



# Student Scholarship and Financial Assistance

Annual Report  
2024



THE AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY

“ —

I will cite here only what seems to me the most indelible of the University's accomplishments: that it has become a source of hope for so many. There is no force more powerful or more needed today. When we plant hope in people's lives, we lighten all their burdens. It is a source of energy and inspiration that is endlessly renewable.

Founding Chancellor, His Highness the Aga Khan IV  
AKU Founder's Day Message, 2023







In 2024, over 800 students graduated from our campuses in Pakistan, Nairobi, Tanzania, and Uganda, joining the ranks of more than 19,000 AKU alumni. They are now prepared to make a difference in society as doctors, nurses, educators, researchers and academics among many other roles. This significant milestone for the majority of our graduates from the Class of 2024 was made possible, thanks to the generous support of our donors.

# Naveera Taj From Chitral

## A story of unyielding hope to make a difference

When I look back at my journey, it is a story of sacrifices, resilience, and an unyielding hope to make a difference. My father, a havaldar (junior post) in the local police station, was the sole breadwinner of our family; he worked tirelessly to support our family of two sisters and three brothers.

In my community, education is a luxury many cannot afford. We have one good private school which offers quality education. When I transitioned to Grade 8, my younger sister was moving to Grade 6. As my father could only afford to send one of us to school, he chose me; my sister continued her education at a public school while I stepped into the doors of opportunity. This situation repeated itself again some years later.

Fortunately when it was time for university, I was blessed with a full scholarship. This not only relieved my family's financial burden but allowed my youngest brother to attend a private school.

Starting university has been both exhilarating and intimidating. I worked hard to excel academically and this year served as student representative for my entire batch on the Faculty Student Advisory Committee.

I have come to believe that kindness, when amplified, has the power to transform lives. I've joined societies like Falah, which focuses on financial health; Synergy, which addresses emotional health; and Aurora, which promotes mental well-being.

Beyond my university commitments, I counsel and mentor students in my village which is two and a half hours from the main city of Chitral. I'm also a facilitator for the Challenge Scholarship and a coordinator for the Gilgit-Baltistan and Chitral Student Support Network, helping students in my community navigate the path to higher education.



The disparities in access to education in my community drive my ambitions. My dream is to bring quality education to underprivileged areas, to create opportunities for students who might otherwise be left behind.

My experiences at AKU, both inside and outside the classroom, have broadened my horizons and solidified my belief in the transformative power of education. I aspire to work in education policy and developmental economics to bridge the gaps in our education system.

This journey has not been without its fears, but the encouragement of my mentors, peers, and family has helped me persevere. Every step forward feels like a small repayment of the sacrifices my sister and family have made for me. I owe it to them, to my community, to those who have supported me financially and to myself to amplify the kindness I have received and to pave the way for others to dream and achieve.

**Naveera is one of the 2,000+ students, who have benefited from the student scholarships and the financial assistance programme in 2024 at AKU, thanks to your support.**



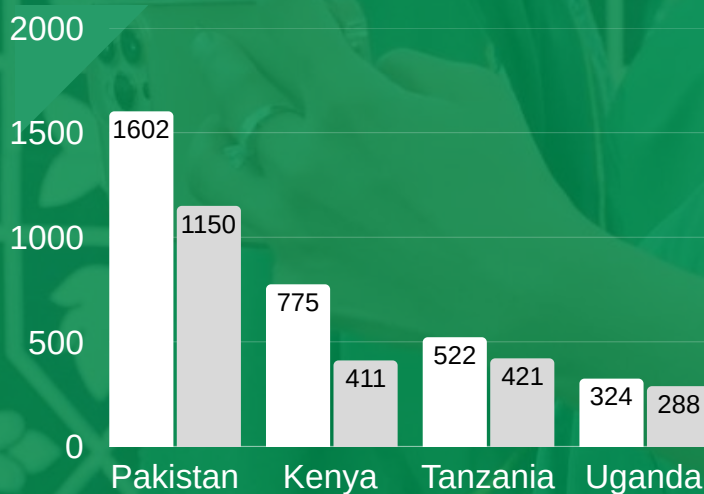
# The Difference Your Generosity Made in 2024

## 2,270 Students

received full or partial support, across our  
campuses in Pakistan and East Africa

● Enrolled students

● Students on FA



### Students who received financial aid and scholarships in 2024:

Pakistan (72%), Kenya (53%), Tanzania  
(81%) and Uganda (89%)

## USD 5.8 million

provided in financial aid and  
scholarships - funded by the generous  
contribution of our donors and the  
University's own resources

## 69%

of the students  
supported in 2024  
were women

# Nancy Atieno Olambo

## A story of perseverance, hope and faith

Even as a young girl growing up in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, for Nancy Atieno Olambo, nursing was more than just a career it was a calling born from her desire to help people.

“I didn’t have access to hospital practice back then, but being a first aider during sports events made me so happy,” Nancy recalls. “I loved the feeling of making people smile again.”

As her family faced financial challenges, Nancy knew education would be her key to achieving her dreams. Nancy’s parents struggled to provide for their five children. “We would often be sent home due to unpaid fees,” she recalls. “Sometimes, we stayed home for days, only returning to school after selling food items to raise the money.”

The financial strain became overwhelming when she reached secondary school and scholarships became her lifeline, enabling her to complete secondary education and a diploma in nursing.

Nancy’s journey as a nurse has been as rewarding as it has been demanding. The long, irregular hours of nursing often meant sacrificing weekends and holidays.

When it came to pursuing her Post RN-BScN at Aga Khan University School of Nursing and Midwifery, Nancy’s decision was clear. “Stopping work to pursue my degree wasn’t an option. AKU’s programme gave me the privilege to learn and work simultaneously. With its international level standards, AKU felt like a once in a lifetime opportunity.”

Nancy speaks passionately about her growth at AKU. “I came in with confidence, but AKU has pushed it to a whole new level,” she says. From mastering public speaking and academic writing to honing time management and innovation, her experience has been transformative.



“There’s always something amazing happening at AKU,” she adds.

Nancy dreams of advancing her career as a researcher to improve evidence-based patient care. “Being a researcher allows me to influence management and policies for better outcomes,” she says. She also hopes to guide young nurses and new graduates, mentoring them as they navigate their own journeys.

Reflecting on her journey, Nancy acknowledges the profound role her husband played in her life and their daughter’s future.

“My husband was our pillar. As an emergency physician, he was dedicated to making things work for everyone at the right time. We were married for three years, working side by side in the hospital, saving lives. Unfortunately, he was called to be with the Lord in 2024.”

Despite her loss, gratitude and hope continue to drive Nancy. She wants to start a sponsorship programme for students facing financial challenges. “I know how life-changing a scholarship can be. I want to bring joy and opportunity to others.” Nancy’s gratitude for her donors is profound.

**“They’ve given me a gift I can never repay. Without their support, I wouldn’t be where I am today.”**



# Your Continued Support Can Make Many More Dreams Come True

## Donate Via Cheque

**For non-endowment donations**, please make cheques payable to:  
The Aga Khan University

**For endowment donations**, please make cheques payable to:  
The Aga Khan University Foundation

### Mail your cheque to:

University Advancement  
The Aga Khan University  
5th Floor, University Centre  
Stadium Road  
P.O. Box 3500  
Karachi 74800, Pakistan

If you wish to donate via cheque through the Aga Khan Foundation Offices, visit this page for details:

[www.aku.edu/supportus/Pages/ways-to-donate](http://www.aku.edu/supportus/Pages/ways-to-donate)

## Donate Online

Donate directly to AKU or make a tax-efficient donation through the Aga Khan Foundation offices. **If you choose to donate via AKF, please mention AKU Scholarships in the comments section.**



AKU (For all currency donations)



AKF, USA (USD donations)



AKF, Canada (CAD donations)



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# In Gratitude

Your continued generosity serves one of AKU's core objectives: educating the leaders of tomorrow. It removes financial barriers for talented students to receive a life-changing education at the University and harness their true potential. Through your support, AKU prepares the students for leadership roles in medicine, nursing, education, media and communications, social and economic development and many other pertinent fields that are critical to bringing a positive change in society.

An AKU education does more than alter the course of students' lives; it ripples across future generations and the communities they will serve. We are profoundly thankful to you—our donors and supporters—for joining hands with the University in its noble mission to shape and improve lives.

Thank you



**Zahra Somani**  
Chief Advancement Officer

## University Advancement

Aga Khan University



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