



KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Salimah R Walani, PhD, MPH, MSN, RN

Dean, Aga Khan University (AKU) School of Nursing and Midwifery, Pakistan



Dr. Salimah Walani is the Dean of the Aga Khan University (AKU) School of Nursing and Midwifery, Pakistan, since August 2024. Dr. Walani has extensive global health and academic experience. Before joining AKU, Dr. Walani was Global Policy and Advocacy Advisor at MiracleFeet – a US-based not-for-profit organisation with programmes in 35 countries. Prior to that, she was Vice President of Global Programs at March of Dimes Foundation, USA, where she led the organization's maternal and Newborn health programs and partnerships in low- and middle-income countries.

In addition to these positions, she has held leadership, advisory, and consultative roles with notable organizations such as the New York City Department of Health, the World Health Organization, UNICEF, and New York University, among others. Dr. Walani has also taught in graduate programmes at Felician University in New Jersey, the University of Connecticut, Arizona State University, and Pace University in New York.

Originally from Pakistan, Salimah Walani graduated from AKU's School of Nursing in 1987 and subsequently served as a faculty member at the university for six years. She then pursued a Master of Science in Nursing from Simmons University, Boston, a Master of Public Health from Harvard University, and a PhD in Nursing Research and Theory Development from New York University.

Dr. Walani is well-known for her advocacy for the global birth defects agenda. She has served on several maternal and newborn health technical advisory groups. She is a member of the World Health Organization's Technical Advisory Group for Birth Defects, a member of the WHO's steering committee for developing a framework for newborn screening, diagnosis and management of birth defects and is an honorary member of the International Clearinghouse for Birth Defects Surveillance and Research. Dr. Walani serves on the editorial board of Policy, Politics & Nursing Practice. In 2014, Dr. Walani created a partnership to launch World Birth Defects Day which then became a global movement for advancing the prevention and care of congenital anomalies.