STATEMENT ON SDG 1:
NO POVERTY

16,704	10,609	44	>131,689
Students enrolled	Students received financial assistance through HESLB	Incubatees supported	Stakeholders reached through extension services

OVERVIEW

Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA) is a public university in Tanzania whose teaching, research, innovation, and outreach functions contribute to Sustainable Development Goal 1 (SDG 1): ending poverty in all its forms. SUA contributes to SDG 1 through several interrelated pathways: widening access to higher education for financially disadvantaged students, supporting student progression and completion, strengthening entrepreneurship and productive livelihoods, expanding access to productive resources and services, and contributing evidence to policy processes that influence poverty reduction and rural development.

This statement sets out SUA's documented contribution to poverty reduction for 2026/2027, highlighting student access and financial assistance, university anti-poverty programmes, community livelihood initiatives and institutional accountability. The most recent figures available in the supplied institutional SDG Progress Report relate to 2025/26.

INSTITUTIONAL STRATEGY AND PERFORMANCE

SUA approaches poverty reduction as both an access issue and a livelihood outcome. At the student level, it supports access to higher education through government-administered financial assistance (Higher Education Students' Loans Board -HESLB) and complementary scholarship arrangements. At the community level, it advances livelihoods through agribusiness incubation, access to productive land, skills training, market participation, outreach, and policy engagement.

STUDENT ACCESS AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR LOW-INCOME STUDENTS

The current total number of enrolled students is 16,704; of these, 10,609 receive financial assistance through the HESLB. HESLB uses a means-testing system to determine financial need. Need is assessed based on the costs of higher education and an applicant's ability to contribute toward those costs, with adjustments for socioeconomic disadvantages. The framework specifically recognizes poor orphans, poor applicants with disabilities, applicants with poor disabled parents, applicants from poor single-parent families, and applicants from poor marginalized and disadvantaged groups. In addition, SUA support is facilitated through different scholarship programmes including CAMFED, the School of St Jude, Help to Help, the Mo Kerry Scholarship program, and the Tertiary Education Scholarship Trust (TEST) for Tanzania (SUA SDG Progress Report 2025/26, p. 11).

UNIVERSITY ANTI-POVERTY PROGRAMMES

Admission opportunities and targets for low-income students

SUA facilitates access to higher education for financially disadvantaged students primarily through national student-financing mechanisms (HESLB) and scholarship programs. As most students come from low-income families, SUA has no formally approved institution-specific admissions target for students in the lowest household-income quintile or another explicitly defined poverty category. It uses a national mechanism that assesses financial need against the applicant's ability to cover higher-education costs and recognizes specific forms of socioeconomic disadvantage, including poverty, orphanhood, disability, single-parent households, and marginalized or disadvantaged backgrounds.

Graduation and completion targets for low-income students

SUA seeks to ensure that financial disadvantage does not prevent admitted students from progressing through and completing higher education. As a publicly funded university, SUA facilitates student access to Tanzania's national means-tested financing mechanism and provides institutional student-support services that complement national financial assistance. For continuing beneficiaries, eligibility for continued HESLB support is linked to academic progression, providing an established mechanism through which financially supported students can continue receiving assistance as they advance through their programmes. The Office of the Dean of Students is responsible for student welfare, while student financing through HESLB supports tuition, meals and accommodation, learning materials and other educational costs.

Additionally, SUA provides accommodation services in which students with special needs and those from low-income families who receive HELSB financial assistance are given first priority.
Additionally, student cafeterias are required to offer meals at lower prices compared to market prices. Generally, SUA aims to ensure financially assisted students complete their studies alongside non- financially disadvantaged students.

COMMUNITY ANTI-POVERTY PROGRAMMES

Financial and productive-resource assistance to entrepreneurs: Enterprise incubation and start-up assistance

SUA provides structured support for local enterprise development and livelihoods through its Agribusiness Incubation Centre (AIC), entrepreneurship initiatives and training programmes. As indicated in the SUA SDG Progress Report 2025/26 (p. 11-12), SUA directly contributes to locally relevant start-up development through training, incubation, and enterprise support, as shown below.

- Through AIC, SUA helps youth invest in agricultural production and the agricultural value chain through the SUA/PASS entrepreneurs' incubation center. AIC has supported 32 incubatees in horticultural production and enterprise development during the reporting period.
- SUA STEPS company—Sokoine Agri-enterprise (SAEG)—operated by third-year students of SUA
- Supported 37 out-of-school youth to complete digital graphic design training through TAGDev 2.0
- Three youth enterprises comprising 16 members were subsequently contracted for seed-fund support after receiving training and incubation support through TAGDev 2.0
- Supported 167 individuals in accessing 250.5 acres of university land for crop production, providing concrete productive-resource support and extending livelihood opportunities through access to productive agricultural resources.
- Harbors the Sokoine University Graduate Entrepreneurs Cooperative (SUGECO), which organizes international internship programs for students and graduates from a variety of disciplines offered by the university and strives to create an enabling environment for graduates to invest in agriculture by forging linkages with sources of agricultural and agribusiness technologies, innovating market linkages and financial services appropriate for start-up businesses, and providing institutional support to new SUGECO members' businesses through business incubation. The SUGECO Internship program has benefited over a thousand SUA graduates, and in 2025/26 it supported 12 incubatees.
- In 2026, SUA-supported entrepreneurs generated TZS 3.72 million in sales at the Nane Nane exhibitions.
- In early 2026, SUA invited youth enterprises to compete for start-up capital of US$2,500–5,000 per group, particularly supporting young women in rice and horticulture value chains.
- Additionally, SUA creates an enabling environment for student innovators, for example, young innovators from the Department of Animal, Aquaculture and Range Sciences (DAARS)

Programmes to Improve Access to Basic Services in local communities

SUA organizes and implements programmes aimed at improving access to essential services, particularly healthcare, safe water, sanitation, hygiene, food safety and community capacity development. These initiatives are delivered through the University's academic, research, healthcare and outreach units, as well as partnerships with relevant government and development institutions. As indicated in the SUA SDG Progress Report 2025/26:

- During the 2025/26 period, SUA implemented a Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) community intervention reaching 1,399 beneficiaries across three villages, strengthening community knowledge and practices related to safe water, sanitation and hygiene (pp. 4, 26, 28–29).
- SUA supplies water from the Kilala River at Mzinga Military intake, which is used by workers and other residents living near the campus, including the Kididimo community (SUA Campus Master Plan, 2024/34, p. 11). During the 2025/26 period, it provided water from its independent supply system to 78 customers outside the University, contributing directly to water access in neighboring communities (p. 28).
- SUA operates a hospital and two health centres serving students, staff and surrounding communities. Between August 2025 and May 2026, these facilities recorded 21,042 curative service contacts and 11,074 preventive service contacts. Preventive services included 2,696 child vaccinations, 5,033 child growth-monitoring contacts and 428 family-planning contacts, alongside other maternal and reproductive health services (pp. 16–17).

Outreach activities

The University contributes to community access to knowledge, outreach, and services that are relevant to poverty reduction. The SUA SDG Progress Report 2025/26 indicates SUA strengthened community capacity in food safety and agricultural production through practical training and extension programmes as shown below.

- 29 agro-processors received training in food safety and quality management,
- University's extension services reached 131,689 stakeholders (pp. 14 and 65).
- 20,924 people were reached at the Nane Nane exhibitions, and 187 participants were trained in soil health (p. 14).

Additionally:

- SUA provides community outreach and extension services, thereby addressing different challenges faced by various communities. For example, the NANOCOM Project outreach activities, including farm visits, mastitis screening, and practical technical support, have improved 187 farmers' dairy management and milk quality
- Experiments, farmer participatory trials, and extension that translate ecological organic agricultural science into practical on-farm improvements.
- SUA's Mkulima Collection unit participates in agricultural outreach and exhibitions such as Nane Nane, Sabasaba, Sokoine Memorial Week, and research stations to market and raise awareness among the general public and agricultural stakeholders.

Policy engagement in poverty reduction

SUA actively contributes to policy development, consultation and implementation processes addressing poverty reduction, food security, sustainable agriculture and rural livelihoods. Through research-based policy advice, stakeholder engagement and partnerships with government institutions and regional organisations, the University contributes evidence and technical expertise to programmes and policies intended to improve socioeconomic conditions.

- At the national level, SUA helped develop and review agroecology policy frameworks. In June 2026, SUA, through its Agroecology Hub in Tanzania (AEHT), facilitated a stakeholder workshop on the Agroecology Policy Scoping Study. The workshop brought together government representatives, researchers, farmers, and development partners to review existing policy frameworks and develop recommendations to strengthen sustainable agricultural systems.
- In April 2026, SUA also joined the Annual Tanzania Agroecology Stakeholders Forum. The Ministry of Agriculture recognized its contribution to agricultural extension capacity development and its support for implementing Tanzania's National Agroecology Strategy (2023–2030).
- SUA contributes to evidence-informed national policy dialogue through the Five-Universities Consortium. During 2025/26, the consortium developed three policy briefs addressing water safety, climate-sensitive public health risks, and research regulation (SUA SDG Progress Report 2025/26, pp. 63–64)

- At the regional level, SUA participates in RAENS, a Southern African research and policy network operating during 2025–2028. The network seeks to strengthen evidence-based policy analysis and advice for inclusive, sustainable agricultural systems and resilient livelihoods across participating countries.
- SUA has *Agrispark* initiative to empower farmers and foster student innovation in the Morogoro region
- University staff participate in a local, regional, national or global policy process related to poverty reduction, livelihoods, food systems or rural development.

EVIDENCE LINKS

SUA SDG Progress Report 2025/26

https://www.sua.ac.tz/sites/default/files/2016-04/SUA_SDGs_Progress_Report_2025-26_compressed.pdf

Enterprise incubation and start-up assistance

https://www.sua.ac.tz/announcements/shortlisted-start-upsentreprises-funded-enterpreneurship-and-job-creation-start-ups

https://www.sua.ac.tz/sites/default/files/documents/announcement/2026-01/CALL%20FOR%20EXPRESSION%20OF%20INTEREST_06012025-1.pdf

https://www.coa.sua.ac.tz/saeg-advanced-in-innovation-for-horticulture-value-addition/

https://www.sua.ac.tz/news/suapass-entrepreneurs-incubation-center-harvest-season

https://www.sugeco.or.tz

https://www.sugeco.or.tz/services/incubation-program

https://www.coa.sua.ac.tz/animal/daars-young-innovators-launch-2026/

Improving access to basic services in local communities

https://www.sua.ac.tz/sites/default/files/2016-04/Health-policy-approved-by-council-on-27-june-2013.pdf

https://www.sua.ac.tz/sites/default/files/2025-12/Master%20Plan_EMC_2025.pdf

Community outreach

https://www.sua.ac.tz/news/sua-launches-agrispark-empower-farmers-and-foster-student-innovation-morogoro-tanzania

https://www.sua.ac.tz/news/sua-advances-efforts-control-mastitis-dairy-cattle

https://www.sua.ac.tz/news/sua-recognized-excellence-ecological-organic-agriculture-research-and-extension-services

https://arc.sua.ac.tz/outreach/

https://www.sua.ac.tz/news/mkulima-collection-sokoine-national-agricultural-library-snal

https://www.sua.ac.tz/announcements/short-course-food-safety-and-quality-management

Policy-oriented engagement through research, technical input, and policy dialogue

https://ypard.net/posts/report-on-the-stakeholders-feedback-workshop-on-the-agroecology-policy-scoping-study?

https://www.sua.ac.tz/news/government-commends-sua-advancing-agroecology-tanzania

https://www.chronicpovertynetwork.org/what-we-do