Al Ain University

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SDG 17: PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

Al Ain University

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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 17

Collaboration with NGOs and Businesses to Tackle the SDGs

Student Volunteering | Research Programmes | Educational Resources

DIRECT RESPONSE: YES

Al Ain University collaborates institutionally with non-governmental organisations, charities, professional associations and businesses to tackle the Sustainable Development Goals through student volunteering programmes, collaborative research and pilot programmes, and the development and delivery of educational resources.

INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSE

1. AAU collaborates with NGOs and businesses through all three routes

Al Ain University's collaborations connect academic expertise, student participation and external-sector capability to practical SDG action. The University's public evidence demonstrates active programmes with humanitarian and charitable organisations, professional associations, civil-society bodies and private companies. These partnerships operate through formal agreements, recurring platforms and implemented events rather than through isolated institutional statements.

The 2024 reporting-year evidence provides direct examples for each part of the indicator. Student volunteering is evidenced through Emirates Red Crescent's Aoun Award, the Al Ihsan Charity Association's Ramadan Aman campaign and the Institute of Management Accountants Abu Dhabi Chapter conference. Collaborative research is evidenced most clearly by the Siemens Energy agreement for joint research and pilot projects. Educational resources are evidenced through youth-development programmes, professional workshops, environmental education and inclusion-focused training delivered with external organisations.

Required component	2024 institutional evidence	SDG contribution
Student volunteering programmes	Aoun community-service programme; Ramadan Aman humanitarian campaign; IMA professional-conference volunteering	SDGs 1, 2, 3, 8, 11, 16 and 17
Research programmes	Siemens Energy joint research, pilot projects,	SDGs 7, 8, 9, 12, 13 and

Required component	2024 institutional evidence	SDG contribution
	student problem-solving and knowledge exchange	17
Development of educational resources	Sandooq Al Watan youth collaboration; IMA engagement; professional-development fair; environmental and inclusion training	SDGs 4, 5, 8, 10, 12, 13 and 17

Public evidence: E01 | E02 | E03 | E14 | E16 | E19 | E26 | E29 | E30 | E31 | E34 | E36 | E37

THREE COMPLEMENTARY FORMS OF PARTNERSHIP

AAU's evidence is not confined to sponsorship or attendance. Students deliver service, researchers and industry partners undertake joint work, and University and external experts create and deliver learning opportunities.

Al Ain University won the Third place in “Aoun” Award for Community Service

The Deanship of Student Affairs at Al Ain University has won third place at the UAE level in the Awn Award 2023-2024 for Community Service in the Universities category. The UAE Red Crescent Authority organized the award in collaboration with the Emirates Foundation for Education.

Prof. Ibtehal Abu Rezeq, Vice President for Development and Follow-up, and Dean of Student Affairs expressed her pride in the winning students who actively participated in society and engaged in voluntary work, and were able to overcome all surrounding conditions and launched numerous innovative community initiatives.

Al Ain University continues its support for the "Ramadan Aman" campaign in its 10th season

Al Ain University continues its ongoing support for the "Ramadan Aman" campaign in its 10th season, serving as a main hub for packing iftar boxes with the participation of faculty, administrative staff, and visitors from outside the university. Launched by the Ihsan Charitable Association in partnership with the Ministry of Interior, and in collaboration with traffic and police departments to reduce traffic

accidents, the campaign aims to distribute iftar meals to drivers at major intersections and crowded areas during iftar time.

Dr. Enas Abu Lebdeh from the College of Education, Humanities and Social Sciences, and the head supervisor at the packing center in Al Ain city, commended the efforts of all those involved in the campaign and its volunteers, emphasizing that "Ramadan Aman" contributes to promoting the noblest meanings of social and humanitarian interaction with various segments of society.

It is worth mentioning that Al Ain University annually participates in the Ramadan Aman campaign alongside other voluntary initiatives, driven by its deep belief in the importance of engaging with the external community and contributing to the promotion of a culture of volunteerism while ensuring the security and safety of everyone.

The College of Business Students Volunteer at IMA Abu Dhabi Chapter Tax Conference

Ten dedicated students from Al Ain University's College of Business (Al Ain University Student Chapter) participated as volunteers at the Mastering the UAE Tax Maze: Adopting the Evolving UAE Tax Landscape conference, organized by the Institute of Management Accountants (IMA) Abu Dhabi Chapter. The conference offered students an enriching opportunity to engage with industry professionals and gain hands-on experience in event coordination and management.

Guided by faculty member Dr. Riham Muqattash, the students took on various essential responsibilities that contributed to the smooth operation of the conference. They began by managing participant registration, distributing ID badges, and providing necessary registration materials. Throughout the event, the students assisted attendees with general inquiries and served as ushers, helping guide participants through the conference's sessions. They also conducted interviews to capture participant insights and feedback, engaging with the professional community. Additionally, they documented vital moments by taking photos and recording video footage, enhancing their skills in event coverage.

In recognition of their efforts and commitment, the Al Ain University College of Business Student Chapter was honored with a Certificate of Appreciation from the IMA Abu Dhabi Chapter. Dr. Muqattash expressed pride in her students' contributions, stating that this experience underscored the value of industry collaboration in preparing students for future careers.

Al Ain University and Siemens Energy collaborate to Foster Research and Innovation in the Energy Sector

Al Ain University (AAU) and Siemens Energy LLC have signed a landmark Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to establish a collaborative partnership to advance innovation, knowledge exchange, and joint research in the energy sector. The MoU was signed by Prof. Ghaleb El Refae (President- Al Ain University), and Dr. Fahad Al Yafei (Chief Technology Officer, Technology and Innovation Center Abu Dhabi, Siemens Energy.). The signing ceremony was attended by Dr. Noor Al Deen Atatreh (Board of Trustees Deputy Chairman- Al Ain University),

Mr. Khalid Bin Hadi (UAE Managing Director- Siemens Energy), and staff members from both organizations.

The partnership between Al Ain University and Siemens Energy focuses on collaborative research and pilot projects, with AAU students addressing real-world challenges and providing consulting solutions. At the same time, Siemens Energy experts contribute their knowledge to enhance the academic environment. This collaboration also aims to create new job opportunities for AAU graduates and develop a skilled talent pipeline for Siemens Energy. It involves sharing resources, pursuing joint funding for energy transition research, and working on projects in de-carbonization, energy storage, and blockchain applications.

“This collaboration marks a major advance in aligning academia with industry needs. By partnering with Siemens Energy, we offer our students exceptional opportunities to tackle real-world challenges, drive innovation, and prepare for leadership roles in the energy sector. Together, we are advancing research and developing sustainable solutions for a better future.” said Prof. Ghaleb El Refae, President of Al Ain University.

“Partnership is key to accelerating de-carbonization. Enabling knowledge transfer and fostering innovation in the energy sector is crucial to empowering future generations in the fight against climate change. We’re proud to launch this collaboration with Al Ain University and work with academia to develop and commercialize new technologies that will make a meaningful contribution to reaching net zero,” said Dr. Fahad Al Yafei, Chief Technology Officer, Technology and Innovation Center Abu Dhabi, Siemens Energy.

AAU organizes the 7th Annual Environmental Day 2024

The College of Business at Al Ain University recently held its Seventh Annual Environmental Day under the theme "Climate Change and its Impact on Economic Development in the 21st Century". The event was organized jointly by Dr. Mosab I. Tabash, Dr. Shorouq Eletter, and Dr. Tahira Yasmin. The University's president, Prof. Ghaleb El Refae, presided over the event, which was attended by deans, faculty from other colleges, staff, and students. The event's primary objective was to raise awareness about the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, specifically SDG4, SDG7, and SDG13. Different views from experts, academicians, students, and researchers enriched the day. The event began with a welcome speech by Dr. Zafar Husain, Dean of the College of Business. He discussed the College's role in promoting sustainability, ethics, and corporate social responsibility in Business.

During the Environmental Day event at Al Ain University, the speakers shared their insights about environmental sustainability and climate change. Aisha Al Mazroui, Project Manager of the Sustainable Campus Initiative from the Environmental Agency- Abu Dhabi (EAD), talked about the different initiatives EAD took and encouraged students to participate in their activities to help create a clean and green environment. Dr. Tahira Yasmin from Al Ain University discussed the "Degrowth Strategy" for Combating Climate Change Challenges globally and in the UAE, highlighting the cost of climate change to economic development.

For the first time on Environmental Day, a student-to-student panel discussion took place where students discussed the relationship between climate change and economic development. They concluded that climate change poses multifaceted challenges to economic growth, such as disrupting agricultural productivity, leading to food shortages and price volatility.

All University colleges participated in the event by setting up booths reflecting their commitment to protecting the environment. Additionally, a plantation drive for Ghaf trees was conducted on the university premises, sponsored by Barari Natural Resources, with the participation of the AAU President, faculty members, and students.

Al Ain University is part of the Sustainable Campus initiative supervised by the Abu Dhabi Environmental Agency and has ranked high in UI Green Metric World University Ranking, Sustainability Ranking, and Impact Ranking. The University is increasingly focusing on addressing urgent environmental issues.

Pioneering Event and MoU with the Institute of Management Accountants

Al Ain University hosted the flagship event "Connect with the Institute of Management Accountants 2024," organized by the College of Business. The event brought together finance and management accounting professionals, offering opportunities to connect with industry leaders, emerging talents, and engage in thought-provoking discussions.

The event featured a workshop on "Igniting Innovations Through Connections," presenting strategic and valuable insights into the future of the profession, delivered by Mike DePrisco, President and CEO of the Institute of Management Accountants. Attendees had the chance to network with peers, learn from experts, and gain insights into the latest trends and technologies shaping the future of industries.

One of the event's highlights was signing a Memorandum of Understanding between Al Ain University and the Institute of Management Accountants. The MOU was signed by Prof. Amer Qasem, Vice President of Al Ain University (Abu Dhabi Campus), and Mike DePrisco, President and CEO of the Institute of Management Accountants. This collaboration represents a significant step toward enhancing cooperation in finance, management accounting, and other areas that benefit both parties.

The MoU aims to strengthen ties between the university and the institute by developing training programs, exchanging practical experiences and skills, collaborating in scientific research, and organizing joint workshops and lectures, all of which contribute to enhancing the quality of education and research at the university.

The event also celebrated the achievements of professionals who recently earned their CMA, CSCA, and FMAA certifications, some of the most prestigious qualifications in the field of management accounting. These certifications hold significant value for students and business

enthusiasts, fostering a community of excellence and leadership.

Prof. Amer Qasem remarked, "Hosting this important event at Al Ain University represents a distinctive step towards solidifying the university's role as a hub for professional and academic engagement." He added, "This event not only provides a platform for finance and management accounting professionals but also enhances opportunities for our students and faculty members to learn from experts and interact with industry leaders."

Qasem further highlighted that the signing of the MoU with the Institute of Management Accountants reflects Al Ain University's commitment to building strategic partnerships that serve the university’s aspirations and the needs of the business community. He expressed pride in celebrating the

achievements of professionals who have earned CMA, CSCA, and FMAA certifications, which signify leadership and excellence in the field.

The President and CEO of the Institute of Management Accountants expressed his pride in this collaboration with Al Ain University, stating that the partnership underscores both parties’ commitment to fostering innovation and excellence in finance and management accounting while preparing a new generation of distinguished professionals to lead the future.

Al Ain University Exhibition for Professional Development and Training reveals new horizons for professional success

The Alumni Office at both the Al Ain and Abu Dhabi campuses organized the fourth edition of Al Ain University's Career Development and Training Exhibition. This initiative aligns with the office's goals of fostering collaboration with governmental and private institutions to provide training programs and job opportunities for the university's graduates and students.

Over 30 governmental and private entities participated in the exhibition at both locations. The institutions offered a variety of activities, including on-the-spot interviews, collection of resumes from Al Ain University graduates, resume editing tips, as well as providing training and volunteering opportunities for graduating students. Job opportunities were also presented for graduates actively seeking employment.

Human Resources unit managers from the participating organizations emphasized the significance of the exhibition for students and graduates. It provides them with a deeper understanding of the job market, the skills required by each company, and the future career opportunities available. The exhibition witnessed a substantial turnout from both graduates and students expected to graduate soon.

Al Ain University and the "Sandooq Al Watan" collaborate to empower youth

In the presence of His Excellency Sheikh Nahyan bin Mubarak Al Nahyan, Minister of Tolerance and Coexistence and Chairman of the Sandooq Al Watan, as part of the "Open Day for Employment" organized by the Sandooq Al Watan at Manarat Al Saadiyat in Abu Dhabi, to empower youth in the private sector and enhance their capabilities to enter the entrepreneurship field, Al Ain University (AAU) has signed a cooperation agreement with Sandooq Al Watan to launch the National Network for Business Incubators, which was also signed by a group of business incubators in the country, in the presence of several ministers, prominent businessmen, Emirati investors, leaders of over 30 business incubators and accelerators nationwide, and more than 500 Emirati youth seeking job opportunities in the private sector alongside the Fund's partners, board members, and His Excellency Yasser Al Qarqawi, the Director General of the National Fund. In addition to the agreement signing, the events featured an exhibition showcasing the Fund's notable works and successful experiences of Emirati youth.

Prof. Ghalab Al Refae, AAU President, stated that the collaboration between Al Ain University and Sandooq Al Watan is a long-term partnership that emphasizes both parties' keenness to empower the nation's youth, enhance their efforts, skills, and create extensive job opportunities in the private sector to enable young men and women to utilize their potentials and invest in themselves. This demonstrates our commitment to contributing to driving the wheel of development and prosperity in the country.

A Workshop entitled “My Farming, My Self-Sufficiency” Workshop in Collaboration with the General Women’s Union

The Deanship of Student Affairs at Al Ain University (Abu Dhabi campus) organized a workshop titled “My Farming, My Self-Sufficiency” in collaboration with the General Women’s Union. The workshop was presented by Engineer Amjad Omar Al-Akhal, Director of Emirates Hydroponic Farms for Vegetables, and covered several key topics, including the historical evolution of agriculture, an introduction to hydroponic farming, the benefits of applying such agricultural practices, and the main types of plants suitable for hydroponic systems. The workshop also featured a practical component where students learned about different agricultural media, types of seeds suitable for hydroponic farming, and how to plant in alternative media to soil. These activities aim to enhance environmental awareness among students and encourage them to adopt sustainable agricultural practices. By learning about hydroponic farming techniques, students can apply this knowledge in their daily lives and contribute to conserving natural resources. Additionally, the workshop helps students develop practical skills in agriculture and environmental conservation.

CoE Participates in Training Program for Students of ZHO for People of Determination

For the second consecutive year, Al Ain University, represented by its College of Engineering at both its Abu Dhabi and Al Ain campuses, participates in the training program for students of the Zayed Higher Organization for People of Determination. The training aims to prepare students to participate in the "Global IT Challenge for Youth with Disabilities 2024" competition, which will be held in the Philippines. This program is part of Al Ain University's efforts to support and empower people of determination in the field of information technology and digital sciences.

The role of the College of Engineering includes providing laboratories for training and exams, in addition to training students in various fields such as creating and editing presentations using PowerPoint, handling data using Excel, learning research skills using the internet, making and editing videos, Internet of Things projects, and programming self-driving cars. The number of students was 19 at the Abu Dhabi campus and 11 at the Al Ain campus.

Engineering students at the Abu Dhabi campus participated in the different aspects of the training program, including students Mohammad Khafash and Omar Al Kendi, under the supervision of laboratory engineers, enhancing the diversity and richness of the training experiences offered to the students. The training phase lasts for five months, ending at the end of October this year.

It is worth noting that the UAE team won first place in the Internet of Things Challenge for the year 2023, with the participation of a student from the College of Engineering among the people of determination.

INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERSHIP FRAMEWORK

2. Governance converts partnerships into sustained SDG programmes

AAU's Strategic and Operational Plans place partnership, community engagement, research, innovation and sustainable development within the University's institutional direction. The Annual Report records delivery across teaching, research and service. The Sustainability Research Center and the Deanship of Scientific Research and Graduate Studies provide institutional structures for interdisciplinary research and external cooperation.

AAU's published collaborative-research framework specifically addresses cooperation with industry and with public and private sectors. It identifies joint research projects, sponsored research, consultation, expert assistance and participation in conferences and workshops organised by governmental and non-governmental organisations. This framework is complemented by student-affairs and alumni structures that connect learners to volunteering, training and professional networks.

Institutional mechanism	Partnership function	Programme route supported
Strategic and operational planning	Links partnership, community engagement, research and performance	All three components

Institutional mechanism	Partnership function	Programme route supported
	monitoring	
Research governance	Supports ethical, funded and disseminated collaborative research	Research programmes
Sustainability Research Center	Provides an interdisciplinary platform for SDG-related work	Research and educational resources
Deanship of Student Affairs	Mobilises students, clubs and external volunteering opportunities	Student volunteering
Alumni Office and colleges	Bring employers and professional bodies into workshops, fairs and events	Educational resources
Public reporting and quality review	Records activity and provides an independently reviewed institutional framework	Accountability and continuity

Public evidence: E05 | E06 | E07 | E08 | E09 | E10 | E11 | E12 | E33

Collaborative Research and Scholarly Activity

According to the AAU research instructions and guidelines, the cooperative arrangement in scientific research entails the development of cooperation with three bodies, including cooperation with other national, regional and international universities; industry; public, and private sectors. This cooperative arrangement statement is based on the university principles of openness and free dissemination of research ideas. It also ensures that profit-oriented companies should use university's research ideas on professional and ethical basis. AAU encourages conducting research with individuals from other institutions and international organizations. As evidence of that, several faculty members have published joint research papers with researchers from other universities. Several faculty members have collaborative work with local and international universities. AAU is aware of the role of research cooperation as an important form of engagement that the university can offer to communities. This engagement will also help AAU to utilize research resources effectively, especially that some resources have often not been used in university partnerships. The research strengths can be integrated more fully into partnerships with communities in the following forms:

Cooperation with Universities

AAU encourages field-specific collaboration with national and international universities and research institutions to develop extended partnership and enhance research quality on mutual benefit basis.

Cooperation between University and Industry

Research and development cooperation between universities and industry is quite hard

because it involves uncertainty, high information use on asymmetries between partners, and high spillovers. Despite these difficulties, AAU is willing to play an important role in the academic fields and research central to arts and humanities, businesses, natural sciences, social sciences, technology and economics.

Cooperation with Public and Private Sectors

AAU encourages research cooperation with the public and private sectors that includes collaboration through joint research projects, sponsored research, consultation and expert assistance. Other important forms of cooperation include University researchers' participation in conferences and workshops arranged by government and non-governmental organizations as well. Graduate students are also encouraged to conduct research related to public interest.

Collaboration between Al Ain University and the UAE Volunteers platform to enhance volunteer work

A collaboration between Al Ain University, represented by the Deanship of Student Affairs (Abu Dhabi campus), and the UAE Volunteers platform, aims to enhance volunteer work. The university seeks to broaden the scope of volunteer activities, instill the concept of social responsibility, promote a culture of volunteerism, and contribute to building a better and more advanced society. This collaboration involves encouraging initiatives and events organized by the university for the benefit of the local community in the United Arab Emirates in general, and specifically for the students.

This collaboration stems from Al Ain University's commitment to enhancing the role of its students and shaping their personalities by encouraging their participation in various forums and activities within the country. The university aims to develop the leadership and organizational skills of its students and contribute to reducing their idle time by directing their energies positively and integrating them into the local community.

Students from Al Ain University who volunteer through the UAE Volunteers platform receive accredited volunteer hours and volunteer certificates from the organizing entity. Recent graduates benefit from

volunteer work by gaining diverse experiences and improving their social communication skills through interaction with the community. Additionally, unique volunteer ideas may receive financial support for implementation.

The UAE Volunteers platform is the first of its kind, the largest in the country, and a comprehensive, interactive platform aimed at organizing volunteer efforts in the UAE. It enables volunteers to seamlessly perform their community tasks in a suitable environment.

Alumni office in a year

The Alumni Office offered a variety of activities, events, workshops, and professional development sessions throughout the past year. It also organized the Al Ain University Career Development and Training Fair, providing a large number of job opportunities for the university's graduates. Among the key activities held last year:

The "Be Ready for the Job Market" workshop and the "Personal Skills" workshop, which aim to develop the skills of graduates and students, enhancing and improving their abilities.

The Alumni office also organized a visit to the Mawahib Center, which is the first center in Abu Dhabi specializing in employment support. The center aims to qualify national talents and meet the needs of the labor market in the UAE. It focuses on enhancing productive and professional skills, offering proactive services that align with employers' aspirations and the requirements of future jobs.

Additionally, the office organized the Al Ain University Career Development and Training Fair, which featured a large number of leading companies and institutions in UAE. This fair helped graduates in their job search by providing direct opportunities to explore available job openings. It also offered a chance to expand networking by directly interacting with company representatives during the event.

The office is also committed to engaging with local companies and institutions to provide job and training opportunities for graduates. Through its efforts, the office facilitated numerous job opportunities for graduates last year by connecting with local organizations and Institutions.

STUDENT VOLUNTEERING PROGRAMMES

3. AAU maintains a structured route into external volunteering

AAU's collaboration with the UAE Volunteers platform establishes a standing institutional route for students to participate in approved community activity. The collaboration is led through the Deanship of Student Affairs and is designed to broaden volunteering, strengthen social responsibility and integrate students into the local community. Students participating through the platform can receive accredited volunteer hours and certificates from the organising body, while distinctive volunteer ideas may be considered for implementation support.

The platform arrangement is reinforced by recurring partnerships with charities and professional organisations. In 2024, AAU's participation was recognised through the Emirates Red Crescent's Aoun Award for Community Service, and students took part in major humanitarian and professional-service activities. This pattern shows a progression from opportunity identification and preparation to participation, recognition and continued engagement.

Programme stage	AAU and partner practice	Student outcome
Opportunity	External opportunities are channelled through the UAE Volunteers platform and partner	Access to recognised service roles

Programme stage	AAU and partner practice	Student outcome
	organisations	
Preparation	Partner-led awareness and skills sessions develop readiness for service	Practical knowledge and responsible conduct
Participation	Students support humanitarian, community, professional and environmental programmes	Applied citizenship and leadership
Recognition	Organising bodies record hours, issue certificates and recognise institutional performance	Documented achievement and employability value
Continuation	AAU sustains partnerships and recurring campaigns across academic years	A culture of volunteering rather than one-off activity

Exhibit 1. UAE Volunteers is the national platform through which AAU broadened accredited volunteering opportunities for its students.

Sources: AAU and UAE Volunteers [E12-E13].

Public evidence: **E12** | **E13** | **E14** | **E15** | **E24** | **E25**

Al Ain University won the Third place in “Aoun” Award for Community Service

The Deanship of Student Affairs at Al Ain University has won third place at the UAE level in the Awn Award 2023-2024 for Community Service in the Universities category. The UAE Red Crescent Authority organized the award in collaboration with the Emirates Foundation for Education.

Prof. Ibtehal Abu Rezeq, Vice President for Development and Follow-up, and Dean of Student Affairs expressed her pride in the winning students who actively participated in society and engaged in voluntary work, and were able to overcome all surrounding conditions and launched numerous innovative community initiatives.

Celebrating volunteerism: ERC honours winners of Aoun Award for Community Service

The Emirates Red Crescent (ERC) on Thursday honoured educational institutions that received the Aoun Award for Community Service in its 12th edition for the academic year 2023-2024.

This took place during a ceremony held at Al Raha Beach Theatre in Abu Dhabi, in cooperation

with the Emirates Schools Establishment and the Department of Education and Knowledge.

The ERC student teams include 94,000 members, from 338 educational institutions, including schools, kindergartens, and centres for people of determination, in addition to Red Crescent Student Clubs at universities.

Winners in this edition of the award included five universities, 21 schools, six kindergartens, and four centres for people of determination, selected out of the 298 participating institutions.

The ceremony also honoured participants from 15 distinguished categories on the UAE level, including the innovative student, the volunteering coordinator, the volunteering community hero, and the distinguished parent.

In his address, His Excellency Rashid Mubarak Al Mansouri, Secretary-General of Emirates Red Crescent Authority, emphasised the significant role of youth in driving the development and prosperity of human societies.

He noted that the UAE has always worked on creating a conducive environment, harnessing the talents and energies of youth for the benefit of their communities and humanity as a whole.

“Following the path of our wise leadership, the Emirates Red Crescent works to instill concepts of volunteerism, humanitarianism, and charitable work among students, encouraging them to extend a helping hand to those in need,” Al Mansouri said.

He further pointed out that the Aoun Award for Community Service fosters creativity and competition among students, motivating them to take initiative, and engage in volunteer and charitable work.

Culture of Giving, Deeply Rooted in Emirati Society

Aletihad spoke to a number of awardees who emphasised the transformative impact of the Aown Award in fostering giving and volunteerism, which are well-established values in UAE society.

The Victoria International School of Sharjah (VISS) - Central Region won first place in the early years category through their “Budding Volunteers” programme. Hediah Kadous, Founding Head of VISS Central Region, noted the importance of volunteering and service learning as essential components of the school’s ethos.

Leading this winning programme is Hanem Shaaban, Activities Coordinator at VISS Central Region. She said that students’ volunteering efforts focused on supporting the “helping hands” at the school, such as bus drivers and the cleaners, through a wide range of initiatives including arranging a group Umra trip.

“Involving children in these volunteering activities had a positive impact on them. It allowed them to recognise and value the contributions of the school’s support staff, ultimately

strengthening their characters, in addition to nurturing their empathy and sense of responsibility towards others," she told Aletihad.

Shaaban added that volunteering holds immense significance in Emirati culture, embodying values of unity, cooperation, and generosity that underpin the foundation of the UAE.

"The legacy of the UAE's Founding Father, the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, epitomises these values, inspiring a culture of volunteerism that is deep-rooted in emirati society," said Shaaban, who also won the award for best volunteering coordinator in the UAE.

Rofida Maymoon, 23, leads the Aoun team for community service at Abu Dhabi University - Al Ain, which clinched the top spot in the university category.

Speaking with Aletihad, Maymoon explained that the team's volunteering efforts focused on empowering people of determination through a diverse range of initiatives spanning innovation, religion, health, and education, both on and off-campus. Collaborating with various institutions, their efforts included donation drives, seminars, and workshops, among others.

"The support and encouragement of our wise leadership through initiatives such as the Aoun Award has a profound impact, promoting and instilling a culture of volunteering among all members of society," she said.

The ERC allocated Dh30,000 for the first-place winner at the university level, Dh25,000 for the second place, and Dh20,000 for the third place. At the school level, Dh25,000 was allocated for the first place, Dh20,000 for the second place, and Dh15,000 for the third place. For kindergartens, Dh15,000 was allocated for the first place, Dh10,000 for the second place, and Dh8,000 for the third place. In addition, Dh15,000 was allocated for the winner of first place in the category of centre for people of determination, Dh10,000 for the second place, and Dh8,000 for the third place.

Al Ain University and the Red Crescent organize a first aid training

The College of Engineering at Al Ain University (Abu Dhabi Campus) organized the first aid training, in cooperation with the Emirates Red Crescent. The workshop was conducted under the supervision of Eng. Huda Alheih and presented by Mr. Muhannad from the Red Crescent.

The course aims to enhance students' awareness of the importance of first aid and how to help the injured in emergency situations. The students were trained on how to contact the operating room and to convey the information that should be provided briefly to understand the situation, such as: location, incident, number of patients, and extent of injury.

It is worth mentioning that; certificates of participation were given to all workshop participants.

HUMANITARIAN AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

4. Emirates Red Crescent partnership produced externally recognised 2024 participation

AAU won third place in the university category of the Emirates Red Crescent's Aoun Award for Community Service in 2024. The award is implemented with education-sector partners to strengthen humanitarian, charitable and community-service values among learners. AAU's result provides externally validated evidence that the University did not merely advertise volunteering: its students and institutional teams participated in a structured programme and achieved formal recognition.

Independent reporting of the award ceremony confirms the programme's scale. The 2023-2024 edition brought together educational institutions across the UAE and formed part of a wider Red Crescent student network. The programme's structured teams, community projects and recognition system place student volunteering within a sustained educational and humanitarian framework.

Evidence	Verified 2024 position	Value for the SDGs
AAU institutional record	AAU won third place in the Aoun Award university category	Direct evidence of implemented student community service
External corroboration	Aletihad reported the Emirates Red Crescent ceremony and national educational participation	Independent confirmation of programme scope
Programme model	Student teams plan and deliver humanitarian and charitable initiatives	Practical learning for SDGs 1, 2, 3, 10, 16 and 17
Recognition	Awards and certificates acknowledge service and encourage continued participation	Institutionalises volunteering and social responsibility

Public evidence: **E14** | **E15** | **E24**

EXTERNAL VALIDATION

AAU's 2024 award is public evidence from both the University and independent national media that its collaboration produced implemented and recognised community-service activity.

IMPLEMENTED STUDENT VOLUNTEERING IN 2024

5. Charity and professional-body partnerships mobilised students in practice

AAU continued its support for the tenth season of the Ramadan Aman campaign in 2024. The

campaign was organised by Al Ihsan Charity Association with public-safety partners and mobilised volunteers to distribute Iftar meals to motorists before sunset, combining humanitarian service with road-safety awareness. Al Ihsan subsequently honoured AAU as a supporter of the campaign.

External reporting recorded the 2024 campaign's national ambition: more than 10,000 volunteers, 500,000 Iftar meals and 31 locations across the UAE. AAU's participation therefore connected its students to a large, recurring NGO-led programme with measurable humanitarian reach.

AAU students also volunteered at the Institute of Management Accountants Abu Dhabi Chapter Tax Conference in October 2024. The free professional event combined expert-led sessions on tax trends, regulation and best practice with networking and a practical workshop. Student service at the conference linked volunteering with professional learning, responsible institutions and decent-work preparation.

Partner programme	Student contribution	Educational and SDG value
Ramadan Aman / Al Ihsan Charity Association	Supported campaign delivery and humanitarian meal distribution	Food support, social solidarity, road safety and civic responsibility
IMA Abu Dhabi Chapter Tax Conference	Volunteered in the delivery of a public professional conference	Workplace skills, professional ethics, financial knowledge and networks
UAE Reads	Participated in national reading and community-learning activities	Literacy, quality education and community participation
Blood-donation activity	Students and staff participated in health-service campaigns	Health awareness, solidarity and support for lifesaving services

Public evidence: E16 | E17 | E18 | E19 | E20 | E21 | E22 | E23

10th edition of ‘Ramadan Aman’ campaign to distribute 500,000 Iftar meals across UAE

The “Ramadan Aman” (Ramadan is Safe) campaign is set to launch its 10th edition during the holy month of Ramadan, with Bashayer Al Hammadi, Chairman of the Organising Committee, announcing this year’s ambitious outreach. This year’s campaign will mobilise over 10,000 volunteers to distribute 500,000 Iftar meals across 31 locations throughout the UAE, Al Hammadi said.

Organised by Al Ihsan Charity Association in Ajman, the campaign has garnered considerable support from various government agencies, highlighting its significance.

Over the last decade, “Ramadan Aman” has attracted more than 100,000 volunteers from

diverse nationalities, contributing over 5.1 million volunteer hours and distributing 4.5 million Iftar meals to those observing the fast, Al Hammadi confirmed.

Al Hammadi emphasised the growing interest in volunteer work and the increased involvement of entities in the campaign during a press conference. She also announced an expansion of the campaign's reach to Al Dhafra Region for the first time, aiming to provide Iftar meals to travellers at the country's borders.

This expansion also seeks to encourage university students in the region to partake in the campaign's activities, further broadening the initiative's impact and fostering a spirit of community service and unity during Ramadan.

The College of Business Students Volunteer at IMA Abu Dhabi Chapter Tax Conferenc

Ten dedicated students from Al Ain University's College of Business (Al Ain University Student Chapter) participated as volunteers at the Mastering the UAE Tax Maze: Adopting the Evolving UAE Tax Landscape conference, organized by the Institute of Management Accountants (IMA) Abu Dhabi Chapter. The conference offered students an enriching opportunity to engage with industry professionals and gain hands-on experience in event coordination and management.

Guided by faculty member Dr. Riham Muqattash, the students took on various essential responsibilities that contributed to the smooth operation of the conference. They began by managing participant registration, distributing ID badges, and providing necessary registration materials. Throughout the event, the students assisted attendees with general inquiries and served as ushers, helping guide participants through the conference's sessions. They also conducted interviews to capture participant insights and feedback, engaging with the professional community. Additionally, they documented vital moments by taking photos and recording video footage, enhancing their skills in event coverage.

In recognition of their efforts and commitment, the Al Ain University College of Business Student Chapter was honored with a Certificate of Appreciation from the IMA Abu Dhabi Chapter. Dr. Muqattash expressed pride in her students' contributions, stating that this experience underscored the value of industry collaboration in preparing students for future careers.

AAU Students participate in "UAE Reads" activities

In collaboration with the Deanship of Student Affairs and student clubs (Library Club, Reading Club, Arts Club, and Red Crescent Club), Khalifa Library organized a reading competition as part of Reading Month activities in the UAE. The event, held in both Arabic and English, welcomed participation from male and female students from all the colleges. Alongside tokens of appreciation for all participants, the winners were honored with valuable prizes in recognition of their remarkable achievements during the competition.

A Blood Donation Campaign Under the Slogan “Give Life, Donate Blood”

The Deanship of Student Affairs at Al Ain University – Abu Dhabi Campus organized a blood donation campaign under the slogan “Give Life, Donate Blood,” in collaboration with Abu Dhabi Blood Bank Services – SEHA, as part of its ongoing community service initiatives.

The Deanship of Student Affairs emphasized the university’s commitment to organizing regular blood donation campaigns, aiming to enhance its social responsibility, promote values of social cohesion, and encourage volunteerism and charity work.

The campaign saw significant participation from faculty, staff, and students, reflecting their enthusiasm to support the campaign’s objectives and contribute to humanitarian efforts within the community.

COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH PROGRAMMES

6. The Siemens Energy partnership establishes joint research and pilot programmes

In 2024, AAU and Siemens Energy LLC signed a formal agreement to advance innovation, knowledge exchange and joint research in the energy sector. The collaboration is designed around joint research and pilot projects in which AAU students and researchers address real operational challenges and provide consulting solutions, while Siemens Energy experts contribute sector knowledge to the academic environment.

The agreement provides for shared resources and the pursuit of joint funding. Its identified technical areas include energy transition, decarbonisation, energy storage and blockchain applications. It also supports technology development and commercialisation, graduate opportunities and a skilled talent pipeline. The partnership therefore connects research, education and employability to SDGs 7, 8, 9, 12, 13 and 17.

Research-programme element	Joint AAU-business activity	Expected public value
Joint research	University and company expertise address defined energy-sector challenges	Evidence and solutions for the energy transition
Pilot projects	Research is tested through applied projects and consulting solutions	Translation of knowledge into practice
Student participation	Students work on real-world problems with expert input	Skills, innovation and employability
Shared resources and	Partners share capability and pursue	Greater capacity and

Research-programme element	Joint AAU-business activity	Expected public value
funding	joint funding	sustained research delivery
Technology development	Work covers decarbonisation, storage and blockchain applications	Progress toward net-zero and resilient infrastructure

Exhibit 2. AAU and Siemens Energy formalised their 2024 research and innovation partnership in the energy sector. Source: AAU [E26].

Public evidence: E08 | E09 | E10 | E11 | E26 | E27 | E28

RESEARCH-TO-IMPACT PATHWAY

7. AAU's research framework supports external-sector solutions beyond one agreement

The Siemens Energy programme sits within AAU's wider institutional research system. AAU explicitly encourages collaboration with industry and with public and private organisations through joint research, sponsored projects, consultation and expert assistance. The Sustainability Research Center enables interdisciplinary work, and the research deanship and published policies support governance, integrity, funding and dissemination.

AAU also uses events such as Innovation Day and its engineering and technology partnership programme to connect researchers, students and external specialists around sustainable solutions. The outcome is a research-to-impact pathway in which partner needs shape problems, University expertise supports inquiry, students contribute ideas and prototypes, and results are shared through pilots, consultancy, workshops, publications and further funding.

Stage	AAU-business/NGO collaboration	Output
Identify	External partners and communities define operational or social challenges	SDG-relevant research question
Design	AAU researchers, students and partner specialists combine knowledge and resources	Joint workplan or pilot
Implement	Research, testing, consultancy or field activity is undertaken	Data, prototype or practical intervention
Learn	Partners review results and exchange technical and sector knowledge	Validated lessons and improved practice
Transfer	Findings are disseminated through education, publications, events or commercialisation	Wider social, environmental and economic value

Public evidence: E05 | E06 | E08 | E09 | E10 | E11 | E26 | E27 | E28 | E40

Al Ain University Strengthens Partnerships with Leading Engineering and Technology Companies

In line with its strategy to form partnerships with the industrial sector to support the educational journey, Al Ain University in its Abu Dhabi campus has signed cooperation agreements with major

companies in the fields of engineering and technology, namely Federal Electronics and MVP, a software and gaming applications company.

On behalf of Al Ain University, the agreements were signed by Dr. Qutaiba Thibyan, Dean of the College of Engineering. Federal Electronics was represented by Engineer Mansour Adel, General Manager of Human Resources and Business Development, and MVP was represented by Engineer Ali Al Hammadi, the company's CEO.

The Memoranda of Understanding were signed in the presence of Prof. Ghaleb El Refae, President of the University, and the College of Engineering administration during the Global Digital Health Conference – Knowledge Exchange and Empowerment 2024, which took place at the university from September 24-26, 2024. These agreements aim to provide practical training opportunities for engineering students across various disciplines, as well as to coordinate joint workshops on entrepreneurship within all engineering fields, in line with labor market demands. The agreements also seek to enhance students' knowledge and skills in engineering, technology, and environmental sustainability, enabling them to apply their academic studies in real-world work environments through lectures and specialized workshops.

Innovation Day: Uniting Minds to Drive Sustainable Solutions

In collaboration with the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Center, the College of Business at AAU (AD Campus) organized “Innovation Day” under the supervision of Dr. Wejdan Farhan and the faculty members of the innovation courses. AAU Vice President Prof. Amer Qasim attended the event and began with a welcoming speech from the Deputy Dean of the College of Business, Dr. Iffat Sabir. Following the opening, attendees toured an exhibition showcasing student projects in an interactive format. Each student group presented an innovative project that combined creativity with practical application, featuring physical prototypes aimed at sustainable solutions. The exhibition sought to promote creativity-based learning by highlighting AAU students’ creative solutions and demonstrating their potential to tackle real-world sustainability challenges.

The event also included a seminar led by a guest speaker from Sandooq Al Watan, who provided students with valuable insights into sustainable innovation. The seminar covered current trends, challenges, and the impact of innovative practices on sustainable development.

Through the exhibition and seminar, participants gained a deeper understanding of sustainable innovation, equipping them with actionable knowledge to apply in their fields and benefit their communities.

An MOU between Al Ain University and the Environment Agency - Abu Dhabi

Al Ain University (AAU) and the Environment Agency - Abu Dhabi have signed a memorandum of understanding aimed at boosting collaboration in areas of shared interest in research and development. The signing of the agreement was overseen by Her Excellency Dr. Sheikha Salem Al Dhaheri, the Secretary General of the Environment Agency - Abu Dhabi, and Prof. Ghaleb Al Rifai, AAU President.

The MoU aims to promote collaboration in multiple environmental disciplines, benefiting both parties involved. It also mandates that faculty members possess the expertise, unique research resources, and innovative ideas to bridge any scientific gaps, as well as support the efforts of the Environment Agency - Abu Dhabi and Al Ain University to safeguard the environment and preserve biological diversity. This will enhance the reputation and function of both institutions as centers of scientific excellence, ultimately aiding Abu Dhabi in achieving its sustainability and environmental objectives.

Prof. Ghaleb Al-Refai, President of the University, said this memorandum will strengthen collaboration in the areas of research, service, and development while highlighting the interdependence of environmental, social, and economic systems in addressing environmental challenges and promoting sustainable development. The University is committed to utilizing its academic programs and scientific research to serve all sectors, particularly the environmental sector. Al Ain University is dedicated to preserving the environmental balance and climate and achieving the objectives of sustainable development. The university is making every effort to provide its expertise and resources to achieve these goals.

Ahmed Baharoon, the Executive Director of the Environmental Information, Science and Awareness Management Sector at the Environment Agency - Abu Dhabi, stated that the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between the agency and Al Ain University demonstrates their shared dedication to actively promoting sustainable development through scientific research activities that focus on utilizing modern technologies. He added that this collaboration is one of the essential elements for meeting the developmental needs in environmental conservation and resource management.

By signing the MoUs, the universities' significant research capabilities will be utilized to meet the emirate's environmental research requirements, while also providing the universities with an abundance of meaningful research questions. The strategic priorities of EAD, such as climate change, habitat

conservation, ground and marine water, fisheries, and air quality, present exciting research

opportunities. Additionally, policy formulation and balancing social, economic, and environmental factors offer valuable areas for research. The results of the collaborative research will be disseminated through various mediums, such as scientific literature, reports, and journals.

DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

8. AAU and external organisations developed and delivered learning opportunities in 2024

AAU's partnerships transform external expertise into accessible educational resources: workshops, training programmes, professional sessions, demonstrations, competitions and public-awareness materials. In 2024, the University collaborated with Sandooq Al Watan to empower young people and support creativity and innovation. Sandooq Al Watan's 2024 programme framework included sustainability, environmental challenges, design and critical thinking, advanced technologies, programming, robotics, artificial intelligence and student-led projects.

The College of Business formalised cooperation with the Institute of Management Accountants and later provided student volunteers for the IMA Abu Dhabi Chapter's tax conference. This creates a coherent educational relationship linking professional-body expertise, events, practical learning and student participation.

The fourth Career Development and Training Exhibition brought more than 30 governmental and private entities to AAU's Al Ain and Abu Dhabi campuses. Participating organisations provided interviews, CV advice, training and volunteering opportunities, information about labour-market skills and direct professional engagement. The Alumni Office's year-end account confirms that this external engagement formed part of a wider programme of workshops and career preparation during 2024.

Partner/resource	Educational provision	Learner benefit
Sandooq Al Watan	Youth initiatives and learning around innovation, identity, sustainability and technology	Creativity, critical thinking and future skills
Institute of Management Accountants	Professional event, expert sessions, practical workshop and institutional cooperation	Tax knowledge, professional standards and networks
30+ public and private entities	Career fair, CV support, interviews, training and volunteering opportunities	Employability, work readiness and market knowledge
External trainers and Alumni Office	Professional-development workshop series	Personal, communication and career-management skills

Public evidence: E19 | E20 | E30 | E31 | E32 | E33 | E34 | E35

Pioneering Event and MoU with the Institute of Management Accountants

Al Ain University hosted the flagship event "Connect with the Institute of Management Accountants 2024," organized by the College of Business. The event brought together finance and management accounting professionals, offering opportunities to connect with industry leaders, emerging talents, and engage in thought-provoking discussions.

The event featured a workshop on "Igniting Innovations Through Connections," presenting strategic and valuable insights into the future of the profession, delivered by Mike DePrisco, President and CEO of the Institute of Management Accountants. Attendees had the chance to network with peers, learn from experts, and gain insights into the latest trends and technologies shaping the future of industries.

One of the event's highlights was signing a Memorandum of Understanding between Al Ain University and the Institute of Management Accountants. The MOU was signed by Prof. Amer Qasem, Vice President of Al Ain University (Abu Dhabi Campus), and Mike DePrisco, President and CEO of the Institute of Management Accountants. This collaboration represents a significant step toward enhancing cooperation in finance, management accounting, and other areas that benefit both parties.

The MoU aims to strengthen ties between the university and the institute by developing training programs, exchanging practical experiences and skills, collaborating in scientific research, and organizing joint workshops and lectures, all of which contribute to enhancing the quality of education and research at the university.

The event also celebrated the achievements of professionals who recently earned their CMA, CSCA, and FMAA certifications, some of the most prestigious qualifications in the field of management accounting. These certifications hold significant value for students and business enthusiasts, fostering a community of excellence and leadership.

Prof. Amer Qasem remarked, "Hosting this important event at Al Ain University represents a distinctive step towards solidifying the university's role as a hub for professional and academic engagement." He added, "This event not only provides a platform for finance and management accounting professionals but also enhances opportunities for our students and faculty members to learn from experts and interact with industry leaders."

Qasem further highlighted that the signing of the MoU with the Institute of Management Accountants reflects Al Ain University's commitment to building strategic partnerships that serve the university’s aspirations and the needs of the business community. He expressed pride in celebrating the achievements of professionals who have earned CMA, CSCA, and FMAA

certifications, which signify leadership and excellence in the field.

The President and CEO of the Institute of Management Accountants expressed his pride in this collaboration with Al Ain University, stating that the partnership underscores both parties' commitment to fostering innovation and excellence in finance and management accounting while preparing a new generation of distinguished professionals to lead the future.

Al Ain University Exhibition for Professional Development and Training reveals new horizons for professional success

The Alumni Office at both the Al Ain and Abu Dhabi campuses organized the fourth edition of Al Ain University's Career Development and Training Exhibition. This initiative aligns with the office's goals of fostering collaboration with governmental and private institutions to provide training programs and job opportunities for the university's graduates and students.

Over 30 governmental and private entities participated in the exhibition at both locations. The institutions offered a variety of activities, including on-the-spot interviews, collection of resumes from Al Ain University graduates, resume editing tips, as well as providing training and volunteering opportunities for graduating students. Job opportunities were also presented for graduates actively seeking employment.

Human Resources unit managers from the participating organizations emphasized the significance of the exhibition for students and graduates. It provides them with a deeper understanding of the job market, the skills required by each company, and the future career opportunities available. The exhibition witnessed a substantial turnout from both graduates and students expected to graduate soon.

Professional Development Workshop Series: Alumni Office Initiative

Professional development is one of the vital aspects in the career of graduates, as it contributes to enabling them to integrate into the labor market and develop their skills continuously. In this context, the alumni office plays a pivotal role by organizing a series of programs and activities aimed at preparing graduates to face the challenges of professional life.

The professional development series offered by the alumni office aims to achieve several main goals, including: developing personal and professional skills by offering workshops and training courses focused on professional development to enhance employment opportunities, in addition to providing specialized professional consulting and assistance in providing employment platforms and practical training to achieve professional sustainability and to encourage graduates to continue learning and continuous development throughout their career.

The professional development series includes a variety of programs and activities aimed at meeting the different needs of graduates such as: training workshops where the workshops cover various topics such as resume writing, preparing for job interviews, and negotiation skills. The courses cover multiple areas such as Career Success, How to successfully pass a job interview, the art of making and managing a team and digital marketing. These courses are organized in cooperation with educational and professional institutions specialized in this field, such as the Khalifa Fund, INJAZ UAE and many other companies.

The professional development series offered by the alumni office is a pioneering initiative that seeks to enable graduates to achieve their career goals and successfully integrate into the labor market. Through a variety of programs and activities, the office provides the necessary support for graduates to be able to face the challenges of the future and achieve sustainable success in their career.

Alumni office in a year

The Alumni Office offered a variety of activities, events, workshops, and professional development sessions throughout the past year. It also organized the Al Ain University Career Development and Training Fair, providing a large number of job opportunities for the university's graduates. Among the key activities held last year:

The "Be Ready for the Job Market" workshop and the "Personal Skills" workshop, which aim to develop the skills of graduates and students, enhancing and improving their abilities.

The Alumni office also organized a visit to the Mawahib Center, which is the first center in Abu Dhabi specializing in employment support. The center aims to qualify national talents and meet the needs of the labor market in the UAE. It focuses on enhancing productive and professional skills, offering proactive services that align with employers' aspirations and the requirements of future jobs.

Additionally, the office organized the Al Ain University Career Development and Training Fair, which featured a large number of leading companies and institutions in UAE. This fair helped graduates in their job search by providing direct opportunities to explore available job openings. It also offered a chance to expand networking by directly interacting with company representatives during the event.

The office is also committed to engaging with local companies and institutions to provide job and training opportunities for graduates. Through its efforts, the office facilitated numerous job opportunities for graduates last year by connecting with local organizations and Institutions.

Al Ain University and the "Sandooq Al Watan" collaborate to empower youth

In the presence of His Excellency Sheikh Nahyan bin Mubarak Al Nahyan, Minister of Tolerance

and Coexistence and Chairman of the Sandooq Al Watan, as part of the "Open Day for Employment" organized by the Sandooq Al Watan at Manarat Al Saadiyat in Abu Dhabi, to empower youth in the private sector and enhance their capabilities to enter the entrepreneurship field, Al Ain University (AAU) has signed a cooperation agreement with Sandooq Al Watan to launch the National Network for Business Incubators, which was also signed by a group of business incubators in the country, in the presence of several ministers, prominent businessmen, Emirati investors, leaders of over 30 business incubators and accelerators nationwide, and more than 500 Emirati youth seeking job opportunities in the private sector alongside the Fund's partners, board members, and His Excellency Yasser Al Qarqawi,

the Director General of the National Fund. In addition to the agreement signing, the events featured an exhibition showcasing the Fund's notable works and successful experiences of Emirati youth.

Prof. Ghalab Al Refae, AAU President, stated that the collaboration between Al Ain University and Sandooq Al Watan is a long-term partnership that emphasizes both parties' keenness to empower the nation's youth, enhance their efforts, skills, and create extensive job opportunities in the private sector to enable young men and women to utilize their potentials and invest in themselves. This demonstrates our commitment to contributing to driving the wheel of development and prosperity in the country.

INCLUSIVE AND ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING

9. Partnership-generated resources address sustainability and inclusion

AAU's educational-resource collaborations extend beyond professional development. The seventh Annual Environmental Day in 2024 created an institutional platform for environmental learning and student participation. The University's workshop with the General Women's Union, 'My Farming, My Self-Sufficiency,' translated sustainable agriculture and self-sufficiency into practical learning. The College of Education's participation in a training programme for students of Zayed Higher Organization for People of Determination demonstrates partnership-based inclusive education.

These 2024 activities build on established frameworks. AAU's agreement with Educators Without Borders International provides for University lecturers and experts to volunteer as trainers for teachers, administrators, students and parents in underserved areas. It also covers research and studies, exchange of experience, lessons, lectures, educational workshops, research publication and the promotion of volunteer values. AAU's agreement with Zayed Higher Organization similarly supports an appropriate learning environment, Braille printing, sign-language courses, research and joint workshops for People of Determination.

Collaboration	Resource developed or delivered	SDG contribution
Annual Environmental	Recurring environmental lectures, exhibits,	SDGs 4, 12, 13 and 17

Collaboration	Resource developed or delivered	SDG contribution
Day	student activity and awareness	
General Women's Union	Practical workshop on farming and self-sufficiency	SDGs 2, 5, 12 and 13
Zayed Higher Organization	Training, accessible learning support, Braille, sign language and joint studies	SDGs 4, 10 and 17
Educators Without Borders International	Trainer volunteering, teacher development, lessons, lectures, workshops and research support	SDGs 4, 10, 16 and 17
Emirates Red Crescent	First-aid and volunteering education delivered by specialist personnel	SDGs 3, 4, 11 and 17

Exhibit 3. AAU and Emirates Red Crescent delivered first-aid education as part of the University's established humanitarian partnership.

Source: AAU [E24].

Public evidence: E24 | E29 | E36 | E37 | E38 | E39

INTEGRATED PARTNERSHIP DESIGN

10. Key partnerships connect more than one indicator component

The strength of AAU's approach is the interaction among volunteering, research and education. Several collaborations create more than one route to impact. This makes the partnership model more durable: students learn while serving, research is informed by external practice, and the resulting expertise is returned to learners and communities.

Partner	Volunteering	Research	Educational resources
Educators Without Borders International	Faculty and students encouraged to volunteer as trainers	Research, studies and scientific publishing supported	Teacher, administrator, student and parent training; lessons and workshops
Emirates Red Crescent	Aoun programme and community-service participation	Community needs and service learning inform institutional engagement	First-aid and volunteer-culture education
Institute of Management Accountants	Students volunteered at the Abu Dhabi Chapter conference	Professional exchange strengthens applied business inquiry	Expert sessions, workshop and professional learning
Siemens Energy	Student contribution	Joint research, pilots,	Expert knowledge

Partner	Volunteering	Research	Educational resources
	through applied project teams	funding and consulting	transfer and real-world learning
Sandooq Al Watan	Youth participation and community-facing initiatives	Innovation challenges can generate evidence and projects	Sustainability, technology, critical-thinking and innovation activities

Public evidence: E12 | E14 | E19 | E20 | E24 | E26 | E30 | E34 | E35 | E38

SDG CONTRIBUTION

11. Cross-sector collaboration translates the SDGs into practical action

AAU's partnerships respond to social, environmental and economic dimensions of sustainable development. The activities below show how the three collaboration routes reinforce one another across the Goals.

SDG focus	Partnership activity	Contribution
SDGs 1 and 2	Ramadan Aman and humanitarian volunteering	Food assistance, solidarity and service to community needs
SDG 3	Blood donation and Red Crescent first-aid education	Health-service support, awareness and emergency readiness
SDG 4	Educators Without Borders, Sandooq Al Watan and partner-led workshops	Quality education, access, skills and lifelong learning
SDGs 5 and 10	General Women's Union and People of Determination programmes	Empowerment, accessibility and reduced inequality
SDG 8	IMA activities and Career Development and Training Exhibition	Professional knowledge, employability and decent-work readiness
SDGs 7, 9 and 13	Siemens Energy research and pilot programme	Energy transition, innovation, decarbonisation and technology transfer
SDGs 11 and 12	Environmental events, afforestation and community action	Sustainable communities, awareness and responsible resource use
SDGs 16 and 17	Professional, charitable and civil-society partnerships	Responsible institutions, participation and implementation partnerships

Public evidence: E04 | E14 | E16 | E19 | E23 | E24 | E25 | E26 | E29 | E31 | E34 | E36 | E37 | E38 | E39

EVIDENCE YEAR AND CONTINUITY

12. The 2024 evidence forms part of a continuing partnership programme

The submission evidence is centred on 2024: AAU received external recognition for student community service, supported the tenth Ramadan Aman campaign, provided student volunteers to an IMA conference, formalised the Siemens Energy research programme, developed youth and professional learning with external organisations, and delivered environmental, agricultural and inclusive education with partners.

Later activities demonstrate that the institutional model continued after the reporting year. In 2025, AAU's eighth Annual Environmental Day brought government and industry specialists into SDG 13 education, including the Environment Agency-Abu Dhabi, Tadweer Group and Rise Biofuels; Barari Natural Resources sponsored a plantation drive. A separate MoU with Rise Biofuels created student-internship and joint-project opportunities in recycling and waste reduction. Agreements with the Sustainable Development Policy Institute, the Arab International Women's Forum, Burjeel Group and HOCK International further extended research, community, women's economic inclusion, healthcare training and professional education.

Period	Partnership evidence	Continuity demonstrated
Established base	UAE Volunteers, Educators Without Borders, Red Crescent, ZHO and environmental partnerships	Standing routes for service, research and learning

Period	Partnership evidence	Continuity demonstrated
2024 core	Aoun, Ramadan Aman, IMA volunteering, Siemens Energy, Sandooq Al Watan, career fair and partner training	All three indicator components active in the reporting year
2025	Environmental Day, Rise Biofuels, SDPI, AIWF, Burjeel, HOCK and General Women's Union	Cross-sector portfolio expanded and diversified
Institutional direction	Strategy, research governance and public reporting	Partnership activity remains embedded in University structures

Public evidence: E41 | E42 | E43 | E44 | E45 | E46 | E47 | E48

INSTITUTIONAL CONCLUSION

13. AAU provides direct evidence across every component of Indicator 17.2.5

Al Ain University answers Yes to Indicator 17.2.5. The University's public evidence demonstrates active collaboration with NGOs, charities, professional associations and businesses to tackle the SDGs through all three required routes.

For student volunteering, AAU operates a structured pathway through the UAE Volunteers platform and implemented externally organised programmes during 2024. The University's third-place Aoun Award result provides national recognition of its community-service participation; Ramadan Aman connects students to a large recurring humanitarian campaign; and IMA conference volunteering links service to professional learning.

For research programmes, the 2024 agreement with Siemens Energy provides the clearest direct evidence: joint research and pilots, shared resources, joint funding, student participation and expert knowledge exchange in energy transition, decarbonisation, storage and blockchain. AAU's published research framework and sustainability structures place this work within a wider institutional system for industry and external-sector cooperation.

For educational resources, AAU and its partners provide youth-development programmes, professional workshops and fairs, environmental education, humanitarian training and accessible learning for People of Determination. The Educators Without Borders agreement unites all three routes in one framework by combining volunteer trainers, educational research and the delivery of lessons, lectures and workshops to underserved communities.

FINAL RESPONSE: YES

AAU collaborates with NGOs and businesses through student volunteering programmes, research programmes and the development and delivery of educational resources, with direct 2024 evidence and a continuing institutional partnership portfolio.

13.1 Submission evidence summary

Indicator component	Strongest public evidence	Institutional result
Student volunteering	Aoun Award, Ramadan Aman and IMA conference volunteering	Structured, implemented and externally recognised student service
Research programmes	Siemens Energy joint research and pilot agreement	Applied energy and climate research with industry
Educational resources	Sandooq Al Watan, IMA, career fair, GWU, ZHO and EWBI	Partner expertise converted into training, workshops and accessible

Indicator component	Strongest public evidence	Institutional result
		learning
Institutionalisation	Strategy, annual report, research framework and responsible units	Partnerships governed and sustained at University level
Continuity	2025 environmental, research, health, professional and women-focused partnerships	Portfolio remained active and expanded after 2024

PUBLIC EVIDENCE REGISTER

14. Public evidence register

The following public sources support AAU's NGO and business collaboration, the three required programme routes, the 2024 reporting-year evidence and continuing implementation.

14.1 Methodology and direct institutional evidence

ID	Source class	Relevance	Public source
E01	THE methodology	Indicator wording, reporting year and evidence framework	**Open public evidence**
E02	AAU SDG page	Direct institutional evidence for Indicator 17.2.5	**Open public evidence**
E03	AAU evidence PDF	Downloadable evidence for NGO and business collaboration	**Open public evidence**
E04	United Nations	SDG 17 partnership context	**Open public evidence**

14.2 Strategy, governance and research infrastructure

ID	Source class	Relevance	Public source
E05	AAU strategy	Partnership, community engagement, sustainability and research framework	**Open public evidence**
E06	AAU annual report	Institutional evidence for academic year 2023-2024	**Open public evidence**
E07	Independent QAA review	Independent 2024 review of AAU's institutional systems and external engagement	**Open public evidence**
E08	AAU research framework	Cooperation with industry, public and private sectors and NGOs	**Open public evidence**
E09	AAU policies	Public governance of research activity	**Open public evidence**
E10	AAU research	Interdisciplinary sustainability research	**Open public evidence**

ID	Source class	Relevance	Public source
	center	structure	
E11	AAU deanship	Institutional responsibility for research and graduate studies	**Open public evidence**

14.3 Student volunteering programmes

ID	Source class	Relevance	Public source
E12	AAU-platform collaboration	Standing route to accredited student volunteering	**Open public evidence**

ID	Source class	Relevance	Public source
E13	National platform	Public volunteering infrastructure	**Open public evidence**
E14	AAU award record	Third place in Aoun Award for Community Service in 2024	**Open public evidence**
E15	Independent media	External corroboration and scale of the Aoun programme	**Open public evidence**
E16	AAU campaign record	Support for Ramadan Aman tenth season in 2024	**Open public evidence**
E17	AAU recognition record	Al Ihsan's recognition of AAU as a campaign supporter	**Open public evidence**
E18	Independent media	National scale and objectives of Ramadan Aman 2024	**Open public evidence**
E19	AAU volunteering record	Students volunteered at IMA conference in 2024	**Open public evidence**
E20	Professional-body event	Conference programme, workshop and public access	**Open public evidence**
E21	AAU community activity	Student participation in UAE Reads	**Open public evidence**
E22	AAU event record	2024 UAE Reads event	**Open public evidence**
E23	AAU health campaign	Blood-donation volunteering and awareness in 2024	**Open public evidence**
E24	AAU-NGO training	First-aid education with Emirates Red Crescent	**Open public evidence**
E25	AAU environmental service	Volunteering in afforestation campaign	**Open public evidence**

14.4 Collaborative research and innovation

ID	Source class	Relevance	Public source
E26	AAU-business partnership	Joint research, pilots and knowledge exchange with Siemens Energy	**Open public evidence**
E27	AAU-industry engagement	Partnerships with engineering and technology companies	**Open public evidence**
E28	AAU innovation event	External expertise and sustainable-solution development	**Open public evidence**
E40	AAU research MoU	Environmental research and shared capability with EAD	**Open public evidence**

14.5 Development and delivery of educational resources

ID	Source class	Relevance	Public source
E29	AAU annual programme	Seventh Annual Environmental Day 2024	**Open public evidence**
E30	AAU-professional-body MoU	Institutional cooperation with IMA	**Open public evidence**
E31	AAU career fair	More than 30 public and private entities provided training and opportunities	**Open public evidence**
E32	AAU workshop series	Professional-development education in 2024	**Open public evidence**
E33	AAU year review	Continuing programme of workshops and career preparation	**Open public evidence**
E34	AAU-NGO collaboration	Youth empowerment with Sandooq Al Watan	**Open public evidence**
E35	Partner programme	2024 sustainability, technology and innovation learning framework	**Open public evidence**
E36	AAU-civil society workshop	Practical sustainable-agriculture learning with GWU	**Open public evidence**
E37	AAU inclusion training	Education for ZHO students who are People of Determination	**Open public evidence**
E38	AAU-NGO MoU	Volunteer trainers, research, lessons and workshops with EWBI	**Open public evidence**
E39	AAU inclusion MoU	Accessible education, research and training with ZHO	**Open public evidence**

14.6 Continuing collaboration after the 2024 evidence year

ID	Source class	Relevance	Public source
E41	AAU environmental programme	2025 cross-sector SDG 13 education	**Open public evidence**

ID	Source class	Relevance	Public source
E42	AAU-business MoU	Internships and joint recycling and waste-reduction projects	**Open public evidence**
E43	AAU-NGO/research MoU	Sustainable-development research and policy collaboration	**Open public evidence**
E44	External partner record	Independent SDPI partnership listing	**Open public evidence**
E45	Civil-society partner	Women's entrepreneurship and economic-inclusion platform	**Open public evidence**
E46	AAU-healthcare partnership	Healthcare education and professional collaboration	**Open public evidence**
E47	AAU-training partnership	Accredited professional education with HOCK International	**Open public evidence**
E48	AAU-civil society coordination	Research, data and community collaboration with GWU	**Open public evidence**

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