



THE AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY

# OUR WORK AND OUR FUTURE

Aga Khan University | School of Nursing and Midwifery

2019-2023

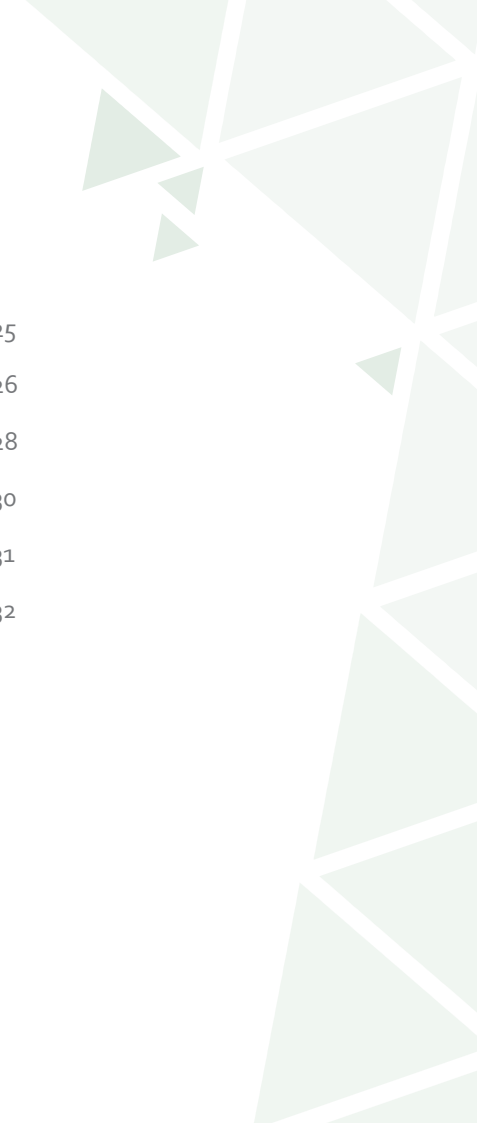


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# THE AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY

The Aga Khan University is a pioneering, not-for-profit, private university that works to improve quality of life in the developing world and beyond. AKU educates leaders who make a difference in the lives of their fellow citizens, addresses widespread problems through its research and delivers international-quality health care. In everything we do, we strive to serve as a role model that raises standards in the societies in which we work. We empower women and the disadvantaged, build support for pluralism and collaborate with government, local partners and world-renowned organizations to achieve shared goals.

Founded in 1983 in Pakistan by His Highness the Aga Khan, AKU launched its first programmes in East Africa in 2000. Today, we have campuses in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, and have awarded more than 3,000

diplomas and degrees across the region. Our academic units in East Africa include our Medical College, School of Nursing and Midwifery, Graduate School of Media and Communications, East Africa Institute and Institute for Human Development. The 300-bed Aga Khan University Hospital in Nairobi is East Africa's leading private teaching hospital. The University provides scholarships to nine out of 10 of its students in East Africa.

AKU is one of 10 agencies of the Aga Khan Development Network. Working mainly in Africa and South and Central Asia, AKDN helps those in need to improve their own lives through a long-term, multifaceted approach to development that spans economic, social and cultural dimensions. AKDN's roots in East Africa date back more than a century, and its activities benefit millions of East Africans every year.

# PROVOST FOREWORD

Since our establishment in 1983, the mission of the Aga Khan University has remained unchanged – we accelerate opportunities for future generations through the development of human capacity, dissemination of knowledge and application of service.

Our realisation of this mission has led to the development of campuses in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda where the University provides both undergraduate and graduate courses that positively affect millions of people through pioneering research that is guided by academic excellence, and that is relevant to the context of our students.



Since its inception in 2000, the School of Nursing and Midwifery (SONAM EA) has embodied the University's mission and values through its continued contribution to the development of health workers in East Africa. With the experience of nearly two decades, SONAM in East Africa is embarking on a fresh path. I am delighted to present this SONAM Overview that outlines the work of SONAM EA over the next half decade.

Of note, SONAM EA will focus on an expanded offering of academic programmes, utilising new learning facilities in each of its campuses, developed

specifically for the region's needs. Throughout its existence, SONAM EA has benefitted from partnerships with generous donors who are equally committed to changing the landscape of health. We look forward to continuing to reimagine the future of health through our work and our partnerships for decades to come.

*Dr Carl Amrhein*

PROVOST & VICE PRESIDENT, ACADEMIC  
AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY

## MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

For 15 years the Aga Khan University School of Nursing and Midwifery in East Africa has focused on developing the capacities of nurses and midwives to meet diverse health challenges across this region. Nurses and midwives make up the largest proportion of health workers globally, and in East Africa represent more than 85% of the health workforce. In many places, they are the only point of care, meaning their ability to respond appropriately is the difference between life and death for thousands of individuals.

Instilling critical thinking, confidence, leadership and compassionate care has been at the heart of SONAM EA's academic approach. We have learnt that these tenets are the key differentiators of our graduates, and we shall continue to use them as the foundation of our training.

In an increasingly complex world, with persistently high levels of maternal and infant mortality,





unacceptably high levels of child and adult malnutrition, and troubling trends in non-communicable diseases, the need for nurses and midwives to be agile, adaptable and proactive is even more urgent.

These realities will continue to guide our work in the future, and we will prepare graduates to meet and skilfully overcome these challenges. We see our role as a vanguard for changing health in East Africa through the students who pass through SONAM EA, and over time to influence policy and practice in their clinics, communities and countries.

This SONAM Overview describes a framework guiding our investments, our

focus and our priorities over the next five years. We commit to upskilling our faculty, upgrading our campuses and unlocking new partnerships through this plan.

Ultimately, our goal is to develop graduates who emerge as teachers and leaders possessing humility, compassion and an unshakeable commitment to the provision of respectful care.

For the SONAM EA team it is an exciting period of progressive change, and we look forward to working with our University colleagues, partners, stakeholders, donors and students to bring these goals to fruition.

*Sharon Brownie*

**DEAN**  
SCHOOL OF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY,  
EAST AFRICA

# SCHOOL OF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY

Since its establishment, the School of Nursing and Midwifery in East Africa (SONAM EA) has delivered high-quality, affordable and accessible work/study programmes for working nurses. Our focus is to develop nursing and midwifery graduates dedicated to transforming health and improving lives.

We aspire to be:

- Leaders in nursing and midwifery education and research scholarship.
- A source of clinically competent, critically thinking nurses and midwives who positively impact the health outcomes of patients, their families and their communities by applying

innovative practices and leading health system improvements.

- Builders of an active interprofessional health system anchored in productive educational and clinical partnerships.
- Contributors to innovative workforce reform through building new scopes of practice for nurses and midwives.
- A school that fosters unique approaches as we combine education, clinical practice and research across the nursing and midwifery workforce.

As we approach our 20-year anniversary,  
we recall His Highness the Aga Khan's words:

“

At the very heart of our programmes is one central conviction: The key to future progress in the developing world will be its ability to identify, to develop, and to retain expert and effective homegrown leadership.



# WHO WE ARE

The School of Nursing and Midwifery in East Africa is a tertiary-level unit within the Aga Khan University. The school provides educational programmes for nurses and midwives.

Nurses and midwives are the frontline of healthcare services in East Africa, and in many areas they represent the only qualified health professional available in a community. Nurses are very familiar in the role of clinical service delivery; however, they serve in several other ways. Nurses are community educators providing much-needed health information in underserved areas; mentors who support community health workers; health advocates who provide insight to changing clinical practices; and innovators who influence policy and health service reform.

Midwives provide essential clinical and psychosocial care needed by women as they prepare for and give birth, performing a critical service in the prevention of unnecessary maternal and new-born deaths. Midwives act as a trusted resource within their communities. Investment in nurse and midwife training has outsized impact in underserved populations, particularly in rural areas that characterise the majority of those living in East Africa.

- Nurses and midwives constitute 85% of the health workforce in East Africa.
- Nurses are often the sole health professionals leading clinic- and dispensary-level health services. Uganda has more than 2,000 government health services solely led by nurses and/or midwives.

NURSES AND MIDWIVES  
EPITOMISE AND VALUE:

Well-being  
Fairness  
Clinical competence  
CRITICAL THINKING  
Self-determination  
Advocacy  
Empathy  
Autonomy  
VALUES

Quality  
Truthfulness  
Social  
TRUST  
Leadership  
COMPASSION  
Accuracy  
RESPECT

Access to care  
justice  
Equity  
Courage  
Dignity  
Excellence  
MORAL

Thoughtfulness  
Human  
CARE  
Essence  
Fairness



# OUR PROGRAMMES

SONAM EA courses are designed to produce nurses and midwives dedicated to transforming health and improving lives. We strive to ensure our programmes are of high quality, are accessible, are relevant and have impact.

Over the past decade we have refined the content of our courses to respond to evolving health trends and incorporate new diagnostic approaches. Our work-study upgrading courses are specifically designed to accommodate the realities of working nurses and midwives.

Deeply grounded in leadership development, ethical practice, critical thinking, current evidence and compassionate care, our curricula reflect changing standards in nursing and midwifery practice while remaining culturally and contextually attuned to the realities of East Africa.





# WHAT WE DO

SONAM EA provides clinical upgrading programmes in nursing and midwifery for working nurses in East Africa. Our programmes have developed over our 18-year history and have reached hundreds of nurses across the region through our affordable and accessible work-study delivery mode. Accessibility to our programmes is enhanced by scholarships provided by our generous donors.

## ACADEMIC PROGRAMMES

### Enrolled Nurse to Registered Nurse (EN-RN) Diploma

This programme enables enrolled nurses (ENs) to upgrade their qualifications to registered nurse (RN) level. The programme has a sharp focus on the development of clinical competency and utilisation of evidence-based research. Active





community participation throughout the programme is aimed at preparing nurses for the multifaceted role they undertake as registered nurses in the communities they serve.

### **Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BScN)**

With a strong focus on critical thinking and clinical leadership, this programme is designed to give experienced registered nurses an opportunity to develop in-depth knowledge, skills and techniques necessary to provide holistic nursing care. The BScN prepares nurses in a broad range of competencies including leadership, management, policy, health education and research as part of its core curriculum.

### **Bachelor of Science in Midwifery (BScM)**

The SONAM midwifery education honours the normalcy of women's lifecycle events, and advocates for appropriate use of interventions and technology to address current or potential health challenges. This BScM programme prepares participants to provide safe, competent, culturally responsive and quality reproductive, maternal and child health-related care. This focus is central to every aspect of the programme, which actively combines knowledge, skills and attitudes from clinical, behavioral, educational and natural sciences.

### **Specialized Diploma in Oncology Nursing**

The Specialized Diploma in Oncology Nursing commenced in 2015. With the sharp rise of

cancer cases in East Africa, the programme provides experienced nurses with specialized skills in this area. Experiential training takes place in oncology wards, outpatient oncology clinics, and chemotherapy and radiotherapy units. In addition, units in paediatric oncology and palliative care are provided, enabling nurses to address the unique challenges of patients undergoing cancer treatment and rehabilitation.

### **NEW PROGRAMMES**

Responding to emerging needs, we will be widening our service offering to include the following certifications:

- Specialized Diploma in Critical Care and Emergency Nursing
- Master of Science in Advanced Practice Nursing (MScAPN)

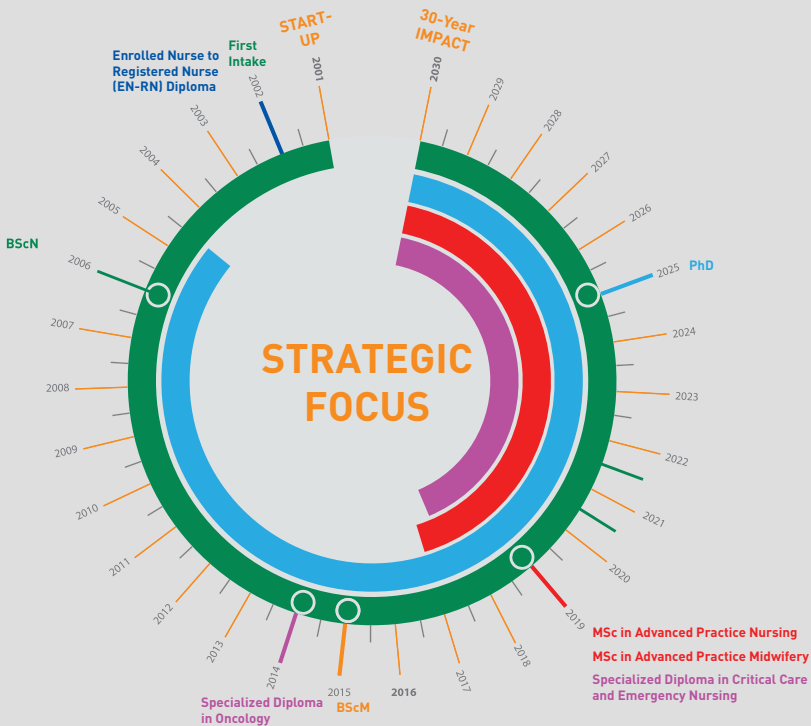
- Master of Science in Advanced Practice Midwifery (MScAPM)

### **FOCUS FOR THE FUTURE**

- Increased use of innovative teaching methods including Moodle online teaching and learning resources, and flipped classrooms.
- Online, distance e-learning (ODEL) formal accreditation.
- Widened pool of international experts contributing to curriculum development.
- Introduction of master's degree-level advanced practice programmes in nursing and midwifery.

# OUR PROGRAMMES

- EN-RN Diploma
- BScN
- BScM
- Specialized Diploma
- Masters
- PhD





NURSE PREPARING FOR A PROCEDURE

# HOW WE WORK

Since inception, SONAM has focused on delivering high-quality and contextually relevant academic programmes to support working nurses and midwives. We view ourselves as a specialised curator of advanced nursing education.

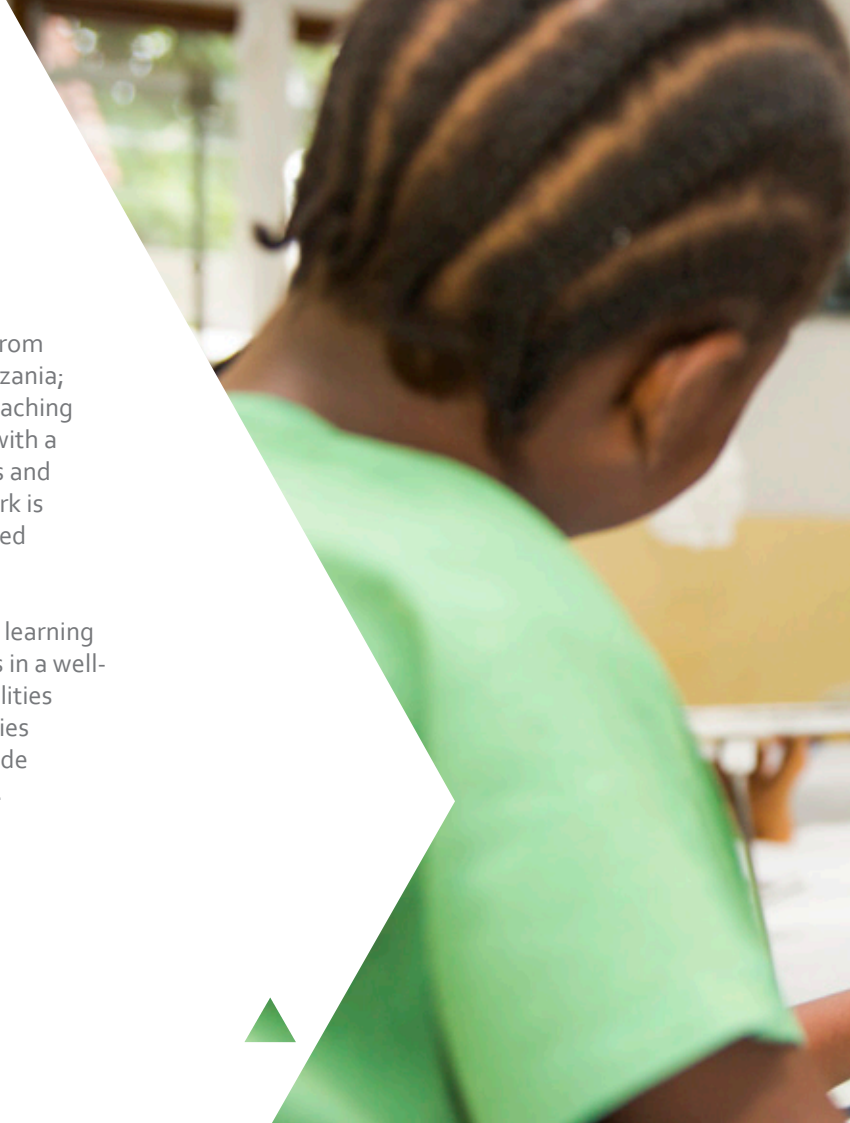
As a result of implementation and learning through practice, we are sharpening our strategic focus to reflect our commitments and deepening our competitive advantage while remaining grounded in our institutional philosophy.

- We pride ourselves in academic quality and student success.
- We focus on priority areas of need for the region in which we work.
- We promote the values of professionalism, integrity, accountability and trust.
- We actively ensure our programmes are available to practitioners in the public sector, recognising the needs of nurses in rural and underserved locales.
- We use innovative teaching processes that engage our students as partners in learning.
- We ensure our teaching and research inspires and accelerates intellectual innovation and change.
- We work with partners to increase our support for students and alumni.
- We actively link education and practice with a strong focus on quality of life for patients, families and communities.

## WHERE WE WORK

The School of Nursing and Midwifery operates from campuses in Nairobi, Kenya; Dar es Salaam, Tanzania; and Kampala, Uganda. Each campus includes teaching classrooms and a modern, well-stocked library with a wide range of relevant and up-to-date resources and remote dial-in capability. Similarly, all coursework is available on our online learning platform designed to increase student access to course materials.

Well-equipped clinical skills labs facilitate active learning where students are able to improve clinical skills in a well-resourced and supportive environment. Our facilities are designed to help students push the boundaries of learning, and we continually invest and upgrade our facilities to support students' learning goals.





## OUR STUDENTS

SONAM EA provides a valuable and valued student experience that enhances learning outcomes and increases workplace retention.

We instill practical aspects of critical thinking and leadership in our students by connecting them with expert clinicians who provide functional leadership lessons.

Our students and faculty are drawn from across East Africa and represent diverse localities and experiences from rural and urban communities. This diversity brings to our classrooms distinct views on community engagement, involvement and collaboration, practically bolstering a fundamental cornerstone of our training ethos.

### Our students are:

- Selected on merit
- Able to access training scholarships
- Supported by active mentorship programmes
- We ensure assessments, guidelines and learning systems that enhance scholarship.



# OUR ALUMNI

SONAM EA graduates reflect the unique approach of our programmes. Our alumni remain a critical resource for us as they influence practice in the public, private or policy spaces that they work in. We continually receive feedback from alumni detailing how they support and shape new approaches amongst colleagues and in their communities as a result of their time with us.

Many of our alumni work with public institutions where they have become agents of change. Additionally, several alumni work with public health programmes in East Africa, deploying their leadership lessons on an even larger scale.

## FOCUS FOR THE FUTURE

- Establishing alumni chapters at each of our campus locations from 2019.
- Engaging alumni through new research partnerships and as guest lecturers.
- Connecting alumni to students to build clinical leadership through mentorship.
- Documenting and disseminating alumni activities to build an engaged alumni network.
- Building a virtuous cycle of student-alumni learning by enrolling more alumni as members of our faculty.
- Establishing new impact tracking mechanisms to assess postgraduation experiences.

# OUR FACULTY

We view high-quality teaching as a key driver in student learning, academic progression and retention outcomes. Our emphasis on the most rigorous higher education standards and academic excellence means that we continually invest in our faculty to meet these goals. Our faculty benefit from continued personal and professional development that propels them to provide quality teaching and learning support to students.

Nursing and midwifery are practice-based professions in a field with rapidly advancing technology and changing prevention and treatment strategies. Consequently, our teaching approaches and faculty continuously embed and reflect new and evolving practices.

We strengthen our faculty through:

- Teaching and learning competencies
- Research and scholarly activity
- Clinical currency and faculty practice





## FOCUS FOR THE FUTURE

- Formal teaching qualifications for all teaching faculty.
- Investment in continuing professional development to advance pedagogy.
- 50% of SONAM EA faculty PhD qualified by 2021.
- Supportive HR practices tracked by clearly defined key performance indicators.
- Strategic recruitment plan for new and expert faculty.
- A competitive retention strategy.

To maintain clinical currency, 20% of the faculty schedule is allocated to practice.

# OUR APPROACH TO RESEARCH

Viewing academic rigour and excellence as a single aspect of SONAM EA courses. We bolster research expertise by providing learning resources that are updated and evidence-based, delivered by experienced faculty and accelerated by superior research collaborations.

We value research as an essential tool for the formation of practice guidelines and adoption of nursing best practice. We believe that an active research status is the hallmark of high-quality faculty and so we constantly strive to build our research output and increase funding to drive SONAM EA operations research.

## FOCUS FOR THE FUTURE

- Increased number of research grants secured by faculty.
- Diversified research partnerships.
- To have 70% of non-PhD faculty enrolled in doctorate programmes.
- Increased research outputs, such as projects, journal articles and research papers.

# OUR LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

We recognise the value of learning spaces that are well-structured, comfortable and technology-enabled. At SONAM EA we strive to build environments that enhance learning as well as expose new standards of care delivery to nurses and midwives. Our well-resourced campuses and award-winning libraries provide optimal learning environments that support student learning.

As a school within AKU, we reflect the global standard of universities dedicated to quality learning environments. Our campuses in Dar es Salaam, Kampala and Nairobi are located close to or within teaching hospitals, allowing our students to benefit from practical sessions that entrench classroom theory.

## FOCUS FOR THE FUTURE

- **Tanzania** – major campus upgrade completed in 2017.
- **Kenya** – new academic building under construction – completion due 2020.
- **Uganda** – new academic building to be constructed 2018–2021.

# FUTURE CAMPUSES



THE AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY NAIROBI CAMPUS



AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY KAMPALA CAMPUS

# OUR COMMUNITY

We view community input and feedback as critical elements for the relevance and quality of our programmes as they ensure we are attuned to community needs. This approach produces graduates who positively impact the quality of life in the communities we serve.







## FOCUS FOR THE FUTURE

- Expanded engagement and collaboration with communities from which our students are drawn.
- Secure funding to expand community-based interventions as a core part of student clinical training experiences.

# OUR PARTNERS



Global Affairs  
Canada

SONAM EA will continue to build partnerships that advance opportunities for our students and faculty. This includes stronger links with regulatory bodies to positively influence the trajectory for learning and standards for nursing practice; widening the scope of research and learning opportunities for our faculty and students; and increasing the number of donors who support our programmes and campus infrastructure development.

Our programmes are strengthened through critical industry and community partnerships. Clinical partnerships and alumni engagement facilitate placement experiences for hands-on learning for our students. Regional and global research partnerships support research capacity development. Through generous donor funding many of our students have received scholarships and SONAM EA has benefited from direct infrastructural support.

Beyond financial support, our partnerships have supported faculty development through mentorship, secondments and joint publication while allowing our staff and students to connect with other world-class institutions.

## FOCUS FOR THE FUTURE

- Building a collaborative engagement strategy for regulatory bodies.
- Increased number of research and learning partners.
- Functional fundraising strategy in place reflected in an increased number of donors.
- Establishment of a sustainability plan.

# OUR SPECIAL PROJECTS

Beyond the scope of our three campuses SONAM EA seeks to share our learnings and broaden our impact by engaging in new locations across the African continent. We purposely seek partnerships that allow us to sharpen our education delivery while building up our core of knowledge as a regional institution. We have a commitment to expand nursing capacity in the region, and so we look for ways to deliver training beyond our classrooms. To date, we have delivered capacity development initiatives in Mwanza, Tanzania; Egypt; and Mozambique.

These short-term and high-impact programmes allow us to extend our impact as a tertiary institution and can be modified to meet the needs of different partners interested in leveraging the skills of our teaching staff.

## FOCUS FOR THE FUTURE

- Upgrading programmes established through IMPACT.
- Faculty upgrading in Aswan, Upper Egypt.
- Providing consulting support in curricula development.
- Suite of short courses developed and available for delivery in new locations.
- Establishing new partnerships to extend our regional footprint.

# MEASURING OUR SUCCESS

SONAM EA will continue to build new indicators of success across all of our engagement areas. We believe that the success of the entire institution is influenced and developed on multiple levels requiring focused development in our student retention, our courses, our faculty, our partnerships, the campuses we work in and the educational resources we develop. Most important – the success of our work is evident in the impact we have on the patients, communities and constituents our nurses serve.

As such, we have carved out a number of areas where we will continually measure our impact.



## ACADEMIC INDICATORS

- Moodle utilization and quality



## FACULTY DEVELOPMENT INDICATORS

- Higher-degree completion
- Research activity
- Clinical currency



## RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS OUTPUT

- Grant acquisition
- Publications
- Downloads
- Citations



## STUDENT EXPERIENCE

- SET (Student Evaluation of Teaching)
- Alumni tracking and impact evaluation



## FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

- Price per student
- Faculty-student ratios
- Donor contributions



## PARTNERSHIPS

- Collaborative activity

## COMPLIANCE

- Accreditations and course approvals









# THE AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY

**The Aga Khan University  
School of Nursing and Midwifery**

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