 28 and 31 of the 35 respondents (80% to 89%) agreed with each main statement about the circle, including that they heard other people's perspectives.

What surfaced that other methods would miss

- **Reporting has to be believed.** One participant said visible injuries or recordings were expected before a complaint was believed, and that people were sometimes told to resolve matters with their partner.
- **Fear includes people close by.** "Sometimes the unsafe people are our own neighbours." "If you speak the truth your life could be in danger."

- **A clear request for short-term safety.** Women called for a "green door": a place where a woman and her daughter could stay temporarily while a problem is addressed.
- **Children need a bridge.** Those who cannot report abuse themselves could be helped by organisations that already work with them.
- **Broken lights are about responsibility.** Residents need to know who is responsible, how to report a fault, when it will be fixed, and how to check that it stays fixed.
- **Training must lead somewhere.** Residents questioned skills programmes that end without placements, and age limits that exclude adults who are still breadwinners.

5 SAFETY IN TEMBISA: WHAT RESIDENTS TOLD US

Four groups

Group	What residents described	What they proposed
Women and girls	Poor lighting, low visibility and unsafe passages; poverty pushing women and girls into financial dependence on men	Monitoring passages, patrols, a "green door", skills such as gardening, food production and sewing, and programmes involving men and boys
Streets, places and getting around	Shootings, drugs including crystal meth, poor police visibility, barriers to reporting intimate partner violence, relapse after rehabilitation	Accountable lighting, sustained support after rehabilitation, and skills that lead to real local work
Reporting and getting help	Information does not reach those expected to act; children cannot report; help is delayed or absent in informal settlements	Organisations working with children as a bridge; action by SAPS and GBV brigades; WhatsApp, with victims' information never shared in group chats
Young people and families	Unsafe everyday places: taverns, sports grounds, tuck shops, hostels, taxi ranks and parks; young people not heard	Churches, halls and community spaces for workshops, life skills and work-related learning, with young people taking an active role

How safe residents feel

Area (35 respondents)	Low	Some	High
Physical safety: protection from crime, violence or harm	18 (51%)	9 (26%)	8 (23%)
Environmental safety: safe and healthy surroundings	21 (60%)	10 (29%)	4 (11%)
Infrastructure and services	17 (49%)	10 (29%)	8 (23%)
Digital safety: reliable access to technology and information	20 (57%)	6 (17%)	9 (26%)

Confidence in policing and response

Participants raised shortages of police staff and vehicles, slow response and fear of reporting to people who may be connected to perpetrators: "Lack of trust with relevant stakeholders: things reported and no response." Questions were also raised about community security-gate arrangements and uneven charges. These are participants' concerns, not findings against any person or institution, and they call for direct engagement with SAPS, the Community Policing Forum and the Community Safety Forum.

6 TRUST, ACCOUNTABILITY AND SOCIAL COHESION

Residents described obstacles at every step: deciding to report, finding someone they trust, getting a response and receiving follow-up. Each weak link discourages the next report.

Stage	Where it breaks now	What would be measured
Disclose	Fear of retaliation, judgement or shame	Residents who feel able to speak openly
Find help	Half of respondents do not know where to seek support	Residents who know where to go
Report	Fear of reporting to people connected to perpetrators; children cannot report themselves	Referrals made through agreed, safe routes
Respond	Delayed or absent help; shortages of staff and vehicles	Time to first response; referrals accepted
Follow up	"Things reported and no response"	Referrals completed; residents who receive feedback

Social cohesion and belonging

Across five statements on social inclusion, between 49% and 63% of respondents agreed, with 63% saying they feel accepted in the community. Responses on belonging, voice and agency were more positive, at between 54% and 83%, and 83% expressed confidence in themselves. Residents feel a measure of personal agency, but are less sure that the community as a whole treats everyone fairly. In the closing round, they offered words such as knowledge, unity, love, communication, empowerment and not giving up.

7 WHY PROBLEMS PERSIST: THE SYSTEMIC BLOCKAGES

No.	Blockage	What it does to the system
1	A broken chain between disclosure and help	Each weak link discourages the next report; a directory alone would not fix this
2	Safety infrastructure without accountable maintenance	Darkness and unsafe passages limit where people can go and when
3	Economic insecurity that undermines protection	Poverty, age limits and training without placements came up in every group
4	Support that ends too soon	People leave rehabilitation for unchanged pressures; short workshops carry the same risk
5	Community initiative without clear governance	Gates, patrols, safe spaces and WhatsApp groups need fair access, safe practice and accountability
6	The gap between being consulted and seeing change	If residents are asked for more before receiving feedback, trust will weaken

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

Residents identified a wide range of assets that could be better connected. These are leads, not yet a verified service network.

Asset	What it could become
Trusted child-focused organisations and NPOs	A bridge for children to raise concerns and receive follow-up
Churches, halls, sports spaces and open land	Places for youth activities, workshops, life skills and learning

Asset	What it could become
Stokvels, women's groups and youth clubs	Mobilisation, support and local enterprise
Community patrollers, the CPF, CSF and GBV brigades	A connected safety and referral network, with safe practice
Clinics, schools and social workers	Referral points in an agreed process
Parents, youth leaders and residents	Time, skills and ideas for shared action

What residents could contribute

Contribution	Respondents
Time	25 (71%)
Skills	24 (69%)
Ideas and knowledge	23 (66%)
Contacts and networks	13 (37%)
Equipment	9 (26%)
Space	6 (17%)
Money	4 (11%)
Nothing right now	0 (0%)

Young people and accredited skills

Young people aged 18 to 29 made up 37% of respondents, and participants asked for more of them in future. A facilitator proposed exploring training in community development, substance abuse and frontline trauma, which could lead to accredited roles in community programmes, and participants responded positively. Residents want skills linked to real work, and a pathway for adults excluded by age limits.

9 WHAT PARTICIPANTS TOLD US IN THE EVALUATION

Thirty-five participants completed the questionnaire. Results describe those who took part, not the whole of Tembisa. Women made up 80% of respondents, which gives weight to the findings on women's and girls' safety. Most are long-standing residents, and 57% had taken part in a community dialogue before.

Measure	Result	What it tells us
Concern about danger often or sometimes stops them doing things	29 (83%)	Fear shapes daily life
Do not feel able to speak openly without fear of intimidation	21 (60%)	Fear silences people
Do not know where they could seek support	18 (51%)	Help is hard to find
Can identify existing people, organisations, skills or spaces	28 (80%)	Residents see real assets
Believe these strengths could be better connected	30 (86%)	The opportunity is connection
Have nothing to contribute	0 (0%)	Everyone offered something
Agreed with each main statement about the circle	28 to 31 (80% to 89%)	The process was valued

The message on what WEAVE could improve was consistent: more. Respondents asked for more time, more regular dialogues, more young people and more government departments in the room: "We need more of these, not just a once off."

10 HOW THE SOURCES FIT TOGETHER

Theme	Dialogue Circle	Evaluation	Fact sheet (context)
Violence and fear	Shootings, drugs, dark streets	83% limit what they do; 51% rate physical safety low	8,434 recorded crimes, up 7.2%
Gender-based violence	Unsafe passages; barriers to reporting; "green door"	"Women and children are still vulnerable."	Priority GBV station
Reporting and response	Children cannot report; help is delayed	60% do not feel able to speak; 51% do not know where to seek help	Resource constraints recorded
Livelihoods	Age limits; skills without placements	Skills offered by 69%	District unemployment of 34.6%
Willingness to act	Practical proposals from every group	No one has nothing to offer	Not covered

The sources point in the same direction. The barrier is not a lack of willing residents or local assets. It is the lack of a reliable connection between residents, organisations, services and opportunity.

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

The Dialogue Circle tells 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 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 Tembisa

What residents told us	What the walk would add
Dark streets and unsafe passages	Working and broken lights, unlit stretches, and who is responsible for repair
Insecurity around a local secondary school	The routes learners use, and where they feel at risk
Taverns, sports grounds, tuck shops, hostels and taxi ranks feel unsafe	The general areas of concern, as seen by women and young people
Delayed help in informal settlements	How far residents are from help, and where access breaks down
Halls, churches and open land could be used	Assets located and verified: does each exist, function, and is it trusted and connected?
A "green door" for women and girls	What such a place would need, and what already exists nearby

Proposed approach

Tembisa is too large for one walk to cover. We recommend short, targeted walks on routes chosen with residents at the feedback sessions, following their confirmed priorities.

- **Who:** six to eight people, including Dialogue Circle participants, women, a young person, an older resident, a local organisation such as Get Informed, 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

Presentations were recorded, transcribed and translated using Khulisa's InsightHub, which supports the identification of themes, blockages and assets. Khulisa analysts check and interpret the results: AI assists, people decide.

Impact Outcomes brings community needs, assets, organisations, commitments, referrals and outcomes into one place-based view. In Tembisa it can hold agreed actions, referrals, walk evidence and results, so that partners and residents can see progress. More reports in the early months may reflect greater trust rather than more harm, so results will be interpreted with care.

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 participants and NGOs; give every agreed action an owner, a date and a clear definition of completion
Build strategy and buy-in	Present residents' confirmed priorities to local government and councillors, linked directly to safety, and agree who will take up what
Listen more widely	Include more young people, as residents asked, and invite other NGOs and relevant departments in a planned way
Locate the evidence	Use targeted transect walks to locate priorities, assets and risks, and to establish a baseline
Connect people to help	Verify services and contacts, and develop agreed referral steps with follow-up and escalation

Priority	What we recommend
Link skills to safety and work	Introduce accredited training in the areas raised (community development, substance abuse and frontline trauma), with links to placements and a route for adults excluded by age limits
Test, then build	After training, develop projects aligned to residents' priorities and Sakhisizwe's priorities, and measure them on Impact Outcomes

Six-month roadmap: November 2026 to April 2027

The dates below are proposed, and will be confirmed with Sakhisizwe, Get Informed and residents.

When	What we propose to do	Key milestone
November 2026	Share a plain-language summary with participants and invite corrections. Confirm unclear names and places. Hold feedback sessions with residents and NGOs at the end of November, and agree two or three priorities.	Findings confirmed; priorities chosen; owners and dates recorded
December 2026	Present residents' priorities to local government and councillors, for strategy and buy-in. Begin a provisional map of services and partners.	Local government presentation held; responses recorded
January 2027	Carry out the targeted transect walks. Verify services and referral contacts.	Assets and risks located; verified contacts
February 2027	Complete the baseline. Report back to residents and NGOs. Hold information sessions on the accredited training, and begin nominations and agreements.	Baseline report; learners nominated
March 2027	Begin accredited training, linked to the priorities residents confirmed. Follow up with local government on what was agreed.	Training under way; progress on agreed actions
April 2027	Review progress against the baseline and commitments, and report back to residents and partners. Confirm priorities for the projects that follow training.	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
Better access to help	Referrals made, accepted and completed; time to first response	Referral records on Impact Outcomes; monthly
Safer routes and spaces	Lighting faults reported, repaired and verified; users' sense of safety	Repeat walks and short feedback
Residents feel safer	Change against the 2026 evaluation, such as the 83% whose activities are limited by fear	Follow-up questionnaire at agreed review points
Residents can speak and find help	Residents able to speak openly; residents who know where to seek support	Follow-up questionnaire

Outcome sought	Suggested indicator	Evidence and review
Skills lead somewhere	Learners completing training; progression to work, placements or further learning	Training and placement records
Follow-through on commitments	Agreed actions completed on time; residents who receive feedback	Impact Outcomes; report-back sessions

15 RISKS AND HOW WE PROPOSE TO WORK

Residents asked repeatedly for WEAVE to return. If they are asked for more before receiving feedback, trust will weaken. To protect that trust, we suggest that the partners work in the following way as the roadmap unfolds:

- **Residents first.** Participants see and correct the findings before they are shared more widely.
- **People kept safe.** No one is identifiable in shared material, and sensitive information is never shared in group chats.
- **Concerns handled with care.** Allegations about corruption, police conduct or criminal activity are reported as participant concerns, not as findings against anyone.
- **Protection comes first.** Abuse and other protection concerns are referred to qualified services immediately.
- **Honest about the evidence.** The limits of the evidence are stated wherever findings are shared, and secondary crime figures are verified before public use.
- **Realistic commitments.** We promise only what can be delivered, and reduce scope transparently if resources are not available.
- **Technology follows consent.** Participants did not request or endorse surveillance technology. Technology should support an agreed service process with community consent, rather than be treated as a solution already requested.

Limits of the evidence

- The dialogue provides qualitative evidence of lived experience. It does not measure the prevalence of crime or represent every resident of Tembisa.
- The evaluation reflects the 35 people who completed it.
- Some names, places and phrases in the translated transcript are unclear and need to be confirmed with participants.
- Crime figures come from secondary sources and have not been independently verified.

16 CONCLUSION

The people of Tembisa gave a clear and honest account of how crime, fear, poverty and weak institutional response shape their daily lives. They also showed that they know their community's strengths, and are ready to give their time, skills and ideas. What they asked for above all is that this conversation continues and leads to action.

The credibility of Project Weave in Tembisa will depend on whether residents see their words reflected in agreed actions, appropriate responses and evidence of change. By returning first, building strategy and buy-in with local government, locating the evidence on the ground, and linking accredited skills to safety, the next six months can begin to do that. What we keep connecting, we make stronger.