



STELLENBOSCH
STELLENBOSCH • PNIEL • FRANSCHHOEK
MUNISIPALITEIT • UMASIPALA • MUNICIPALITY

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

VOLUNTARY LOCAL REVIEW 2026





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List of Acronyms

Acronym	Description
ART	Antiretroviral Therapy
CBD	Central Business District
CCTV	Closed Circuit Television
CEF	Capital Expenditure Framework
CWDM	Cape Winelands District Municipality
CBD	Central Business District
CoCT	City of Cape Town
CoGTA	Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
CCS	Climate Change Strategy
CSIR	Council for Scientific and Industrial Research
COGTA	Ministry of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs
DMP	Disaster Management Plan
DRR	Disaster risk reduction
D4UC	Dialogues for Urban Change
EA	Environmental Authorisation
FPL	Food Poverty Line
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GDPR	Gross Domestic Product per Region
IDP	Integrated Development Plan
IUDF	Integrated Urban Development Framework
LBPL	Lower – Bound Poverty Line
MERO	Municipal Economic Review and Outlook
MSA	Municipal Systems Act
MSDF	Municipal Spatial Development Framework
MTREF	Medium Term Revenue Expenditure Framework
NDP	National Development Plan
NICRO	National Institute for Crime Prevention and the Reintegration of Offenders
NPC	Non-Profit Company
NPC	National Planning Commission
NUA	New Urban Agenda
NUP	National Urban Plan
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
P2P	Peer to Peer
PDA	Priority development areas
PMU	Project Management Unit
PSHB	Polyphagous Shot Hole Borer
RDP	Regional Development Plans
SCN	Strong Cities Network
SDF	Spatial Development Framework
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SFA	Strategic Focus Areas



Acronym	Description
SFRS	Stellenbosch Fire and Rescue Service
SKEW	Servicestelle Kommunen in der Einen Welt (Service Agency Communities in One World)
SM	Stellenbosch Municipality
SPLUMA	Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act
Stats SA	Statistics South Africa
SUDS	Sustainable Urban Drainage System
UBPL	Upper Bound Poverty Line
UN	United Nations
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UN-HABITAT	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
VLR	Voluntary Local Review



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Stellenbosch Municipality finds itself in a much peculiar situation—for the very first time, this vibrant municipality—solidly established on the map and bolstered by a diverse range of provincial and national institutions—has become actively engaged in the ambitious global Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) project that seeks to address pressing issues worldwide in a multitude of contexts. This significant participation is marked by enthusiastic involvement from various stakeholders across different sectors, combined with a collective voice that is more than ready to share its unique and compelling story with the world at large, showcasing its rich heritage and innovative spirit.

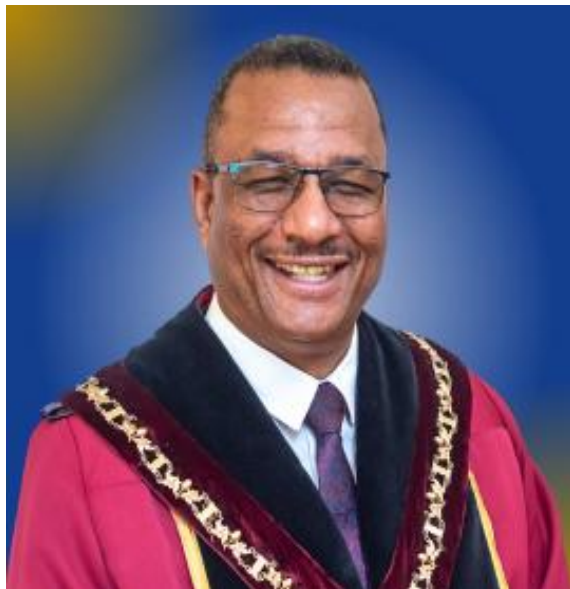
This Voluntary Local Review (VLR) report is undertaken to gather, formulate, and present compelling evidence of progress and challenges in the municipality's firm commitment to sustainability and holistic development efforts. This multifaceted and innovative approach, as reported in this VLR, highlights the critical importance of community input, collaboration, and meaningful engagement, as well as the shared desire among its residents and local leaders to contribute meaningfully to crucial global dialogues that seek to promote sustainable practices and foster a better future for all members of society.

With every initiative and project, such as this VLR report, Stellenbosch Municipality not only reinforces its place on the global stage but also sets a precedent for sustainable development that will hopefully inspire others to emulate.

This is not yet a chronicle of success, but rather a retelling of the municipality's efforts—updates on the past, not yet on what has been fulfilled or achieved. Although the focus here might be primarily on stocktaking, in another sense, the report can also be viewed as a sounding board, collecting not objective data and information but rather part of the stories of the people of the municipality. The basis of much of the discussion is an interactive process of analysis and reflection supported by the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) and related documents, focusing specifically on the SDGs selected by the municipality to report on.



FOREWORD BY THE EXECUTIVE MAYOR



Cllr J Fasser
Executive Mayor

It is my privilege to present this Voluntary Local Review (VLR) of our municipality's progress toward achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This report reflects not only our commitment to global development priorities, but more importantly, how these goals are embedded in the everyday work of delivering services to our residents.

As a municipality, we must remain constantly cognisant of the SDGs. They are not abstract international ideals; they are practical, guiding principles that inform how we plan, budget and serve our communities. From ensuring access to

basic services, to protecting our natural environment, the SDGs are deeply aligned with our strategic objectives and the lived realities of our citizens.

One of our five Strategic Focus Areas (SFAs) is our vision to be a Green and Sustainable Valley. This vision is not aspirational alone - it is actively being realised through a range of impactful initiatives. We continue to explore alternative and renewable sources of energy, while making significant strides in modernising and rehabilitating our waste landfill site. Our commitment to reducing waste to landfill is further strengthened by expanding recycling services across all areas of the municipality.

A particularly noteworthy initiative is the capture and utilisation of methane gas at our landfill site. By converting harmful methane into less harmful carbon dioxide through controlled burning, we are reducing our environmental footprint while harnessing energy in the process. Complementing this is our Material Recovery Facility, established in recent years, where waste is sorted, processed, and packaged into bales for resale into the private sector – turning waste into economic opportunity.

Our commitment to sustainability also extends to the greening of informal settlements and public spaces. We are proud to plant an average of two trees per week across parks, cemeteries, sidewalks, open spaces and nature areas. These efforts contribute not only to environmental resilience but also to the well-being and dignity of our communities.



Furthermore, our municipality stands out as the only category B-Municipality with four nature reserves - an achievement that underscores our dedication to biodiversity conservation and environmental stewardship.

This VLR is both a reflection of progress made and a roadmap for the journey ahead. While we celebrate our achievements, we recognise that the work of building a sustainable, inclusive, and resilient municipality is ongoing. Through continued alignment with the SDGs, collaboration with our communities, and a steadfast commitment to innovation, we will ensure that no one is left behind.

Together, we are shaping a greener, more sustainable future for all.

Cllr Jeremy Fasser
Executive Mayor



OVERVIEW BY THE MUNICIPAL MANAGER



Geraldine Mettler
Municipal Manager

It is with great pride that I present this Voluntary Local Review (VLR), which reflects our administration's ongoing commitment to embedding sustainability, environmental stewardship and resilience into every aspect of municipal governance.

For us as an administration, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are not distant global targets – they are rooted in how we plan, implement and deliver services daily. Whether it is the rollout of basic municipal services, infrastructure development or long-term spatial planning, we are

continuously working to ensure that our actions today safeguard the needs of future generations.

The vision of a Green and Sustainable Valley is not only a strategic priority but also a guiding principle that shapes our operational approach. We are intentional in integrating environmentally responsible practices into our delivery service models—ensuring that sustainability is not an afterthought, but a foundation.

On a personal level, the SDGs resonate strongly with me as a passionate conservationist and environmentalist. This commitment is reflected in the work of our teams, who strive to expand recycling services to more communities each year, reducing the volume of waste sent to the landfill and encouraging a culture of responsible consumption.

Our ongoing tree-planting initiatives are another important contribution, steadily lowering our carbon footprint while enhancing the natural beauty and ecological health of our municipality. At the same time, we recognise that sustainability is also about protecting our most precious resources. Water, in particular, demands our urgent attention, and we are committed to ensuring that pipe leaks and infrastructure faults are addressed as quickly as possible to minimise unnecessary loss.



We are already witnessing the tangible impacts of climate change in our daily operations—from shifting weather patterns to increased pressure on infrastructure and resources. These realities compel us to adapt, innovate and strengthen our resilience as an institution.

This VLR demonstrates that sustainability is not a single project or initiative, but a continuous, collective effort embedded in the way we govern and serve. As an administration, we remain committed to aligning our work with the SDGs, ensuring that our municipality continues to grow in a way that is responsible, inclusive and environmentally conscious.

Geraldine Mettler
Municipal Manager



Chapter 1: Introduction and Overview

1.1 Introduction

The United Nations Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development is a pivotal global initiative that encourages all member states to align their various national strategies with the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets explicitly defined in the UN Resolution 70/1. These goals are crucial for guiding countries toward a more sustainable future. This alignment process includes a strong emphasis on the integration and localisation of these ambitious goals by sub-national and local governments to achieve meaningful long-term sustainable economic, social, and environmental development. The global Agenda 2030 is fundamentally about creating a comprehensive to-do list for humanity aimed at ending poverty, reducing inequality and sustaining the planet, with an additional focus on ensuring that all nations and people are placed at the centre of development initiatives. By doing so, it significantly sets the stage for fostering a similar local development agenda that can effectively meet the unique challenges faced by diverse communities. In alignment with the fundamental objectives outlined in Agenda 2030, Stellenbosch Municipality has proactively participated in the voluntary review project (Musekiwa and Mandiyanike, 2017:138).

Stellenbosch Municipality is acclaimed as a scenic wine-producing town located in the Western Cape Province of South Africa. The town, Stellenbosch, serves as the administrative hub of the municipality that showcases a distinctive combination of urban and rural characteristics, coupled with a picturesque setting enveloped by lush vineyards and majestic mountain ranges (Kaye-Essien and Bidandi, 2025:34).

The local economy of Stellenbosch is notable for being characterised by relatively high-income levels, which contribute to the overall prosperity of the area. In fact, the Stellenbosch region has become an increasingly popular destination owing to four key activities that significantly contribute to its economic landscape: the development of attractive residential estates, the thriving sectors of tourism and agritourism, extensive university-related services, and the production of artisanal food products, which prominently include the brewing of local beers (de Lange and Bricker, 2024:15).

In this context, it is crucial to recognise that to preserve a lasting and expanding legacy, concepts of sustainability must be integrated into the municipality's operations and the development, maintenance, and growth of the municipality. Consequently, sustainability



influences every facet of how the municipality conducts its business (de Lange and Bricker, 2024:16).

Therefore, the size and responsiveness of local government in relation to the needs of citizens significantly position municipalities at the leading edge of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) implementation. The approach known as the voluntary review seeks to harness and enhance the monitoring of local SDG implementation processes to effectively bolster citizen dialogue, promote internal policy coherence, and foster intergovernmental alignment concerning the entire SDG agenda across diverse sectors, various policies, and the multiple planning cycles in place. As such, the Stellenbosch Voluntary Review Initiative emerges as an important exploratory case study that illustrates the localisation of the 2030 Agenda. Consequently, it highlights the specific, pivotal role that a municipal government can fulfil when responding to the challenges presented by these global goals. Through this initiative, municipalities not only address local concerns but also contribute to the global discourse around sustainable development, thereby underscoring their essential function in achieving broader objectives related to sustainability and social equity (Kaye-Essien and Bidandi, 2025:34).

1.2 Socio-economic Context of Stellenbosch Municipality

Stellenbosch Municipality is located at the edge of the City of Cape Town, but still manages to retain its distinct small-town character. This undoubtedly gives Stellenbosch a strong competitive advantage – sharply contrasting with similarly sized towns located 400 km or more from the nearest metropolis. Aside from being a mere 50 km from Cape Town’s central business district (CBD) and being flanked by the N1 and N2 main routes, Stellenbosch is also just 30 km away from the sea (at Somerset West / Strand) and only a few kilometres away from one of the most attractive mountain ranges of the Boland. In addition, Stellenbosch is a mere 28 km from Cape Town International Airport, one of South Africa’s top (air) links to the global economy, and not much further away from Cape Town Harbour, the shipping portal to both the Atlantic and Indian Oceans (Stellenbosch Municipality, 2026:24).

This convergence of environmental resources, scenic quality and business opportunities has two other mutually reinforcing spin-offs: The largest number of JSE-listed companies based in any small South African town have their headquarters in Stellenbosch, and the town is home to a disproportionately high number of corporate CEOs and executives, which in turn means that it can sustain a comparatively high level of economic activity and



consumer services for a town of its size. This results in other benefits throughout the value-added chain and for employment. The municipal area covers approximately 900 km². The municipality's area of jurisdiction includes the towns of Stellenbosch and Franschhoek, as well as several rural hamlets such as Wemmershoek, La Motte, De Novo, Kylemore, Pniël, Johannesburg, Lanquedoc, Groot Drakenstein, Muldersvlei, Klapmuts, Elsenburg, Raithby, Jamestown, Koelenhof and Vlottenburg (most with a population of less than 5 000). Apart from formal settlement areas, the municipal area also includes several informal settlements. Franschhoek, known as the “French Corner”, is celebrated for its exceptional culinary scene, offering a delectable fusion of French and South African flavours. It is a favourite among local and international tourists. Due to recent developments, Klapmuts is considered a regional growth node thanks to its regional connectivity (Stellenbosch Municipality, 2026:24).

Stellenbosch is the second oldest town in South Africa, dating back to 1679 when an island in the Eerste River was named Stellenbosch by the then Governor of the Cape, Simon van der Stel. The first farming activities in the area were started in 1679. Today, the area has become primarily known for its extraordinary wines and fruits. The towns of Stellenbosch and Franschhoek are renowned for various architectural styles such as Dutch, Georgian, and Victorian, which reflect their heritage and traditions, but also divisions of the past (Stellenbosch Municipality, 2026:24).

The area houses excellent educational institutions, including the University of Stellenbosch and several prestigious schools. It has a strong business sector, ranging from major South African businesses and corporations to smaller enterprises and home industries. The tourism industry alone is responsible for the creation of about 18 000 jobs in the area. Wine farms and cellars abound, and the area is the home of the very first wine route in South Africa. A variety of sports facilities are available. Coetzenburg, with its athletics and rugby stadiums, has delivered star performances over many generations. The municipal area has a variety of theatres, which include Stellenbosch University's HB Thom Theatre, Oude Libertas Amphitheatre (renowned for its summer season of music, theatre, and dance), and Spier Amphitheatre, as well as Klein Libertas Theatre, Dorp Street Theatre, and Aan de Braak Theatre (Stellenbosch Municipality, 2026:24).



1.3 Ward Demarcation

The Stellenbosch Municipality is currently structured into the following **23** wards:

Table 1: Municipal ward demarcation

Ward	Areas
1	Mooiwater, Franschhoek Town and Surrounding Farms
2	Langrug, La Motte, Dennegeur, Groendal
3	Lanquedoc, Wemmershoek to La Motte Wine Farm and Leopards Leap Wine Farm
4	Kylemore, Johannesdal, Pniël and Surrounding Farms
5	Ida's Valley (Hillside Village, La Gratitude Park (Kreefgat), The Ridge, La Roche, Lindida, Bloekomlaan(Moses / Martin) Lindley)
6	On the corner of Moffat Street to the end of Lelie Street, the Corner of Moffat Street to Rustenburg Road, Desch Street to Rustenburg Road, Moffat Street, Hahn Street, Weber Street, Tindell Street, Juffernbruch Street, Kahler Street, Luckhoff Street, Erasmussmith Street, Baker Street, Desch Street, Lelie Street, Protea Street to Erasmusmith Street, Botmanskop Way, Dahlia Street, Speler Street, Rustenburg road of the corner of Helshoogte Road to Lelie Street; Glenelly Estate in Lelie Street; Helderfontein in Helshoogte Road; Nietvoorbij on R44; Blue Jay / Timberlea Trust Farm on R44; Kloofbosch on R44; Babin Farm on R44; Morgenhoff Wine Estate on R44; Remhoogte on R44; Groenhof on R44; Muratie Wine Estate on R44; Delheim Wine Estate on R44; Kanonkop on R44; Uitkyk on R44; Warrick on R44; Lievland on R44
7	Mostertsdrift, Karindal, Rozendal, Uniepark, Simonswyk and Universiteitsoord
8	Stellenbosch University campus and university residence area; Coetzenburg, (partially:) Koloniesland
9	Stellenbosch CBD, Part of the US campus (residential areas within both these areas), the Southern border is the Eerste River, the Northern border is Merriman Street, the Eastern border is Die Laan, and the Western border is Bird Street
10	Tenantville, Lakay Street, Titus Street, Langsuid Street up to Lakay Street, Tennant Street, Lapan Street, Bell Street, Bird Street, La Colline (Dr Malan Street, Dan Pienaar Street, Paul Roos Street, Tobruk Park, Irene Park, La Colline Road, Conde Street, Taylor Street, Mount Albert Street), Kromrivier Road, Jan Celliers Street, Hammanshand, Ds Botha Street, Voorplein Street, Bird Street, Langenhoven Street, Du Toit Station, Ryneveld Street, Karee Street, Olienhout Street, Banghoek Road, Academia, Bosman Street, Smuts Road, Joubert Street, De Beer Road, De Villiers Road from Ryneveld Street to Cluver Road on the left-hand side
11	Boundaries of the ward are: Kridge Road, Herte Street, Skone Uitsig Road onto Alexander Street, onto Du Toit Street, toward Merriman Avenue, towards Adam Tas Road onto George Blake Street, Mark Street, Distillery Road, Santhagen Road, Swawel Avenue, Kanarie Road, Tarentaal Road, Bokmakierie Road, Fisant Road, Devon Valley Road, Kiewiet Road, Dagbreek Road, Pelikaan Street, Patrys Road, Hammerkop Road, Loerie Road, Muldersvlei Landgoed, and all areas in Onder Papegaaiberg and businesses
12	Kayamandi: Zone A George Blake Street, Chris Hani Drive, 10th and 13th Street, School Crescent, Snake Valley, Enkanini, Watergang, Watergang TRA 2 and Watergang Informal Settlements
13	Kayamandi: Zone A Masithandane Street, Zone J, Red Bricks, Zone K and L, Hostels, Dairy and University Hostels, Old Bricks Houses, Red Roofs, Zwelitsha, Costaland
14	Kayamandi: Zone P, I, F, D and O, Costaland, Marikana, Watergang TRA 1, Smarties (Mgabadeli Street), Monde Crescent
15	Kayamandi: Zone M, N, O, 4 th and 5 th Avenue, 10 th , 12 th and 14 th Street, Long Street, Retreat Street, Forest Drive
16	The borders are Tenant Road, Long Street, Crombi Road to the end of Gabriels Road. Asalea Road, 2 nd Road, Noble Road, Bailey Road, Eike Street, Curry Street, Hoop Road, Pansy Road, West Road, Laai Road, Anthony Road, Carriem Road, Archilles Road, Bergstedt Road, Davidse Road, Cupido Road, Pearce Road, Robyn Road, Gonzalves Road, Hercules Road, Chippendale Road, Afrika Road, Arnolds Road, September Road, Jakaranda Street, Short Road, Quarry Road, Middle Road, Primrose Street, Pine (Bo en Onder), North End, Vredelust, Gemsbok, Daffodil Single, Steps, Sylvia Street, Eiland Street, Last Street (White City), Frikkadel Dorp, September Street
17	A part of Cloetesville (Lakay Road towards Langstraat –



Ward	Areas
	Suid Road, Kloof Street, Fir Street, Fontein Road, Williams R towards Gabriels Road towards February Road, Valentyn Road, Pool Road, Raziet Road, Ortell Road, Rhode Road, King Road, Hine Road, Hendrikse Road, Rhode Road), as well as Welgevonden, Green Oaks, Stellita Park, Weltevrede, Welgevonden Estate (Red Oak Road, Belladonna Street, Wildeklaar Welgevonden Boulevard, Olive Road, Sonnedou Road, Mountain Silver Road, Silver Oak Road, Froetang Road, Katbos Road, Everlasting, Fynbos Street, Sourfig Street, Scarlet Crescent, Pin Oak Street, Evergreen, Autumn Close, Nenta, Cherrywood, Candelabra, Froetang, Candelabra, Kouter, Protea Street, Minaret, Gooseberry, Honeybush), Klein Welgevonden (La Belle Vie, Chablis) and the Municipal Flats in Rhode, Kloof and Long Streets, Bertha Wines and Weltevreden Estate, 15 Weltevreden Estate,) The borders of the ward are the R44 Klapmuts Road and Long Street.
18	Klapmuts Town Centre, Bennitsville, Weltevrede Park, Klapmuts New Houses, Mandela City and La Rochelle Informal Settlement, Klapmuts Farms (The Purple Windmill, Arra Vineyards, Hidden Gems Wines, Gravel Junction Wine and Spirits Company, Wine Estate Le Bonheur, Anura Vinyard, Dalewood Farms, Blueberry Bar, Klapmuts Transfer Station, Trophy SA, DKL Transport Pty, Welgelee Estate)
19	De Novo, Kromme Rhee, Vaaldraai, Muldersvlei, Koelenhof and surrounding farms, Koelenhof Station, Slaley, Hunting, Koelenhof Farms, Poulter / Mariendahl, De Hoop, Nooitgedacht Village, Bottelary and Surrounding Farms, De Waalshof, Weltevrede 1, Weltevrede 2, Smartie Town.
20	Vlottenberg, Raithby, Mooiberge, Lynedoch
21	Brandwacht Aan Rivier, Paradyskloof, Stellenbosch Golf Course, Blaauwklippen / Stellenzicht Farms, De Zalze, Jamestown, Mountainview, Stellenbosch Airfield
22	Die Boord, Dalsig, Brandwacht, Krigeville, Libertas Farm
23	Dorp Street, Krige, Hamman Street, Schroder Road, Die Braak, Bird Street from Dorp Street, Dennesig area, Muller Road, Banghoek Road, Ryneveld Street, Plankenburg Industrial area and Kayamandi Corridor.

Source: Stellenbosch Municipality, 2026:25



Below is a map of the Cape Winelands District concerning the provincial district boundaries:

Map 1: Locality of Cape Winelands concerning Provincial Boundaries

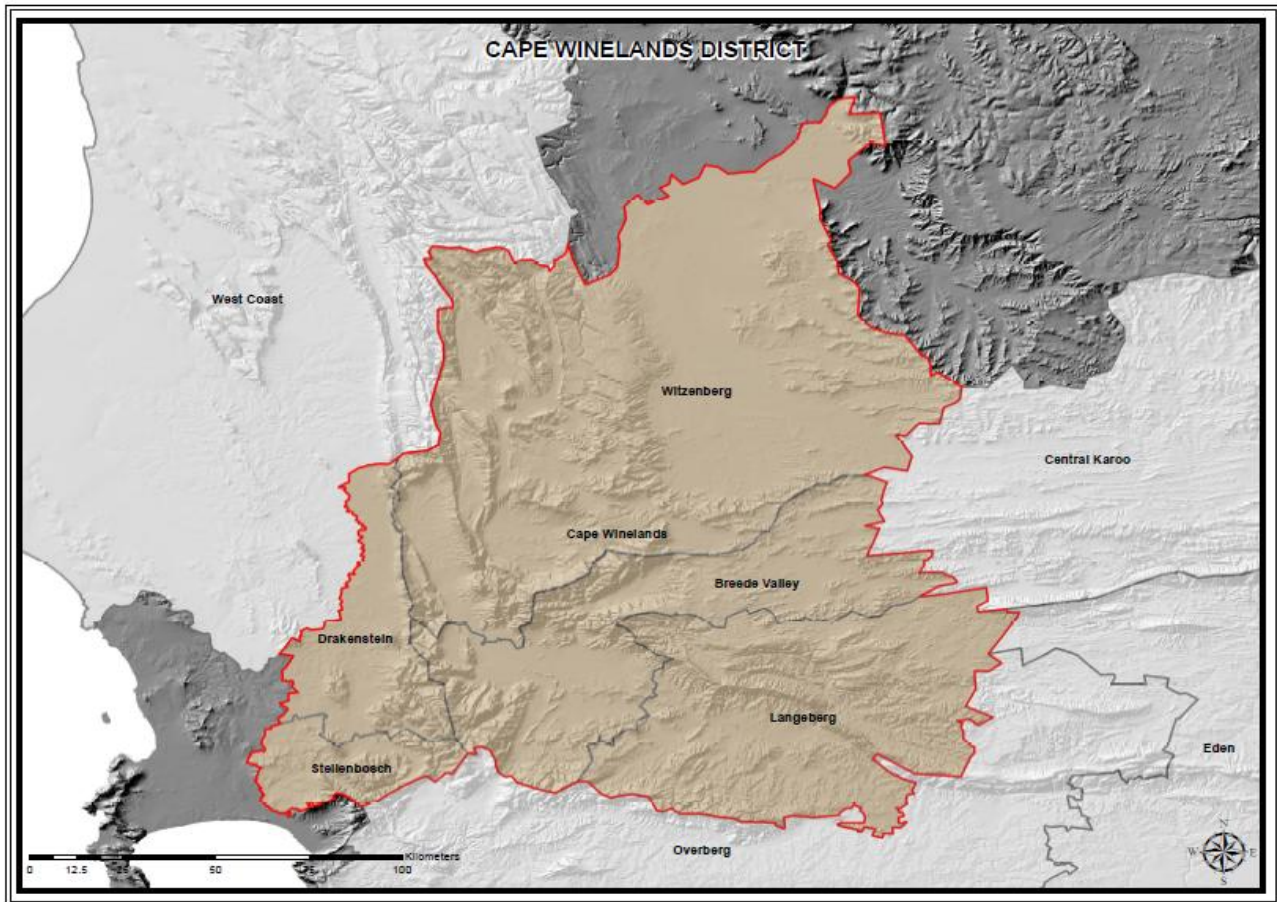


The Western Cape Province makes up 10.6% of the country's land surface and encompasses an area of 129 462 km². The province's spatial area includes 1 metropolitan area (City of Cape Town), 5 district municipal areas (Central Karoo, Eden renamed Garden Route, Overberg, Cape Winelands, and West Coast), and 24 local municipalities (Stellenbosch Municipality, 2026:27).



Below is a map of the municipalities in the Cape Winelands District:

Map 2: Locality map of Stellenbosch Municipality concerning Cape Winelands District Boundaries

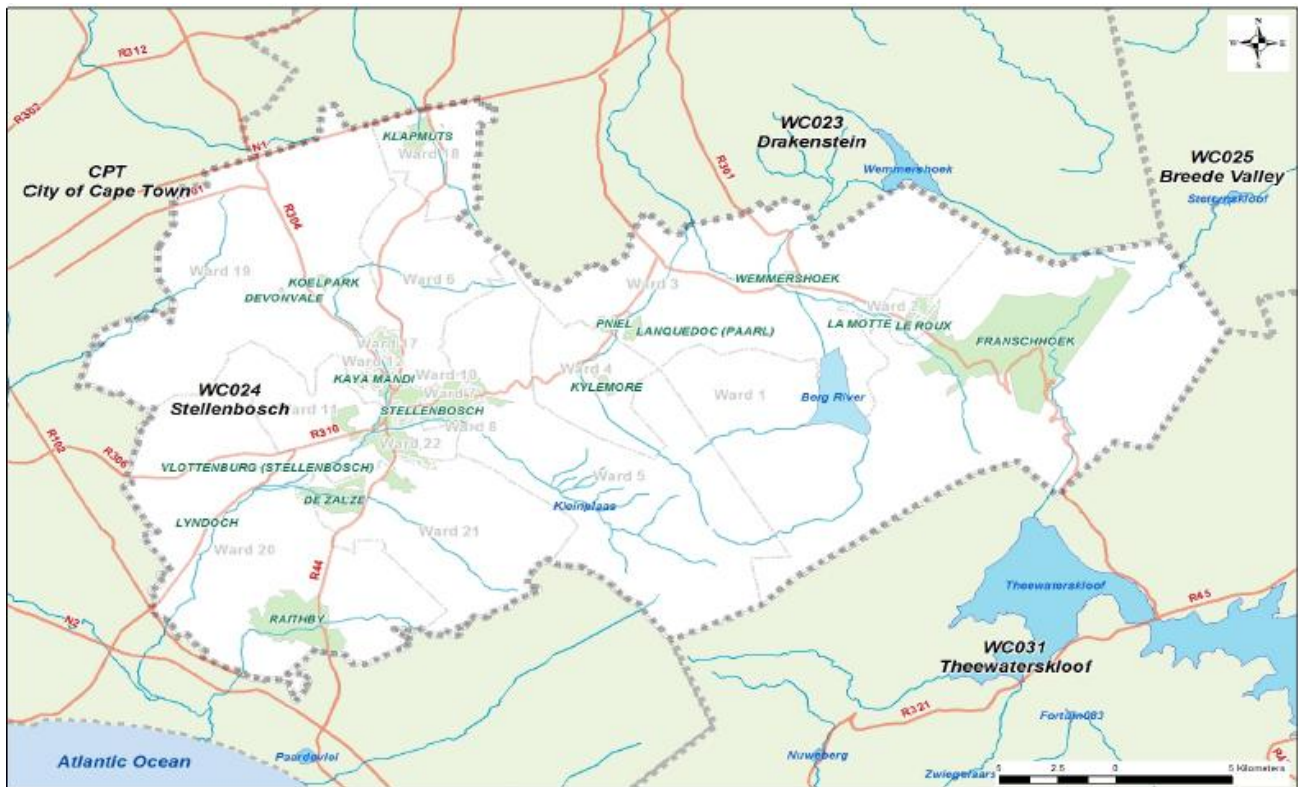


The Cape Winelands District Municipality is located within proximity of the City of Cape Town, which offers excellent access to trade opportunities, routes, and infrastructure such as expanding broadband networks, an international airport (with direct flights to international cities), the second-largest container port in the country, and a comprehensive road and rail network. This makes the Cape Winelands district ideally located as an investment destination. The Cape Winelands District municipal area incorporates Drakenstein, Stellenbosch, Breede Valley, Langeberg, and Witzenberg (Stellenbosch Municipality, 2026:27).



Below is a map of the Stellenbosch Municipality's area of jurisdiction:

Map 3: Locality map of municipal boundaries



Stellenbosch Local Municipality is located in the heart of the Cape Winelands and adjacent to the City of Cape Town and Drakenstein Municipality. Stellenbosch Municipality, as a local authority, governs the towns of Stellenbosch, Pniël, Klapmuts, Kylemore, Jamestown, Raithby, Ida's Valley, Cloetesville, Kayamandi, and Vlootenburg, as well as the surrounding rural areas. The area covers 831 square kilometres and adjoins the City of Cape Town (CoCT) to the west and south and the Breede Valley, Drakenstein, and Theewaterskloof municipalities to the east and north. Functionally, Stellenbosch Municipality (SM) forms part of the Greater Cape Town metropolitan area (Stellenbosch Municipality, 2026:28).

The main settlements in SM are the historic towns of Stellenbosch, Franschhoek, and Klapmuts. There are also several smaller villages, including Jamestown (contiguous with Stellenbosch town), Pniël, Johannesdal, Lanquedoc, Lynedoch, and Raithby. New nodes are emerging around agricultural service centres, for example, Koelenhof and Vlootenburg. Stellenbosch is a sought-after space, offering opportunity and quality of living while being near city life. This has placed the municipal area under constant development pressure (Stellenbosch Municipality, 2026:28).



1.4 Stellenbosch Municipality at a Glance

Table 2: Stellenbosch Municipality - Summarised Statistics

Population Estimates, 2025				Actual households, 2025						
	Population		210 962		Households		58 912			
	(Source: MYPE)									
Education, 2025				Poverty, 2025						
	Learner Retention Rate	7.6%		Gini-Coefficient	0.59					
	Learner-Teacher Ratio	26.7		Poverty Head Count Ratio (UBPL)	71.4%					
Health, 2025										
	Primary Health Care Facilities	8 (excl. mobile / satellite)	Immunisation Rate	58.4%	Maternal Mortality Ratio (per 100 000 live births)	58.0%	Teenage Pregnancies – Delivery rate to women U/19	12.7%		
Safety and Security				The annual number of reported cases in 2024/25						
	Residential Burglaries	996	DUI	251	Drug-related Crimes	1464	Murder	79	Sexual Offences	254
Access to Basic Service Delivery 2024/25				Percentage of households with access to basic services, 2024/25						
Water 98.5%		Refuse removal 87.4%		Electricity 97.1%		Sanitation 96.7%		Formal Housing 72.4%		
										
Labour, 2024				Socio-economic Risks						
Unemployment Rate (narrow definition) 13.8%				Risk 1 Job Losses						
				Risk 2 Low Learner retention						
				Risk 3 Low skills base (Labour)						
Largest 3 sectors				Contribution to GDP, 2023						
Finance, insurance, real estate and business services		Wholesale and retail trade, catering and accommodation		Manufacturing						
29.2%		15.8%		15.7%						
										

Source: Western Cape Government, MERO 2025:282 – 304)



1.5 Socio – Economic Context

All socio-economic information is sourced from the Local Government 2025 – 2026 Municipal Economic Review and Outlook (MERO). The report provides a snapshot of the safety and well-being of our communities, and economic growth. The statistical data are primarily sourced from Statistics South Africa, administrative data from sector departments, the Municipal Review and Outlook (MERO), Global Insight Regional Explorer, and Quantec (Western Cape Government, 2025:283).

Population growth and socioeconomic data are essential for effective municipal planning and the equitable distribution of public services. Population size, household growth, age structure and migration patterns all have a direct impact on the demand for infrastructure, housing, education, healthcare and social services. In rapidly expanding economic hubs such as the Stellenbosch municipal area, monitoring these trends enables policymakers to better anticipate future service demands, allocate resources efficiently, and design targeted interventions that enhance social well-being while also strengthening economic resilience (Western Cape Government, 2025:283).

The GDP performance, risk, and vulnerability factors can be read in detail within the Local Government MERO 2025 for the Stellenbosch municipal area (Western Cape Government, 2025:283).

1.5.1 Population Growth

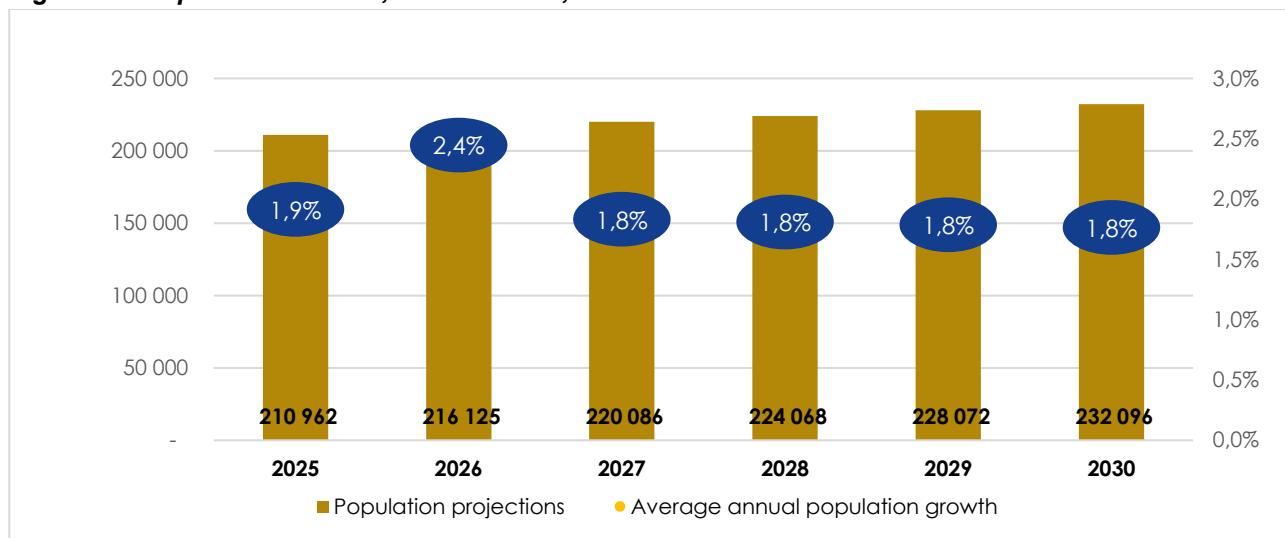
In 2025, the Stellenbosch municipal area was home to **210 962** individuals, reflecting an annual growth rate of **1.9 per cent** during 2025. This significant increase illustrates Stellenbosch's appeal, particularly due to migration with the educational institutions and vibrant community atmosphere. This growth necessitates strategic planning for infrastructure and local services to support the needs of a larger population (Western Cape Government, 2025:281).

The household growth reflects the demographic expansion within Stellenbosch. In terms of households, Stellenbosch exhibits an annual growth from 57 520 in 2024 to **58 912 in 2025**, with an annual growth rate of approximately **3.6 persons**. This increase highlights a growing demand for municipal services and housing that aligns with the growing population. Addressing this growth in households will require proactive planning and resource allocation for maintaining service quality and community engagement (Western Cape Government, 2025:281).



The figure below depicts the estimated population growth from 2025 to 2030:

Figure 1: Population Growth, Stellenbosch, 2025 – 2030



Source: Western Cape Government, MERO, 2025:281)

1.5.2 Racial Split

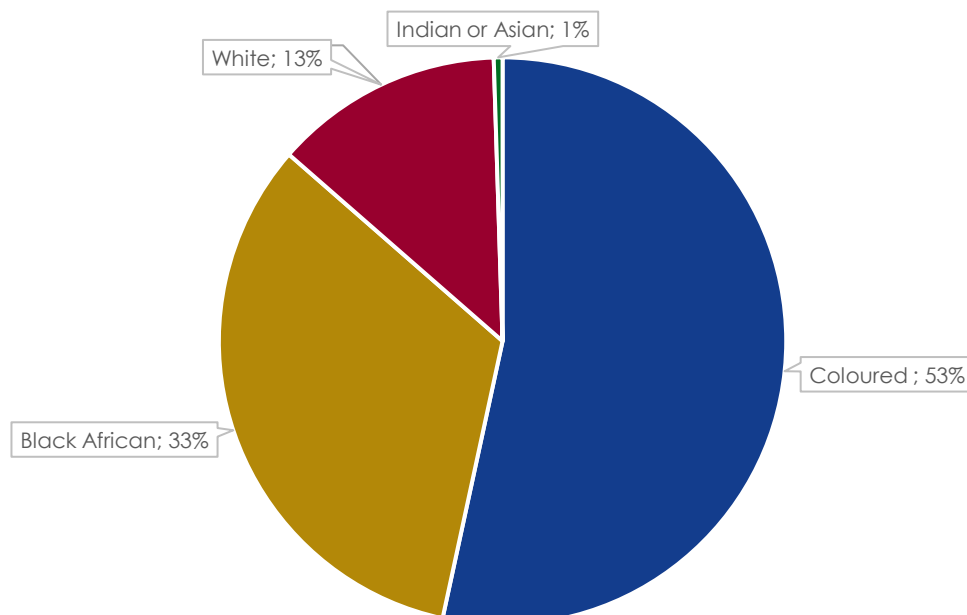
The race dynamics in the Stellenbosch municipal area present a diverse demographic landscape. Much of the population comprises Black African individuals, accounting for 33.1 per cent of the total, followed closely by the Coloured community, constituting 53.5 per cent. White residents make up 13.1 per cent of the population, while individuals categorised as Indian / Asian represent a smaller proportion at 0.5 per cent (Western Cape Government, 2025:283).

This cross-analysis highlights the intricate racial composition within the Stellenbosch community, underscoring the significance of cultural diversity and its potential impact on economic and social interactions (Western Cape Government, 2025:283).



The figure below indicates the ratio split within the Stellenbosch Municipality:

Figure 2: Racial Split for the Stellenbosch Municipal area



Source: Western Cape Government, MERO 2025 (Quantec, 2025)

1.5.3 Gender Ratio

The 2025 population pyramid of the Stellenbosch municipal area indicates a noticeable gender imbalance within the 202-24 and 25- 29 age cohorts, with 12 372 males compared to 12 422 females in the 20-24 age group. This pattern reflects the underlying demographic and socio – economic dynamics of the area. The gender imbalances could be a nexus of labour migration patterns, the substantial student population (which often influences age–specific demographic distribution) and potential out–migration of males seeking employment opportunities elsewhere. These factors contribute toward shaping the structure of the local labour force and demographic profile of the Stellenbosch municipal area (Western Cape Government, 2025:282).

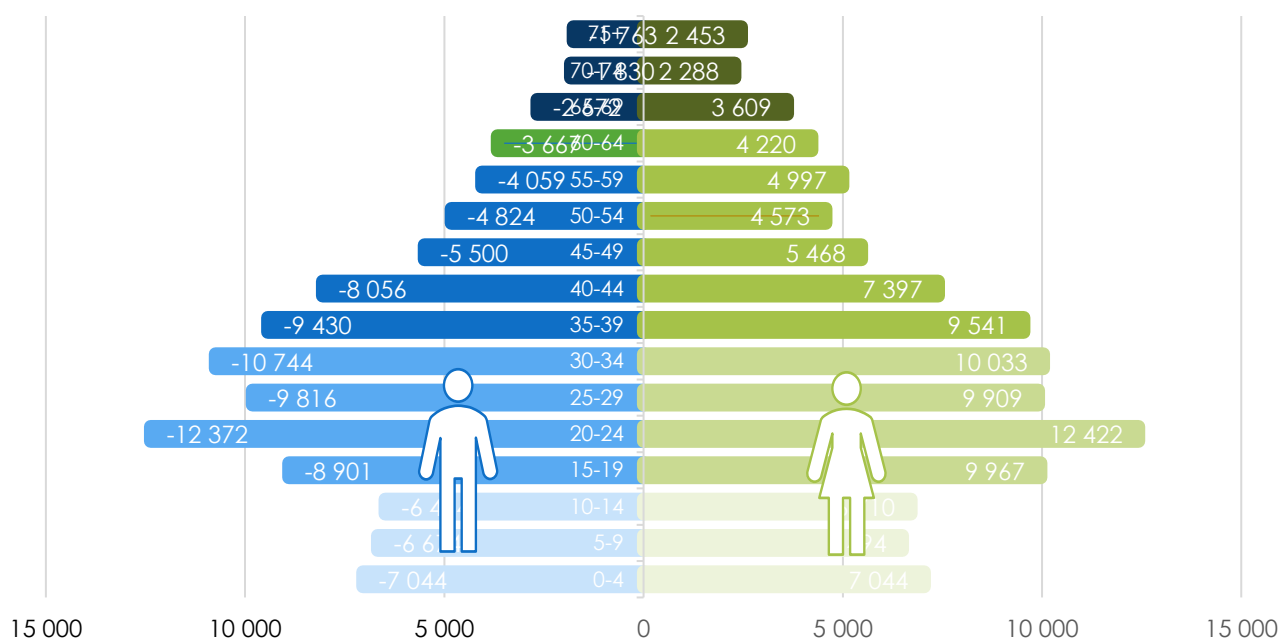
This demographic imbalance may contribute to a growing dependency burden. The relatively large base of children (0 to 14 years) and the rapidly expanding elderly population (especially females aged 60 and above) will place increasing pressure on a potentially constrained work – age population to sustain public expenditure on social services, healthcare and pensions. In addition, it will in the future strain public resources and shift



housing demands and settlement patterns. To sustain economic growth and social stability, policy responses will need to focus on strategies that retain young male professionals or facilitate adaptation to a workforce with a higher female participation rate (Western Cape Government, 2025:282).

The table below depicts the gender ratio within the Stellenbosch municipal area.

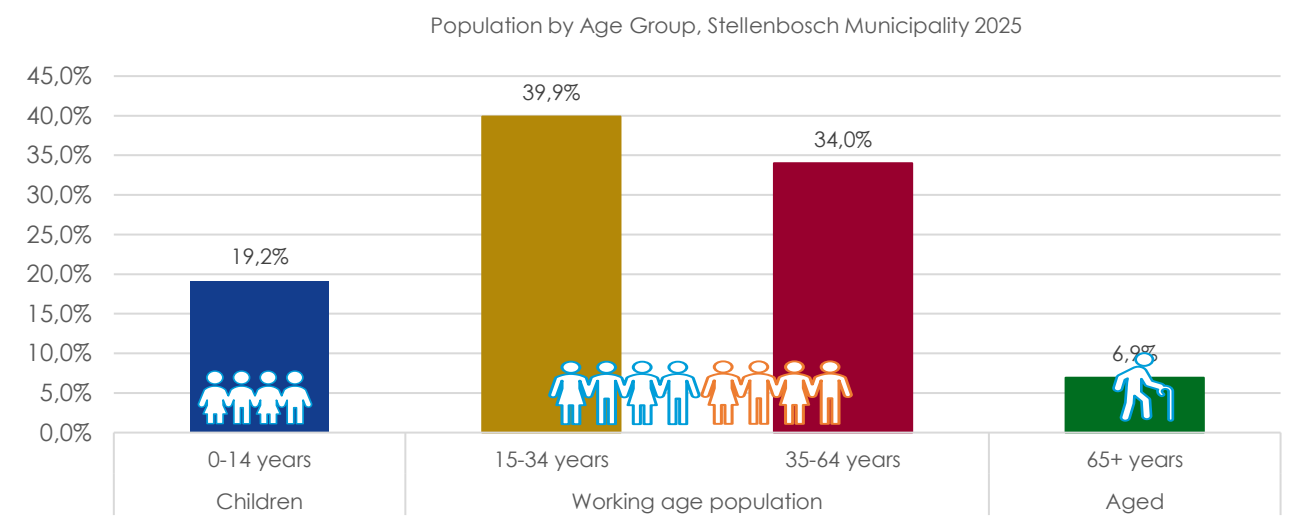
Figure 3: Ratio of % females and males



Source: Western Cape Government, MERO, 2025:282)

1.5.4 Age Cohorts

The age distribution of the Stellenbosch population has significant socioeconomic implications, particularly for future housing and service delivery. With a substantial **39.9 per cent** of the population **aged 15 to 34**, the Municipality is under pressure to facilitate job creation and supply affordable housing for young working-age persons. This demographic projection, combined with a sizeable child population (19.2 per cent), indicates continued high demand for basic services and infrastructure, placing a strain on municipal resources. The relatively small population of elderly residents (6.9 per cent) suggests a lower immediate burden on care systems for the aged. In addition, the overall youth-heavy structure points to sustained, long-term demand for indigent support as these young adults form households in a challenging economic environment (Western Cape Government, 2025:283).

**Figure 4: Population by age group, Stellenbosch Municipality**

Source: Western Cape Government, MERO 2025 and Department of Social Development, Western Cape Provincial Population Unit (PPU), 2025:282

1.5.5 Safety and Security

All the data below are sourced from the Local Government MERO 2025 for the Stellenbosch Municipal area.

The 2024 crime statistics indicate that the Stellenbosch municipal area is facing a deeply dualistic socio-economic crisis, in which the crime profile is both a cause and a consequence of deep – seated structural inequalities (Western Cape Government, 2025:303).

The statistics in the table below reflect that Stellenbosch's rate of crime per 100 000 population far surpasses CWD averages in almost every category of crime. Significant disparities are seen in the incidence of driving under the influence (DUI) and the prevalence of commercial crime. The 61.0 per cent rate of DUI recorded in Stellenbosch in 2024 signals a public safety risk and deeper substance abuse issues. The persistence of these trends in 2024 indicates that current approaches to curbing DUI are merely containing, not resolving, the underlying matters (Western Cape Government, 2025:303).

**Table 3: Number of cases per crime category, crime per 100 000 people, 2022 - 2024**

Crime Category	Actual Numbers			Trend	Crime per 100 000 Population	
	2022	2023	2024		Stellenbosch	Cape Winelands District
Murder	90	80	79	↔	38	43
Sexual Offences (also see SDS)	248	209	254	↑	123	103
Common assault	1 041	1 119	1 116	↔	539	634
Malicious damage to property	818	839	806	↓	389	416
Burglary at residential premises	941	877	996	↑	481	471
Commercial crime	876	1 064	1 229	↑	594	268
Drug-related crime	1 233	1 474	1 464	↓	707	735
Driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs	264	254	251	↔	121	75

Source: Western Cape Government, MERO 2025:303)

1.5.6 Economy and Labour Market Performance

1.5.6.1 Sectoral Overview

In 2024, the economic landscape of the Stellenbosch municipal area boasted a Gross Domestic Product at the regional level (GDPR) of R25.2 billion, equivalent to 24.0 per cent of the CWDM and 2.7 per cent of the Western Cape economy. Economic activity in 2024 was broadly stagnant, with GDPR growth of only 0.1 per cent and total employment declining by 1.3 per cent to 77 504 jobs. Labour market indicators weakened correspondingly: the unemployment rate rose to 13.8 per cent in 2024, while the labour-force participation rate fell to 66.2 per cent and the labour-absorption rate to 57.0 per cent (Western Cape Government, 2025:109).

Employment is predominantly focused on Stellenbosch town, which accounts for the majority of formal jobs dominated by higher education, financial and business services, retail activities associated with Stellenbosch University, commercial offices, and tourism. The Franschhoek town is a secondary employment node, with its main sectors in hospitality, accommodation, and restaurants, while Lanquedoc is defined by agri – processing and support activities for crop production. Elsenburg, by contrast, drives public sector and agricultural research employment through Provincial and academic institutions. This geographic distribution shows a dual economy, one being an urban, service-driven core



centred in Stellenbosch town, and a productive agricultural periphery extending through the valley settlements and wine estates (Western Cape Government, 2025:109).

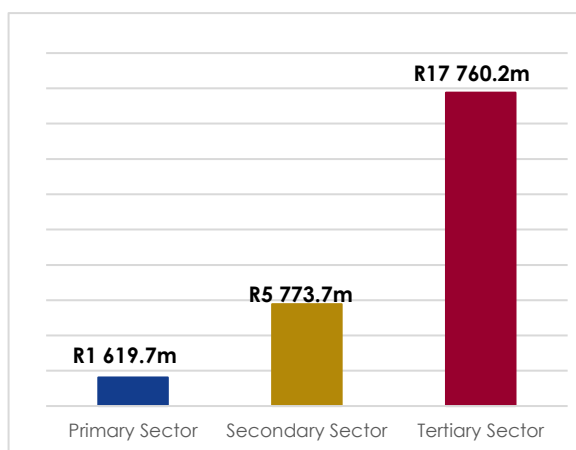
The municipality's economy thrives on a dominant tertiary sector, led by finance, trade and personal services. The finance and business sector provided the only positive growth momentum in 2024, contributing 0.8 per cent points to the overall GDP (Western Cape Government, 2025:109).

Table 4: Sectoral contribution to GDP 2024

Primary Sector	
Sector	2024
Agriculture	R1 584.5m
Mining	R35.2m
Total	R1 619.7m

Secondary Sector	
Sector	2024
Manufacturing	R4 496.0m
Electricity	R407.8m
Construction	R869.9m
Total	R5 773.7m

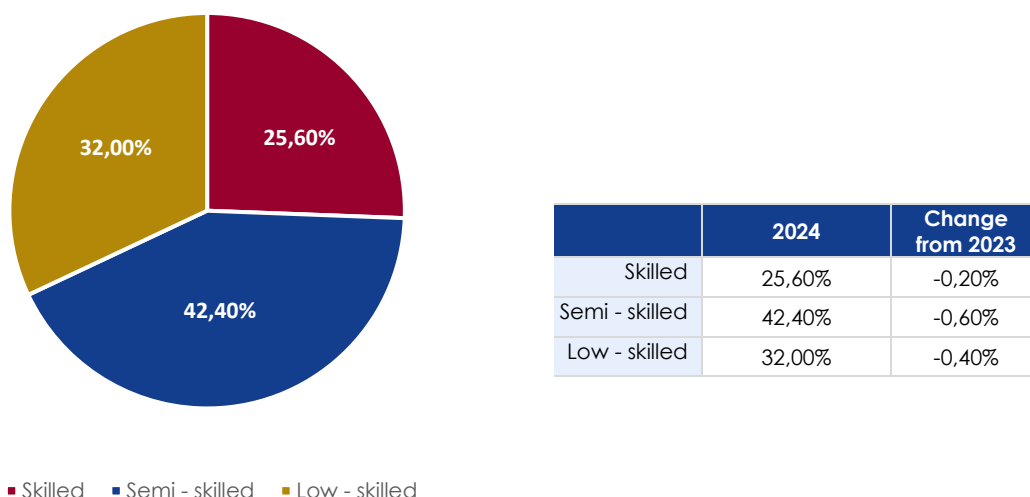
Tertiary Sector	
Sector	2024
Trade	R2 541.3m
Transport	R4 425.3m
Finance	R6 541.9m
General Government	R1 385.1m
Personal Services	R2 866.6m
Total	R17 760.2m



Source: Western Cape Government, MERO 2025 (Quantec, 2025)

1.5.6.2 Formal and Informal Employment

The presence of Stellenbosch University and the diverse industries in the area have led to a significant workforce composition, with 25.6 per cent classified as skilled workers and 42.4 per cent as semi-skilled workers. Informal sector activities, particularly in trade, agriculture, and personal services, contribute significantly to employment, accounting for 23.1 per cent of the workforce in 2024. However, a notable challenge exists for low-skilled workers, constituting 32.0 per cent of the workforce, as recent job creation trends have favoured semi-skilled and skilled workers, limiting opportunities for this demographic (Western Cape Government, 2025:113).

**Figure 5: Skills Level Contribution, 2024**

Source: Western Cape Government, MERO 2025:113

1.5.6.3 Job Gains and Unemployment

It is crucial to facilitate access to education and skills development initiatives in communities where high unemployment rates occur. Social transformation needs to be promoted and provide enough relevant opportunities and resources for the affected demographic areas (Western Cape Government, 2025:117).

Not only does this initiative enhance the socio-economic landscape, but it also has implications for municipal revenue. A skilled and educated workforce can contribute to a more vibrant local economy, generating higher tax revenues to support municipal projects and services (Western Cape Government, 2025:117).

An analysis of the formal sector indicates that, although there was a net gain of 3 293 formal jobs, this was overshadowed by losses elsewhere. The most notable increases in informal employment occurred in management consultancy (1 693 jobs) and short-term accommodation (358 jobs). However, these gains were countered by significant job losses in sectors such as other telecommunications activities (617 jobs), private security activities (322 jobs), and notably the manufacture of wines (221 jobs), the latter reflecting the broader downturn experienced in the agriculture sector (Western Cape Government, 2025:117).



Chapter 2: SDG Governance in Stellenbosch Municipality

2.1 Introduction

The attainment of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) necessitates effective governance frameworks that incorporate the SDGs into municipal governmental operations. Consequently, the subsequent key themes have been identified as a conceptual framework for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in Stellenbosch Municipality: governance, integration, coherence, accountability, and multi-level alignment. The SDGs do not encompass all institutional obligations of municipalities; rather, they align with the principal performance domains of municipal governance.

Governance encompasses the institutional frameworks and procedures by which individuals and groups express their interests, resolve their conflicts, and fulfil their legal rights and responsibilities. Integration denotes the coordination of activities across sectors and the formulation of comprehensive policies that acknowledge the interrelation of economic, social, environmental, and governance matters. The phrase coherence denotes the necessity for both vertical and horizontal alignment. Vertical alignment guarantees that policies and strategies are congruent with national and global obligations, whereas horizontal alignment pertains to the consistency among diverse strategies formulated to fulfil specific commitments, including those associated with climate change, national development, and sustainable development.

Accountability is the execution of duties and obligations mandated by law, regulations, or programmes, together with the enforcement of commitments undertaken. Given that different organisations function at distinct levels and possess differing mandates, it is imperative to establish systems to guarantee their accountability for respective responsibilities and actions. This element is closely associated with transparency, defined as the accessibility of information regarding plans, procedures, decisions, and outcomes. Multi-level alignment recognises that national governments cannot attain the SDGs independently, especially in federal or decentralised systems. Sub-national governments, community-based organisations, and the commercial sector are essential actors in promoting sustainability at the local level. Various tiers of government participate in planning, service provision, and funding. In multi-tiered systems, coordination and cooperation among government levels and other stakeholders are essential for formulating cohesive responses to the SDGs and addressing interconnected challenges.



2.2 SDG Governance

2.2.1 Interdepartmental Coordination Mechanisms

Stellenbosch Municipality has achieved notable progress in establishing effective interdepartmental coordination mechanisms, which are essential for improving the integration of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into its carefully designed municipal governance frameworks. This meticulously organised governance and institutional system is intentionally crafted to include elected political leaders, the Municipal Manager, and two SDG champions, who are supported by SDG team leaders responsible for data management and report writing. This team collaborates effectively with the five directorates to finalise the VLR report for the six selected SDGs.

The alignment of each official's portfolio is carefully determined to correspond well with the selected SDGs, which act as a crucial framework for advancement and cohesion. This alignment fosters a unified operational plan that highlights the municipality's forward-looking vision for sustainable development, ensuring that all activities are coordinated towards reaching common goals. This strategic alignment not only directs fundamental municipal operations but also shapes vital budgetary priorities and creative service delivery methods that effectuate substantial change. This thorough method guarantees that resources are distributed with maximum efficiency and accountability, surpassing mere compliance and promoting true community improvement. Furthermore, the municipality's Strategic Focus Areas (SFAs) act as essential focal points, consistently targeted by the planning processes employed by each Directorate, thereby fostering a cohesive and synergistic approach in their joint efforts to achieve the municipality's overarching goals. Stellenbosch Municipality reaffirms its steadfast commitment to advancing essential developmental agendas while ensuring the efficient delivery of essential services to its community members, thereby enhancing their quality of life and contributing to a sustainable future for all.

2.2.2 Stakeholder Engagement and Partnerships

According to Agusdinata (2022:1604), the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development commences with informed and explicitly defined priorities crucial for attaining its goals. These priorities necessitate localised implementation strategies aimed at fostering effective local, provincial, and national development. This pressing requirement is distinctly evident in the diverse local, district, provincial, and national plans established to achieve these ambitious global objectives, including initiatives for poverty alleviation, environmental sustainability, and social fairness.



Local government plays a crucial and essential part in this process, as it represents the closest level of governance to the communities and individuals it serves every day. Local government, positioned at the forefront of this project, serves as the primary vocal point for Agenda 2030, promising that the programmes are accessible and attuned to community needs. The Stellenbosch Municipality, committed to realising the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) specified in the 2030 Agenda, is undertaking significant measures to establish the first Stakeholder Engagement Platform dedicated as an interactive initiative to co-plan and co-implement matters relating to the SDGs selected by the municipality.

Therefore, a stakeholder engagement was arranged on 25 February 2026, where all spheres of government, businesses, NGOs, and any interested and affected parties were invited to share data, projects, initiatives, and programmes with the municipality. This engagement highlighted stakeholders' desire to work with the municipality to ensure a sustainable future for all. Various matters of concern were raised. These matters will be championed by the municipal SDG team members to ensure that the matters of concern raised get a foothold in municipal planning and implementation initiatives.

This innovative initiative aims to assist all stakeholders, including local government representatives, business leaders, academics, non-profit organisations, and civil society, in understanding the municipality's firm commitment to achieving the SDGs and recognising their potential contributions to these significant and transformative initiatives. Stellenbosch Municipality selected 6 out of 17 SDGs as an initial step to report on the SDGs in its VLR report. This will provide clear direction and targets to enable significant stakeholder engagement. The objective of establishing these links is to attain substantial outcomes that encourage more community engagement and enhance collaboration for sustainable development (Sever, Tok and Sellami, 2025:06).

2.2.3 Global Policy Direction

The Stellenbosch Municipality's strategic planning does not occur in a vacuum. Various key policy directives are being employed, ranging from a global reach to more specific directives applicable to the municipality and its neighbouring municipalities. All these directives are considered when framing future strategic planning and resource allocation. The sections below outline key policy directives considered when framing Stellenbosch Municipality's 4th review of the 5th Generation IDP 2022 – 2027 (Stellenbosch Municipality, 2026:52).



2.2.4 Sustainable Development Goals

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), officially known as Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, are a set of seventeen aspirational "Global Goals" with 169 targets between them. The Agenda is an action plan for people, the planet, and prosperity, with a focus on strengthening peace and partnerships. The SDGs are integrated and indivisible and balance the three dimensions of sustainable development: economic, social, and environmental (Stellenbosch Municipality, 2026:53).

Figure 6: *Sustainable Development Goals*



Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030

- 🚩 **Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere.**
- 🚩 Goal 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture.
- 🚩 Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all ages.
- 🚩 Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all.
- 🚩 **Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.**
- 🚩 Goal 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.
- 🚩 Goal 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all.
- 🚩 Goal 8: Promote sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all.
- 🚩 Goal 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation, and foster innovation.
- 🚩 Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries.
- 🚩 **Goal 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable.**
- 🚩 Goal 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.
- 🚩 **Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.**



- Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development.
- Goal 15: Protect, restore, and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat deforestation, halt and reverse land degradation, and halt biodiversity loss.
- Goal 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels.**
- Goal 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development.**

(Stellenbosch Municipality, 2026:53).

The table below indicates how the municipality's Strategic Focus Areas (SFAs) are aligned with national, provincial, and district plans.

Table 5: Horizontal Alignment Matrix

Strategic Focus Areas (SFAs)	Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	Medium-Term Development Plan	Western Cape Provincial Government	CWDM Strategic Objectives
SFA 1 Valley of Possibility	Promote sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and	Drive inclusive growth and job creation (1)	Growth for Jobs (1)	Promoting sustainable infrastructure services and transport systems which foster social
SFA 2 Green and Sustainable Valley	Take urgent action to combat climate change (13) Protect, restore, and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss (15)	Build a capable, ethical and developmental state (3)	Educated, Healthy and Caring Society (3) Innovation, Culture and Governance (4)	Creating an environment and forging partnerships that ensure the health, safety, social and economic development of all communities, including the empowerment of the poor in the Cape Winelands District through economic, environmental, and social infrastructure investment.
	Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable (11)	Build a capable, ethical and developmental state (3)	Educated, Healthy and Caring Society (3)	Promoting sustainable infrastructure services and transport systems which foster social and economic opportunities.



Strategic Focus Areas (SFAs)	Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	Medium-Term Development Plan	Western Cape Provincial Government	CWDM Strategic Objectives
SFA 3 Safe Valley	Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels (16)	Build a capable, ethical and developmental state (3)	Safety (2)	Creating an environment and forging partnerships that ensure the health, safety, social and economic development of all communities, including the empowerment of the poor in the Cape Winelands District.
SFA 4 Dignified Living	Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all (4) Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages (3)	Reduce poverty and tackle the high cost of living (2)	Educated, Healthy and Caring Society (3)	Creating an environment and forging partnerships that ensure the health, safety, social and economic development of all communities, including the empowerment of the poor in the Cape Winelands District.
	Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation (9)	Drive inclusive growth and job creation (1)	Innovation, Culture and Governance (4)	Promoting sustainable infrastructure services and transport systems which foster social and economic opportunities.
SFA 5 Good Governance and Compliance	Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels (16)	Build a capable, ethical and developmental state (3)	Growth for Jobs (1)	Promoting sustainable infrastructure services and transport systems which foster social and economic opportunities.
			Innovation, Culture and Governance (4)	To provide an effective and efficient financial and strategic support service to the Cape Winelands District Municipality.

(Stellenbosch Municipality, 2026:59).



CHAPTER 3: SDG SELECTION AT STELLENBOSCH MUNICIPALITY

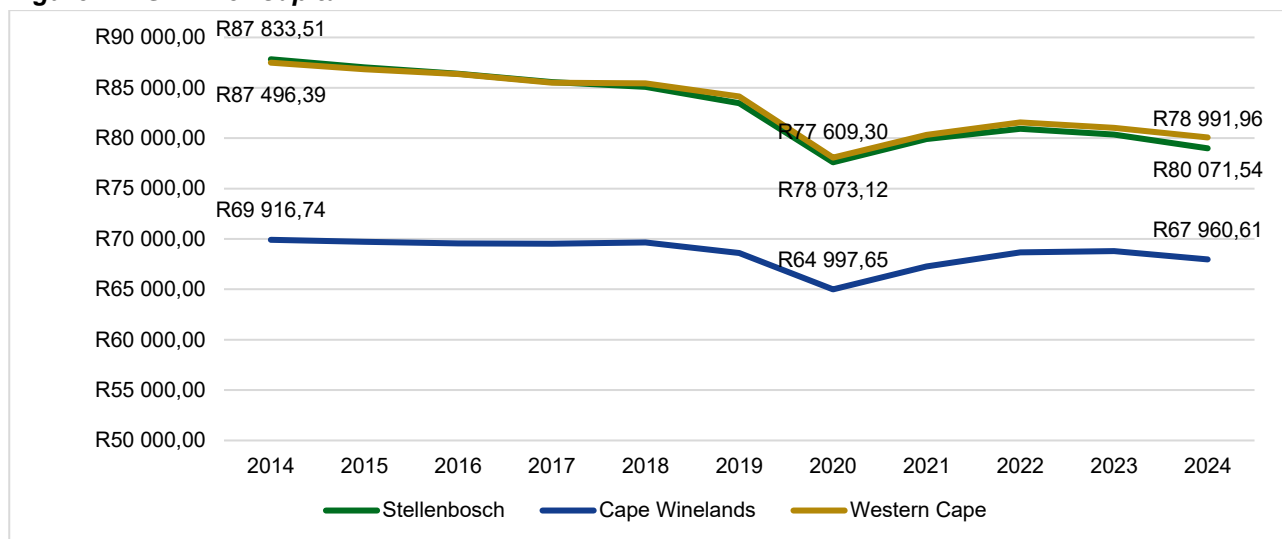
3.1 SDG 1 No Poverty

One of the main objectives of the Sustainable Development Goals is to end severe poverty for all people worldwide by 2030 (United Nations, 2026).

3.1.1 GDP Per Capita

In terms of Gross Domestic Product per capita (GDPR), an increase is only witnessed when economic growth surpasses population growth. According to the MERO 2025, Stellenbosch's GDP per capita consistently exceeds the Cape Winelands region and Provincial averages, indicating its economic growth. In 2020, per capita GDPR in Stellenbosch contracted sharply (declining to R77 609), then peaked in 2022 (R80 943). It declined for two consecutive years to R78 992 in 2024. This indicates that Stellenbosch's high – value economy, underpinned by viticulture, tourism and academia, is confronting structural headwinds, including inflationary pressures or slower export growth, which are limiting gains in per capita economic wellbeing (Western Cape Government, 2025:294).

Figure 7: GDP Per Capita



Source: Western Cape Government, MERO 2025

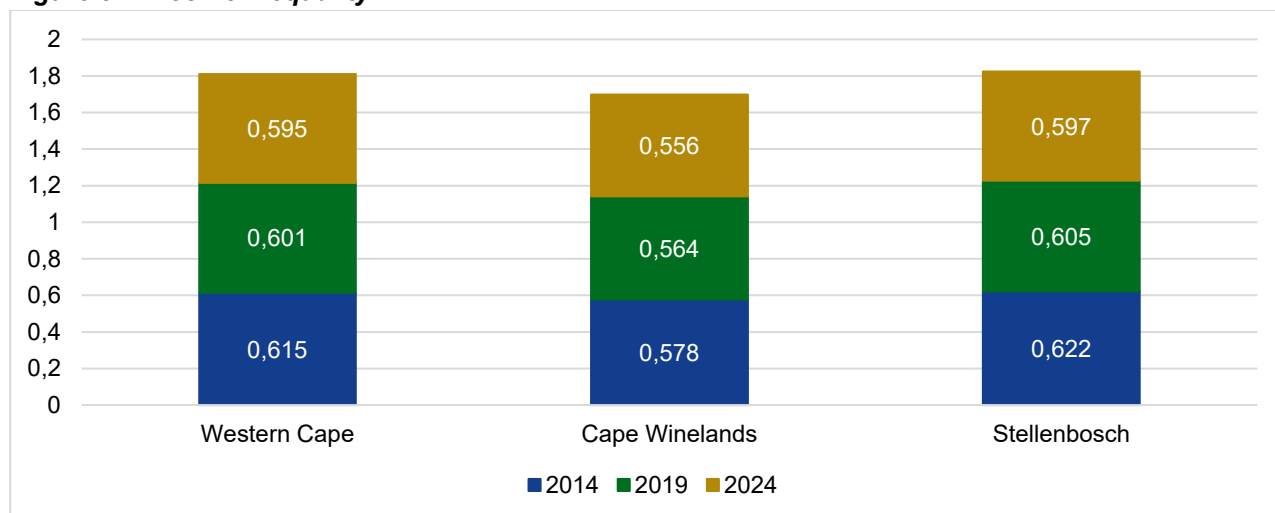
3.1.2 Income Inequality

According to the widely used Gini index, South Africa has one of the highest levels of inequality globally. Inequality is seen through a distorted distribution of income, unequal opportunities, and regional discrepancies.



The National Development Plan (NDP) has set a target of reducing income inequality in South Africa from a Gini coefficient of 0.7 in 2010 to 0.6 by 2030 (South African Government, 2025:34). The Gini coefficient of the Stellenbosch municipal area decreased from 0.605 in 2019 to 0.597 in 2024. However, the improvement was negligible, and the figure remains close to 0.600 – a ratio indicative of severe social strain. The Stellenbosch coefficient exceeds the average for the Western Cape and far surpasses that of the CWD (Western Cape Government, 2025:296).

Figure 8: Income Inequality



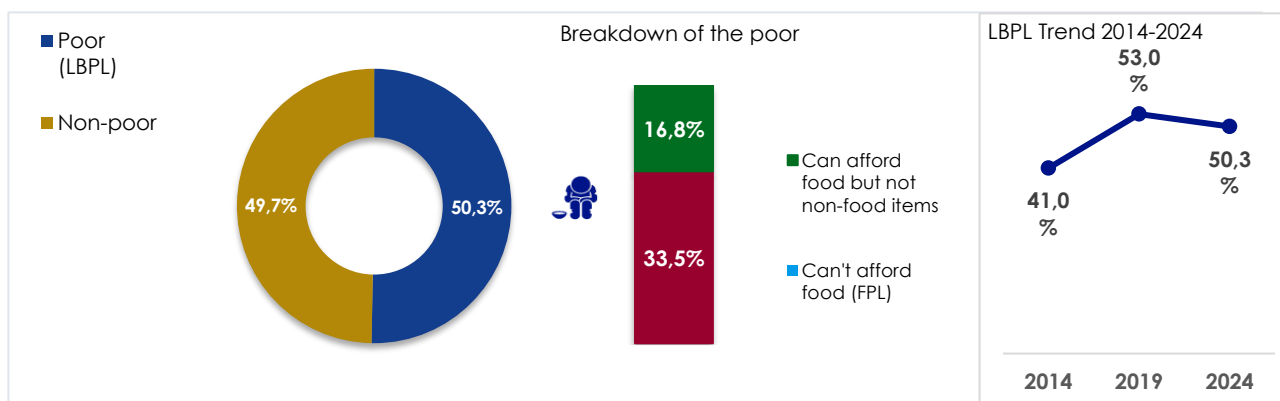
Source: Western Cape Government, MERO, 2025:295

3.1.3 Poverty Line

The Upper Bound Poverty Line (UBPL) headcount ratio is the proportion of the population living below the UBPL, i.e., that cannot afford to purchase adequate levels of food and non-food items (Western Cape Government, 2025:299).

Poverty affects the social development of communities through lower life expectancy, malnutrition and food insecurity, higher exposure to crime and substance abuse, lower educational attainment, and poor living conditions (Western Cape Government, 2025:299).

In 2024, 50.3 per cent of Stellenbosch's population fell below the lower – bound poverty line (LBPL). Of this population, 33.5 per cent fell below the Food Poverty Line (FPL), indicating an inability to afford basic nutritional requirements, while 16.8 per cent were able to meet food needs but remained unable to cover essential non – food needs. Although an improvement has been shown from 2019 of 53.0 per cent, poverty levels remain substantially higher than those recorded in 2014 (41.0 per cent) (Western Cape Government, 2025:299).

**Figure 9: Poverty Headcount Rate, 2014 – 2024**

Source: Western Cape Government, MERO 2025:299

3.1.4 Basic Service Delivery

The Constitution stipulates that every citizen has the right to adequate housing access and that the state must take reasonable legislative and other measures within its available resources to achieve the progressive realisation of this right. Access to housing also includes access to basic services such as potable water, basic sanitation, safe energy sources, and refuse removal services, to ensure that households enjoy a decent standard of living.

This section reflects on the latest available information from the MERO 2025 and Quantec Research for 2025. The latest official statistics were collected by Statistics South Africa in the 2022 Census, but for the purpose of these statistics, Quantec's modelled estimates were utilised by the Western Cape Provincial Government to compile the MERO 2025, which offers more recent and regularly updated figures. The information on indigent households was obtained from the Western Cape Department of Local Government.

3.1.5 Housing and Household Services

In 2024, in the Stellenbosch municipal area, which comprises 57 520 households, 72.4 per cent had access to formal housing, lower than the Cape Winelands District average of 73.7 per cent. The remaining households were spread across other housing types: 10.0 per cent lived in informal dwellings (i.e. informal dwellings or shacks not located in a backyard), 0.8 per cent occupied traditional dwellings, and 0.2 per cent resided in other or unspecified housing types (Western Cape Government, 2025:300).

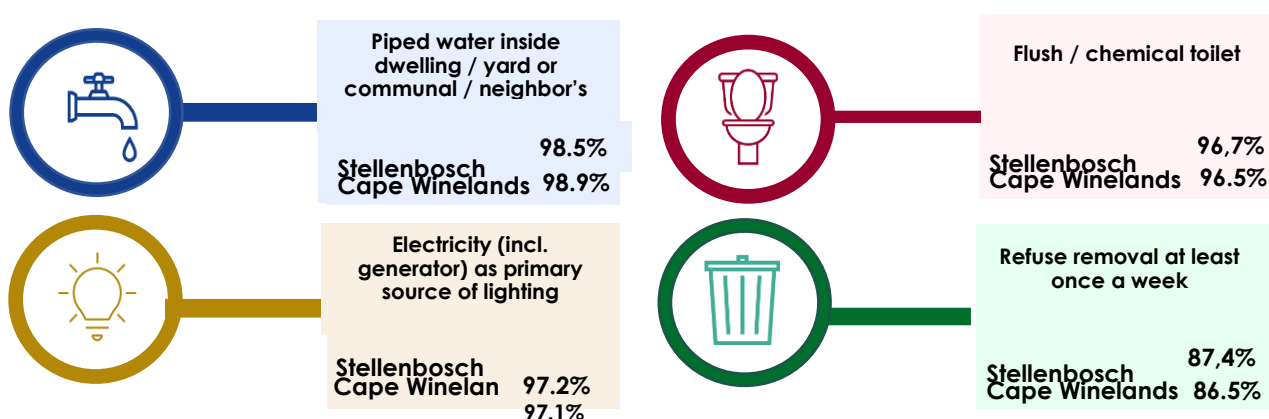
**Table 6: SDG Target 1.4**

Target 1.4 By 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular 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

Indicator	Baseline (up to 30 June 2025)
1.4.1 Proportion of population living in households with access to basic services	
1.4.2 Proportion of total adult population with secure tenure rights to land, with legally recognised documentation and who perceive their rights to land as secure, by sex and by type of tenure	

It should be noted that the proportion of households in Stellenbosch residing in informal dwellings was substantially higher than the district average (6.8 per cent). This category, which includes structures in densely populated informal settlements, reflects persistent housing shortages, ongoing urban in-migration pressure, and income inequality (Western Cape Government, 2025:301).

Service delivery access levels within the municipal area were considerably higher than the access to formal housing, with access to piped water access (98.5 per cent), flush or chemical toilet access (96.7 per cent), electricity access (including generators) for lighting (97.1 per cent), and the removal of refuse at least weekly by the local authority at 87.4 per cent of households. These access levels were above the District figures for electricity and refuse removal services (Western Cape Government, 2025:302).

Figure 10: Service delivery access levels (HH)

Source: Western Cape Government, MERO 2025:302

3.1.6 Free Basic Services

The following table indicates the percentage of average registered indigent households that have access to free basic municipal services. The total number of indigent households



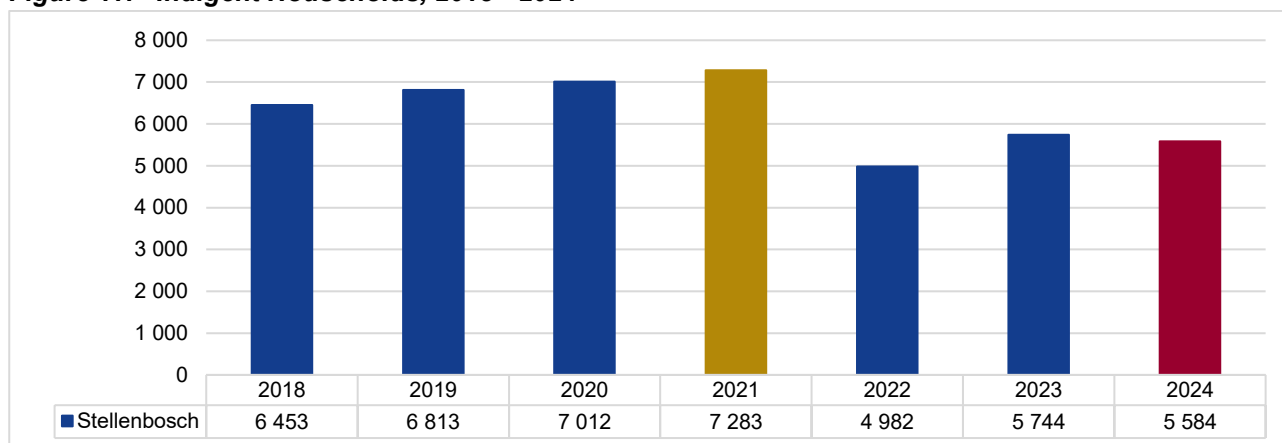
excludes all informal households and includes formal households that have been registered as indigent households. The total i.t.o. of free basic electricity includes only indigent households claiming 100 kWh from the Stellenbosch Municipality. Additionally, it excludes the totals for areas where ESKOM manages the electricity distribution (Western Cape Government, 2025:302).

Per the approved Indigent Policy of the municipality, all households earning less than R7 500 per month will receive free basic services as prescribed by national policy and in terms of Stellenbosch Municipality's Indigent Policy, 2025 (Stellenbosch Municipality, 2025:07).

Stellenbosch had a decline in the number of households that were registered for indigent support from 2021 to 2022. In 2021, 7 283 households were recorded, followed by a 32.0 per cent drop to 4 982 in 2022. The lowest recorded number of indigent households was in 2024/25 at 5 584, which is well below pre – pandemic (COVID-19) counts, Western Cape Government, 2025:302).

The table below indicates the number of households receiving free basic services.

Figure 11: Indigent Households, 2018 - 2024



Source: Western Cape Government, MERO 2025:302

Municipalities offer free basic services to financially vulnerable households, and the number of households receiving these services in the Stellenbosch municipal area sharply declined in 2024. Target local initiatives have successfully lifted a major portion of households out of poverty, as evidenced by the divergence from 2022 to 2024. Such interventions include municipal indigent support programmes and expanded access to basic services (Western Cape Government, 2025:302).

Per the approved Indigent Policy of the municipality, all households earning less than R7 500 per month will receive free basic services as prescribed by national policy.



Indigent households in the Stellenbosch Municipal Area receive:

- ✚ free sanitation services;
- ✚ free refuse removal services;
- ✚ 6 kilolitres of free water per month; and
- ✚ 100 units of free electricity per month.

The Rates Policy allows for an additional R100 000 Reduction for Indigent Consumers over and above the total of R250 000 Reduction/Exclusion already granted to owners of residential properties.

Table 7: Access to Free Basic Services

Year	Number of Households							
	Free Basic Water		Free Basic Sanitation		Free Basic Electricity		Free Basic Refuse Removal	
	Access	%	Access	%	Access	%	Access	%
2018/19	6 813	13.01	6 813	13.01	4 833	9.23	6 813	13.01
2019/20	6 666	100%	6 666	100%	4 932	100%	6 666	100%
2020/21	7 283	100%	7 283	100%	5 189	100%	7 283	100%
2021/22	4 681	100%	4 681	100%	4 982	84.25%	4 681	100%
2022/23	5 744	100%	5 744	100%	5 744	100%	5 744	100%
2023/24	5 584	100%	5 584	100%	5 584	100%	5 584	100%
2024/25	6 732	100%	6 732	100%	6 732	100%	6 732	100%

Source: Municipal Indigent Register

Table 8: SDG Target 1.1

Target 1.1 By 2030, eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere, currently measured as people living on less than \$3.00 a day		
Indicator	Baseline (up to 30 June 2025)	Post-Baseline Developments (after 30 June 2025)
1.1.1: Proportion of the population living below the international poverty line by sex, age, employment status and geographic location (urban / rural)	<i>Not applicable at the local government level</i>	<i>Not applicable at the local government level</i>
RSA Domesticated Indicator		
Indicator	Baseline (up to 30 June 2025)	Post-Baseline Developments (after 30 June 2025)
Proportion of households living in poverty	<i>50.3 per cent</i>	<i>Information not available</i>

In 2024, 50.3 per cent of the municipal population lived below the lower-bound poverty line (LBPL). Of these, 33.5 per cent were unable to afford food, as represented by the food poverty line (FPL), while 16.8 per cent were able to meet food needs but not non-food needs.



Although this reflects an improvement from the 2019 peak of 53.0 per cent, poverty levels remain considerably higher than in 2014 (41.0 per cent) (MERO, 2025).

3.1.7 Grant in aid

Grant in Aid is an annual donation programme implemented by the municipality. It originates from S67 of the MFMA and has been operational in the municipality through the approved Grant in Aid Policy for many years. The information relating to Grant in Aid for the purpose of the VLR will focus on the last 5 years.

3.1.7.1 Overview of Programme

The purpose, aims, and objectives of the programme, as contained in the Grant in Aid Policy, include the following:

This policy aims to provide a framework for Grant-in-Aid to non-governmental organisations (NGOs), community-based organisations (CBOs), non-profit organisations (NPOs), non-profit companies (NPC) or Public Benefit Organisations (PBO's) and bodies that are used by government as an agency to serve the poor, marginalised or otherwise vulnerable as envisaged by Sections 12, 17 and 67 of the Local Government: Municipal Finance Management Act, 2003 (Act No. 56 of 2003).

The purpose of the Grant-in-Aid Policy is to complement the goals, objectives, programmes and actions of the Stellenbosch Municipality's Integrated Development Plan (IDP), to create a sustainable, credible and caring municipality by empowering and building communities and enhancing growth and sharing through partnerships. Priority ward needs as identified through the Council's IDP MUST be the guiding factor in developing these partnerships.

Grant-in-Aid should not duplicate services already provided for by the Council, which falls within the geographical jurisdiction of the Council.

Grant-in-Aid should improve the opportunity for the Council to elicit the support of external organisations to deliver those services to communities which fall within the Council's geographical area of responsibility in a way that allows the Stellenbosch community and town to create an enabling environment for community development.



3.1.7.2 Outcome

The table below depicts the outcome of the programme and indicates the number of Grant in Aid organisations supported and the budget spent over the last four years:

Table 9: Number of Grant in Aid applications recommended and approved

Financial Year	Organisations supported	Funding Allocated:
2021/22	90	R4 898 457
2022/23	61	R4 527 340
2023/24	41	R4 450 800
2024/25	31	R5 292 510



3.1.7.3 Statistical data- Beneficiaries

All beneficiaries of the successful grant applicants are local citizens living within the municipal area. They range from young to old. Some organisations render generic social services, whilst others are more specialised / focused on the services they render.

Table 10: Grant in aid categories

Financial Year	General	ECD	Disability	Elderly	Youth	Substance Abuse	Gender	Food Security	Homeless	Environment	Skills Dev	Health	Sport	Arts and Culture
2021/22	4	48	4	6	13	2	2	2	1	1	3	1	16	15
2022/23	1	30	2	2	7	0	0	1	1	1	5	2	7	2
2023/24	4	18	2	2	5	1	1	2	1	0	2	3	0	1
2024/25	4	12	3	0	2	1	0	1	2	0	1	2	1	2

Source: Municipal Grant-in-aid data



Grant-in-Aid Outreach



3.1.8 Give Responsibly Campaign

The campaign was launched in March 2019 by Heartflow NPC and is currently implemented by Stellenbosch Night Shelter. This includes the distribution and record keeping of coupons sold to the public vs coupons redeemed for services by homeless persons. The statistics show clearly that many people wanting to go to the shelter, make use of the coupons and have accepted this as a system that works for them. The campaign aims to stop the cash economy on the streets of Stellenbosch by encouraging citizens to give coupons to homeless persons begging on the streets, which they can use to access services.

The campaign is implemented in collaboration between the municipality and local roleplayers.

The role distribution of the campaign is as follows:

Stellenbosch Municipality:



Develop marketing materials. Communicate information on the campaign via municipal social media accounts to citizens. Support Stellenbosch Night Shelter through the Grant-in-aid donation programme.

Stellenbosch Night Shelter:



Recruit local businesses to become vendor distribution points. Distribute coupons to vendors. Deliver services to homeless persons in exchange for a coupon.

Visit Stellenbosch:



Communicate campaign to tourists, vendors of coupons, and host information on the tourism website.



✚ **Stellenbosch Feeding in Action:** Provide lunch to homeless persons through Grant in Aid Donation at the Bergzicht Taxi Rank.

✚ **Animal Welfare Society Stellenbosch:** Provide access to coupons in exchange for menial jobs.

✚ **Dog Walking at the Devon Valley AWSS**

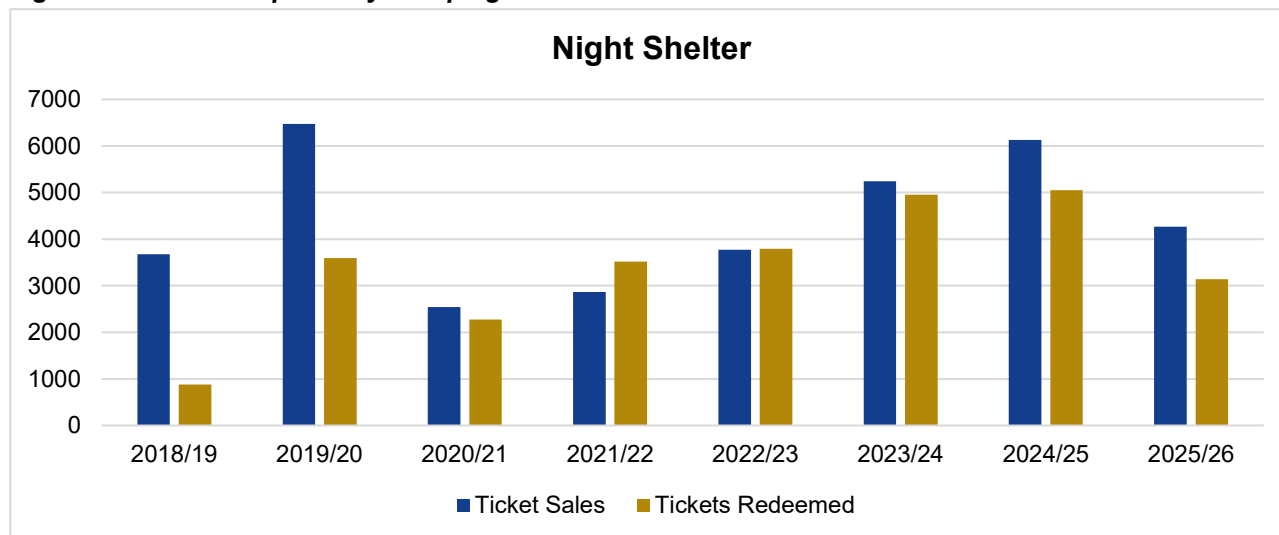


Through the Stellenbosch Homeless Ministries Network, a project in collaboration with Heartflow started, where homeless persons can walk dogs at the AWSS in exchange for a Give Responsibly Coupon. The homeless walk the dogs for about an hour, but some have found the connection so compelling that they stay there and assist with the cleaning of the feeding and water bowls, as well as the kennels. It is difficult to accommodate the people when the weather is rainy. The project is not suitable for all homeless

persons, but it provides an opportunity where a person can, through personal effort, obtain a coupon to sleep in the shelter without having to beg for it.

3.1.8.1 Statistical data Ticket Sales

Figure 12: Give Responsibly Campaign Ticket Statistics



Source: Stellenbosch Night Shelter Monthly Reports

Due to the COVID-19 lockdown period, no payment was required for access to the Stellenbosch Night Shelter or the Municipal Shelter. This is evident in the decrease in tickets redeemed in the 2019/20 financial year.



3.2 SDG 5 Gender Equality

3.2.1 Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

Gender mainstreaming is one of the SDGs and the District Development Model (DDM) objectives. The SDG (Goal 5) and DDM advocate that the government should aim for gender equality, empower all women and girls, and ensure inclusivity through gender-responsive budgeting based on the needs and aspirations of our people and communities at a local level. In support of the SDG and DDM objectives, the Stellenbosch Municipality aims to establish an environment that encourages gender mainstreaming interventions at the municipal level. Although priority issues identified by the different segments of the community cannot be addressed at once due to insufficient resources, the municipality is implementing interventions as a start to address gender and gender mainstreaming.

Gender mainstreaming will require the municipality to shift in organisational cultures and ways of thinking, as well as in the goals, structures, and allocation of resources. Through the IDP and in support of the SDG and DDM objectives, the Stellenbosch Municipality will make an effort to incorporate gender into each phase of planning. As a stepping stone to incorporating gender in municipal planning, it will take the form of identifying key gender indicators linked to the projects and programmes encapsulated in the 5th Generation IDP 2022 – 2027. The table below on the gender matrix is in alignment with the principles of gender mainstreaming as stipulated below:

- Gender-sensitive language;
- Gender-specific data collection and analysis;
- Equal access to and utilisation of services;
- Women and men are equally involved in decision-making; and
- Equal treatment is integrated into steering processes.

The benefits of incorporating gender outcomes into the IDP will be:

- Positive impact on individuals, organisations, and at a societal level;
- Acceleration of the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);
- Higher rate of growth and development;
- Improved resource management;
- Improved productivity; and
- By examining the overall situation of women and men across municipalities, a stronger analysis could provide a basis for identifying their specific needs and assessing



whether certain groups of women and men could be adversely affected by development programmes and projects.

The following SDG ‘Targets’ and ‘Indicators’ have been selected for this baseline review process:

Table 11: SDG Targets 5.1 and 5.5

Target	Indicator
Target 5.1	End all forms of discrimination against women and girls everywhere.
Target 5.5	Ensure women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities. For leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic, and public life.

3.2.2 Gender Interventions

In terms of integrated planning and streamlining governance processes, the Department: Community Development and the Provincial Department: Social Development signed an MOU to collectively focus on various programmes with gender as one of the focal points. This includes the implementation of empowering programmes for women, reaching out to single mothers, hosting the 16 Days of Activism / Gender-Based Violence, and establishing a Gender-Based Violence Forum.

The implementation of gender-specific programmes is depicted in the table below:

Table 12: Gender Based Interventions

Key Activity / Project / Programme / Initiative (measurable action)	Description of Unit of Measurement	Performance Comment
Establishment of the Greater Stellenbosch GBV Forum	Number of Greater Stellenbosch GBV Forums established by 30 June 2024	The GBV Forum has been established by the Department of Social Development (DSD) in the 2023/24 financial year.
Hosting of the 16 Days of Activism event	Number of 16 days of activism events hosted by 30 November	The 16 Days of Activism event will be hosted each financial year for the period 2022 – 2027. This programme is linked to the Mayoral Outcome to create safer environments for communities. Implementation and monitoring of the programme will be on a departmental level.



3.2.3 Addressing GBV through the lens of International Partnerships

The partnership between Stellenbosch Municipality (South Africa) and Jönköpings kommun (Sweden), under the auspices of the Swedish International Centre for Local Democracy (ICLD), represents a shift from traditional, transactional North-South twinning to normative, reciprocal paradiplomacy.

While the partnership spans multiple democratic dimensions, its most critical mechanism is its focus on Gender-Based Violence (GBV), walkability, integration and public safety.

Here is an advanced breakdown of the intersection between these two municipalities, centring on Stellenbosch's proactive agency.

3.2.4 Stellenbosch's Strategic Role in the GBV Partnership

While Jönköping provides the pedagogical blueprint for norm-critical interventions, Stellenbosch Municipality does not act as a passive recipient. Instead, it serves as an institutional laboratory for contextualising gender safety within a high-friction, unequal urban environment.

3.2.5 Contextualising the "Normstorm" Methodology

Developed by Jönköping in 2012, "Normstorm" is a pedagogical tool utilising creative and analytical exercises to deconstruct societal norms driving inequality and violence (ICLD, 2024).

Whilst not the original intention, however, considering the broader gender context, Stellenbosch Municipality also addressed the "dignity deficit" created by years of unequal policy and treatment of especially female inhabitants.

The Stellenbosch Intervention:

While education falls under provincial jurisdiction (Western Cape Province), Stellenbosch Municipality used its convening power to embed Normstorm into local curricula (Jönköpings kommun, 2025). By 2025, the programme expanded from three pilot schools to twelve, demonstrating how a municipality can drive educational policy despite lacking a direct constitutional mandate.

Another unintended outcome is the expansion of the partnership programme to include youth participation, primarily through the newly established Junior Town Council (JTC)



Spatial Materialisation:

Stellenbosch translated classroom discussions into spatial urban planning. An example is the safety upgrade along George Blake Avenue (GBA), where municipal engineering departments used resident feedback on gendered spatial insecurity to overhaul public lighting and pedestrian accessibility (ICLD, 2024).

3.2.6 Disrupting Unidirectional Policy Transfer (Reverse Learning)

A critical, often overlooked aspect of this partnership is that **Stellenbosch trains Jönköping**. Traditional paradiplomacy assumes the Global North teaches the Global South. In this corridor, the learning is bidirectional.



The Stellenbosch Model:

Political leaders and senior managers from Jönköping have undergone training led by Stellenbosch representatives regarding **citizen dialogues and gender budgeting** (ICLD, 2024).



Critical Insight:

Stellenbosch's systematic approach to using gender-disaggregated data and monthly citizen budget consultations is seen by Swedish officials as a benchmark for overcoming the "illusion of equality" (the self-image trap in Nordic states where assumed equality blind-sides local governments to latent gaps) (Jönköpings kommun, 2025).

3.2.7 Redefining Public Safety

In partnership workshops, Stellenbosch successfully shifted the problem formulation from generic "urban insecurity" to "Safety in Public Environments through an Equality Lens" (ICLD, 2023).



The Structural Friction:

Stellenbosch officials pushed the discourse beyond psychological perceptions of safety (the standard Swedish focus) to incorporate hard infrastructure realities, such as how energy insecurity and rolling blackouts disproportionately expose women to physical violence in transit (ICLD, 2021).



3.2.8 Critical Takeaway: The Institutionalisation of Gender

The strategic value of this partnership for Stellenbosch is the capacity-building of its civil servants and councillors (Stellenbosch Municipality, 2024). By training its internal leadership to look at standard municipal directives (zoning, waste, transport) through a GBV-preventative lens, Stellenbosch Municipality is slowly shifting GBV from a "social development" issue to a core, cross-departmental engineering and compliance mandate.



3.3 SDG 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities

3.3.1 Introduction

SDG 11 is “Sustainable Cities and Communities”, and it has 10 targets with 15 official global indicators (UN 2025). The goal is to create sustainable cities and communities that are inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable. Achieving this goal requires a multi-stakeholder approach and involves governments, civil society, the private sector, and individuals working together to address the following challenges, i.e.:

- ✦ Adequate, safe, and affordable housing (11.1);
- ✦ Sustainable transport systems (11.2);
- ✦ Inclusive and sustainable urbanisation (11.3);
- ✦ Protect cultural and natural heritage (11.4);
- ✦ Reduce disaster impacts (11.5);
- ✦ Reduce the disaster environmental impact of cities (11.6); and
- ✦ Access to green and public spaces (11.7).

The aforementioned challenges pertain to cities and their ability to address urbanisation, climate change, inequality, and inadequate infrastructure. One of the overarching and enabling indicators for SDG 11 is the development of National Urban Policies (NUP) and Regional Development Plans (RDP), which needs to respond to population dynamics, ensuring balanced territorial development, and increase in the fiscal space (11.a.1). Coupled with this strategic urban planning policy is linking development assistance and other flows in support of urban infrastructure or urban infrastructure projects (11.c.1). The goal of these indicators is to support positive economic, social and environmental links between urban, peri-urban and rural areas by strengthening national and regional development planning.

The SDG 11.a.1 indicator further relates to several goals and targets (UN, 2025), particularly SDG 1 (land tenure security and resilience), 2 (land tenure security and urban-rural linkages), 5 (safety and ownership and control over land), 6 (access to drinking water and sanitation), 7 (access to renewable energy and energy efficiency), 8 (job creation, decent work and youth unemployment), 9 (access to and upgrading and financing infrastructure), 10 (discriminatory laws), 12 (waste management), 13 (resilience and adaptive capacity; capacity for effective climate-change related planning and management), 15 (integrate ecosystem and biodiversity values), 16 (government subsidiarity and institutional capacity building; non-discriminatory laws and policies), and 17 (policy coherence for sustainable



development; effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships) (UN 2018; UN 2025).



NUPs and RDPs (also known as urban development plans, framework, or strategies) are defined as a set of decisions or principles of actions derived through a deliberate government led process of coordinating and rallying various actors for a common vision and goal that will promote a more transformative, productive, inclusive, and resilient urban development for the long term (20 – 30 years or even 100 years horizon). An RDP follows the same definition, but is applied at the subnational level (UN, 2014; UN, 2025). In the policy development process of these urban development plans / frameworks / strategies, consideration should be given to key qualifiers based on the SDG metadata for SDG 11.a.1. These include the following;

- ✚ Feasibility and diagnosis of policy problems and opportunities;
- ✚ Formulating a NUP or RDP responding to population dynamics, including population composition, trends, and projections at a geographic scale over time;
- ✚ Formulating a NUP or RDP ensuring and promoting a spatially coherent territory that includes a balanced system of human settlements, including cities and towns, and including urban corridors that address social, economic, environmental, and spatial disparities, considering the urban-rural continuum.
- ✚ Formulating a NUP or RDP with an understanding of the sum of financial resources available for improved delivery of basic social and economic services at the local level as a result of the budget and related decisions by governments at all levels, without any prejudice to the sustainability of a government's financial position (UN 2014; UN 2025).

The rationale for the SDG 11.a.1 indicator is based on the notion that the development and implementation of NUPs and RDPs should support participation, partnership, cooperation, and coordination of actors as well as facilitate dialogue (refer to SDG 11.3.2 as well). A coordinated effort from the government through the development of urban development plans / frameworks / strategies provides the best opportunity for achieving sustainable and



inclusive urbanisation and balanced territorial development by linking sectoral policies, connecting national, regional, and local government policies, and strengthening urban, peri-urban, and rural links through balanced territorial development. The urban policy process is led at the national level to ensure the articulation and coordination of different sectors and government levels, but it engages both top-down and bottom-up processes. Subnational governments are key implementing partners due to their proximity to citizens and their role in delivering services and infrastructure. Therefore, a NUP does not replace regional or local development policies and plans but strengthens them and relies on their horizontal alignment and vertical articulation (UN 2025).

The NUP provides the overarching framework articulating and aligning subnational and local plans and policies under a common vision for urbanisation that also makes it particularly suited to consider the urban-peri-urban-rural continuum. These plans are seen as an additional mechanism to ensure intergovernmental agreements, such as the New Urban Agenda (NUA – aligned to SDG 11), are also considered and implemented (UN 2025). Key actions from the NUA that should be included in the formulation of NUPs include the following:

Urbanisation is a catalyst for economic growth and social progress, and even holds the possibility for the protection and more efficient use of natural resources, climate change mitigation, and adaptation. However, the positive impact of this process is not automatic and can bring about negative economic, social, and environmental impacts when it is rapid and/or unplanned. Therefore, a NUP should provide the framework for understanding urbanisation processes and how the dividends can be leveraged, and the negative impacts, such as increasing congestion, sprawl, informality, social exclusion, inadequate infrastructure, etc., can be mitigated. A NUP provides the strategic planning instrument ensuring sectoral government policies are aligned and coordinated towards achieving sustainable urban development by promoting more compact, socially inclusive, better connected and integrated cities which are resilient to climate change (UN 2014; UN 2025).

Due to the rapid urbanisation trend in low and middle-income countries, the UN-Habitat has prioritised the development and implementation of NUPs in these countries. South Africa is categorised as an upper-middle-income country, with 65% of the population urbanised and, on average, a 1.59% annual urban population growth rate (UN 2018), necessitating an urgent need to formalise and approve a NUP.



3.3.2 South Africa's National Urban Policy (NUP)

The monitoring of SDG 11.a.1 is done by the UN-Habitat every year, and it compiles and presents national urban policies (NUPs) into a National Urban Policy Database (<https://nupdb.urbanpolicyplatform.org>). The primary source data is the official documents submitted by the member states in the NUP survey. Each NUP submitted to the UN-Habitat is assessed in terms of its alignment with the indicators by independent national-level policy evaluators to avoid subjectivity and bias (UN 2025). To date, 191 countries have submitted NUPs on SDG 11.a.1 (<https://nupdb.urbanpolicyplatform.org> accessed 24 March 2026).

In addition to the NUP Database, the UN-Habitat, in partnership with OECD and Cities Alliance, produces reports on the state of NUPs. The Global State of National Urban Policy 2018 (UN 2018) reports assessed 150 countries' NUPs. South Africa's NUP formed part of this first analysis report, and the policy is called the Integrated Urban Development Framework (IUDF). The IUDF was created in 2009, and the NUP was further formulated and released for public participation in 2014 by the Ministry of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (CoGTA). The draft IUDF was assessed as part of the Global State of National Urban Policy report, and the analysis included a thematic scope in five policy sectors: economic development, spatial structure, human development, environmental sustainability, and climate resilience. In the assessment, four categories were used: extensive, moderate, low, and insufficient information.

The draft IUDF was assessed using the framework, and the following outcomes were indicated in the table below (UN 2018), namely:

Table 13: Global State of NUP – South Africa result

Country	Nature of NUP	Level of attention by theme (*** = extensive ** = moderate * = low - = insufficient information)				
		Economic development	Spatial structure	Human development	Environmental sustainability	Climate resilience
South Africa	IUDF Explicit	***	***	***	***	*

Source: UN 2018

-  The draft IUDF explicitly states that it is an NUP, which represents a strong policy commitment on the part of the national government (UN 2018).
-  The economic development theme is extensively covered, meaning that the IUDF highlights sustainable and inclusive urban economies as a key principle, promoting the agglomeration benefits of well-planned urbanisation, which includes high productivity, competitiveness, and innovation, with full, productive, and decent employment for all.



In this thematic area, the draft IUDF is a key tool to link urbanisation with the National Development Plan 2030 (NDP). The NDP identifies economic development as a policy priority, and the IUDF provides the linkage with the broader economic development policies and how to capitalise on the economic opportunities of urbanisation. Cities are the engines of national economic growth, and maximising the potential economic benefits of urbanisation through the national urban policy can be transformative and a future-oriented strategy to achieve the overall NDP goals (UN 2018).



The spatial structure theme is extensively covered, meaning that the draft IUDF highlights the need for balanced spatial development to address economic, social, and environmental goals; for instance, limiting urban expansion to protect high-potential agricultural land. Focusing on balanced spatial development can address the persistence of poverty, inequalities, socio-economic exclusion, spatial segregation, and environmental degradation. The draft IUDF adopts a framework to reduce urban and territorial disparities through productive and inclusive systems of cities and urban-rural linkages, as well as an equitable provision of and access to infrastructure, public goods and services, national and regional economic development, resilience, environmental protection, and adequate housing (UN 2018).



The human development theme is extensively covered, meaning the draft IUDF highlights the vision of “cities for all”, which is a principle of “leave no one behind”, and a transformative commitment to sustainable urban development for social inclusion and ending poverty. Human development entails a wide range of actions, such as ensuring urban residents have equal rights, opportunities, and access to democratic participation, infrastructure, basic services, and adequate, affordable, and decent housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living. It also means that vulnerable populations are considered and engaged (UN 2018).



The environmental sustainability theme is extensively covered, meaning the draft IUDF promotes sustainable patterns of compact, dense, and mixed urban development and, more generally, ensures sustainable consumption and production patterns, the efficient and responsible use of resources, protecting biodiversity and green spaces, curbing pollution, and harnessing the opportunities of new technologies and clean energies (UN 2018).



The climate resilience theme (SDG 13) has low coverage, which indicates that the draft IUDF either does not address this aspect in the policy or the sectoral policies are unconnected to the overarching NUP. Areas that need to be further explored associated with this theme include how to translate the transformative commitment to



an environmentally sustainable and resilient urban development, including addressing the need to build urban resilience, reduce disaster risks, and mitigate and adapt to climate change (UN 2018).

The five thematic themes provide an international benchmark in terms of policy areas that need to be considered and addressed in the policy formulation of an NUP and, by extension, an RDP. Based on the analysis of the draft IUDF, the policy responds to the main concerns of global urban agendas (i.e., SDG 11.a.1 and the NUA) and is a transformative and future-oriented strategy to achieve the overall national development goals contained in the National Development Plan – Vision 2030 (NDP). The final IUDF (South African NUP) was presented and approved by Cabinet in 2016.

The IUDF builds on various national development goals contained in the NDP and further extends Chapter 8: Transforming human settlements and the national space economy and its vision for urban South Africa (IUDF 2016; NPC 2012). Considering that South Africa will be three-quarters (71%) urbanised by 2030 and reaching almost 80% by 2050 (IUDF 2016, p. 12), the NDP goal of “meaningful and measurable progress in reviving rural areas and in creating more functionally integrated, balanced and vibrant urban settlements” is critical to unlock the positive impacts and dividends from urbanisation in cities and towns. The strategic framework from both the NDP and IUDF guides the growth, management, and transformation of cities and towns in response to rapid urbanisation, setting out the “New Deal” for cities and towns into inclusive, efficient, and sustainable places through integrated planning, investment, and governance (IUDF 2016). The vision of the IUDF is -

“Liveable, safe, resource-efficient cities and towns that are socially integrated, economically inclusive and globally competitive, where residents actively participate in urban life.” (IUDF 2016)

The NUP / IUDF integrates with the NDP and steers the spatial transformation agenda whilst acknowledging that cities and towns have different roles, requirements, and need to address unique conditions and challenges within a system of cities. The vision should therefore be interpreted and pursued in differentiated and locally relevant ways (IUDF 2016). To achieve this spatial transformation vision, four (4) strategic goals are introduced with nine (9) policy levers.

**Figure 13: IUDF Vision, Strategic Goals, and Levers**

Source: IUDF 2016

These strategic goals inform the priority objectives of the nine (9) policy levers, which are:

- ✚ Integrated spatial planning and land use management, which relates to cities and towns that are spatially organised to guide investments that promote integrated social and economic development, resulting in a sustainable quality of life for all citizens;
- ✚ Integrated transport and mobility, which relates to cities and towns where people can walk, cycle, and use different transport modes to easily access economic opportunities, educational institutions, health facilities, and places of recreation;
- ✚ Integrated sustainable human settlements, which relate to cities and towns, are spatially equal, integrated, and multi-functional, in which settlements are well-connected to essential and social services, as well as to areas of work opportunities;
- ✚ Integrated urban infrastructure, which relates to cities and towns that have transitioned from traditional approaches to resource-efficient infrastructure systems, provides for both universal access and more inclusive economic growth;
- ✚ Efficient land governance and management, which relates to cities and towns that grow through investments in land and property, providing income for municipalities that allow



further investments in infrastructure and services, resulting in inclusive, multi-functional urban spaces;

- ✚ Inclusive economic development, which relates to cities and towns that are dynamic and efficient, fosters entrepreneurialism and innovation, sustains livelihoods, enables economic growth, and generates the tax base needed to sustain and expand public services and amenities;
- ✚ Empowered active communities, which relate to cities and towns that are home to socially and culturally diverse citizens, who are actively involved in city life and committed to making South Africa work;
- ✚ Effective urban governance, which relates to cities and towns that have the necessary institutional, fiscal, and planning capabilities to build inclusive, resilient, and liveable urban spaces; and
- ✚ Sustainable finance, which relates to cities and towns, is supported by a fiscal framework that acknowledges the development potential and pressures of urban spaces, manages their finances efficiently and effectively, and can access the necessary resources and partnerships for inclusive urban growth (IUDF 2016).

3.3.3 Integrated Planning Framework

The IUDF represents South Africa's overarching National Urban Policy (NUP), providing the strategic framework to guide the management of urbanisation and the transformation of spatial patterns in cities and towns. The section of this report presents how the implementation of the IUDF occurs through municipal planning and budgeting instruments guided by the Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act (Act No. 16 of 2013) (SPLUMA), and the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act (Act No. 32 of 2000) (MSA).

3.3.3.1 Alignment between the IUDF and SPLUMA

The IUDF operationalises the spatial transformation principles introduced by SPLUMA. The key alignment areas between the legislative framework (SPLUMA) and the policy (IUDF) are:

- ✚ Spatial transformation – SPLUMA establishes the legal requirement for spatial restructuring through the development principles of Spatial Sustainability and Efficiency. Whilst the IUDF provides the policy approach and implementation framework (compact cities, integration, accessibility, etc.).
- ✚ Integrated planning – SPLUMA requires alignment between SDFs, land use management, and infrastructure planning, which enforces the development principle



of Spatial Resilience and Spatial Integration. Whilst the IUDF strengthens this through integrated urban infrastructure, transport, and land governance policy levers.

- ✦ Spatial justice – SPLUMA introduces the development principle of spatial justice as a legal principle, whilst the IUDF translates this into practical implementation through housing location, densification, and improved accessibility.

In practice, SPLUMA provides the legislative framework, while the IUDF provides the policy direction and the implementation strategy.

3.3.3.2 Alignment between the IUDF and the Municipal Spatial Development Framework (MSDF)

The MSDF provides the spatial vision and the spatial restructuring logic for the municipality. The MSDF gives spatial expression to the IUDF strategic goals and objectives. In addition, the IUDF directly informs how the MSDF should be prepared and implemented over the 20-year planning horizon. The key planning implications for MSDFs are:

- ✦ Promote compact and connected urban form;
- ✦ Prioritise public transport corridors and nodes;
- ✦ Encourage infill, densification, and mixed-use development;
- ✦ Protection of environmental and agricultural land;
- ✦ Improve access to economic opportunities and social services; and –
- ✦ Align spatial planning with infrastructure investment.

This means that MSDFs should function not only as a statutory spatial plan but also as strategic urban restructuring strategies and investment prioritisation to achieve the vision of spatial transformation over the long term.

3.3.3.3 Alignment between the IUDF, the Capital Expenditure Framework (CEF), and the Integrated Development Plan (IDP)

The role of the IDP is the municipality's primary strategic planning document and coordinates development priorities, sector plans, and budgets over a 5-year planning horizon. The IUDF strengthens the short-term (5-year) spatial and economic components of the IDP by:

- ✦ Setting the development vision for the municipality;
- ✦ Linking spatial planning with economic development priorities;
- ✦ Setting the spatial transformation priorities;
- ✦ Infrastructure investment programmes;
- ✦ Economic development strategies; and



Social inclusion and service delivery targets.

The role of the CEF is to guide and coordinate the medium to long-term capital investment in the built environment over a 3 (MTREF budget) to 10-year planning horizon. The CEF ensures financial alignment with the MSDF and IUDF spatial priorities. The IUDF is promoted in the CEF through:

-  Targeted spatial investment in targeted and priority investment areas or catalytic projects (also known as spatial targeting);
-  Aligning infrastructure investment with spatial restructuring.
-  Supporting transit-oriented development;
-  Coordinated investment in infrastructure (housing, transport, municipal infrastructure services); and –
-  Alignment between spatial plans and municipal capital budgets.

3.3.3.4 IUDF policy levers and municipal implementation

The IUDF's nine (9) policy levers translate directly into municipal planning and budgeting responsibilities, which are required in terms of the applicable legislated framework, namely:

Table 14: IUDF and Municipal Implementation

IUDF policy lever	Municipal Implementation Instrument	Time Horizon
Integrated spatial planning	MSDF / CEF / LSDF / Precinct plans	20 - 30 years
Integrated transport and mobility	MSDF / Comprehensive Integrated Transport Plans / Roads master plans / CEF	5 - 10 years
Integrated human settlement	MSDF / Integrated Human Settlement Plans / CEF / Housing Pipelines / Inclusionary Housing	10 years
Integrated urban infrastructure	CEF / Capital Investment Plans / IDP	10 years
Land governance and management	Zoning schemes / Overlay Zones/development management	10 years
Inclusive economic development	CEF / IDP / Local economic development strategies / Rural development strategies / urban regeneration	5 years
Empowered communities	IDP Public participation processes / Customer satisfaction surveys	Yearly (or more frequently)
Effective urban governance	MSDF / IDP / performance management	Yearly reviews
Sustainable finances	CEF / Capital investment prioritisation / Long-term financial strategies and planning	MTREF and 10 years (reviewed yearly)

Source: IUDF, SPLUMA and MSA



3.3.3.5 Overall planning significance of the IUDF in municipal planning

The IUDF provides a comprehensive national policy framework that strengthens the implementation of SPLUMA and guides municipal spatial planning and investment decision-making. The IUDF shifts municipal planning away from fragmented sectoral planning towards:

- 🏡 Integrated spatial planning;
- 🏡 Infrastructure-led spatial transformation;
- 🏡 Compact and efficient urban form;
- 🏡 Inclusive economic growth, and –
- 🏡 Long-term spatial restructuring.

Together, the IUDF, MSDF, IDP, and CEF form the policy-to-implementation chain for urban development within the local government context, ensuring that spatial planning is directly linked to implementation and resource allocation. In this context, the IUDF is a critical instrument for enabling municipalities to transition toward compact, efficient, and inclusive urban systems.

3.3.4 Stellenbosch Municipality's alignment with the IUDF

The Stellenbosch Municipal Spatial Development Framework (MSDF, 2023) demonstrates strong alignment with the IUDF as South Africa's National Urban Policy. The MSDF explicitly recognises the IUDF as a key policy informant and adopts its core objective of achieving compact, connected and coordinated urban development (MSDF, 2023). The section of this report presents a compliance matrix aligning the nine (9) policy levers of the IUDF with the MSDF adopted by the Council on 27 June 2023.

Table 15: MSDF alignment to the IUDF

IUDF policy lever	IUDF requirement	MSDF response	MSDF reference	Compliance assessment
Integrated spatial planning	Promote compact, connected cities; integrated land use	MSDF promotes compact urban form, urban edge containment, nodal hierarchy, and corridor development	Spatial Vision and Structuring Elements	Strong alignment
Spatial integration (SPLUMA principle)	Reduce spatial fragmentation and apartheid spatial form	Corridor-based development (Adam Tas, R304), integration of Stellenbosch–Klapmuts settlements	Spatial Structuring and Development Corridors	Strong alignment



IUDF policy lever	IUDF requirement	MSDF response	MSDF reference	Compliance assessment
Integrated transport and mobility	Public transport, TOD, NMT prioritisation	MSDF promotes TOD along corridors, NMT networks, and reduced car dependency	Transport and Mobility Framework	Moderate–Strong alignment
Integrated human settlement	Inclusive, well-located housing	Focus on densification, infill, upgrading informal settlements, and inclusionary housing.	Human Settlements Strategy and Inclusionary Zoning Policy	Strong alignment
Integrated urban infrastructure	Infrastructure-led development and coordinated investment	Capital Expenditure Framework (CEF) aligns infrastructure with spatial priorities; catalytic infrastructure projects	Infrastructure and CEF Chapter	Strong alignment
Land governance and management	Manage land use efficiently; protect strategic land	Urban edge enforcement; protection of agricultural land; densification policies	Land Use Management and Rural Protection	Strong alignment
Inclusive economic development	Support inclusive, spatially targeted economic growth	Strengthening of Adam Tas Corridor, Klampmuts node; agri-processing and tourism economy	Economic Development Strategy	Strong alignment
Empowered active communities	Participatory planning and inclusive governance	Public participation processes embedded in MSDF preparation and LSDFs	Public Participation and Governance Sections	Compliant
Effective urban governance	Integrated, coordinated planning and budgeting	Alignment between MSDF, IDP, CEF; intergovernmental coordination (e.g., Capital Planning Forum)	Institutional and Implementation Framework	Strong alignment
Sustainable finances	Financial sustainability and investment prioritisation	CEF aligns capital budgeting with spatial priorities, leveraging IUDG funding	Finance and Implementation	Strong alignment
Spatial sustainability (SPLUMA principle)	Protect the environment and promote resilience	Protection of biodiversity, agricultural land, and environmental systems	Strategic Environmental Framework	Strong alignment
Infrastructure-led growth (cross-cutting IUDF principle)	Use infrastructure to unlock development	Identification of Priority Development Areas (PDAs) and catalytic projects (Adam Tas)	Implementation Strategy	Strong alignment

Source: Own using MSDF/CEF 2023



3.3.4.1 Summary of compliance of the MSDF with the IUDF

The MSDF (2023) demonstrates full alignment with the IUDF spatial transformation objectives. It translates the NUP into a localised spatial strategy by:

- ✚ Promoting compact, connected, and integrated settlements;
- ✚ Strong integration of infrastructure-led development and spatial planning;
- ✚ Effective use of corridor development and nodal structuring; and
- ✚ Clear linkage between planning, budgeting (CEF), and implementation.

3.3.4.2 Key Strengths

The MSDF (2023) demonstrates the following key strengths:

- ✚ Strong urban edge management and compact city approach;
- ✚ Clear corridor-based spatial structuring, i.e., Adam Tas Corridor;
- ✚ Integration of CEF as a spatial investment tool; and
- ✚ Alignment with IUDF implementation mechanisms (e.g., Integrated Urban Development Grant (IUDG), Priority Development Areas (PDAs)).

3.3.4.3 Areas for strengthening / Identified gaps.

The following areas of improvement have been identified in the MSDF (2023):

- ✚ Further details are required on public transport implementation and TOD phasing.
- ✚ Strengthening monitoring indicators aligned to the IUDF outcomes; and
- ✚ Enhanced articulation of community empowerment beyond participation processes.

3.3.5 Conclusion

The Stellenbosch MSDF/CEF (Final Amended 2023) is substantially compliant with the Integrated Urban Development Framework (IUDF) and successfully translates national urban policy into a locally responsive spatial strategy. The MSDF and the CEF demonstrate strong alignment across all IUDF policy levers, particularly in relation to spatial integration, infrastructure-led development, and inclusive economic growth, thereby supporting the municipality's long-term spatial transformation objectives.



3.4 SDG 13 Climate Action

3.4.1 Goal 13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

Goal description: Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 13 calls for urgent climate action on two fronts: cutting greenhouse gas emissions (mitigation) and strengthening resilience to climate-related hazards (adaptation). Climate change has emerged as one of the greatest intergenerational challenges threatening sustainable development, environmental health, and human well-being. Its effects have been observable for decades and are projected to worsen throughout the 21st century, underscoring the need for bold action now. In 2024, climate change reached alarming new levels globally, with some impacts already irreversible for centuries. For the first time on record, the world's average temperature exceeded 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, making 2024 the hottest year in 175 years of observations. Extreme weather events, including tropical cyclones, floods and droughts, led to the highest number of new displacements in 16 years, worsening food crises and causing massive economic losses and social instability.

Yet, with swift and courageous action, we can still avert the worst outcomes of the climate crisis. Limiting long-term global warming to 1.5°C remains scientifically possible if greenhouse gas emissions are halved by 2030. Achieving this requires transformational change across every sector of the economy: a rapid transition to net-zero emissions powered by clean energy and innovation. Every fraction of a degree of avoided warming reduces risks, lowering future costs, and preventing irreversible damage to people and the planet. At the same time, investment in climate resilience needs to be scaled up.

If left unchecked, climate change places the world on a perilous path toward more than 3°C of warming by century's end. Scientists warn that this would trigger catastrophic tipping points and overwhelm the limits of adaptation. In response, countries, cities, and communities — including youth movements — are increasingly united in calls for urgent, collective action. The cost of inaction now far exceeds the investment needed for climate solutions. Proactive action offers the opportunity not only to safeguard public well-being and protect development gains, but also to realise co-benefits such as job creation, improved public health, and inclusive green growth.



3.4.2 Stellenbosch Municipality's Progress Towards Meeting SDG 13

Stellenbosch Municipality faces a growing climate risk profile, shaped by projections of a hotter and drier climate by 2050 (CSIR, 2023a). These changes are expected to increase heat stress, wildfire risk, water scarcity, and flood exposure in vulnerable areas. Such shifts have direct implications for municipal service delivery, particularly in the areas of stormwater management, water security, roads, electricity infrastructure, and fire services. As assets face rising stress and maintenance demands, climate change will place increasing pressure on both operational budgets and long-term planning systems. It also threatens sectors such as agriculture and tourism, while intensifying risks for communities exposed to heat, resource scarcity, and environmental hazards. As such, integrating climate risk into spatial planning, infrastructure investment, and governance systems is essential to ensure that development in the Stellenbosch Municipal area remains resilient and inclusive.

Although this is Stellenbosch Municipality's first Voluntary Local Review (VLR), several important steps have already been taken toward aligning local action with the objectives of SDG 13: Climate Action:

Under Target 13.1 — strengthening resilience and adaptive capacity — the municipality has partially reported on disaster impacts (Indicator 13.1.1) using available fire incident data as a proxy. The municipality also meets Indicator 13.1.3, having adopted a Council-approved Disaster Management Plan (DMP). Looking forward, significant investment has gone into flood resilience — most notably through the Franschhoek Flood Resilience Programme. In addition, the development of a Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDS) Strategy marks a shift toward water-sensitive design and infrastructure that can better handle both drought and flood risks.

Under Target 13.2 — integrating climate change into policies and planning — the municipality does not yet have a greenhouse gas inventory (Indicator 13.2.2), but plans are underway to assess the feasibility of developing one in alignment with the Air Quality Management Plan. Although Indicator 13.2.1 applies formally at the national level, Stellenbosch Municipality has begun local-level climate planning with the appointment of its first Climate Change Expert on 1 June 2025, funded through the Experts Fund for Municipal Partnerships Worldwide (SKEW). This marks the first time climate change is being addressed as a dedicated function within the Municipality. Since then, a Climate Change Strategy (CCS) has been under development, which includes both mitigation and adaptation actions.



Under Target 13.3 — improving education, awareness, and institutional capacity — a wide range of activities have taken place since June 2025. These include the launch of the Municipality’s first climate change awareness campaign via social media, focused on public education around climate change and fire risk, and a set of participatory stakeholder sessions in Franschhoek that combine climate literacy with disaster recovery. Further engagement was integrated into IDP public participation events, and a capacity-building programme for municipal staff was initiated in November 2025, starting with a technical workshop for the Infrastructure Directorate. These efforts represent a growing emphasis on institutional learning and public involvement in climate resilience.

This VLR serves as a foundation, and it is anticipated that future reviews will reflect more comprehensive progress as climate action becomes embedded across municipal systems.

3.4.3 Methodology

As Stellenbosch Municipality’s first VLR, this chapter places strong emphasis on establishing a credible baseline and identifying early climate actions undertaken or planned. The methodology reflects the current state of municipal data availability, institutional capacity, and overall reporting readiness.

Scope and timeframe: The reporting period for this chapter is defined as the baseline period covering activities up to 30 June 2025. Where relevant, post-baseline developments (after 30 June 2025) are also included to reflect the Municipality’s recent climate-related initiatives and to highlight the momentum following the appointment of a dedicated Climate Change Expert on 1 June 2025.

Indicator selection and interpretation: This chapter follows the official SDG 13 targets and indicators as outlined by the United Nations. However, several indicators — particularly 13.1.2, 13.2.1, 13.3.1, 13.a.1, and 13.b.1 — are not formally applicable at the local government level. Despite this, Stellenbosch Municipality has elected to report qualitatively on selected aspects of these indicators where local relevance exists.

In cases where full reporting against global indicators was not possible, locally appropriate proxies and narrative reporting were used. For example, Indicator 13.1.1, which calls for reporting disaster-related impacts per 100,000 population, was partially addressed using fire incident and casualty data collected by the Municipality’s Fire Services from 2021 to 2025 (Stellenbosch Municipality, 2026). These data were disaggregated by area, structure type, and casualty type. Where further demographic disaggregation (e.g. by age, gender, or disability) was not available, limitations are clearly noted.



Data sources and validation: The methodology used to collect the data for the Comprehensive Fire and Fatality Analysis Report (Stellenbosch Municipality, 2026) employed a multi-stage quantitative approach, sourcing data from municipal fire and rescue logs and validating these data through cross-referencing emergency service records. The following methods were used to ensure data accuracy and trend reliability:

- ✦ Data sourcing: primary data were extracted from the Stellenbosch Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) incident logs. Each entry corresponds to an official dispatch record identified by a unique Incident Number (e.g., SFSBF21013004);
- ✦ Classification criteria: incidents were categorised into two primary structural types;
 - ✦ informal structures — non-permanent dwellings typically found in high-density settlements (e.g., Kayamandi, Langrug); and ii) formal structures — permanent brick-and-mortar buildings, including residential flats and private homes (e.g., Cloeteville, Stellenbosch town);
- ✦ Casualty definitions: fatalities — deaths confirmed on-site or as a direct result of fire-related injuries. Injuries — any physical harm recorded by emergency responders requiring medical intervention or hospitalisation;
- ✦ Geographic mapping: incidents were mapped by street address or settlement zone to identify geographic hotspots — areas where the frequency of fire or the severity of loss exceeds regional averages; and
- ✦ Analysis framework: data were aggregated by calendar year to calculate annual totals and identify shifts in risk. The 2025 data include all recorded incidents up to the current reporting date.

Post-baseline developments were recorded through direct collaboration with internal stakeholders and directorates leading on infrastructure, environmental resilience, and disaster risk reduction projects. Key initiatives — such as the Franschhoek Flood Resilience Programme, the development of the SUDS Strategy, and progress toward a municipal CCS — are described based on internal documentation, interviews, and progress updates received from project leads.

Limitations: As a baseline review, several limitations are acknowledged:

- ✦ Incomplete data for several global indicators, particularly those requiring long-term emissions tracking or demographic disaggregation;
- ✦ Limited institutional capacity, with only one full-time staff member currently dedicated to climate change; and



The short timeframe between the appointment of dedicated climate staff and the VLR baseline cut-off date, which meant that many initiatives were still in planning or early implementation phases.

The following section outlines the available data during the baseline reporting period (up to 30 June 2025) and highlights additional activities undertaken or planned post-baseline.

Table 16: SDG Target 13.1

Target 13.1: Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries		
Indicator	Baseline (up to 30 June 2025)	Post-Baseline Developments (after 30 June 2025)
13.1.1: Number of deaths, missing persons and directly affected persons attributed to disasters per 100 000 population	35 incidents affecting 52 people (36 injuries, 16 fatalities) and 166 structures (148 informal, 18 formal)	2 major incidents occurred, damaging 50 informal structures and causing 2 fatalities
13.1.2: Number of countries that adopt and implement national disaster risk reduction strategies in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030	<i>Not applicable at the local government level</i>	<i>Not applicable at the local government level</i>
13.1.3: Proportion of local governments that adopt and implement local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with national disaster risk reduction strategies	Disaster Management Plan (DMP) adopted by Council on 26 April 2023	Programme initiated to upgrade the DMP from Level 1 to Level 3

Indicator 13.1.1: Number of deaths, missing persons and directly affected persons attributed to disasters per 100 000 population

Stellenbosch Municipality does not yet have a comprehensive system in place for tracking disaster-related deaths, missing persons, or directly affected individuals, particularly in a way that is disaggregated by age, gender, disability status, or population group. This limits full reporting against Indicator 13.1.1. However, fire-related incidents are consistently recorded by the municipality's fire services, and provide a valuable proxy for local disaster-related impacts (Stellenbosch Municipality, 2026). These records are disaggregated by year, location, structure type, and casualty type (Table below).



Table 17: Fire-Related Incidents in Stellenbosch Municipality by year, location, structure type, and casualty type (2021–2025).

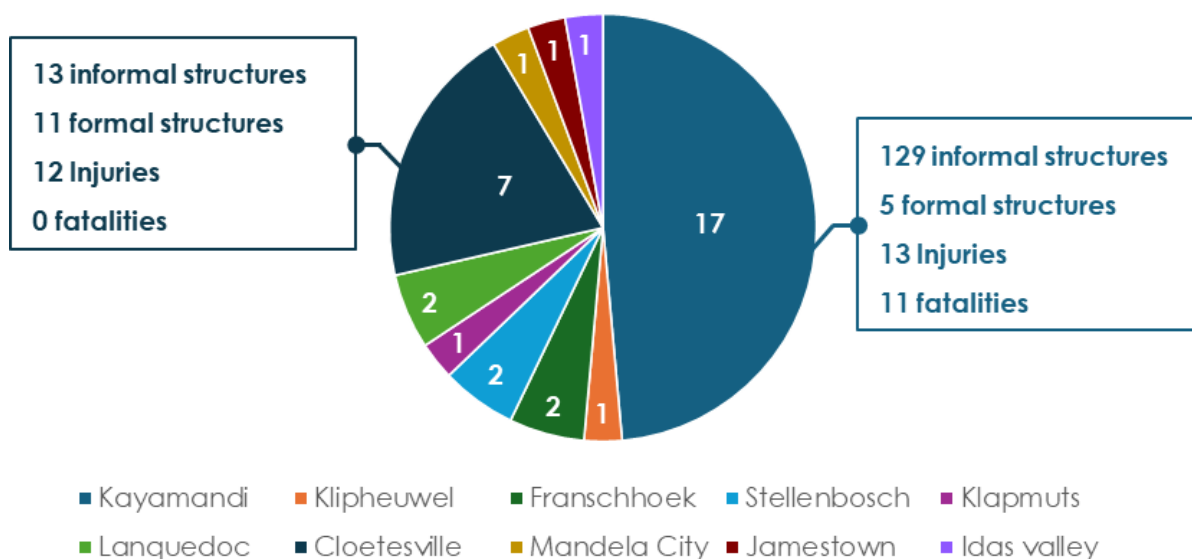
Year	Location	No of incidents	Structure type		Casualty type	
			Informal	Formal	Injuries	Fatalities
2021	Kayamandi	2	37	2	3	2
	Klipheuwel	1	0	1	0	1
	Franschhoek	1	0	0	2	0
2022	Stellenbosch	1	0	0	1	0
	Kayamandi	5	19	1	4	4
	Klapmuts	1	1	0	1	0
	Lanquedoc	2	1	0	2	0
	Cloetesville	1	2	2	2	0
2023	Kayamandi	8	71	2	5	4
	Mandela City	1	2	0	0	1
	Cloetesville	1	1	0	1	0
	Stellenbosch	1	0	0	1	0
	Jamestown	1	1	0	1	2
2024	Kayamandi	1	1	0	0	1
	Cloetesville	3	10	7	6	0
	Franschhoek	1	1	0	1	1
	Idas valley	1	0	1	2	0
2025	Kayamandi	1	1	0	1	0
	Cloetesville	2	0	2	3	0
Baseline total (up to 30 June 2025)		35	148	18	36	16
2025	Franschhoek	1	30	0	0	1
2025	Kayamandi	1	20	0	0	1
Cumulative total (Jan 2024–Dec 2025)		37	198	18	36	18

Source: Stellenbosch Municipality (2026) Comprehensive Fire and Fatality Analysis Report (2021–2025).

During the baseline period (1 January 2021 to 30 June 2025), a total of 35 fire-related incidents were recorded, affecting 52 individuals (36 injuries and 16 fatalities) and 166 structures (148 informal and 18 formal dwellings). The majority of incidents occurred in high-density informal settlements, most notably Kayamandi, which emerged as the area most at risk for both structural loss and fatalities. Cloetesville appears to be the area where formal structures are most affected, with a high ratio of injuries relative to the number of incidents. 2023 was the most severely affected year overall, with a total of 12 fire-related incidents resulting in damage to 75 informal structures and 7 fatalities, mostly in Kayamandi. 2022 recorded the highest number of injuries (10), again concentrated in the Kayamandi area. In 2024, fire-related impacts in formal structures areas rose considerably (8 in total), primarily in Cloetesville.



Figure 14: Number of fire-related incidents recorded in the Stellenbosch Municipal area by location (01 January 2021 – 30 June 2025)



While this VLR establishes a baseline up to 30 June 2025, post-baseline observations are included to inform forward planning. In the second half of 2025, two high-impact fires occurred in the informal settlements of Kayamandi and Langrug (Franschhoek), damaging a combined 50 informal structures. These events make 2025 the second most affected year after 2023 in terms of structural loss. Notably, Langrug has newly emerged as a high-risk informal settlement area experiencing severe fire-related impacts, alongside the well-established hotspot of Kayamandi.

These data reveal that, while formal structures are not immune to fire-related incidents, the burden of structural loss and fatalities is disproportionately concentrated in informal settlements. These findings underscore an urgent need for targeted fire-safety interventions, risk education, and infrastructure improvements in high-density informal areas, particularly in Kayamandi and Langrug.

Indicator 13.1.3: Proportion of local governments that adopt and implement local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with national disaster risk reduction strategies

Stellenbosch Municipality has adopted and is implementing a local disaster risk reduction (DRR) strategy through its council-approved DMP (Stellenbosch Municipality, 2025), which provides the institutional framework for disaster risk governance, preparedness, response, recovery, and long-term risk reduction within the municipal area. The DMP guides the municipality's approach to identifying hazards, reducing vulnerability, strengthening



institutional coordination, and building resilience across communities, infrastructure systems, and key economic sectors.

The DMP is aligned with the legislative framework established under the Disaster Management Act, 2002 (Act No. 57 of 2002) and the National Disaster Management Framework 2005. It also contributes to global commitments under the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. The current DMP was developed as a Level 1 plan and formally adopted by Council on 26 April 2023 to guide the municipality's disaster risk management functions. The plan is subject to periodic review to ensure continued alignment with legislative requirements, evolving risk patterns, and institutional capacity.

During the baseline reporting period (before 30 June 2025), the municipality implemented a range of disaster risk reduction activities, including ongoing risk monitoring, coordination with provincial and district disaster management structures, preparedness planning, and strengthening institutional response arrangements.

Following 30 June 2025, Stellenbosch Municipality initiated a structured programme to upgrade the existing DMP to a fully compliant Level 3 DMP. This programme includes a comprehensive ward-based multi-hazard risk assessment, integration of climate change projections to 2050, development of operational Target Hazard Plans for priority risks, and the strengthening of governance mechanisms such as a Municipal Disaster Management Forum and sectoral hazard custodian framework. These actions aim to further institutionalise DRR, strengthen climate resilience, and enhance early warning and coordination mechanisms across municipal sectors.

Table 18: SDG Target 13.2

Target 13.2: Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning		
Indicator	Baseline (up to 30 June 2025)	Post-Baseline Developments (after 30 June 2025)
13.2.1: Number of countries with nationally determined contributions, long-term strategies, national adaptation plans and adaptation communications, as reported to the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change	<i>Not applicable at the local government level</i>	<i>Not applicable at the local government level</i>
13.2.2: Total greenhouse gas emissions per year	<i>Not data currently available</i>	<i>Not data currently available</i>



Indicator 13.2.1: Number of countries with nationally determined contributions, long-term strategies, national adaptation plans and adaptation communications, as reported to the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

While Indicator 13.2.1 is designed to track national-level commitments under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), local governments are increasingly recognising the importance of integrating climate change mitigation and adaptation into their own strategies, plans, and operations. Although municipalities are not required to report against this indicator, Stellenbosch Municipality has opted to include it in the VLR as a reflection of its growing institutional commitment to addressing climate change.

During the baseline period, Stellenbosch Municipality had no dedicated climate change strategy or implementation framework in place. Climate change considerations were limited to risk identification in the municipal Integrated Development Plan (IDP), where climate change was recognised as one of the top five strategic risks, and within the DMP. Broader climate-related guidance was largely drawn from the Cape Winelands District Municipality (CWDM) Climate Change Adaptation Plan (CSIR, 2023a).

A significant shift began on 1 June 2025, with the appointment of Stellenbosch Municipality's first dedicated Climate Change Expert, funded through SKEW, implemented by Engagement Global gGmbH in collaboration with the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ). This marked the first full-time role within the municipality dedicated exclusively to climate change, with the position funded through the SKEW programme until September 2027. Although this falls just one month before the baseline cut-off date, it represents a key institutional milestone and sets the foundation for structured climate action moving forward.

Following the appointment of the Climate Change Expert, Stellenbosch Municipality initiated a formal process to develop its first Climate Change Strategy (CCS), which will include both adaptation and mitigation components. A climate risk assessment was completed using the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) Green Book data (CSIR, 2023b) and methodology, providing an up-to-date evidence base for municipal decision-making. Based on these risks, the CCS will set out a locally tailored programme of climate responses and establish a framework for integrating climate considerations across municipal functions. In addition to the development of the CCS, a comprehensive review of all key municipal



policies, plans, and strategies is underway, with the aim of mainstreaming climate change across governance, infrastructure, land use, and service delivery.

Indicator 13.2.2: Total greenhouse gas emissions per year

Stellenbosch Municipality does not yet have a municipal-level greenhouse gas inventory in place and is therefore unable to report quantitative data under Indicator 13.2.2 at this stage. However, the importance of local-level mitigation has been recognised, and the development of a greenhouse gas inventory is being explored as a key intervention under the municipality's forthcoming CCS, with the aim of aligning it with emissions data already collected under the municipality's Air Quality Management Plan. This approach is intended to reduce duplication, improve data accessibility, and support integrated planning across environmental management functions.

Other planned mitigation interventions under the CCS include:

- ✚ Improving energy efficiency in municipal operations and infrastructure;
- ✚ Increasing the share of energy from renewable sources across the municipal area; and
- ✚ Expanding recycling efforts and exploring Waste-to-Energy opportunities.

While formal emissions tracking is not yet in place, these initiatives signal a growing institutional commitment to local climate mitigation, in line with South Africa's national climate targets and the goals of Indicator 13.2.2.

Table 19: SDG Target 13.3

Target 13.3: Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning		
Indicator	Baseline (up to 30 June 2025)	Post-Baseline Developments (after 30 June 2025)
13.3.1: Extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development are mainstreamed in (a) national education policies; (b) curricula; (c) teacher education; and (d) student assessment	<i>Not applicable at the local government level</i>	<i>Not applicable at the local government level</i>

Indicator 13.3.1: Extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development are mainstreamed in (a) national education policies; (b) curricula; (c) teacher education; and (d) student assessment

While this indicator is formally designed to track national education systems, Stellenbosch Municipality has opted to report on it from a local government perspective in alignment with



SDG Target 13.3, which calls for improved education, awareness-raising, and institutional capacity for climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction, and early warning.

During the baseline period (up to 30 June 2025), Stellenbosch Municipality had no dedicated staff capacity or structured programmes in place for climate change education or awareness-raising. Human and institutional capacity for climate-related risk reduction, adaptation, and mitigation was consequently limited. No education or outreach events on climate change were hosted by the municipality during this period. However, since July 2025, the municipality has launched multiple public-facing education and awareness initiatives. These include:

-  **Community Engagement Sessions:** As part of the municipality's flood resilience efforts in Franschhoek, a series of participatory community engagement sessions took place in July 2025, August 2025, and February 2026, with further engagements planned. These sessions engage communities that were severely affected by the 2023 floods and focus on co-learning, where residents and municipal staff jointly explore the causes, consequences and solutions to the flood impacts experienced in 2023. In addition to workshop-style engagements, river walks through flood-prone areas are used to identify vulnerabilities, share local knowledge, and discuss ways climate change is likely to impact flood risk in the area. Discussions also centre on practical actions that households and the municipality can take to strengthen local resilience, with community input feeding directly into the design of the Franschhoek Flood Resilience Programme (see below);
-  **Public participation:** During the September 2025 IDP public participation process, five engagement sessions included a presentation on the municipality's climate change plans and provided space for residents to share how climate change is affecting them, express their priorities, and ask questions directly to the Climate Change Expert. Follow-up engagements are scheduled for April 2026; and
-  **Social Media Campaigns:** In December 2025, the municipality launched its first dedicated climate change awareness campaign via Facebook and X (formerly Twitter), aiming to improve public understanding of climate change. Topics included the distinction between weather and climate, key causes of global warming, and practical actions residents can take. A series of posts focused specifically on the relationship between climate change and fire risk, timed to coincide with the fire season in Stellenbosch. Future campaigns are planned for June and December 2026.



In terms of institutional capacity building, during August and September 2025, the municipality conducted a capacity needs assessment across departments to evaluate their current understanding of climate change, its relevance to their operations, and any ongoing climate-related work. This assessment helped identify key knowledge gaps and opportunities for targeted support. Based on the findings, the first internal capacity-building workshop was held on 27 November 2025 for senior managers and managers within the Infrastructure Directorate. The session focused on presenting localised climate projections for the municipal area and linking these to operational risks, serving as a foundation for integrating climate considerations into strategic and operational planning. To further embed climate literacy and action across the municipality, a series of additional capacity-building workshops is scheduled for September and December 2026, as well as March and June 2027, targeting other key directorates within the municipality.

A key step in strengthening the municipality's DRR and early warning capacity has been the appointment of a Senior Disaster Management Coordinator. This strategic position enhances the municipality's institutional capacity to plan, coordinate, and implement climate-informed early warning systems and risk reduction initiatives, directly supporting long-term resilience planning.

The role ensures that disaster risk management efforts are aligned with both provincial and national early warning frameworks, enabling timely interpretation, dissemination, and response to hazard alerts. Through proactive coordination across municipal departments, the Senior Disaster Management Coordinator facilitates the integration of hazard and climate risk information into local planning processes, standard operating procedures, and emergency preparedness strategies.

Moreover, the position actively strengthens community-level awareness and response mechanisms, fostering a culture of preparedness and enhancing the municipality's ability to mitigate the impacts of climate-related hazards. By institutionalising early warning and risk-informed decision-making, this initiative represents a measurable step toward fulfilling Indicator 13.1.3 and demonstrates the Stellenbosch Municipality's commitment to embedding climate resilience into local disaster risk management practices.

**Table 20: SDG Target 13.a**

Target 13.a: Implement the commitment undertaken by developed-country parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to a goal of mobilising jointly \$100 billion annually by 2020 from all sources to address the needs of developing countries in the context of meaningful mitigation actions and transparency on implementation, and fully operationalise the Green Climate Fund through its capitalisation as soon as possible		
Indicator	Baseline (up to 30 June 2025)	Post-Baseline Developments (after 30 June 2025)
13.a.1: Amounts provided and mobilised in United States dollars per year in relation to the continued existing collective mobilisation goal of the \$100 billion commitment through to 2025	Not applicable to South Africa or at the local government level	
Target 13.b: Promote mechanisms for raising capacity for effective climate change-related planning and management in least developed countries and small island developing States, including focusing on women, youth and local and marginalised communities and NBSP		
13.b.1: Number of least developed countries and small island developing States with nationally determined contributions, long-term strategies, national adaptation plans and adaptation communications, as reported to the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change	Not applicable to South Africa or at the local government level	

3.4.4 Municipal Projects and Programmes Supporting Climate Action

In addition to the indicators formally reported on in this VLR, Stellenbosch Municipality is implementing several projects and programmes that contribute directly to climate action and resilience. While not all of these initiatives align fully with a specific SDG 13 indicator, they reflect the municipality's growing commitment to mainstreaming climate considerations into service delivery, infrastructure, urban planning, and community engagement. This section highlights select examples of ongoing municipal interventions that support climate change action, awareness-raising, and institutional strengthening.

3.4.4.1 Franschhoek Flood Resilience Programme

In response to the growing risk of unpredictable and extreme rainfall events under climate change, Stellenbosch Municipality is implementing a multi-year flood resilience programme in the town of Franschhoek. The programme was initiated following the extreme flood event of September 2023, when the La Cotte River overtopped its banks during a 1-in-200-year rainfall event. The resulting flood caused widespread damage to roads, bridges, homes, and municipal infrastructure, exposing the town's high vulnerability to flood hazards.

A key factor contributing to this vulnerability is historic urban development within the river's natural floodplain, which has reduced the river's effective flow capacity to approximately a 1-in-5-year flood in some areas. Emergency repairs were completed in 2024, but the



municipality recognised that long-term resilience would require more than infrastructure restoration. The Franschhoek Flood Resilience Programme was therefore launched as a phased, long-term climate adaptation intervention running through to 2030.

The programme's primary objective is to increase the flood-carrying capacity of the La Cotte River system to handle at least a 1-in-50-year flood event. However, achieving this requires creative design solutions due to the dense development and private land ownership along the river corridor. A combination of interventions has been proposed, including:

- ✦ Upgrading and enlarging culverts;
- ✦ Strategic river widening in constrained sections;
- ✦ Engineered embankments, berms, and gabions; and
- ✦ Naturalised riverbank treatments where space allows.

The programme is being implemented in phases, beginning downstream and progressing upstream. The initial focus is on culvert upgrades, with later phases addressing floodplain widening, erosion control, and ecological enhancements. Although the early design relied heavily on hard-engineered solutions, future phases will integrate nature-based interventions, such as:

- ✦ Riparian buffer zones with indigenous flood-resilient vegetation;
- ✦ Vegetated banks for erosion control; and
- ✦ Ecological corridors for education and co-benefits like urban cooling and biodiversity enhancement.

A major component of the programme is community engagement. Many river-adjacent properties are privately owned, and securing community cooperation has required ongoing dialogue to address concerns around land use, construction disruption, and property impacts. This participatory approach, including river walks and community sessions, ensures that local knowledge informs the programme's design and builds long-term support.

3.4.4.2 Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) Strategy

As part of the ongoing review of Stellenbosch Municipality's Stormwater Master Plan, the municipality has recognised the need to adapt its stormwater infrastructure in response to intensifying climate risks. In particular, projected increases in both water scarcity during prolonged drought periods and flooding caused by high-intensity rainfall events have prompted a shift in how the stormwater system is planned and managed.



To address these dual risks, the municipality has initiated the development of an SUDS Strategy, which will form a dedicated component of the revised Stormwater Master Plan. The strategy aims to modernise the municipality's approach to stormwater by treating it not only as a drainage challenge, but also as a valuable resource that can contribute to local water security.

Key objectives of the SUDS Strategy include:

- ✚ Designing infrastructure that retains and reuses stormwater runoff during dry periods;
- ✚ Improving the capacity of urban drainage systems to absorb and safely convey excess runoff during extreme rainfall events; and
- ✚ Reducing urban flood risks while supporting groundwater recharge, water quality, and climate co-benefits.

While the strategy is still in development, it represents an important step toward climate-responsive infrastructure planning. By embedding SUDS principles into municipal policy and design standards, Stellenbosch aims to future-proof its stormwater systems against the growing variability and intensity of climate-related water risks.

3.4.4.3 Dwars River Project

The Dwars River Project was initiated in response to the devastating impacts of the September 2023 floods, which were classified as a 1-in-100-year event in the Dwars River system. The floods caused extensive damage to the river system, leading to severe bank erosion and the loss of critical municipal infrastructure, including sewer pipelines, a bridge, sections of road, and private properties. The event also significantly degraded the ecological health of the river corridor.

While initial municipal recovery efforts in 2024 and 2025 focused on reconstructing the Raising Main Sewer pipeline, which had been washed away during the flood, a broader and more sustainable rehabilitation process commenced in 2026, with the planning and implementation phases envisioned to span at least three years.

The project prioritises the use of nature-based solutions to stabilise eroded riverbanks and restore ecological integrity. A Rehabilitation Plan is currently being developed and will be informed by ecological condition assessments, flow characteristics studies, and expert consultations. Consultants have been appointed, and field inspections and stakeholder engagements have already begun. The project aims to enhance both climate resilience and



ecosystem health in the Dwars River catchment, while reducing future flood vulnerability and supporting long-term infrastructure protection.

3.4.4.4 Tree Planting Project

Stellenbosch's historic town centre is internationally recognised for its majestic English oak trees (*Quercus robur*), many of which are centuries old and officially designated as National Monuments. These trees form a vital part of the town's living heritage and cultural landscape. However, they are now under serious threat from the Polyphagous Shot Hole Borer (PSHB), an invasive beetle that introduces a lethal fungus into large trees, compromising water transport and leading to widespread die-off.

In response, Stellenbosch Municipality has launched the Tree Planting Project to preserve the town's urban tree canopy through a coordinated strategy of protection, removal, and replanting. The project is a collaborative effort between the municipality, concerned residents, Stellenbosch University researchers, and the Stellenbosch Trail Fund NPC, which oversees fundraising and public engagement.

Key elements of the project include:

- ✦ Safe removal of PSHB-infected or dead trees in line with protocols from Heritage Western Cape;
- ✦ Replanting with more resilient species, such as Turkish oak (*Quercus cerris*) and pin oak (*Quercus palustris*), which show greater resistance to the borer;
- ✦ A commitment to plant at least 30 new trees in 2026, with maintenance guaranteed for the first three years (watering, soil care, root barrier systems); and
- ✦ Public sponsorship opportunities that allow residents and donors to fund new trees, complete with personalised plaques.

The municipality handles technical aspects such as tree removal approvals, planting pit preparation, and installation of BioBarrier root systems and permeable paving. Community partners lead on procurement, fundraising, and public outreach. Each sponsored tree costs R25 000, covering purchase, planting, maintenance, and replacement if needed.

While the project's immediate goal is to protect Stellenbosch's historic aesthetic and environmental character, it also contributes to broader climate adaptation goals by:

- ✦ Cooling urban areas through shade and evapotranspiration;
- ✦ Enhancing stormwater absorption and soil stability;
- ✦ Increasing carbon sequestration; and



🚩 Building community awareness and engagement in ecosystem protection.

This project demonstrates how cultural heritage and climate resilience can be addressed together, and how community partnerships can drive adaptive urban action at a local level.

3.4.5 Challenges in Meeting Goal 13

Stellenbosch Municipality's growing commitment to addressing climate change is clear, but significant challenges remain that constrain the scale and speed of local climate action. These challenges are not unique to Stellenbosch Municipality and are shared by many local municipalities across South Africa — particularly those operating under tight budgets, complex mandates, and limited technical capacity.

One of the most pressing challenges is institutional capacity. At present, the municipality has only one dedicated staff member focused full-time on climate change. While this appointment in June 2025 marked a significant step forward — and positions Stellenbosch ahead of many peer municipalities where climate functions are typically added onto environmental or planning roles — the scale of the climate crisis far exceeds what a single post can address. Climate change is cross-cutting by nature, impacting every municipal function from infrastructure and energy to water services, housing, and emergency response. Addressing it effectively requires coordination, technical skill, and time — all of which are difficult to sustain within current resourcing levels. The municipality's dedicated climate change post is currently funded only until September 2027, raising concerns about long-term institutional stability and the ability to build and maintain internal momentum.

A second key challenge lies in securing strategic and political buy-in. Climate change is often perceived as an additional issue — a separate environmental concern — rather than a driver that will worsen existing development challenges. In the context of constrained budgets and pressing service delivery needs, climate action can be deprioritised in favour of more visible or immediate development issues such as housing, roads, or basic infrastructure. Yet in reality, climate risks undermine all of these sectors, and failing to address them will compromise long-term development gains. Elevating climate change to a core development priority — not just an environmental one — is essential. This shift in mindset requires sustained advocacy, political leadership, and cross-departmental collaboration.

In short, while meaningful progress has begun, Stellenbosch Municipality — like many local municipalities in South Africa — is still at the early stages of mainstreaming climate change across governance systems. To maintain momentum, climate action must be institutionally embedded, supported by adequate capacity and funding, and prioritised as a development



issue, not just an environmental one. Without these shifts, there is a real risk that climate change will continue to be treated as a peripheral concern — even as it increasingly shapes the municipality’s ability to deliver its mandated functions of basic service provision, the protection of vulnerable communities, and building a resilient future.



3.5 SDG 16 Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions

Goal 16 is about promoting peaceful and inclusive societies, providing access to justice for all and building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels. People everywhere should be free of fear from all forms of violence and feel safe as they go about their lives, whatever their ethnicity, faith or sexual orientation.

3.5.1 Overview of Strong Cities Network

The municipality joined the Strong Cities Network after attending a workshop for South African cities on the role of local governments in preventing hate, extremism and polarisation, which Strong Cities and the City of Cape Town co-hosted in May 2023. In December 2023, representatives from Stellenbosch participated in a Strong Cities learning trip to Cape Town for mayors from Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda, as well as other senior city officials. They gave presentations on the many preventative programmes of the Community and Protection Services directorate.

3.5.2 Existing Institutional Responses

Although policing and crime prevention are not municipal functions in South Africa, the municipality has institutionalised several safety-related policies according to the Strong Cities Network (n.d.), to enable it to take ownership over the safety of its residents. These include:

- ✚ The **Auxiliary Enforcement Officers Policy**, which allows the municipality “to invest in public safety, train members of the community and open career paths for residents who want to serve their communities”.
- ✚ The **Rewards for Criminal Information Policy**, which establishes guidelines for the management of confidential information and for compensation of persons who provide information leading to arrest, confiscation and recovery of stolen goods.
- ✚ The **Externally Funded Law Enforcement and Traffic Officer Policy** (or “Rent a Cop”), which facilitates “an increase in visible policing” through partnerships between the private sector and the municipality’s Community and Protection Services’ directorate, whereby the former invests in local law enforcement capacities by “renting” officers from the latter to work in specific areas.
- ✚ The Municipal Council approved the establishment of a Community Safety Forum, as described below (Stellenbosch Municipality, 2022).



3.5.3 Collaboration and Partnerships

Stellenbosch Municipality's Community Safety Forum convenes ward councillors, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), the private sector, city and provincial departments and national actors such as the South African Police Service (SAPS), quarterly to discuss matters of community safety.

The Community Safety Forum (CSF) was approved by the Council on 30 March 2022. The CSF is a multi-stakeholder forum that will address matters of community safety and security in the Stellenbosch Municipal area. The purpose of the CSF is to promote the development of communities in a safe environment and provide access to high-quality services at the local government level through multi-agency collaboration between the different spheres of government and communities. The CSF, as a multi-sectoral structure, would champion the coordination, integration, and implementation of crime and violence prevention and community safety initiatives. The CSF has three clusters, namely: Law Enforcement, Social Cohesion and Crime Prevention through Urban Design (Stellenbosch Municipality, 2022).

Furthermore, the municipality is a member of the Stellenbosch Safety Partnership, a broader security partnership that unites private security firms, non-profits like Winelands Safety Initiative, and security actors like SAPS. To coordinate responses to current security incidents and / or emerging security challenges, these actors are housed in a single municipal control room. A specific hotline, a designated WhatsApp number, and various technological investments like CCTV are used to receive reports of such incidents (Strong Cities Network, n.d.).

According to the Strong Cities Network (n.d.), the municipality also has a partnership with Stellenbosch University, which involves a quarterly mayoral forum where the Mayor, Municipal Manager and Directors meet with senior management from the university to share information, raise awareness (e.g., about emerging challenges each party has observed) and develop joint safety and crime prevention interventions.

3.5.4 Community Engagement

The Stellenbosch Municipality has and continues to invest in and support neighbourhood watches (NHWs) and mobilise communities to support them. This includes direct assistance to NHWs to formalise their registration with the Department of Police Oversight and Community Safety (POCS) so that they can qualify for financial support and participate in sanctioned safety projects. The NHWs form a critical part of the community-based safety



focus of the municipality in that they are located in the communities and understand the particular challenges faced by those communities. In addition to the support received from POCS, the municipality continues to provide training for under-resourced neighbourhood watches and provides them with radios for swift and effective communication with the municipal control room as and when required (Stellenbosch Municipality, 2026). To achieve this, the following role players have been identified as key stakeholders and partners for success:

- ✚ South African Police Services (SAPS);
- ✚ Department of Police Oversight and Community Safety (POCS);
- ✚ Cape Winelands District Municipality (CWDM);
- ✚ Neighbourhood watches and farm watches;
- ✚ Community Policing Forums (CPFs);
- ✚ Private and corporate businesses;
- ✚ Private security companies;
- ✚ Winelands Safety Initiative (WSI);
- ✚ Department of Correctional Services (DCS);
- ✚ Department of Justice (DoJ);
- ✚ University of Stellenbosch (Campus Security); and
- ✚ Stellenbosch Municipality
 - Law Enforcement
 - Traffic Services
 - Fire and Rescue
 - Disaster Management.

Building collaborative relationships with our community stakeholders and highlighting the Council's commitment to maintaining strong partnerships with primary law enforcement agencies remains the foundation of ensuring safety throughout the Greater Stellenbosch.

The control room is fully functional and situated at the Stellenbosch Fire Department. The municipality still strives and will continue to, as part of the strategy, to provide a space where all safety and security stakeholders can jointly monitor and communicate with each other on safety and security matters. This includes the monitoring of municipal bylaw transgressions, criminal activity, emergency response in case of disasters, emergencies, and a range of other safety and security-related incidents.

Awareness initiatives have been and will continue to be launched as they contribute to making communities aware of crime prevention tips and other preventative tips, for example,



fire safety and what to do in case of disasters. This will be a joint approach between role-players, supplemented based on crime patterns and situations experienced. Training will also be provided to enhance safety initiatives, for example, road safety (crossing of roads).

3.5.5 Governance components

Stellenbosch Municipality has demonstrated strong institutional performance through its governance systems, including achieving its sixth consecutive clean audit outcome from the Auditor-General of South Africa, the implementation of the Anti-Fraud and Corruption plan, and strong internal controls. The Anti-Fraud and Corruption plan is aligned to the Consequence Management Policy that aims to assist prevention, detection, investigation and sanctioning of fraud, corruption, unethical behaviour, and instances of gross negligence that might result in damage or loss to the municipality.

These measures align with SDG 16.5 and SDG 16.6, which emphasise reducing corruption and strengthening transparency and accountability.



3.6 SDG 17 Partnerships

SDG 17 focuses on strengthening global partnerships to support and achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It recognises that the world's most pressing challenges—poverty, inequality, climate change, and economic instability—cannot be solved by individual countries or sectors acting alone. Instead, effective collaboration across governments, the private sector, civil society, academia, and international organisations is essential (United Nations, 2026).

The Stellenbosch Municipality's Intergovernmental and International Relations (IGR and IR) Policy serves as a strategic framework that guides how the municipality engages with government partners and international stakeholders. Its purpose is to align these engagements with the municipality's broader development goals as outlined in its Integrated Development Plan (IDP). The policy reinforces Stellenbosch's ambition to strengthen its global profile as an appealing destination for tourism, investment, living, and business. It is aligned with the Western Cape Government's International Relations Strategy, which emphasises trade, tourism, investment, skills development, and knowledge sharing (Stellenbosch Municipality, 2025b).

Recognising the growing global role of local governments, the policy underscores the importance of municipalities as drivers of economic growth and development. It also highlights the need for strong intergovernmental collaboration—across local, provincial, national, and non-state partners—to support effective governance, service delivery, economic opportunity, and social upliftment.

International Partnerships Strengthening Community Safety and Climate Resilience in Stellenbosch Municipality

3.6.1 Building Global Municipal Partnerships

Stellenbosch Municipality has actively pursued international partnerships to strengthen its institutional capacity, improve urban governance, and address complex challenges such as community safety, climate change, and sustainable urban development.

Through strategic collaboration with international networks and partner cities, the municipality has participated in knowledge exchange programmes that promote practical solutions to local challenges while contributing to the global United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.



Two notable partnerships illustrate the municipality's commitment to international cooperation and peer learning, namely the following:

- Collaboration with the **Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)** through the South African–German Peer-to-Peer Learning Network.
- Community safety collaboration with Nansana Municipality (Uganda) through the Strong Cities Network (SCN).

These partnerships have enabled Stellenbosch Municipality to both **learn from international best practices and share its own experience**, strengthening governance and service delivery across multiple sectors.

3.6.2 Partnership 1: South African German Peer-to-Peer Learning Network

3.6.2.1 Project Overview

Stellenbosch Municipality participated in the South African–German Peer-to-Peer Learning Network, implemented by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Housing, Urban Development and Building in partnership with South Africa's Department of Cooperative Governance.

The initiative forms part of the **Dialogues for Urban Change (D4UC)** programme and aims to strengthen integrated urban development through collaboration between municipalities in South Africa and Germany.

Through a series of workshops, technical exchanges and site visits, participating cities explored solutions to common urban development challenges, including:

- ✚ Urban safety and public space management;
- ✚ Inner-city regeneration;
- ✚ Climate resilience;
- ✚ Integrated urban planning; and
- ✚ Community engagement.

Stellenbosch Municipality hosted the **third network workshop in February–March 2023**, where international delegates engaged directly with local urban development challenges and community initiatives.



3.6.2.2 Key Outcomes

The partnership generated several institutional and operational outcomes:

Institutional Capacity Building

Municipal officials benefited from international knowledge exchange and peer learning focused on:

- 🇳🇿 Integrated urban planning;
- 🇳🇿 Crime prevention through urban design;
- 🇳🇿 Public space activation;
- 🇳🇿 CBD regeneration; and
- 🇳🇿 Informal economy integration.

Insights gained through the network contributed to improvements in municipal initiatives, including:

- 🇳🇿 Development of a **Parking Management Model**;
- 🇳🇿 Informing the municipality's **CCTV infrastructure procurement processes**; and
- 🇳🇿 Strengthening cross-department coordination on urban development issues.

Community Safety and Training Initiatives

Training programmes supported by the partnership included:

- 🇳🇿 Community safety training;
- 🇳🇿 Park activation initiatives;
- 🇳🇿 Gender-based violence awareness through the **Stepping Stones Programme**; and
- 🇳🇿 Youth resilience training initiatives.

A **baseline safety study in Kayamandi** was also conducted in partnership with NICRO to inform future safety interventions.

Climate Change Expert Appointment

A major outcome of the partnership was the successful application for funding from **GIZ** to appoint a **Climate Change Expert** within the Office of the Municipal Manager.



The appointment (June 2025 – December 2026, in the process of extension application) focuses on strengthening municipal capacity to address climate-related risks following severe weather events experienced in the region, including the **2023 floods that affected Franschhoek**.

Key responsibilities of the expert include:

- ✚ Climate vulnerability assessments;
- ✚ Climate Change Adaptation plan;
- ✚ Emergency preparedness planning;
- ✚ Climate adaptation and mitigation strategies;
- ✚ Ecosystem restoration and river corridor development; and
- ✚ Community awareness and stakeholder engagement.

This initiative significantly strengthens the municipality's ability to respond to climate change impacts.

3.6.3 Partnership 2: The Stellenbosch–Karlsruhe Municipal Partnership

3.6.3.1 Project overview

The Stellenbosch–Karlsruhe Municipal Partnership is a strategic international collaboration between Stellenbosch Municipality and the City of Karlsruhe in Germany. The partnership is facilitated through the Expert Fund for Municipal Partnerships Worldwide (SKEW), implemented by Engagement Global gGmbH in collaboration with Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ).

The partnership was strengthened during the 4th Network Meeting of the South African–German P2P Learning Network and formally established in response to the September 2023 flood events in Franschhoek, which highlighted the municipality's vulnerability to climate risks. A joint application submitted on 31 January 2024 resulted in the successful appointment of a Climate Change Expert within Stellenbosch Municipality to support integrated climate adaptation planning.



3.6.3.2 Key Outcomes

The partnership was entered into with the agreement that it will be responsible for several key performance indicators, namely:

- ✚ To enhance institutional capacity for climate change adaptation within Stellenbosch Municipality;
- ✚ To promote knowledge exchange and mutual learning between Stellenbosch and Karlsruhe;
- ✚ To integrate climate resilience into municipal spatial planning, infrastructure development, and service delivery;
- ✚ To support the development and implementation of Stellenbosch's Climate Change Strategy; and
- ✚ To ensure a needs-based and implementation-driven approach to international cooperation.

3.6.3.3 Beneficiaries of the Partnership

In relation to the various webinars and meetings held, it became evident that a wide range of beneficiaries will benefit from the partnership, especially:

- ✚ Residents of Stellenbosch Municipality, particularly communities vulnerable to climate-related risks such as flooding;
- ✚ Municipal officials and departments through strengthened technical capacity and access to international expertise;
- ✚ Local businesses and stakeholders are benefiting from improved infrastructure resilience and sustainable planning; and
- ✚ Broader regional and global networks through shared knowledge and best practices in climate adaptation.

3.6.3.4 Key Outcomes and Alignment with the SDGs

- **Improved Climate Resilience (SDG 13: Climate Action):**
Enhanced capacity to respond to climate risks through informed planning, technical support, and the integration of climate adaptation measures into municipal strategies.
- **Sustainable Urban Development (SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities):**
Strengthened spatial planning and infrastructure resilience, contributing to safer, more inclusive, and sustainable human settlements.



- **Strengthened Global Partnerships (SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals):**
Effective international cooperation enables knowledge sharing, technical exchange, and co-development of solutions tailored to local needs.
- **Institutional Capacity Building:**
Appointment of a Climate Change Expert and ongoing technical engagements have improved internal capacity to implement climate-responsive policies and projects.
- **Tangible Local Impact:**
A strong focus on implementation ensures that knowledge exchange translates into practical interventions and measurable improvements within the municipality.

3.6.4 Partnership 3: Community Safety Collaboration with Nansana Municipality

3.6.4.1 Project Overview

Through participation in the Strong Cities Network, Stellenbosch Municipality established a city-to-city partnership with Nansana Municipality in Uganda to strengthen community-based safety initiatives.

Nansana faces growing security challenges linked to rapid urbanisation, youth unemployment and social vulnerability. Municipal leaders identified Stellenbosch's **Neighbourhood Watch model** as a potential framework that could be adapted to their local context.

Two technical exchange visits took place:

- **May 2023:** Initial Neighbourhood Watch training and capacity building; and
- **August 2024:** Follow-up engagement focusing on implementation progress and community structures.

The collaboration focused on sharing governance frameworks, operational guidance and community mobilisation strategies to support the development of sustainable neighbourhood safety initiatives.



3.6.4.2 Key Outcomes

Training and Capacity Building

Stellenbosch officials conducted training sessions covering:

- ✦ Establishment and governance of Neighbourhood Watch structures;
- ✦ Volunteer roles and responsibilities;
- ✦ Coordination with police authorities;
- ✦ Community mobilisation strategies; and
- ✦ Reporting and communication systems.

Participants were guided through practical steps to establish neighbourhood safety initiatives, including the development of constitutions, leadership structures and formal registration processes.

Development of Community Safety Structures

Several communities in Nansana have developed neighbourhood safety initiatives, including:

- ✦ **Nansana East I A Zone:** Community safety representatives and a WhatsApp communication network with approximately **145 members**;
- ✦ **West II A Zone:** **40 Neighbourhood Watch members** and communication platforms with over **200 participants**;
- ✦ **Nabweru South Cell III:** Over **500 active Neighbourhood Watch volunteers** coordinating safety activities;
- ✦ **Buwambo Area:** Youth-led initiatives; and
- ✦ organised neighbourhood safety structures across five zones.

Strengthened Police–Community Collaboration

Engagement with the District Police Commissioner reinforced the importance of collaboration between community safety initiatives and law enforcement authorities.

Police representatives confirmed support for neighbourhood safety initiatives and recommended regular information sharing and structured safety programmes.



3.6.5 Beneficiaries of the Partnerships

The partnerships generated benefits at multiple levels.

Institutional Beneficiaries

Municipal officials from Stellenbosch Municipality benefited from:

- ✚ International knowledge exchange;
- ✚ Exposure to global urban development practices; and
- ✚ Capacity building in climate resilience and community safety.

Municipal leaders and officials in Nansana Municipality also benefited from training and institutional support in establishing community safety structures.

Community Beneficiaries

Community members benefited through:

- ✚ Community safety training programmes;
- ✚ Youth resilience initiatives;
- ✚ Gender-based violence awareness training; and
- ✚ Neighbourhood safety initiatives.

Key statistics include:

- ✚ **25 youth participants** trained in resilience programmes in Stellenbosch;
- ✚ **More than 500 Neighbourhood Watch volunteers** are participating in safety initiatives in Nansana; and
- ✚ **Hundreds of residents** participating in community communication and safety networks.

3.6.6 Contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals

The partnerships contribute to several SDGs, namely the following:

SDG 11 – Sustainable Cities and Communities

- ✚ Strengthening urban safety initiatives;
- ✚ Improving public space management; and



- Supporting inclusive community participation.

SDG 13 – Climate Action

- Climate vulnerability assessments;
- Climate adaptation planning;
- Municipal climate resilience initiatives.

SDG 16 – Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

- Strengthening governance and community safety structures; and
- Improving collaboration between communities and law enforcement.

SDG 17 – Partnerships for the Goals

- International municipal cooperation;
- Knowledge exchange between cities; and
- Multi-level governance and institutional collaboration.

3.6.7 Overall Impact of the Partnerships

These partnerships demonstrate the value of international cooperation in strengthening municipal capacity and addressing complex development challenges.

Through collaboration with international partners, Stellenbosch Municipality has enhanced its institutional knowledge, strengthened community safety initiatives and improved its ability to address climate-related risks.

Importantly, these partnerships also position Stellenbosch Municipality as both a learner and contributor in global municipal networks, sharing local expertise while benefiting from international best practices.

The initiatives highlight how global partnerships can deliver practical benefits at the local level, contributing to safer communities, stronger institutions and more resilient cities.



During the partnerships between Stellenbosch Municipality, GIZ, and Nansana Municipality, several key insights for future municipal cooperation and local development initiatives were experienced, namely:

- **Practical Knowledge Exchange**

Structured peer-to-peer learning and technical exchanges create tangible outcomes when paired with live, locally relevant projects.

- **Local Ownership Ensures Sustainability**

Initiatives succeed when communities, local leaders, and municipal officials are actively involved in designing, implementing, and managing projects.

- **Multi-Level Partnerships**

Collaboration across international partners, municipal departments, law enforcement, and community organisations builds long-term institutional resilience.

- **Integrated Approaches**

Linking climate resilience, urban safety, and social inclusion initiatives ensures broader impact across multiple SDGs, while addressing interdependent local challenges.

3.6.8 Photos of International Partnerships:



Nansana Municipality



1st Network Meeting - Nelson Mandela Bay



2nd Network Meeting - Karlsruhe and Berlin



3rd Network Meeting - Stellenbosch



4th Network Meeting - Nuremberg



5th Network Meeting - KwaDukuza and uMhlathuze



6th Network Meeting - Ludwigsburg, Heidelberg



7th Network Meeting - Bottrop



CHAPTER 4: CONCLUSION AND WAY FORWARD

Stellenbosch Municipality has already begun contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals through a range of programmes, and establishing a clear baseline was important for measuring progress going forward. While significant work still lies ahead to fully achieve the SDGs, the first critical step was to understand our current position, hence the development of the baseline VLR report.

Through the VLR compilation process, it became evident that greater awareness of the SDGs is needed within the municipality, as well as among external stakeholders, including civil society. Although the municipality has undertaken initiatives that are contributing towards the SDGs, these initiatives were not centrally documented.

The baseline VLR now provides the foundation upon which targets and indicators will be integrated into the municipality's predetermined objectives and core policy documents. The municipality also realises that achieving the SDGs cannot be done in isolation, and true progress will require collaboration with our partners across all sectors.

The VLR will be reviewed and updated every two years to ensure progress is tracked, challenges are identified, and momentum toward achieving the SDGs is maintained.



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