City of Santa Rosa
Laguna, Philippines

Voluntary Local Review

Serbisyong Makatao
Lungsod na Makabago

SANTA ROSA
THE LION CITY

Contents

List of Figures

Abbreviations

AICS	*Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situations*
BPO	*Business Process Outsourcing*
CPDO	*City Planning and Development Office*
CSO	*Civil Society Organization*
CSWD	*City Social Welfare and Development*
DEPDev	*Department of Economy, Planning, and Development*
DILG	*Department of the Interior and Local Government*
DepEd	*Department of Education*
EO	*Executive Order*
EWS	*Early Warning System*
LGU	*Local Government Unit*
MOA	*Memorandum of Agreement*
MRF	*Material Recovery Facilities*
MSMEs	*Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises*
OUOPS	*Office of the Undersecretary for Operations*
PESO	*Public Employment Service Office*
PPAs	*Programs, Projects, and Activities*
PSA	*Philippine Statistics Authority*
SDGs	*Sustainable Development Goals*
TWG	*Technical Working Group*
UHC	*Universal Healthcare Act*
UN ESCAP	*United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific*
UST	*University of Santo Tomas*
VLR	*Voluntary Local Review*
VNR	*Voluntary National Review*

Executive Summary

Santa Rosa, a rapidly growing economic hub in the Philippines, has undertaken its inaugural Voluntary Local Review (VLR) to align local policies with the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This effort reflects the City's commitment to balancing industrialization with sustainability, ensuring that economic growth benefits all residents while safeguarding natural resources. The VLR highlights Santa Rosa's best practices, identifies challenges, and offers a replicable model— the Triple VLR framework (framework, process, and tool)—for other cities to emulate. By localizing the 2030 Agenda, Santa Rosa integrates priority SDGs into its plans, programs, and activities, striving to leave no one behind.

The VLR draws on empirical data from city agencies, including historical records and administrative datasets, providing critical insights into Santa Rosa's progress toward selected SDGs. Stakeholder engagement was pivotal, with interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs), and direct observations enriching the process. Notably, FGDs and validation workshops with Barangay Chairpersons bolstered the data-driven approach, capturing grassroots perspectives on achievements and challenges.

Santa Rosa's VLR focuses on ten SDGs across five pillars: People (SDGs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5), Prosperity (SDGs 11, 12), Planet (SDG 13), Peace (SDG 16), and Partnership (SDG 17). These targets were chosen to enhance human capital and environmental sustainability, underpinned by peace and collaborative partnerships.

Under the pillar of People, Santa Rosa has invested in inclusivity and equitable growth. Notable achievements include poverty reduction through social protection programs and economic empowerment initiatives, housing assistance for informal settler families, and urban gardens and school feeding programs that have improved food security and reduced malnutrition rates. Healthcare services have expanded, integrating universal healthcare to increase vaccination coverage and maternal care access. Education programs, scholarships, and vocational training have enhanced literacy rates and employability, while gender equality efforts have strengthened women's leadership roles and established initiatives such as the Men Opposed to Violence Against Women Everywhere (MOVE) program. Furthermore, a multifunctional public space, the barangay basketball court, has become a collective venue to showcase social, political, cultural and economic inclusivity. As the only spacious area in the barangay, this is where the mayor or barangay captain meets the constituents for political activities. The basketball court is also the venue for community members to receive medical services, financial assistance, and food rationing and the public space where to showcase cultural talents or perform religious ceremonies.

For the pillar of Prosperity, Santa Rosa has emerged as a thriving economic hub by fostering a robust business ecosystem that attracts multinational corporations like Toyota and Coca-Cola while supporting local Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). The City has advocated digital governance, implemented e-governance platforms that have improved communication

with citizens, and invested in climate-resilient infrastructure, including flood control systems and disaster risk management programs. However, rapid urbanization necessitates improved infrastructure planning to prevent congestion and ensure balanced growth.

Santa Rosa's commitment to environmental sustainability and climate resilience falls under the Planet pillar. The City has prioritized renewable energy programs, installing solar panels in government buildings and offering incentives for green businesses. Investments in climate adaptation and risk management have led to disaster-resilient infrastructure, ecosystem conservation, watershed rehabilitation, river cleaning, and green space development.

The Peace pillar focuses on building safe, just, and inclusive communities through good governance and community development. Santa Rosa has expanded access to justice with legal aid programs for marginalized sectors at the barangay level and strengthened child protection and anti-domestic violence programs to create safer spaces for women and children. Enhancing community engagement in governance can further improve accountability and inclusivity. Santa Rosa recognizes the importance of Partnerships in driving collective action for sustainable development. The City has forged strong collaborations with national government agencies, private sector players, and international organizations. Civil society and local communities are actively engaged to ensure an inclusive approach to sustainable development. Local policies align with the Philippine Development Plan and global SDG frameworks, with efforts to expand collaborations with regional and global partners crucial to sustaining long-term SDG initiatives.

Despite its e-governance advancements, Santa Rosa faces data access limitations for SDGs 16 and 17, compounded by stakeholders' lack of awareness of their SDG impact. To address this, the City is committed to enhancing data-driven monitoring and reporting of key performance indicators to better track progress and measure impact.

Santa Rosa's first VLR, guided by the Triple VLR model, transcends mere documentation. It serves as a transformative tool, offering a blueprint for localizing the SDGs and embedding sustainable practices into governance, policymaking, and multi-stakeholder engagement. Advocating data-driven governance, it strengthens SDG integration at the local level. Santa Rosa aims to inspire cities across the Philippines, the ASEAN region, and other rapidly urbanizing areas to accelerate SDG implementation. Localizing the 2030 Agenda is a shared global responsibility, and by sharing its journey, Santa Rosa contributes to realizing a sustainable, inclusive future for all.

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
CITY OF SANTA ROSA
PROVINCE OF LAGUNA

ARLENE B. ARCILLAS
CITY MAYOR
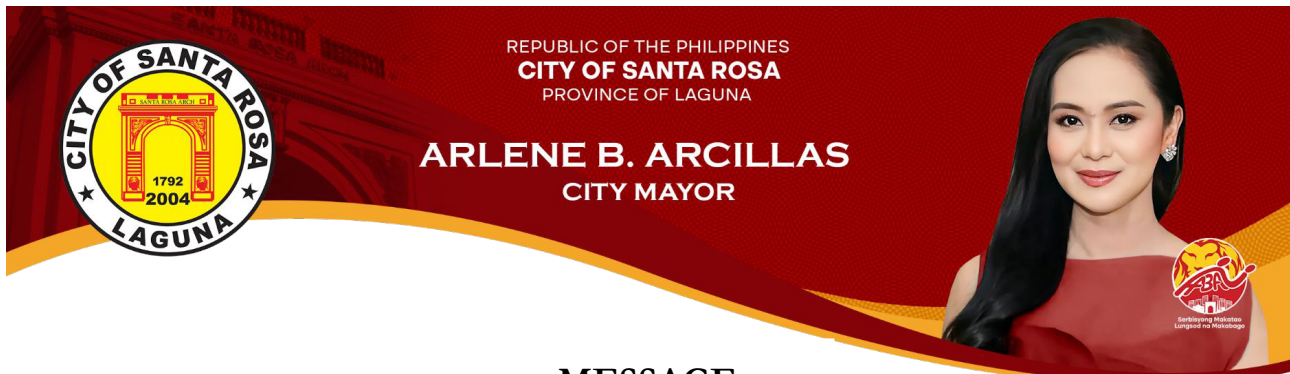
MESSAGE

Hello Santa Rosa!

It is with great pride and a deep sense of purpose that I share with you the **City of Santa Rosa's** very first **Voluntary Local Review (VLR) Report.**

This is more than just a document — it is a vital tool in advancing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and ensuring that the Sustainable Development Goals are translated into concrete, local actions that address the needs of our communities.
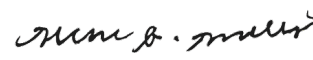
What began as a daunting task in 2024 became a shared achievement — thanks to the dedication of our Technical Working Group, who consolidated data, identified gaps, and crafted inclusive strategies. I am deeply grateful to them and to our partners, including the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, the Philippine Statistics Authority, and our collaborators in civil society, academia, and the private sector.

This VLR reflects our collective belief that progress must leave no one behind, and stands as Santa Rosa's contribution to the global movement for sustainable and inclusive development.

In the pages that follow, you will find a detailed discussion of the 10 SDGs we've chosen to prioritize, and how each has been localized to reflect the unique needs, goals, and aspirations of our City. This report also outlines our path forward, showing how sustainability has been woven into our policies, programs, and planning processes.

May this report not only serve as a comprehensive and accessible reference for best practices at the local level but also inspire other local governments to take that all-important first step toward building a more sustainable and inclusive future.

Together, let us continue striving for a City of Santa Rosa where growth is equitable, progress is shared by all.

ARLENE B. ARCILLAS
City Mayor
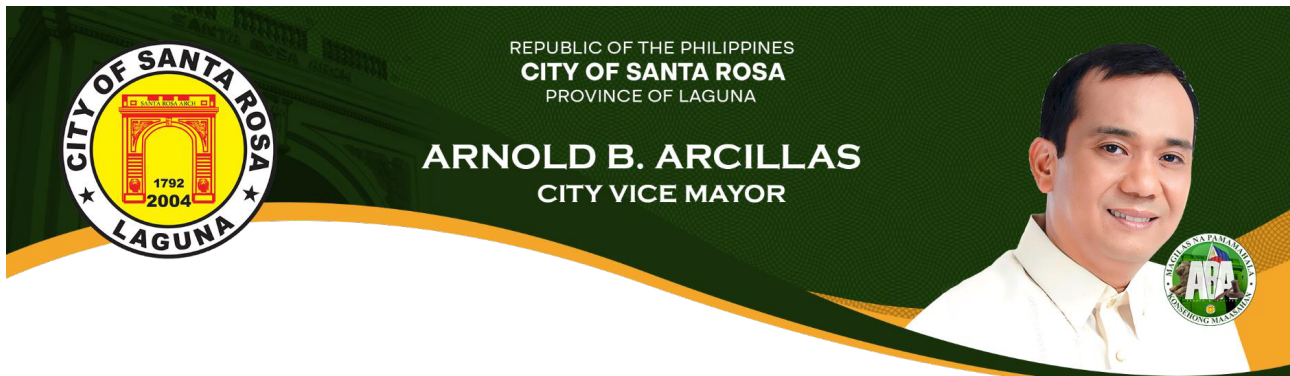
MESSAGE

Santa Rosa's journey toward becoming one of the Philippines' next Smart Cities underscores the urgent need for inclusive growth and long-term, sustainable development.

We envision a kind of technological advancement that is not only driven from the center but also reaches — and uplifts — those on the margins of our society. We seek not temporary fixes, but institutional reforms that outlast political terms and build a resilient, future-ready city.

This, I believe, is the very heart of sustainable urban development.

Our Voluntary Local Review (VLR) is a significant step in this direction. It allows us to translate the global 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into policies and programs that resonate with our local context and realities.

Through the guidance and framework provided by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) — with its measurable indicators, clear targets, and inclusive platforms for dialogue — we are able to highlight Santa Rosa's best practices while benchmarking our progress alongside other leading cities in the region.

As Vice Mayor and Presiding Officer of the City Council, I see the VLR as a valuable navigational tool for informed policymaking and forward-looking governance. I commend the Technical Working Group for their commitment and expertise in crafting this report, and extend my deepest thanks to all our stakeholders for their meaningful contributions.

As a final point, this VLR is a declaration of our intent, a voice in the global dialogue, and clear evidence of our steadfast commitment to inclusive and sustainable development.

Maraming salamat! Mabuhay ang Santa Rosa!

ARNOLD B. ARCILLAS
City Vice Mayor

MESSAGE FROM THE CITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR: EnP. ERMIN V. LUCINO, MPM, AICP, PMP®

OFFICE OF THE CITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR
Republic of the Philippines
CITY OF SANTA ROSA
Province of Laguna

Message of the *City Planning and Development Coordinator*
City of Santa Rosa's 1st Voluntary Local Review (VLR)
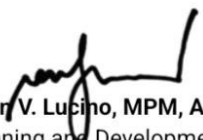
It is with great pride and optimism that we present Santa Rosa City's first Voluntary Local Review (VLR), a testament to our commitment to sustainable and inclusive development. I extend my deepest gratitude to our visionary Mayor Arlene B. Arcillas, whose progressive leadership has consistently positioned Santa Rosa as a forward-thinking city. The VLR aligns seamlessly with our Smart City initiatives, reinforcing our dedication to innovation, resilience, and the well-being of every *Roseñan (citizens of Santa Rosa)*. Under our Mayor's guidance, Santa Rosa has embraced the challenge of localizing the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), proving that meaningful change begins at the grassroots.

Santa Rosa's VLR is one of the first in the Philippines, a milestone that reflects our city's unwavering resolve to mainstream the SDGs into local governance. This achievement would not have been possible without the support of key partners, including the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), Department of Economic, Planning and Development (DEPDev), Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), League of Cities of the Philippines, United Nations Economic and Social Commission in the Asia Pacific (UN ESCAP), *Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit* (GIZ), United Cities and Local Governments Asia-Pacific (UCLG ASPAC), CityNet, and the City of Yokohama, Japan—whose insights during the 2023 Smart City initiatives have been invaluable. Their collaboration has empowered us to integrate global best practices into our local context, ensuring that our strategies are both ambitious and attainable.

This VLR is more than a report—it is the outcome of multi-stakeholder collaboration, embodying the collective aspirations of our community. Government agencies, civil society organizations, the private sector, and most importantly, our citizens, have all contributed to shaping this roadmap for sustainable progress. True to our belief in participatory governance, this document is not just a plan for the people, but a plan owned by the people. It reflects their voices, needs, and dreams for a smarter, greener, and more equitable Santa Rosa.

As we publish this inaugural VLR, we reaffirm our pledge to transparency, accountability, and inclusive growth. Let this document serve as both a benchmark of our progress and a blueprint for future action. Together, with the continued support of our partners and the active engagement of our community, we will turn these plans into tangible outcomes. The journey toward sustainability is ongoing, and Santa Rosa is ready to lead by example.

Thank you for believing in our shared vision. Mabuhay ang Lungsod ng Santa Rosa!

EnP. Ermin V. Lucino, MPM, AICP, PMP®
City Planning and Development Coordinator
City Government of Santa Rosa

MESSAGE OF REQUEST

Republic of the Philippines
CITY OF SANTA ROSA
Province of Laguna

OFFICE OF THE CITY MAYOR

November 28, 2023

Ms. Armida Salsiah Alisjabhana
Executive Security
United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)

Dear Executive Secretary Alisjabhana:

Greetings from the City of Santa Rosa, Laguna Philippines!

Our City Planning and Development Coordinator (CPDC) attended the 12th Smart City Conference in Yokohama, Japan wherein Ms. Sanjee D. Singh of ESCAP presented the Voluntary Local Review (VLR) which helped localize the SDGs in select Cities in the Asia-Pacific Region. Our CPDC highly recommends that our City apply the VLR tool of ESCAP.
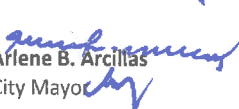
The undersigned signifies our interest to collaborate with ESCAP in relation to the local application of the VLR tool, knowledge sharing with cities already implementing the VLR, and capacity building of our departments and stakeholders.

One of our goals is to localize and mainstream the SDGs in our local plans, programs and activities. By applying the VLR strategy, our City Departments and implement projects geared towards the attainment of these global goals.

I am looking forward to a productive and fruitful partnership with ESCAP. Together, let us give our future generation safe and sustainable cities and a healthy planet to live in.

Thank you very much.

Very truly yours,

Arlene B. Arcillas
City Mayor

"SERBISYONG MAKATAO, LUNGSOD NA MAKABAGO"
2/F, City Hall Building A, City of Santa Rosa, Laguna
(049) 530-0015 Loc. 2801-2805

11

Republic of the Philippines
CITY OF SANTA ROSA
Province of Laguna

OFFICE OF THE CITY MAYOR

Executive Order No. 13 - 2024

AN ORDER CREATING THE CITY TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP (TWG) ON THE FORMULATION OF THE 1ST VOLUNTARY LOCAL REVIEW REPORT OF SANTA ROSA CITY, PHILIPPINES

WHEREAS, the City of Santa Rosa is committed to contribute in the attainment of the Global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030;

WHEREAS, the City of Santa Rosa is continuously implementing strategies in mainstreaming SDG indicators in its local programs, plans, and projects;

WHEREAS, the City of Santa Rosa is still considering the right tool to develop and monitor its SDG progress based on a comprehensive set of indicators;

WHEREAS, Mayor Arlene B. Arcillas was invited by the United Nation's Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN-ESCAP) during the 9th CityNet Congress held on September 20-23, 2022 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia to present the Urban Digital Transformation of the City;

WHEREAS, the Voluntary Local Review (VLR) report was presented by UN-ESCAP in the 12th Asia Smart City Conference held in Yokohama, Japan on November 2023;

WHEREAS, Mayor Arlene Arcillas, through a letter to UN-ESCAP, signified the interest of the City of Santa Rosa to learn and apply the SDG Voluntary Local Review (VLR);

NOW THEREFORE, I, ARLENE B. ARCILLAS, City Mayor of City of Santa Rosa by virtue of the power vested in me by law do hereby order the creation of technical working group to work with the UN ESCAP in the formulation of **1st Voluntary Local Review report of Santa Rosa City, Philippines**;

Section 1. Composition : The TWG shall be composed of the following:

Chairperson:
Mayor Arlene B. Arcillas   City Mayor

Co-Chairperson
Atty. Leonardo M. Ragaza Jr.   City Administrator

Project Leader (Focal Person)
EnP. Ermin V. Lucino   City Planning and Development Coordinator

Alternate Focal Person
EnP/Engr. Maria Amor Salandanan   City Environment and Natural Resources Officer

Page 1 of 2

Members:

Hon. Roy M. Gonzales	Chairperson, SP Committee on Urban Development
Hon. Godofredo Z. Dela Rosa	Association of Barangay Council President
Engr. Albertini S. Solatan, MPMG	City Engineer
Ms. Olivia M. Laurel	City Business Permit and Licensing Office Department Head
	City Social Welfare and Development Officer
Dr. Soledad Rosanna C. Cunanan	City Health Officer II
Dr. Erwin M. Escal	City Health Officer I
Mr. Joselito M. Batitis	City Agriculturist
Mr. Mark Paulo G. Velasco	City Cooperative Development Office Head (MSME)
Ms. Pearlee B. Zavalla	City Urban Development and Housing Office Department Head
Ms. Gina B. Madin	Officer-In-Charge - Gender and Development Office
Ms. Michelle F. Mapua	City Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Officer IV
Mr. Antonino Z. Lu	City Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office Operations Manager
Dr. Hereberto Jose D. Miranda	DepEd Schools Division Superintendent – City of Santa Rosa

Secretariat: City Planning and Development Office

Section 2. Functions and Duties of the Technical Working Group. The TWG shall have the following duties and functions:

a. Coordinate with the UN-ESCAP consultants in the formulation, implementation, and monitoring of deliverables;
b. Organize conduct of public consultations and workshops;
c. Report on the formulation progress at least once a month to the City Mayor;
d. Invite other city departments, local experts and national government agency technical experts to assist in the formulation of the report;
e. Resolve issues arising in the process;
f. Ensure adherence to the work plan;
g. Ensure transfer of technical knowledge and capability building of local staffs; and
h. Supervise the Secretariat.

Section 3. Secretariat: The City Planning and Development Office (CPDO) shall serve as the Secretariat of the TWG.

Section 4. Schedule of Meetings.

The TWG shall meet twice a month or as often as necessary until Report Completion and its adoption by the Sangguniang Panlungsod are achieved.

Section 5. Effectivity. This Executive Order shall take effect immediately.

Done this __2nd__ day of April 2024 in the City of Santa Rosa, Laguna, Philippines.

ARLENE B. ARCILLAS
City Mayor

MESSAGE FROM THE INSTITUTE FOR GLOBAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGIES (IGES)

IGES Institute for Global Environmental Strategies

www.iges.or.jp

27 March 2025

Mayor Arlene B. Arcillas
City of Santa Rosa, Laguna

Dear Mayor Arcillas,

It is my great honour to be writing this letter to congratulate you on the publication of Santa Rosa City's Voluntary Local Review (VLR). This significant achievement reflects your city's steadfast commitment to implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES) has been privileged to follow and support the city's progress throughout the VLR process. Through our close collaboration, we have witnessed how Santa Rosa has adopted an inclusive and forward-thinking approach to SDG implementation—an approach that underscores the essential role of community engagement in shaping local policies and actions.

Santa Rosa's dedication to participatory decision-making is especially commendable. By bringing together local communities, businesses, civil society organisations and government entities, the city has ensured that the VLR truly represents the voices and aspirations of its people. This inclusive process not only strengthens policy outcomes but also fosters a sense of shared ownership and responsibility—an essential foundation for advancing sustainable development.

Throughout this VLR process, Santa Rosa's leadership has demonstrated remarkable determination in addressing pressing issues such as climate resilience, equitable economic growth and social well-being. This VLR not only documents your city's achievements but also charts an inspiring course for future progress.

Looking ahead, IGES remains committed to supporting Santa Rosa in accelerating the realisation of the SDGs. We hope that this VLR will serve as a catalyst for continued innovation and knowledge-sharing, inspiring other cities across the region—and beyond—to pursue bold and inclusive sustainable development strategies.

On behalf of IGES, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to everyone involved in the creation of this VLR. Your dedication to collaboration embodies the very spirit of the SDGs. We look forward to strengthening our partnership and continuing this important journey together.

小野　洋

Hiroshi Ono
Executive Director,
Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES)

I

March 19, 2025

Ms. Arlene B. Arcillas,
City Mayor
City of Santa Rosa, Province of Laguna

Dear Ms. Arlene B. Arcillas,

The City of Yokohama extends its heartfelt respect and sincere compliments to the City of Santa Rosa for successfully implementing its Voluntary Local Review. This achievement reflects Santa Rosa's strong commitment to sustainable urban development and its dedication to the Sustainable Development Goals.

The City of Yokohama is honored to be part of this endeavor and we firmly believe that knowledge-sharing and collaboration among cities are essential to accelerating global sustainability efforts. To this end, the City of Yokohama hosts the Asia Smart City Conference annually, fostering discussions and knowledge exchange on sustainable urban development among urban leaders and practitioners across Asia. Within this framework, the CityNet SDG Cluster Seminars have recently placed a strong emphasis on VLRs. Through these discussions at the seminars, cities such as Santa Rosa have demonstrated strong commitments to VLR initiatives and successfully developed their own VLRs.

Drawing on our own experiences and best practices, the City of Yokohama offered comments and suggestions regarding SDG Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities and Goal 13: Climate Action, to ensure that the report meaningfully reflects Santa Rosa's achievements and aspirations. Notably, this collaboration may mark the first peer review of a VLR conducted between two Asian cities as far as we know. We were impressed by the inclusive stakeholder engagement demonstrated in Santa Rosa's VLR and recognized again the importance of international partnerships in addressing shared urban challenges and advancing sustainable development.

Once again, we extend our sincere congratulations to the City of Santa Rosa on the publication of this VLR report. We hope that this report serves as an inspiration for other cities to embark on similar initiatives, further strengthening the collective effort to build resilient, inclusive, and sustainable communities worldwide.

Sincerely,

三枝 思裕

Tadahiro SAEGUSA (Mr.)
Director General of the International Affairs Bureau,
City of Yokohama, Japan

◆ **CITY OF YOKOHAMA**

6-50-10 Hon-cho, Naka-ku, Yokohama 231-0005
Japan

MESSAGE FROM THE UNITED CITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS ASIA-PACIFIC (UCLG ASPAC)

FOREWORD

**United Cities and Local Governments
Asia-Pacific**

Political will and leadership are indispensable to sustainable cities. With the completion of Santa Rosa's first Voluntary Local Review, the commitment to sustainability is evident. Santa Rosa now joins the global VLR movement of over 200 local and regional governments around the world. On behalf of the United Cities and Local Governments Asia Pacific (UCLG ASPAC), I wholeheartedly offer my congratulations to Mayor Arlene Arcillas and the City Government of Santa Rosa for the VLR which can be good reference for other cities in the Philippines and beyond.

As the Philippines will present its fourth Voluntary National Review at the High-Level Political Forum this 2025, this marks the perfect opportunity for local and regional governments to undertake a VLR and contribute to the process. The strength of the VLR comes in its ability to showcase the realities on the ground, captured through an inclusive and participatory process. Santa Rosa showcased the rigorous process it has implemented in this regard.

We look forward to how the VLR will shape the city's development, land use, and investment plans. It is important that the VLR not only serves as an assessment of progress on the SDGs but also drives action towards a sustainable future. By acknowledging the achievement and understanding the current gaps and opportunities in the city through this VLR, Santa Rosa can transform into a city as envisioned by its people.

DR. BERNADIA IRAWATI TJANDRADEWI
Secretary General
United Cities and Local Governments Asia Pacific

**Message
Vijay Jagannathan
Secretary General, CityNet**

We extend our congratulations to Mayor Arlene Arcillas, the local leaders and everyone involved in the development of the first Santa Rosa City's Voluntary Local Review Report, *'From Localizing to Mainstreaming the 2030 Agenda of Sustainable Development Goals in the City of Santa Rosa'.*

The Santa Rosa City VLR Report is a remarkable achievement and a significant step forward towards sustainable urban development, ensuring the global aspirations translate into meaningful local actions.

The Santa Rosa VLR Report is not just a monitoring and evaluation tool—it is a testament to progress, a showcase of impactful initiatives, and a strategic roadmap toward a more sustainable and resilient future. It is a clear demonstration of the strong leadership of Mayor Arlene and city leaders to guide the City of Santa Rosa toward a high quality of urban life.

Santa Rosa now stands alongside a network of dynamic cities, including our CityNet members such as Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur, and Yokohama, that are leveraging the VLR process to assess progress, refine policies, and implement sustainable solutions.

A key strength of the VLR is its emphasis on the stakeholder engagement. The Santa Rosa City VLR Report is a product of inclusive approach, reflecting efforts, challenges and aspirations of its residents. It is a guiding, living document that strengthens partnerships, enhances policy making, and fosters inclusive growth for all.

At CityNet, we are proud to promote Santa Rosa City's VLR Report in our knowledge-sharing initiatives. This Report positions Santa Rosa as a model of urban governance in the Asia-Pacific region.

Vijay Jagannathan
Secretary General

MESSAGE FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMY, PLANNING, AND DEVELOPMENT(DEPDev)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMY, PLANNING, AND DEVELOPMENT

OPENING STATEMENT

2025 Voluntary Local Review of the City of Santa Rosa

As the 2030 Agenda aligns with the development goals of the Philippines, the Department of Economy, Planning, and Development (DEPDev) has seamlessly integrated the United Nations' (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into the Philippine Development Plan, Regional Development Plans, and Sectoral Plans.

The Philippines is set to produce its fourth Voluntary National Review (VNR) and present at the High-Level Political Forum in New York this July 2025, reaffirming our commitment to achieving the 2030 Agenda and its 17 SDGs. This year, we are also pleased to present the Voluntary Local Review (VLR) of Santa Rosa City. These voluntary reviews are not merely reporting mechanisms; they represent our commitment to evaluating lessons learned, identifying best practices, and addressing challenges in the implementation of SDGs.

Santa Rosa City's VLR stands out as a remarkable example of innovative strategies and collaborative initiatives involving various stakeholders. It emphasizes ten priority SDGs and highlights the interconnected nature of these goals, demonstrating how progress in one area can create positive ripple effects in others.

While progress has been made in implementing the SDGs, a recent study by the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific reveals that the region may require an additional 42 years to fully achieve the 2030 Agenda. This serves as a stark reminder of the urgency of our mission. With only five years remaining until 2030, we must intensify our efforts and adopt a Whole-of-Nation Plus approach.

Each sector of our society plays a pivotal role in the country's transformative journey toward achieving the 2030 Agenda. We commend the City of Santa Rosa for its significant strides in this collective endeavor to eradicate poverty, safeguard our planet, and ensure peace and prosperity. We hope this inspires other local government units to commit to attaining our SDGs.

We extend our best wishes to the City of Santa Rosa as it demonstrates unwavering dedication to realizing our collective vision of a strongly rooted, comfortable, and secure life for all.

ARSENIO M. BALISACAN, PhD
Secretary
Department of Economy, Planning, and Development

MESSAGE FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT (DILG)

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT
DILG-NAPOLCOM Center, EDSA cor. Quezon Avenue, West Triangle, Quezon City
www.dilg.gov.ph

FOREWORD

The Philippines has made significant progress in fulfilling its commitment to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, along with the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which aims to end poverty, protect the environment, and ensure that all people can enjoy peace and prosperity.

While great strides have been taken, more work is needed to ensure sustainable development in the country. The Department of the Interior and Local Government, with its duty to supervise local government units (LGUs), is committed to providing support and guidance that will empower them to meet SDGs as they relate to local government mandates. The Voluntary Local Review (VLR) initiated by the City Government of Santa Rosa, Laguna is a commendable step towards achieving these goals.

I would like to congratulate everyone involved in this review and wish that this will pave the way for more similar undertakings from other LGUs. I am confident that this will allow the City of Santa Rosa to be more responsive to the changing needs of their constituents, while also meeting development targets under international commitments. It is my hope that this VLR will inspire LGUs across the country to recognize and assume their responsibilities as fundamental parts of the government in achieving sustainable development.

On behalf of the Department, I send my warmest regards to the City Government of Santa Rosa, Laguna and wish it continued success.

Mabuhay!

JUANITO VICTOR C. REMULLA
Secretary

MESSAGE FROM THE PHILIPPINE STATISTICS AUTHORITY (PSA)

Message from the Philippine Statistics Authority

The Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) congratulates the City of Santa Rosa, Laguna for successfully organizing its 1st Voluntary Local Review (VLR) in June 2024. This initiative reflects the city's commitment to good governance and its leaders' dedication to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Similar to the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) conducted by countries every July at the High-Level Political Forum in the United Nations in New York, the VLR highlights the experiences, including successes, challenges and lessons learned, with a view to accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Through this initiative, policies and institutions of the local government will be strengthened while fostering multi-stakeholder support and partnerships for SDG implementation.

Santa Rosa is among the few local government units (LGUs) in the country that have taken up the challenge in ensuring that global SDGs are translated into tangible and meaningful actions within its community. At the national level, the SDGs are integrated in the Philippine Development Plan 2023-2028, serving as a blueprint for national budget planning and appropriations. This VLR marks an important milestone in mainstreaming SDGs into policies, activities and programs of the city government which offers a roadmap that is sustainable, inclusive, and resilient. Additionally, it will serve as a framework to track and assess local progress while ensuring alignment and contribution to national SDG targets. Santa Rosa's participation in this endeavor reaffirms its commitment to the SDG principle of Leaving No One and Nowhere Behind, safeguarding its citizens and future generations.

To further strengthen evidence-based decision-making at the local level, the PSA leads the implementation of the 2024 Census of Population and Community-Based Monitoring System (POPCEN-CBMS). The POPCEN-CBMS is a nationwide effort that aims to gather comprehensive and accurate data on the country's population and housing characteristics, the CBMS is capable of identifying 21 SDG indicators, effectively capturing 10 out of the 17 SDGs at the barangay level.

Linking the VLR with CBMS creates a powerful tool for the city to track, evaluate and report progress on the SDGs, ensuring data-driven decision-making at the community level. This will help identify service and resource gaps, laying the foundation for a strategic plan that is responsive, tailored to community needs, and aligned with local realities. Furthermore, it will strengthen advocacy for resource allocation, policy improvements, and collaboration with national government agencies.

Once again, the PSA congratulates the City of Santa Rosa for this milestone. We look forward to its continued leadership in advancing the SDGs, and we hope that other cities and LGUs will follow suit.

CLAIRE DENNIS S. MAPA, PhD
Undersecretary
National Statistician and Civil Registrar General

MESSAGE FROM THE UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC(ESCAP)

While national governments establish overarching policies and frameworks, cities and municipalities are deeply attuned to local realities, making them uniquely positioned to identify challenges and development initiatives that cater directly to their communities' needs. The role of cities and municipalities is pivotal in translating the global aspirations of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into tangible impacts, focusing on the most vulnerable populations.

ESCAP commends the initiative of the City of Santa Rosa in strengthening its commitment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by embarking on its first Voluntary Local Review (VLR). This VLR highlights the importance and impact of evidence-based analysis on the core, transformative commitment of Leave No One Behind.

Santa Rosa's first VLR is timely, as the Philippines will present its fourth Voluntary National Review (VNR) at the 2025 UN High-Level Political Forum in New York, including findings from the City's VLR. The alignment between Santa Rosa's VLR and the 2025 VNR strengthens the Philippines' cohesive strategy for implementing and monitoring SDGs, reflecting the willingness to analyze lessons learned, showcasing best practices, and tackling obstacles in achieving sustainable development. This integration of local and national efforts illustrates how progress at the local level feeds into broader national and global objectives. The National SDG 11 Roadmap, which is currently under development with the support of ESCAP, will further facilitate the alignment of national and local urban policies and strategies.

This VLR report reflects a whole-of-government and whole-of-society effort, thanks to the valuable input provided by stakeholders at all levels. ESCAP was pleased to work alongside the UN Country Team, the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), Philippines Statistics Authority (PSA), the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies, and other local and international organizations who contributed to the VLR process and report.

ESCAP member States adopted the theme, '*Regional cooperation for resilient and sustainable urban development*' for its 81st Commission Session in April 2025, highlighting the importance of resilient and sustainable communities to securing the region's future growth. ESCAP's SDG Localization Platform will provide an avenue to further promote Santa Rosa's and the region's efforts toward the SDGs.

ESCAP looks forward to the progress to be made as the City of Santa Rosa takes forward the recommendations of its VLR, ensuring a more sustainable and prosperous future and community for all its people.

Lin Yang
Deputy Executive Secretary
for Programme of ESCAP

Acknowledgments

Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA)	Ms. Shiela N. Eje
Department of Economy, Planning, and Development (DEPDev)	Mr. Richard P. Engasa, MBA, MPM
Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG)	Provincial Director Jay Beltran

Local Governments and Local Institutions

Local Executive	Hon. Arlene B. Arcillas
	Hon. Arnold B. Arcillas
Council	Hon. Ma. Theresa C. Aala
	Hon. Sonia U. Algabre
	Hon. Laudemer A. Carta
	Hon. Jose B. Catindig, Jr.
	Hon. Mythor C. Cendaña
	Hon. Jose Joel L. Aala
	Hon. Antonio M. Tuzon, Jr.
	Hon. Rodrigo B. Malapitan
	Hon. Ina Clariza C. Punongbayan
	Hon. Manuel G. Alipon
	Hon. Wilfredo A. Castro
	Hon. Patrick Ivhan B. De Guzman

Barangay Captains:

Aplaya	Hon. Fe Villanueva
Balibago	Hon. Ariel Gomez
Caingin	Hon. Edwin Servo
Dila	Hon. Raymond Fortunado
Dita	Hon. Godofredo Z. Dela Rosa
Don Jose	Hon. Irineo Aala
Ibaba	Hon. Carlos Barrinuevo
Kanluran	Hon. Ronald Daroy
Labas	Hon. Ronald Ian De Guzman
Macabling	Hon. Adoracion Ong-iko
Malitlit	Hon. Emiliano Mangahis
Malusak	Hon. Ramon Dia
Market Area	Hon. Michael Ambata
Pooc	Hon. Alvin Cartaño
Pulong Santa Cruz	Hon. Christopher Sarmiento
Santo Domingo	Hon. Lily Ortega
Sinalhan	Hon. Ladislao Alicbusan
Tagapo	Hon. Edison Caravana

Departments & Unit Heads / OIC

Department of Interior and Local Government	CLGOO VI Melody M. Barairo

Office of the Secretary to the Sangguniang Panlungsod	Atty. Rommero O. Alojado
Office of the City Treasurer	Ms. Analita O. Constantino
Office of the City Assessor	Ms. Cecilia L. Gabayan
Office of the City Accountant	Ms. Ma. Sheila I. Manuel, CPA
Office of the City Budget Officer	Ms. Nenita B. Cartagena
Office of the Building Official	Engr. Myles H. Funtila
Santa Rosa Community Hospital	Dr. Parnell C. Patacsil, MD
Office of the City Civil Registrar	Ms. Mylene S. Gonzales
Office of the City Legal Officer	Atty. Numeriano D. Villena
Office of the City Veterinarian	Dr. Joseph Milkho U. Bustamante, DVM
Office of the City General Services Officer	Mr. Celso C. Catindig, Jr.
Office of the City Information Officer	Mr. Tugaris L. Zapanta
Office of the City Human Resource Management Officer	Ms. Cherry M. Odoño Mr. Harry A. Pagkalinawan
Office of the City Information Technology Officer	Ms. Sheila Marie C. Hemedez
Office of the City Internal Audit Service	Mr. Pedro M. Catindig
Manpower Training Center	Mr. Manuel A. Garcia
Operation of Public Market	Ms. Carmencita T. Catindig
Nutrition Office	Ms. Josefina B. Arcillas
Clean and Green	Ms. Elvira T. Marcelo
City Anti-Drug Abuse Unit	Mr. Roy A. Lazaga
Sport and Development Office	Mr. Jose Monico C. Batitis
Command Center	Mr. Domel Jenson Ian M. Barairo
Office of the City Youth and Development Officer	Mr. Leomar M. Eugenio
City Scholarship Office	Mr. Socrates E. Reyes
Office of the Senior Citizens Affairs (OSCA)	

Technical Working Group:

Chairperson/ City Mayor	Hon. Arlene B. Arcillas
Co-Chairperson / City Administrator	Atty. Leonardo M. Ragaza, Jr.
Focal Person / City Planning and Development Coordinator	EnP. Ermin V. Lucino, MPM, AICP, PMP®
Alternate Focal Person / City Environment and Natural Resources Officer	Engr. Maria Amor A. Salandanan, EnP.

Members:

Chairperson, SP Committee on Urban Development	Hon. Roy M. Gonzales
Association of Barangay Chairpersons President	Hon. Godofredo Z. Dela Rosa
OIC – Office of the City Engineer	Engr. Jauntee Jo C. Delada
City Business Permit and Licensing Office Department Head	Ms. Olivia M. Laurel Mr. Val V. Del Rosario
OIC- City Social Welfare and Development Officer	Dr. Soledad Rosanna C. Cunanan

City Health Officer II	Dr. Erwin M. Escal
City Health Officer I	Mr. Joselito M. Batitis, L.Agr.
City Agriculturist	
City Cooperative Development Office Head	EnP. Mark Paulo G. Velasco, MPAf
City Urban Development and Housing Office Department Head	EnP. Pearlee B. Zavalla
OIC – Gender and Development Office	EnP. Gina B. Madin
City Disaster and Risk Reduction Management Officer IV	Ms. Michelle F. Mapua
City Disaster and Risk Reduction Management Operations Manager	Mr. Antonino Z. Lu
Department of Education Santa Rosa Superintendent	Dr. Hereberto Jose D. Miranda, CESO VI

University and Research Entity Representatives

Private Schools Administrators Association	Ms. Brenda Geluz
	Mr. Gerard B. Co
Polytechnic University of the Philippines – Santa Rosa Campus	Dr. Leny V. Salmingo
	Dr. Jonell John O. Espalto
Department of Education – Santa Rosa	Mr. Adolfo Ibayan
	Mr. Bonifacio B. Lagura Jr.
	Mr. Kenrick Villanueva
University of Santo Tomas – Santa Rosa Campus	Dr. Philipina A. Marcelo
	Dr. Seigfred V. Prado, RECE, SMIEEE
Santa Rosa Science and Technology	Mr. Alvin D. Sta. Maria, Ed.D
De La Salle University	Ms. Evelyn B. Laranga

Civil Society Organizations

Angat Kababaihan	Ms. Myla Paulene B. Pecson
City Agricultural and Fisheries Council (CAFC)	Mr. Abner Barrameda
Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Management Councils (FARMC)	Mr. Jose Delmo
Federated TODA Santa Rosa City	Mr. Roxanne I. Zamora
Kadenang Bulaklak	Mr. Ruel P. Mayano
Philippine Institute of Chemical Engineers (PiChe)	Dr. Flocerfida L. Amaya
Philippine Institute of Environmental Planners (PIEP)	EnP. Vergel L. Maaghop
Santa Rosa Livelihood	Ms. Belen Acuña
	Ms. Corazon Manuel
Santa Rosa City Unified Transport Cooperative	Mr. Philip Camcaman
	Ms. Rose Anne C. Intano
	Mr. Romy Dealagaon
Santa Rosa Youth Council	Mr. Kian Joseph Hermosa
Save Silang Santa Rosa River (S3R2)	Mr. Ronnel Andaya
	EnP. Erlinda C. Creencia
	Mr. Fred Frio

Senior Citizen Federation KIWANIS	Mr. Mark Genesis M. Las

Private Sector

AFNI Philippines	Ms. Melanie Lara
	Mr. Neil Cruz
Coca-Cola Europacific Aboitiz Philippines Inc	Ms. Elda Domael
Enchanted Kingdom	
	Ms. Suzette Gillera
	Mr. Ambet Santos
LETWORKX	Mr. Mark Paulo Alcala
	Engr. Marites B. Pua
Mitsubishi	Ms. Lovie A. Ferrer
	Mr. Dexter Carolino
Monde Nissin	Mr. Jerome Landicho
	Ms. Angelica Jaojoco
Panasonic	Ms. Nisa Sampaco
SM Supermalls	Mr. Ramil Telan
Toyota Aisin Philippines	Mr. Patrick Ballesteros
	Ms. Arlena R. Bucao
Toyota Motor Philippines	Atty. Alex Patoc
	Atty. Rommel Gutierrez
	Ms. Ann Lorraine P. Estrella
	Ms. Ma. Queenie Jasmine J. Nagera

Additional Key Informants

LGU Departments

Department of Interior and Local Government	Ms. Jenny S. Mendoza
Office of the City Mayor	Ms. Ma. Minette D. Alfonso
Office of the City Treasurer	Mr. Christian Paul G. Gonzales
Office of the City Assessor	Mr. Roberto Esguerra
Office of the City Accountant	Mr. Ronald Ryan F. Carvajal
Office of the City Budget Officer	Ms. Melody Dolosa
Office of the City Engineer	Mr. Gilbert M. Villanueva
	Ar. Philip Lai
Office of the Building Official	Ar. Ismael Vallejo, EnP.
Office of the City Health Office II	Engr. Melody Lijaoco
Office of the City Civil Registrar	Ms. Sahlee Yao
Office of the City Administrator	Mr. Armando Sumadsad
	Mr. John Romeo Cariño
Office of the City Legal Officer	Mr. Johnell Dioness
Office of the City Social Welfare and	Atty. Virgilio B. Galeon
Development Officer	Ms. Marivic E. Congreso, RSW, MMPA
Office of the City Persons with Disability Affairs	Ms. Emy C. India, RSW, MSSW
Officer	Mr. Ryan Cardinal
Office of the City Information Officer	Mr. Jonathan Gefa
	Mr. John Reymar De Jesus
	Ms. Trixie Mae B. Umali
Office of the City Agriculturist	EnP. Shamah Reynaldo, L.Agr.

Office of the City Environment and Natural Resources Officer	Mr. Mark Joseph Ferranco, RChT
Office of the City Business Permit and Licensing Officer	Mr. Rav Ignacio
Office of the Public Employment Services Manager	Ms. Perla G. Lozada, MBA
Office of the City Information Technology Officer	Mr. John Emmanuel R. Magpantay
Public Order and Safety Office	Mr. Joseph S. Diaz
Office of the City Urban Development and Housing Officer	Ms. Charisse Galupino
City Civil Security Unit (CCSU)	Ms. Ma. Jocelyn C. Tenorio
Traffic Management and Enforcement Office	Atty. Gilbert Recosana
Gender and Development Office	Ms. Maria Eleunor B. Lucino, MBA, MA
Clean and Green	Mr. Rey Anthony Beniga
	Ms. Jennifer Pante
Command Center	Ms. Rica Llagas
City Scholarship Office	Ms. Jessica Siguenza

Barangay Representatives:

Aplaya	Ms. Marra Beato
Caingin	Mr. Bernard Matias
Dita	Dr. Nimfa Gamban
	Mr. Adrian Perez
Ibaba	Ms. Hazelyn Faganday
Labas	Ms. Jenny Lazaro
Macabling	Ms. Pelilia C. Villar
Malitlit	Mr. Roderick L. Aala
	Ms. Ena Joy S. de Leon
Market Area	Mr. Melvin F. Almeria
Pulong Santa Cruz	Mr. John Kimuel M. Pegine
Santo Domingo	Ms. Aileen D. Asilo
Sinalhan	Mr. Romaldo C. Gamilla
Tagapo	Ma. Cristina Dayauis
	Mr. Carlos L. Gicos

University of Santo Tomas Research Team	Dr. Arlen A. Ancheta
	Dr. Arturo J. Patungan
	Dr. Carmina S. Vicente
	Dr. Alain Jomarie G. Santos, CPA
	Dr. Mary Ann V. Bulanadi
	Ms. Louise Victoria R. Noriel
Support:	
	Ms. Cyanah Marielle Laccay
	Mr. Zoeren Emmanuel De Leon
	Mr. Joshua Adrian Gumasing
	Mr. Aldain Rodriguez
	Mr. Gabriel Noel Tijam

Office of the City Planning and Development Coordinator

Secretariat:

Mr. James R. De Guzman
Mr. Joshua A. dela Cruz
Ms. Angelika Celina A. Dichoso
Ms. Mutya T. Dichoso
Ms. Cheryl Anne A. Mendez
Ms. Maria Vanessa B. Mendoza
Ms. Akira Joyce M. Orbase
Ms. Marielle Angelie A. Plandez
Ms. Daniellica Franz Z. Tomelden

Proponents:

Focal Person	EnP. Ermin V. Lucino, MPM, AICP, PMP®
Project Manager	EnP. Ervie M. Rodriguez, MBA
Project Lead	Ms. Maerylle Gale N. Zaide
Assistant Project Lead	Mr. Michael Joseph B. Garcia
Under Study	Ms. Patrisha Shane C. Dogmoc, RPm

Introduction

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is articulated on social, economic, and environmental dimensions—with 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 specific targets, covering various topics, from poverty to education and gender equality to climate action. Although initially designed for national governments, the SDGs are also relevant to local governments and other stakeholders.

The City of Santa Rosa has pledged to integrate the SDG framework into its development plans and activities. To do so effectively, in 2024, the City decided to undertake a Voluntary Local Review (VLR). A VLR is a process through which local governments (LGs) assess their progress in achieving the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.

The transformation of Santa Rosa into a thriving economic zone south of Metro Manila requires careful oversight to prevent resource depletion, particularly of land and water resources. The City's VLR comes at an opportune moment, reflecting Santa Rosa's developmental initiatives, including its programs, projects, and activities. This assessment is crucial in guiding the City's growth trajectory while ensuring sustainable resource management.

Cities, as the political, economic, social, and institutional hubs, are critical in translating sustainable development. They are frontliners in crafting policies and ordinances and implementers, ensuring the constituents will not be left behind. As development forerunners, cities like Santa Rosa regard the VLR as an avenue for translating the SDGs into a local experience.

VLR is a globally established process for assessing local progress on sustainable development anchored on the SDGs. It is a window for public engagement, identifying priority issues for the city, and putting forward innovative and locally driven solutions for sustainability. A city can leverage the VLR process to synchronize policy frameworks, tools, and processes.

The VLR is a framework, tool, and process all in one. It is a tracking mechanism to monitor progress in the assessment of sustainable development using the SDGs as a framework; it is an instrument for analyzing whether programs, projects, and activities are synchronized with SDGs. Moreover, it provides a check and balance in governance and promotes political transparency and accountability to the citizens.

1.1

The City of Santa Rosa in Numbers

Santa Rosa was named after the first South American Saint, Santa Rosa de Lima of Peru, a nun of the Third Order of Saint Dominique. The city, formerly called Barrio Bukol, was created into a municipality of Santa Rosa on January 18, 1792. The townspeople of Santa Rosa were farmers, fisherfolks, and artisans. Santa Rosa, with a lake on the lower portion and a watershed on the upper part, became a city on July 10, 2004, by Republic Act No. 9264. The first mayor was Hon. Leon Arcillas, the father of the present one.

The City of Santa Rosa covers a total land area of 5,543 hectares. Located in the Silang-Santa Rosa sub-watershed, the City is almost entirely plain, with 97.89% of its total land area having slopes ranging from 0.0 to 2.5%, indicating level to nearly level lands[1] . Only about 114 hectares, or 2.06% of the City's total land area, is subject to slight erosion2. It is 100% an urban area. Santa Rosa represents 2.89% of the total land area of Laguna[2].

Santa Rosa is a First-Class Component City[2] comprised of 18 barangays[3] : 3 of these barangays are located at the coastal Laguna Lake, namely Barangay Aplaya, Barangay Sinalhan, and Barangay Caingin; 12 barangays are at the low-land area composed of barangays Balibago, Dila, Dita, Malitlit, Macabling, Malusak, Pooc, Market Area, Ibaba, Labas, Kanluran, and Tagapo; the remaining 3 barangays are Santo Domingo, Don Jose, and Pulong Santa Cruz—which are situated on the upper side going to Tagaytay City. The largest barangay is Barangay Don Jose, accounting for 19.07% of the City's total land area, followed by barangays Malitlit and Santo Domingo with 18.78% and 14.53%, respectively. The smallest barangay is Malusak, comprising only 0.25% percent of the total land area of Santa Rosa. The western part of the City houses numerous commercial, industrial, and business establishments. At the same time, the northern portion is primarily composed of residential areas and

Figure 1. The City of Santa Rosa in Relation to Metro Manila

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[1] Based on the figures provided in the Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP) 2023-2028 of the City of Santa Rosa. https://drive.google.com/file/d/1JzpHjYUNe1LIF9F0mkl7hMxdh0dicyDe/view?usp=sharing.
[2] In accordance with the Philippines' Senate Bill 251, a 'First-Class City' as one with an average annual income of USD 14 million or more over the past three fiscal years.
[3] Barangay is the smallest political unit in the Philippines.
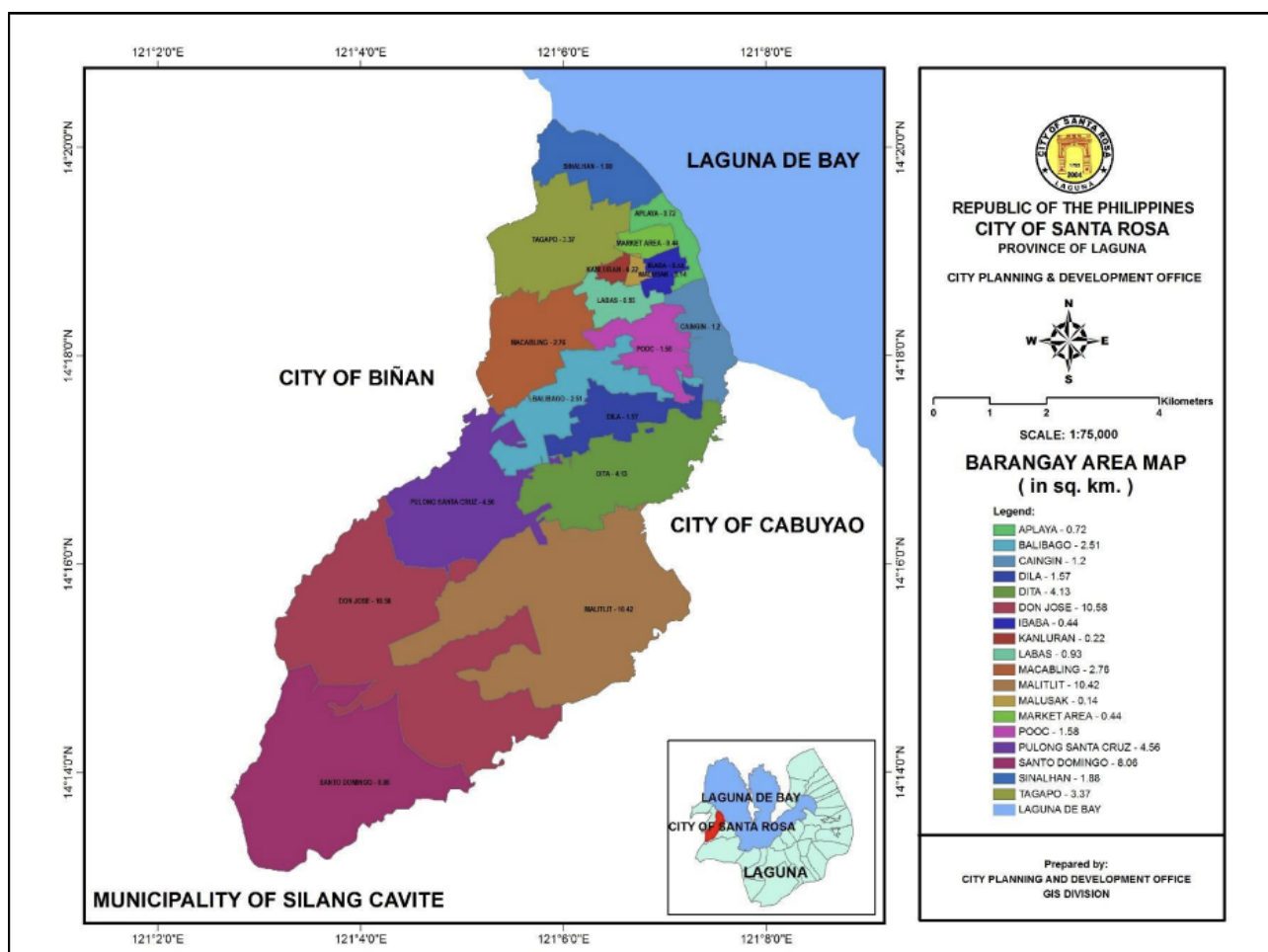
Figure 2. Barangay Area Map of the City of Santa Rosa

subdivisions, schools, industrial zones, and various business establishments.

Santa Rosa leaped forward to an industrial area from an agricultural municipality with the coming of local and foreign investors. These economic transformations were instrumental in the town and province's fast-paced economic and social transformation. The opening of the South Luzon Expressway paved the way to the establishment of business enterprises in the City. As of 2021, real estate lessors have the City's highest average growth rate at 58.33%.

An economic and residential hub south of Metro Manila, Santa Rosa is gaining popularity due to its mixed land use. Santa Rosa, a city of contrast, has a share of the lakeshore resources and a farming on the other. Despite the development brought about by commercialism and industrialization, Santa Rosa still sustains its cultural heritage.

The City has an income of USD 85.8 Million (2022), the highest revenue among Laguna's Local Government Units[4] . Santa Rosa has won the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry's Most Business-Friendly LGU award for the City Level 2 Category in 2020.

Santa Rosa's total population was 414,812 in 2020[5], among the top 10 most populous cities in Region IV-A, composed of the Provinces of Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, and Quezon (CALABARZON). The annual population growth rate for the City is 3.41%[2]. According to the 2020 Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) population census, the most populated barangay is Barangay Pooc (55,705), 13.43 % of the total population, but with a percentage share of land area of 2.84%, the smallest in Santa Rosa.

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[4] https://business.inquirer.net/471045/booming-sta-rosa-eyes-sustainable-future#:~:text=%2C%E2%80%9D%20he%20added.-,Sta.,to%20the%20Commission%20on%20Audit.
[5] Population Census of 2020.

1.2

Santa Rosa's Place in the Philippines and ASEAN

The City is a prime location in DEPDev CALABARZON's Southern Luzon "strategic development cluster," serving as a vital entry point to CALABARZON and covering the rising population influx due to in-migration. Santa Rosa is considered a promising Special Economic Zone (SEZ) in the Philippines. There are several manufacturing plants in the City, including Toyota, Mitsubishi Motors, Monde-Nissin Corp., San Miguel Brewery, and the Coca-Cola Company. Considered an investment capital of Southern Luzon, it is also known as "the Lion City of the South" and "Next Wave City." It also houses the Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) industry and companies like AFNI, IQor, Teletech, and Concentrix. In 2013, IBM opened a facility in Santa Rosa, too. BPO marketplace Outsource Accelerator ranked Santa Rosa as the fourth top BPO destination after Manila, Cebu, and Davao. Moreover, it accommodates Ayala Land's largest "eco-city" and the 600-hectare Eton City, a township project. The Enchanted Kingdom, a theme park in the city, can host up to 25,000 guests on its 25-hectare property and houses the SM giant's first "supermall" in the Laguna province.

As an international business city, Santa Rosa continues to connect with the ASEAN through industrial investments, innovations, and technology.

The City of Santa Rosa is an investment enabler for Asian industries and could serve as a technology and innovation hub for the ASEAN region. Characterized by rapid urbanization, Santa Rosa offers a workforce for industries and spacious residential villages that can accommodate ASEAN visitors, scholars, and technocrats.

Santa Rosa's accessibility to ports and harbors in southern Luzon increases the mobility of delivery services within the ASEAN region. The South Luzon Expressway (SLEX), coupled with SKYWAY routes, facilitates faster transportation from Santa Rosa to the business centers in Metro Manila. Santa Rosa's priority programs on health and wellness and the presence of medical care facilities are conducive to efficient health services extended to Asian industries. The presence of multinational industries will attract ASEAN scholars for internship programs, given the availability of technical academic institutions. Moreover, the City Tourism Office, in partnership with the Department of Tourism and the Philippine National Police, has been conducting an Integrated Tourism Safety Security Seminar for Tourist Oriented Police, promoting community order and protection and establishing an image that the province of Laguna is a safe destination for both local and international communities.

1.3

Santa Rosa's Sustainability Commitments

Sustainability is at the heart of every Program, Project, and Activity (PPA) in Santa Rosa. The SDGs are mainstreamed into the City's plans, which include the Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP)[7] —a pioneer in Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) practices even before the Housing Land Use Regulatory Board (HLURB) mandated it for all Local Government Units (LGUs) in 2013. One of the most recently approved tools that the City developed is the Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP)[8]. CDP, a multi-sectoral plan that covers the five development sectors, incorporates SDG indicators alongside the mandated criteria from the Department of Interior and Local Government. This ensures a top-down alignment of local plans with national strategies, specifically the Philippine Development Plan 2023-2028, which is SDG-centric.

The City of Santa Rosa has defined its development approach in several dimensions: human-centered and economic development, cultural sustainability, technology, and innovation.

Human-centered Development

Santa Rosa has cultivated strong civic consciousness through local people's organizations rooted in the barangay. The development of social capital ensures the City's dynamic involvement with its citizens. Creating various sectoral groups in sports, educational, and cultural activities participated by the senior citizens, youth, single parents, women, and persons with disability encourages citizens' open communication and engagement with local authorities.

Economic Development

The City of Santa Rosa's progress reflects its journey, guided by Mayor Arlene Arcillas' leadership since 2007. The Mayor's 'Concept of Development' is embodied in four areas emphasizing key growth sectors. The first pillar focuses on Knowledge and Skills Development, reminiscent of SDG 4. The second pillar prioritizes a Clean Environment and Healthy Lifestyle, aligning with SDGs 2, 3, 12, and 13. The third pillar highlights Livelihood and Job Generation, reflecting SDGs 1, 5, and 8. Lastly, the fourth pillar promotes Peaceful and Orderly Communities, corresponding to SDGs 11 and 16. Building on this, the City's development framework focuses on sustainability, economic growth, social development, and good governance. It advocates four building blocks, ensuring the local government is responsive, proactive, inclusive, and participative. The Four Pillars articulate the City's commitment to achieving the selected SDGs for Santa Rosa.

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[7] Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP) 2018-2026 of the City of Santa Rosa. https://drive.google.com/file/d/1JFHVPPBJSELgkYLTOBREsuASmGNFCvl8/view?usp=drive_link.
[8] Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP) 2023-2028 of the City of Santa Rosa. https://drive.google.com/file/d/1JzpHjYUNe1LlF9F0mkI7hMxdh0dicyDe/view?usp=sharing.

Cultural Sustainability

The City values its cultural heritage. Ordinance NO. 2122-2019 declares the Old Poblacion in Santa Rosa as "The City of Santa Rosa Heritage Square," prescribing its use and conservation for other purposes. Through the ordinance, Santa Rosa is transforming its Spanish-era city center into a "Heritage Square" that will include the church, the heritage houses, the museum, and various government offices. The "Heritage Square" is a reminder of the city's glorious history and it will inspire its people to value the tradition and culture

Technology

Advanced technology and innovation are drivers for economic growth. Santa Rosa invests in technology and partners with the Department of Science and Technology Region IV-A. Santa Rosa is focusing on energy efficiency and clean energy. The local government has installed solar panels on its buildings to shift to renewable sources. Moreover, local officials encourage residents and businesses to adopt solar energy when possible. The City Engineering Office oversees energy saving in Santa Rosa, making it a green city hall. Investments are also allocated to disaster preparedness and water testing. The City has set up its water testing laboratory to analyze wastewater and ambient water, with the facility set to cater to private establishments. The City's command center uses state-of-the-art equipment for monitoring road incidents and flooding.

The VLR will serve as a framework to accelerate the City's objectives, ensuring that the path toward sustainable development is people-oriented, resource-based, and inclusive.

The Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP) roadmap, Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP) strategic framework, and Annual Investment Plan (AIP) blueprint all share one objective: to mold Santa Rosa's future toward sustainable development.

1.4

VLR as a Framework for the City's Futrue

Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP)

This plan outlines a strategic, multi-sectoral roadmap for sustainable development and addresses social, economic, environmental, and institutional challenges while aligning with national and global frameworks, such as the SDGs.

Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP)

This plan serves as a strategic framework for the city's spatial and sectoral development, integrating stakeholder insights and focusing on sustainable land use, climate change adaptation, and disaster risk reduction. It aims to address urbanization challenges while optimizing Santa Rosa's economic, environmental, and social potentials to guide its progress as a resilient and inclusive urban center.

Annual Investment Plan (AIP)

The AIP serves as a blueprint for resource allocation, ensuring that financial investments align with local priorities. This is to promote inclusive and sustainable urban development by enhancing institutional efficiency, improving public service delivery, and fostering environmental resilience.

The VLR Process

The overarching objective of the VLR is to localize the 2030 Agenda to the context of Santa Rosa, identifying priority SDGs and mainstreaming them in the City government's local plans, programs, and activities, leaving no one behind. More specifically, the VLR aims to:

01
Assess Achievements

quantify the City's accomplishments in relation to the SDG targets, showcasing progress and highlighting successful initiatives that can serve as models for future programs.

02
Mainstream the SDGs

into the City's annual investment plan and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

03
Identify Opportunities

to uncover areas where further improvements or expansions of programs can enhance the City's capacity to address pressing challenges, promote inclusivity, and advance sustainable development.

04
Leverage Action

for addressing the multiple interlinked crises and promotes sustainable development.

05
Promote Vertical Integration

(VLR-VNR) to strengthen the legitimacy of subnational/local follow-up review of the SDGs.

06
Raise Awareness

of the SDGs in local communities, resulting in a comprehensive bottom-up action to achieve the SDGs.

The VLR focuses on the 10 SDGs identified by the City as key priorities and validated by stakeholders during the inception workshop held on June 6 -7, 2024. These selected SDGs are contextualized in the "Five Pillars," ensuring a holistic approach to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It is important to note that while Santa Rosa has chosen to focus on these specific SDGs, the interconnected nature of the Goals means that progress in these areas can have positive ripple effects across other SDGs as well. This approach aligns with the concept of SDG localization, where communities tailor global goals to their specific contexts and needs.

Santa Rosa's chosen SDGs focus on the first five goals (SDGs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5), which primarily address fundamental aspects of human development. This prioritization reflects Santa Rosa's emphasis on addressing basic needs, improving health outcomes, enhancing educational opportunities, and promoting women's empowerment. By concentrating on these areas, Santa Rosa aims to create a strong foundation for poverty alleviation and overall societal progress.

Santa Rosa also focused on SDGs 11, 12, and 13, prioritizing environmental security and inclusive sustainable development. SDGs 16 and 17 complement the selection of the SDGs in Santa Rosa as they promote collaboration and a peaceful environment in pursuing a sustainable future.

2.1

Scope and Framework of the VLR

PEOPLE	PLANET	PACE	PROSPERITY	PARTNERSHIP
SDG 1 - No Poverty SDG 2 - Zero Hunger SDG 3 - Good Heath and Well-being SDG 4 - Quality Education SDG 5 - Gender Equality	SDG 12 - Responsible Consumption and Production	SDG 16 - Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions	SDG 11- Sustainable Cities and Communities	SDG 17 - Partnerships for the Goals

Table 1. Selected SDGs for the City of Santa Rosa VLR as contextualized in the Five Pillars of the 2030 Agenda

Figure 3. Overview of the Selected Sustainable Development Goals Under Review in the City of Santa Rosa

People (SDGs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5). This pillar aims at social equity and holistic human development. Securing the well-being of the people is attained by overcoming poverty and hunger, focusing on health, anchoring on education, and promoting gender equality.

Planet (SDGs 12, 13). This pillar provides the resources for sustainable development. Sustainable cities and communities have a common goal: to be resilient and withstand the impacts of climate change.

Peace (SDG 16). In a well-secured city where all forms of conflict are being addressed. Strong institutions at the city level can overcome threats from all forms of crime.

Prosperity (SDG 11). Prosperity enables the creation of sustainable cities, where communities work hand in hand with the natural environment amidst technological advancement.

Partnership (SDG 17). A sustainable city collaborates with partners towards the common development goal of strengthening global security.

2.2

The Three Dimensions of Sustainability Applied in the VLR

Socio-cultural:

The VLR process raises awareness of the SDGs at the grassroots level, leading to wider stakeholder engagements and a comprehensive bottom-up approach to governance.

Economic:

The VLR is integrated into the City's future strategic plans and investments, coupled with data audits and inventory to ensure financial security.

Environment:

The VLR recognizes the ecosystem services of the natural environment to improve the indicator framework, aiming at enhancing quality of life and contributing to preserving natural resources.

2.3

The Three Dimensions of Sustainability Applied in the VLR

The triple VLR model functions as a Framework, Tool, and Process.

As a framework, the model is people-oriented, resource-based, and inclusive. It ensures that the City's CDP roadmap, CLUP, and AIP are geared towards sustainable development. It provides a space for stakeholder engagement, socializing the SDGs, and making sure that no one is left behind.

As a tool, the VLR selects key performance indicators for the SDG targets. Anchored on data-based governance, the VLR allows the City to showcase its achievements through numerical analysis, graphs, and tables to visualize its commitments to sustainable development.

As a process, it works as a system with various interrelated phases, creating a report that is participatory, consultative, and anchored in evidence and covers the socio-cultural, economic, and environmental dimensions of sustainability.

The results of these three interrelated dimensions create a dynamic ecosystem comprising the City's projects, programs, and activities and reflecting on how SDGs are mainstreamed and localized.
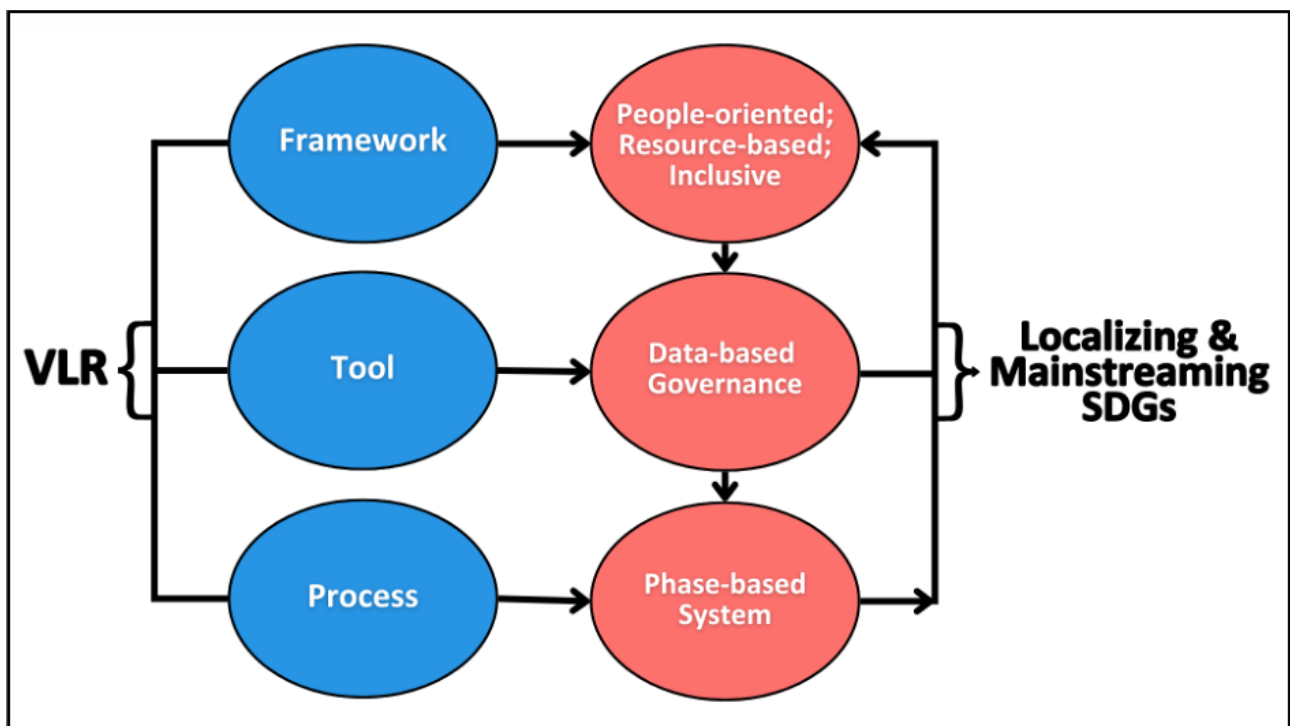
Figure 4. The Triple VLR Model of Santa Rosa, Laguna

2.4

The VLR Development Process

The VLR process for the City of Santa Rosa followed the guidelines developed by ESCAP[10] in 2020:

INCEPTION PHASE

- Establishment of the TWG
- Identification of the Priority SDGs
- First VLR Workshop – *June 6-7, 2024*
- Submission of the Inception Report

SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

- Face-to-face interviews
- Distribution of questionnaires
- Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

FINALIZATION PHASE

- Submission of priority SDGs
- Facilitation of a Validation Workshop with the City of Santa Rosa TWG, Barangay Chairpersons, Academe, Civil Society Organizations, and the Private Sector.
- Submission of the final VLR draft

FOLLOW-UP PHASE

- Presentation of the VLR in the 12th Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (February 2025, Bangkok) and the High-level Political Forum (July 2025, New York)
- VLR publication

Figure 5. VLR Development Process of the City of Santa Rosa

Inception phase

01

The TWG of the City of Santa Rosa

The Technical Working Group (TWG) of the City of Santa Rosa was created through a resolution in April 2024. The TWG was established through an Executive Order.

02

Identification of the Focus SDGs and First VLR workshop

The VLR Inception Workshop was conducted among the Santa Rosa City Offices, Civil Society Organizations, sectoral representatives, business establishments, and academia on June 6 - 7, 2024 . The objective was to inform the stakeholders of the VLR process and agree on the SDGs to review.

Implementation phase

The VLR writers prepared the City of Santa Rosa VLR in close coordination with the CPDO and ESCAP. Experts from IGES also contributed to the process. Primary data was collected on SDG indicators through government documents and secondary data from the various City offices and interviews with the TWG.

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9 City of Santa Rosa VLR Post-Activity Report. https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mKflHtOW_Minmj1oKqC_Um-PJNiRQPyl/view?usp=drive_link.
10 See https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/Asia-Pacific%20Regional%20Guidelines%20on%20VLRs_0.pdf

Stakeholder Engagement

The VLR will give local communities in the City of Santa Rosa a voice in the national conversation. The VLR looked at how stakeholders collaborate with the city to align the local agenda with the SDGs. It also expanded the political discussion between city-level management and barangay-level governance.

Stakeholder engagement plans in the City of Santa Rosa included:

- Participation of the stakeholders from various sectors during the workshop in preparation for the inception report.
- Consultation with the TWG and the Barangays on the City's PPAs relative to its priority areas.
- Dialogues with the Barangay officials allow vulnerable groups like senior citizens, solo parents, PWDs, and out-of-school youth to be heard and ensure their needs are prioritized.

- Discussions with the private sector and business groups on corporate social responsibility activities.
- Digital platform to reach Civil Society organisations (CSOs), Barangay officials, and the private sector.
- Validation workshops were held for the three sectors (TWG, CSOs, private sector, and Barangays) to solicit feedback.

Methods for stakeholder consultations included:

1. Face-to-face interviews

Between July and November 2024, 12 key informants were interviewed face-to-face. Among the interviewees were the president of a women's organization, a fisherfolk, a farmer, and a barangay administrator.

2. Distribution of questionnaires

To facilitate a wider range of data collection, questionnaires on SDG PPAs were disseminated to the City of Santa Rosa's offices, barangay officials, selected CSOs, and private sectors to solicit inputs not gathered through the face-to-face interviews. The questionnaires collected information on how stakeholders operate, the relevance of particular SDGs in their initiatives, and how the City of Santa Rosa supports them in meeting their endeavors. The questionnaires were either distributed online by email or in person, which were mostly answered through interviews that were then transcribed afterwards with the consent of the respondents involved. The CPDO supported this data-gathering process by following up with the City Offices concerned and the 18 barangay captains of the City of Santa Rosa.

3. Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

Two parallel FGDs were conducted simultaneously on September 27, 2024, at the UST Santa Rosa campus. The activity was developed with the Office of the Assistant to the Rector for UST Santa Rosa.

The objective of the FGD was to meet the Barangay Chairpersons of Santa Rosa—or their Barangay's representative if the Barangay Chairperson could not make it—and stimulate discussions on how they implement SDG projects and activities at the barangay level. The FGD highlighted insights on 13 Barangays that deal with poverty alleviation, reducing hunger, environmental protection, gender equality, as well as caring for health and wellness.

- **Health programs** – Both FGDs highlighted the importance of health programs. FGD 1 focused more on accessible medicine distribution (e.g., Generika partnership). FGD 2 mentioned partnerships and hospitals like Medical City for comprehensive services. FGD 1's reliance on local partnerships for medicine and distribution (e.g., Generika) is crucial in addressing healthcare gaps, particularly in low-income communities. FGD 2 showed a broader scope of healthcare, involving hospitals for more complex medical services and a more structured health service. Both FGDs mentioned the importance of community participation. FGD 1 focused on clean-up drives and other local initiatives, while FGD 2 incorporated community participation into broader programs like gardening for food security.

- **Challenges in leadership** – Both FGDs mentioned challenges faced by barangay leadership. They highlighted the need for Barangay Chairpersons to be more directly involved with their constituents rather than relying on barangay officials only. FGD 2 discussed the issue of inherited projects from the previous Barangay Chairpersons and managing previous leadership priorities.

- **Budget constraints** – The budget was also mentioned in the discussion of the 2 FGDs. Barangays relied more on external collaborations for financial support, while FGD 2 noted more reliance on personal funds from barangay officials.

- **Sustainability Practices** – Sustainability was a priority in both FGDs, though FGD 1 focused more on environmental sustainability (waste management). FGD 2 connected sustainability to broader issues like food security through community gardens.

- **Environmental initiatives** – Both FGDs mentioned initiatives like clean-up drives, which are connected to larger programs such as flood control and awareness raising.

- **Collaboration** – Collaboration was important for both FGDs. FGD 1 relied on partnerships with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and the local government, while FGD 2 had a wider range of collaborators, including hospitals and private companies.

- **Economic programs** – FGD 1 focused on local economic support, such as small businesses, while FGD 2 had broader economic initiatives like job fairs and livelihood programs.

Finalization phase

Validation Workshops were conducted on January 22-24, 2025, to gain feedback and recommendations, as well as verify data from stakeholders—namely, the TWG, Barangays, Private Sector, Academe, and CSOs.

2.5

Challenges

Since the VLR is a new initiative for the City, some challenges were encountered, particularly concerning data and coordination. The VLR is a new governance experience for Santa Rosa. A deep-seated analysis of the whole system was needed to classify data and place them in their proper setting. Nevertheless, the process is projected to become more streamlined and efficient with each iteration.

One of the limitations in writing the VLR was the availability of data from the Offices concerned. Furthermore, not all city offices have automated databases, and for those that do, the data remains decentralized. Better coordination and communication between experts and the offices supplying data is necessary. Strengthening dialogue and information exchange between these groups would significantly enhance collaborative efforts.

2.6

Research Methods

2.6.2 Quantitative

Quantitative data sources encompass a wide range of historical records, reports, and administrative datasets that offer critical insights into the city's performance in achieving the selected SDGs. The data collected include detailed information on the city's programs, projects, and activities specifically designed to address various aspects of sustainable development. These were drawn from historical archives maintained by relevant offices and reflect quantitative indicators and descriptive records of the city's interventions over time. Such data provides a multidimensional picture of how the city has progressed in implementing its development agenda, from resource allocation and program execution to measurable outcomes.

2.7

Data Analysis

2.6.1 Qualitative

The qualitative data was collected through different sources, such as:

- Face-to-face interviews.
- Focus Group Discussions: the FGDs provided insights from the Barangay Chairpersons or Barangay officials themselves.
- Direct observations of local communities
- The City's Programs, Projects, and Activities (PPAs).
- Policies, reports, and secondary data that are available online.
- Other online sources such as websites and Facebook pages (Barangays Facebook page helped present data for the communities' real-time activities).

This evidence-based approach ensures a comprehensive analysis of the city's sustainable development efforts. By linking the collected data to specific SDG targets and indicators, the study provides an accurate snapshot of the city's performance and identifies actionable strategies for driving further progress. Moreover, this methodology emphasizes inclusivity, ensuring that no sector or community is left behind in pursuing sustainability.

The results of this analysis will offer city stakeholders a data-driven foundation for decision-making, enabling them to refine existing strategies, prioritize investments, and foster collaborative efforts with local and international partners to achieve the SDGs.

A structured approach was employed to analyze the collected data, ensuring the reliability and validity of the findings. This process involved several critical steps, including data cleaning, validation, and detailed analysis to identify actionable insights. Additionally, existing data was aligned with the global SDG indicators to bridge the gap and provide a comprehensive perspective between local knowledge of communities and worldwide aspirations guided by the SDGs.

Linking Global Indicators with Local Initiatives: A crucial step involved selecting appropriate indicators from the international SDG framework and aligning the City's existing data with these indicators. This process ensured local data were mapped to internationally recognized standards, enabling a clear connection between community-level activities and the global SDGs.

Data Cleaning and Validation: Before the analysis, the datasets were thoroughly cleaned to ensure accuracy, consistency, and reliability. Missing data were appropriately handled through the use of proxies, and outliers were identified and addressed to preserve the integrity of the analysis. Additionally, the quantitative data were validated against reports provided by the respective offices to confirm completeness and alignment with documented records.

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Descriptive and Trend Analysis: Descriptive statistics and trend analysis were performed to provide a comprehensive overview of the city's efforts in addressing specific SDG targets. Historical data were analyzed to identify patterns and changes over time, allowing the study to highlight areas of improvement, stagnation, or regression. This analysis provided critical insights into the sustainability and long-term impact of the city's programs, projects, and activities to advance the SDGs.

Comparative Analysis: Where possible, the City's data were compared against regional and national benchmarks to contextualize its performance. This comparative perspective highlighted the city's strengths and achievements and uncovered opportunities for aligning local efforts with broader development initiatives and standards.

Data Visualization: Key insights and trends were translated into visual representations such as graphs, charts, and other data visualization tools. These visuals were designed to present the findings in an easily interpretable format, ensuring stakeholders could quickly understand achievements, challenges, and opportunities.

Qualitative Contextualization: Qualitative descriptions of PPAs were reviewed to complement and provide context to the quantitative findings. This included analyzing the implementation challenges, successes, and narratives about sustainable development efforts.

Validation and Synchronicity of Data and Actions: Validated quantitative results served as the foundation for assessing the City's actions. Synchronicity between the validated data and the impact indicators was emphasized to ensure that actions were well aligned with the identified needs and development goals.

Identification of Data Gaps: Data gaps were systematically identified. These gaps provided the basis for formulating actionable recommendations to address deficiencies to achieve sustainable development objectives.

This multi-layered analytical approach ensured a rigorous and comprehensive evaluation of the city's progress toward the SDGs. By integrating quantitative and qualitative insights, the analysis highlighted achievements, identified challenges, and offered targeted recommendations to guide the City's sustainable development journey. The selection of the target SDGs at the city level is a response to the issues being addressed by the national government. In the same manner, the selected targets are also aligned with the global agenda on hunger, poverty, gender, and climate action.

Santa Rosa's Progress Toward the SDGs

The City of Santa Rosa remains steadfast in its commitment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, ensuring that no one is left behind. Recognizing that people are at the core of sustainable development, the city has focused on addressing poverty alleviation, food security, healthcare access, and quality education - key components of the "People" dimension in the SDG framework.

3.1

PEOPLE

The City of Santa Rosa has demonstrated its commitment by focusing on supporting vulnerable groups within its barangays (local communities). This support is evident in their efforts to strengthen social capital through various initiatives.

Santa Rosa has created a more efficient system for providing financial aid, distributing food, and coordinating disaster relief efforts. Furthermore, the City empowers community members by giving them a platform to voice their opinions and actively participate in local activities.

The City's approach to community engagement is reflected in diverse activities promoting wellness and social cohesion. These include:
- Volunteerism in disaster management.
- Zumba classes for senior citizens, women, and youth.
- Sports competitions for youth and women.
- Talent shows highlighting artistic and creative abilities.
- Community-wide efforts to clear and clean waterways.

These activities encourage physical health and creativity and foster a sense of unity and togetherness among Santa Rosa's residents. The City has created an inclusive environment that strengthens community bonds and promotes active citizenship by involving people of various ages and backgrounds.

SDG 1 – No Poverty

The socio-economic landscape of Santa Rosa has evolved dramatically over the years. Initially a primarily agricultural community, it has transformed into a bustling urban center known as the "Investment Capital of South Luzon." This transition has increased living costs, further straining low-income families who cannot keep pace with rising rents and prices for basic goods.

Living in poverty poses significant financial challenges for many families living in informal settlements, which are often referred to as Informal Settler Families (ISF). As a city with rapid urbanization and industrial growth, informal settlements frequently occupy risk-prone areas. Typically, they are located along waterways, the lakeshore, and lands managed by various authorities, such as the National Irrigation Authority land area, making them particularly vulnerable to environmental hazards.

Residents of these informal settlements face extreme economic difficulties, struggling to meet even the most basic needs, such as food, clean water, and adequate shelter. Many families live in precarious conditions, often in makeshift housing ill-equipped to withstand the region's frequent flooding and other disasters. The threat of eviction compounds these environmental risks, as informal dwellings are often illegal and lack formal tenure recognition.

Not all ISFs qualify for government housing projects, especially those building makeshift houses on private properties. They received financial assistance, but it was insufficient to start anew. Meanwhile, some relocatees sell their rights and return to their hard living conditions.

Poverty alleviation is a core mission of Santa Rosa, emphasizing the importance of prioritizing SDG 1. This Goal advocates for inclusive development, ensuring that every individual's voice is acknowledged and valued. By focusing on SDG 1, the City aims to create opportunities for vulnerable groups, enabling them to access affordable housing and live with dignity. Furthermore, it seeks to provide stable employment that allows families to cover their essential expenses, ensuring they have food and the means to support their livelihoods. This commitment reflects a broader vision of fostering an equitable society where all community members can thrive.

Localized Targets:
- Equal rights to ownership, access to basic services, technology, and economic resources.
- Mobilize resources to end poverty.

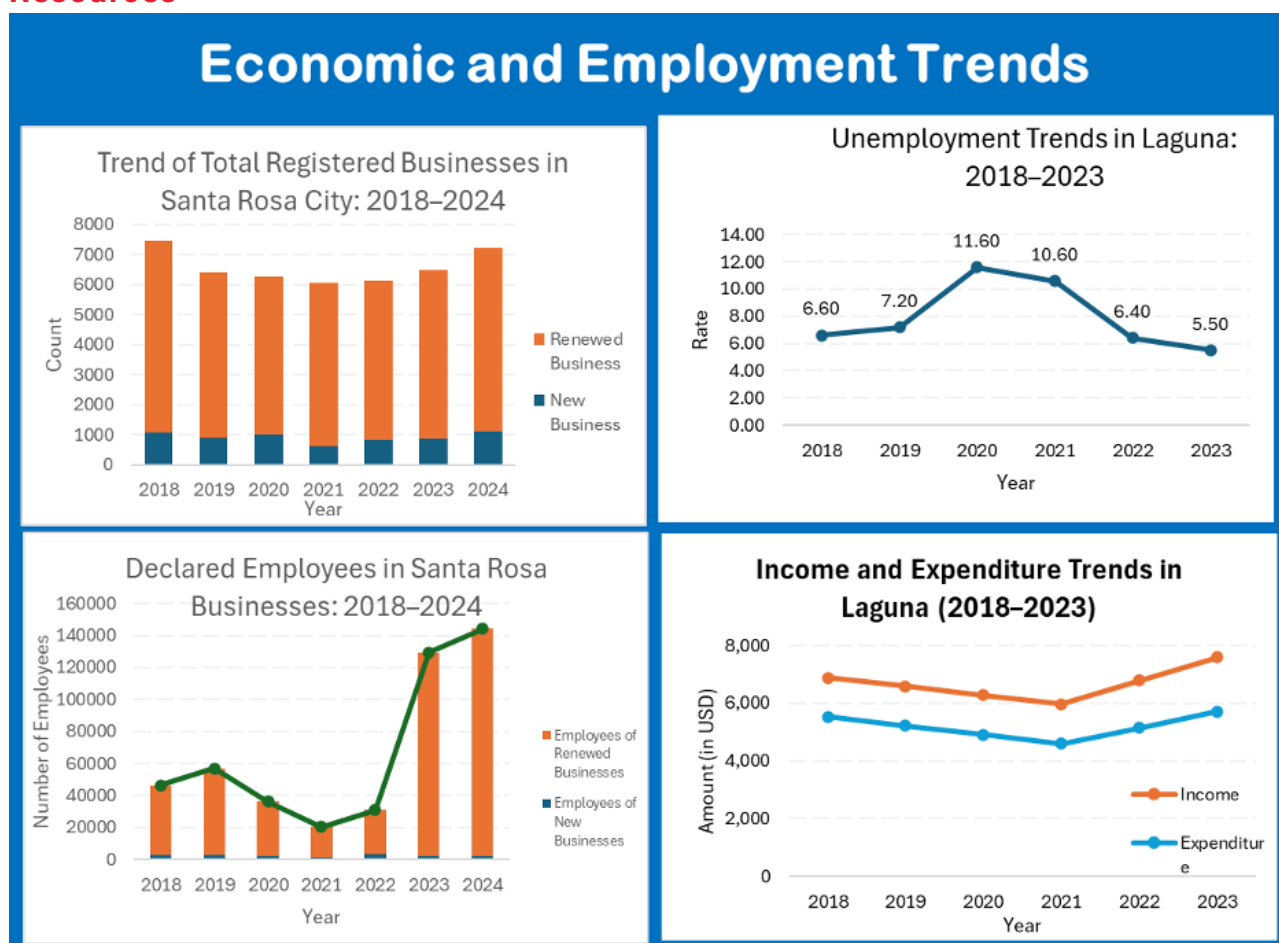## Equal Rights to Ownership, Basic Services, Technology, and Economic Resources

Figure 6. Economic and Employment Trends in Santa Rosa and Laguna (2018-2024)
Sources: Philippine Statistics Authority & City of Santa Rosa Business Permit and Licensing Office

The dashboard below provides insights into economic and employment indicators (see Figure 6) related to SDG 1, focusing on the City of Santa Rosa and the Province of Laguna. Indicators such as business registrations, number of employees, unemployment rate, and income-expenditure trends offer a comprehensive view of economic resilience and opportunities for continued growth in the region.

Between 2018 and 2024, Santa Rosa established itself as a business-friendly city, with renewed businesses consistently outnumbering new registrations by over 5:1. This trend underscores the City's ability to nurture and sustain established enterprises. To complement this strength, encouraging innovation and entrepreneurship, particularly in emerging sectors like technology and

sustainability, could further enhance Santa Rosa's economic diversification. Currently, the City houses a diverse range of businesses from manufacturing, automotives, tech, BPO, retail, shopping malls, real estate and townships, healthcare, education, MSMEs, to tourism and hospitality.

Santa Rosa continues to excel as a key job generator hub. Declared employees rose from approximately 60,000 in 2021 to nearly 160,000 in 2024, showcasing remarkable progress aligned with SDG Target 8.5 [11], emphasizing full and productive employment. While these achievements are notable, tracking informal workers, who may constitute a significant part of the workforce, could offer a more comprehensive picture of employment inclusivity and sustainability.

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[11] By 2030 achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value.

Provincial trends in Laguna suggest similarly positive developments, with unemployment rates decreasing from 11.6% in 2020 to 5.5% in 2023. Santa Rosa has likely mirrored these trends, reflecting the city's robust economic policies. Additionally, Laguna's rising income levels, with an average income nearing USD 7,600 by 2023, demonstrate financial stability.

City-specific data could provide even deeper insights, helping to identify and address localized disparities. Data gaps limit the ability to evaluate the city's progress fully:

- **City-level unemployment rates:** While Laguna's overall unemployment trend is positive, Santa Rosa-specific data is needed to assess the inclusivity and sustainability of local employment growth.
- **Income and expenditure data**: Localized statistics can provide a more nuanced understanding of financial security and inequality within Santa Rosa.
- **Sector-specific business data:** Identifying industries driving growth and innovation can help shape targeted policies for sustainable development.

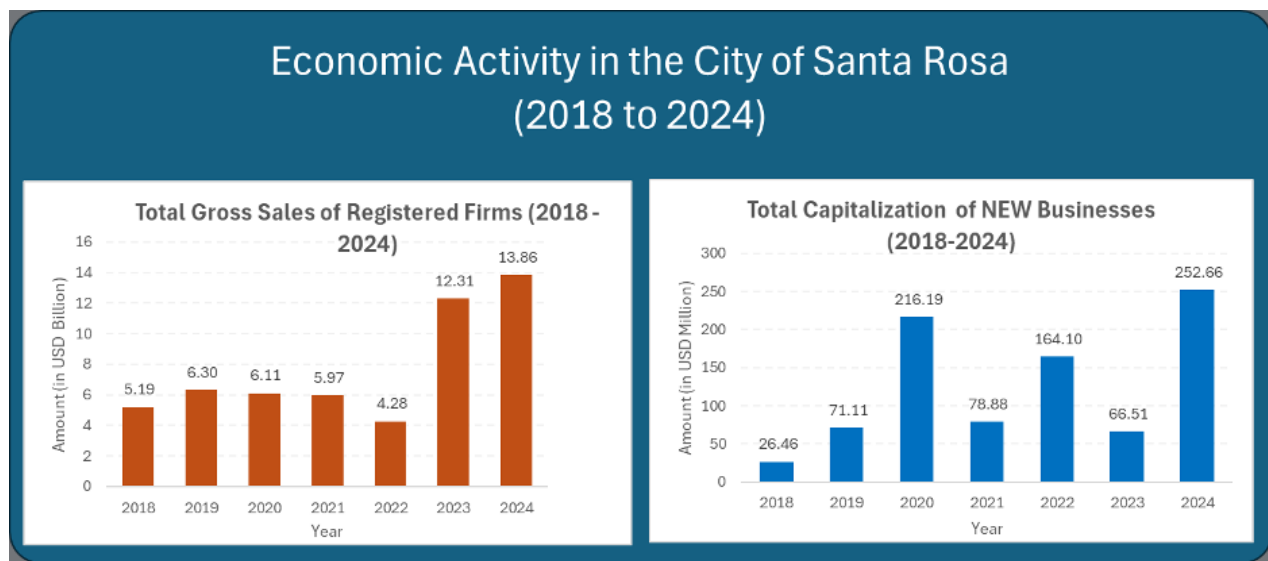## Economic Growth as a Tool for Poverty Reduction in Santa Rosa

Figure 7. Economic Activity in the City of Santa Rosa
Source: City of Santa Rosa Business Permit and Licensing Office

Economic growth plays a crucial role in poverty reduction as it generates employment opportunities, increases household incomes, and enables investments in social services. The data on gross sales of registered firms and capitalization of new businesses in Santa Rosa from 2018 to 2024 (see Figure 7) highlights the City's potential to address poverty through sustained economic activity.

Economic growth in Santa Rosa has created a solid foundation for poverty reduction. Gross sales of registered firms remained steady at USD 5 billion annually from 2018 to 2022 before surging to over USD 13 billion in 2023 and maintaining this momentum through 2024.

Business capitalization also reflects positive trends, peaking at USD 253 million in 2024, signaling continued confidence in Santa Rosa as an attractive investment destination.

These upward trends highlight the city's resilience and potential to reduce poverty effectively. Ensuring marginalized groups—such as low-income families, women, and youth— benefit equitably from this growth will further solidify Santa Rosa's alignment with SDG Target 1.4 [12], emphasizing equal access to economic resources. Additionally, exploring how economic gains directly impact job creation and specific industries could maximize the benefits of this growth.

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[12] By 2030, ensure that all men and women, particularly the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership, and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology, and financial services including microfinance.
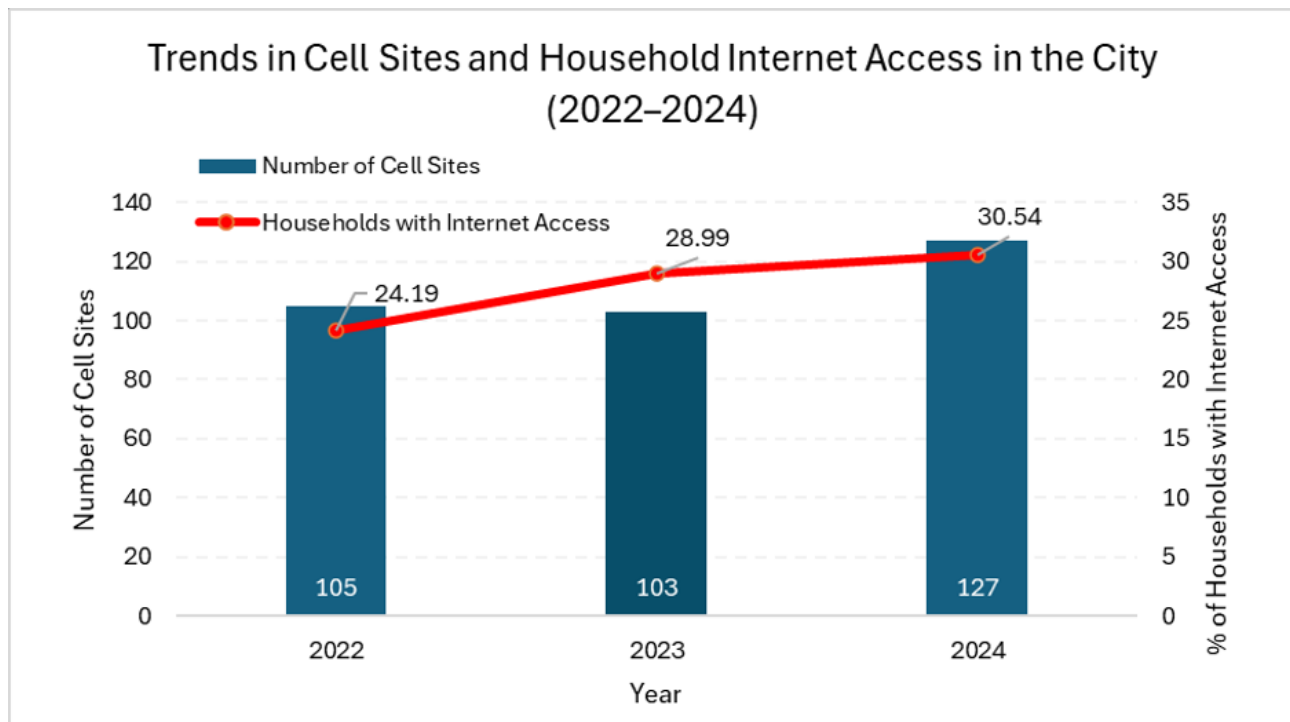
Connectivity and Poverty Alleviation in Santa Rosa

Figure 8. Cell Sites and Household Internet Access in Santa Rosa (2022–2024)
Source: National Telecommunications Commission

Internet connectivity has become a lifeline for individuals and families striving to improve their quality of life, particularly in overcoming barriers to education, employment, and essential services. The available data on cell sites and household internet access in Santa Rosa offers valuable insights into the city's progress toward digital inclusion and its alignment with SDG 1 (see Figure 8).

Between 2022 and 2024, the number of cell sites increased by 20%, reinforcing the City's efforts to strengthen its telecommunications backbone. Similarly, household internet

access grew from 28% to 31% during the same period, representing steady improvements in digital inclusion. While these developments are encouraging, further progress is possible. Collecting data on wireless connectivity, such as mobile subscriptions and Wi-Fi coverage, could provide a clearer picture of digital inclusion, particularly for low-income households primarily relying on mobile internet. Assessing internet affordability and addressing digital literacy challenges will further enhance access and help bridge the remaining digital divide.

Mobilize Resources to Implement Policies in Ending Poverty

The chart (see Figure 9) illustrates the percentage of the city budget dedicated to social services over selected years, highlighting the city's commitment to supporting community welfare and well-being. Santa Rosa has strongly committed to addressing poverty through its social services budget allocations. In 2020,

25% of the city's budget was dedicated to social services, showcasing the city's ability to respond effectively to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. By sustaining or increasing these allocations, Santa Rosa can continue to strengthen its social safety nets and make significant strides toward SDG 1.

Figure 9. Annual Percentage of City Budget Allocated to Social Services (2018−2023)
Source: City of Santa Rosa Annual Investment Plan

Poverty Index in Santa Rosa

Santa Rosa has consistently outperformed provincial and regional levels in reducing poverty, reflecting the city's resilience and proactive measures. From a poverty index[13] of 1.3 in 2018, Santa Rosa experienced a temporary rise to 3.7 in 2021 due to the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic (Figure 10). However, even during this challenging period, the City performed better than Laguna and CALABARZON. This reflects Santa Rosa's proactive approach to poverty alleviation, supported by economic growth, targeted social programs, and investments in infrastructure.
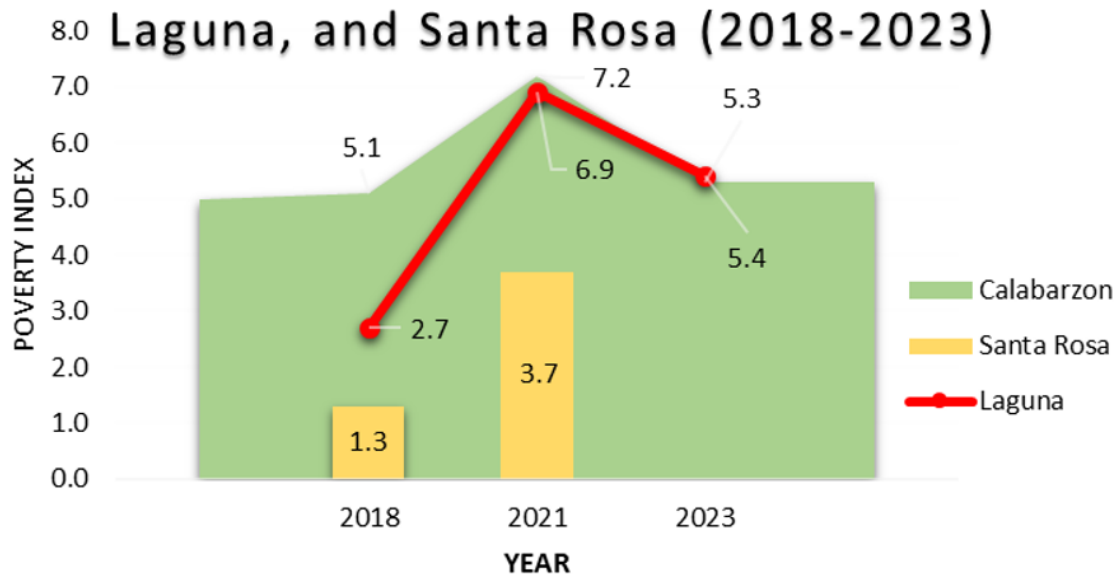
Figure 10. Poverty Index Trends (2018−2023)
Source: Philippine Statistics Authority

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[13] The Poverty Index measures the percentage of households whose income falls below the national poverty threshold and lacks access to basic needs such as food, clean water, healthcare, and education. It serves as a long-term measure of poverty reduction and the effectiveness of economic and social policies in the city. Changes in the index reflect sustained progress in poverty alleviation.

Laguna and CALABARZON significantly improved poverty indices between 2021 and 2023, declining from 6.9 to 5.4 and 7.2 to 5.3, respectively. Given Santa Rosa's historically strong performance and its status as an economic hub, it is reasonable to infer that the city experienced a similar, if not more pronounced, improvement during this period. However, this assumption remains speculative due to the absence of city-specific data for 2023.

City-specific data for 2023 would further confirm these positive trends, providing insights into the impact of ongoing programs and highlighting opportunities to target support where it is needed most.

City Actions to Achieve SDG 1

The Goal calls for providing affordable services to the vulnerable groups of Santa Rosa and alleviating poverty. Therefore, mainstreaming the localized targets on SDG 1 requires the concerted efforts of several local agencies in Santa Rosa. This is particularly challenging because it requires the involvement of various agencies that need to coordinate, implement, and monitor poverty programs in various capacities.

Financial Assistance to the Informal Settlement Families with Court Orders

According to the Emergency Shelter Assistance Program of the City Urban Development Housing Office (CUDHO), the City allocated financial assistance to informal settlement families with court orders[14] of USD 132,703.21. The approved budget for this program is USD 5,897.90, allotted to 11 families. Furthermore, the Mayor's Office donated USD 93,777.28 to supplement assistance, which benefited 199 families.

Employment

The Public Employment Service Office (PESO) serves as a recruitment agency for job seekers in Santa Rosa looking for opportunities as machine operators or technicians in factories. PESO organizes regular job fairs where job seekers can search for jobs that match their skills. At the same time, PESO coordinates with factories, offices, and industries on what skills job seekers need to have. According to Ms. Perla Lozada, Head of PESO, there is an internal arrangement with companies that companies recruiting through PESO should have at least 70% of their staff from Santa Rosa.

The agency also has career information and guidance for graduating high school and senior students. PESO has labor and market information that serves as the database for job applicants. It also has a database for job vacancies and a Facebook Page where job vacancies are posted.

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14 Court orders refer to the legal owners of the land who filed cases against the informal settlement families.

Conditional Cash Transfer

The City Social Welfare and Development (CSWD) coordinates with families qualified to receive the government's conditional cash transfer program to meet basic needs.

Other salient services offered through the CSWD include counseling sessions on breastfeeding for pregnant adolescents and support to young mothers to apply for a certificate of financial incapability to avail themselves of the PhilHealth maternal and newborn package. CSWD also coordinates residential programs for protective custody, legal assistance, and psychosocial intervention for children and women victims of abuse.

Amelioration Program

Assistance to Individuals in Crisis Situations (AICS) is the main social amelioration program of Santa Rosa, which includes medical assistance, hospitalization subsidy, burial assistance, and the Balik Probinsya Programme[15]. Specific actions include services to address a client's financial strain brought about by the sickness or death of a family member, as well as homes severely damaged by calamities. Self-employment assistance is also provided to individuals with existing micro-enterprises able to increase family income and provide sufficient food for their household members.

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[15] Balik Probinsya, Bagong Pag-Asa ("Return to the province, new-found hope." This program is part of the Government's strategy to achieve balanced development in all regions, ensure the well-being of rural areas, and improve initiatives towards achieving strong and thriving communities. https://balikprobinsya.nha.gov.ph/

Barangay Initiatives

As the smallest administrative unit in the Philippine political system, Barangays serve as the frontline provider of essential services to local communities. One important initiative implemented at this grassroots level is barangay consultation, which addresses issues concerning vulnerable sectors of society. Cohesiveness is a significant characteristic of the barangays in Santa Rosa.

Significant initiatives of the barangays are related to access to healthcare, livelihood employment assistance, and implementation of a barangay community garden[16]. Barangays actively address employment concerns in their communities. For instance, some barangays collaborate with local companies to create job opportunities for residents, demonstrating a grassroots approach to tackling unemployment[17].

Mr. Dela Rosa, President of the Association of Barangay Captains, emphasized the importance of community involvement in local governance. He highlighted that barangays are responsible for addressing the health conditions of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) and senior citizens; however, when an issue cannot be resolved within the barangay, it is escalated to the concerned City department for further action.

In Barangay Aplaya, the Chairwoman added that they have a doctor, physical therapist, pharmacist, and legal adviser serving the barangay. A legal adviser is needed as settling family disputes is challenging. Moreover, the chairwoman mentioned that her barangay was the first to provide USD 172 cash assistance to the bereaved families of senior citizens.

In Barangay Santo Domingo, livelihood assistance is given to solo parents and mothers. According to the Barangay Chair, "here in our barangay, livelihood programs are still ongoing for solo parents and mothers who lost their jobs during the pandemic. As part of the livelihood program, the single parents and mothers even partnered with an elementary school to sew foot rugs that the students can use."

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[16] Information based on the written responses and focus group discussions of the Barangay Chairpersons or their respective representatives.
[17] Based on an interview with Barangay Ibaba.

SDG 2 – Zero Hunger

Food insecurity is a major setback in development and represents a significant challenge for Santa Rosa in achieving this goal. As Santa Rosa progresses toward industrialization and the city's population increases, more land is converted from agriculture to other uses. Fishing grounds are also threatened due to the expansion of solar infrastructure, further jeopardizing the livelihoods of those dependent on fishing for sustenance and reducing the availability of this food source. Addressing these challenges is vital for ensuring all community members have access to affordable food and a decent living standard.

Rising food costs and concerns about food security are pressing issues in Santa Rosa. The inclusion of SDG 2 among the City's priorities is crucial for implementing effective interventions aimed at supporting vulnerable groups, including small-scale farmers and fisherfolk, alongside other marginalized communities and persons in vulnerable conditions, such as ISFs, PWD, the elderly, and single parents.

Localized Targets:
- Universal Access to Safe and Nutritious food.
- End all forms of malnutrition.
- Sustainable food production and resilient agriculture.

Hunger Incidence in the City: A Path Toward Zero Hunger

Hunger Incidence in the City
(2018-2023)
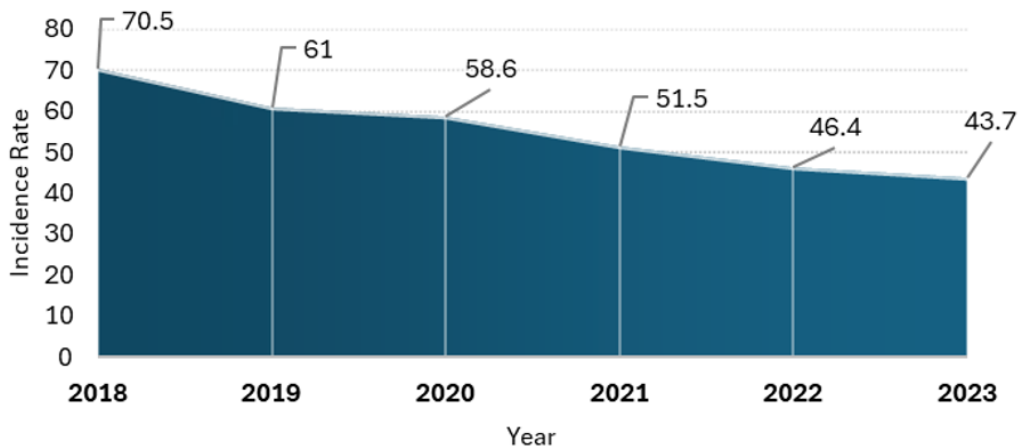
Between 2018 and 2023, hunger incidence decreased significantly from 70.5 to 43.7 per 100,000, a reduction of nearly 27 percentage points. This steady improvement reflects the city's commitment to reducing food insecurity and strengthening the foundation for a healthier and more equitable society.

From 2018 to 2020, hunger incidence declined steadily to 58.6 per 100,000 inhabitants, thanks to social protection measures, improved food distribution mechanisms, and shifts in household income patterns. Between

2021 and 2023, the pace of improvement accelerated, with hunger incidence reaching 43.7 per 100,000. This sharper decline suggests intensified efforts or structural changes in food systems during this period. Despite challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic, rising food prices, and climate disruptions, the City demonstrated resilience and adaptability in sustaining progress. While the exact drivers of this decline require further analysis, the results inspire optimism and highlight the need for continued efforts to address food insecurity.

Addressing Children Malnutrition

Children Malnutrition Rate trends by Sex and Overall (2019–2023)

The City has made remarkable progress in reducing malnutrition rates among children[18] over the past 5 years (2019 – 2023). From 3.68% in 2019, the malnutrition rate steadily declined to 2.39% in 2022 before a slight increase to 2.51% in 2023. This progress highli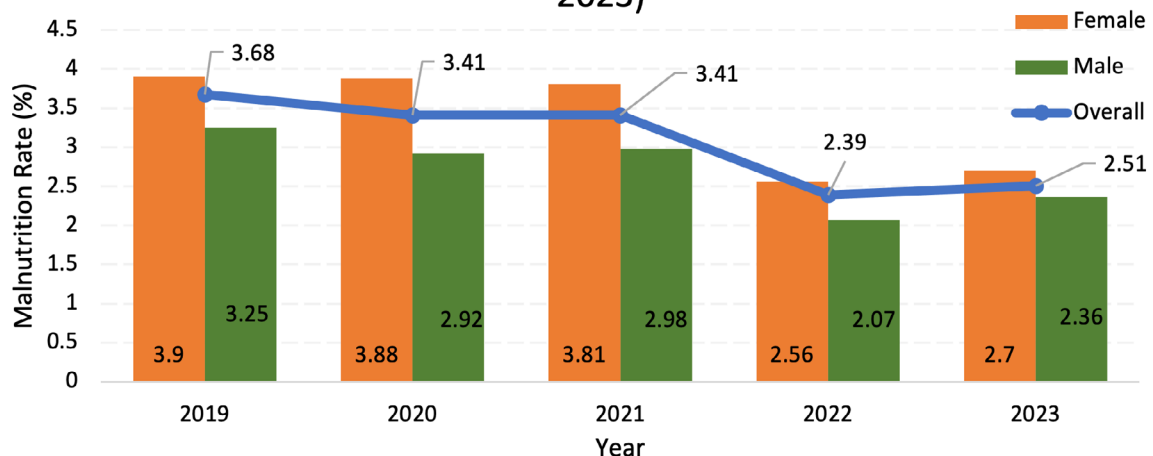ghts the impact of maternal and child health initiatives, school-based feeding programs, and public campaigns promoting nutrient-rich foods.

While malnutrition among females mirrors the overall trend, the slight uptick in 2023 underscores the need for sustained efforts, particularly among vulnerable populations. Expanding nutrition programs targeted at women and children, strengthening food systems to withstand economic and climate-related disruptions, and fostering partnerships between communities, the private sector, and local government will ensure continued progress.

End All Forms of Malnutrition: Supporting Nutrition Through Food-Related Businesses

The City Growth in Food-Related Businesses (2018–2023)
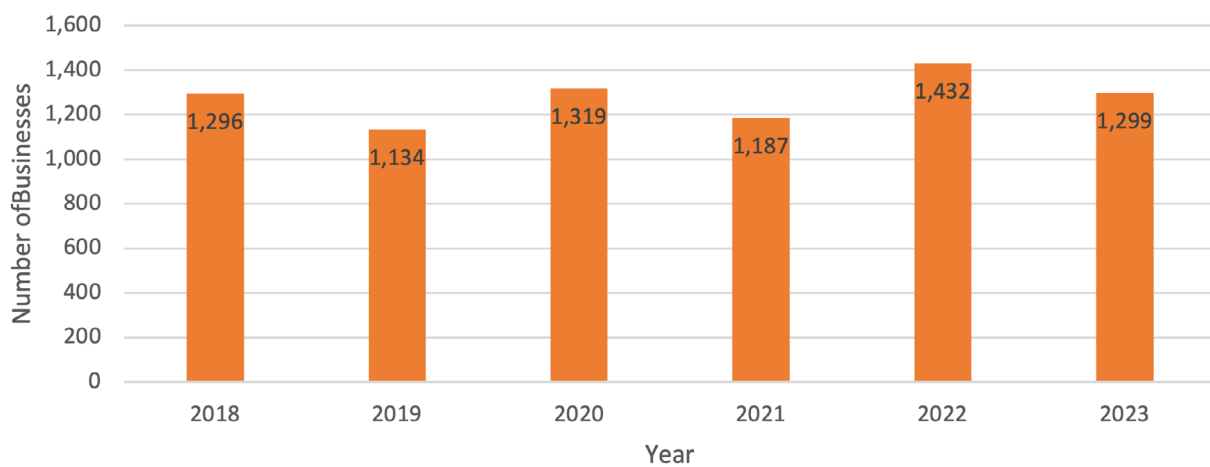
Figure 13. Number of Food-Related Businesses (2018-2023)
Source: City of Santa Rosa Agriculture Office and the Business Permit and Licensing Office

The City's commitment to ending all forms of malnutrition is reflected in public health programs and the growth and sustainability of food-related businesses.

Food-related businesses have played a critical role in providing affordable and nutritious food for residents. Despite economic challenges, the number of food establishments in the City grew from 1,200 in 2018 to a peak of 1,400 in 2022 before stabilizing slightly lower in 2023. This resilience highlights the importance of fostering food accessibility through a robust business sector, contributing to the City's efforts to end malnutrition.

Sustainable Food Production and Resilient Agriculture

By ensuring that agricultural land is managed responsibly, the City strengthens its capacity to produce nutritious, safe, and accessible food for its population. From 2018 to 2023, the City's progress in adopting sustainable practices on agricultural land reflects a commitment to balancing food production with environmental stewardship, although trends reveal both achievements and challenges.

The percentage of agricultural land under sustainable practices rose from 19.48% in 2018 to 27.77% in 2020, sustained through 2021 due to supportive policies such as farmer training, subsidies, and investments in sustainable technologies (see Figure 14). However, 2022 saw a sharp decline to 8.71%, likely caused by economic constraints, funding cuts, or external challenges like extreme weather.

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[18] Measures the percentage of children under five who are undernourished, based on stunting (height-for-age), wasting (weight-for-height), or underweight (weight-for-age).

Percentage of Agricultural Land Practicing Sustainable Methods (2018–2023)
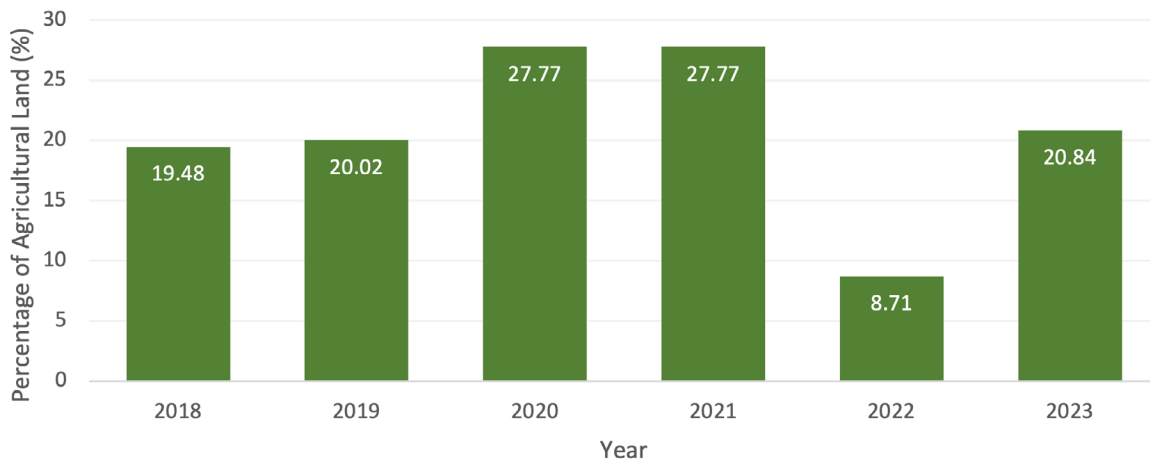
Figure 14. Percentage of Agricultural Land Practicing Sustainable Methods (2018-2023)
Source: City of Santa Rosa Agriculture Office

However, 2022 saw a sharp decline to 8.71%, likely caused by economic constraints, funding cuts, or external challenges like extreme weather. Recovery began in 2023, reaching 20.84%, though still below the 2020-2021 peak. These fluctuations underscore the need for consistent support to sustain progress and resilience.

Sustainable Food Production and Resilient Agriculture

City Community Gardens and Farmer Support Programs (2019–2023)
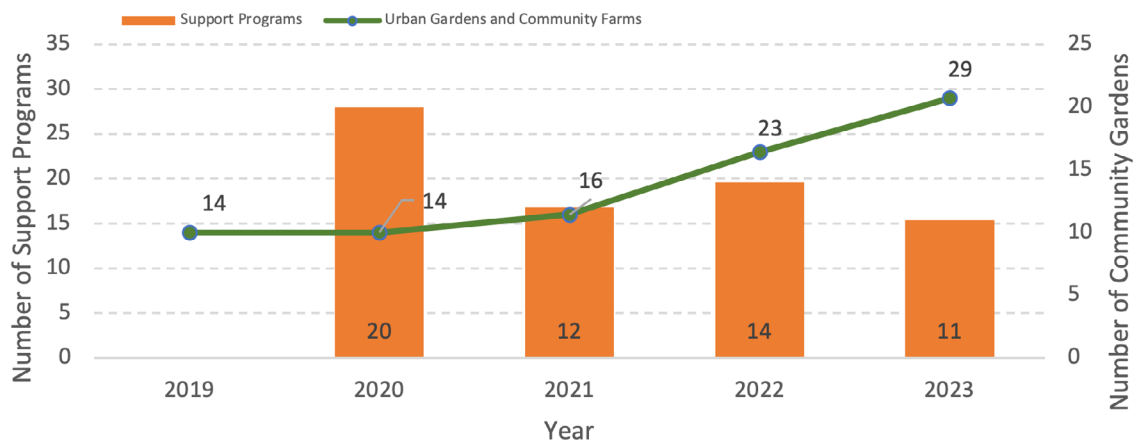
Figure 15. Number of Community Gardens and Farmer Support Programs in the City (2019–2023)
Source: City of Santa Rosa Agriculture Office

In its journey toward achieving SDG 2 and promoting sustainable agricultural practices, the City has made commendable efforts to support local farmers and enhance food security in local communities. Urban gardens and farmer support programs significantly affect food security and sustainability by boosting local food production, empowering communities, and creating green spaces that enhance urban resilience.

The number of urban gardens and community farms more than doubled, rising from 14 in 2019 to 29 in 2023 (see Figure 15). These gardens supplement the local food supply and provide education on sustainable practices, fostering a culture of shared responsibility for food security. However, support programs for local farmers experienced fluctuations, with the number dropping from 20 programs in 2020 to 11 in 2023. These variations highlight the need for greater consistency and expansion.

Empowering Farmers and Fisherfolks

The City recognizes that addressing food insecurity and achieving SDG 2 requires empowering farmers and fisherfolks. Over the years, training programs focused on sustainable agricultural and fishing practices have been key to ensuring food security and environmental resilience.

In 2022, the City trained 627 fishermen and 81 farmers, with efforts in 2023 balancing 591 fishermen and 105 farmers (see Figure 16). These initiatives equip food producers with the knowledge and tools to adapt to changing environmental and economic conditions, ensuring long-term productivity and sustainability in agriculture and fishing.

City Farmers and Fisherfolk Trained in Sustainable Practices (2019–2023)

Figure 16. City Farmers and Fisherfolk Trained in Sustainable Practices
Source: City of Santa Rosa Agriculture Office

City Actions to Achieve SDG 2
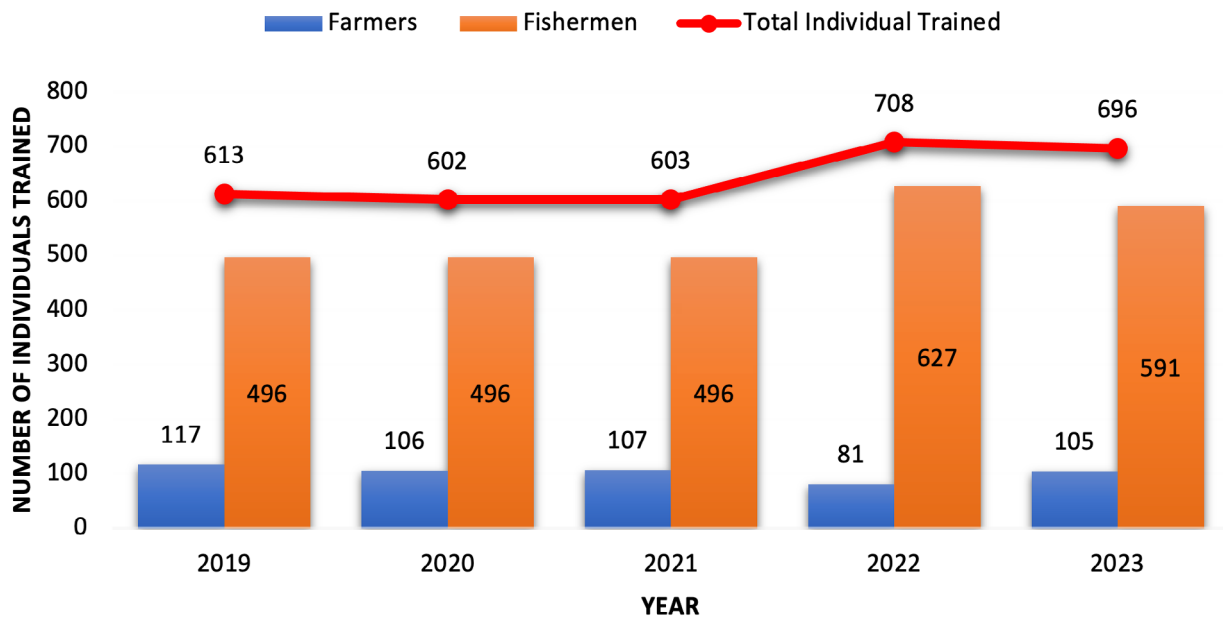
Capacity Building

The Office of the City Agriculturists (OCA) regularly conducts capacity-building, food fairs, and livelihood activities, engaging with stakeholders such as fisherfolk and farmers. This ensures the participation of the farmers and fisherfolks of Santa Rosa in the different banner programs of the Department of Agriculture (DA) and their inclusion as beneficiaries or recipients of farm inputs and credit assistance, types of machinery, and equipment the DA has for the Local Government Units (LGUs). The various programs, such as the Urban Agriculture Program, Organic Agriculture Program, Livelihood Program, and Dispersal Program, distribute farm inputs and fishery equipment to farmers and fisherfolks, respectively. OCA offers vegetable seeds, fruit seedlings, hydroponics kits, mushroom fruit bags, organic fertilizers, gill nets, and fingerlings. This assistance reduces the production cost of the farmers and fisherfolks. as beneficiaries or recipients of farm inputs and credit assistance, types of machinery, and equipment the DA has for the Local Government Units (LGUs). The various programs, such as the Urban Agriculture Program, Organic Agriculture Program, Livelihood Program, and Dispersal Program, distribute farm inputs and fishery equipment to farmers and fisherfolks, respectively.

OCA offers vegetable seeds, fruit seedlings, hydroponics kits, mushroom fruit bags, organic fertilizers, gill nets, and fingerlings. This assistance reduces the production cost of the farmers and fisherfolks. Additionally, since 2022, OCA has implemented the national and peri-urban agriculture program that aims to accommodate food production with the present land situation[19] , promoting communal gardens in the barangays and schools. It also provides seeds for households doing small-scale gardening.

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[19] Interview with Ms. Reynaldo, City Agriculture Office Staff.
[20] 'Palengke' is the Filipino term for public market.

KADIWA as Rolling Palengke [20]

The KADIWA ("fellow of the same spirit or thinking") food fair is a major government project that provides farm-to-consumer food supply chains and strengthens local distribution channels of essential goods in the communities. KADIWA aims to support local farmers and fisherfolks, enabling them to sell their products directly to consumers without intermediaries, thus ensuring higher profits for producers and lower prices for consumers. KADIWA centers are located in Santa Rosa City Hall and are accessible to everybody.

"We requested DA-AMAD (Department of Agriculture - Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Division) to conduct a KADIWA here in our City. From there, they were the ones who arranged the FCAs (Farmers Cooperative and Associations/Merchants) that will be sold in the KADIWA. The primary benefit of this is the lower price point of the goods in comparison to the public market. This is because we monitor the price in the public market a day before the KADIWA so that the merchants can use it to price their goods."

EnP. Shamah Reynaldo

From Yakap at Halik MPC Cavite on KADIWA in Santa Rosa
"The prices of our (merchants) products are lower than the prevailing market prices in other KADIWA programs. The DA-AMAD is responsible for monitoring the price in the City's public market, which will be forwarded to us so we can adjust our prices from 10 to 20 pesos per kilo for the commodities sold."

Mr. Ranoy Aure, "Yakap at Halik" Multipurpose Cooperative vendor

City Social Welfare and Development

Santa Rosa addresses hunger through its Supplemental Feeding Program (SFP), particularly for preschool children[21] . Now in its 14th cycle, the SFP provides at least 4,500 preschool children with low-cost but nutritious food prepared by child development center personnel with the help of volunteer parents.

SDG 2 is also addressed through the Department of Social Welfare and Development's conditional cash transfer. CSWDO assists in implementing the Pantawid Pamilya Pilipino Program or 4Ps, mainly by conducting Family Development sessions that integrate the SDGs.

Barangay Initiatives

Several activities to achieve SDG 2 are developed at the Barangay level. For example, the Barangay Children's Associations, mentored by the CSWD, develop awareness-raising activities on nutrition through interactive fun games, arts and crafts, and backyard gardening. The agency also advocates for bio-intensive gardening among Barangay Councils for the Protection of Children.

Implementing community activities for food security is one of the initiatives in the barangay. The barangay chairperson of Market Area states, "Since there is no longer land left in our barangay for agriculture, we thought of establishing Urban Gardening that is more than 20 meters in size and 10 meters in height. This was constructed near the Barangay Hall. The crops we grow in the Urban Gardening are vegetables, ornamentals— anything for the consumption of our barangay and free food for those who work in this garden. The same community activities are also found in Barangay Pulong Santa Cruz, such as community gardening, where residents are trained in gardening. and creating green spaces that enhance urban resilience.

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[21] Based on an interview with Ms. Emy India of the City Social Welfare and Development Office (CSWD).

SDG 3 – Good Health and Well-being

SDG 3 aims to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all ages. It includes targets on universal health coverage and access to safe, effective, quality, and affordable medicines and vaccines for all. It covers all major health priorities, including reproductive, maternal, newborn, child, and adolescent health, and addresses preventive communicable and non-communicable diseases.

A major challenge in Santa Rosa is the capacity to guarantee that disadvantaged residents, such as senior citizens, the unemployed, solo parents, and the poor, have access to good health services. Often, these residents need more financial means to pay for medical services and medicines.

Ensuring the well-being of Santa Rosa's residents is paramount to enhancing the overall quality of life in the city. As Santa Rosa experiences rapid urbanization, its inhabitants face increasing challenges such as congestion, pollution, and traffic. In this context, health is an invaluable asset that demands careful attention. By prioritizing health, citizens can maintain productivity, foster positive relationships, and contribute effectively to the community's growth and development.

Localized Targets:
- Reduce maternal mortality.
- Reduce premature mortality.
- Strengthen the prevention and treatment of substance abuse.
- Achieve universal health coverage.
- Reduce the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and pollution.
- Increase health financing and workforce.

Reduction of Maternal Mortality Ratio: Ensuring Safe Deliveries, A Cornerstone of Maternal Health
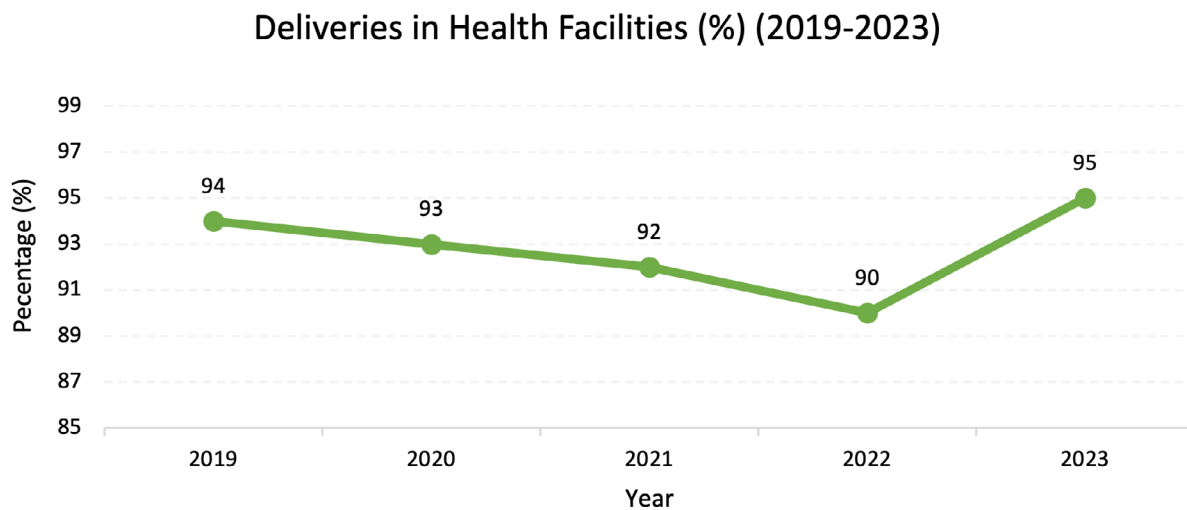
Deliveries in Health Facilities (%) (2019-2023)

Figure 17. Percentage of Deliveries in Health Facilities
Source: City of Santa Rosa Health Office

Access to quality healthcare during childbirth is fundamental to improving maternal and neonatal health. Deliveries in health facilities are a critical driver of progress under SDG 3, as those are directly associated with reduced maternal and neonatal mortality risks. The percentage of facility-based deliveries in the city reflects consistent efforts to provide safer environments for mothers and newborns.

From 2019 to 2023, the percentage of deliveries in health facilities remained high, starting at 94% in 2019, briefly declining to 90% in 2022, and rebounding to 95% in 2023, the highest recorded level. The dip in 2021–2022 is likely due to COVID-19 disruptions, strained healthcare systems, and altered healthcare-seeking behavior (see Figure 17). However, the City's rapid recovery in 2023 underscores its commitment to ensuring skilled care during childbirth.

This high rate of health facility deliveries demonstrates the City's success in promoting institutional care as the standard for safe deliveries. Policies prioritizing skilled birth attendants, community outreach, and investments in healthcare infrastructure have driven these positive outcomes. This includes the establishment of Super Health Centers and an adaptation of the California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen), among others.
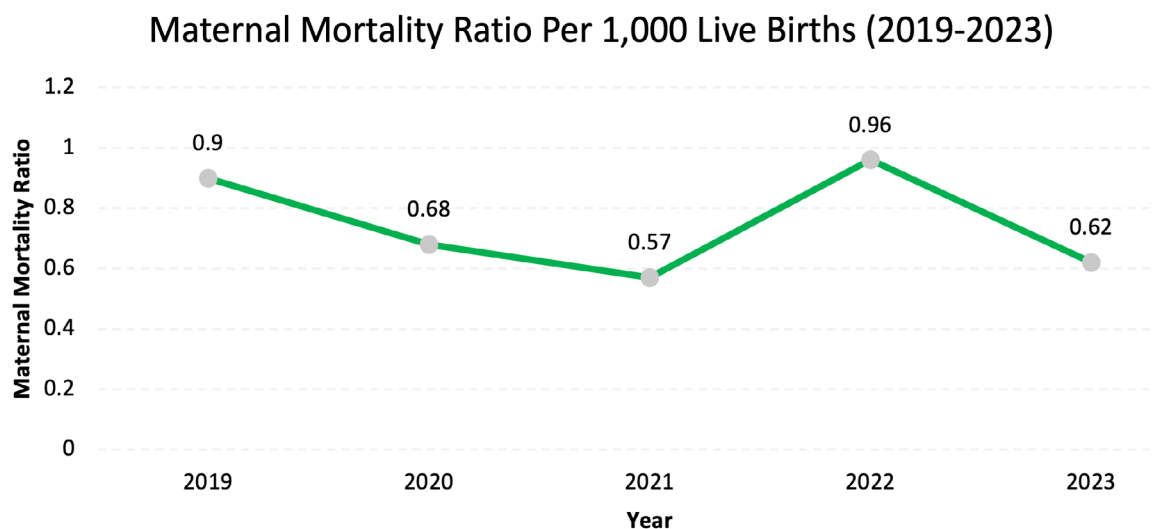
Maternal Mortality Ratio Per 1,000 Live Births (2019-2023)

Figure 18. Maternal Mortality Ratio Per 1,000 Live Births (2019-2023)
Source: City of Santa Rosa Health Office

The Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR)[22] trend from 2019 to 2023 also reflects significant progress (see Figure 18). From 2019 to 2021, MMR declined from 0.8 to 0.6 maternal deaths per 1,000 live births, driven by improved healthcare access and maternal education initiatives. While 2022 saw a temporary increase to 0.9, the city rebounded in 2023, restoring MMR to 0.6. This sustained progress indicates that the City has achieved SDG Target 3.1 of reducing maternal mortality to less than 70 per 100,000 live births.

Tackling Premature Mortality

Trends in Death Ratios Across Age Categories (2019-2023)
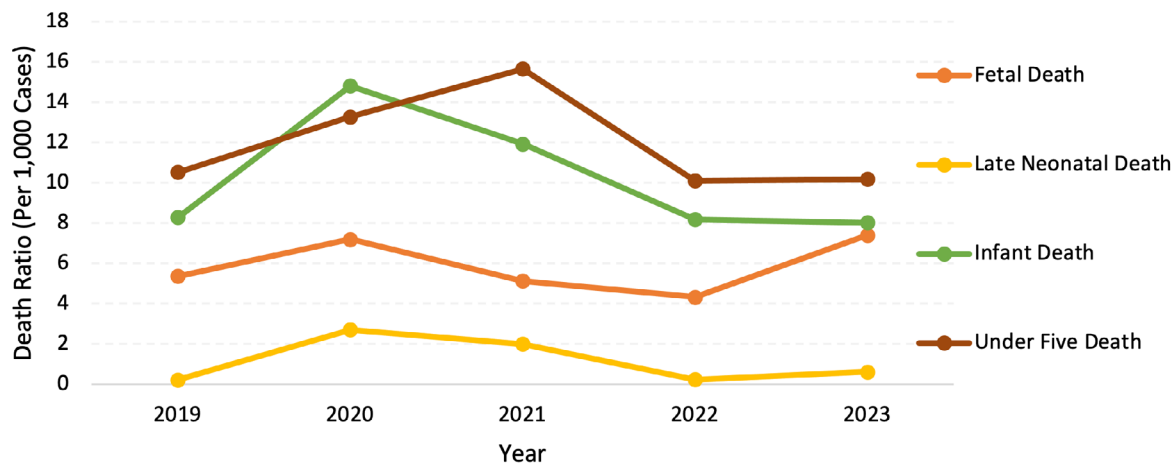
**Figure 19. Trends in Death Ratios Across Age Categories
Source: City of Santa Rosa Health Office**

Premature mortality, particularly among infants and young children, remains a critical focus under SDG 3. Data from 2019 to 2023 reveal notable trends:

- Fetal Death Ratio: A gradual decline until 2021, reflecting improvements in prenatal care, followed by a slight uptick in 2023, indicating the need for targeted high-risk pregnancy interventions.
- Infant Death Ratio: Consistent decreases since 2020, driven by enhanced neonatal care, better immunization coverage, and community health programs.
- Under-Five Death Ratio: After peaking in 2020, linked to COVID-19 disruptions, the ratio followed a steady downward trend, aligning with improved child nutrition and illness management.

- Late Neonatal Death Ratio: Fluctuating between 2019 and 2023, with a small peak in 2020. This suggests potential disruptions in postnatal care access during the pandemic and highlights the need for strengthened support systems for newborns during the critical postnatal period.

While progress is evident, fluctuations in the fetal death ratio highlight vulnerabilities in early pregnancy monitoring, and under-five mortality underscores the impacts of external factors like the pandemic. Sustained investments in maternal and child health and innovative healthcare delivery remain crucial.

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[22] Measures the number of maternal deaths per 100,000 live births within a specific time frame. A maternal death is defined as the death of a woman while pregnant or within 42 days of termination of pregnancy, from causes related to or aggravated by the pregnancy.

The Challenge of Cardiovascular, Cancer, Diabetes, and Chronic Respiratory Diseases

By ensuring that agricultural land is managed responsibly, the City strengthens its capacity to produce nutritious, safe, and accessible food for its population. From 2018 to 2023, the City's progress in adopting sustainable practices on agricultural land reflects a commitment to balancing food production with environmental stewardship, although trends reveal both

achievements and challenges. Cardiovascular diseases consistently dominate mortality ratios, emphasizing the importance of promoting healthy lifestyles and early diagnosis. Similarly, cancer screening and prevention programs are vital for reducing mortality from malignant neoplasms and cerebrovascular diseases.
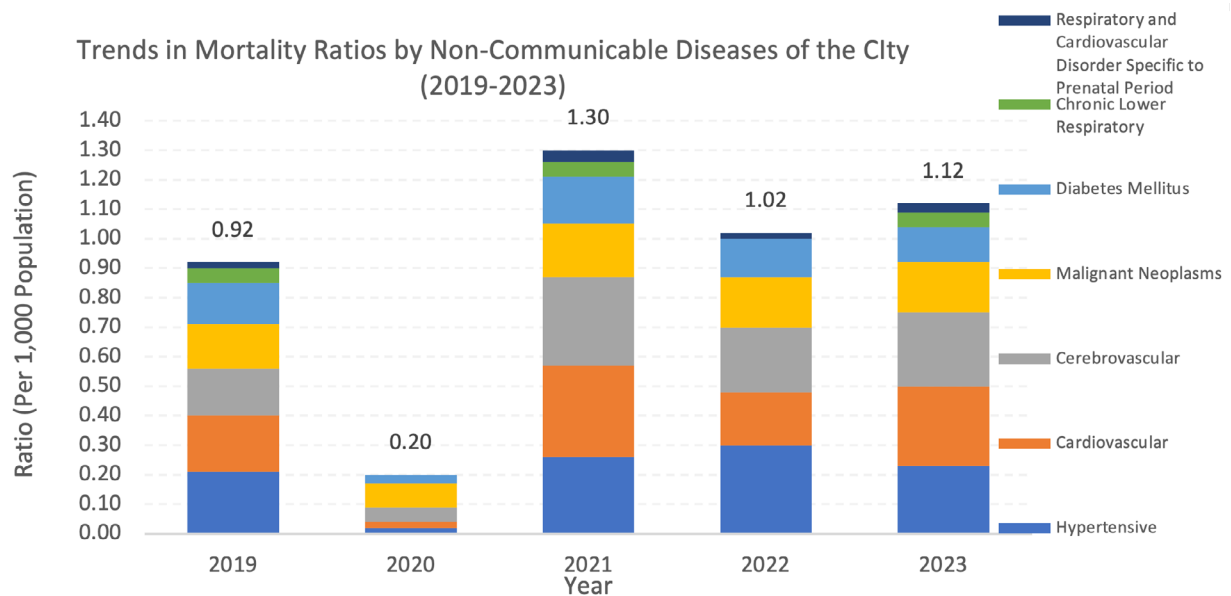

Figure 20. Reported Mortality Ratio Attributed to Cancer, Diabetes, Cardiovascular and Chronic Respiratory Diseases
Source: City of Santa Rosa Health Office

Combating Communicable Diseases
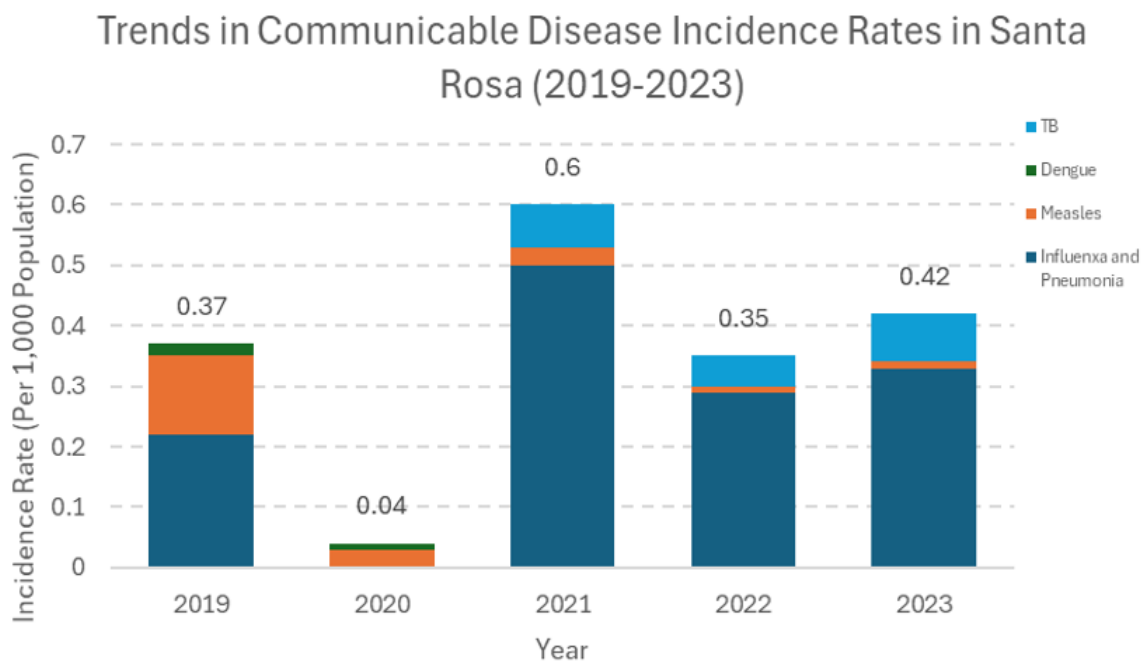
Figure 21. Incidence Rate of Communicable Diseases
Source: City of Santa Rosa Health Office

Tracking the incidence of diseases such as influenza, pneumonia, tuberculosis (TB), dengue, and measles provides critical insights into progress and gaps in disease control. Trends from 2019 to 2023 include:

• There was a sharp decline in 2019–2020 due to health campaigns and pandemic restrictions.
• A spike in 2021, with influenza and pneumonia accounting for 60% of recorded cases.

• Stabilization in 2022–2023, though incidence rates remain higher than pre-pandemic levels.

Influenza, pneumonia, and TB remain significant concerns, requiring targeted interventions, while measles cases reflect successful immunization efforts. The city's ability to manage these diseases highlights resilience and commitment to public health.

Vaccination Coverage: A Pillar of Disease Prevention

Vaccination is a cornerstone of disease prevention. From 2019 to 2023, core vaccines (Pentavalent Vaccine (PENTA), Oral Polio Vaccine (OPV), and Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccines (PCVs)) maintained strong recovery trends post-2020 (see Figure 22).

However, Full Immunization Coverage (FIC) and Complete Immunization Coverage (CIC) remained lower, underscoring persistent gaps in vaccine compliance. Strengthened follow-up interventions and resilience planning are needed to sustain equitable coverage.
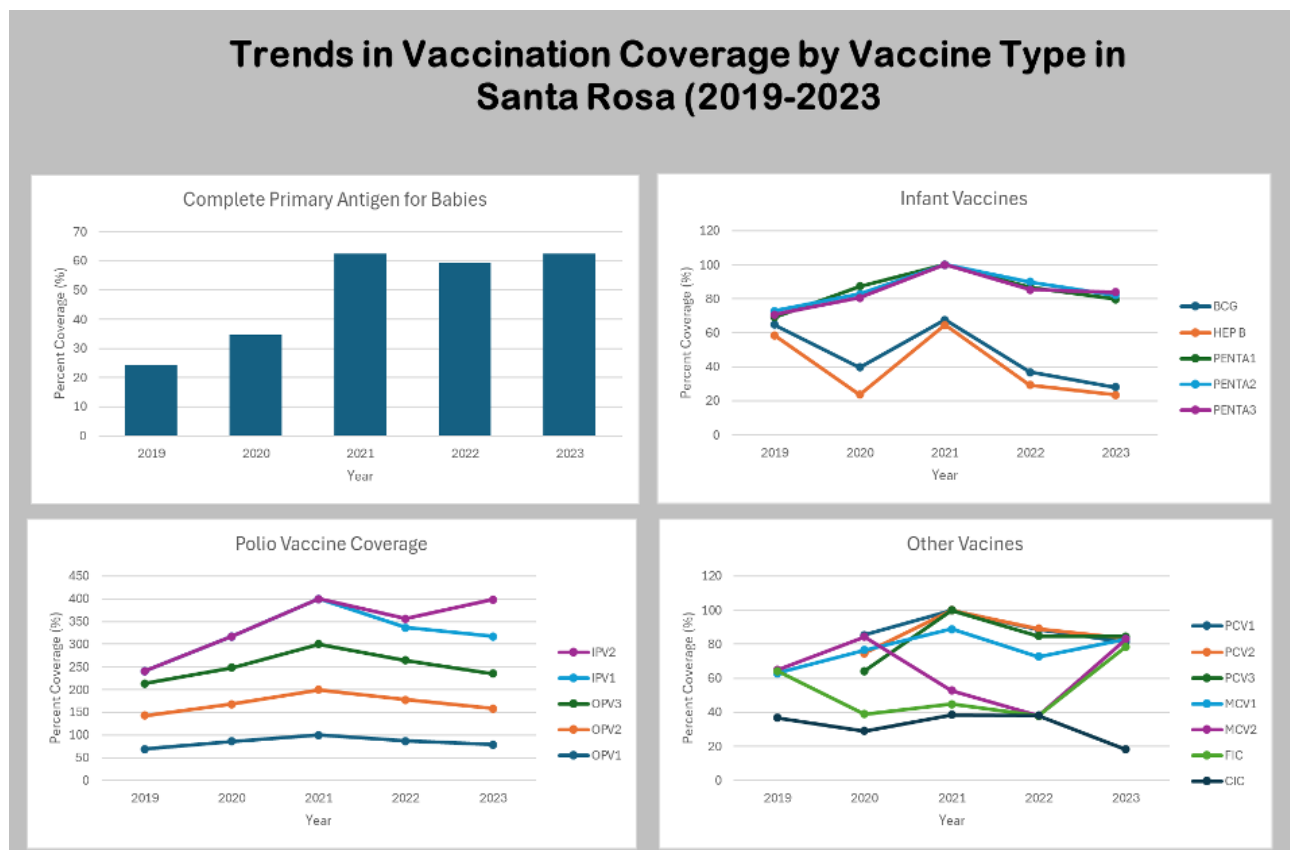
Figure 22. Vaccination Coverage for 2019 to 2023
Source: City of Santa Rosa Health Office

Treatment Success Rate for Tuberculosis: Sustaining Progress in Disease

TB treatment success rates showed resilience, recovering from a decline during 2020–2021 (89.8%) to 91.5% in 2023. Challenges include ensuring patient adherence and addressing disparities in access to healthcare. Continued efforts in these areas will bolster disease management.

The City Annual TB Treatment Success Rate (2018-2023)
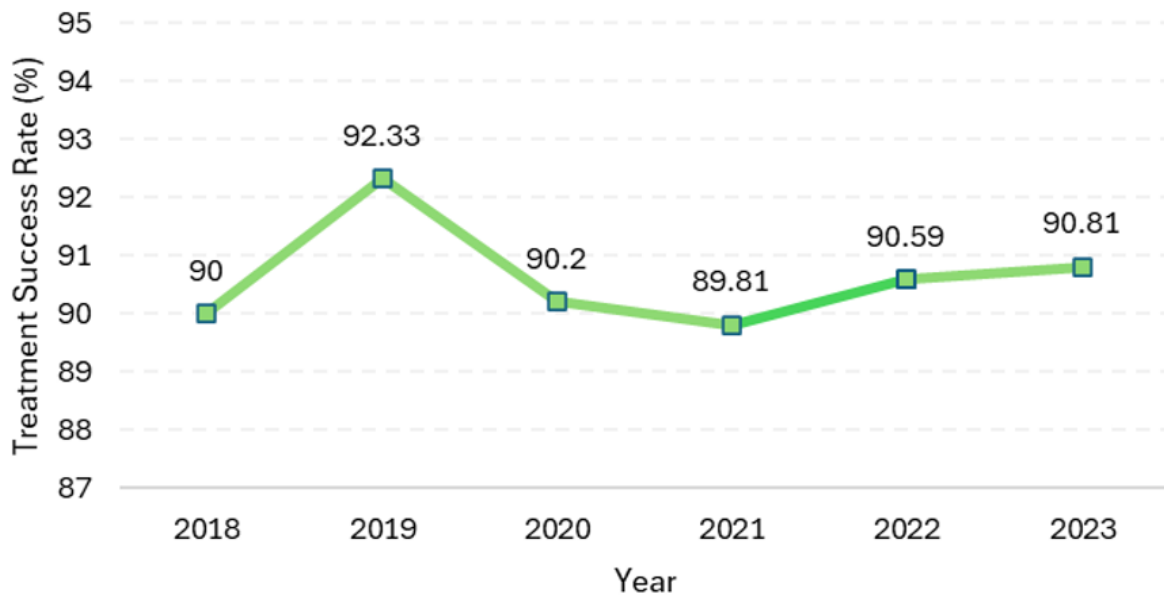
Figure 23. Treatment Success Rate for Tuberculosis for 2019 to 2023
Source: City of Santa Rosa Health Office

Addressing Substance Abuse: Progress in Treatment Accessibility

Substance abuse treatment data highlight fluctuations, with a decline in 2020–2021 due to pandemic disruptions and a recovery trend in 2022–2023. Enhanced treatment facilities, long-term recovery programs, and reduced stigma are critical to sustaining progress.

Individuals Receiving Substance Abuse Treatment in the City (2018-2023)
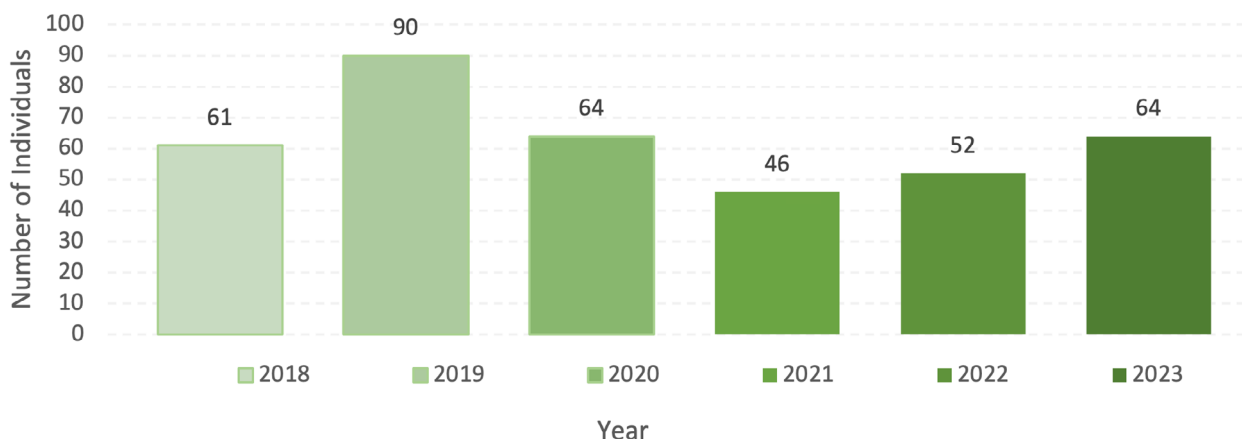
Figure 24. Individuals Receiving Substance Abuse Treatment in the City for 2018 to 2023
Source: City of Santa Rosa Health Office

Achieving Universal Health Coverage. Investing in Health: Total Health Expenditure as a Percentage of GDP

Sustainable health programs and services require robust financing, and the City's total health expenditure trends from 2018 to 2022 reveal both challenges and recovery efforts in this regard:

- 2018–2019: Total health expenditure increased from about USD 2,148,000 in 2018 to USD 2,617,000 in 2019, reflecting steady investment in healthcare systems.
- 2020: Expenditure dropped significantly to USD 1,863,000, likely due to pandemic-

related disruptions and budget reallocations.
- 2021–2022: The city demonstrated strong recovery efforts, with health expenditure rising sharply to USD 3,088,000 in 2021 and peaking at USD 3,587,000 in 2022.

Increased spending post-2020 likely contributed to the recovery of disrupted services, reinforcing the City's resilience and commitment to achieving SDG 3 targets.

Total Health Expenditure of the City (2018-2022)
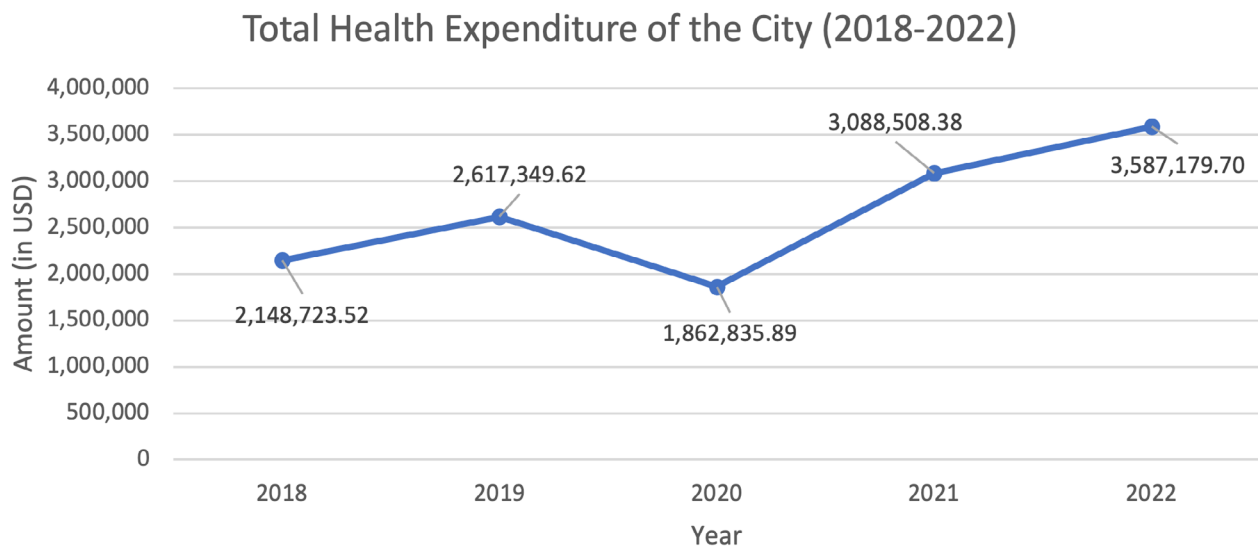
Figure 25. Total City Health Expenditure for 2019 to 2023
Source: City of Santa Rosa Annual Investment Plan

Strengthening Health Capacity: Population-to-Healthcare Worker Ratios

Improvements in the health workforce are critical to achieving SDG 3. Trends from 2020 to 2024 reveal varying levels of progress across healthcare roles:

1. Population-to-Doctor Ratio: It improved significantly in 2022 (1:234) and slightly worsened to 1:259 in 2024, remaining well within the World Health Organization (WHO)-recommended threshold.
2. Population-to-Nurse Ratio: Declined steadily from 640 (2021) to 603 (2024), indicating progress in workforce expansion.
3. Population-to-Midwife Ratio Worsened

from 3,806 (2020) to 6,792 (2024), highlighting gaps in maternal health services.
4. Population-to-Medtech Ratio: Improved dramatically from 4,775 (2022) to 2,308 (2024), reflecting investments in diagnostic capacity.

While progress has been made in certain areas, such as the recruitment of doctors and medical technologists, gaps in midwifery services remain a pressing issue. Sustained investment in workforce development is critical to ensuring equitable healthcare for all residents.

Figure 26. Health Workforce Capacity of the City (2020-2024)
Source: City of Santa Rosa City and Municipalities Competency Index Data

City Actions to Achieve SDG 3

Substance abuse treatment data highlight fluctuations, with a decline in 2020–2021 due to pandemic disruptions and a recovery trend in 2022–2023. Enhanced treatment facilities, long-term recovery programs, and reduced stigma are critical to sustaining progress.

Addressing Substance Abuse: Progress in Treatment Accessibility

Health Services to Santa Rosa

Santa Rosa is aligning with Republic Act No. 11223 [23] , which mandates Universal Healthcare Coverage (UHC) for all Filipinos. UHC is a comprehensive healthcare model that ensures all Filipinos have access to quality and affordable services without experiencing financial hardship. In Santa Rosa, the implementation of UHC begins with a program-based approach, which is currently being piloted in 9 barangays as a preparatory step toward establishing a City Health Center. To further support this initiative, the Department of Health has recommended the creation of a centralized command center and a diagnostic center to serve all 18 barangays. These facilities aim to decongest hospitals, strengthen preventive care, and expand healthcare coverage across the city.

Other than this, according to the CSWD, Early Childhood Care and Development services provided to preschool children under the Child Development centers in the 18 barangays contribute significantly towards the achievement of SDG 3. The Family Development Sessions provided to beneficiaries of the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps) also target SDG 3, providing information on maternal and birth control options.

> "As initiated by Dr. Cunanan, the introduction of LGU scorecards at the barangay level took place wherein the heads of the first nine barangays selected were oriented regarding the health priorities of the City, and they chose which among those will be implemented in their respective barangays. They also can hire doctors that are co-managed by the City LGU."
>
> Mr. Joemer, City Health Office

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[23] Measures the number of maternal deaths per 100,000 live births within a specific time frame. A maternal death is defined as the death of a woman while pregnant or within 42 days of termination of pregnancy, from causes related to or aggravated by the pregnancy.

Muling nakamit ng Pamahalaang Lungsod ng Santa Rosa ang "SEAL OF CHILD-FRIENDLY LOCAL GOVERNANCE" pagkatapos nitong pumasa sa 2023 Child-Friendly Local Governance Audit (CFLGA).

Seal of Child-Friendly Local Governance

Santa Rosa received the 2022 Seal of Child-Friendly Local Governance, which is a National Award given by the Council for the Welfare of Children (CWC)—whose Secretariat is the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) as one of its primary members—in recognition of the City's programs to improve the children's welfare. In the past years, the City implemented specific actions targeting children's health and welfare, such as the vaccination program, regular dental check-ups and fluoride application, deworming, and distributing A-vitamin doses to children from 1 to 4 years old. Moreover, breastfeeding is highly encouraged to develop strong immunity among children.

Key Insights from the Barangay

Based on the interview with the Association of Barangay Captains President, Mr. Godofredo dela Rosa, health is the priority in barangay governance with the tagline "prevention is better than cure." There is a reliance on barangays to fill healthcare gaps, especially for vulnerable populations. The focus on free services indicates that these communities face financial barriers to accessing healthcare, and barangays are stepping in to address the gap.

"One of our biggest priorities is to strengthen the health services in our barangay, especially for senior citizens." (FGD of Barangay Chairpersons/Representatives). According to Barangay Market Area, "All of our medical activities are for free. Most of our residents cannot pay medical fees, so we want to provide them with aid.

SDG 4 – Quality Education

SDG 4 has been chosen as a priority goal because knowledge and skills development are considered pillars for the development of Santa Rosa. According to the mission statement of Santa Rosa, a well-educated population with knowledge and skills is the foundation of a progressive city and will ensure sustainability and continuity of development. Development, thus, will only be relevant and significant if the people have access to and the capacity to learn and possess the necessary knowledge and skills demanded by the times and needs of the City (City of Santa Rosa's mission statement).

Education is a fundamental right of every person. Education plays an important role in human development and is the anchor of sustainable development. Skills and knowledge are enhanced with personality development and the formation of ethical values.

The major obstacles in education are expensive tertiary education, challenges for public education, and the increasing student population. The challenge for the City is providing basic education for all and alternative educational services to those who cannot afford a college education.

Localized Targets:
- Free Primary and Secondary Education for all.
- Equal Access to Affordable Technical, Vocational, and Higher Education.
- Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship

Net Enrollment Rate of the City
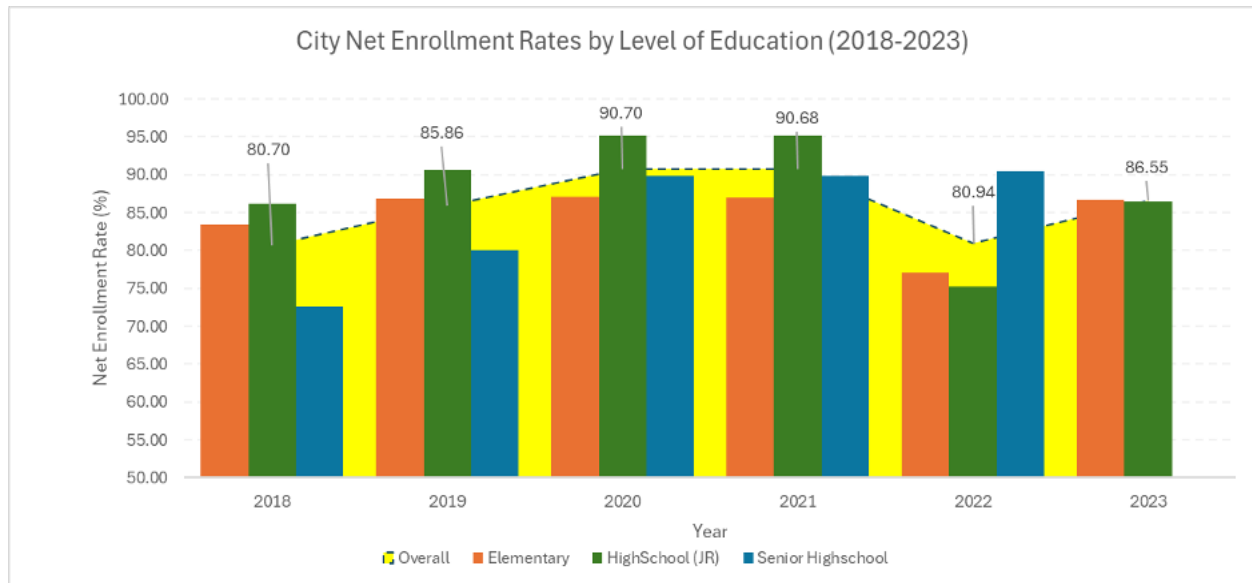
Figure 27. Net Enrollment Rate of the City (2018-2023)
Source: City of Santa Rosa DepEd

The City's net enrollment rates demonstrate consistent progress over the reporting period, peaking at 90.70% in 2020 despite challenges posed by the pandemic.

This peak reflects the City's strong foundational systems and effective strategies to sustain student enrollment, like providing technological assistance to teachers and students during the pandemic. However, the rates declined slightly to 86.55% in 2023, signaling lingering challenges post-pandemic. Elementary education consistently maintained outstanding performance above 90%, while enrollment at Junior and Senior High School levels saw more fluctuations, requiring targeted measures to sustain participation.

Completion Rate
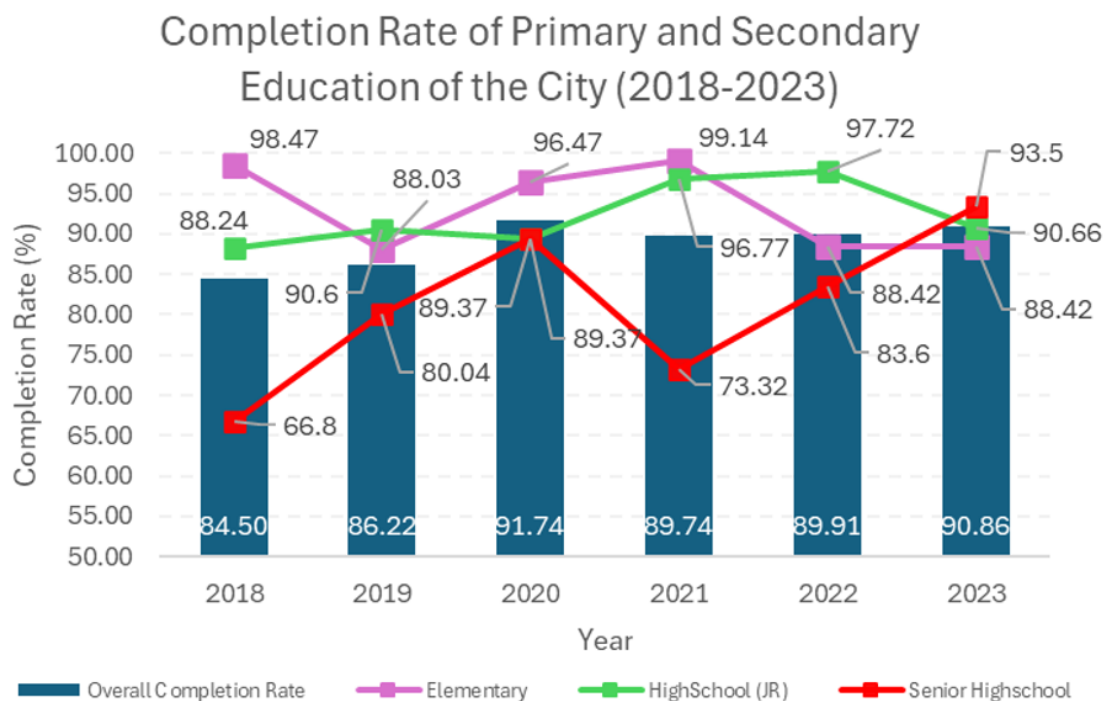
Figure 28. Completion Rate for Primary and Secondary Education in the City (2018 - 2023)
Source: City of Santa Rosa DepEd

Completion rates across all levels remained high despite the disruptions caused by the pandemic. Elementary education stood out with consistent rates above 96%, while Senior High School displayed resilience, recovering from 89.3% in 2020 to an impressive 93.5% by 2023. These achievements are bolstered by programs like the Santa Rosa Manpower Training Center, which ensures students' success in skill development, achieving a 100% passing rate for the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority theoretical and practical examinations and an 85% hiring rate among graduates.

Retention Rate
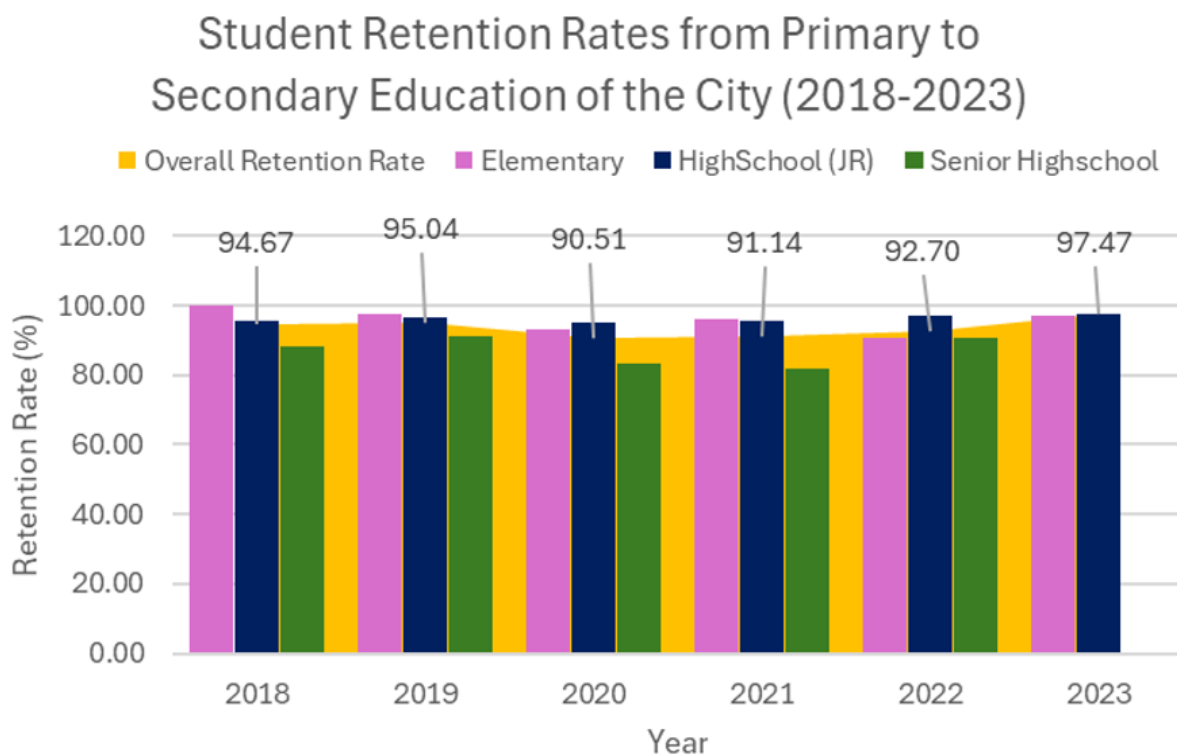
Figure 29. Student Retention Rates from Primary to Secondary Education (2018 - 2023)
Source: City of Santa Rosa DepEd

Retention rates steadily grew over the reporting period, increasing from 94.67% in 2018 to 97.47% in 2023. Elementary levels experienced minimal disruption during the pandemic, reflecting the City's ability to sustain foundational education effectively. Junior and Senior High School levels also showed remarkable resilience, recovering quickly from minor pandemic-related dips.

Trends in Dropout Rates Across Basic Education Levels

Dropout rates saw remarkable improvements during the pandemic and beyond, declining from 2.99% in 2019 to 1.09% in 2020 and further to 0.85% in 2023. These trends highlight the success of interventions aimed at reducing dropouts, such as engagement programs and financial support, which helped mitigate the impact of the pandemic on student attendance.
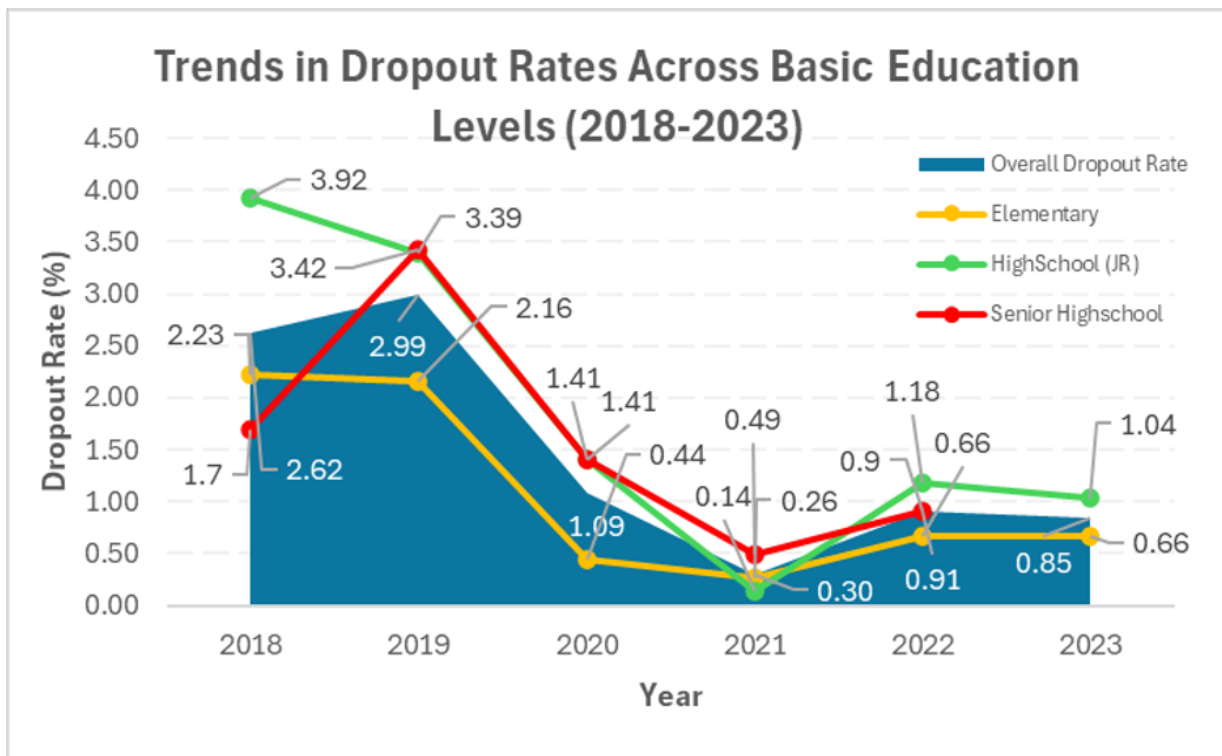
Figure 30. Trends in Dropout Rates Across Basic Education (2018 - 2023)
Source: City of Santa Rosa DepEd

Trends in Vocational and Technical Education Enrollment in the City

Vocational and technical education faced significant challenges during the pandemic, with enrollment declining to 223 students in 2020. However, a strong recovery followed, with enrollment rebounding to 807 students by 2023.

Programs like those offered by the Santa Rosa Manpower Training Center continue to align education with labor market demands, ensuring high employability for graduates.
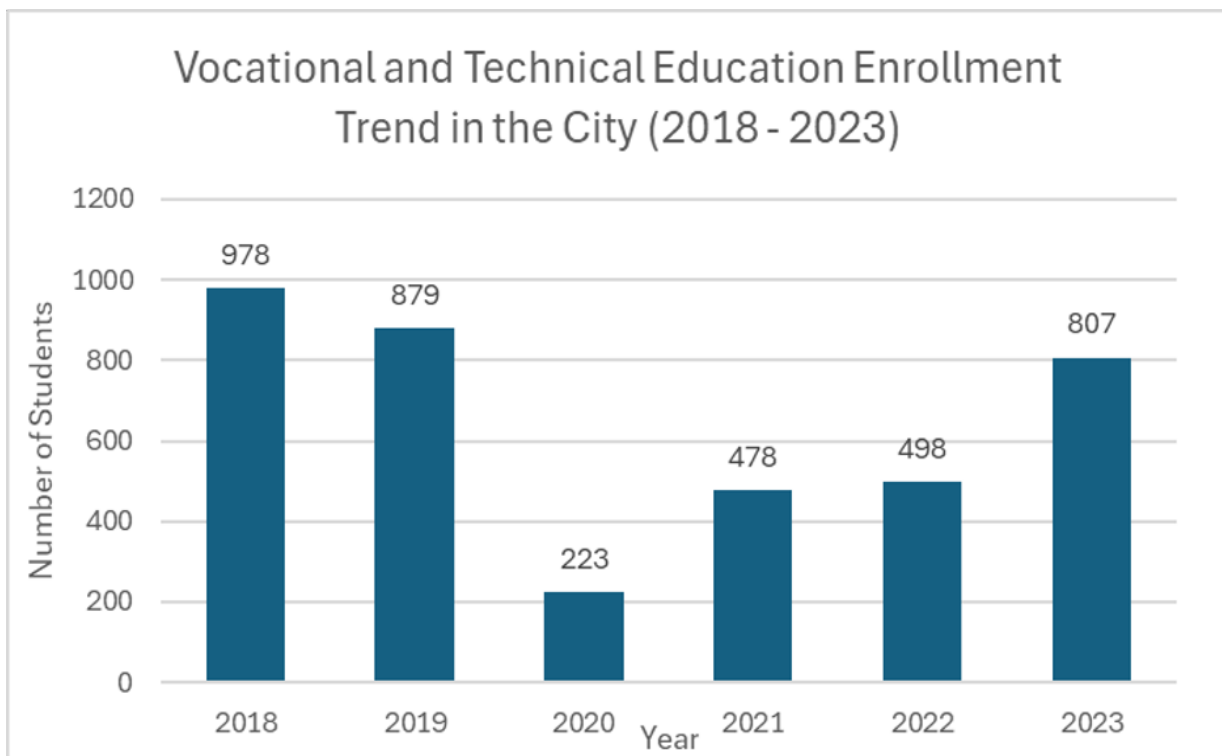
Figure 31. Vocational and Technical Education Enrollment Trend in the City
Source: City of Santa Rosa PESO

Students Receiving Financial Aid or Scholarships in the City

The City's scholarship programs expanded significantly during the pandemic to mitigate financial barriers, supporting 5,414 students in 2023 compared to 1,851 in 2018. This growth underscores the City's commitment to providing equitable education opportunities, particularly for marginalized groups.
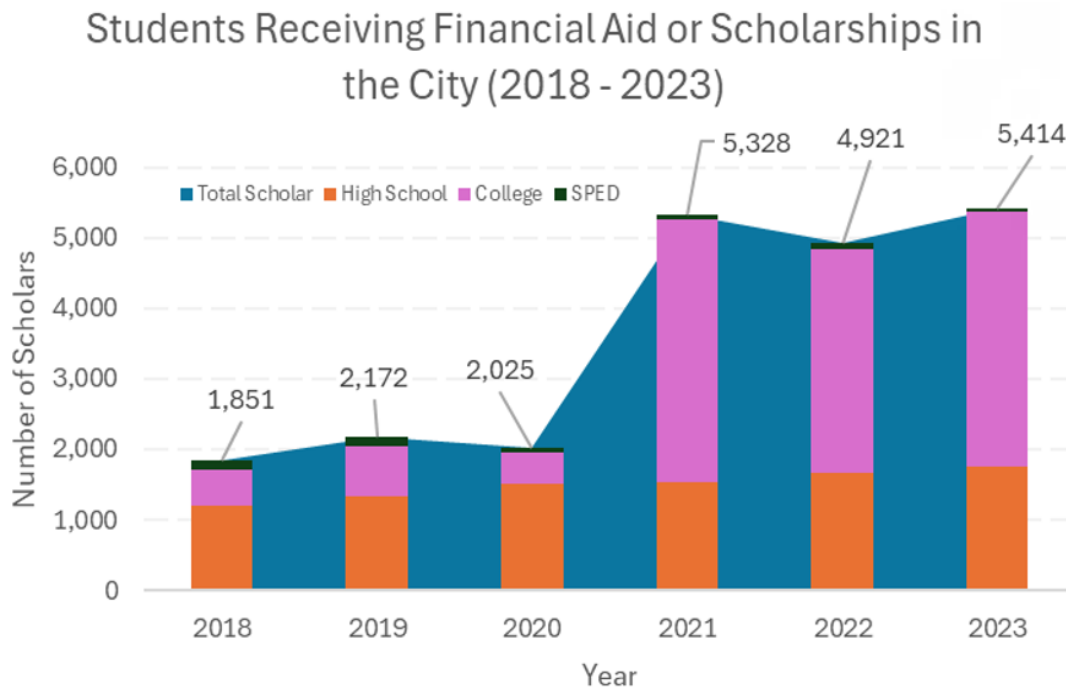
Figure 32. Students Receiving Financial Aid or Scholarship in the City
Source: City of Santa Rosa Scholarship Office

Inclusive Education Enrollment in the City
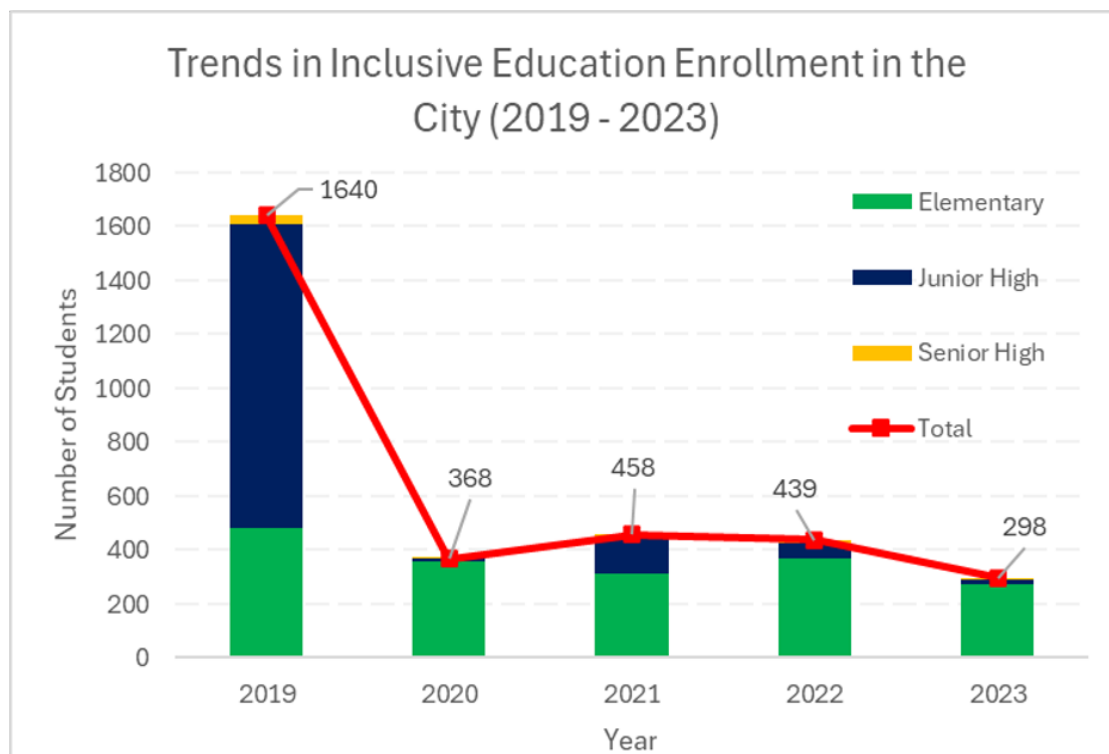
Figure 33. Trends in Inclusive Education Enrollment in the City
Source: City of Santa Rosa DepEd

Inclusive education ensures that all learners, regardless of abilities, socioeconomic status, or cultural backgrounds, have access to quality education in a supportive and accommodating environment. It emphasizes integrating students with special needs into mainstream classrooms while providing the necessary support to promote equity and inclusivity. Enrollment in inclusive education experienced fluctuations, with a significant decline from 1,640 students in 2019 to 298 students in 2023. This decline calls for stronger outreach and support for marginalized groups, particularly during challenging periods like pandemics. However, existing efforts provide a foundation for future expansion and improvement.

Daycare Enrollment

Daycare enrollment witnessed a temporary decline during the pandemic, falling from 4,847 students in 2019 to 3,000 in 2022. Nevertheless, enrollment recovered to 4,000 students in 2023, demonstrating the City's commitment to restoring early childhood education programs and ensuring young learners' participation.
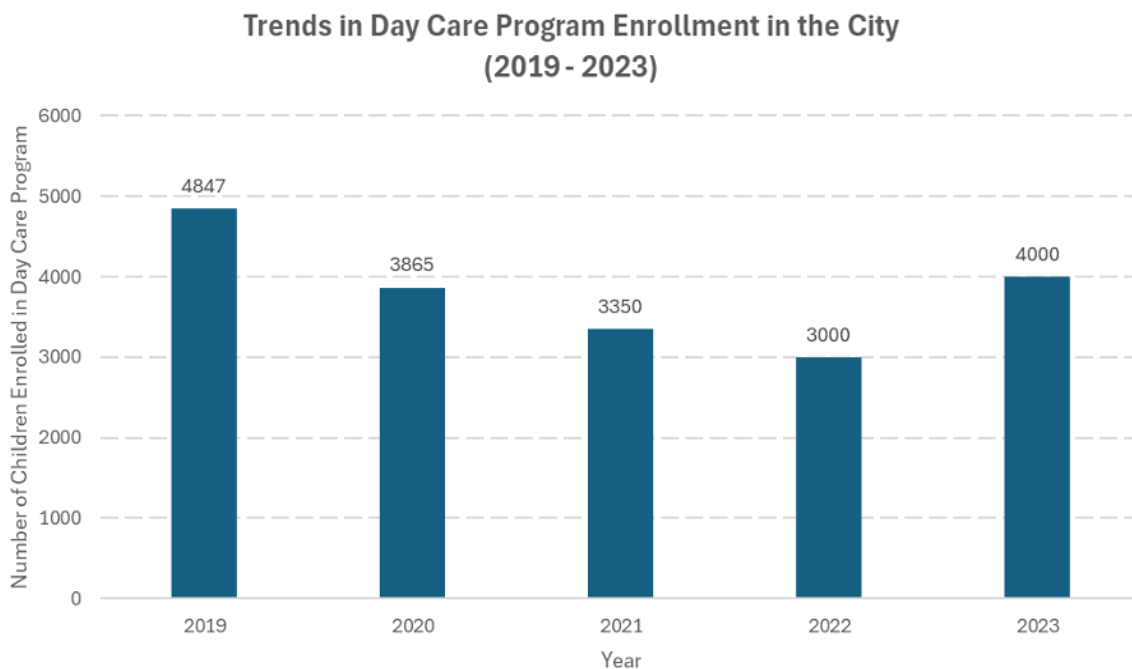
Figure 34. Day Care Enrollment of the City
Source: City of Santa Rosa CSWD

Graduation Rates of Students Across Levels in the City

Graduation rates remained strong across all levels. Elementary education led with an average of 97.77%, while Senior High School achieved notable recovery, reaching 80.17% by 2023. Vocational and Technical education consistently performed well, with an average graduation rate of 93.17%, reflecting the alignment of these programs with practical skills and workforce needs.

Even during the pandemic, the City demonstrated remarkable resilience and adaptability in advancing educational outcomes. Through targeted interventions such as expanded scholarship programs, vocational training, and early childhood education support, the City has laid a strong foundation for achieving SDG 4.

Table 1. Graduation Rates of Students Across Levels in the City

Level	Average	Year			
		2021	2020	2019	2018
Elementary	97.77	100.00	93.66	98.65	98.77
High School	88.54	78.79	82.13	97.01	96.21
Senior High School	8017	72.97	82.13	88.38	77.11
Overall Basic Education	90.27	83.92	85.97	94.68	90.70
Vocational and Technical	93.17	90.68	94.65	95.7	91.63
Alternative Learning System	90.58	81.20	99.96		
Tertiary	64.17	64.17	43.22		

Source: City of Santa Rosa DepEd

City Actions to Achieve SDG 4

One of Santa Rosa's goals is to provide quality support and social services to educate people. "No one shall be left behind" is the rationale for the City's initiative to establish a local college, initiated by Mayor Arcillas. The college has been part of the governance program since 2007 [24].

Infrastructure and Knowledge Enhancement
The construction of school buildings and training centers provided learning spaces to students in Santa Rosa. Furthermore, the City provides books and school supplies under the 'Libreng Aklat Project'; distributes free bags and school supplies to elementary pupils; scholarship grants to deserving students in private high schools; feeding program and brigada eskwela ("school brigade," otherwise known as the "National Schools Maintenance Week" in the Philippines) initiatives; a summer learning camp for children; and an HIV/AIDS awareness program are also offered to school children.

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[24] Local data and indicators, City Government of Santa Rosa.

Madrasah Education for Inclusive Education

The Madrasah Education Program in the Division of Santa Rosa City primarily aims to provide Muslim learners with appropriate and relevant educational opportunities, recognizing their cultural contexts and unique purposes for participating in the program. Additionally, it seeks to integrate relevant content and competencies that are particularly interesting to Muslim learners.

The Division Office, through the Curriculum Implementation Division (CID), has conducted a General Orientation on implementing the Madrasah Education Program for School Year 2024-2025 [25]. This is a significant milestone in providing inclusive and culturally relevant education for Muslim Filipino learners in the City of Santa Rosa. This initiative represents a step forward in promoting Arabic Language and Islamic Values Education (ALIVE), further strengthening the educational foundations of students while preserving their cultural and religious identity.

Alternative Learning System (ALS Act of 2020)

This caters to out-of-school youth, providing those who could not finish elementary and high school with programs for dressmaking, industrial sewing machine operation, culinary arts, electronic products assembly and servicing, handicrafts and bead assembly/soap making, cosmetology, and hairdressing.

The program on education behind bars provides a comprehensive Alternative Learning System (ALS) program that extends educational opportunities to Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs) in correctional facilities. This initiative provides inmates with elementary and junior high school education, allowing them to earn diplomas and potentially continue their education. The Department of Education (DepEd) of Santa Rosa has recently formalized its partnership with the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) to enhance educational access for PDLs through the ALS program.

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[25] In line with DepEd Order No. 41, s. 2017 (Policy Guidelines on Madrasah Education in the K to 12 Basic Education Program) and DepEd Order No. 25, s. 2021 (Revised Implementing Guidelines on the Utilization of Funds for the Madrasah Education Program).

This collaboration aims to improve inmates' well-being and educational rights, recognizing education as crucial in rehabilitation and reintegration.

Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship

- DepEd Memorandum OUOPS No. 2023-01-11025 aims to promote environmental preservation and a deeper appreciation of nature by giving 236,000 trees as gifts to children.
- ALS also conducts a Clean-Up Drive to promote cleanliness and participation of ALS in Community Development.
- Laguna Water holds interactive learning sessions among public school learners to encourage the youth to ensure water sustainability.

Barangay Initiatives

The out-of-school youth are encouraged to enroll in the ALS to acquire the skills needed for jobs in the industrial sector. In Barangay Tagapo, according to the barangay administrator, Mr. Leonardo Lianza, "Since there is a lot of out-of-school youth—for example, they only finished elementary school—they have the option to finish their studies through the ALS program so they can have the opportunity to go to training schools. Regarding daycare centers, we have a 'School on Wheels' program to extend literacy teachings to poor areas in Barangay Tagapo."

SDG 5 – Gender Equality

SDG 5 aims to "achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls". In the Philippines, Republic Act 9710 or the Magna Carta of Women (MCW)[26] fulfills the government's commitment to the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), which the Philippines ratified in 1981. Gender equality recognizes the various roles of men and women in society and, therefore, is an indispensable enabler for development. However, despite the existence of national legislation that guarantees gender equality, achieving this Goal is challenging.

The City of Santa Rosa actively promotes gender equality as part of its efforts to enhance the quality of life for all residents. These initiatives aim to give a voice to marginalized individuals within households, support campaigns against gender-based violence, and empower people to participate in governance, industrial sectors, and development projects. Additionally, the City encourages cultural expression and involvement in socially relevant community activities, ensuring inclusivity for women, men, and the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT+) community.

Localized Targets:
- Gender Employment Gap: Addressing disparities in employment opportunities between genders.
- Women Market Traders: Increase women's representation among market traders.
- Women-Owned SMEs: Supporting and promoting small and medium enterprises (SMEs) owned by women.
- Women's Bank Accounts/Financial Literacy: Increasing the number of women with bank accounts and enhancing their financial literacy.
- Formal Complaints for Episodes of Violence Against Women: Encouraging the reporting of incidents of violence against women through formal channels.
- Female Hospitalization for Assault: Monitoring and reducing instances of female hospitalization due to assault-related injuries.
- Female Population Recorded as Assault Victims at Hospital Emergency Departments: Tracking the number of women identified as assault victims in emergency care settings.
- Seats Held by Women in Local Government: Promoting women's representation in local government positions.

26 https://pcw.gov.ph/faq-republic-act-9710-the-magna-carta-of-women

Gender Employment Pay Gap

The analysis of the Median Monthly Basic Pay and Allowances Between Male and Female Employees in the Philippines (2018–2022) reveals that women earned slightly higher median pay than men in 2018 and 2020, reflecting a marginal national-level advantage. By 2022, the gap narrowed as both genders experienced increased compensation, though women maintained a small lead. However, the lack of city-specific data limits localized analysis, making it difficult to determine if these national trends apply at the city level.

To address this gap, it is essential to collect city-specific data on gender pay disparities, enabling targeted interventions. Local employers should be encouraged to conduct pay equity audits to identify and rectify discrepancies. Supporting women's career development, particularly in high-paying roles, can also help sustain equitable compensation trends locally.

Gender Disparities in Median Pay and Allowances in the Philippines (2018–2022)
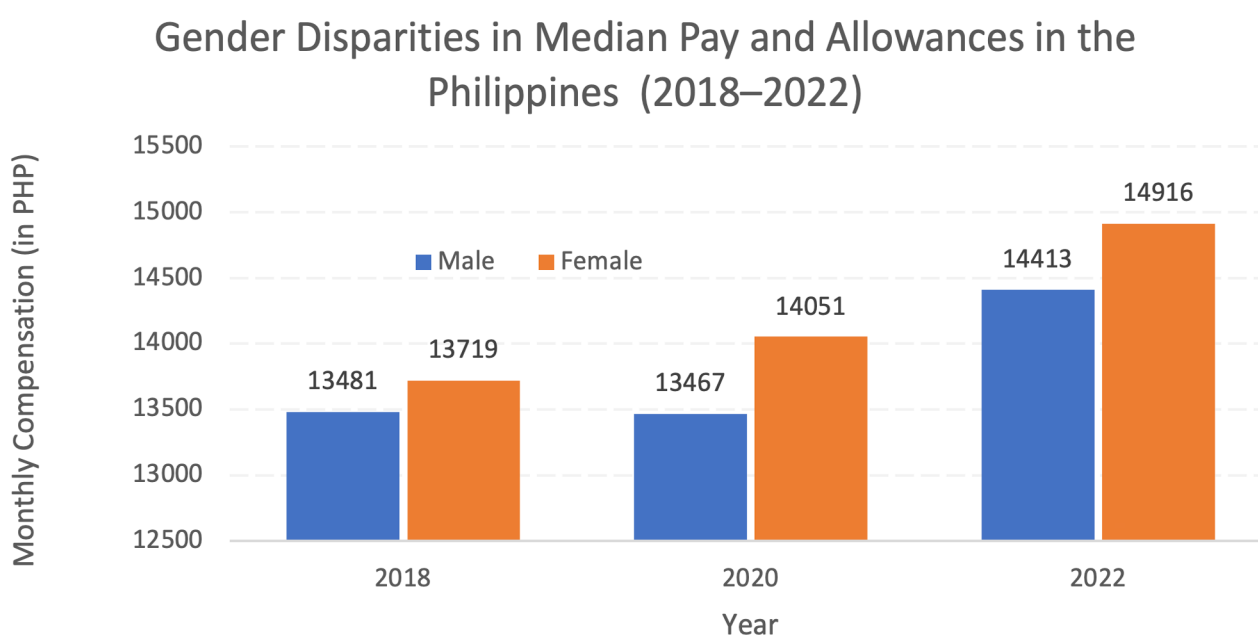
Figure 35. Gender Disparities in Median Pay and Allowances in the Philippine
Source: Philippine Statistics Authority

Women-Owned MSMEs

The Proportion of Women-Owned Micro, Small, and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs) decreased significantly from 63% in 2018 to 42% in 2021, potentially due to pandemic-related challenges and limited access to resources. However, a notable recovery began in 2022, with women's ownership rebounding to nearly 60% by 2023. This recovery suggests improved conditions for female entrepreneurs, supported by policies and resources aimed at fostering resilience and growth.

To sustain this positive trend, support for women entrepreneurs through training programs, funding access, and policy enhancements is crucial. Addressing structural barriers and providing tailored resources will ensure continued growth and success for women-owned MSMEs.

Women-Owned MSMEs in the City of Santa Rosa (2018–2023)
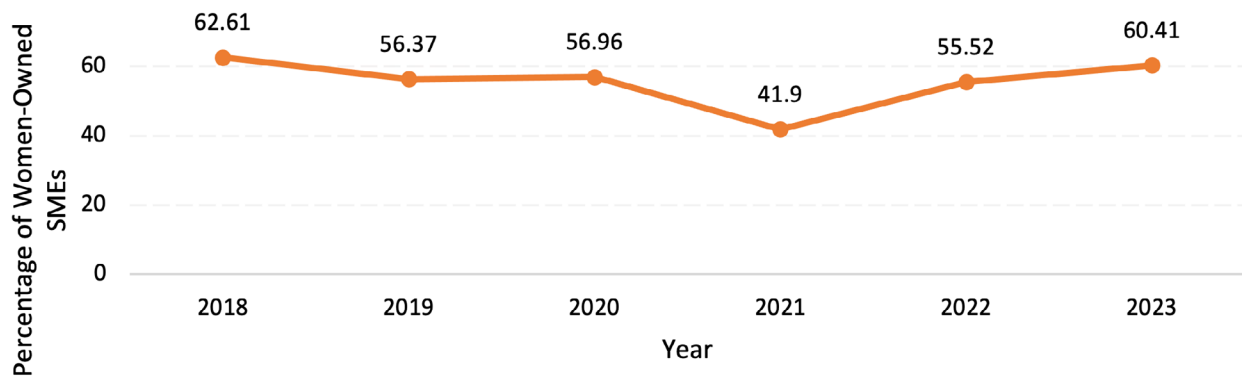
Figure 36. Women-Owned MSMEs in the City (2018 - 2023)
Source: City of Santa Rosa Cooperative Office and Business Permit and Licensing Office

Formal Complaints for Episodes of Evidence of Violence Against Women

The trends in reports of Violence Against Women (VAW) cases from barangay and Philippines National Police (PNP) sources (2019–2023) highlight strengths and gaps in addressing gender-based violence. Barangay-reported cases peaked in 2021, reflecting pandemic-driven vulnerabilities, before declining to 2,395 in 2023. PNP-reported cases, while lower, rebounded to 110 in 2023, suggesting increasing public trust in formal law enforcement for serious cases. Despite these trends, gaps in case escalation and resolution tracking remain.

Stronger coordination between barangays and the PNP is needed to ensure effective case referrals and resolution. Expanding public awareness campaigns about reporting mechanisms and providing comprehensive survivor support services, such as counseling and legal aid, are essential. Monitoring and evaluating case outcomes will also enhance justice delivery and accountability.

Formal Complaints of Violence Against Women in the City: Barangay and PNP Reports (2018–2023)
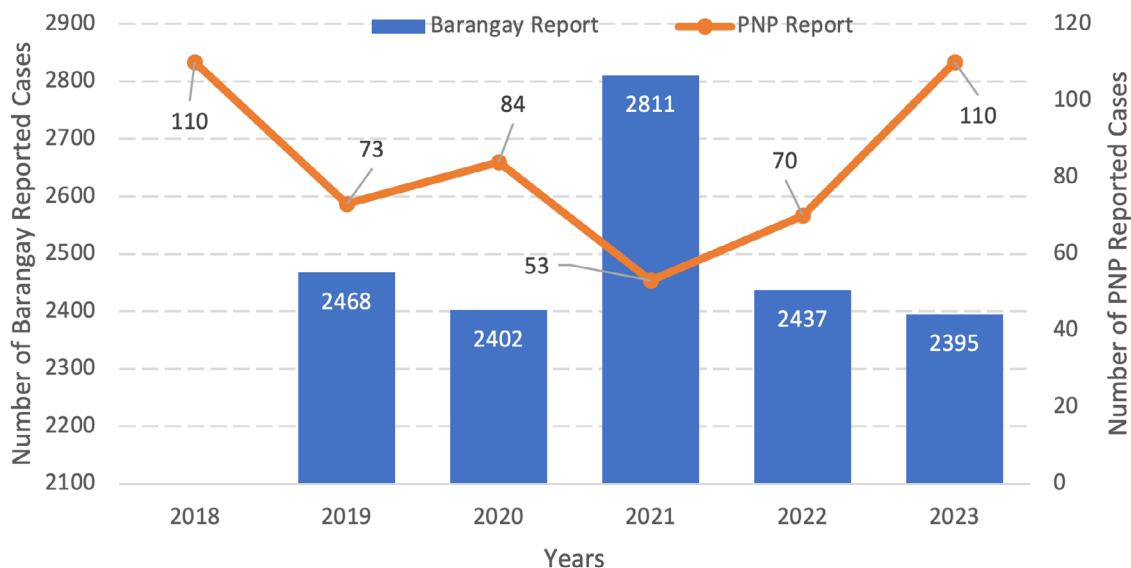
Figure 37. Formal Complaints of Violence Against Women in the City
Source: City of Santa Rosa GAWD office and Santa Rosa PNP
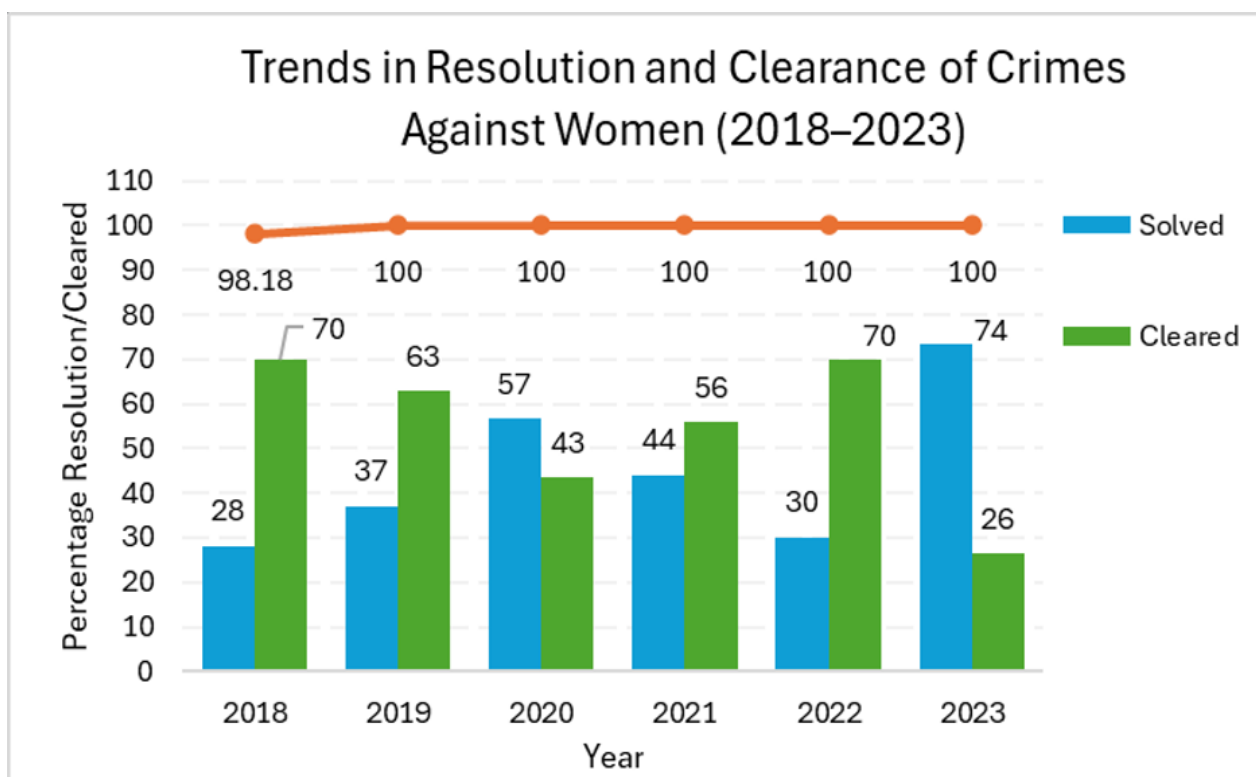
Figure 38. Resolution and Clearance of Crimes Against Women
Source: City of Santa Rosa PNP

This chart presents the Resolution and clearance of Crimes Against Women from 2018 to 2023, highlighting two important stages in the resolution process: cleared and solved cases. In the context of this data:

- Cleared Cases indicate that the offender or one of the offenders has been identified, allowing a case to be filed and the administrative closure of the case.
- Solved Cases represent the final resolution, where the suspect is not only identified but also apprehended, put on trial, or convicted, thereby achieving full legal closure.

Across the years, the cleared and solved rate consistently reached 100%, demonstrating that every reported crime against women received attention from the PNP. Each case was at least brought to administrative closure, with the offender or suspect identified and initial actions taken.

While all cases reached administrative closure, the solved rates varied across the years: in 2018, 28.18% of cases were fully solved, reflecting initial challenges in achieving full legal resolutions. By 2023, the solved rate rose to its highest point at 73.58%, marking significant progress in moving cases beyond administrative closure to full resolution in the justice system. The cleared and solved rates represent complementary stages in the crime resolution process.

The consistent cleared rate demonstrates that initial actions, such as identifying suspects and filing cases, were taken in all reported cases. The solved rate, while varying, reflects the extent to which cases progressed to full legal closure, including apprehension and judicial proceedings.

Highest Resolution of Crimes in 2023

In 2023, 73.58% of cases were fully solved, indicating that a substantial number of offenders were apprehended, tried, or convicted. This high solved rate represents the most

effective year for final resolutions, reflecting improved efficiency or resources in fully resolving cases.

Women's Representation in Local Politics

The data on women's participation in local politics reveals both progress and challenges. Women consistently accounted for 66.67% of mayoral candidates in the 2016, 2019, and 2022 elections, showcasing a strong level of female leadership aspirations. However, representation for vice-mayor candidates dropped significantly after 2016, with no women running for the position in both 2019 and 2022. Similarly, women councilor candidates fluctuated, peaking at 27.78% in 2019 but declining to 25% in 2022, signaling continued underrepresentation in legislative positions.

Despite these challenges, women candidates have been increasingly effective in securing victories. In 2019, 57% of female candidates won their races, up from 27% in 2016, and this strong trend continued with a 50% success rate in 2022. Women consistently held the Mayor's position in 2019- 2022 and the 2022- 2025 term of office. However, fewer women running for office limits broader representation across local government roles.

To address these disparities, mentorship and capacity-building programs for aspiring women leaders should be developed, along with awareness campaigns to promote gender balance in governance. Introducing incentives or quotas can also increase female participation in the Vice Mayor and Councilor roles while strengthening support networks and researching barriers to women's participation, which will further advance gender parity in local elections.
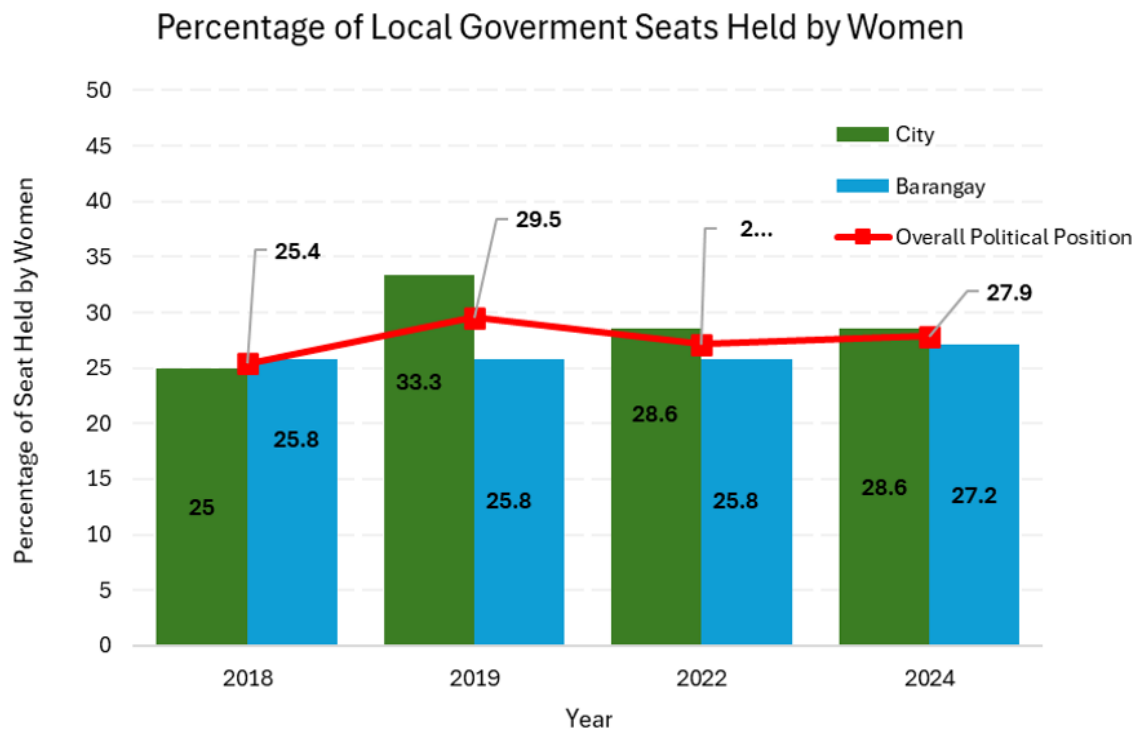
Figure 39. Local Government Seats Held by Women
Source: Philippine Commission on Election and DILG

Women City Personnel

From 2018 to 2023, women consistently made up approximately 45% of Santa Rosa's workforce, reflecting stable gender representation. Leadership representation also improved significantly, with women department heads increasing from 30% in 2020 to 50% in 2023, achieving parity with overall workforce distribution.

Women Personnel and Heads of Department in the City
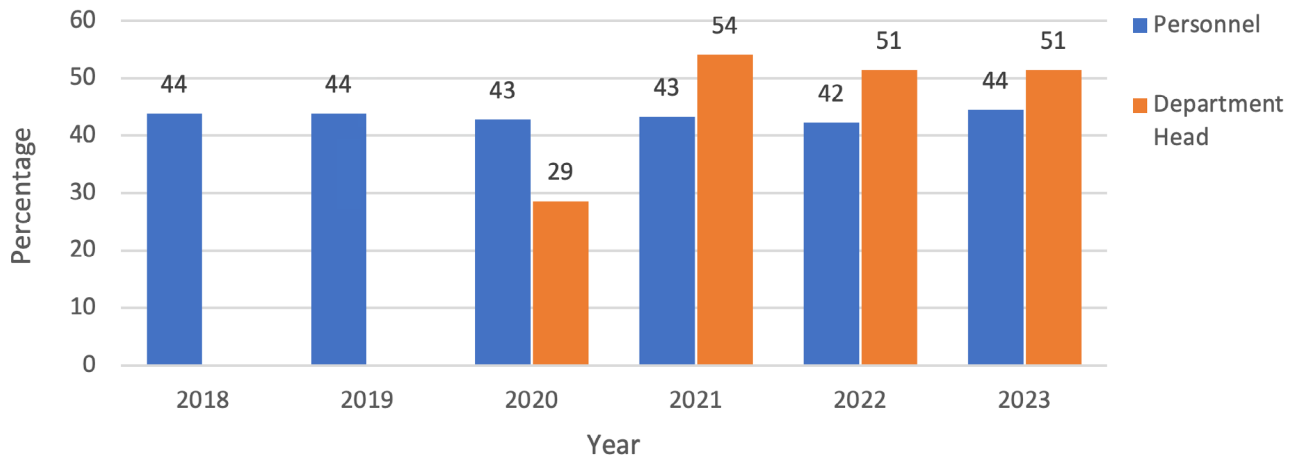
Figure 40. Women Personnel and Heads of Departments in the City
Source: City of Santa Rosa Human Resource Department

Continued promotion of women into leadership positions through capacity-building initiatives is crucial to sustaining this progress. Regular reviews of gender representation in city leadership roles will help maintain equitable trends and ensure long-term improvements.

Santa Rosa has made significant progress in advancing gender equality, as demonstrated by workforce representation, entrepreneurship, and local leadership trends. However, persistent challenges such as data gaps, barriers to political representation, and limitations in addressing gender-based violence highlight areas requiring sustained focus. By addressing these challenges through targeted interventions, enhanced support systems, and community awareness campaigns, Santa Rosa can continue aligning with SDG 5 and fostering an inclusive, equitable environment where women and girls thrive.

City Actions to Achieve SDG 5

Women as Political Enablers

Santa Rosa has 21% of women as city-level elected officials (Santa Rosa Smart City Roadmap 2023-2033), which indicates women's representation in governance. This is best exemplified by the Honorable Mayor Arlene Arcillas and 20 empowered officials.

Power of Inclusivity

Women are one of the vulnerable groups being targeted by the activities of the City Social Welfare and Development. This Office conducts capacity-building activities for Violence Against Women (VAW) Desk Officers and members of the City Committee on Anti-Trafficking and Violence against Women and their Children (CCAT-VAWC), which focuses on gender sensitivity and gender equality. It handles cases of gender-based violence against women and children and provides psychological support and other needed services. It also organizes men as advocates for a violence-free barangay through

the MOVE (Men Opposed to Violence against Women Everywhere). The women's sector is empowered by the establishment of the Council of Women, which is at the forefront of various initiatives during the celebration of Women's Month every March. Together with the members of the CCAT-VAWC, they also spearheaded the annual observance of the 18-day Campaign to end VAW from November 25 to December 12.

Since 2019, the City of Santa Rosa has celebrated the last Saturday of June as "PRIDE DAY"[27] . The City fully supports the LGBT community and duly supports its greater inclusion, protection, and empowerment. The celebration of LGBT Pride Day in the City of Santa Rosa represents a positive stance against discrimination and violence towards LGBT people, promoting their self-affirmation, dignity, and equal rights, increasing their visibility as a social group, building communities, and promoting sexual diversity and gender variance.

[27] Ordinance No. 2124, series of 2019

Livelihood for Women through NGO Initiatives

The Santa Rosa Livelihood Organization Inc. (SLOI) provides livelihood training to the Women Children Crisis Center and the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology. SLOI has been active for over a decade. SLOI started with 100 members but dwindled through time. At present, membership is down to 20. According to an interview with Ms. Belen Acuña, President of the SLOI, the organization teaches women how to become entrepreneurs and be economically independent. SLOI is composed of self-driven women from various barangays in Santa Rosa. They look for recyclable materials and make them into bags, gather water lilies, and make them into wallets and piggy banks.

Men Opposed to Violence Against Women Everywhere (MOVE)

The MOVE is another initiative by the City Social Welfare and Development to capacitate men as advocates of peace and assist women in ending violence against them. Though in its early stage, the CSWD is bent on expanding the reach of the MOVE in all the barangays, encouraging men to actively participate in protecting women's rights.

Barangay Initiatives

According to Barangay Dita, awareness of violence is important.

> "Initially, we did gender awareness training as we have VAWC (Violence Against Women and Children), and VAWC should not be just those who have awareness and make an effort: it should be done collectively as a barangay".
>
> Hon. Godofredo Z. Dela Rosa, Captain of the Barangay Dita

SDG 11 – Sustainable Cities and Communities

SDG 11 aims to create safe and resilient cities and communities. The fast urban expansion of Santa Rosa must prioritise safety and resilience to protect its expanding population and reduce social, ecological, and economic losses during disasters, being in a critical Silang Santa Rosa sub-watershed area. Protecting the environment and promoting a healthy lifestyle are the twin mission statements of the City of Santa Rosa. Indeed, mobility and flooding are two of the major challenges for Santa Rosa, which reflect the social and environmental costs of rapid urbanization in Santa Rosa, affecting people's safety and mobility. Several barangays in Santa Rosa are confronted with distinct challenges that compound these urban issues.

Firstly, mobility is hampered by traffic and insufficient public transport systems due to the increasing workforce, visitors, and residents. Expanding business centers, commercial malls, private cars, and bus company services slow mobility. As a significant investment hub south of Metro Manila, the expanding daytime population of the City causes traffic on major thoroughfares. The land conversion from agricultural to industrial parks and residential areas has attracted people from various parts of CALABARZON and Metro Manila to work and reside in Santa Rosa, resulting in traffic jams and congested areas in the city center. The Central Business District (CBD) also faces severe congestion due to the high density of commercial, institutional, and residential establishments.

3.2

PROSPERITY

Geographically, the proximity of Santa Rosa to Taal Lake, the West Valley fault, and the Silang Santa Rosa sub-watershed make the city susceptible to flooding, earthquakes, and volcanic ash fall. Following the downstream effect, water from the upper part of the City flows down to the lakeshore barangay during heavy downpours and more so during typhoons, passing through several barangays downstream. The lakeshore barangays of Sinalhan, Aplaya, and Caingin are prone to flooding. The Silang-Santa Rosa watershed traverses through the Municipality of Silang in the upstream and three cities of Laguna downstream, namely, Binan, Santa Rosa, and Cabuyao. The water from the Silang-Santa Rosa River flows down to the lower parts of Santa Rosa, causing flooding in these areas and nearby barangays. Domingo is also a risk, coupled with volcanic ash coming from Taal Lake. Direct observations conducted in the población area ("city center") after the typhoon in September 2024 revealed the extent of flooding events. Many lakeshore communities are further compromised by narrow alleys and the presence of talipapa ("makeshift markets") at alley entrances. Informal settlers have encroached on the lake easements, converting these areas into residential zones, exacerbating the risk of flooding and reducing public access to vital drainage areas.

Efficient traffic regulations and management enhance mobility and reduce road accidents, while flood-free communities provide safe surroundings and avoidance of diseases. The Upper Santa Rosa area offers a good example, with a more favorable infrastructure and a vast road system accommodating mixed land uses, including industrial, commercial, institutional, and high-end residential subdivisions. This balance of development and efficient road networks demonstrates the potential for better urban planning to address similar challenges elsewhere in the city.

Localized Targets:
- Convenient access to public transport.
- Reduction of deaths, missing persons, and directly affected persons attributed to disasters.
- Reduction of direct economic loss, damage to critical infrastructure, and disruptions to basic services attributed to disasters.

The proportion of the population that has convenient access to public

The road network map illustrates the accessibility of public transport across various City areas (Figure 41). It highlights the extent to which the population can conveniently access transportation services, a leading indicator under SDG 11.

The City's road infrastructure has been strategically developed to promote inclusivity and connectivity. However, certain underserved areas remain, particularly those with higher population densities or geographic barriers. Addressing these gaps is essential to achieving equitable and sustainable urban mobility. By monitoring and improving the road network and its integration with public transportation systems, the City reaffirms its commitment to creating inclusive and sustainable communities.
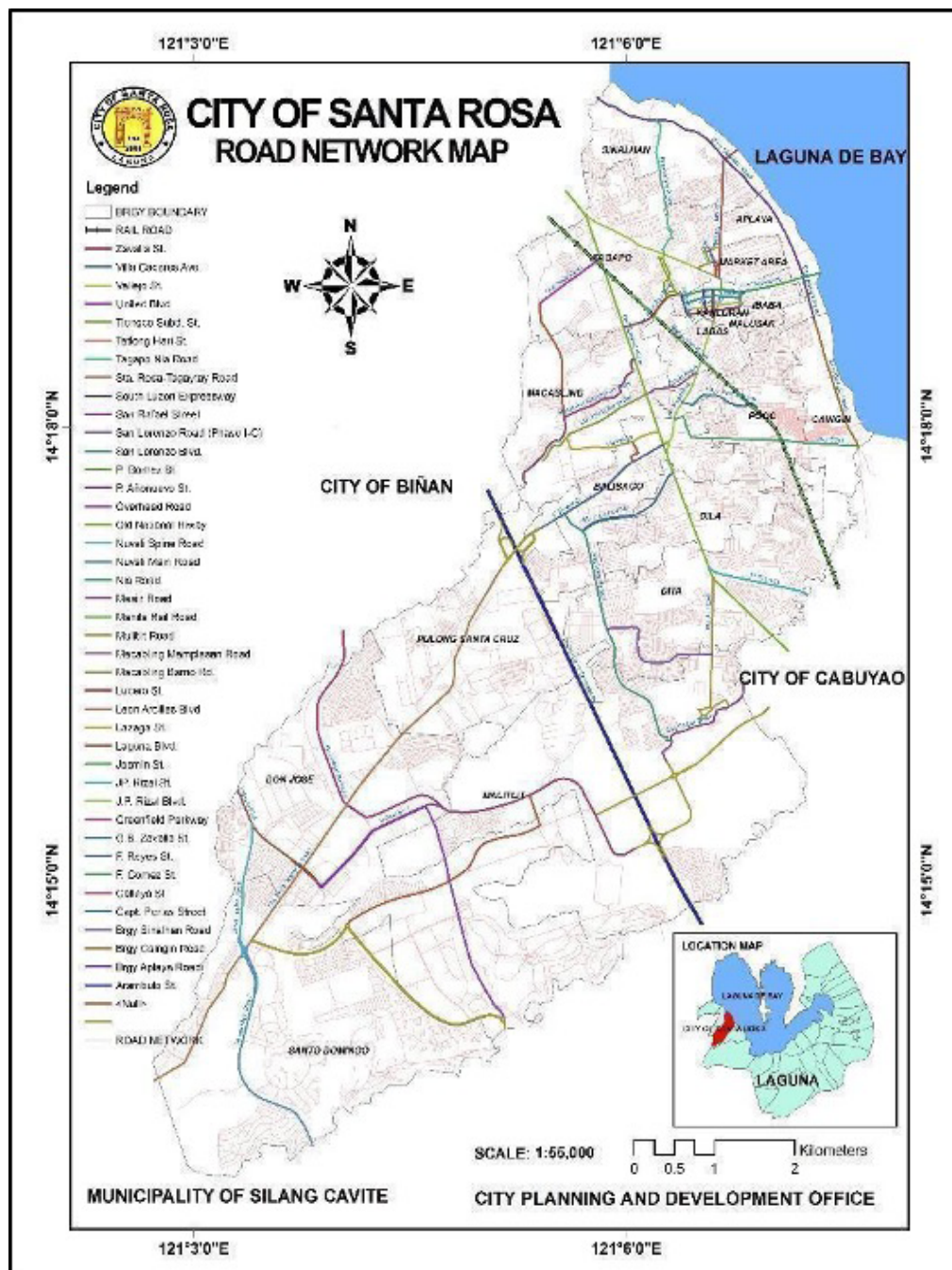

Figure 41. City of Santa Rosa Road Network Map
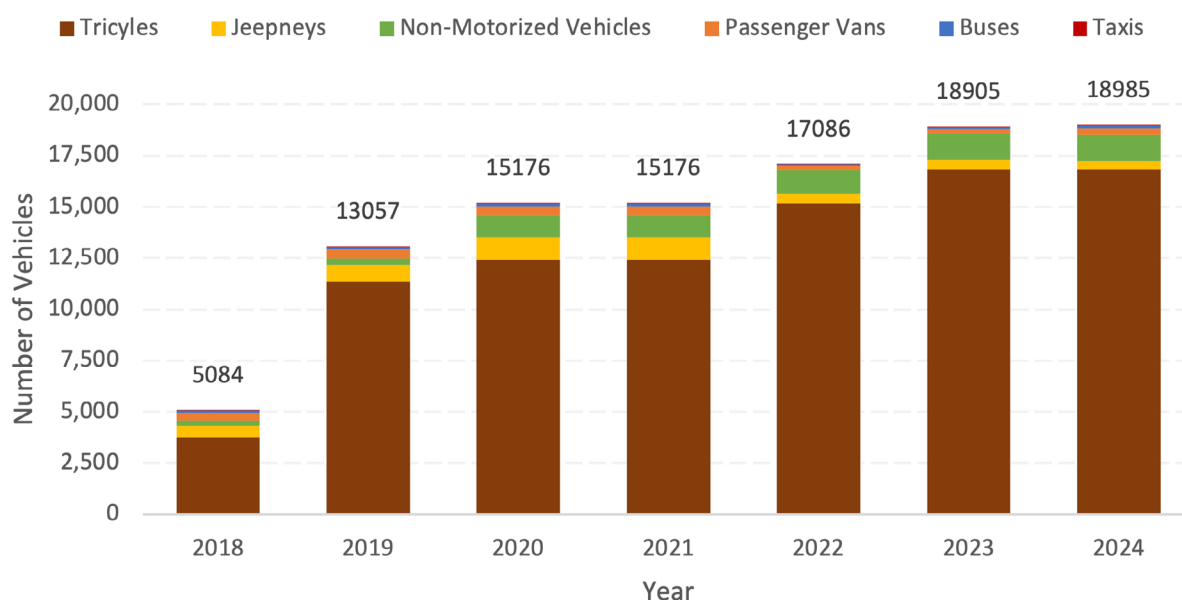
Transportation Modes Across the City (2018-2024)

Figure 42. Trends in Transportation Modes Across the City
Source: City of Santa Rosa Traffic Management, and Sanguniang Panglungsod

Figure 42 highlights the trends in transportation modes across the city from 2018 to 2024, revealing significant growth in tricycles as the dominant mode of transport, alongside modest increases in jeepneys, buses, and passenger vans. This trend reflects the City's efforts to expand its transportation network but also underscores a heavy reliance on smaller, localized transport options. Such reliance may indicate gaps in larger public transit systems, particularly in addressing the needs of underserved areas. The minimal presence of non-motorized vehicles further suggests an opportunity for greater investment in sustainable transportation infrastructure. Strengthening the integration of efficient public transport systems and promoting sustainable mobility options will be critical to achieving the City's vision of equitable and inclusive urban development.

Number Of Deaths, Missing Persons, and Directly Affected Persons Attributed to Disasters

From 2020 to 2024, the City experienced frequent disasters, yet the impacts on households varied significantly, reflecting the effectiveness of its disaster resilience strategies.

In 2020, a high frequency of disasters resulted in 1.4% of households being affected, highlighting the year's substantial impact. By 2021, despite a comparable number of disasters, the percentage of affected households declined sharply to just 0.2%, suggesting that improved disaster preparedness and mitigation strategies, such as early warning devices, flood monitoring, training of disaster responders, and the like, were effectively implemented after 2020. However, in 2022, the percentage of affected households rose to 0.8%, likely due to the higher severity of specific events despite the consistent frequency of disasters. By 2024, the number of disasters and the percentage of affected households had increased, with 1% of households impacted. Tragically, three deaths were reported in 2024, emphasizing the need for continued enhancement of disaster response mechanisms to minimize loss of life alongside reducing household vulnerabilities.

Households Affected and the Number of Disasters Experienced from 2020-2024
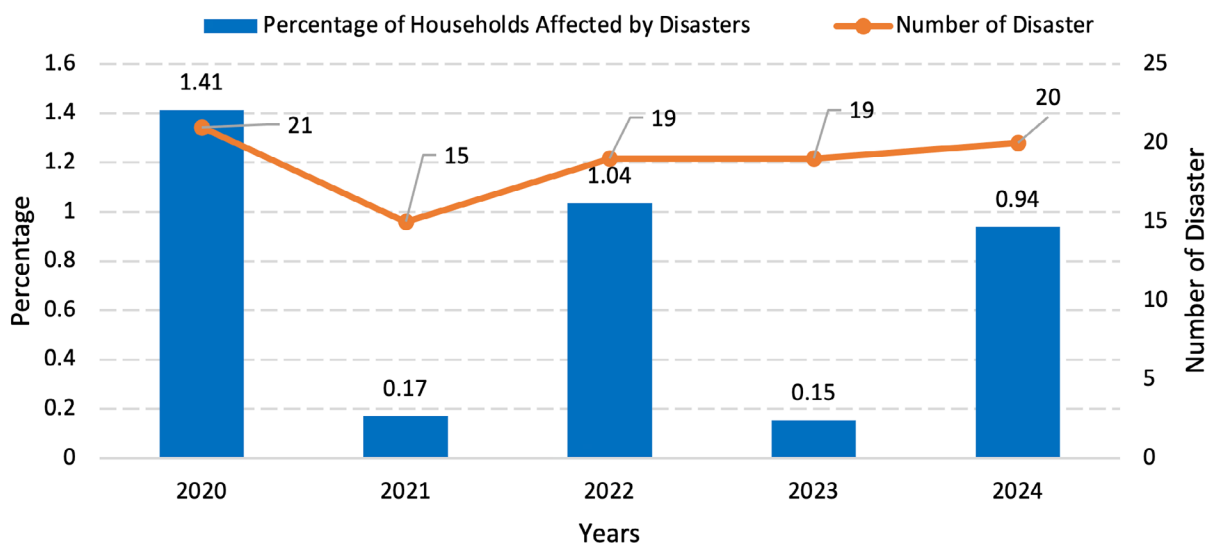
Figure 43. Households Affected and Number of Disasters in the City (2020-2024)
Source: City of Santa Rosa DRMM

Diversity of Natural Disasters

The City faced various natural disasters from 2018 to 2024, including Tropical Depressions, severe tropical storms, Typhoons, and Super Typhoons, as well as rare geological events such as a Volcanic Eruption in 2020.

Years marked by heightened disaster risks, such as 2018, 2020, 2023, and 2024, saw the occurrence of Super Typhoons, which pose significant threats due to their destructive potential. The Volcanic Eruption in 2020 added complexity to disaster response efforts, underscoring the importance of preparing for predictable weather-related disasters and rare geological events.
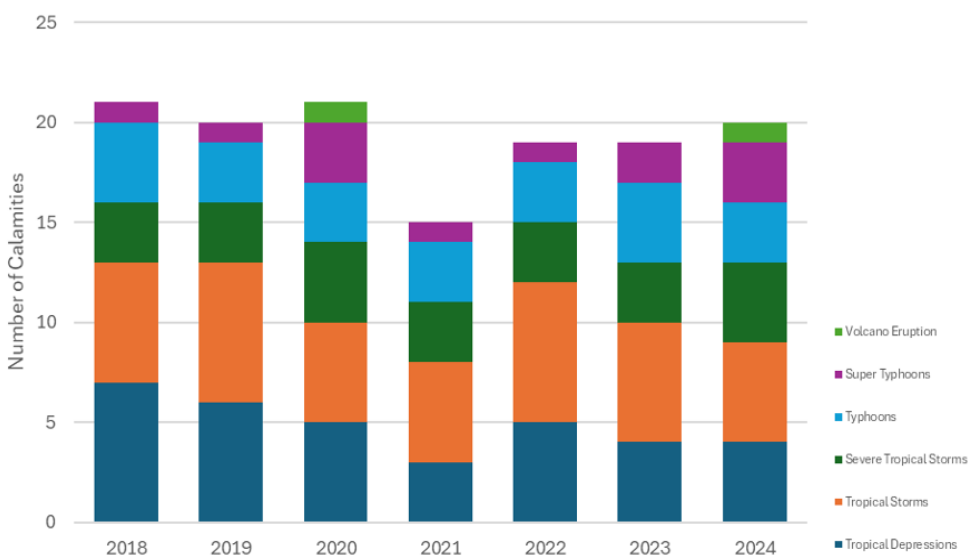
Figure 44. Disasters by type (2018 -2024)
Source: Department of Science and Technology, City of Santa Rosa DRMM

Funding for Disaster Resilience

Santa Rosa's financial commitment to disaster resilience has grown steadily from 2018 to 2024, reflecting its prioritization of Risk Reduction Management (RRM) and Resilient Infrastructure Projects.

Investment in resilient infrastructure projects from 2019 to 2023 shows a fluctuating pattern, highlighting a project-specific allocation approach driven by immediate needs and resource availability (Figure 45). In 2019, investments amounted to approximately USD 197,832, which nearly doubled in 2020 to USD 412,868, aligning with the City's heightened efforts to enhance infrastructure resilience during significant disaster frequency. Investments remained substantial in 2021, close to 400,000, but dropped sharply in 2022, reflecting a reduction in available resources or a shift in priorities. In 2023, investment levels recovered slightly, reaching approximately USD 260,000.
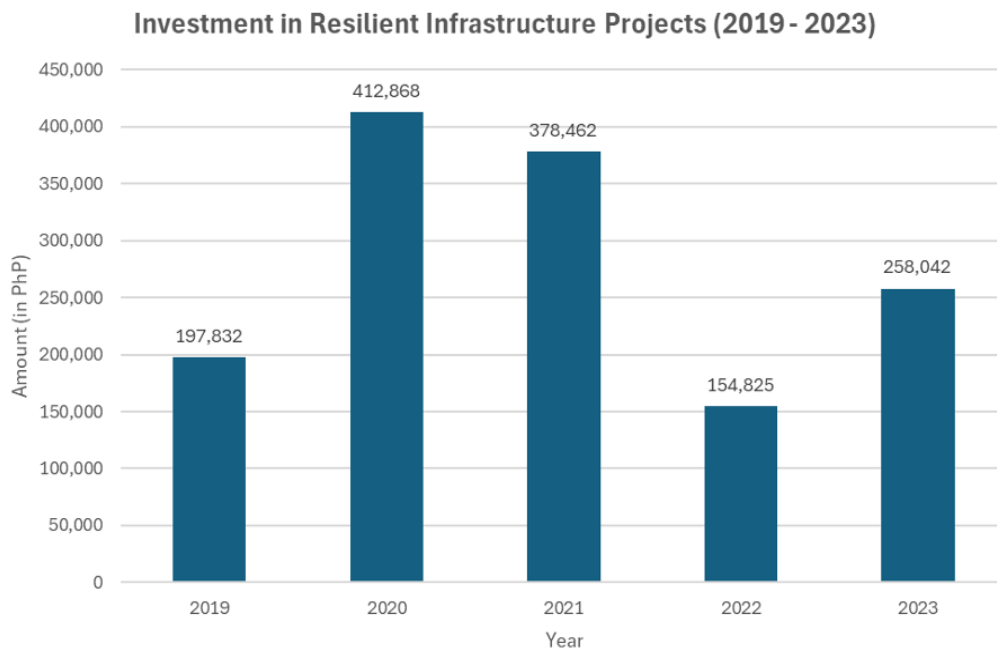
Figure 45. City's Investment in Resilient Infrastructure Projects
Source: City of Santa Rosa Annual Investment Plan
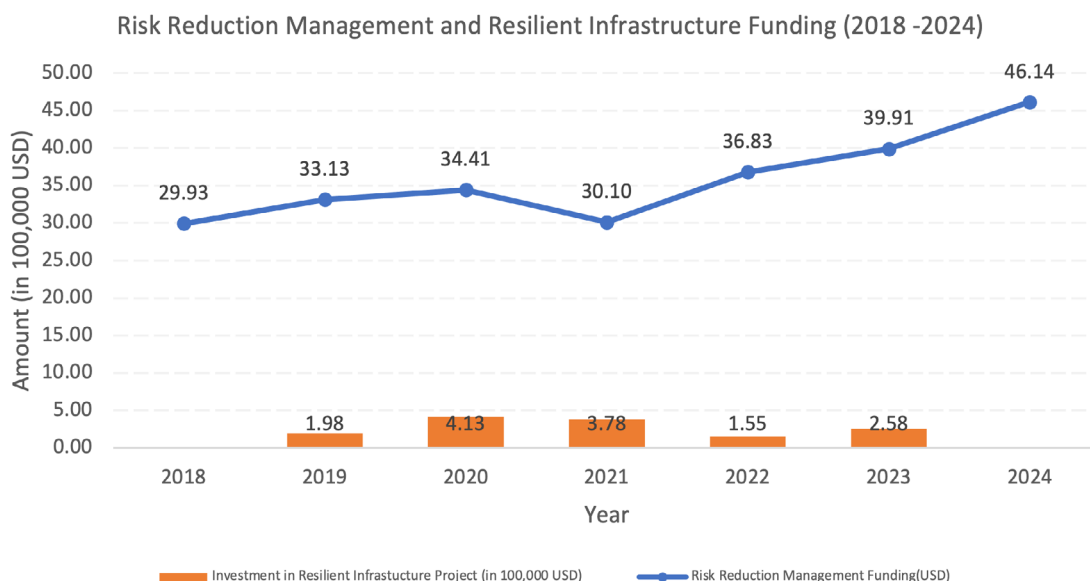
Figure 46. Risk Reduction Management and Resilient Infrastructure Funding
Source: City of Santa Rosa Annual Investment Plan

Funding for RRM increased consistently over the same period, starting at USD 29.93 million in 2018 and rising to USD 46.14 million in 2024, indicating a focus on long-term preparedness (Figure 46). While the steady growth in RRM funding highlights the City's commitment to disaster readiness, the fluctuations in infrastructure funding emphasize the importance of ensuring consistent and adequate investments. Achieving a balance between these funding streams is critical for holistic disaster resilience.

Training for Disaster Responders

The City has consistently focused on enhancing its capacity for disaster response by training responders. Between 2018 and 2024, the number of trained responders increased significantly, rising from approximately 200 in 2018 to nearly 600 in 2024 (Figure 47), underscoring the commitment to building local disaster preparedness and response capacity. Continued investment in these training programs is vital to align with global standards and ensure the safety and well-being of the community.

Number of Trained Responders of the City (2015 - 2024)

Year	Number of Responders Trained
2024	562
2023	429
2022	419
2021	302
2020	302
2019	302
2018	240
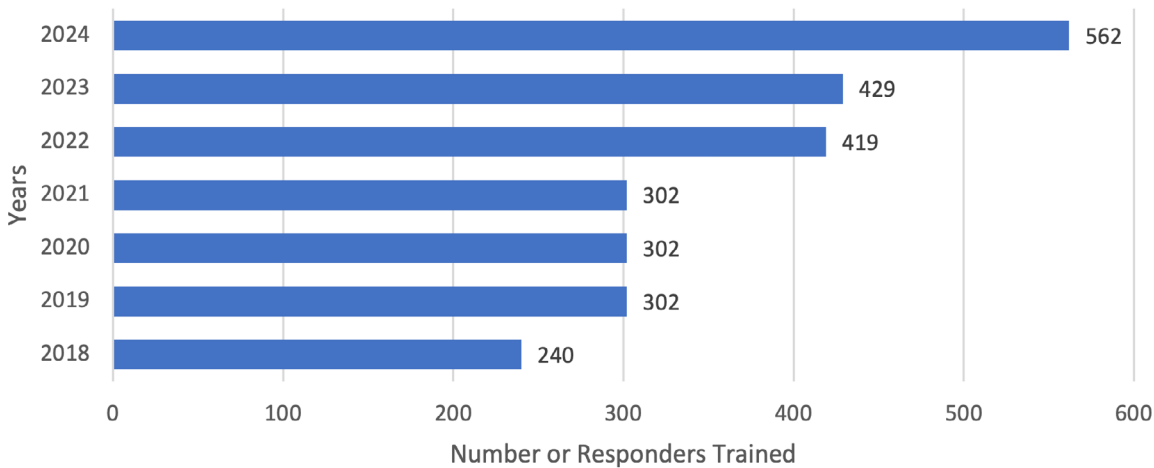
Figure 47. Number of Trained Responders of the City
Source: City of Santa Rosa DRMM

City Actions to Achieve SDG 11

Disaster Risk and Reduction Management (DRRM)

The Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) has completed another evacuation center project with facilities in Santa Rosa, Laguna, amounting to USD 597,009.80, houses a 2-storey accommodation building catering to 33 families or 132 persons displaced by calamities.

Barangay Initiatives in DRRM

A Barangay Rescue Team is created in each barangay, which develops emergency management programs that include planning and coordinating disaster response for concerned barangay officials and HOA (homeowner association) officers. The Barangay Rescue Teams are active during flooding and typhoon events in all the barangays. The barangay stresses the importance of community participation in clean-up drives as a mitigation measure for flooding. Barangays install early warning systems in critical areas during inclement weather. These systems include water level signage in flood-prone areas, a public address system, and a warning siren for a second alarm by the roving fire truck. Barangays prepare evacuation routes and centers with the Barangay Health Workers and prepare emergency supplies with concerned Barangay officials.

Santa Rosa Command Center

Santa Rosa has a DRRM Command Center that covers monitoring, rescue operations, evacuation management, coordinating with barangays, and food distributions to the affected areas. Additionally, covered courts and schools are temporary evacuation centers during flooding events. The City of Santa Rosa uses hydrometers and Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) to monitor road conditions, identifying traffic, accidents, and risky areas such as flooded streets or main highways. CCTV is a vital disaster tool that tracks barangay street life and the safety of the residents. The City Disaster Risk Reduction Management (CDDRM) Facebook Page is used as a channel for open communication between the City officials and the residents of Santa Rosa. More importantly, the overflowing of rivers is monitored for the safety of the residents. Hydrometers in strategic areas like Arcillas Blvd, Rizal Blvd, and Macabling are precautionary instruments enabling the local government to track water levels in the city for the safety of the residents.

3.3

Planet

SDG 12 – Responsible Consumption and Production

With expanding industries, commercial centers, high-end residential areas, the numerous subdivisions that mushroomed through time, and an emerging university belt, waste is a by-product of urbanization in Santa Rosa and a major concern.

Localized Targets:
- Reduce the amount of waste generated per capita.
- Increase the percentage of waste recovered.
- Increase the percentage of waste segregated.
- Increase/create material recovery facilities in the city.

Amount of Waste Generated per Capita

The steady growth in per capita waste generation, from 0.7 kg/person/day in 2018 to approximately 0.703 kg/person/day in 2023, reveals the necessity to enhance the city's waste management strategies (Figure 48).

By investing in advanced waste treatment facilities such as recycling plants and composting systems, the City can efficiently manage increasing waste volumes while fostering sustainability. Community education campaigns promoting waste segregation, recycling, and composting will further empower residents to adopt responsible consumption practices, strengthening collective efforts toward sustainability.

City's Average Amount of Waste Generated per Capita from 2018 to 2023 (kgs/person/ day)
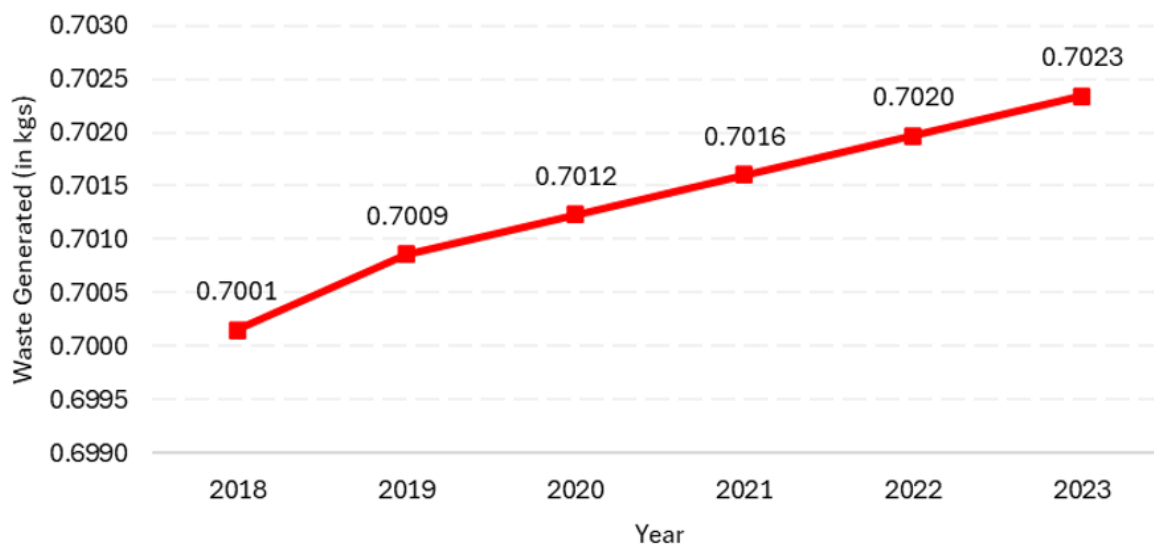
Figure 48. Waste Generated Per Capita
Source: City of Santa Rosa CENRO

Percentage of Waste Recovered

The remarkable rise in waste recovery rates, from 60% in 2018 to an impressive 78% in 2023, demonstrates the City's commitment to sustainable practices (Figure 49). This consistent improvement reflects the effectiveness of policies, public awareness campaigns, and investments in infrastructure. By continuing to expand recycling facilities and incorporating advanced technologies to process diverse materials, the City can sustain and even accelerate this positive trend. Engaging communities through education on waste segregation and recycling further enhances these achievements. Tracking recovery rates by waste type will ensure targeted and data-driven interventions, maximizing the city's resource efficiency and waste reduction progress.

Yearly Growth in Waste Recovery Rates (2018–2023)
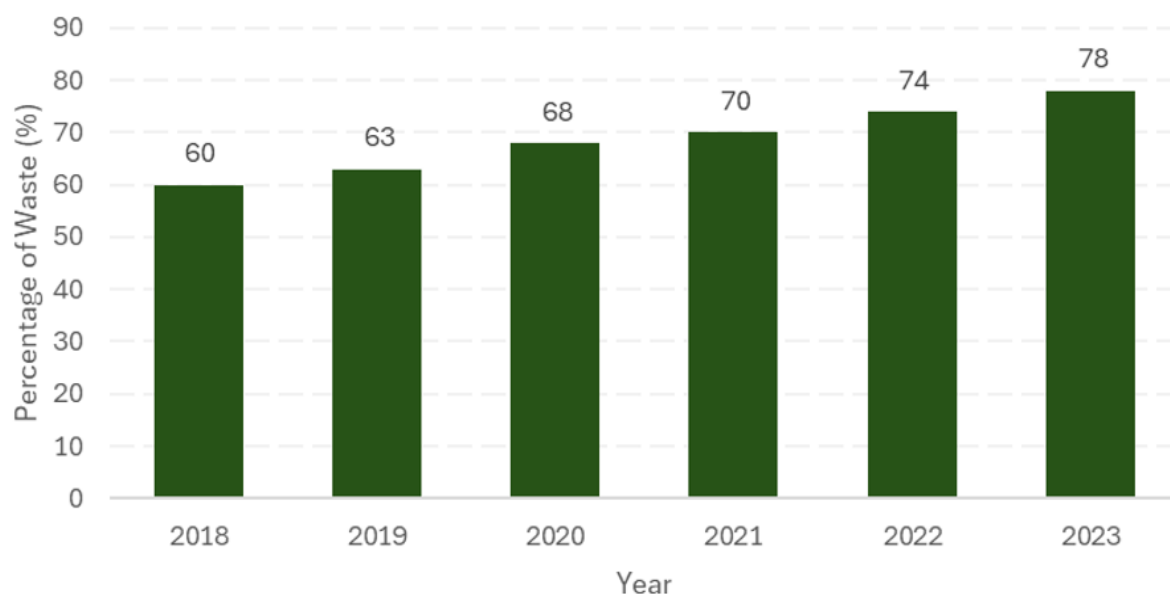
Figure 49. Percentage of Waste Recovered
Source: City of Santa Rosa CENRO

Material Recovery Facilities in the City

The stable number of 20 solid waste management facilities, including Barangay Material Recovery Facilities (MRFs), composting, and briquetting facilities, highlights a solid foundation for waste management. With rising waste generation trends, this is an excellent opportunity to expand further and modernize these facilities, enabling the City to lead in sustainable waste practices. Encouraging households and businesses to adopt circular economy models—such as composting, reducing single-use plastics, reusing materials, and supporting products made from recycled materials—will reinforce infrastructure improvements and inspire a culture of sustainability across all sectors.

City Actions to Achieve SDG 12

Environmental Management

Santa Rosa prioritizes a clean environment alongside industrial and commercial development. The Pillar of Clean Environment and Healthy Lifestyle advocates for environmental protection to sustain industrial growth and development, ensure a clean environment, and promote health.

Santa Rosa is a Hall of Famer in the Manila Bay Clean-Up Program for restoring water quality in Manila Bay. The city has 21 material recovery facilities monitored by the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) for waste diversion.

Santa Rosa has no landfills. Waste collection and hauling, including final waste disposal, are privately contracted, and waste is disposed of in the neighboring city landfill. Even though not all the material recovery facilities are functioning to cater to segregation and recycling in the different barangays, Santa Rosa has been implementing the 10-year Solid Waste Management Program (2016-2025) approved by the National Solid Waste Management Commission (NSWMC), which includes waste recovery and waste diversion as mandated by the National Solid Waste Management Commission.

Solid waste is managed by the City Environmental and Natural Resources Office (CENRO), which employs 700 people. CENRO has an environmental code and policies covering waste management, water, air, and noise pollution, for which it received the Green Awards from Santa Rosa in 2024. The office participates in environmental events like Zero Waste Month, Earth Hour, and International Coastal Cleaning. CENRO runs Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) campaigns and environmental awareness programs, including modules on environmental education for students in grades 3 to 6. CENRO leverages social media, such as Facebook for enhanced environmental awareness. The Head of CENRO has been part of the screening committee for DepEd in their Youth for Environment in School Organization (YES-O) program in public elementary and high schools.

SDG 13 – Climate Action

Santa Rosa is particularly vulnerable to climate change impacts because of its location within the Silang-Santa Rosa sub-watershed, facing increased risks from intensifying typhoons and floods. Long-term and short-term climate change actions through public awareness, policymaking, and strengthening adaptive capacity will build resilience against climate-related hazards. This approach will help the City overcome immediate challenges like flooding and ensure sustainable coexistence with the natural environment. By implementing these measures, Santa Rosa can create a more livable, resilient, and sustainable city for current and future generations, directly contributing to the overarching goals of SDG 13 and the broader sustainable development agenda.

Localized Targets:
- Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related disasters.
- Integrate climate change measures into policies and planning.
- Promote mechanisms to raise capacity for climate planning and management.

Strengthen Resilience and Adaptive Capacity to Climate-Related Disasters

Over the years, the City of Santa Rosa has strongly committed to addressing climate change by steadily increasing investments in climate-resilient infrastructure. Between 2019 and 2023, the City's allocation of resources rose significantly, from approximately USD 300,000 in 2019 to USD 2.3 million by 2023, a five-fold increase. This upward trend underscores the City's proactive stance in strengthening infrastructure to cope with the impacts of climate change, including intensified flooding and typhoons.

These investments have been directed toward constructing or upgrading flood barriers, improving drainage systems, and adopting resilient urban designs. This progress aligns with SDG Target 13.1, which focuses on strengthening resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards. Through these efforts, Santa Rosa sets an example for other municipalities, integrating sustainability into city planning to protect the environment and its residents.
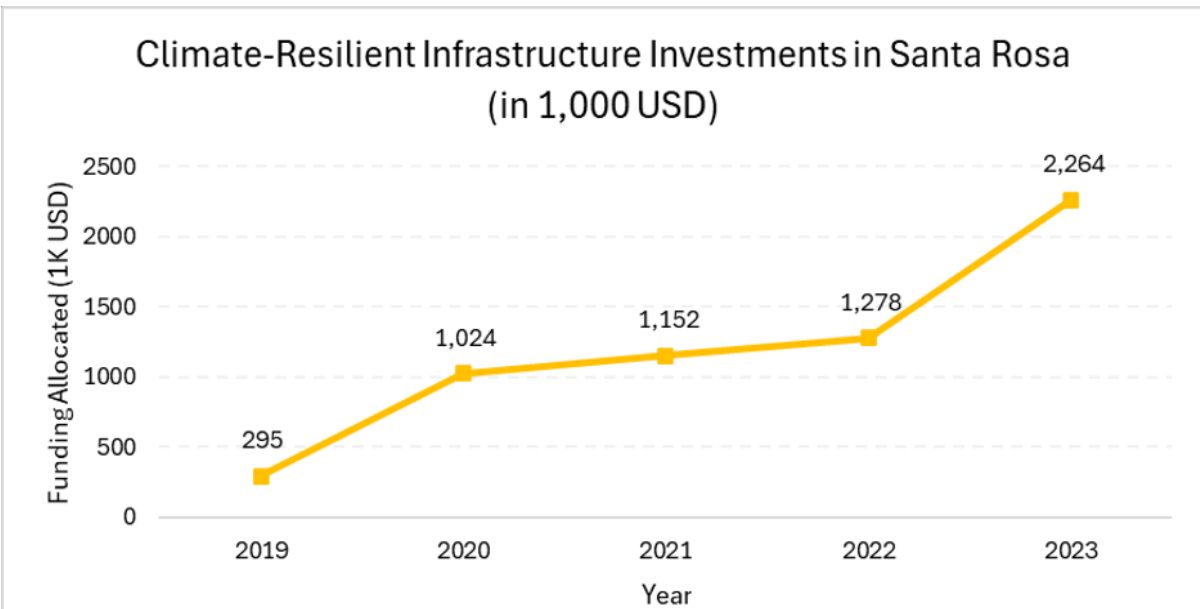
Figure 50. Climate-Resilient Infrastructure Investment of the City
Source: City of Santa Rosa Annual Investment Plan

Funding Climate Adaptation Initiatives

The City of Santa Rosa has consistently invested in climate adaptation initiatives, reflecting its commitment to sustainable development and resilience. From 2019 to 2023, funding increased overall, with occasional fluctuations in response to specific climate-related challenges, such as intensified typhoons and flooding (Figure 51). For example, funding rose from USD 255,948 in 2019 to USD 268,832 in 2020 but declined slightly to USD 250,159 in 2021. A significant surge occurred in 2022, with funding reaching USD 530,617—nearly double

the previous year—before tapering to USD 471,186 in 2023.

These funds have supported projects such as early warning systems, community-based adaptation programs, and climate risk mitigation initiatives. The trends reflect an adaptive approach, aligning with Target 13.2 of SDG 13, which emphasizes integrating climate measures into planning and decision-making. By prioritizing critical needs, Santa Rosa enhances its ability to manage climate risks effectively.

City Funding Allocated to Local Climate Adaptation Initiatives(in 1,000 USD)
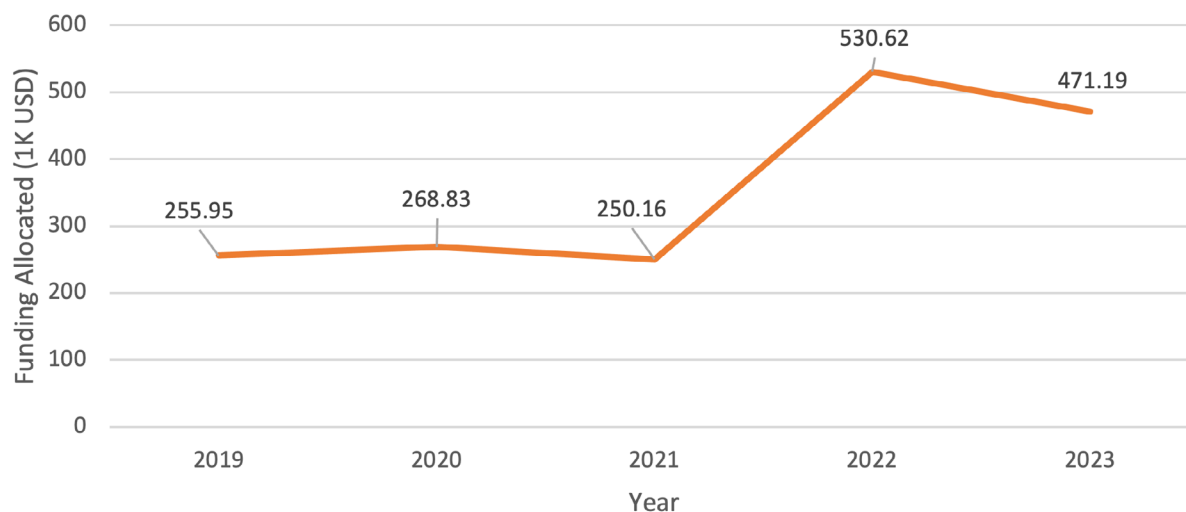
Figure 51. Funding Allocated to Local Climate Adaptation Initiatives of the City
Source: City of Santa Rosa Annual Investment Plan

Coverage of Early Warning Systems

The City of Santa Rosa has consistently maintained 100% Early Warning System (EWS) coverage across its 18 barangays from 2018 to 2024. This is a robust approach to disaster preparedness, addressing risks such as typhoons, flooding, and other climate-related hazards. Comprehensive EWS coverage enables communities to act proactively, mitigating potential losses and safeguarding lives. The City's dedication to full coverage highlights effective coordination and resource allocation, setting a benchmark for other municipalities.

Number of Local Climate Adaptation Projects

From 2019 to 2023, the City of Santa Rosa has consistently expanded its local climate adaptation initiatives, as shown in Figure 52. The number of projects has steadily increased from 6 projects in 2019 to 12 in 2023.

This increase aligns with the City's overall strategy to enhance resilience and adaptive capacity, contributing directly to SDG Target 13.2, which emphasizes integrating climate change measures into local policies and initiatives. The steady rise in the number of projects underscores Santa Rosa's proactive efforts to prioritize community-based programs and infrastructure improvements that effectively address climate risks.

Local Climate Adaptation Projects in Santa Rosa (2019 - 2023)
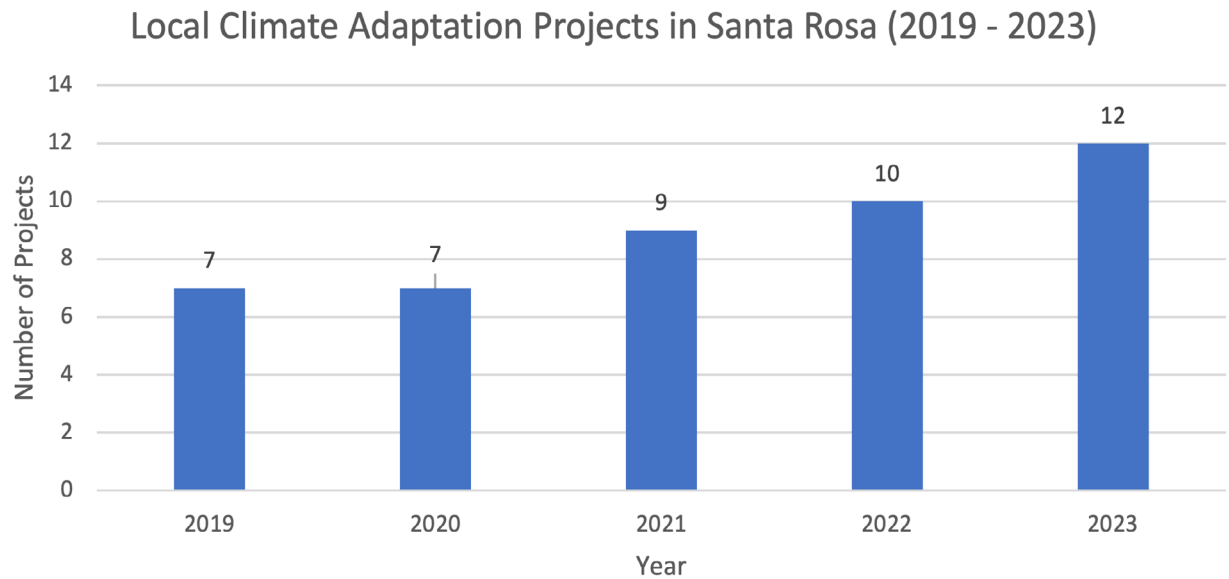
Figure 52. Local Climate Adaptation Projects of the City (2019-2023)
Source: City of Santa Rosa Engineering Office

Integrate Climate Change Measures into Policies and Planning

From 2018 to 2024, the City of Santa Rosa achieved and maintained 100% integration of climate change measures into urban planning and zoning laws. This ensures that all urban development aligns with climate adaptation and mitigation goals, prioritizing sustainable land use, resilient infrastructure, and disaster risk reduction.

By embedding climate considerations into its regulatory framework, the City aligns with SDG Target 13.2, emphasizing climate-resilient planning. This proactive stance ensures Santa Rosa's growth and development remain sustainable, addressing challenges posed by rapid urbanization and climate change. The City's efforts set a strong precedent for municipalities aiming to incorporate regulatory alignment into comprehensive climate action.

Promote Mechanisms to Raise Capacity for Climate Planning

Public awareness has been a critical component of the City of Santa Rosa's approach to raising capacity for climate planning. The city strengthens collective resilience to climate-related risks by fostering community engagement through public awareness campaigns and capacity-building workshops.

City Actions to Achieve SDG 13

The City has been very proactive in establishing the Disaster Operation Center since 2018, a centralized location unit that monitors and evaluates the real-time conditions of Santa Rosa during disasters. Moreover, Santa Rosa, through its City Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office, established various emergency response training for search and rescue, contingency planning training for the Barangay Disaster Brigade, and the Barangay Disaster Coordinating and Rescue Unit.

CENRO's activities on climate action are reflected in the annual investment planning. Priority projects are natural environmental management, pollution abatement, and strengthening adaptation plans. The city implemented several mitigation actions, such as converting fluorescent lights to LED at the City Government Offices, using solar lights for streetlights, and greening government-owned areas. Santa Rosa's consistent solar capacity of 129.78 kW and annual energy savings of 516,573 kWh from LED lights between 2020 and 2023 showcase its dedication to energy efficiency and renewable solutions. This energy-efficiency achievement serves as a strong platform for future initiatives, reflecting a commitment to building a greener, more resilient future. Expanding renewable energy projects and upgrading LED lighting systems can amplify these gains, while policy incentives and community involvement will further encourage sustainable energy practices.

Several environmental stewardship initiatives exist, like the planting of 200 bamboo seedlings as a climate change mitigation measure initiated by the Civil Service Commission and Laguna Water in September 2024.

3.4

Peace

SDG 16 – Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions

Santa Rosa's mission is to maintain a peaceful and orderly city. In a well-governed city, where there is a strong partnership between the political leaders and the constituents, political leaders work for the benefit and security of their constituents. In a peaceful and harmonious city, human security is valued and prioritized, which will attract business players, bringing about job opportunities.

Localized Targets:
- Reduce violence everywhere.
- Protect children from abuse, exploitation, trafficking, and violence.
- Promote the rule of law and ensure equal access to justice.
- Develop effective, accountable, and transparent institutions.
- Provide universal legal identity.

Crime Statistics and Reduction of Violence

The annual trends in violent crime rates per 100,000 population reveal both challenges and progress in maintaining peace and order in Santa Rosa. Between 2019 and 2021, the City experienced increased reported crimes, peaking in 2021. The most frequently reported crimes included theft, physical injury, and violations of special laws. Theft accounted for a significant portion of the total, while physical injury incidents heightened concerns regarding community safety.

By 2023, Santa Rosa achieved a notable reduction in overall violent crime rates, showcasing progress in mitigating threats to peace and security. This decline reflects the impact of targeted strategies implemented by law enforcement and community engagement initiatives. The upward trend in earlier years underscores the complexities of crime prevention in a rapidly urbanizing area. At the same time, the subsequent decline highlights the City's commitment to improving safety through proactive measures.
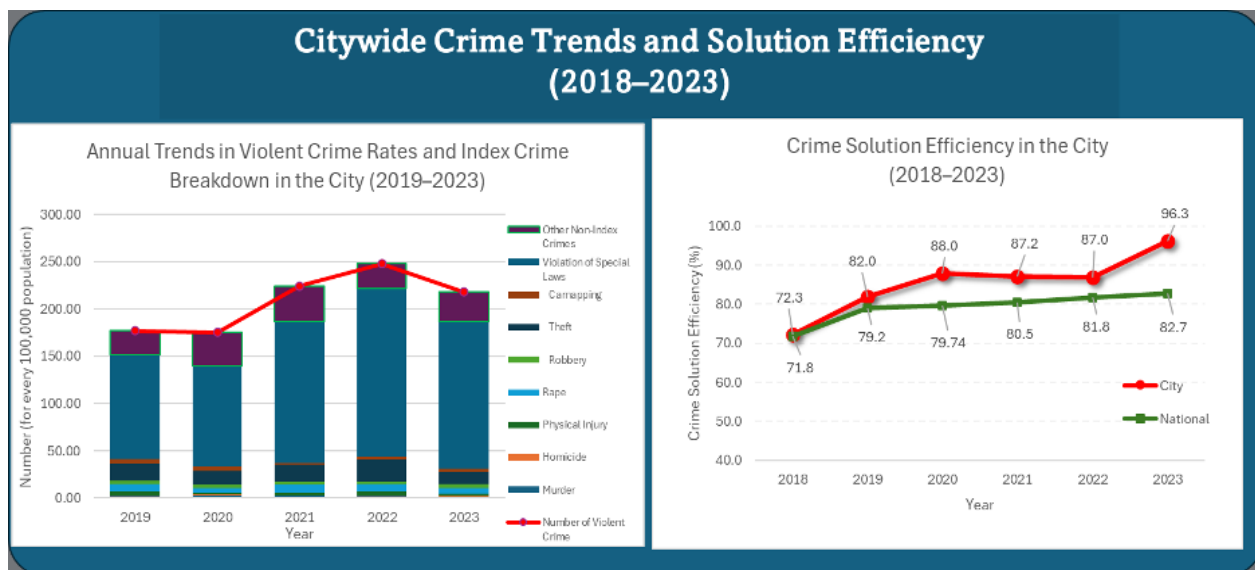
Figure 53. City Crime Trend and Solution Efficiency Rate
Source: City of Santa Rosa PNP

Solution Efficiency

Amid the challenges posed by rising crime rates in earlier years, Santa Rosa demonstrated remarkable resilience by significantly improving its crime solution efficiency. Starting from 72.3% in 2018, the crime solution efficiency rate steadily increased, reaching an impressive 96.3% in 2023. This growth highlights the city's commitment to strengthening its institutional response to crime.

Pivotal factors contributing to this success include establishing specialized units, such as the Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) team and the Tourist-Oriented Police (TOPCOP), which enhance law enforcement capabilities.

Additionally, investments in resources, such as patrol vehicles and modern policing strategies, have equipped the local police force to resolve cases more effectively. This improvement reflects not only the operational efficiency of law enforcement but also trust. While the progress in reducing violent crime rates and improving crime resolution is commendable, sustaining these efforts through continued investment in institutional capacity and community-based initiatives is crucial. By doing so, Santa Rosa can build on its achievements, ensuring peace and justice for all.

Domestic Violence

Despite progress in overall crime reduction, the City recorded an increase in domestic violence cases, rising to 7.4 incidents per 100,000 population in 2023. This increase may result from:

- **Improved Reporting Mechanisms**: Awareness campaigns and accessible reporting systems encouraged victims to come forward.

- **Underlying Social Pressures**: Post-pandemic stress and economic challenges could have contributed to increased incidents.

Addressing these challenges will require targeted interventions, including expanded community outreach, support systems for victims, and preventive measures to ensure safety and social cohesion.

Domestic Violence Incidence in the City (2020–2023)
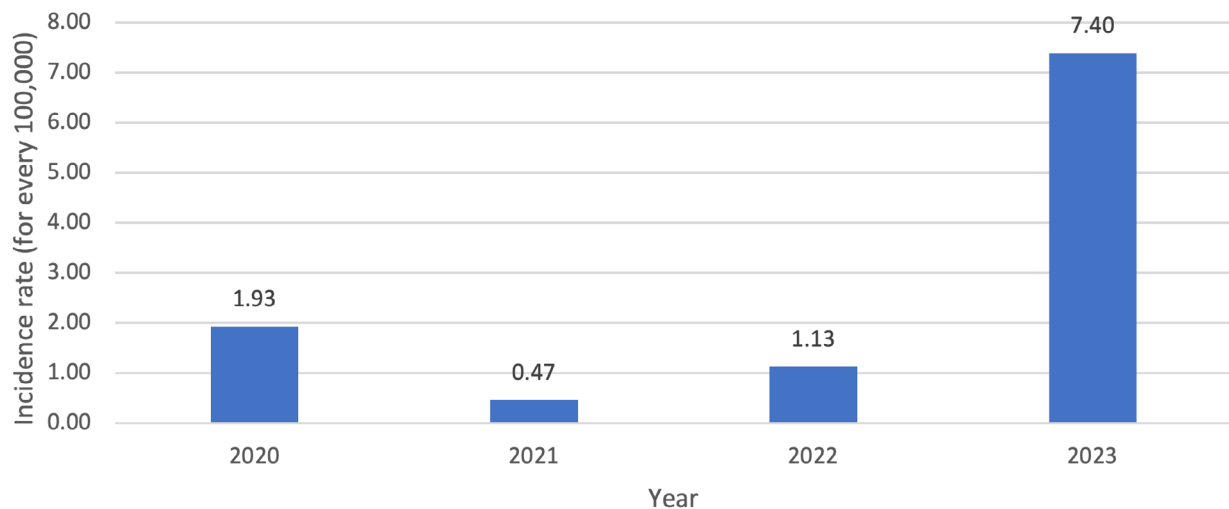
Figure 54. Domestic Violence Incidence in the City
Source: City of Santa Rosa PNP

Child Protection: Protect children from Abuse, Exploitation, Trafficking, and Violence

The data on child abuse and exploitation cases between 2018 and 2023 highlights both progress and challenges in protecting vulnerable populations. Notable observations include the fluctuating incidence of child abuse, peaking with 52 cases in 2019 and again in 2023. The drop to 21 cases in 2022 suggests underreporting or a temporary decline.

Resolution rates for these cases have shown marked improvements, with an impressive 85.56% resolution rate in 2023. Over the same period, no reported cases of child trafficking were recorded, reflecting the City's robust preventive measures, community awareness programs, and monitoring systems. To build on these successes, Santa Rosa must continue investing in child protection initiatives, enhance public awareness and community-based interventions, and monitor reporting mechanisms to ensure their accessibility and effectiveness.
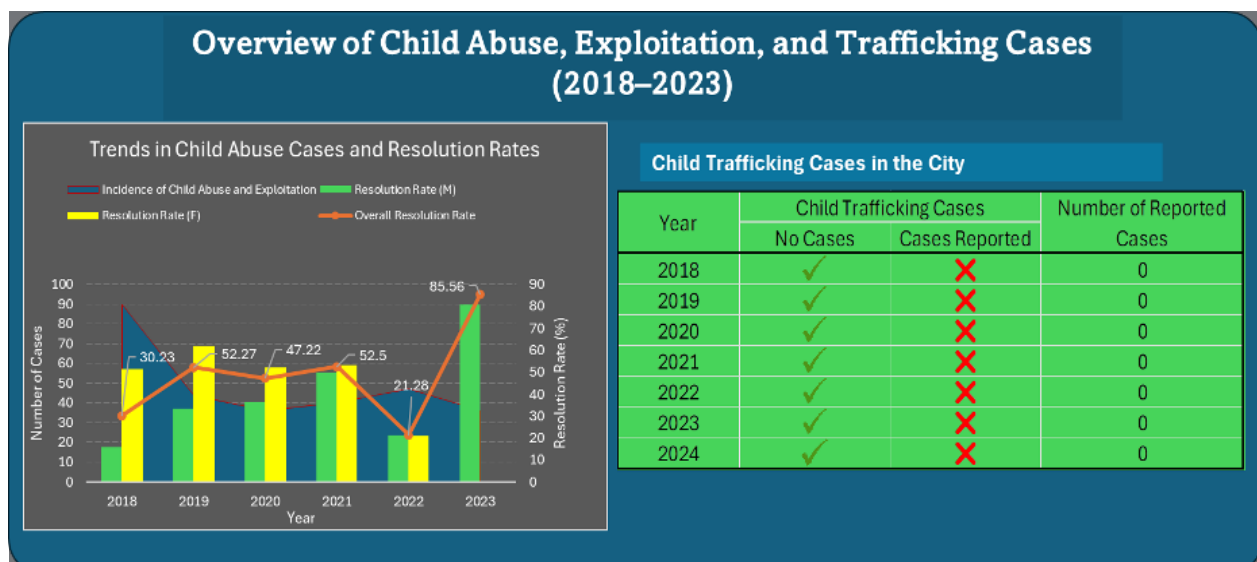
Figure 55. Child Abuse, Exploitation, and Trafficking Cases in the City
Source: City of Santa Rosa PNP and CSWD

Promote the Rule of Law and Ensure Equal Access to Justice

Figure 56. City's Legal Services Summary
Source: City of Santa Rosa Legal Department

Between 2018 and 2024, Santa Rosa expanded its legal support services, reflecting growing demand and improved accessibility:

- Legal Advice Given: Cumulative sessions increased from 827 in 2018 to over 12,000 by 2024, with spikes during the pandemic.
- Legal Documents Prepared: Totals rose from 9,253 in 2018 to nearly 60,000 by 2024, highlighting heightened administrative activity.

Annual trends show shifts in demand, such as declining legal advice sessions after 2021. These efforts promote equal access to justice, strengthen institutional accountability, and foster social and economic stability. To sustain progress, Santa Rosa should expand outreach, digitalise legal processes, and monitor trends to adapt resources effectively.

Develop Effective, Accountable, and Transparent Institution

The Cities and Municipalities Competency Index underscores Santa Rosa's institutional capacity and governance progress. From 2018 to 2023, the index rose steadily, peaking at 53.25 before slightly declining to 49.51 in 2024. This upward trend reflects efforts to enhance governance systems, improve institutional efficiency, and

foster public trust. However, the 2024 decline highlights areas that need renewed focus. Sustaining progress requires addressing these challenges, strengthening institutional reforms, and engaging stakeholders in participatory governance.
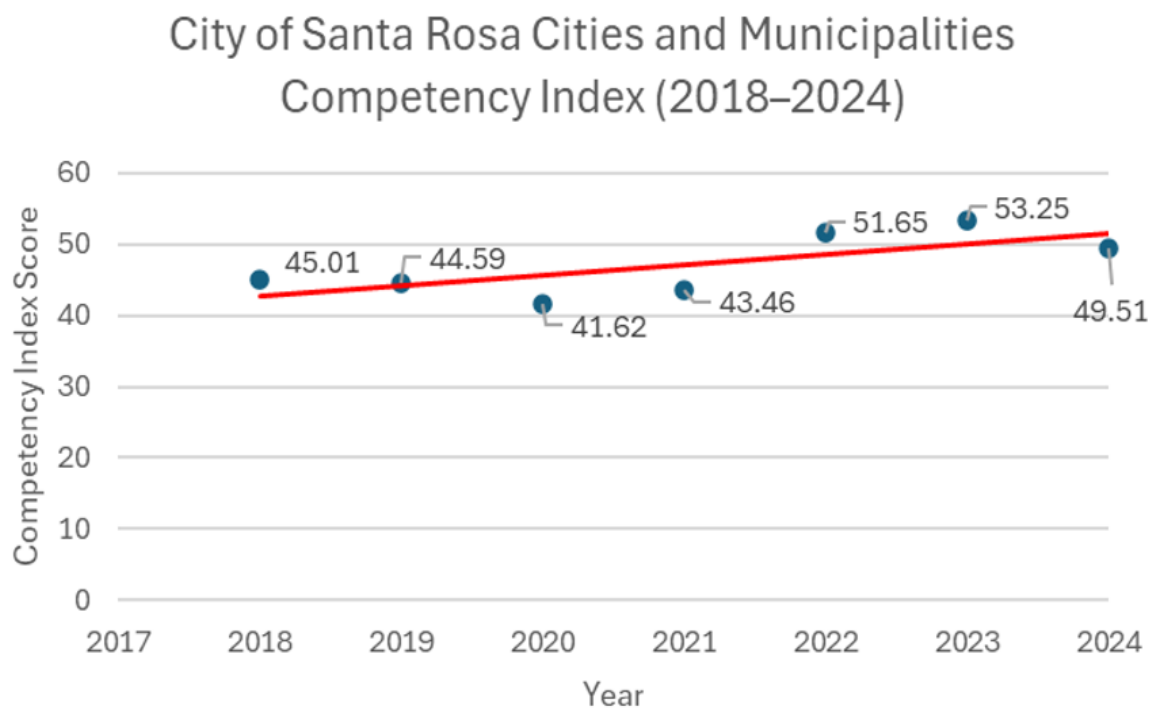

Figure 57. Domestic Violence Incidence in the City
Source: City of Santa Rosa PNP

Provide Universal Legal Identity

Trends in birth registration from 2018 to 2023 demonstrate Santa Rosa's commitment to ensuring universal legal identity. Total registrations peaked in 2019 (6,875) before stabilizing at 5,656 in 2023. Late registrations decreased significantly from 2018 to 2020 but began rising again after 2021, accounting for

20.20% of all registrations in 2023.

While high total registrations promote inclusivity, persistent late registrations highlight systemic gaps. Santa Rosa must expand outreach, simplify registration processes, and monitor trends to address barriers to timeliness.

Trends in Birth Registrations and Late Registrations (2018–2023)
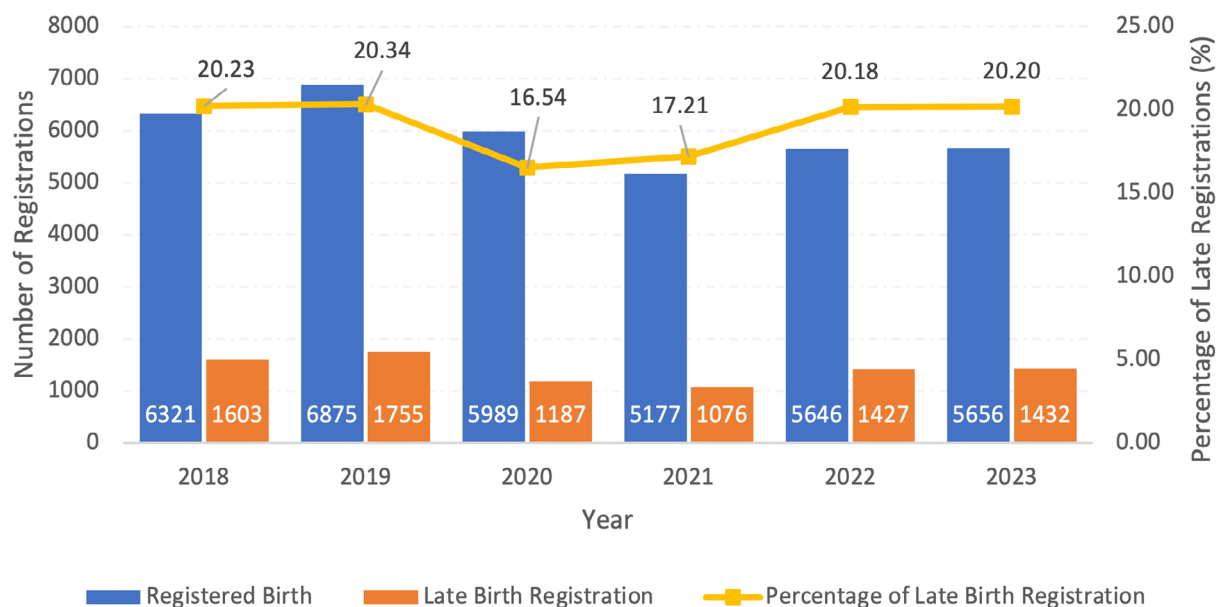
Figure 58. Birth and Late Birth Registration in the City
Source: City of Santa Rosa Registry Office

City Actions to Achieve SDG 16

Santa Rosa places a high value on peaceful and safe communities, making them a cornerstone of its development strategy.
The City's commitment to peace and order is demonstrated through a multifaceted approach that includes exceptional policing, robust fire safety measures, and innovative community programs aimed at fostering safety and inclusivity.

Police Excellence

Santa Rosa has consistently demonstrated excellence in policing, earning national recognition for its efforts in maintaining peace and order. Primary achievements in this area include:

- Award-winning community relations: Recognized as the "Best Police-Community Relations Section" in the Philippines.
- Top-ranking police station: Ranked 3rd Best Urban City Police Station nationally.
- Innovative policing: The first city in CALABARZON to establish a SWAT team.
- High crime solution efficiency: Achieving an impressive 90.23% crime solution efficiency rate.

Fire Safety and Emergency Management

- Beyond policing, Santa Rosa demonstrates its commitment to safety through proactive fire safety and emergency management initiatives:
- Recognized as Best City Marshall of the Year and Best Fire Station of the Year in CALABARZON.
- Implementation of comprehensive fire safety measures, including: routine fire safety inspections to ensure compliance and reduce risks; organized fire drills for preparedness across public and private institutions;provision of updated firefighting gear to the Bureau of Fire Protection.

Community Engagement and Collaboration

- Santa Rosa's approach to SDG 16 extends beyond enforcement to actively involve the community in creating a safe and peaceful environment:
- Initiatives promoting community-police partnerships to strengthen trust and cooperation.
- Awareness programs focused on disaster preparedness and crime prevention.
- Partnerships with local stakeholders to address root causes of crime and enhance inclusivity.

These comprehensive efforts reflect Santa Rosa's dedication to fostering a secure and peaceful community that aligns with the principles of SDG 16. By integrating innovation, collaboration, and proactive safety measures, the City ensures continuous progress toward sustainable peace and development.

SDG 17 – Partnerships for the Goals

Santa Rosa, Laguna, is a rapidly developing city in the Philippines characterized by a diverse mix of industrial, commercial, residential, recreational, and institutional land uses. Given the city's varied stakeholders, there is a pressing need to facilitate collaboration among multiple and diverse groups, implement systematic resource sharing to foster harmonious relations, and work towards the common goal of sustainable development.

The stakeholders in Santa Rosa have different priorities regarding resource allocation.

Their fundamental needs include access to water, reliable energy sources, safety measures, and a peaceful living environment. However, urban development often presents trade-offs, such as increased pollution, traffic congestion, space limitations, and waste management challenges. To address these issues effectively, various partnerships – cooperation, collaboration, or alliances – should be actively encouraged among the city's stakeholders.

3.5

Partnerships

One community, city, or country cannot achieve sustainable development alone. As resources are limited, sustainable development requires partnerships between governments, private sectors, and civil societies. By forging a partnership, diverse stakeholders and the host local government unit can work together to pursue productivity while protecting the environment and resources of the host local government unit.

Collaboration is a catalyst for progress. Urban development thrives when business entities and residential community representatives join forces to foster a sustainable cityscape. A robust partnership framework facilitates resource pooling, knowledge exchange, and cultivating positive relationships, all contributing to a productive ecosystem. That is why achieving SDG17 is an indispensable priority of the city and a necessary base for actualizing the other Goals.

Localized Targets:
- Have better coordination with partners to implement better policies with regard to the SDGs.
- Encourage effective partnerships.
- Develop effective, accountable, and transparent institutions.
- Provide universal legal identity.

Social Media Engagement: Amplifying Awareness and Collaboration

The City of Santa Rosa has strategically utilized social media to promote awareness and foster engagement with the SDGs. From 2018 to 2023, the City's SDG-related social media posts and total reach reflected its adaptability in leveraging digital platforms. During the COVID-19 pandemic, digital platforms became essential for communication and community engagement, leading to a surge in posts from 196 in 2018 to 1,572 in 2020. The total reach peaked at 9.37 million, illustrating the city's ability to connect effectively with the community during a critical period.

As pandemic restrictions eased from 2021

onward, the number of posts and their reach naturally declined, stabilizing at 633 posts and a reach of 4.61 million in 2023. This transition reflects a shift toward hybrid engagement strategies, combining online tools with in-person interactions to maximize impact. Social media continues to complement on-the-ground initiatives, with reach figures of 2.85 million in 2022 and 4.61 million in 2023. Moving forward, integrating targeted digital campaigns to engage younger audiences and amplifying in-person initiatives through online platforms will help maintain the relevance and effectiveness of social media in advancing SDG awareness.
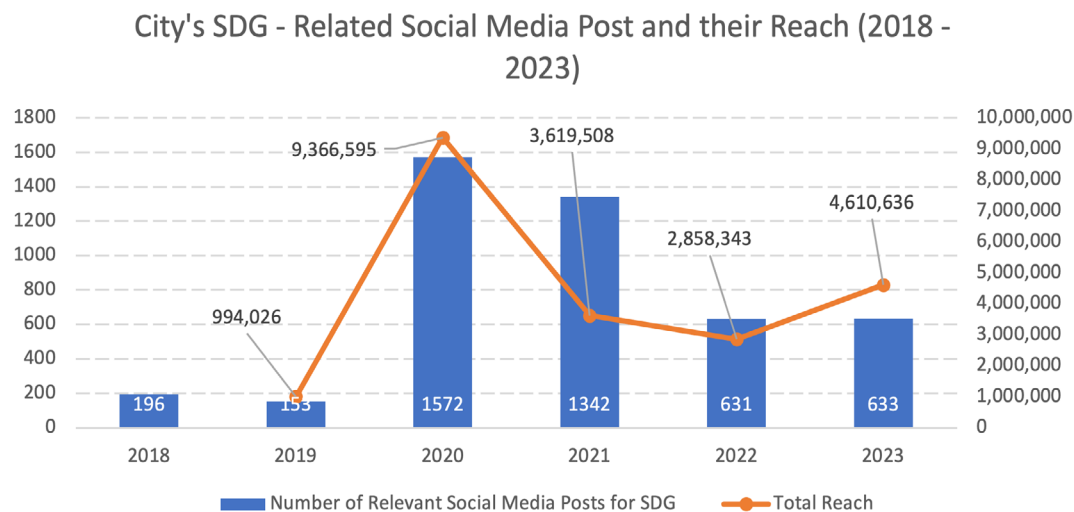

Figure 59. City's SDG-related Social Media Posts and Their Reach
Source: City of Santa Rosa Sanguiniang Panglalawigan

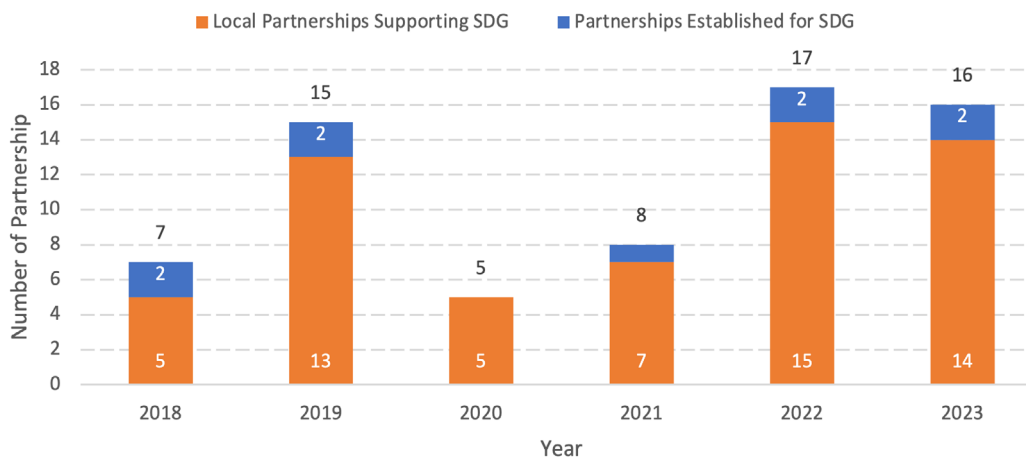## Strengthening Partnerships for Sustainable Development

Figure 60. Number of City Established and Local Partnerships for the SDGs
Source: City of Santa Rosa Sanguiniang Panglalawigan

Santa Rosa's progress in forging partnerships has been instrumental in advancing the SDGs. In 2019, the city achieved a milestone by forming 15 local collaborations and two SDG-specific partnerships, demonstrating a proactive approach to aligning local initiatives with broader sustainability frameworks. The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted these efforts in 2020, reducing partnerships to five, but the city adapted, recovering in 2021 with seven local collaborations and one broader partnership.

By 2022, partnership activities returned to pre-pandemic levels, with 15 collaborations recorded, followed by 14 in 2023. Santa Rosa's partnerships highlight the importance of engaging local stakeholders while expanding networks to include regional, national, and and expertise can further enhance the city's capacity to meet sustainability challenges.international collaborators. Strengthening inclusivity by involving marginalized groups, youth, and grassroots organizations will ensure that these partnerships address diverse needs and foster equitable progress. Leveraging established collaborations to share resources

Policy Alignment: Institutionalizing Sustainable Practices

Santa Rosa has made significant strides in aligning local policies with the SDGs, reflecting its commitment to embedding sustainability into governance. Starting with five aligned policies in 2018, the city increased to 19 by 2020, laying a strong foundation for institutionalizing SDG principles. From 2021 onward, the city consistently added seven policies annually, reaching 55 by 2023. Projections for 2024 indicate an additional policy, bringing the cumulative total to 56. Examples of sustainable policy alignments implemented by the City are as follows:

• MOA - Promotion of Sustainable Mobility that will Offer Free Community Shuttle Service: A Resolution authorizing City Mayor Arlene B. Arcillas to enter into and sign a MOA in behalf of the City Government of Santa Rosa, Laguna with the Toyota Motor Philippines Corporation, in connection with the promotion of sustainable mobility that will offer free community shuttle service in the City of Santa Rosa, Laguna.

• MOA - Smart City Assessment and Roadmap Development of Santa Rosa City: A Resolution authorizing City Mayor Arlene B. Arcillas to enter into and sign a MOA in behalf of the City Government of Santa Rosa, Laguna with the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) - CALABARZON for the implementation of the project Smart City Assessment and Roadmap Development of Santa Rosa City, subject to all legal laws, rules and regulations.
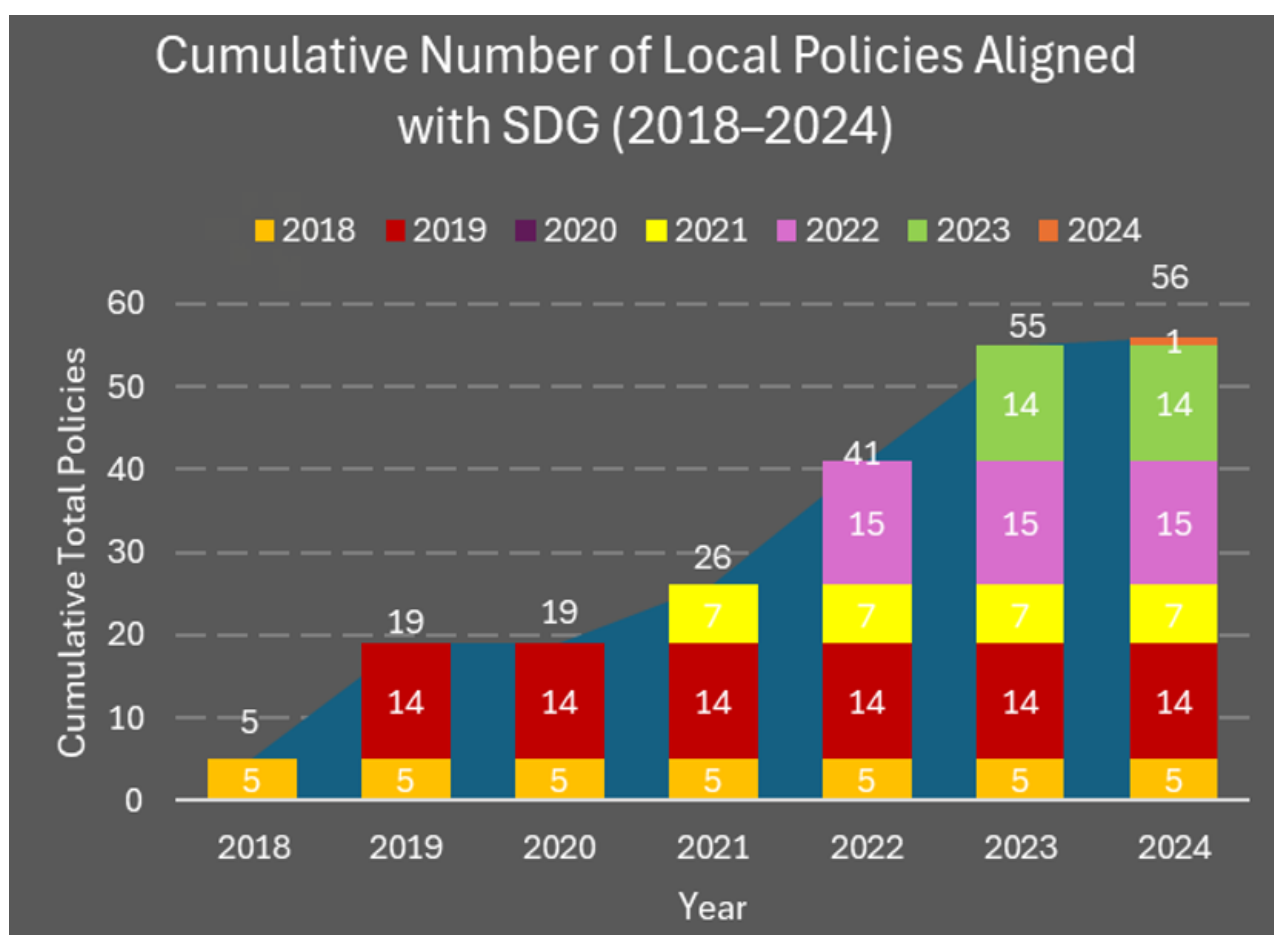
Figure 61. Cumulative Number of Local Policies Aligned with the SDGs
Source: City of Santa Rosa Sanguiniang Panglalawigan

The steady growth in policy alignment demonstrates the City's recognition of sustainability as a governance priority. Enhancing monitoring mechanisms to evaluate the impact of these policies on SDG targets can help ensure long-term success. Additionally, involving stakeholders—such as local communities, businesses, and NGOs—in policy formulation will foster inclusivity and strengthen the alignment process. Successful policies can also serve as models for replication in other local government units, promoting knowledge sharing and innovation.

Financing the SDGs and Sustainable Development

Achieving the SDGs requires strategic financial planning. Santa Rosa's fiscal strategies focus on optimizing local revenue generation, attracting private sector investments, and leveraging national and international funding sources. Essential aspects include:

- Revenue Generation – With a city income of USD 86 billion in 2022, Santa Rosa is Laguna's highest-earning LGU. Business taxes, real estate revenues, and industrial investments drive economic growth.

- Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) – Santa Rosa collaborates with private companies in areas such as infrastructure development, renewable energy projects, and digital transformation initiatives.
- International and National Funding Support – The city accesses grants and funding from development agencies, climate finance mechanisms, and SDG-aligned initiatives, ensuring continuous resource mobilization for sustainability programs.

Awards and Recognitions: Validating Progress

From 2018 to 2023, Santa Rosa consistently received recognition for its sustainable development efforts, reinforcing its leadership in governance and innovation. The City achieved its highest number of awards in 2020, with six DILG-recognized honors reflecting its strong pre-pandemic performance. The challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021 resulted in a decline to one DILG-recognized award, but the city rebounded by 2022, maintaining six awards annually through 2023.
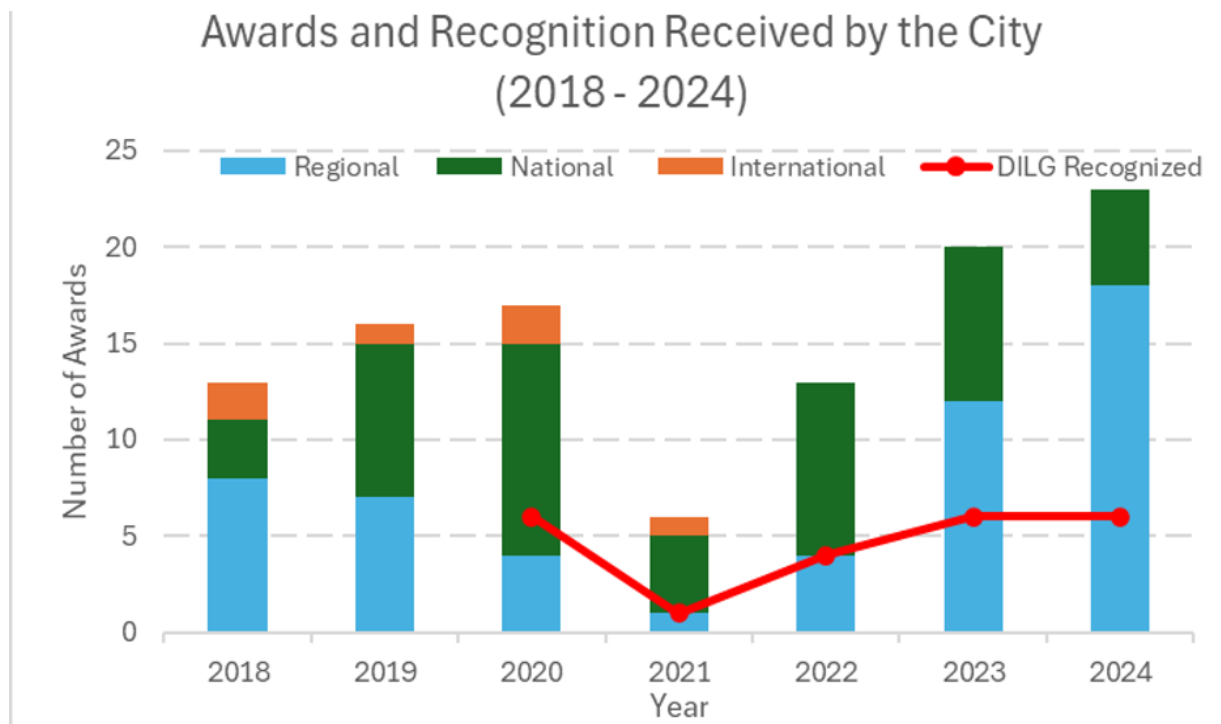
Figure 62. Awards and Recognitions Received by the City
Source: City of Santa RosaCity Information Office

The National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRM) has awarded the City the Gawad Kalasag Award Seal of Excellence and Beyond Compliant in recognition of its role in humanitarian assistance and ensuring community safety before, during, and after the calamities in 2022 and 2023.

In 2015, the City won the Regional Gawad Kalasag award from the Regional Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council 1V-A of the Office of Civil Defense. Santa Rosa City was awarded "The First National Earth Hour Capital of the Philippines" under the World Wide Fund (WWF) Earth Hour Challenge Program. The City's entry showcased strong commitments and actions toward building a climate-smart environment. Lastly, the city was awarded the "Energy Efficiency Excellence Award" by the Department of Energy on December 19, 2023.

These recognitions highlight Santa Rosa's resilience and commitment to excellence. Sharing these achievements widely through public platforms can inspire collaboration and attract new partnerships and funding opportunities. Strengthening evaluation mechanisms will ensure future initiatives remain impactful and aligned with global best practices, further cementing the city's role as a leader in sustainable development.

City Actions to Achieve SDG 17

The City government created initiatives to improve the local economy, including business incentives, infrastructure projects to improve connectivity, and programs to support small and medium enterprises. Establishing the Santa Rosa Business Council has strengthened the partnership between the local government and the business community, driving economic growth and innovation. It serves as the preferred voice of the business community. It is a non-profit, service-oriented, non-partisan, and apolitical organization serving the business enterprises, the local government, and the people of Santa Rosa. The major goal of the SRBC is to develop and maintain synergies between the business community and the local government that benefit the city's public. It is a consultative body to the City's local government on business, trade, tourism, industry, investments, and peace and order.

Role of the Industry

Industries play an important role in partnerships for the goals. Toyota Motor Philippines Foundation is one of Santa Rosa's major partners. Over time, the car manufacturing industry has collaborated with the City on several projects like the Clean Energy Investment Accelerator (CEIA), Santa Rosa Watershed Management Council, Santa Rosa River Clean-up, and International Coastal Clean-up Day. Furthermore, Santa Rosa actively participated in the Bayanihan Activities at Toyota, Gawad Kalinga Village, Sikad-Lakad-Takbo (SILAKBO) para sa Kalikasan, Surgical Outreach Program at Santa Rosa Community Hospital, and Fire Emergency Response. Moreover, Toyota Motor

Philippines donated three Vios units to the City government to serve shuttles for Santa Rosa Community Hospital and two Health Offices of the City Government.

Collaboration and Twinning Cities

Santa Rosa has vital partners such as Silay City, Negros Occidental to enhance cultural exchange and cooperation and Glendale, California, to advancements in technology and innovation.

Environmental Protection

Laguna Water is a joint venture between the Provincial Government of Laguna and Laguna AAAWater Corporation, a Manila Water subsidiary. Its concession area covers the cities of Biñan, Santa Rosa and Cabuyao. Laguna Water has actively participated in initiatives to enhance environmental awareness and community involvement in preserving ecological sustainability. The company has organized fun runs and tree-planting activities to engage residents and promote environmental stewardship.

In addition, Laguna Water is anticipated to participate in the Adopt-a-River Program, a collaborative initiative with the Laguna Lake Development Authority. This program is designed to mobilize various community sectors, pooling their resources and efforts toward the common goal of river cleanup and restoration. By joining this program, Laguna Water demonstrates its commitment to environmental conservation and community engagement, further solidifying its role as a socially responsible water service provider.

POLICY AND ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

This chapter examines the policy landscape and institutional framework that support the implementation of the SDGs in Santa Rosa. It highlights the city's alignment with national policies, local sustainability efforts, institutional mechanisms, and financial strategies to ensure sustainable urban development.

4.1

Alignment with National Government on SDG Implementation

Notably, the formulation of the Regional Sustainable Development Goals Catch-up Plans in 2024 serves as an in-depth localized plan for each region to accelerate progress. These alignments ensure that the city's initiatives are coherent with national strategies, particularly in the areas of poverty reduction, sustainable cities, climate action, and inclusive growth.

At the national level, DEPDev is preparing the Philippines' fourth voluntary national review (VNR), and it will also include a discussion of the City of Santa Rosa, underscoring its innovative strategies and stakeholder collaborations with a focus on the City's 10 priority SDGs. Complementarities among Santa Rosa's

The City of Santa Rosa aligns its local policies and development agenda with national frameworks such as the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2023-2028, the AmBisyon Natin 2040, and the Department of Economy, Planning, and Development (DEPDev)'s SDG Roadmap. Apart from this, Santa Rosa's sustainable development initiatives are also aligned with the CALABARZON Regional Development Plan.

VLR and the 2025 VNR bolster the country's vertical alignment in SDG implementation and monitoring, reinforcing the commitment to evaluating lessons learned, identifying best practices, and addressing challenges in achieving the SDGs. This VLR-VNR integration exemplifies how local progress contributes to national and global goals.

At the local level, Santa Rosa integrates the Local Government Code of 1991, which mandates LGUs to take the lead in planning and implementing development programs. These national and global policies guide Santa Rosa's CDP and CLUP, which aim to create a sustainable, inclusive, and resilient city.

4.2

Santa Rosa's Sustainability Efforts

1. Economic Growth with Environmental Consciousness – Santa Rosa has successfully balanced industrial expansion with sustainability. The city encourages investments in green industries, eco-friendly infrastructures, and renewable energy projects.

2. Social Inclusion and Equity – Through poverty reduction, livelihood programs, and affordable housing projects, Santa Rosa ensures that marginalized groups, including informal settlers, women, PWDs, and senior citizens, are not left behind.

Santa Rosa's sustainability framework is built on five key pillars: People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace, and Partnerships, aligning with selected SDGs. The city has been proactive in adopting sustainability strategies, including:

3. Climate Resilience and Disaster Preparedness – Santa Rosa implements climate adaptation strategies, such as flood control systems, waste management programs, and urban greening initiatives, which contribute to SDGs 12 and 13.

4. Digital Transformation – Investments in ICT infrastructure, smart city solutions, and public service digitization are enhancing governance and service delivery, particularly in the education and employment sectors.

4.3

Santa Rosa's sustainability framework is built on five key pillars: People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace, and Partnerships, aligning with selected SDGs. The city has been proactive in adopting sustainability strategies, including:

Aligning Local Policies

- Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP) 2015-2024 – Integrates SDG indicators into multi-sectoral development strategies.
- City Investment Plan (CIP) – Aligns infrastructure projects and funding with sustainability goals, ensuring environmental and social safeguards.

- Climate and Disaster Risk Reduction Ordinances (CDRR) – Strengthen Santa Rosa's ability to mitigate and adapt to climate change impacts.
- Ordinance No. 2122-2019 – Declares the Old Poblacion as a Heritage Square, preserving Santa Rosa's cultural identity while promoting sustainable tourism.

4.4

Annually, the CPDO conducts a workshop on Investment Planning, and one of its topics is Mainstreaming SDGs into the AIP. Various departments or units under the City government are guided through proper SDG tagging into their PPAs.

Mainstreaming SDGs in Santa Rosa

This is to raise awareness that certain offices have existing PPAs that align with or affect certain SDGs and their corresponding target/s and indicator/s.

Some of the PPAs of the offices that are mainstreamed:
- The Operation of the City Anti-Drug Abuse Office, which addresses SDG 3.5.
- Intellectual Ability Test Materials and Reference.
- Detoxification and Basic Health Attention.
- City Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office's (CDRRMO's) Emergency Response Program - which addresses SDG 11.5.
- Office of the Sangguniang Panlungsod's Management of the Local Archives and the City Library - related to SDG 4.6.

More examples can be found in the 2024

AIP, where PPAs are tagged with the corresponding SDG goal/target/indicator. Additionally, in the same Annual Investment Planning Workshop, there is a topic on Climate Change Expenditure Tagging (CCET) in which offices are to declare if their allocated resources are utilized towards CCA/CCM this is a policy coordinated by the Climate Change Commission (CCC), the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) and the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG).

There is also the topic of Gender and Development (GAD) Mainstreaming, in which gender perspective is incorporated by assessing the implications for all genders in any planned actions, including legislation, policies, or programs. A GAD training for DEPED teachers is held annually, and a topic on DEPDev Project Monitoring and Evaluation workshop.

4.5

Institutional Mechanisms, including Monitoring and Follow-up

- The City Planning and Development Office (CPDO) – Leads the localization of SDGs, ensuring policies are well-integrated into the city's long-term plans.

- Technical Working Group (TWG) on SDGs – Established in 2024, the TWG coordinates data collection, assessment, monitoring, and reporting for the VLR.

Santa Rosa has developed a strong institutional structure for SDG monitoring and policy implementation. Key mechanisms include:

- Multi-Stakeholder Engagement – The city regularly engages barangays, CSOs, businesses, and academia in participatory governance to ensure broad-based support for sustainability programs.

- Performance Indicators and Data-Driven Decision-Making – The city employs Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) linked to SDG targets, enhancing policy effectiveness through evidence-based governance.

Facing the Challenges and Moving Forward

Conclusion

Mainstreaming VLR Framework to Strengthen Local Governance. The VLR model, as a framework, will be used to strengthen local governance covering vertical and horizontal coordination. The vertical coordination refers to all national government agencies located in the city that are responsible for carrying out the policies and programs of the national government, with the City as the major implementing agency. In collaboration with the national agencies, the SDGs on human development, such as poverty, hunger, education, gender, health, and well-being will be strengthened. SDGs on climate, responsible consumption, and sustainable cities will be enhanced, coupled with programs to reduce pollution, waste, and climate action. Programs on Peace and Partnership are to be secured to protect the interests of the NGOs, BPOs, the car industry, educational institutions, and housing development, among others. The verticalization is to be articulated and implemented at the barangay level as partners of development. On the other hand, the VLR will also improve horizontal coordination in terms of expanding delivery services such as employment, medical services, environmental management, and education.

Inclusive Stakeholder Engagement. The VLR as a process encourages inclusive partnership of the sectoral groups for wider coordination. The involvement of the big companies, such as Toyota, Ayala Land, and BPOs, on one hand, and DEPDev and DILG, on the other hand, with the participation of the vulnerable groups in the City that reflects the holistic approach of the city towards inclusive governance. Partnership with the City of Yokohama encourages peer review of VLR to remain on track with sustainability objectives. Through inclusive sectoral engagements, Santa Rosa encourages participatory governance and can claim ownership in crafting the VLR.

VLR as Basis of Policy Formulation. The VLR will serve as the basis of developmental policies in Santa Rosa as it is updating its Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP), a nine-year plan of the City implemented through a zoning ordinance. Furthermore, it will also be the basis of updating the three-year Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP) of the City. Included in the CDP is the Local Development Investment Plan (LDIP), which is a three-year plan that lists all the plans and projects of the City for the next three years. The VLR could serve as a launchpad for crafting the new Executive-Legislative Agenda (ELA) that will define the executive and legislative directions with the new mandate after the local election in May 2025. The VLR is an important document of Santa Rosa aligning itself with the Sustainable Development Goals. It is not a separate document of the City, rather, it could be used as the basis for the writing of the CLUP, CDP, and ELA, where projects, probably not all, will be mainstreamed in the City. As part of Santa Rosa's plans, a budget could be allotted for its implementation.

Replicability. Santa Rosa's experience offers a replicable roadmap for other sub-national governments. The VLR also strengthens the VNR by fostering multi-level coordination and integrated planning, highlighting local successes and struggles as the nation progresses toward the 2030 Agenda.

5.2

Santa Rosa's Continued Sustainable Development Challenges

Despite progress, Santa Rosa faces several challenges in achieving the SDGs:

1. **Data Gaps and Availability** – The limited availability of disaggregated city-level data for certain SDGs makes tracking progress more difficult.
2. **Urbanization Pressures** – Rapid growth has led to housing shortages, traffic congestion, and increasing health and basic services demand.
3. **Environmental Sustainability Risks** – Industrial expansion must be carefully managed to prevent resource depletion, waste management issues, and climate-related vulnerabilities.
4. **Financial Constraints** – While Santa Rosa generates significant revenue, long-term financing for sustainability initiatives remains a challenge.
5. **Need for Enhanced Coordination** – Strengthening inter-agency collaboration, stakeholder engagement, and regional cooperation is crucial for sustainable development.

5.3

Recommendations

Santa Rosa must institutionalize the VLR process through legal frameworks and popularize it through digital platforms for wider reach and involvement of stakeholders. Awareness of the VLR, understanding of the process, and broad participation are essential in shaping the future directions of the City. Active multi-stakeholder engagements must be enhanced using a bottom-up approach, encouraging various vulnerable groups to participate in data-gathering activities and reflecting cohesiveness across sectoral groups. This is needed across city departments and barangays to promote an informed decision-making process and foster comprehensive action toward achieving SDGs. To enforce data-driven governance at the barangay level, a repository of updated data-based documents will be created to enhance data sharing. The City of Santa Rosa will be the repository and be responsible for keeping records and tracking down documents and statistical data for future use.

Specific recommendations from the stakeholders include:
- Governance and Policy Implementation
- Strengthen documentation and reporting of SDG progress.
- Improve SDG policy enforcement at the barangay level.
- Enhance sustainability-focused curricula and research in academic institutions.

Urban Development and Sustainability

- Enhance waste reduction systems with doable and sustainable solutions.
- Ensure proper green and open spaces in city planning.
- Address traffic congestion and improve transportation routing services.

Climate Action and Disaster Preparedness

- Implement stronger climate resilience measures, especially in flood-prone areas.
- Strengthen sustainable climate action initiatives at the barangay level.
- Popularize climate action programs at the barangay level for residents to understand the interrelations of waste management, climate change, and disaster.

Economic and Social Inclusion

- Expand livelihood programs, especially for low-income families and marginalized groups.
- Strengthening partnerships with the private sector for job creation and skills development.
- Promote gender equality in leadership roles.

Public Health and Education

- Improve access to healthcare services and expand vaccination programs.

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Annex

DATA GAPS AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

SDG 1: No Poverty
Gaps:
1. **Informal Settler Families (ISFs):** Many ISFs live in risk-prone areas without access to affordable housing or secure tenure, making them vulnerable to eviction and environmental hazards.

2. **Limited City-Level Data**: The lack of city-specific data on unemployment rates, income levels, and sector-specific business growth limits the ability to assess and address localized poverty effectively.

Recommendations:
1. Expand Affordable Housing Programs: Develop targeted housing programs for ISFs, including relocation assistance, low-cost housing projects, and secure tenure arrangements. Partner with private developers and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to fund and implement these initiatives.

2. **Improve Data Collection**: Establish a city-level data collection system to track unemployment, income disparities, and sector-specific economic growth. Use this data to design targeted poverty alleviation programs and monitor their impact.

SDG 2: Zero Hunger
Gaps:
1. **Food Insecurity:** Rising food costs and reduced agricultural land due to urbanization threaten food security, especially for vulnerable groups like ISFs, PWDs, and senior citizens.

2. **Limited Support for Small-Scale Farmers**: Despite efforts, small-scale farmers and fisherfolk face challenges in accessing resources, training, and markets for sustainable food production.

Recommendations:
1. **Promote Urban Agriculture**: Expand urban gardening initiatives and provide technical and financial support to households and communities for growing their food. Integrate urban agriculture into city planning to ensure land availability.

2. **Strengthen Farmer and Fisherfolk Support**: Increase funding for training programs, provide access to modern farming and fishing technologies, and establish direct market linkages (e.g., through KADIWA) to ensure fair prices for their produce.

SDG 3: Good Health and Well-Being
Gaps:
1. **Healthcare Access for Vulnerable Groups:** Low-income families, senior citizens, and PWDs often lack access to affordable healthcare services and medicines.
2. **Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs):** High mortality rates from cardiovascular diseases, cancer, and diabetes indicate gaps in prevention, early diagnosis, and management.

Recommendations:
1. **Expand Universal Healthcare Coverage:** Strengthen the implementation of Republic Act No. 11223 (UHC) by increasing funding for local health centers, providing free or subsidized medicines, and expanding health insurance coverage for vulnerable groups.

2. **Launch NCD Prevention Campaigns:** Conduct community-based awareness programs on healthy lifestyles, regular health screenings, and early intervention for NCDs—partner with private healthcare providers to offer free or low-cost diagnostic services.

SDG 4: Quality Education
Gaps:
1. High Cost of Tertiary Education: Many students cannot afford college education, limiting their opportunities for higher-paying jobs.

2. Dropout Rates: Although dropout rates have declined, some students still leave school due to financial constraints or a lack of interest.

Recommendations:
1. Expand Scholarship Programs: Increase the number of tertiary education scholarships and financial aid programs, focusing on low-income families and marginalized groups.

2. Enhance Alternative Learning Systems (ALS): Strengthen ALS programs by providing more vocational training opportunities and ensuring alignment with industry needs to improve employability.

SDG 5: Gender Equality
Gaps:
1. Underrepresentation in Local Politics: Women are underrepresented in vice-mayor and councillor positions, limiting their influence in decision-making.

2. Gender-Based Violence: Despite improvements, domestic violence and violence against women remain significant issues, with underreporting and limited support services.

Recommendations:
1. Promote Women's Political Participation: Implement capacity-building programs for aspiring women leaders and introduce quotas or incentives to increase female representation in local government.

2. Strengthen Support for Victims of Violence: Expand services for victims of gender-based violence, including counseling, legal aid, and safe shelters. Conduct community awareness campaigns to encourage reporting and reduce stigma.

SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities
Gaps:
1. Traffic Congestion: Rapid urbanization has led to severe traffic congestion, affecting mobility and quality of life.

2. Flooding in Lakeshore Barangays: Frequent flooding in lakeshore areas like Barangays Sinalhan, Aplaya, and Caingin poses risks to residents and infrastructure.

Recommendations:
1. Improve Public Transportation: Invest in efficient and sustainable public transportation systems to reduce traffic congestion and enhance mobility.

2. Strengthen Flood Mitigation Measures: Implement comprehensive flood control projects, including improved drainage systems, river dredging, and reforestation in the Silang-Santa Rosa sub-watershed.

SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production
Gaps:
1. Increasing Waste Generation: Per capita waste generation has risen, straining the city's waste management capacity.

2. Limited Waste Segregation: Despite efforts, waste segregation rates remain low, hindering effective recycling and recovery.

Recommendations:
1. Promote Circular Economy Practices: Encourage businesses and households to adopt circular economy principles, such as reducing single-use plastics, reusing materials, and supporting products made from recycled materials.

2. Strengthen Waste Segregation Programs: Launch city-wide campaigns to educate residents on proper waste segregation and provide incentives for compliance. Expand material recovery facilities

SDG 13: Climate Action
Gaps:
1. Climate-Resilient Infrastructure: While investments have increased, more funding is needed for climate-resilient infrastructure to address flooding and typhoon risks.

2. Public Awareness: Limited public awareness of climate change risks and adaptation measures hinders community participation in climate action.

Recommendations:
1. Increase Funding for Climate Adaptation: Allocate more resources to climate-resilient infrastructure projects, such as flood barriers, green spaces, and renewable energy systems.

2. Enhance Climate Education: Conduct community workshops and school programs to raise awareness about climate change risks and promote sustainable practices like tree planting and energy conservation.

SDG 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions
Gaps:
1. Domestic Violence: Rising domestic violence cases indicate gaps in prevention and support services.
2. Child Abuse and Exploitation: Despite improvements, child abuse cases remain a concern, with fluctuations in reporting and resolution rates.

Data is not available for the following targets. However, they have been indicated as a priority for the city.
- Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedom.
- Sustainably reduce corruption and bribery.

Recommendations:
1. Expand Domestic Violence Prevention Programs: Strengthen community-based initiatives like MOVE (Men Opposed to Violence Against Women Everywhere) and provide more resources for victim support services.

2. Enhance Child Protection Mechanisms: Increase funding for child protection programs, improve reporting mechanisms, and conduct regular awareness campaigns to prevent child abuse and exploitation.

SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals
Gaps:
1. Limited International Partnerships: While local partnerships have grown, there is limited collaboration with international organizations to leverage global expertise and resources.

2. Inconsistent Policy Implementation: Despite policy alignment with SDGs, inconsistent implementation and monitoring hinder progress.

Recommendations:
1. Foster International Collaborations: Establish partnerships with international organizations, such as the UN and World Bank, to access funding, technical expertise, and best practices for SDG implementation.

2. Reinforce Monitoring and Evaluation: Develop a robust monitoring and evaluation framework to track the implementation of SDG-aligned policies and ensure accountability.