

ANNUAL REPORT 2025/2026

SOUTH AFRICAN MEDICAL RESEARCH COUNCIL

A PRESENTATION TO THE PARLIAMENTARY
PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

2 OCTOBER 2026



health

Department:
Health
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

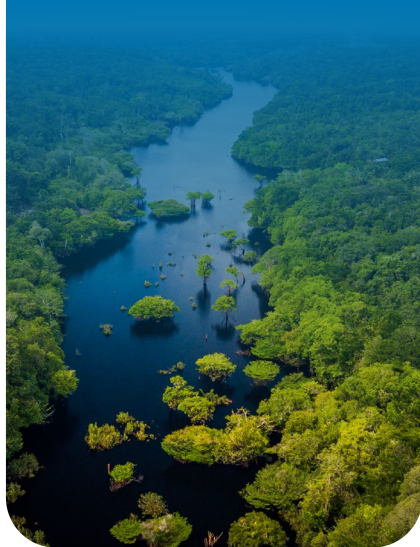


SCOPE OF PRESENTATION

PART A
INTRODUCTION



PART B
**HUMAN
RESOURCES**



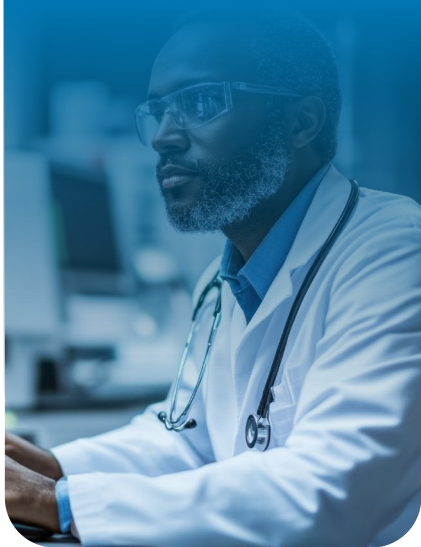
PART C
**PERFORMANCE
INFORMATION**



PART D
**FINANCIAL
INFORMATION**



PART E
**CORPORATE
SOCIAL
RESPONSIBILITY**



PART A

INTRODUCTION



The South African Medical Research Council
recognises the catastrophic and persisting
consequences of colonialism and apartheid, including
land dispossession and the intentional imposition of
educational and health inequities.

Acknowledging the SAMRC's historical role and silence
during apartheid,
we commit our capacities and resources to the
continued promotion of justice and dignity in health
research in South Africa.



ABOUT THE SAMRC

OUR MANDATE

The mandate of the South African Medical Research Council (SAMRC), in terms of the MRC Act 58, 1991 (as amended), is to improve the health and quality of life of South Africans. This needs to be realised through research, development, and technology transfer.

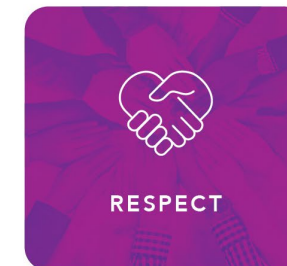
OUR VISION

Building a healthy nation through research, innovation and transformation.

OUR MISSION

To advance the nation's health and quality of life and address inequality by conducting and funding relevant and responsive health research, capacity development, innovation, and research translation.

OUR VALUES



SAMRC INTRAMURAL RESEARCH

Health promotion and disease prevention

- Non-communicable Diseases
- Mental Health, Alcohol, Substance Use and Tobacco
- Environment and Health

Health Systems Strengthening

- Health Systems
- Burden of Disease
- Cochrane South Africa
- Biostatistics
- SAPRIN

Public Health Innovation

- Genomics Platform

Biomedical Research

- Biomedical Research and Innovation Platform
- Primate Unit and Delft Animal Centre

Maternal Child and Women's Health

- Gender and Health

HIV, AIDS, TB and Other Communicable Diseases

- HIV and other Infectious Diseases
- Centre for Tuberculosis
- Malaria Research Group
- Office of AIDS and TB Research

SAMRC EXTRAMURAL UNITS RESEARCH UNITS

30 UNITS AND CENTRES, GROUPED INTO SIX RESEARCH THEMES

Infection & Immunity	• Antibody Immunity • Antimicrobial Resistance and Global Health • Centre for Antimicrobial Resistance • HIV/TB Pathogenesis and Treatment	• Pan African Centre for Epidemics • Vaccine and Infectious Diseases Analytics • Antiviral Gene Therapy
Chronic & Non-communicable Disease	• Cardiometabolic Health • Hypertension and Cardiovascular Disease • Precision Oncology • Intersection of Non-communicable and Infectious Disease	• Child and Adolescent Lung Health • Preeclampsia • Wound and Keloid Scarring Translational
Brain, Mental & Social Health	• Genomics of Brain Disorders • Risk and Resilience in Mental Disorders • Discovery Neuroscience in Children	• Violence, Injury and Social Asymmetries • Ageing African Adult
Therapeutics & Genomics	• Drug Discovery and Development • Herbal Drugs	• Platform for Pharmacogenomics Research & Translation • Centre for Nanopharmaceutical Translation
Health Systems & Policy	• Health Services to Systems • Centre for Health Economics and Decision Science	• Rural Public Health and Health Transition • Public Health Interventions, Innovations and Implementation
Environment, Digital Health & AI	• Microbial Water Quality Monitoring • AI for African Population	• UNIVEN/MINTEK Digital Health and AI for Occupational Health

**SOUTH AFRICAN MEDICAL
RESEARCH COUNCIL**
STRATEGIC PLAN
2025/26 - 2029/30

DATE OF TABLING - MARCH 2025

THE STRATEGIC PLAN REINFORCES OUR RESEARCH EFFORTS ACROSS FIVE STRATEGIC PILLARS:

1. Administer health research effectively and efficiently, and in accordance with good corporate governance practices
2. Lead the generation of new knowledge and funding of research
3. Supporting health innovation and technology development through funding to improve health
4. Building sustainable health research human capacity in South Africa
5. Research translation into policy and practice to improve health

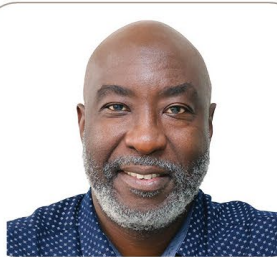
SAMRC BOARD AS AT 1 NOVEMBER 2025



PROF TYRONE PRETORIUS
CHAIRPERSON



PROF BONGINKOSI CHILIZA
DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON



PROF DAVID R. KATERERE



PROF LIMAKATSO LEBINA



DR ZINHLE MAKATINI



PROF LUFUNO RUDO MATHIVHA



MS DORIS DONDUR



PROF SHARON PRINCE



PROF TAHIR PILLAY



ASSOC PROF TRACEY NALEDI



DR VATHISWA PAPU-ZAMXAKA



DR NICO PATRICK SWARTZ



ASSOC PROF RAZIA ADAM



PROF CHARLENE AFRICA



ASSOC PROF SEAN CHETTY

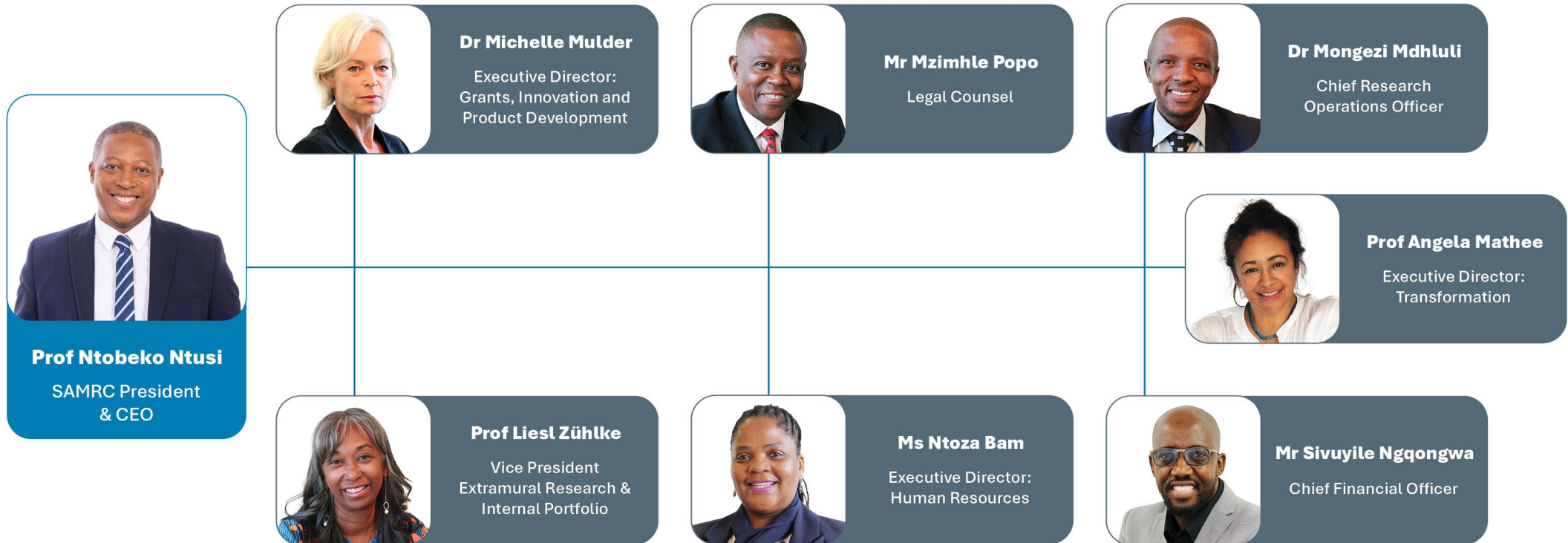


PROF XIKOMBISO MBHENYANE



PROF NTOBEKO NTUSI
SAMRC PRESIDENT AND CEO

EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (EMC)

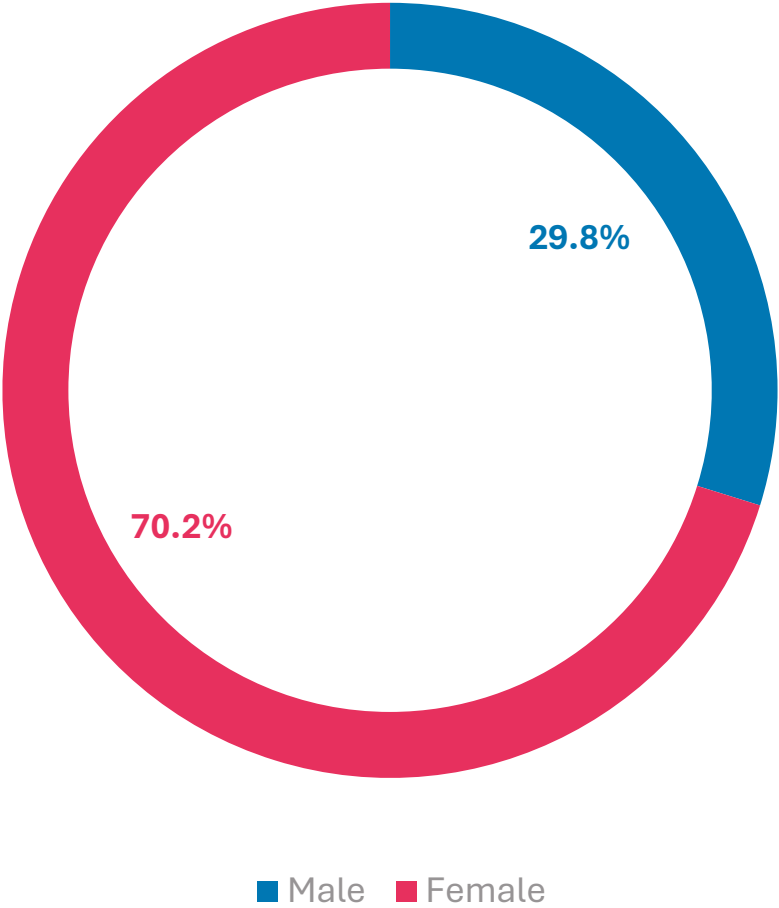


PART B

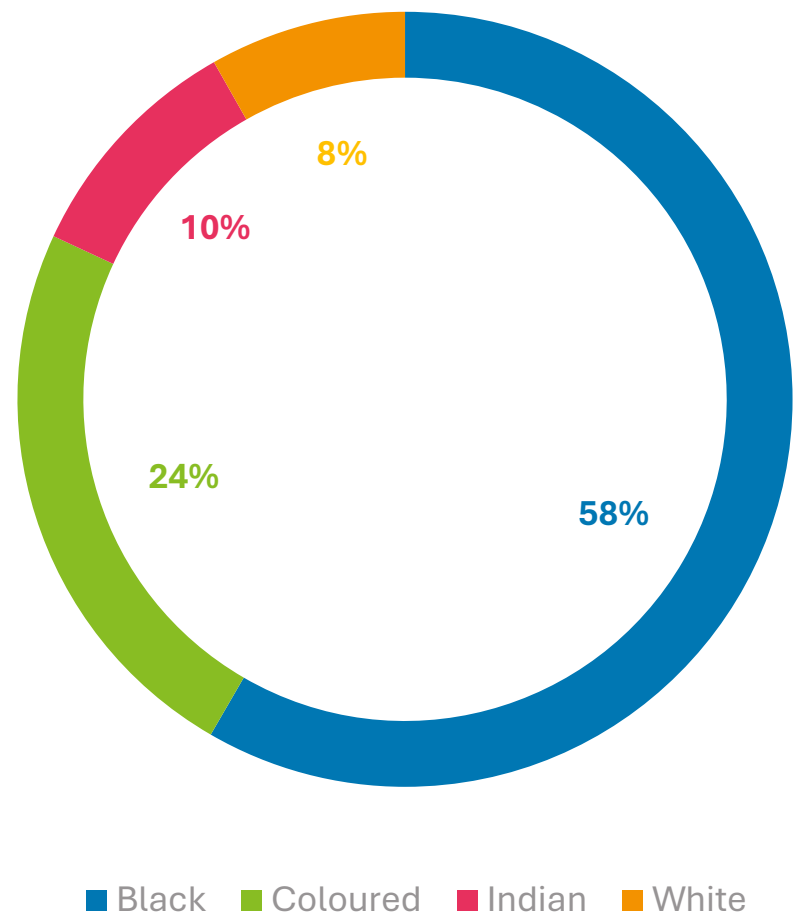
HUMAN RESOURCES



EMPLOYEE PROFILE BY GENDER AS AT 31 MARCH 2026: TOTAL NUMBER: 658

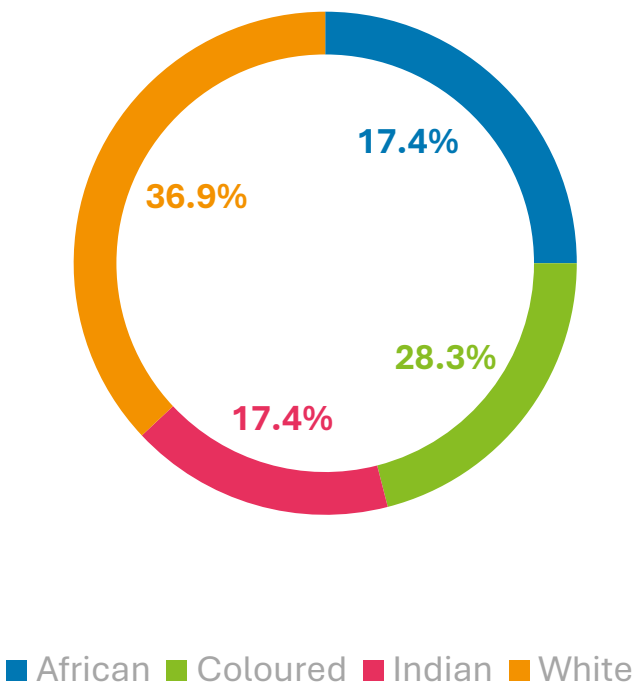


EMPLOYEES PROFILE BY RACE AS AT 31 MARCH 2026

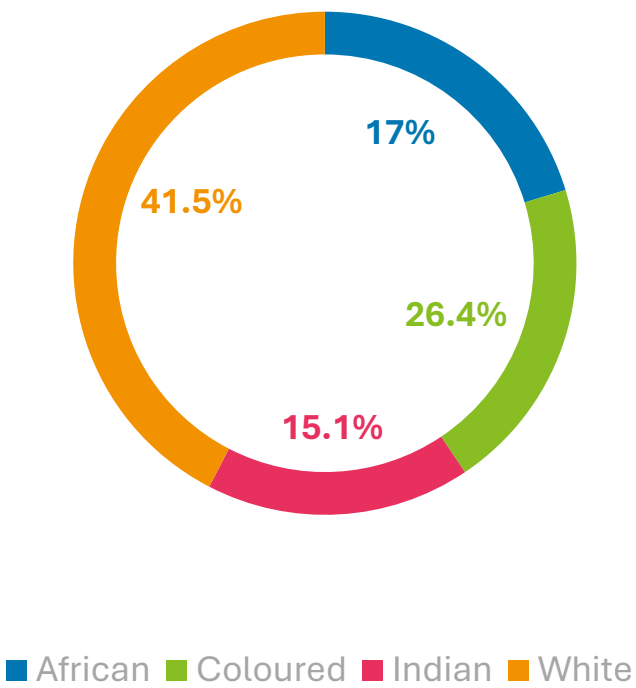


SENIOR MANAGEMENT PROFILE BY RACE: 3-YEAR COMPARISON

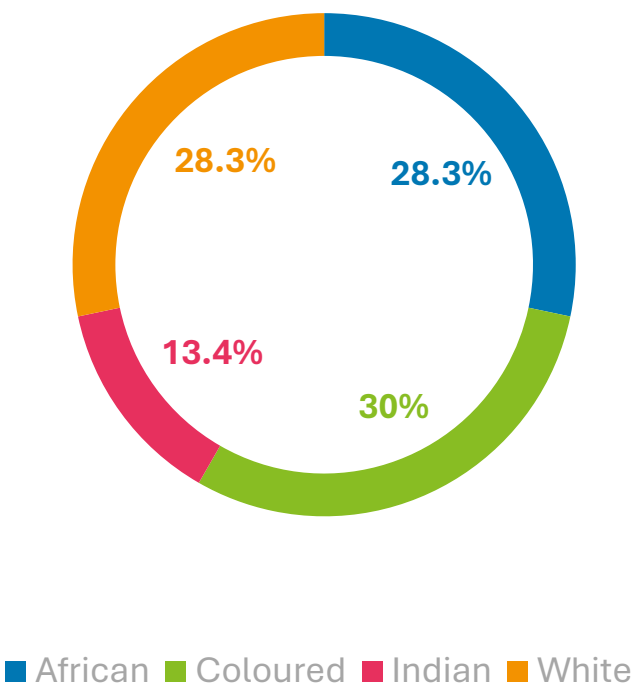
2023/2024



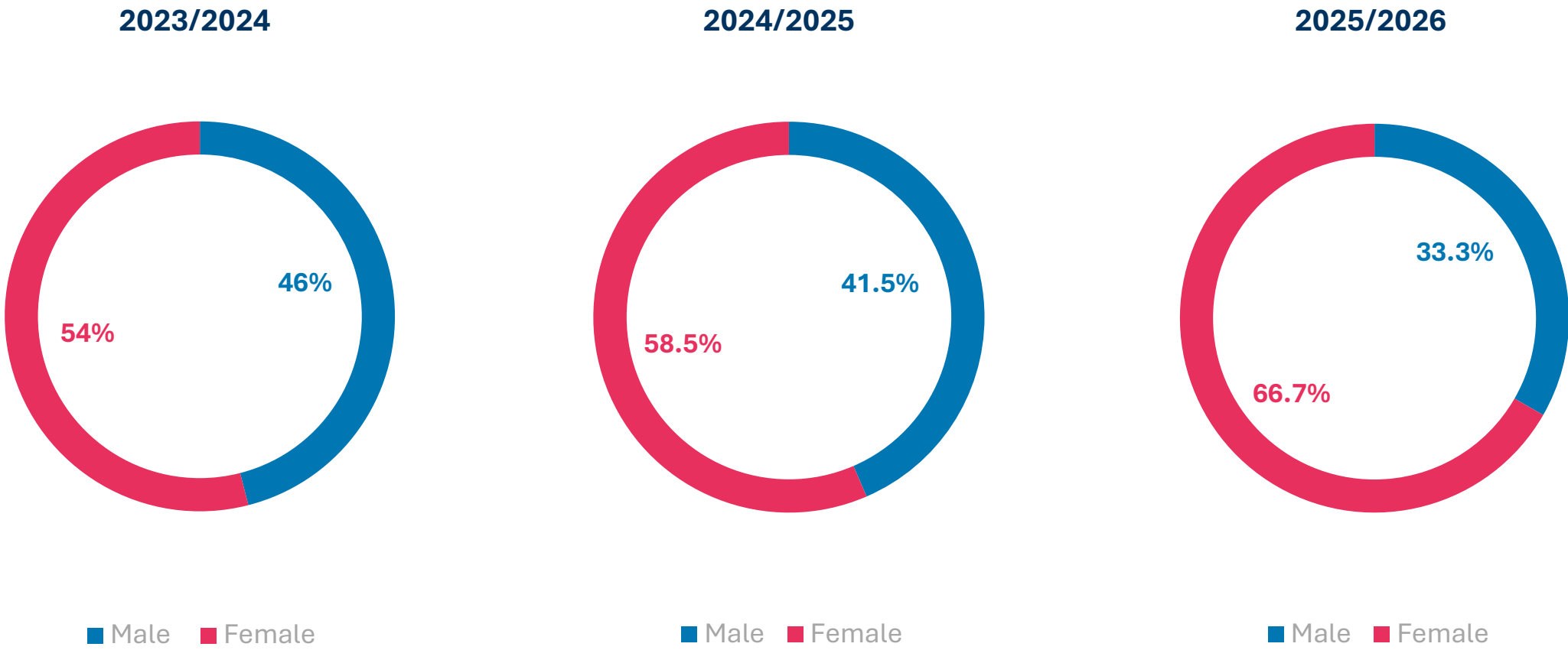
2024/2025



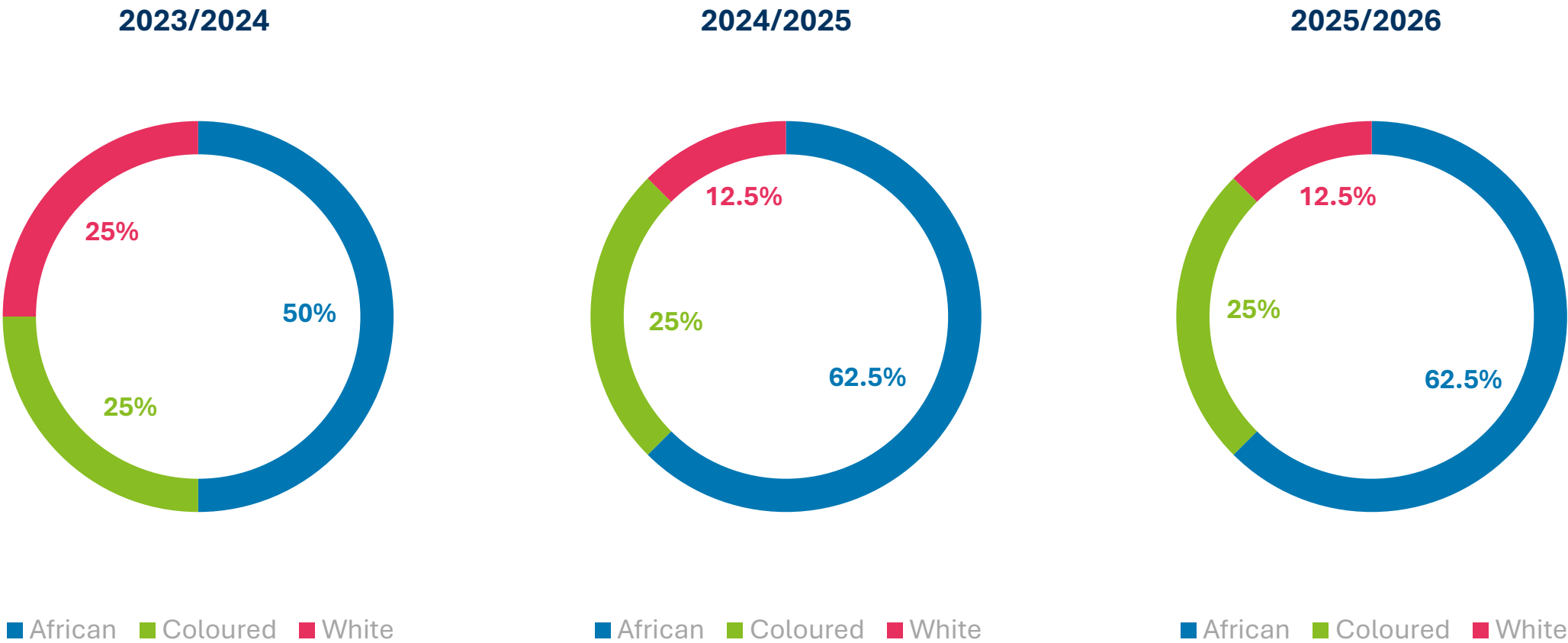
2025/2026



SENIOR MANAGEMENT PROFILE BY GENDER: 3-YEAR COMPARISON

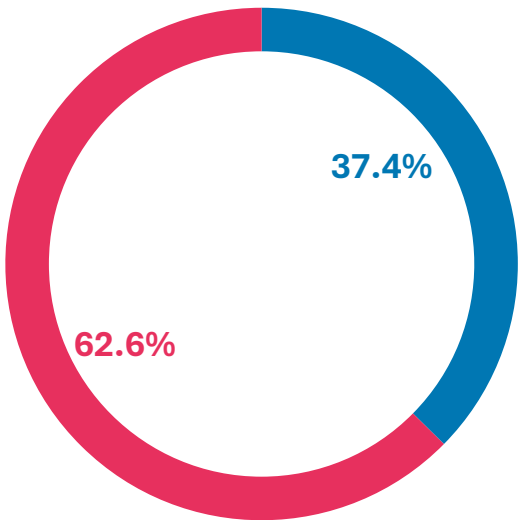


EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT PROFILE BY RACE: 3-YEAR COMPARISON



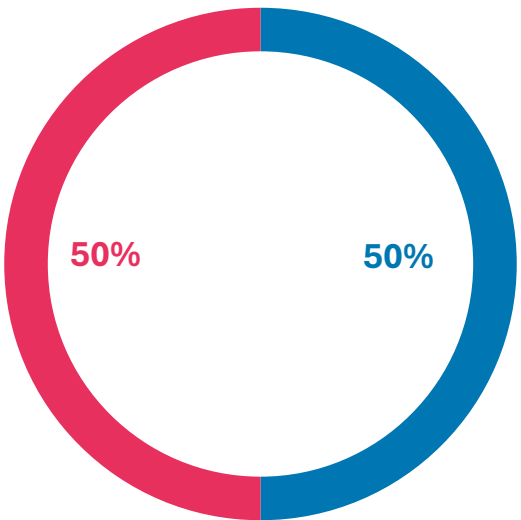
EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT PROFILE BY GENDER: 3-YEAR COMPARISON

2023/2024



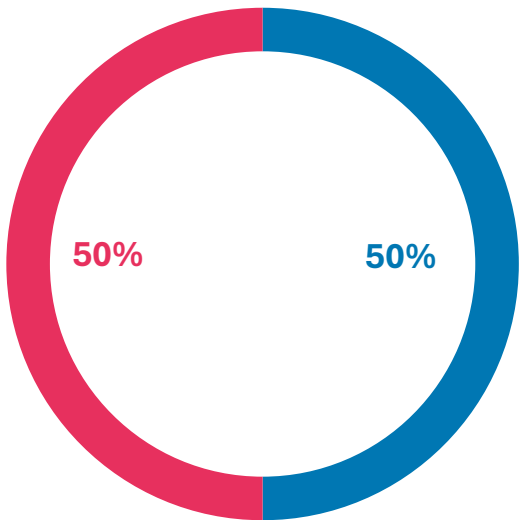
■ Male ■ Female

2024/2025



■ Male ■ Female

2025/2026

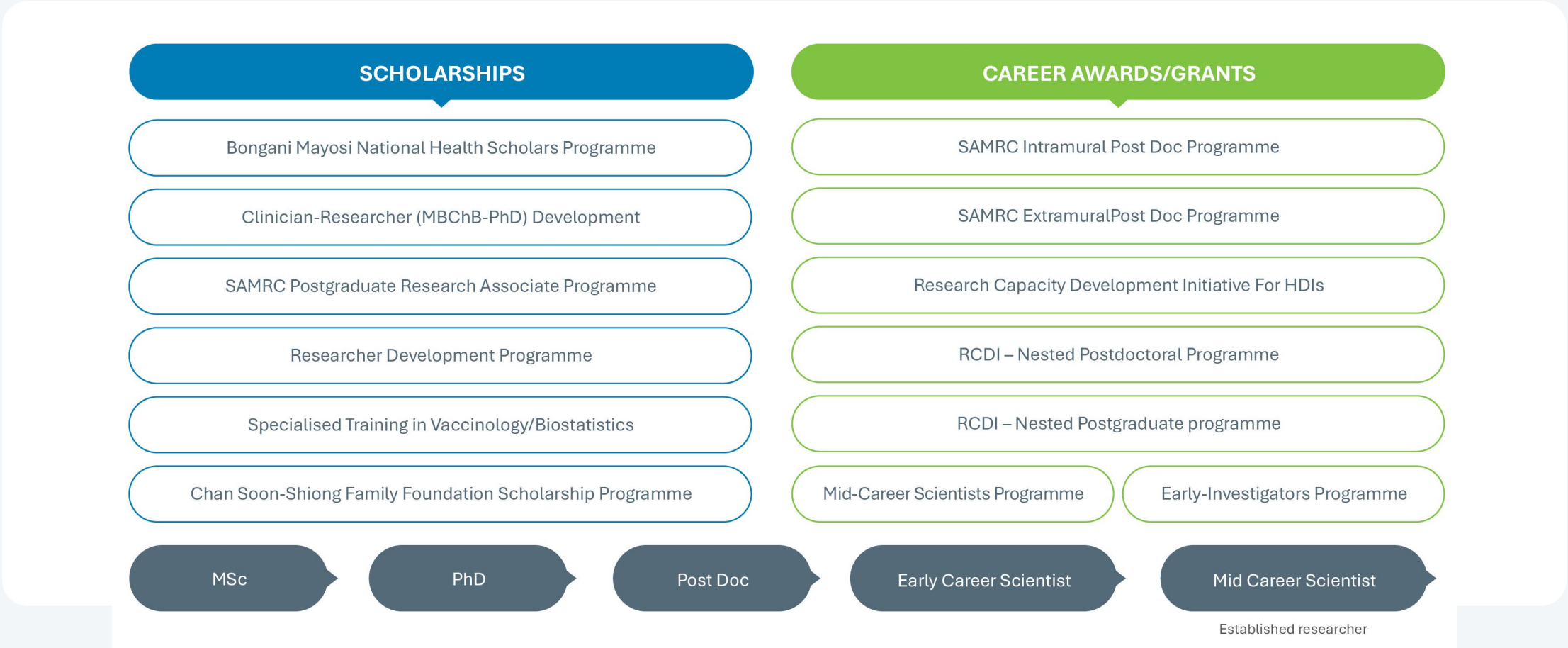


■ Male ■ Female

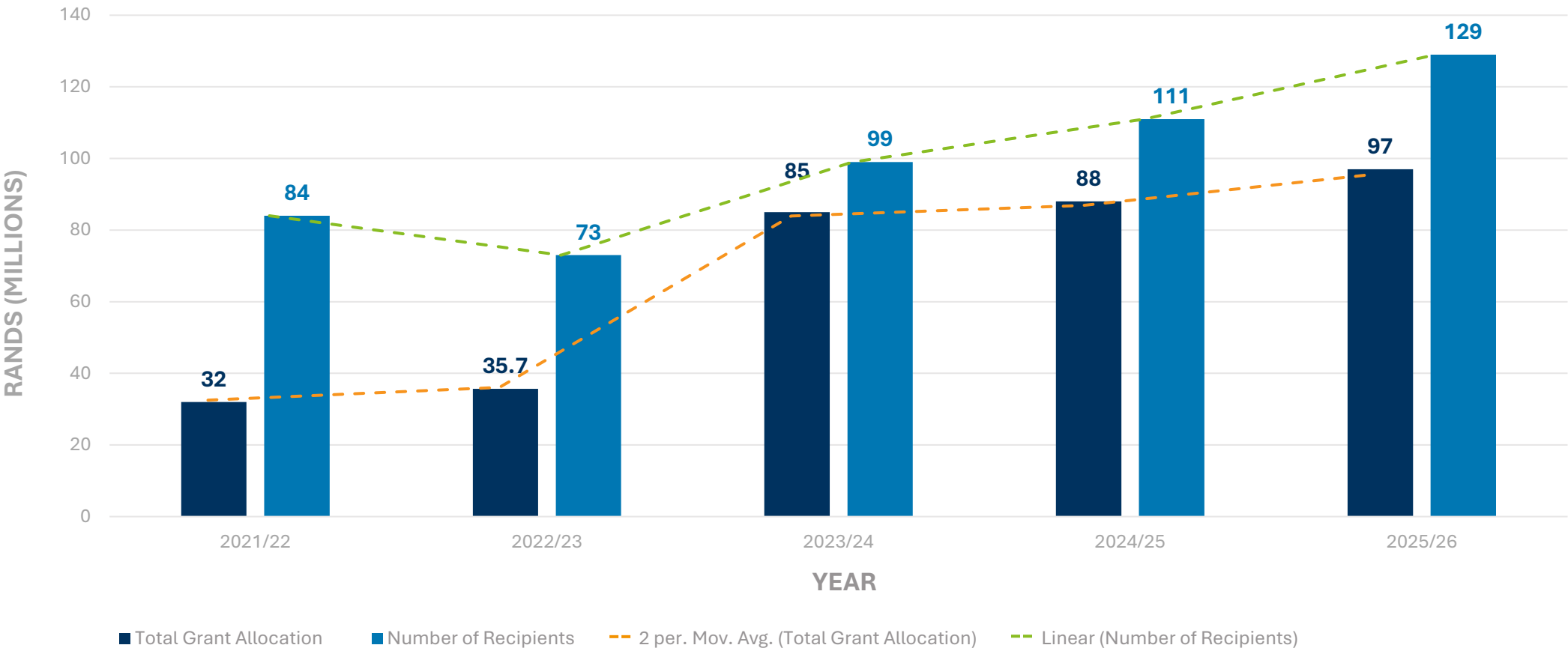
DISTRIBUTION OF SCHOLARSHIPS, CAREER AWARDS AND RESEARCH GRANTS



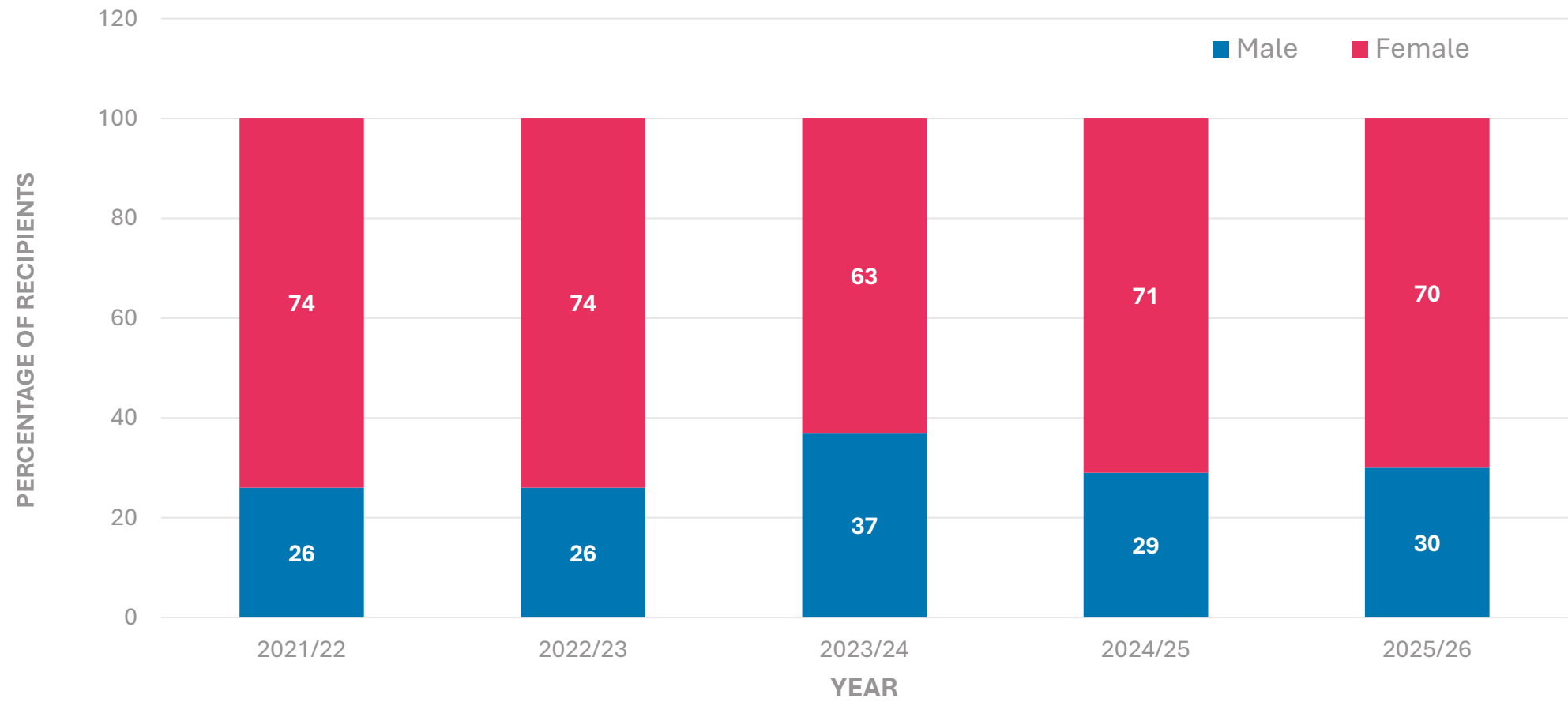
SAMRC RESEARCH CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT - OUTLINE OF PROGRAMMES



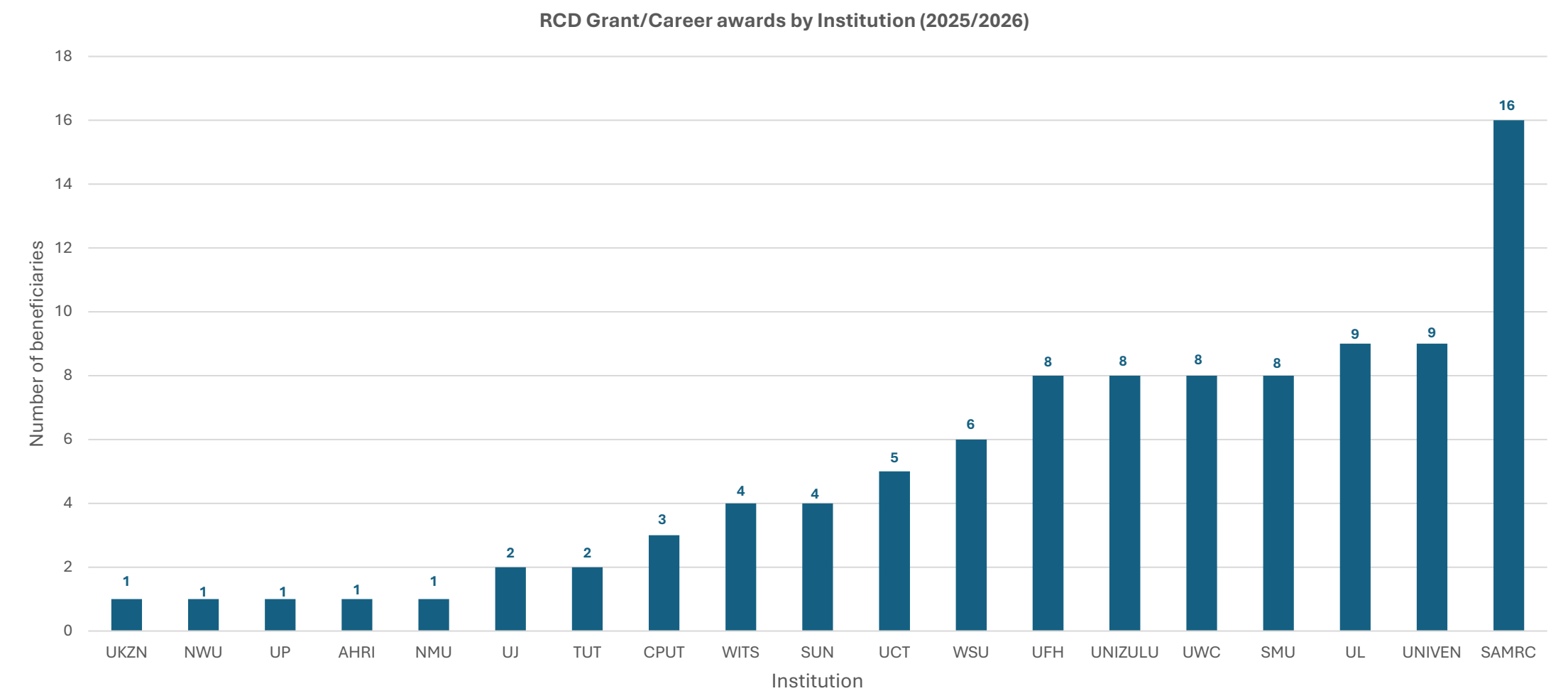
GROWTH IN RESEARCH GRANT FUNDING ALLOCATION & RECIPIENTS: 2021/2022 - 2025/2026



GROWTH OF RESEARCH GRANT AWARDEES: 2021/2022 -2025/2026

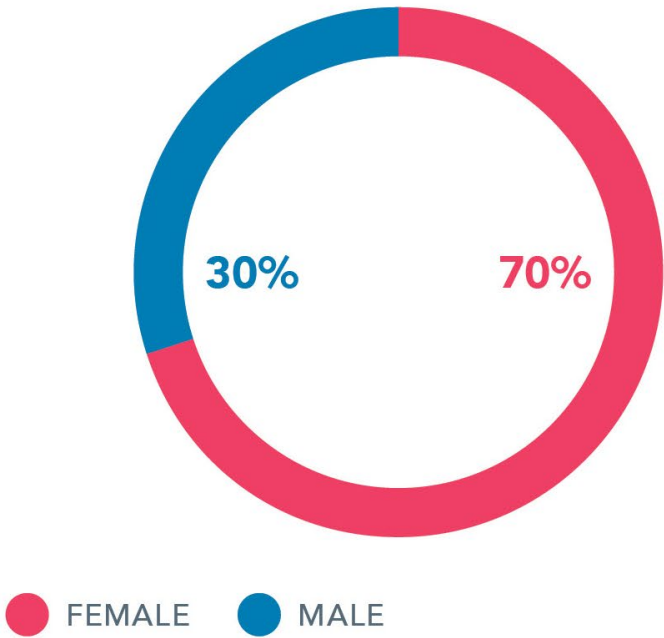


RESEARCH GRANTS/CAREER AWARDS BY INSTITUTION

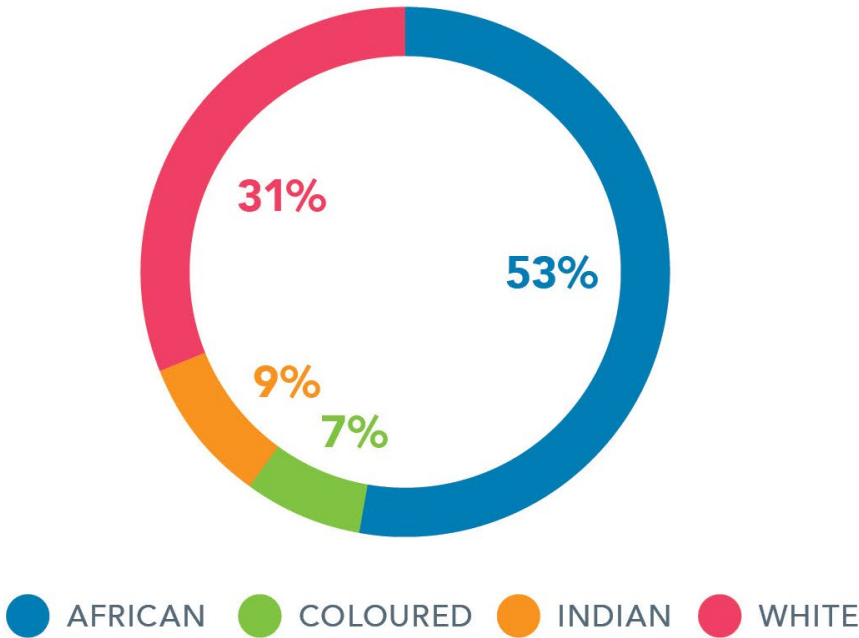


OVERALL DISTRIBUTION OF SAMRC SCHOLARSHIPS BY GENDER AND ETHNIC GROUP

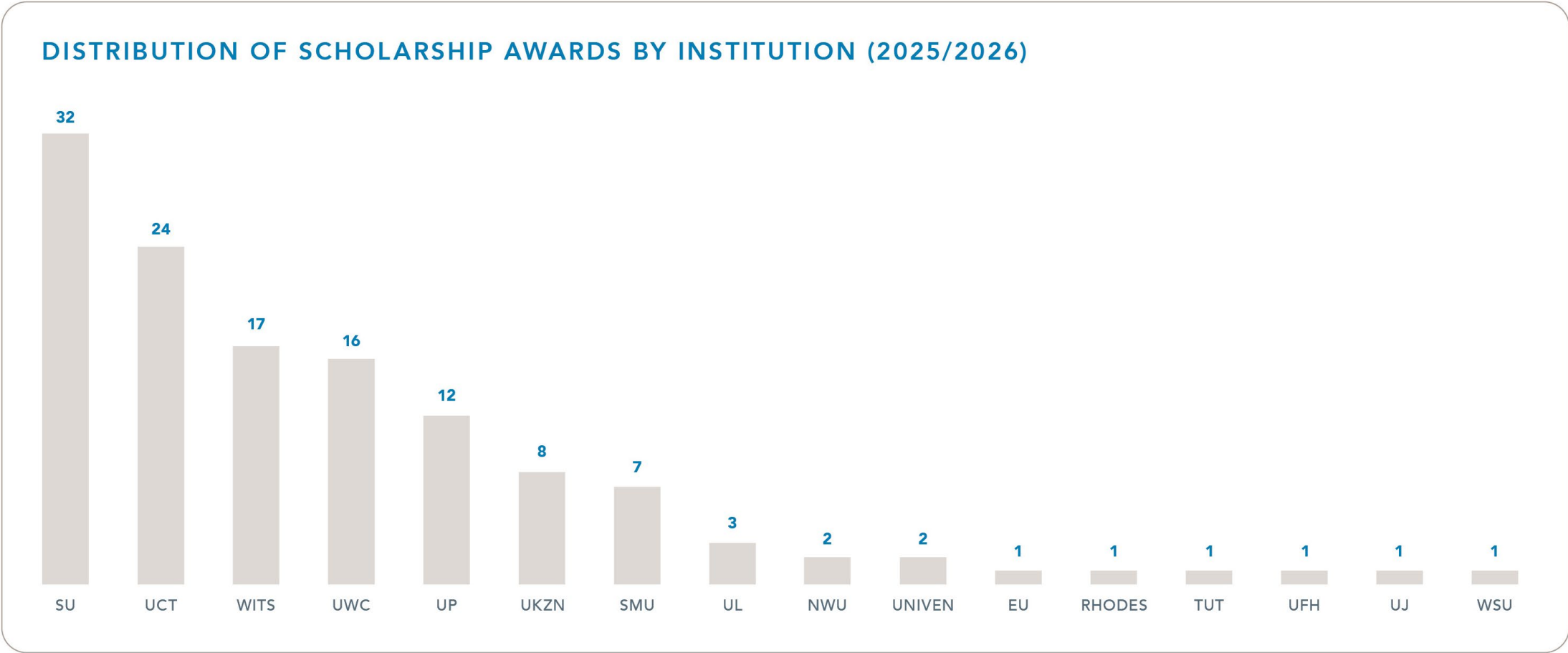
SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS BY GENDER (2025/2026)



SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS BY ETHNIC GROUP (2025/2026)



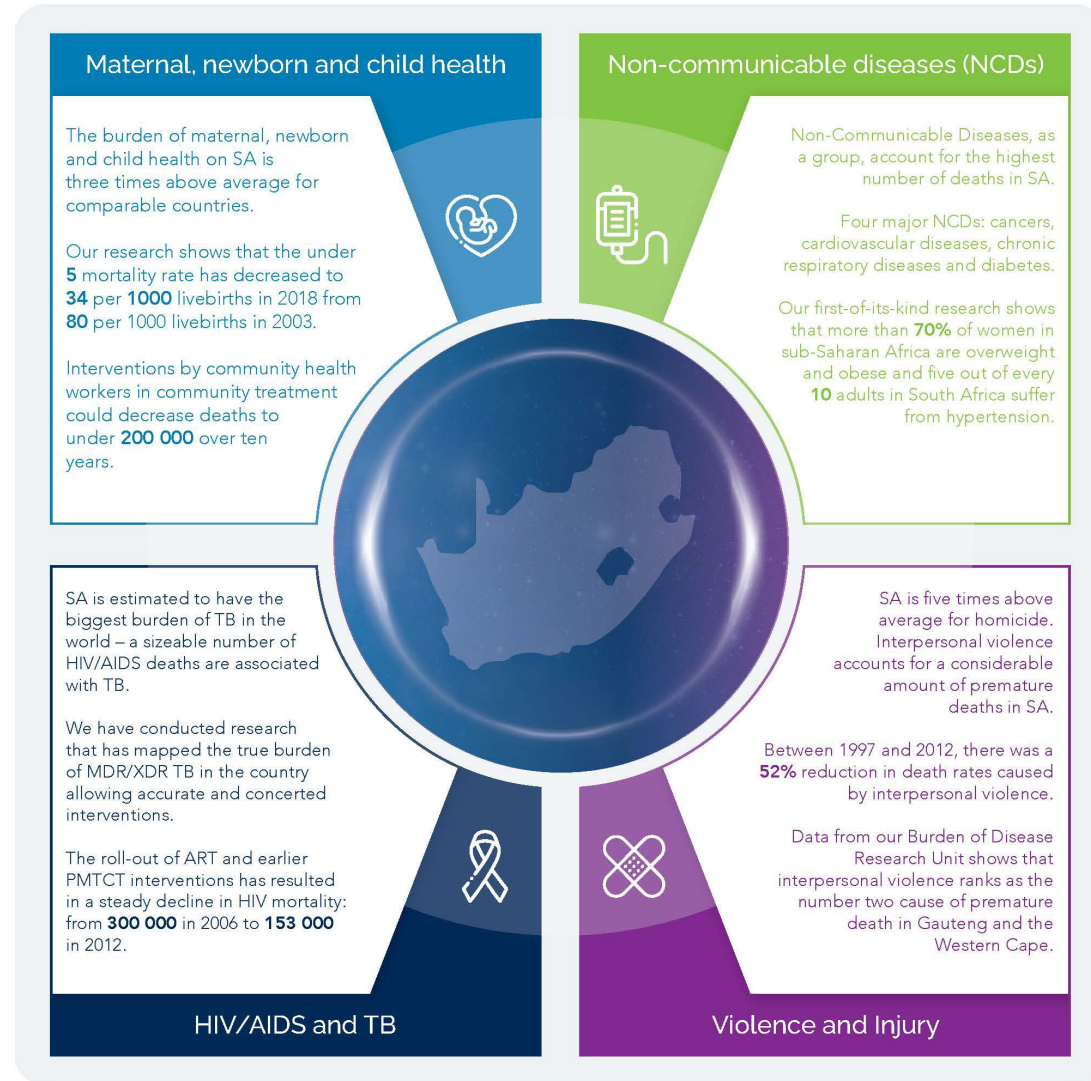
DISTRIBUTION OF SAMRC SCHOLARSHIPS BY INSTITUTIONS



OUR RESEARCH IMPACT AT A GLANCE



RESEARCH PRIORITIES



SAMRC RESEARCH AND INNOVATION SUPPORT

Intramural Research Units

- 11 IMUs
- Research focuses on the leading causes of death in South Africa

Extramural Research Units

- 30 EMUs
- Units at universities affiliated to the SAMRC centred on recognised experts

Strategic Research Initiatives

- Strategic partnerships
- Designated Authority (NRF, CDC, EDCTP)
- SAMRC grant mechanisms (Cancer centres and strategic projects)

Platforms

- PUDAC
- BRIP
- SAMRC Genomics Platform
- Malaria Research Group

Research Capacity Development

- Scholarships and career awards including PhD support, clinician awards, early- and mid-career investigator support, internships

Grants, Innovation and Product Development

- SAMRC grant mechanisms
- Strategic projects
- Strategic partnerships
- Innovation grants
- Innovation support mechanisms

RESEARCH INTO PREVENTION AND EARLY WARNING

Heat-health early warning

Historical temperature and mortality data were analysed to develop evidence-based heat-health thresholds and inform a provincial Heat Early Warning System. The work also assessed population vulnerability and health-system preparedness.

CLIMATE-RESILIENT HEALTH PLANNING

AI-enabled wastewater forecasting

Wastewater SARS-CoV-2 signals were integrated with clinical case data in an AI-driven model to forecast infection trends and strengthen proactive pandemic preparedness.

EARLIER DETECTION OF HEALTH THREATS

Malaria vector control

Insecticide-resistance testing confirmed susceptibility to products used for indoor residual spraying. Cross-border spraying and larval-source management supported malaria control in endemic provinces and southern Mozambique.

TARGETED CONTROL TOWARDS ELIMINATION

RESEARCH INTO MOTHERS, INFANTS AND YOUNG PEOPLE

RSV prevention for infants

Research demonstrated very high efficacy of long-acting monoclonal antibodies in preventing infant hospitalisation and lower respiratory tract infections, including among infants with underlying comorbidities.

FEWER SEVERE RESPIRATORY INFECTIONS

Childhood TB and pneumonia

Projects evaluated AI-assisted chest X-rays, thoracic ultrasound and digital lung-sound recording to improve consistent point-of-care interpretation for paediatric TB and pneumonia.

EARLIER, MORE ACCESSIBLE DIAGNOSIS

Campus violence prevention

Ntombi Vimbela! and Vimbela uVikele! improved gender-equitable attitudes, communication, conflict-management skills and peer support, while reducing risk factors linked to sexual and intimate-partner violence.

SAFER LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

RESEARCH INTO HIV AND TB PREVENTION, DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT

Long-acting HIV prevention

HIDRU sites contributed more than 10% of participants in PURPOSE 1, supporting the 2025 registration of lenacapavir, the first six-monthly injectable HIV prevention agent.

EXPANDED HIV PREVENTION CHOICE

Rapid drug-resistant TB diagnosis

TRiAD showed GeneXpert MTB/XDR reduced time to appropriate treatment. Integrated analyses also found that more than two-thirds of bedaquiline-resistant strains resulted from community transmission.

FASTER TREATMENT AND SURVEILLANCE

Next-generation TB vaccines

Research evaluated M72/AS01E, BNT 164-01/02, MTBVAC and ID93+GLA. M72/AS01E-4 was shown to be safe and immunogenic in people living with HIV.

EVIDENCE FOR FUTURE TB PREVENTION

RESEARCH INTO HEALTHIER LIVES AND STRONGER SYSTEMS

National salt-reduction evidence

The Agincourt evaluation found significant reductions in urinary sodium excretion and sustained decreases in systolic and diastolic blood pressure, particularly among women.

EVIDENCE THAT POLICY WORKS

African kidney-disease intelligence

CKD-Africa pooled data from nearly 100,000 participants across 12 African countries, enabling cross-country analysis of prevalence and determinants.

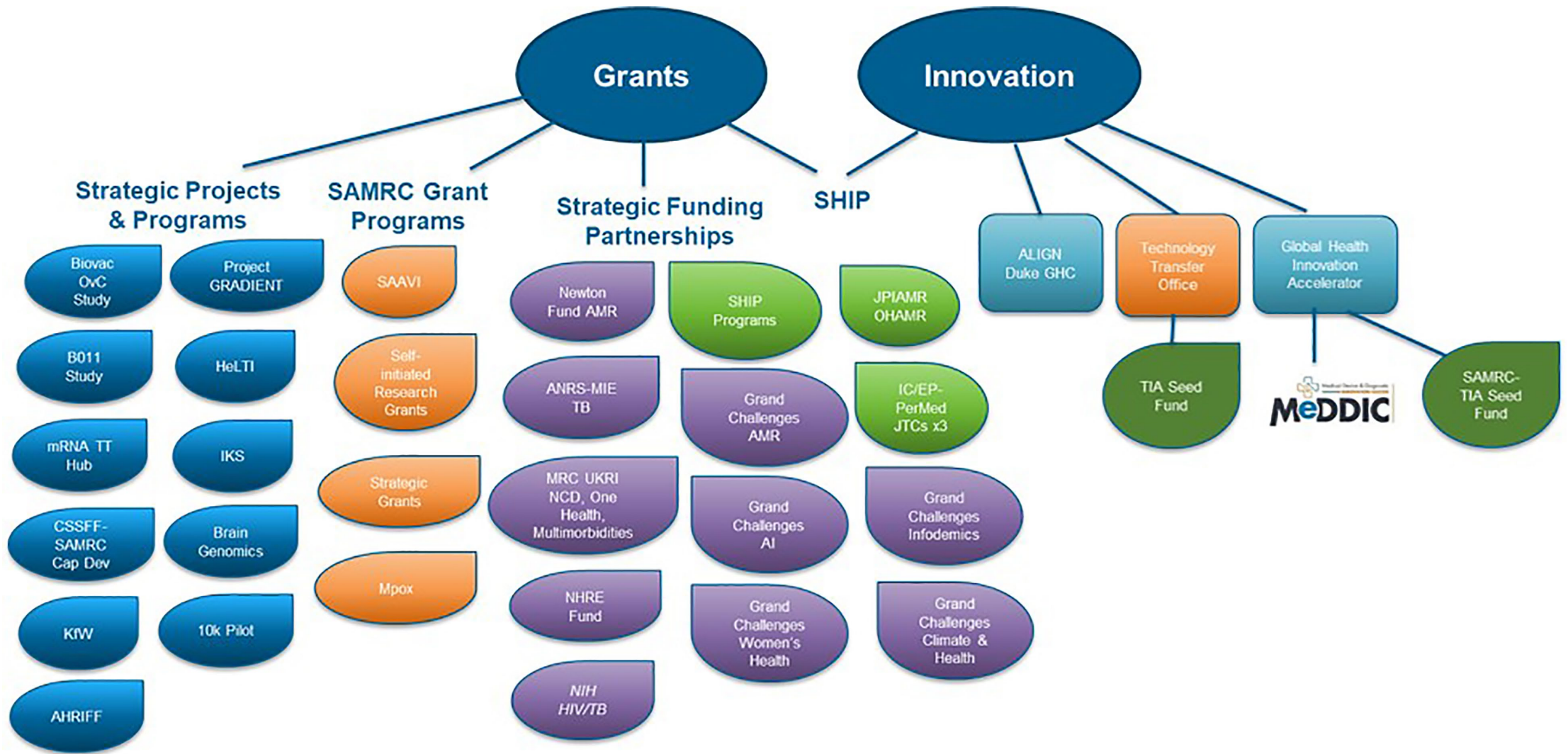
BETTER NCD PLANNING AND RISK INSIGHT

Cause-of-death surveillance

VIDA maintained CHAMPS cause-of-death surveillance through minimally invasive tissue sampling and developed AI-supported approaches to improve coding and the flow of mortality data to public health authorities.

MORE PRECISE PRIORITY-SETTING

SAMRC FUNDING PROGRAMMES



NATIONAL HEALTH RESEARCH ENTERPRISE (NHRE) PROGRAMME

“Rescue” funds to address gaps left by US funding cuts

R114M from National Treasury

R100M from Gates Foundation

R100M from Wellcome

Total R314M

RFA published 29 July 2025 – awards Sep & Oct 2025

2nd RFA launched in December 2025 - awards Mar 2026

Total – 59 awards ~R243 M

Remaining Gates Foundation and Wellcome funds:
~R72 M

Additional commitment from National Treasury to
2028/29: ~R355 M

NHRE funds disbursed to date

68 early-career and **44** mid-career researchers; **17** Masters and **28** PhD students supported

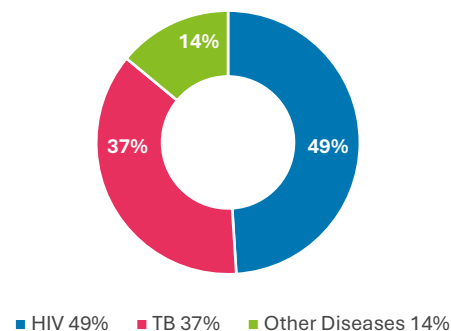
Total ~R427 M

New RFAs: July and Aug 2026

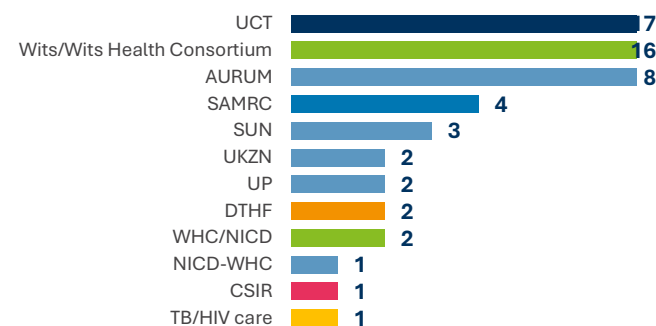
Priority Areas	Cross Cutting Areas
Infectious diseases & Pandemic preparedness	Digital health and AI
Non-communicable diseases	Genomics
Women, maternal, child and adolescent health	IKS, mental health & violence prevention
Health systems and policy research	Mid-career scientist support
	Health Sciences PhD Programme

NHRE FUNDS DISBURSED TO DATE

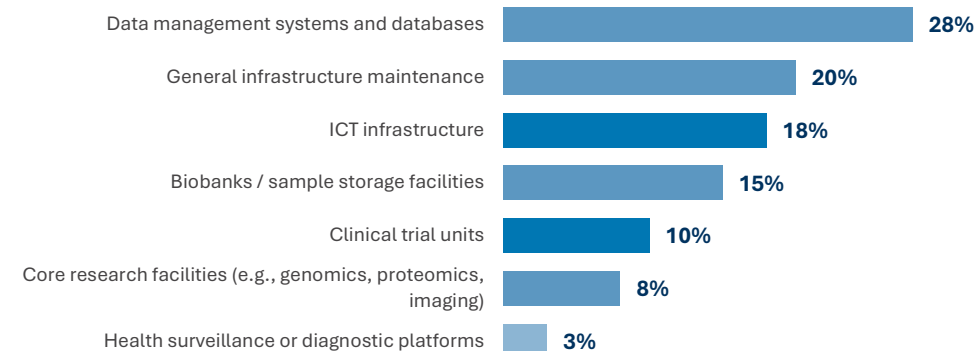
Portfolio by Thematic Area



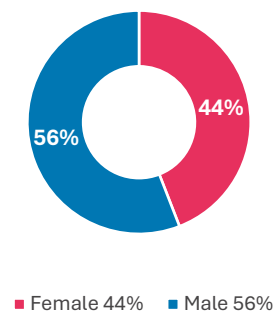
Portfolio by Institution



Types of Infrastructure Support



Portfolio by Gender



PEOPLE SUPPORTED

68 Early-career researchers

44 Mid-career researchers

17 Masters students

28 PhD students

OTHER GIPD HIGHLIGHTS

STRATEGIC HEALTH INNOVATION PARTNERSHIPS	 science, technology & innovation Department: Science, Technology and Innovation REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA		New SHIP Business Plan approved by DSTI 10k Human Genome Project launched	
GRAND CHALLENGES SOUTH AFRICA	 science, technology & innovation Department: Science, Technology and Innovation REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA	 health Department: Health REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA		New Programs launched: Women's Health; Diagnostics; Climate & Health; African Drug Discovery Accelerator
KFW-DSTI INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORT PROGRAMME	 science, technology & innovation Department: Science, Technology and Innovation REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA	 german cooperation DEUTSCHE ZUSAMMENARBEIT	Implemented by:  KFW Bank aus Verantwortung	Over 75 individual equipment items awarded - Procurement initiated
MEDICAL DEVICE & DIAGNOSTICS INNOVATION ACCELERATOR	 science, technology & innovation Department: Science, Technology and Innovation REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA	 technology innovation A G E N C Y	 Medical Device & Diagnostic INNOVATION CLUSTER	Phase 1 completed and evaluated - conservative midpoint return on investment ~3.68:1, with plausible range of 3:1 - 8:1
IKS SUPPORT	 health Department: Health REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA	 technology innovation A G E N C Y		2 traditional medicines preparing for clinical trials BRIP African Traditional Medicine (ATM) platform supported to evaluate ATMs

PART C

PERFORMANCE INFORMATION



REPORT OF THE AUDITOR-GENERAL TO PARLIAMENT ON THE SOUTH AFRICAN MEDICAL RESEARCH COUNCIL

Report on the audit of the annual financial statements and basis for opinion

- “In my opinion, the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the South African Medical Research Council as at 31 March 2026 and its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with the Standards of Generally Recognised Accounting Practice (GRAP) and the requirements of the Public Finance Management Act 1 of 1999 (PFMA).
- I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

Report on the audit of the annual performance report

I did not identify any material findings on the reported performance information for the selected indicators.

Report on compliance with legislation

I did not identify any material non-compliance with the selected legislative requirements.

Internal control deficiencies

I did not identify any significant deficiencies in internal control.”

SAMRC PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

Programme	Output Indicator	APP 2025/26 Performance Target	2025/26 Actual Performance
1. Administer health research effectively and efficiently, in accordance with good corporate governance practices	A clean audit opinion on the SAMRC from the Auditor-General South Africa	Clean Audit	Clean Audit
	Expenditure on administration from government budget allocated to the SAMRC does not exceed a set percentage	20%	17.25%
2. Lead the generation of new knowledge and funding research	Number of accepted or published conference proceedings, abstracts, journal articles, book chapters and books by SAMRC affiliated and funded authors	1000	1491
	Number of accepted or published conference proceedings, abstracts, journal articles, book chapters and books by SAMRC grant-holders with acknowledgment of the SAMRC support	220	509
	Number of accepted or published conference proceedings, abstracts, journal articles, book chapters and books where the first and/or last author is affiliated to the SAMRC	650	764
	Number of research grants funded by the SAMRC	210	333
3. Supporting health innovation and technology development through funding to improve health	Number of innovation and technology projects funded by the SAMRC aimed at developing, testing and/or implementing new or improved health solutions	38	90
	Number of innovation disclosures made by the SAMRC employees and students	1	2

SAMRC PERFORMANCE INFORMATION CONTINUED

Programme	Output Indicator	APP 2025/26 Performance Target	2025/26 Actual Performance
4. Building sustainable health research human capacity in South Africa	Number of SAMRC career and capacity development awards to all recipients of Masters', PhDs, Postdocs, Early-Career and Mid-Career Scientists	110	226
	Number of SAMRC career and capacity development awards to female recipients of Masters', PhDs, Postdocs, Early-Career and Mid-Career Scientists	80	150
	Number of SAMRC career and capacity development awards to Black South African citizens and permanent resident recipients of Masters', PhDs, Postdocs, Early-Career and Mid-Career Scientists	90	133
	Number of SAMRC career and capacity development awards to all recipients of Masters', PhDs, Postdocs, Early-Career and Mid-Career Scientists at the historically disadvantaged and under-resourced institutions	35	91
	Number of Masters' and PhD students graduated or completed	50	117
5. Research Translation into policy and practice to improve health	Number of policies, reports and guidelines that reference SAMRC research	50	331
	Number of reports and guidelines (co) produced by the SAMRC intramural researchers	35	81
	Number of national or international bodies/committees that SAMRC researchers and research support employees serve on	140	271
	Number of conferences, seminars, webinars and continuing development points workshops supported by the SAMRC	50	147

PART D

FINANCIAL INFORMATION



STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE 31 MARCH 2026

Description	2025/26 R	Variance %	2024/25 R
Revenue	1 591 560 839	13,0%	1 408 845 749
Other income	30 913 433	15,4%	26 792 641
Operating expenses	(1 589 019 764)	11,1%	(1 430 555 110)
Operating Surplus / (Deficit)	33 454 508	558,1%	5 083 280
Investment income	70 259 969	29,2%	54 392 992
Fair value adjustments	2 482 462	68,0%	1 477 299
Finance costs	(2 068 931)	620,0%	(287 363)
Surplus for the year	104 128 008		60 666 208

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE – VARIANCES

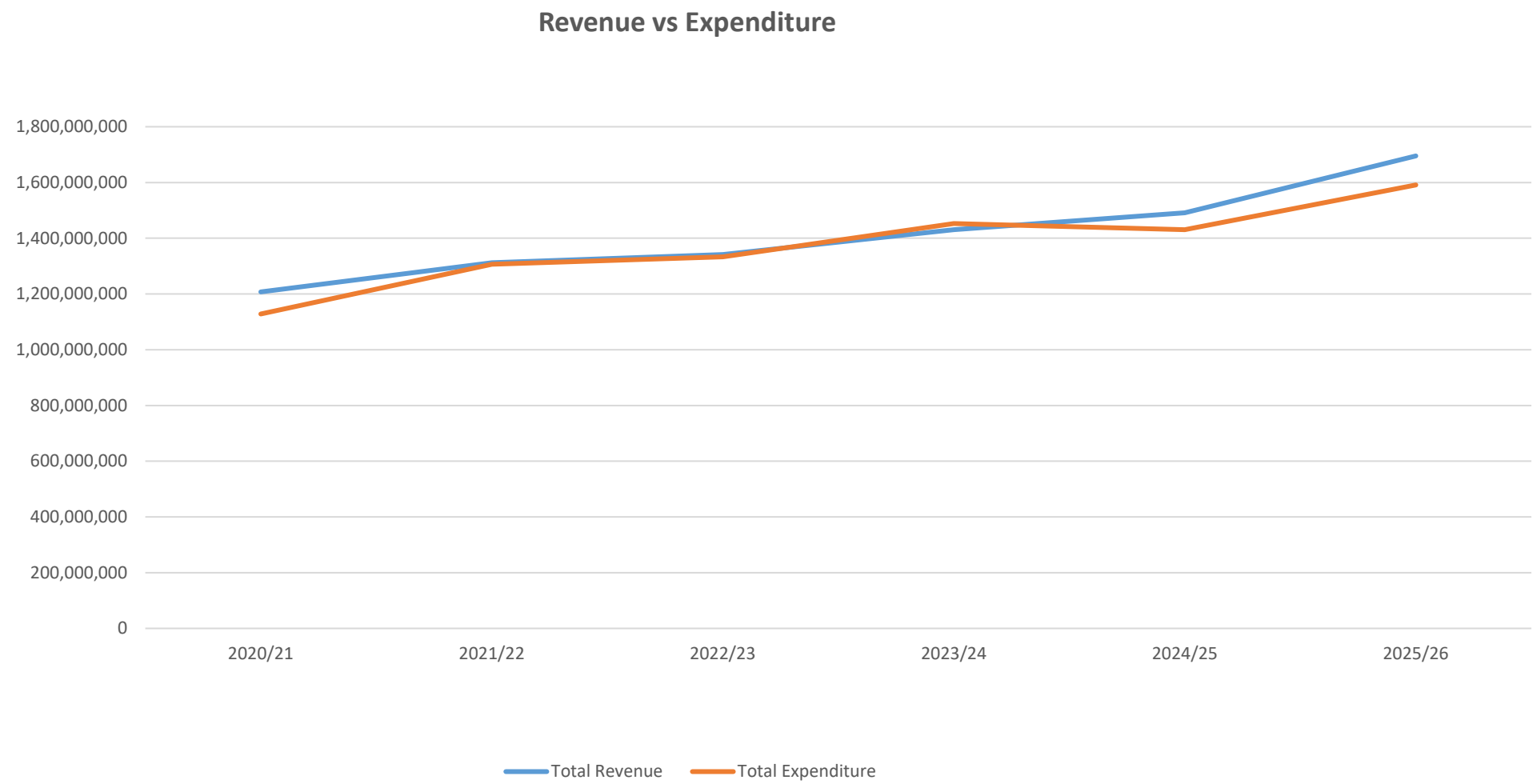
Total Income increased by 13,66% to R1 695m

- Baseline grant increased by 5,69% to R765m
- Contract income increased by 20,7% to R826m
- Rental Income increased by 13,4% to R6,8m
- Investment income increased by 29,2% to R70,0m
- Value of new research contracts awarded R644m

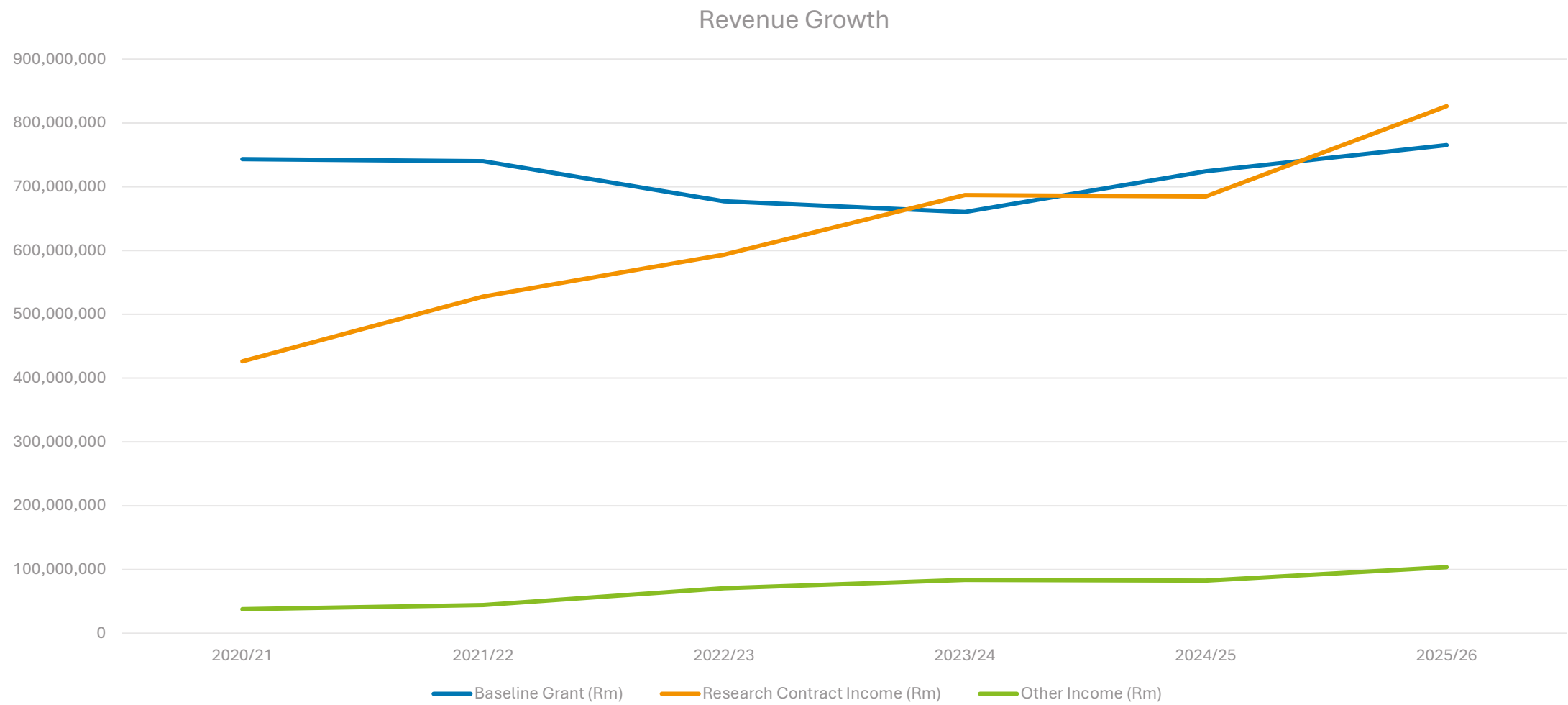
Expenses increased by 11% to R1 591m

- Collaborative research costs increased by 27,2% to R602,9m
- Travel costs decreased by 1,9% to R55,7m
- Lab Costs decreased by 25,2% to R37,3m
- Staff costs increased by 3,5% to R620,2m
- Consulting costs increased by 34,2% to R22,9m
- Audit fees increased by 3,5% to R3,4m

REVENUE VS EXPENDITURE



REVENUE GROWTH



IRREGULAR EXPENDITURE RECONCILIATION

Description	2025/2026	2024/2025
Opening balance	R217 000	–
Adjustment to opening balance	R2 680 000	–
Opening balance as restated	R2 897 000	–
Irregular expenditure confirmed	R3 914 000	R217 000
Condoned	–	–
Not condoned and removed	–	–
Recoverable	–	–
Written off	–	–
Closing balance	R6 811 000	R217 000

Reconciling notes

R2 680 000 related to 2024/2025 and was identified in 2025/2026.

R3 914 000 related to the current reporting year.

Status at year-end

- No irregular expenditure was reported as condoned.
- No amount was reported as recoverable.
- No amount was reported as written off.
- Disciplinary processes were in progress.

INDEPENDENT RFQ REVIEW AND CONSEQUENCE MANAGEMENT

R60 874 000 RFQ transactions reviewed for 1 Apr 2024–31 Mar 2025	R2 680 374 2024/2025 irregular expenditure identified	R3 913 587 2025/2026 irregular expenditure identified	R6 593 961 Exact total identified by the independent review
How the amounts arose - Two RFQ transactions were identified as non-compliant. - SAMRC reviewed all RFQ transactions from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025, totalling R60 874 000. - The review identified R2 680 374 for 2024/2025. - The review was extended to 1 April–31 December 2025 and identified R3 913 587 for 2025/2026.		Accountability actions disclosed - Disciplinary processes are underway for expenditure incurred in both years. - Identified service providers were notified of SAMRC's intention to restrict their ability to do business with organs of state. - Provider representations were being considered before reporting to National Treasury.	

FRUITLESS AND WASTEFUL EXPENDITURE: CONFIRMED ITEMS

Confirmed item	Actual amount
Payroll continued after intern contracts ended	R60 000
Accommodation booked but not used	R16 794
Flight-ticket change	R2 050
Late professional-membership renewal penalty	R6 322
Traffic fines	R2 395
Interest on CashSend accounts with debit balances	R93
Total confirmed for 2025/2026	R87 654

Recovery response

SAMRC disclosed attempts to recover the intern payroll amount. The responsible employee was negotiating a repayment plan.

Comparative disclosure

2024/2025 confirmed fruitless and wasteful expenditure: R47 420.

2025/26 increase: R40 234.

Fruitless and wasteful expenditure under assessment 2025/2026

R7.7 million: South African Diabetes Prevention Programme.

R411 000: Consultancy services.

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES AND CAMPAIGNS



SAMRC President and CEO Prof Ntusi hosting Grade 11 boys as part of Talking to the Boy Child Initiative.

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES AND CAMPAIGNS



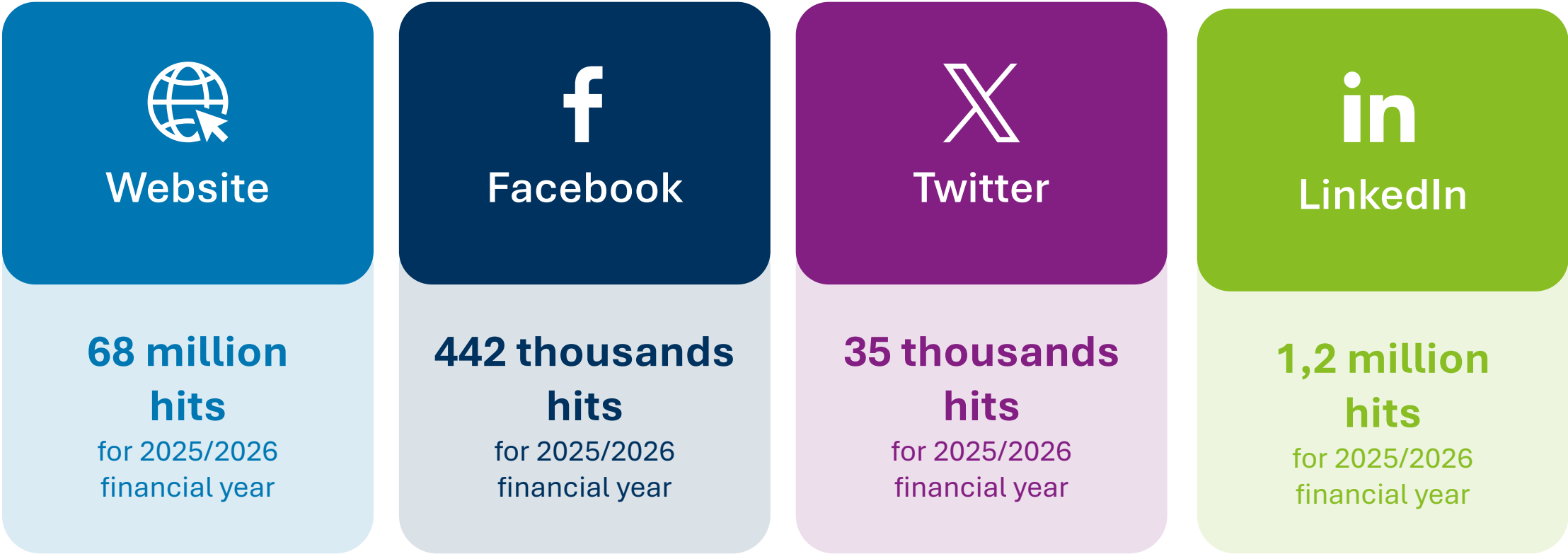
On Nelson Mandela Day, SAMRC showed up for those who are in need.

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES AND CAMPAIGNS



*SAMRC Generation Science
Job Shadowing Programme
continues to inspire curious
young minds in Durban, Cape
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