



SOKOINE UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURE

DIRECTORATE OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES (DUS)

Trends in First-Generation Student Admissions at Sokoine University of Agriculture (2022/2023–2024/2025)

**SUBMITTED TO THE COMMITTEE OF PRINCIPALS DEANS AND DIRECTORS
(CoPD)**

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1.0 Introduction

Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA) stands as one of Tanzania's most distinguished public universities, recognized for its leadership in agricultural training, research, and innovation. The University traces its origins to the Faculty of Agriculture of the University of Dar es Salaam, and was elevated to full university status through Parliamentary Act No. 14 of 1984. SUA's main campus is located in Morogoro Municipality, with additional campuses at the Solomon Mahlangu Campus in Mazimbu and the Mizengo Pinda Campus College in Katavi Region.

Since its establishment, SUA has expanded its academic and research portfolio to include agriculture, natural sciences, veterinary medicine, forestry, environmental studies, engineering, education, social sciences, and agribusiness management. This multidisciplinary orientation reflects the University's commitment to addressing complex development challenges through integrated teaching, research, and outreach. SUA's contributions to food security, environmental sustainability, rural development, and policy innovation have made it a key national institution supporting Tanzania's growth agenda.

The University's operations are anchored in the Corporate Strategic Plan (CSP 2021/2022–2030/2031), which envisions SUA as a leading African institution in delivering quality education, research, innovation, and community service in agriculture and allied sciences. The CSP promotes inclusivity, gender equity, and human capital development as core principles that guide institutional planning and academic programming. These priorities also align with Tanzania Development Vision 2025, the Third Five-Year Development Plan (FYDP III 2021/22–2025/26), and continental and global frameworks such as the African Union's Agenda 2063 and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In the context of these strategic directions, this report examines the profile of students admitted to SUA for the 2024/2025 academic year, with a special focus on first-generation university entrants. The analysis seeks to understand who gains access to higher education at SUA and how family educational background and gender influence participation in university studies.

Specifically, the report explores two dimensions:

- The proportion of first-generation students, defined as those whose parents or guardians have not previously attended university, serving as an indicator of SUA's role in widening participation and enhancing social mobility; and
- The gender distribution among these first-generation entrants, highlighting SUA's progress toward achieving gender-balanced access to higher learning.

The findings are intended to inform institutional planning, student support initiatives, and policy formulation that promote equitable access and inclusive excellence in higher education. They also reinforce SUA's broader mission of producing graduates equipped with the knowledge, values, and leadership skills necessary to drive Tanzania's agricultural transformation and sustainable development.

2.0 Methodology

The analysis presented in this report is based on institutional data obtained from official university information systems and administrative records. The primary data sources were:

- The Sokoine University of Agriculture Student Information System (SUASIS), which maintains comprehensive data on student applications, admissions, and demographic profiles;
- The Examinations and Statistics Bureau (ESB), responsible for consolidating institutional data on admissions, registration, and performance statistics; and
- The Directorate of Undergraduate Studies (DUS), which provided verification and supplementary statistics on admission categories, gender composition, and program distribution.

Data were extracted for the 2024/2025 academic year, with selected comparative references to previous academic years to identify emerging trends in first-generation student enrollment and gender participation. The dataset was cleaned, validated, and analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques, generating frequencies, percentages, and proportions of first-generation students relative to the total number of admitted candidates.

Tables and graphical visualizations were employed to illustrate variations in first-generation representation, gender balance, and overall admission proportions. The analysis adheres to SUA’s internal data management protocols and contributes to the monitoring and evaluation framework of the Corporate Strategic Plan (CSP) under the thematic areas of *Teaching and Learning* and *Outreach and Partnerships*.

2. Key Findings

The analysis of first-generation entrants over the three admission years (Table 1) highlights important patterns and progress in promoting equitable access to higher education at SUA.

Table 1: Numbers of admitted students showing first generation entrants

Academic Year	First Generation		None first generation		No response		Total
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
2022/2023	1453	870	983	791	1400	637	6134
2023/2024	1171	905	743	747	980	560	5106
2024/2025	1390	1005	700	535	1133	715	5478
Total	4014	2780	2426	2073	3513	1912	16718

Trend of First-Generation Students (2022/2023–2024/2025)

The data (Table 1) reveal important year-to-year shifts in first-generation student admissions at SUA:

- Admission year 2022/2023: The first major increase in first-generation students is observed, with 2,323 of 6134 admitted students identifying as first-generation. The number of female first-generation students (870) accounts for 14.2 % of all admitted students, showing early impact of outreach and improved gender inclusivity.
- Admission year 2023/2024: The total number of admitted students declines slightly to 5106, but the share of first-generation students remains high. Female first-generation admissions (905) surpassed their previous year's number, while male figures drop modestly—indicating that women's participation continues to grow.
- Admission year 2024/2025: This year records the highest absolute number and of first-generation students—2,395 of 5478 total admissions. The number of female first-generation students rose sharply to 1,005, the largest on record, narrowing the gender gap considerably.

This sequential rise in first generation female students shows that SUA's inclusive admission policies and broader national gender initiatives are producing measurable results. The transition from 38% (2022/23) to 43.4% (2024/25) first-generation representation reflects a clear and consistent upward trajectory in educational access for students from non-university families.

Figures 1 and 2 show proportion of first-generation university entrants over the three years period. On overall, **the percent** of first-generation university entrants (Figure 1) has been increasing and reached above 60% in the 2024/25 academic year.

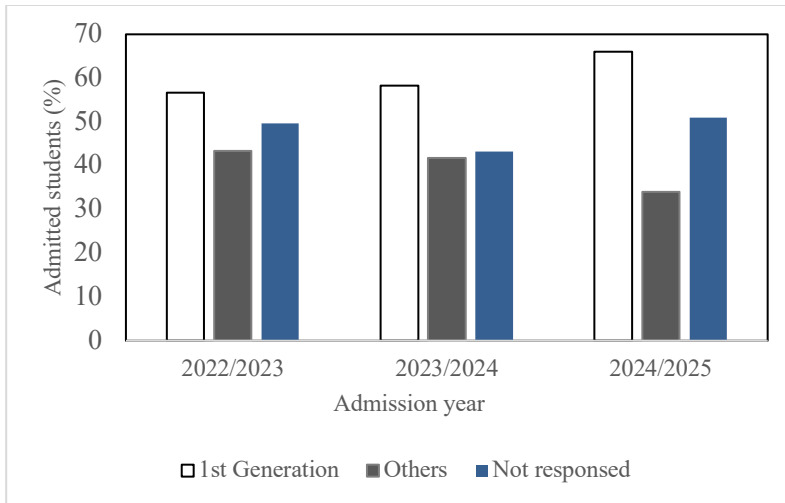


Figure 1: First generation University entrants

The percent of female first-generation students (computed out of total admitted females) also rose to above 60 in the academic year 2024/25 (Figure 2). This consistent upward slope suggests effective inclusion efforts and growing awareness among women from non-university families.

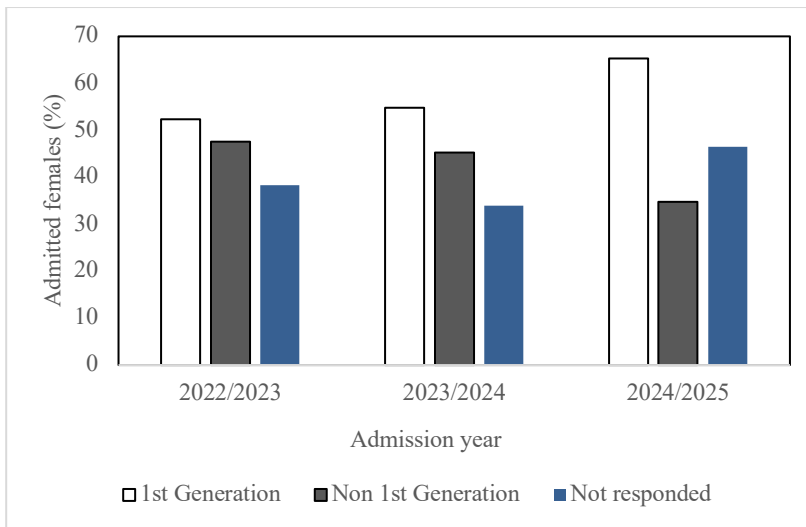


Figure 2: First generation female university entrants (percent out of total admitted females)

5. Recommendations

5.1 Support for First-Generation Students

- i. Establish structured mentorship programs to guide first-generation students in adapting to university life and enhancing academic success.
- ii. Expand financial aid, scholarships, and grants to alleviate economic constraints and promote equitable access.
- iii. Integrate first-generation support modules into orientation and counselling programs.

5.2 Promoting Gender Equity

- i. Strengthen gender-responsive recruitment and outreach efforts, especially in STEM and underrepresented fields.
- ii. Introduce career guidance and leadership initiatives for female students to build confidence and retention.
- iii. Continue implementing scholarships and mentorship networks that empower women from first-generation backgrounds.

6. Conclusion

Sokoine University of Agriculture continues to be a national leader in inclusive education, particularly in reaching first-generation and female students. The rising participation of women and students from non-university families demonstrates SUA's contribution to social mobility and equitable access. However, continued efforts are essential to address persistent gender disparities and ensure that all students—regardless of background—have equal opportunities to excel and contribute to Tanzania's socio-economic transformation.