



**aljiser**

FOUNDATION

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## Letter from the Board

2020 and 2021 would prove to be a challenging period, as the Covid-19 pandemic and its related impacts sent shockwaves across the world. The pandemic highlighted the fragility of our health systems, exposed the gross inequalities across the globe and reversed the progress nations, companies and individuals have made towards achieving the 2030 Agenda. The Covid-19 pandemic reaffirmed our resilience, the strength of our communities and highlighted what we can achieve not only as individuals, but as nations if we collaborate, cooperate, and work together for the greater good.

2020-2021 gave the Al Jisr Foundation the opportunity to pause and reflect on 'the new normal' and adapt accordingly. The Foundation swiftly implemented flexible working arrangements to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of our employees and their families. A reactive, needs based approach was applied to respond to the evolving Covid-19 crisis with initiatives driven through a top-down model. Efforts were focused inwards to support the health, education, and social infrastructure in the Sultanate of Oman to ensure continuity in education delivery, availability of critical health services, equipment, and resources to serve the most vulnerable members of society. The Foundation's long-term goals progressed within the boundaries of Covid-19 restrictions but faced significant delays to their implementation and continuity. In 2022 the Foundation will focus on making up for 'lost time' and restart and continue to progress existing initiatives.

The Foundation is proud of its efforts and their employee's efforts throughout the Covid-19 crisis. The Foundation is grateful for the support and collaborative approach with its shared-value partners to complement the Government of Oman's (GoO) initiatives throughout 2020 and 2021. The Al Jisr Foundation will continue its initiative implementation and contributions towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) and reaffirms our continued support to the United Nations Global Compact and its Ten Principles.

We would like to thank our stakeholders and the wider community for their continued support and share with you our biennial Communication on Engagement.

Ms. Fawziya Saud Bahwan Al Mukhaini, Chairperson  
Ms. Anisa Saud Bahwan Al Mukhaini, Deputy Chairperson  
Ms. Mira Khalid Al Busaidi, Board Member  
Ms. Nouf Abdullah Al Hosni, Board Member

## Forward

2020-2021 saw a period of unprecedented change and challenges, not only at the domestic level but on a global scale. In January 2020, Oman's beloved ruler, Sultan Qaboos (peace be upon him) was laid to rest. Succeeded by his cousin in a smooth transition, Haitham Bin Tariq was inaugurated as the Country's new Sultan. Sultan Haitham confirmed his commitment to continuing his predecessors' policies in economic diversification, fiscal reform and to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) outlined in the Oman Vision 2040, a blueprint for Oman's long-term strategic development.

On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared the Covid-19 outbreak a global pandemic. The Covid-19 pandemic would have a significant impact on people's lives, livelihoods and had devastating effects on global economies. The Covid-19 outbreak influenced nations commitment to the SDG's and has significantly undermined the trajectory of a 2030 delivery. Covid-19 has significantly impeded the progress made towards many of the SDG's, particularly SDG3, SDG2, SDG1, SDG5 and SDG6. These impacts are strongly correlated with the closure of borders and associated wind down of economies as economic activity came to a standstill. Global lockdowns placed pressure on food production, disrupted supply chains and threatened basic household income. The pandemic highlighted the systematic flaws within global systems and exacerbated inequalities. Greater emphasis was placed on collective collaboration and cooperation to achieve common goals to minimise the impact of the most vulnerable members of society.

In April 2020 Al Jisr Foundation submitted their first communication on engagement following its commitment to report on the Foundation's achievements to uphold the Ten Principles of the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC). The report highlighted The Foundation's contributions towards achieving the 2030 agenda and it's continued endeavours to promote partnerships between civil society and the public and private sector. The report showcased the Foundation's achievements in education, social and health Initiatives and addressed the measures the Foundation had undertaken towards addressing the Ten Principles of the UNGC.

The submission of the first Communication on Engagement coincided with Al Jisr Foundation's 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, commemorated with an Anniversary publication that showcased health, social and education initiatives and reiterated to stakeholders the contribution Al Jisr Foundation have made over the last decade, prioritising activities in line with Oman Vision 2040 and those that support ongoing efforts towards achieving the SDG's.

The Al Jisr Foundation's Instagram account saw a significant increase in activity during the 2020-2021 period, an 88% increase in impressions, 3% increase in engagement, 12.5% increase in the number of followers, and a 338% increase in the frequency of posts highlighting the expansion of the Foundation's reach through their digital advocacy campaigns.

In October 2021 the Al Jisr foundation welcomed the addition of two new board members as the organisation underwent internal transformation and adopted a top-down approach to initiative implementation over the 2020-2021 period. To accommodate the unprecedented demand for health, education, and social assistance the Foundation strengthened existing

relationships and engaged in shared-value partnerships with International Organisations and the Government of Oman (GoO). New partnerships were forged with the private sector through their mutual objective to serve the community and maintain the health, education, and welfare of the people of Oman.

Al Jisr Foundation's 2022 Communication on Engagement will be in line with the biennial reporting obligations and will cover the period of 2020-2021. The report will provide an update on ongoing and current initiatives and address the Ten Principles of the United Nations Global Compact.

## Partnerships

During the 2020-2021 period the Al Jisr Foundation continued to implement key components of our long-term strategy to broaden our approach to partnership engagement. With a focus on expanding our sphere of influence to achieve maximum impact for the communities and individuals we serve, the Foundation signed a Collaboration Agreement in 2021 with the World Health Organization (WHO) Oman office and a Memorandum of Collaboration with Petroleum Development Oman.

The agreement with the WHO Oman will focus on the provision of technical guidance and support throughout the Health Projects lifecycle. This project will focus on nutrition, mental health, school health and other emerging health priorities within the Sultanate of Oman. The Memorandum of Collaboration with Petroleum Development Oman will provide ongoing support to the GoO's efforts in mental health and drug and rehabilitation programmes.

## Al Jisr Foundation's Response to Covid-19

In March 2020, in response to the Covid-19 outbreak countries around the world began implementing containment measures to flatten the curve. Non-essential businesses were closed, social distancing implemented, limits on public gatherings enforced and restrictions on mobility and trade would cause an economic shutdown in most countries on a scale not seen in peacetime since the great depression<sup>1</sup>. Containment measures caused a sharp decline in employment and the loss of part or all of people's income. Demand for goods and services reduced as household and companies alike were either physically or financially unable to maintain their normal levels of spending<sup>1</sup>. The impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic exposed existing vulnerabilities and placed pressure on households as access to food and essential services and goods were no longer within their reach.

In support of the GoO's Covid-19 response programme the Al Jisr Foundation placed priority on collaboration through the creation of shared-value partnerships with businesses, government organisations and other not-for-profit organisations to achieve and fund national priorities. These opportunities not only supported the Oman Vision 2040, advanced the

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---cabinet/documents/publication/wcms\\_756331.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---cabinet/documents/publication/wcms_756331.pdf)

Government's progress towards achieving the SDG's but maximised the impact the Foundation had on individuals and the communities in which it serves.

The Minister of Social Development invited Al Jisr Foundation to participate in a national working committee under the Relief and Shelter Sector to combat the economic, social, education and health related impacts the Sultanate was facing in the wake of the Covid-19 crisis. The committee was established to support the GoO's Covid-19 response and a means to assign and distribute roles, tasks, and services to the broader community.

Internally, the Foundation responded swiftly to mandatory work from home orders, providing staff with the necessary equipment, platforms, and resources to ensure the continuation of operations. Training and Development programmes and staff upskilling were temporarily placed on hold as employees' health and wellbeing were prioritised.

As COVID-19 admissions rose exponentially across the globe, a global shortage of essential medical equipment, caused by factory closures, export restrictions and supply chain and logistics delays saw a reduction in the availability of medical equipment globally. As Covid-19 cases increased in the Sultanate, the admission of patients into ICU placed significant strain on the national health system. Sultan Qaboos University Hospital faced a severe shortage of respiratory equipment due to the conversion of the paediatric ICU to accommodate the rise in adult ICU admissions. The paediatric ICU was transferred to a ward and converted into a temporary ICU. The ongoing shortage of ventilators and other medical devices reduced the availability of ICU spaces to paediatric patients. In 2021 Al Jisr Foundation signed an agreement with Sultan Qaboos University Hospital to provide ventilators and medical devices for the paediatric ICU to ensure the continued availability of medical care to the children of Oman. These contributions strengthen the GoO's medical infrastructure and advance efforts in achieving SDG3. These contributions assist towards The Al Jisr Foundation achieving SDG3, SDG9, SDG17 and its indicators.

## Al Jisr Foundation's Response to Cyclone Shaheen

In October 2021 Cyclone Shaheen made landfall between the Wilayas of Musannah and Suwaiq, south of Al Batinah Governorate bringing heavy rains, high winds and prompted the evacuation of coastal regions. The cyclone damaged hundreds of houses, shops, civil infrastructure and left thousands without electricity and telecommunications for days. The cost of the damage was estimated at approximately OMR200 million.

Al Jisr Foundation visited the North and South Al Batinah to assess and evaluate how the Foundation could contribute to the Government's ongoing aid and reconstruction efforts. Al Khaboura and Suwaiq were assessed as the worst hit regions and a housing construction initiative developed in collaboration with the Ministry of Housing. In partnership with the Ministry of Social Development (MoSD) beneficiaries were selected on a need's basis having met a stringent set of eligibility criteria.

In line with Vision 2040's national priorities, specifically, the development of Governorates and sustainable cities, and advance the GoO's progress towards SDG11, The Foundation has committed to rebuild thirty homes with a focus on those from low-income backgrounds or those on social security.

The Ministry of Housing has re-allocated land to beneficiaries outside of the usual wadi's path to ensure future developments are sustainable long term. Building in these re-allocated areas will be a pre-requisite to the Foundation reconstructing these homes. Houses have been designed in accordance with sustainable building standards and contribute towards the Foundation achieving SDG11. In 2021 the Al Jisr Foundation received an award from the Gulf Housing Construction for their ongoing housing solutions over the last decade. The Foundation will continue its endeavours to provide sustainable housing solutions to the people of Oman contributing towards the Foundation achieving SDG1, SDG8, SDG10, SDG11, SDG17 and its indicators.

## Social Affairs

During 2020-2021 Al Jisr Foundation received an unprecedented number of requests for assistance as a consequence of the Covid-19 related impacts. In response, the board allocated extra funding to ensure that activities continued in line with its mission to enable equal access to health, education, and social welfare. Over 10,000 ration packs sourced from local vendors were distributed and the financing of utilities ensured the continuity of essential services like water, electricity, and medicine for those who had lost their jobs or source of income. The Foundation financed the ongoing education of twenty-five University and school students and provided financial support and resources for small business owners. Due to Covid-19 related impacts the Foundation changed its criteria for low-income assessments to reflect the ongoing economic climate. Ramadan Iftar was distributed to approximately 48,511 people over the 2020-2021 period. Initiatives in this area contribute to the Foundations progress towards achieving, SDGs 1 through 7, SDG10, SDG11 and its indicators.

Covid-19 cases and related hospital admissions significantly rose during 2020 and 2021. To reduce the burden on public health infrastructure and free-up much needed hospital beds the Al Jisr Foundation donated fifty-four respiratory care devices, including ventilators, O2 concentrators, suction pumps and manual resuscitators to support the GoO's ongoing Covid-19 response. The devices were donated to patients from low socioeconomic backgrounds, who could recover at home under the guidance of medical professionals with the use of personal respiratory devices. The devices were handed to the General Directorate of Specialized Medical Care who distributed them accordingly. The Foundation was honoured in a ceremony as part of the respiratory awareness week in October 2021 under the patronage of the Minister of Health, H.E. Dr Ahmed Al Saidi, for the Foundation's contribution to relieving patients in Intensive Care through the provision of respiratory devices. Contributions towards the Sultanate's Covid-19 response contribute towards the Foundation achieving SDG3 and its indicators.

Al-Quds University contacted Al Jisr Foundation to establish a strategic partnership for the provision of financial support for fourteen young graduates from the medical, pharmaceutical



and health disciplines. The fourteen graduates were financially unable to pay their university fees, preventing them from obtaining their formal degrees. Without their formal qualifications the graduates faced continued unemployment when the Covid-19 pandemic had claimed the lives of 2494 Palestinians. Government and private hospitals were at 140% capacity forcing the Palestinian Government to establish field hospitals to accommodate Covid-19 admissions. Due to the criticality of skilled staff the Oman Charitable Organization facilitated the international funding for these graduates in collaboration with the Al Jisr Foundation. This initiative contributes towards the Foundation's progress towards achieving SDG3, SDG10 and its indicators.

## Initiative Updates

### Health Initiatives

#### The National Nutrition Campaign

In 2019, in collaboration with the MoH and the World Health Organization (WHO), Al Jisr Foundation launched the National Nutrition Campaign. The Communication Campaign was to be delivered over a three-year period with the aim of improving the nutritional status of children, adolescents, and adults in Oman. The programme was established to create shared-value partnerships within the Government and Private Sector to advocate for change in legislation to reduce salt, sugar, and fat in locally and imported food products and advance the GoO progress towards SDG2 and SDG3.

In 2021 Al Jisr Foundation and the FAO entered into a strategic partnership agreement where the FAO would provide strategic and technical expertise to complement the delivery of the Campaign at the national level. The Campaign has faced significant delays as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and was officially launched in December 2021 under the auspices of His Excellency Dr. Mohammed bin Saif Al Hosni, Undersecretary Ministry of Health Affairs. The Campaign is in its second phase and set for completion in 2023. Al Jisr Foundation, in collaboration with its initiative partners will define the activities to be launched during the 2022 period. This initiative helps towards the Foundation achieving SDG2, SDG3, SDG4, SDG17 and its indicators.

#### Exclusive breastfeeding campaign

The Exclusive Breastfeeding (EBF) campaign, as part of the National Nutrition Campaign was developed to encourage EBF within the first hour of life, up until at least six months of age, in line with WHO guidelines and advance the GoO's progress in SDG2 and SDG3. The Campaign was to be launched in the first quarter of 2020 but due to Covid-19 related impacts was officially launched in March 2021. To strengthen institutional capacity, in line with Vision 2040 and advance SDG4, SDG8 and SDG9 sixty-three female health workers were enrolled in the International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners (IBLCE) Lactation Course. The Campaign is in its final stage of delivery and will be used as a model to develop a national training programme for EBF.

#### Saving Hearts Project

In collaboration with the Oman Medical Speciality Board (OMSB), Al Jisr Foundation signed an agreement to finance the scholarships of three doctors to contribute to raising Oman's medical service to an internationally recognized standard, increase health security for the Country's citizens and alleviate the growing number of patients required to seek medical treatment abroad. This initiative helped towards the GoO advancing its progress in SDG3 and SDG4. One of the scholarship students will complete their fellowship in Paediatric Cardiology in September 2022 while the other scholarship candidate is still enrolled in an ongoing fellowship programme. This initiative helps towards the Foundation achieving SDG3, SDG4, SDG5, SDG10, SDG17 and its indicators.

## Community Engagement Initiatives

### SAWI Initiative

The SAWI initiative was developed in 2019 for the purpose of empowering people with disabilities through the development of a logo, associated branding and protective workshops that would provide livelihood opportunities and contribute towards Al Jisr and the GoO achieving SDG10, SDG8 and its indicators. The Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the implementation of the initiative and progress remains slow.

In 2020 the logo and initiative name were reviewed by the relevant authorities and a proposal developed to modify both the name and logo to ensure greater inclusivity. The initiative has been rebranded to AZM (to mean “determination”) and the accompanying logo redesigned and approved. Al Jisr Foundation developed branding guidelines and an accompanying marketing strategy pending approval from the MoSD.

Employment in the open labour market continues to pose significant challenges for people with disabilities. Al Jisr Foundation proposed the establishment of protective workshops that provide education, training and occupational therapy as well as provide an opportunity for people with disabilities to generate an income. The Directorate General of Persons with Disabilities Affairs, under the MoSD have granted the Foundation the use of a building within their premises to set up the workshop, contributing towards the GoO’s achievements in SDG8 and SDG10. The building will be converted into a custom-built paper recycling factory and advance both the GoO and the Al Jisr Foundation’s achievements towards SDG12.

The Foundation are in the process of procuring equipment which is being manufactured offshore. The design, build and export of the machinery have been impacted by Covid-19 restrictions which has forced the project to be put on hold. With the easing of restriction throughout 2022, delivery is scheduled for the second quarter of 2022. It is anticipated that the official opening of the workshop will be in the last quarter of 2022. Following the fit out of the building installation supervisors will be trained to operate and maintain the machinery and training for students/workers will commence in 2023. This initiative helps towards the Foundation achieving SDG4, SDG8, SDG10, SDG12, SDG17 and its indicators.

### Internship Programme for persons with disabilities

As a result of Covid-19 Al Jisr Foundation’s internship programme that advocates for the inclusive employment of those with disabilities was placed on hold. Persons with disabilities generally have more health care needs than others which make them more vulnerable to severe Covid-19 and its associated complications. Al Jisr Foundation hopes to re-establish the programme in 2022 and continues to advocate for the employment of those with disabilities in the wider community. These achievements continue to work towards the Foundation and the GoO achieving SDG8, SDG10 and its indicators.

## Education Initiatives

### STEMinds

Al Jisr Foundation, in collaboration with MoE and their chosen facilitating partner, YouThinkers developed the STEMinds initiative to instil a culture of research and innovation among the Omani youth in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM). The initiative, in line with Vision 2040 will advance achievements in SDG4, SDG9, SDG11, SDG17, and SDG5. Due to Covid-19 restrictions and the implementation of a digital delivery mode of education the implementing partner, YouThinkers, developed an online platform to ensure students progressed to the second phase of the project delivery. This phase focused on ethics, leadership and global citizenship, presentation skills, critical thinking, proposal writing, problem solving, programming (coding and design), electronics (robotics), internet of things, and artificial intelligence. The third phase of the initiative will commence in March 2022 and is set for completion in September 2022. This initiative contributes towards the Foundation achieving SDG4, SDG8, SDG10, SDG17 and its indicators.

## Current Initiatives

### Health Initiatives

Oman continues to make advances in creating an inclusive and equitable health system that follows international best practice and works towards advancing SDG3 and its indicators. Vision 2040 has emphasised the need for more medical specialities and specialised medical institutes and universities that can develop medical staff for various medical specialisations<sup>2</sup>. The GoO will focus on technological innovations that play a major role in healthcare not only for the delivery of medical services but in the prevention of disease itself<sup>3</sup>.

#### The National Heart Centre Simulation Program

Throughout the Gulf, Cardiovascular Disease (CVD) is one of the leading causes of death and accounts for 30% of all Ministry of Health (MoH) hospital related deaths in Oman<sup>3</sup>. In line with Vision 2040, Al Jisr Foundation, in collaboration with the National Heart Centre at the Royal Hospital, signed a funding agreement for the provision of equipment to be used in the simulation room to train and upskill doctors and medical students to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation. This equipment is the latest CPR technology, accredited and certified by the American Heart institute. The program aims to serve not only healthcare members and allied healthcare but patients, and their families. A training programme was developed that will extend to community members to teach them basic life support in line with Vision 2040 which emphasises creating a society where health is the responsibility of all<sup>2</sup>. The programme was initiated in 2020 but due to Covid-19 restrictions and delays, delivered in 2021 when restrictions were lifted. This initiative helps towards the Foundation achieving SDG3, SDG4, SDG17 and its indicators.

#### Medical Equipment Provision

In recognition of the GoO's strategic objective to strengthen and build the health sector, Al Jisr Foundation continues to place a special focus on high impact health initiatives that improve the level of medical services provided by hospitals. Al Jisr Foundation received several requests for the provision of medical devices from the Royal Hospital, Khoula Hospital, Quryat Hospital and Khasab, Bakha and Debba Hospitals in the Musandam Governorate. In 2020, OMR 500 thousand worth of medical equipment was given to the Khoula and Royal hospitals as part of the Foundation's contributions towards the GoO's Covid-19 response efforts.

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<sup>2</sup> [https://isfu.gov.om/2040/Vision\\_Documents\\_En.pdf](https://isfu.gov.om/2040/Vision_Documents_En.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.omjournal.org/articleDetails.aspx?coType=1&ald=666>

### Ambulance's project

To enhance the quality of healthcare in remote and rural areas, the Directorate Generals of health services from the Al Batinah and Al Dakhliya Governorates approached Al Jisr Foundation to procure and fit out Ambulances to transport patients to the hospital or primary healthcare centres within the regions. North and South Al Batinah governorates each received four ambulances, one hospital specification and three primary health centre specification. Al Dhaklyia received eight ambulances, two hospital specification and five primary health specification. The ambulances were delivered and distributed over the 2020-2021 period.

Al Jisr Foundation also provided two hospital specification ambulances to the Jabal Al Akhdar Hospital and Ibra Hospital. These contributions assist towards the Foundation achieving SDG3, SDG10, SDG17 and its indicators.

### Medical Fellowships

The Covid-19 pandemic has stressed hospital systems and negatively affected public health infrastructure. A shift from conventional standards of care was required to manage the increase in ICU admissions and highlighted a gap in critical skills and capabilities world-wide. In recognition of the criticality of these skills and advance the GoO's progress in achieving SDG3 and SDG4 the Oman Medical Specialities Board (OMSB) signed an agreement with Al Jisr Foundation in 2020 to strengthen institutional capacity and contribute towards upgrading Oman's health system in line with Vision 2040. In 2020 Al Jisr Foundation financed fellowships for two doctors in cardiac anaesthesia and two allied health professionals. In 2021, fellowships were financed for three doctors in critical healthcare from remote areas to strengthen institutional capacity and expertise with an aim of reducing the burden on the health infrastructure in the Capital. The completion of these fellowships assist towards the Foundations achieving SDG4, SDG5, SDG8, SDG17 and its indicators.

**For further information on our Health initiatives please refer to Annex 1.0**

## Community Engagement

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities have commended the GoO for the initial steps taken to put into place legislation, mechanisms, and programmes to promote and protect the rights of persons with disabilities<sup>4</sup>. The GoO have made reasonable progress towards recognizing the rights of persons with disabilities and continue to implement the recommendations to work towards achieving SDG10, SDG8, SDG4 and its indicators.

## Digital Inclusion

The Covid-19 pandemic has accelerated the need for digital transformation and highlighted inequalities in digital readiness. As the world transitions into the fourth industrial revolution the application of technological advancements will remain at the forefront of the agenda. The importance of digital inclusion has been widely acknowledged by Governments and International Organisations through the SDG's<sup>5</sup>. Although the SDG's do not refer to digital inclusion directly, there is a focus on advocating for stronger inclusion of traditionally marginalised groups and communities while also advocating that Information Computer Technology (ICT) can act as enablers of the SDG's<sup>6</sup>. Digital Inclusion facilitates integration and participation in education of marginalised groups and provides them with access to knowledge and information.

There are currently 10,880 children with Disabilities in Oman. Of these, 23.9% have a hearing impairment and 1.8% are visually impaired. Vision 2040 highlights the need to empower persons with disabilities, maximising their capabilities and skills and providing them with adequate social protection<sup>2</sup>. The e.Oman 2030 strategy compliments Vision 2040 through the creation of an inclusive digital society where Omanis have an equal chance in digital inclusion and participation and that the digital gap of disadvantaged citizens is addressed<sup>6</sup>. These initiatives help towards the GoO achieving SDG4, SDG8 and SDG10. In line with Vision 2040 and e.Oman 2030, Al Jisr Foundation placed a special focus on providing digital resources for children with disabilities and promote inclusive education.

In response to the introduction of Government lockdown measures in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic a distance learning education model was implemented and delivered digitally. Globally, children with disabilities were identified as being at greater risk of having their education most impacted by distance learning<sup>7</sup>. To ensure that all children could continue to reach their full potential and complement the Ministry of Education's (MoE) existing efforts to support students affected by Covid-19, Al Jisr Foundation donated ten Braille Sense Polaris Devices to the Omar Bin Al Khattab Institute for the visually impaired, the only specialist

<sup>4</sup> <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/1483323?ln=en>

<sup>5</sup> [https://collections.unu.edu/eserv/UNU:7584/n201219\\_Report-7\\_A\\_global\\_framework\\_for\\_digital\\_inclusion-2.pdf](https://collections.unu.edu/eserv/UNU:7584/n201219_Report-7_A_global_framework_for_digital_inclusion-2.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> [https://oman.om/wps/portal/index/DigitalOman2030!/ut/p/a1/hc5NC4JAEAbg39LBY87YImQ3QSpTWexT9xla2xaoK2pt\\_ftMugR9zO0dnpcZYBABK5LrWSTNWRZJ9szM3NPQMIO5RY\\_OyAhD118Sb2MQpNiCuAX4Zwz811\\_xAnbAOKZwhkgtN\\_DWgYODsp0uLN8kjjN8gR9nFsBEJtPu5dguUjIwWcP-5BWv9EvVrk9NU9YTDTVUSulCSpFx\\_SBzDT9VTrJuIHqXUObRze2z9K7s3gMelLUy/dl5/d5/L0IKQSEvUUt3SS80RUKhL2Vu/](https://oman.om/wps/portal/index/DigitalOman2030!/ut/p/a1/hc5NC4JAEAbg39LBY87YImQ3QSpTWexT9xla2xaoK2pt_ftMugR9zO0dnpcZYBABK5LrWSTNWRZJ9szM3NPQMIO5RY_OyAhD118Sb2MQpNiCuAX4Zwz811_xAnbAOKZwhkgtN_DWgYODsp0uLN8kjjN8gR9nFsBEJtPu5dguUjIwWcP-5BWv9EvVrk9NU9YTDTVUSulCSpFx_SBzDT9VTrJuIHqXUObRze2z9K7s3gMelLUy/dl5/d5/L0IKQSEvUUt3SS80RUKhL2Vu/)

<sup>7</sup> <https://iite.unesco.org/publications/the-impact-of-covid-19-on-the-education-of-persons-with-disabilities/>

government school of its kind in Oman. The addition of the Braille Sense Polaris devices increased the quality of basic education and provided the students with access to technological innovations that not only help them reach their highest potential but assist in transforming them into digital users.

Fifty laptops were donated to the Al Amal school for the deaf, the only specialised school for children with hearing impairments managed by the MoE. In response to Government lockdowns televised classes for students were delivered nationally. Covid-19 created numerous barriers to education and modes of education delivery weren't always accessible to all. Televised classes were not inclusive for children with disabilities, specifically those with hearing impairments due to the absence of sign language or subtitles to ensure continuity in education. The distribution of laptops provided a fit for purpose model that would allow the delivery of information through sign language and increase the student's ICT proficiency. Al Jisr Foundation worked in collaboration with the MoE, the Director General of Special Education and Continuous Learning and the MoE IT department to ensure that the specifications for the educational programmes were in line with Ministry requirements. Laptops were assigned to senior students as a priority due to examination preparation periods and the criticality of their education continuity.

These initiatives contribute towards the Foundation achieving SDG4, SDG10, SDG17 and its indicators.

[Association of Early Intervention for Children with Disabilities \(AEICD\).](#)

Non-profit organisations have been severely impacted by the economic stressors of the pandemic having fewer resources to sustain them through the Covid-19 crisis, making them particularly vulnerable to closure.

The Association of Early Intervention for Children with Disabilities (AEICD) is a non-profit charitable organization based in Oman. It is the only Association in Oman that provides services to children with disabilities from birth to nine years of age. The Association offers rehabilitation, social and psychological services as well as life skills and training for parents and the broader community, for which they charge a minimal fee. The Association relies on donations from the private sector, individuals, schools, government, charity boxes, and small contributions from the families of children who use the Associations services.

The Association was gifted a parcel of land and commenced the construction of a new building that would allow them to offer services to a larger number of children. Building construction was set for completion in March 2020. Due to lack of funding the project was placed on hold. Covid-19 has forced the Association to find more creative methods and develop innovative approaches to seeking funds to ensure a steady income stream. This consistent income stream will create a sustainable source of revenue that will allow the Association to complete their projects, cover their overall operational costs, as well as subsidise products and services to families from low-income backgrounds.

Al Jisr Foundation engaged the expertise of a third party to prepare a feasibility study and business plan for two potential business opportunities. The feasibility study and



accompanying business plan will allow the Association to present tangible business opportunities to potential donors with the goal of raising capital to establish the business.

Al Jisr Foundation agreed to allocate OMR 150,000 to purchase the equipment for three of the four business activities:

1. 3D Biomechanical full body motion analysis lab
2. Medical footwear store (Orthopaedic shoes and footwear)
3. Medical centre (Physical therapists, Occupational therapists & Orthopaedic treatment)

The remaining funds will be allocated and cover salaries for the Physical and Occupational therapists for the first year of operation. Al Jisr Foundation will work alongside the Association to ensure the initiatives success and have established a robust reporting structure to monitor the progress and implementation of the initiative. It is expected that the fund will be fully utilized by the end of 2022. This initiative helps towards Al Jisr Foundation achieving SDG3, SDG10, SDG17 and its indicators.

#### Camel Milk and by-products Initiative

In collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources (MAFWR) Al Jisr Foundation signed a funding agreement that aims to empower Women Camel Milk producers by strengthening the Camel Milk and by-products value chain in Rakhout, in the Dhofar region of Oman. This project aims to create a more efficient and competitive value chain through the establishment of a market-oriented Camel Milk and by-product production unit owned by a group of Women producers from low-income backgrounds. This opportunity would boost economic opportunity in rural areas and improve Omani Women's livelihoods.

Al Jisr Foundation are positioned not only as a project donor but as a member of the project working team. This ongoing role allows the Foundation to contribute ideas as well as monitor the ongoing progress of the project and be part of the selection process for external services. The project delivery model will consist of 2 phases implemented over a two-year period followed by a project impact assessment. This initiative helps towards the Foundation achieving SDG1, SDG2, SDG8, SDG9, SDG10, SDG17 and its indicators.

#### Developing Vocational Skills for Persons with Disabilities

In 2020 Al Jisr Foundation signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Gulf College to implement a vocational skills training programme for twenty students from low socioeconomic backgrounds with motor, visual or hearing disabilities. The programme aims to provide the students with the necessary skills and experience to enter the labor market as well as fostering entrepreneurship and small business ownership in line with Vision 2040 and helps towards the GoO's advances in SDG4, SDG8, SDG10 and its indicators. Al Jisr Foundation hold an advisory position on the committee alongside Gulf College to monitor, evaluate and

provide guidance throughout the programme's implementation. This initiative helps towards the Foundation achieving SDG4, SDG8, SDG10 and its indicators.

**For further information on our Community Engagement initiatives please refer to Annex 2.0**

## Education Initiatives

The GoO, in line with Vision 2040 aims to develop the different levels of the education system and improve educational outcomes to ensure their graduates receive competitive qualifications to increase their employability not only locally but internationally<sup>2</sup>. The GoO has taken a holistic approach and will focus on the development of educational institutions as well as faculty and staff to ensure the delivery of a world class education curriculum for the people of Oman and continue its advances in achieving in SDG4, SDG8, SDG10 and its indicators.

### Caring for Gifted Students

The Ministry of Education (MoE) has developed an educational framework and accompanying curriculum that identifies and fosters gifted students with the ambition to create a national programme across Oman. In collaboration with the MoE, Al Jisr Foundation engaged the expertise of the International Centre for Innovation in Education (ICIE) in Berlin to strengthen institutional capacity through the delivery of a series of teacher training workshops and help advance the GoO achievements towards SDG3, SDG8, SGG10 and its indicators. These workshops aim to provide teachers with the tools and knowledge to develop and implement enrichment activities aimed at gifted students.

The project will be implemented across four stages and a robust monitoring and evaluation framework established to measure the programme's success. The Foundation's contributions assist towards achieving SDG4, SDG8, SDG10 and its indicators.

### English Language Curriculum Reform

In 2020 Al Jisr Foundation in collaboration with the MoE began the review the planning and customization of the English Language International Series curriculum in public schools throughout Oman. The curriculum was selected based on a review of student performance and English proficiency of those currently studying under this curriculum in bilingual and international schools in Oman. Case study reviews across various countries, including those within the GCC show an increase in English language proficiency in students studying under the English Language International Series curriculum.

The implementation of the English Language International Series curriculum will be delivered by Pearson Education UK and places a heavy emphasis on institutional capacity building to deliver the curriculum in line with international standards advancing the GoO's progress in SDG4 and SDG8. The training will be carried out at the Ministries Specialised Institute for the Professional Training of Teachers by qualified trainers recommended by the Curriculum Development Organisation, using the 'train the trainer' methodology and rolled out by the MoE's trained professionals at the national level. Al Jisr Foundation is part of the steering committee that provides strategic direction to ensure the successful implementation of the curriculum. This initiative helps towards the Foundation achieving SDG4, SDG8, SDG17 and its indicators. **For further information on our Education initiatives please refer to Annex 3.0**

## Addressing the Principles

**Principle 1 Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights; and Principle 2 make sure they are not complicit in human rights abuses.**

The Al Jisr Foundation reconfirms its commitment to support the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights and implement measures to ensure they are not complicit in human rights abuses. Throughout 2020-2021 the Foundation have demonstrated this through their core initiatives, strategic social investment, advocacy and public policy and partnership and collective action.

The Foundation supported the right to education through the implementation of international curriculum to strengthen the GoO's education system and invest in the capacity building of teachers and MoE staff. Strategic partnerships were developed to design and manage the implementation of the programme, investing in the future of Oman's youth. Scholarship programmes promoting inclusive education were designed for disadvantaged children with a focus on improving educational outcomes in line with the GoO's Vision 2040.

Through its commitment to advocate for the inclusion of persons with disabilities the Foundation in partnership with the MoSD have established workshops for the intellectually disabled ensuring everyone has the right to work and everyone without discrimination has the right to equal pay for equal work. The Foundation hope to restart its persons with disabilities internship programme in 2022 and continues to promote inclusive employment within the private and public sectors.

Al Jisr Foundation's health initiatives have supported the right to health through multiple channels. Through the provision of medical devices and vehicles in support of the GoO's Covid-19 response, access to medical care and social services were available for children, the elderly and other, often overlooked groups. The Foundation, in collaboration with the WHO and the FAO continue to advocate for legislative change to reduce the levels of sugar, salt and fat from food indirectly reducing rates of CVD, diabetes and other metabolic disorders via their National Nutrition Campaign. Al Jisr Foundation invests in the development of doctors and health assistants to strengthen Oman's health infrastructure in line with Vision 2040.

Throughout Covid-19 Al Jisr foundation transitioned to a work from home operation to protect the health and wellbeing of not only their staff but their families. Flexible working hours were implemented to accommodate working parents with homeschooled children. When staff returned to the office hand sanitizer was available at all working stations, mask mandates and social distancing measures put in place and Covid-19 vaccine costs covered for all employees. Journey management plan submission has become mandatory for all staff travel and incident reporting has been developed and rolled out across the organization

During 2020-2021 emphasis was placed on engaging local vendors and suppliers to reduce the economic impacts of the Covid-19 crisis. The Foundation participated in Covid-19 response committees to identify community and individual needs and allocate resources and funds to protect the economic livelihood of local communities. Programmes were developed to empower female entrepreneurs from low-income backgrounds to expand their business with support from the Foundation.

**Principle 3 Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining; Principle 4 the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour; Principle 5 the effective abolition of child labour; and Principle 6 the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.**

During the 2020 and 2021 period Al Jisr Foundation engaged 33 new vendors for the supply of different services and products. In demonstration of its continued support to end any form of child labor and forced labor the Foundation continues to mandate the submission of company documents for review as well as potential vendors becoming signatories to and submitting the supplier self-certification. Vendors who do not sign this document will not be engaged.

The supplier self-certification form ensures vendors maintain high ethical and social operating standards, uphold safe working conditions and social rights, avoid child labor, bondage or forced labor, assure safe, reasonable working conditions, that their employees are free from exploitation, extortion, abuse, and discrimination and that the protection of their employee's basic social rights are upheld, including the prohibition of human trafficking. Signatories commit to not discriminating against any beneficiaries during the term of the Agreement.

The Foundation welcomed new employees during 2020 and 2021 who were recruited in line with the Foundation's recruitment and onboarding policy. Working conditions are outlined in employee contracts in accordance with Omani Labour Laws stating the terms and conditions of service, the voluntary nature of employment, the freedom to leave (including the appropriate procedures) and any penalties that may be associated with a departure or cessation of work. No candidate is discriminated against based on gender, age or religious affiliation or other, as outlined in The Foundation's policy.

The Foundation's commitment to inclusivity extends into the broader community where they continue to advocate for persons with disabilities, the elderly and women and girls. The Foundation sponsors initiatives that strengthen social and health infrastructure through the provision of equipment, funding, education, and employment opportunities within the wider community.

**Principle 7 Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges;**

**Principle 8 undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility; and Principle 9 encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.**

The Foundation and their employees continue to take an active role to promote environmental stewardship and maintain sustainable operations and practices. Al Jisr Foundation aims to maintain impeccable standards to preserve natural resources and prevent pollution by engaging with local communities, Government Organisations, and vendors to adopt sustainable solutions to protect the environment, people, and communities in which they operate.

Environment sustainability forms part of the Foundation's project management framework. Supply of goods and services for projects are procured through local vendors to minimise the Foundation's carbon footprint and raise the standards of environmental stewardship within Oman. As a result of Covid-19 the Foundation indirectly reduced carbon emissions and used less paper and consumables as operations transitioned to a digital platform. The environmental contributions indirectly obtained will form part of the Foundation's long term environmental impact strategy moving forward with a heavy focus on maintaining a paperless office, work from home initiatives, and prioritising digital meetings where possible to reduce the Foundations overall carbon footprint. Al Jisr Foundation launched the use of ZOHO, CRM software that will audit casefiles digitally in an effort to further reinforce the paperless office initiative.

The Foundation continues to enforce the requirement that all vendors commit to and become a signatory of the Supplier Self-Certification, ensuring that the procurement of goods and services has the least negative impact on the environment. Vendors who do not adhere to this will not be engaged.

**Principle 10: Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.**

The Foundation reconfirms its commitment to the Anti-corruption call to action. Reforms on financial management and internal auditing have been reviewed and updated over the 2020-2021 reporting period due to the associated risks of conducting business in a virtual world during Covid-19. All recent employees have signed the anti-corruption policy and all staff members were advised to review the amendments and familiarise themselves with the current changes accordingly.

The Foundation continues to enforce suppliers, contractors and third parties to submit and sign the Anti-Corruption Compliance and Due Diligence questionnaire and provide, at tender, their policies reflecting their commitment or commitment towards ending corruption. During the 2020-2021 reporting period Al Jisr provided 100% of suppliers with the Anti-Corruption Compliance and Due Diligence questionnaire and can proudly confirm 100% compliance.

Recently onboarded employees were required to read and sign the Foundation's policy pertaining to conflicts of interest. All employees are required to report or disclose any possible or perceived conflicts of interest to avoid any conflict between their personal interest and the interest of the Foundation in dealing with suppliers, consumers and all other organizations doing or seeking to do business with the Foundation or any subsidiaries/associates in accordance with Foundation's policy.

Projects and initiatives are audited at random to ensure compliance across all operations domestically and internationally. A whistle blowing policy has been implemented outlining the process for escalating issues that may be deemed to conflict with the Foundation's Anti-Corruption policy. Al Jisr Foundation promotes a culture of transparency to promote the highest standards of ethics and integrity.

## Closing Remarks

Throughout 2020 and 2021 the Al Jisr Foundation placed a heavy emphasis on supporting the GoO's efforts towards the Covid-19 pandemic relief and developed a reactive approach to initiative delivery throughout this period. Special priority was placed on complementing initiatives in the health sector and increasing efforts towards social affairs for the most vulnerable in line with the Foundation's overarching vision, values, and mission. The Foundation acknowledges the impacts the Covid-19 pandemic has had on reversing progress made towards achieving the SDG's, not just on organizations but on Countries around the world and commits to continue its ongoing initiatives with a special focus on those SDG's that made little progress during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Looking forward, the Foundation will aim to make up for 'lost time' and focus on idea generation and innovation to complement the GoO's post Covid-19 path to recovery. The Foundation will continue to strengthen its communication and information sharing with stakeholders and leverage and expand private and public partnerships to achieve National and Organizational goals. Professional development and the implementation of a Project Management System will form part of the 2022 strategic path forward.

The Foundation commits to participate in Global Compact global and local events, reach out to Global Compact Local networks and continue to provide commentary to stakeholders on Communication on progress throughout 2022-2023.

## Annex 1.0

### Health Initiatives

#### Cleft lip and palate surgeries

The Covid-19 pandemic has caused significant delays in surgical treatments as health systems buckled under the volume of hospital admissions caused by Covid-19 and Covid-19 related complications. Cleft lip and palate surgeries were placed on hold or postponed, despite their general urgency, as hospitals were forced to limit the number of patients and services offered to accommodate the influx of Covid-19 hospitalisations. Khoula Hospital contacted Al Jisr Foundation to coordinate and fund twenty-four urgent paediatric cleft lip and palate surgeries for children from low-income households. Under the guidance of the children's original surgeons from Khoula Hospital, three private hospitals were selected to perform these urgent procedures. This initiative assists towards the Foundation achieving SDG3, SDG10, SDG17 and its indicators.



## Annex 2.0

### Community Engagement

#### Support for the Elderly through Al Ihsan Association Al Dakhiliya Branch

Senior Citizens account for approximately 6% of Oman’s total population, an estimated 145,450 people. In the Al Dhakiliya region, there are approximately 16,700 senior citizens, 1723 of which suffer from age related disease, impairment, and physical limitations.

Al Ihsan Association- Al Dakhiliya Branch is a voluntary charity association that advocates for the care of elderly people within the community and aims to improve their quality of life through several initiatives and services, including the supply of medical equipment and associated consumables. In October 2020, in collaboration with the Nizwa Hospital the Association launched “Brakat Musin” (An elderly is a blessing), an initiative that addresses the needs of the elderly in Al Dakhiliya Governorate.

During an average week the Association receives 22-24 requests to provide sanitary items for 26 Senior Citizens who are bedridden or unable to walk. At any point in time there are an average of 245 Senior Citizens who require adult diapers. These sanitary necessities reduce bed sores and health problems and decreases hospital stays freeing up much needed beds.

Al Jisr Foundation signed an agreement with the Association to provide one year’s supply of adult diapers for 100 senior citizens and one fit for purpose, emergency transport vehicle ambulance for the Associations Al Dakhiliya Branch. The vehicle will be used to transport patients with chronic disease and for Senior Citizens who are unable to travel to and from their medical appointments. The adult diapers are distributed through the Association on a needs basis with special priority given to those from low socioeconomic backgrounds. A robust monitoring and reporting system was implemented with quarterly progress reports submitted to the Foundation for review. This initiative aims to strengthen and establish partnerships for the goals as well as create a cohesive and cooperative community environment. This initiative helps towards the Foundation achieving SDG3, SDG9, SDG10, SDG17 and its indicators.

#### Supporting Public Schools – Infrastructure Development

Growing up in a clean safe environment is every child’s right<sup>8</sup>. The Covid-19 pandemic reinforced the importance of hand washing and access to clean water and sanitation. More than half of the world’s population don’t have access to safe sanitation<sup>8</sup>. Providing children with access to clean water, basic toilets and good hygiene practices not only keeps children healthy but prevents the spread of disease<sup>8</sup>. The Wadi Adi School is one of the oldest schools

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<sup>8</sup> <https://www.unicef.org/wash>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.globalgoals.org/9-industry-innovation-and-infrastructure>

in Oman and has been in operation for 38 years. The school currently educates 200 students from grades one to four. The original infrastructure had not been updated or renovated since its inception and posed a significant health and safety risk to children and staff. The school submitted a request to the Al Jisr Foundation for the full renovation of their common area. This included the bathrooms for all children and staff and the complete renovation of the school health clinic. The scope of work included the demolition of existing buildings, plumbing and complete refurbishment of all infrastructure. A local contractor was engaged to carry out the demolition, construction and renovation works which were completed in three months and handed over in November 2021.

This initiative, in line with SDG9 is part of Al Jisr Foundation's infrastructure upgrade programme for Public Schools in Oman. The success of communities is dependent on the establishment of functioning, sustainable, resilient infrastructure that positively impact student's lives<sup>8</sup>. The Foundation will continue to advocate for infrastructure improvement programmes and encourage other organizations to focus on similar schools with the ambition of forging partnerships for change within the community the schools serve. Al Jisr Foundation aims to develop a programme for school aged students that promotes the wise use of water and favourable hygiene practices that create behavioural change for generations to come and assist the Foundation in advancing SDG3, SDG4, SDG6, SDG9, SDG10, SDG17 and its indicators.

### Empowering Women Entrepreneurs

Entrepreneurs have the ability to change the way people live and work. Entrepreneurs can increase standards of living, create jobs, and positively impact an economy. Entrepreneurs drive change with innovation by creating new products that generate growth and opportunities for new markets to be developed. They create an environment conducive to reinvesting into local communities, driving, and facilitating national economic growth and contribute towards the SDG's. Women are often a key group underrepresented, and not utilized to their full potential to promote and drive social change and economic advancement.

Women bring to the table a unique perspective and set of experience that if harnessed, the potential for economic growth would increase. Their enterprise ventures would not only change the lives of their children, families and communities but have the power to change the nation. As part of the strategic direction outlined in Oman Vision 2040 and contribute to achieving SDG1, SDG8 and SDG10 the GoO aims to create a cohesive and vigilant society that is socially and economically empowered, especially women, children, the youth, the persons with disabilities and the most vulnerable groups<sup>2</sup>.

Covid-19 lockdown measures placed significant strain on small and medium sized enterprises. Women entrepreneurs have been disproportionately affected and were faced with a higher risk of unemployment and income loss. To mitigate the effects of Covid-19 Al Jisr Foundation

provided financial support to, two female entrepreneurs from low socioeconomic backgrounds. This support enabled the continuation of their business following the removal of lockdown measures. This initiative assists towards the Foundation achieving SDG1, SDG2 SDG5, SDG8, SDG10 and its indicators.

## Annex 3.0

### Education Initiatives

#### Education Project – Childhood Care Centre

Al Jisr Foundation believe that children have the right to quality education, the right to a healthy and nutritious diet and the right to grow up in a safe and caring environment, regardless of their background. When these rights are protected not only will children thrive but become empowered, independent and have the power to change and shape their world. Since 2016, Al Jisr Foundation has sponsored the educational needs of orphans from the Childhood Care Centre in Muscat. The children attend private schools that foster their academic ability with a focus on English language.

Due to the success of the initiative the Foundation was motivated to increase the number of students they sponsored from the Centre. Al Jisr Foundation recognise that inclusive quality education for all is a key driver for sustainable development and works towards the GoO achieving SDG4 and SDG8. Three schools were chosen based on their English language curriculum and availability of resources and facilities to cater to children with learning difficulties and special needs. A robust monitoring and evaluation framework has been established to measure academic performance. This initiative helps towards the Foundation achieving SDG4, SDG10, SDG17 and its indicators.

#### University Scholarship Programme

In 2021 Al Jisr Foundation introduced The International Student Scholarship Programme. The programme aimed to expand upon the Foundation's National scholarship programme initiatives and target low-income families in expatriate communities throughout Oman. The scholarship would provide two students with the opportunity to pursue an education in STEM at Monash University Malaysia or University of Nottingham Malaysia. A number of expatriate community schools in Muscat were invited to share this opportunity with their high school graduates. The Foundation visited Social Clubs to reach a broader audience within the expatriate communities. Al Jisr Foundation have developed a robust monitoring and evaluation framework to monitor the students' progress and support them throughout their education journey. This initiative works towards the Foundation achieving SDG4, SDG8, SDG9, SDG17 and its indicators.

