



Publication: Thembisa - Main

Title: Community dialogue shines a light on environmental rights

Publish date: 24 Jun 2026

Page: 5

Reach: 50000

AVE: R 47537.95

Author: Staff Reporter



Initiative aims at helping the community of Thembisa through environmental issues.

Community dialogue shines a light on environmental rights

The Centre for Environmental Rights, an NPO comprising activist lawyers, engaged with Thembisa residents during a community dialogue held at TSHAD on June 10.

The organisation works to promote and protect environmental rights by providing legal support, training and advocacy to communities affected by environmental challenges.

During the engagement, representatives explained the organisation's services and encouraged residents to learn more about their environmental rights and how they can use them to address issues affecting their communities.

Attorney Tatenda Muponde introduced the organisation's latest initiative, Ask Karabo, which aims to make environmental information and legal assistance more accessible to the public.

"Ask Karabo is our new initiative that forms part of our environmental education and advocacy work. It is designed to help young people and communities better understand their rights and how they can use them to create positive change," said Muponde. He explained

that the initiative consists of two components: an online platform where users can submit questions on environmental rights and receive responses from qualified legal professionals.

"The beauty of the platform is that there are real lawyers behind it who respond to enquiries. It is almost like having a lawyer in your pocket at any time.

"It is part of our effort to make the law more accessible and to provide people with information more quickly without them having to spend hours seeking assistance," he said.

Community member and Ask Karabo team member Sifiso Skhosana said his involvement in an environmental rights course helped him better understand the laws that protect communities.

"The course taught me how to interpret environmental rights within communities and understand the legal protections available to residents. We are here today to give back to the community by sharing information about environmental issues and pollution," said Skhosana.

He stressed the impor-

tance of educating residents about environmental health, including water quality, waste management and the impact of pollution on daily life.

"We need to teach communities about keeping their surroundings clean, protecting water sources and understanding how environmental issues affect our health. We felt it was important to share this knowledge rather than keep it to ourselves," he added.

TSHAD centre manager Gezani Ndlovu welcomed the initiative and said it complemented the centre's existing environmental programmes.

"We are involved in waste collection, gardening and agricultural projects that contribute to environmental sustainability.

"Opportunities such as this help broaden our knowledge and strengthen the work we already do. It is important that we continue learning and encouraging others to protect and care for the environment," said Ndlovu.

The dialogue formed part of ongoing efforts to raise awareness about environmental rights and empower communities to play an active role in protecting their surroundings.