



34 000 000
inhabitants



♂ 61 yrs ♀ 65 yrs
life expectancy



7.3 %
of GDP for health



2.8
doctors/10 000 people

STUDYING MEDICINE IN...

Khartoum, Sudan

Ashraf Fadul (26) studied medicine at the University of Khartoum and graduated in 2012.

How is university life in Sudan?

In Sudan there are 28 medical schools. Eighteen of these are public or governmental universities. The others are private. The curriculum differs per university. While in some universities the study takes five years, most of the universities, including mine, apply a six year system. We spend around thirty hours per week on lectures, lab practice and clinical rounds. In Sudan, it is not possible for everyone to study medicine. Although there is not a real financial barrier, you need to get really high marks in secondary school depending on the university to which you apply. At the University of Khartoum, you have to score at least 92 percent, which is difficult to achieve. Depending on a family's economical status, the payment ranges from \$100 to \$1000 in governmental universities.

What do you think is the best part of medical education in Sudan?

During our clinical rounds, we see and examine many interesting cases that you would not imagine can still exist in this century, ranging from tropical and endemic diseases to cancer and metabolic diseases. In addition, there are medical missions organised by students. During these missions, we travel to the remote rural areas in the country where we work under the supervision of graduated colleagues to examine patients and prescribe drugs for free. We also work in the laboratory and learn simple pharmaceutical knowledge.

If you could change one thing in the medical education in Sudan, what would that be?

Unfortunately, the quality of the medical schools differs highly throughout the country. Most of the state universities lack teaching staff members and facilities. This generates doctors of a wide range in quality. Some even lack the basic knowledge and skills required for safe practice.

What is the biggest difference between studying medicine in Sudan and other countries?

I think especially the way of teaching the clinical part and the research part is different. In Sudan, our clinical teaching starts when we reach the fourth grade. On a regular day, we go to the hospital from eleven AM to two PM and not even every day. We have to do rounds in large groups of twenty students. Therefore, only few students are able to take patients' histories and examine them. The clinical internships are done after the graduation as 'houseman-ships'. This is a paid training job. The types of research we do are so simple, and mostly involve Knowledge, Attitude and Practice (KAP) studies (non-experimental and non-interventional) due to our limited facilities. We don't have the opportunity to do lab work or travel.

Describe your life in 2020.

I hope to be a successful professor of surgery trained in either the United States or Europe, and a well-known professor of molecular medicine – travelling around the world to speak at scientific conferences. But all of that comes after religion and my family's success.