



# The Lord Sheikh

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## Sudan Visit Report



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Orphans in Need International Programmes Department  
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# Introduction

Orphans in Need's representatives, **Sheikh Anis Musa, Jonaed Afzal, John Brown and Mohamed Maigag**, visited Sudan for 10 days to undertake a scoping mission where they visited several organisations whose team's support orphaned children. We also visited Ahfad university for women and distributed food parcels to orphans, widows, refugees and flood victims. The team also took the opportunity to film the overwhelming need amongst the poor and disadvantaged through their food parcel distributions. The team's visit was facilitated by Physicians across Continents UK and Physicians across Continents – Sudan. This was the first OiN visit to Sudan and all members of OiN's mission in Sudan, led by Sheikh Anis Musa were astonished with the scale of need and poverty in the country which is unimaginable. The high cost of living and high unemployment rate are to the absolute extreme and amid all these challenges, coupled with the country's struggle with COVID-19, and influx of up to 40,000 refugees from Ethiopia who are fleeing the war between the Ethiopian Federal Government and defiant authorities in the Tigray region, OiN's representatives were touched by the resilience, patience and good nature of the Sudanese people. Although, most of the Sudanese people the team spoke with were contemplating trying to leave the country for a better life.



Sudan was once the biggest country in Africa and the 16th largest country in the world. The country is bordered by Egypt in the North, Uganda in the South, Ethiopia in the South East, Eritrea in the East and Chad in the West. Historically, Northern Sudan was conquered by the Othman Empire in 1821 and was under joint British - Egyptian rule from 1899 - 1955, but in 1956 Sudan gained independence. After a civil war spanning several years, Sudan was divided into two countries in 2011: Northern part of Sudan where the majority are Suni Muslims of Arab descent officially became the Republic of Sudan. Southern Sudan became the Republic of South Sudan; the 54th independent sovereign State of Africa where most of the population are Christians of black African origin. According to Concern Worldwide, Southern Sudan is the third poorest country in the World. Our OiN Sudan mission was confined to Northern Sudan in particular its capital city - Khartoum as we were unable to visit South Sudan or the Republic of South Sudan due to time and other logistical constraints.

# Physicians Across Continents

OiN's Sudan visit was facilitated by PAC UK and PAC Sudan. We are incredibly grateful for the support we have received from Mr Khalid Javid - Director of PAC UK, Dr Azhari Abdelkarim - General Manager and Dr Ashraf Kamal the Managing Director of PAK Sudan.

PAC is an international medical charity which was established in 2003 by a group of doctors, nurses and medical technicians to provide medical care to people affected by crisis situations and disasters. The organisation has offices in Somalia, Sudan and Turkey and its headquarters are in the UK.

As OiN's host organisation, PAC Sudan was the first organisation OiN's team met in Sudan at their office in Khartoum. The team attended an introductory meeting with Dr Azhari Abdelkarim who introduced his team and Jonaed Afzal, OiN's UK Director introduced the members of OiN. In this meeting we discussed the areas we would be visiting during our programme and the possibility of sponsoring 200 orphaned children with PAK Sudan. Sheikh Anis Musa also explained the ethos of OiN to Dr Azhari and his team. OiN in principle agreed to build the capacity of PAC Sudan and to sponsor 200 orphaned children with this organisation.

Sudan Visit Introductory Meeting Attendees	
Orphans in Need	PAC Sudan
Sheikh Anis Musa - Founder Trustee - OiN	Dr. Azhari Abdelkarim - General Manager PAC S
Jonaed Afzal - OiN UK Director	Dr Adil Abas - Manager
John Brown - OiN Photographer & Videographer	Dr Mai Mohamed - Volunteer Manager
Mohamed Maigag - OiN International Programmes Manager	Mohamed Usama - Admin assistant



# Food Parcel Distributions

The food parcel programme entailed distributing 2000 food parcels to people most in need, our distributions took place in Khartoum and surrounding areas. Our original plan was to begin the first distribution on Saturday 28th November 2020, but we were unable to do so due to logistical issues including delays with the release of food parcel funds transferred by OiN to PAC Sudan bank and also issues associated with the transportation of food items to the first distribution centre.

**The contents of each food parcel we distributed were:**

**25kg flour, 5kg sugar, 1kg lentils, 2 kg pasta, 1 kg tea, 2 litres cooking oil, 2 pieces toilet soap, 2 pieces washing soap, 1 vial medium size toothpaste.**













# Angola IDP Camp Distribution

The Angola IDP camp is situated in the Southern part of Khartoum. There are 17,000 impoverished and needy people living in this camp which is a very high number. OiN allocated 1200 food parcels for the needy people residing here, but, the need for food in this camp was far greater than any of us could have ever imagined. Our team were overwhelmed with crowds of people, mainly women and children queuing to receive food parcels and others trying desperately to attend/gate crash the distribution centre. The poverty was so devastating and with the issues we faced in distributing here, the food distributions at this camp took almost 3 days to complete.

## Masjid Distribution

100 food parcels were distributed at a mosque in Khartoum to students from Chad, Central Africa and other West African countries. OiN & PAC Sudan did not experience any problems with this distribution. The students rely on public support through mosques for their food.

## Victims of Flood Distribution

Unlike the mosque distribution which went smoothly, the 350 food parcels distributed to some of the victims of the Sudan floods had to be abandoned due to crowd unrest, although we did manage to complete this distribution on the following day.

## Aborial IDP Camp Distribution

Around 5000 people live in the Aborial IDP camp, and OiN allocated 350 food parcels to the benefit of the poor people residing here. This distribution commenced peacefully and was going very well, but halfway through, the distribution descended into chaos due to unrest on the part of our beneficiaries who had attended to collect their food parcels. Given this unrest, we had to work with extra police and security guards to complete the distribution of these food parcels, but all in all this distribution ended on a high.

We did face adversity and some initial problems during the food parcel distributions and these issues were mainly due to the capacity of our partner PAC Sudan who had not undertaken this kind of work previously. With the experience gained from the four distributions we undertook with the team, and our support in building the infrastructure of the organisation, PAC Sudan will be much better prepared for any future food parcel distributions they assist with or undertake.

Part of our programme during our Sudan visit was to meet with the Ahfad University for Women and other organisations who support orphaned children and explore ways in which we could work together.

# Ahfad University for Women

It was an honour and absolute pleasure for OiN's representatives, Sheikh Anis Musa and Mohamed Maigag, (accompanied by Dr Azhari of PAC Sudan) to visit this excellent educational institute and meet Mr Gasim Badri, who is the current President of the University and some members of his team, Dr Abubekr Abdelazim - Director of Admissions and Mr Abdelrahman Badri from the faculty of Psychology.

Ahfad University for Women is one of the most prominent private universities in Sudan established by the Badri family. The university's history goes back as far as 1907 when Sheikh Babiker Badri established Sudan's first private girls' school. In 1966 Professor Yousif Badri took the school to another level by establishing it as Ahfad University College for Women. In 1995 the Ahfad University College for Women attained full university status and became Ahfad University for Women.

So far, 8000 students have graduated from the different faculties of the university, this includes undergraduate studies in Psychology, Preschool Education, Management Studies and Medicine. The Post graduate programmes include Gender, Diversity, Peace and Rights, Business Administration, Counselling and Health Psychology and English Language Teaching. Like many sectors in Sudan and indeed worldwide, COVID 19 has had an impact on the university, but this had not hampered the university's ethos of giving scholarships to disadvantaged students from 5 states including the Blue Nile State.



Despite the separation of North & South Sudan, Ahfad university supports students from South Sudan and undertakes annual rural trips for 1000 students, so they can take part in a research and rural extension programme. 15 - 20% of the university's annual budget is spent on scholarships, 24% of students receive full scholarships and 20% receive half scholarships. The rest of their students pay fees in full so as to cover the cost of their studies but if any student does fall into hardship and can no longer pay their fees, the university will support them. The sectors that graduate from the university usually undertake work in: Banking and other private sectors, NGOs and the Ministry of Health.

On behalf of OiN and The Honourable Lord Sheikh, OiN's Patron, who is familiar with the academic excellence of the Ahfad University, Sheikh Anis pledged £50,000 annual donation for the scholarship of orphaned girls. The scholarship will continue for the full duration of their undergraduate course which last for 5 years except for medical degrees that last for 6 years.

President Qasim Badri thanked Sheikh Anis for this financial pledge and informed the meeting that Ahfad University is very much looking forward to working with OiN to implement this project.



# Organisational Visits

OiN's team were able to visit the four organisations listed below as part of identifying organisations that support orphaned children and widows for whom OiN can work in partnership with for orphan sponsorship and other related programmes:

- **Safe Haven for Development Foundation**
- **Parent Satisfaction / Obey Organization**
- **Alsmo Charitable Organization**
- **Maazin Women International Organisation**

## Safe Haven for Development Foundation

Safe Haven for Development Foundation were the least developed of the organisations our team visited. The charity informed OiN's representatives that they support homeless people and people living on the streets through education and rehousing and they confirmed their main source of income is through social media platforms such as Facebook and individual donors. The organisation does not currently support orphaned children but they are planning to do so.

## Parent Satisfaction/Obey Organization

Parent satisfaction is run by Ibtissam Al Ameen, she is a very passionate Sudanese woman who used to live in Saudi Arabia. With the help of a small team of women, the charity distributes food to the poor including widows and orphan children and have established several wells in rural areas. The charity also supports over 1000 orphaned children. Parent Satisfaction's main source of income comes from individual donors in Saudi Arabia; mainly Ibtissam's friends and individual donors from Sudan. The organisation keeps good financial records including receipts for payments made and a very good orphan data filing system but they do not have any publications about the organisation's history, services or governance. The organisation is very service driven and passionate about the work they undertake.

## Alsmo Charitable Organization

Alsmo Charitable Organisation is managed by a group of young volunteers. The organisation supports up to 400 orphaned children and provides ad-hoc support services to the poor and needy. Alsmo is less developed than Parent Satisfaction and require assistance with capacity building, especially in the development of good financial and administration recording. The organisation could not produce their receipt books

when asked as part of our due diligence as the receipt books were kept at another location by their accountant. Although, Alsmo representatives did provide the receipt books the next day during a second meeting held at our hotel. The main source of income for this organisation comes from Facebook fundraising and individual donors in Sudan.

## Maazin Women International Organisation

Maazin Women International Organisation is a charitable organisation which was established in 2002, this organisation is run by a group of well organised women and is the most developed of the organisations OiN visited. This charity specialises in family, women and children's issues. Its services include support to migrants and women in prisons, they campaign for women's rights and orphan sponsorship. Up until recently, Maazin was sponsoring around 3000 orphaned children as it was funded by a Qadari foundation, however since this funding came to an end, the number of children sponsored has reduced to just over 800, they do have good IT, office and filing systems. This organisation also has its own website and brochures about its different services, however its annual budget which is under \$150,000 does not reflect in its work and development.

A fund of £500 was given to each of Parent Satisfaction / Obey Organization, Alsmo Charitable Organization and Maazin Women International Organisation by Sheikh Anis for the organisations orphan sponsorship and widow and orphan support projects after checks on their financial records and systems were undertaken and OIN was satisfied these organisations deliver much needed services to the beneficiaries they support. Each organisation was informed that future collaborative work with Orphans in Need will depend on the effective use of the funds donated and submission of images and project completion reports on the use of the donated funds. All the organisations were asked to cooperate with PAC Sudan who will assist them in the submission of their reports and provide them with assistance in the areas of capacity building they require.

## The story of Intisar Ali

One of the most important parts of our OiN Sudan visit Programme was to document and film the need in Sudan, especially at IDP camps so that OiN can better plan our future work and raise the plight of this proud nation with our donors and supporters in whatever way this can be achieved. In one of our outings at the IDP camps, Orphans in Need film maker and photographer, John Brown, (accompanied by Abdelbagi Ali assigned by The Humanitarian Aid Commission (HAC) to help with the food distributions), climbed on top of a mud house, to take images. Our OiN team were all devastated to witness the immense need and desperation amongst the people they met in the IDP camps they visited. Most of the people we met were impoverished women and children,



amongst the poor women the team met was a blind woman called Intisar Ali and her two children. She was queuing for a food parcel in the last of our food parcel distributions in Aborial IDP camp. Despite her disability, Intisar had managed to travel to the distribution location to collect food and this itself is reflection of the poverty and dire need. Intisar lost her sight when she gave birth to one of her children and became anaemic due to losing a lot of blood. OiN's team followed Intisar to her roofless mud house carrying her food parcels and were all immensely overcome and upset to see the extreme and poor conditions she was living in. This further confirmed that OiN need to further their reach and assist as many women and children residing in Sudan as is possible.



# Conclusion

Overall, OiN's Sudan mission was successful and very productive. Sheikh Anis and the team he led, who highly benefited from his field work experience, learnt a lot about the need in the Republic of Sudan. During our 10 day visit the team came across thousands of people who are living in the most devastating of situations and were all overwhelmed by the level of poverty and disadvantaged people they came across. The team met organisations who want to address this need, but themselves require assistance especially with capacity building. They also met and befriended remarkable people like Dr Azhari and Dr Ashraf who provided them all the support they could during their stay. We are all very grateful for their assistance and will treasure the friendship we forged with them for years to come. We would also like to thank all the other organisations we met with a special thanks going to President Gasim Badri and his team for welcoming us at Ahfad University for Women and showing us, first hand the amazing work they are undertaking in providing a five star education to their students.

In the coming days, weeks and months, OiN will reflect on their experiences, knowledge and learning from this first visit to Sudan. Our team will now formulate strategies and plans as well as projects that will address some of the need and assist our beneficiaries in living a brighter, healthier and happier life. In the upcoming months/years we will be working very closely with PAC UK and PAC Sudan to accomplish this and provide aid to those most in need of our support.