

When Muneer Hamid Issa first imagined life beyond Sudan, he pictured Rwanda—a country he had only heard about from Rwandan peacekeepers stationed in Darfur. He admired their discipline, their warmth, and the stories they told of a nation rebuilding itself. Rwanda, he thought, was a place where possibilities could thrive.



Muneer Hamid Issa, Founder of Darfur Trading

But moving to Kigali was not as effortless as he had hoped. “The transition was not smooth,” he admits. Yet when war erupted in Sudan, the decision that once felt distant suddenly became urgent. With conflict closing in, Muneer packed his plans—and his hopes—and set off for a country where he knew no one.

Originally from the Darfur region, Muneer’s life was never meant to follow a straight line. He went to Khartoum for a master’s degree and later earned a PhD in Chemistry, even lecturing at the university. But despite his academic path, something kept pulling him back to business.

“Every time the community needed something, I felt compelled to bring it,” he says. “I wanted to pursue research, but it was complicated—modern laboratory, expensive equipment, limited resources. And deep inside, trade was in my blood. My father was a trader too.”



By the time he left Sudan, Muneer was already a seasoned entrepreneur. His instincts told him Rwanda was the next chapter.

A New Beginning in Kigali

When he arrived in Kigali nearly three years ago, he was overwhelmed—in a good way. The orderliness, the safety, the pace of growth—it all made sense to him. Shortly, he opened his first shop in Remera. Today, he runs two branches under his company, Darfur Trading Ltd, located in the Central Business District and Kanombe.

His business model is simple: supply what the market doesn’t yet have.

Darfur Trading imports goods from China, Dubai, and Sudan—including children’s toys, swimming gear, massage equipment, and everyday household items that

were previously hard to find in Kigali. “We want to introduce products that are rare on the market,” he explains.



But breaking into a new market hasn't been without challenges. Many of the items he brings in are high-quality—and therefore expensive. Locals sometimes hesitate, unfamiliar with the value of products.

Still, Muneer pushes on. Today, he has expanded to importing Sudanese foods such as yellow beans, spices, and dates—items that are beginning to attract both Sudanese expatriates and curious Rwandans.

Finding Home Again and Dreams Beyond

Despite arriving alone, Muneer's integration into the Rwandan community has been smooth. His children are now enrolled in school, and he describes Kigali as a place where a family can breathe again.

“Rwandans are wonderful people,” he says warmly. “This country is very welcoming.”

While Darfur Trading continues to grow, Muneer's ambitions stretch far beyond his shops.

He hopes to return to pharmaceuticals one day—he once owned a pharmacy in Khartoum. He is also exploring agriculture, especially as the Sudanese community in Rwanda expands and the demand for familiar foods grows. He has already experimented with cultivating Sudanese beans at home with excellent results. A friend in Bugesera is now growing them too.



Muneer is preparing to open more branches in Kigali, and plans for a shop in Gisenyi are already underway. That branch will strategically serve both Rwandan customers and those from eastern Democratic Republic of Congo.

But his boldest dream is to build a cheese factory.

Sudanese communities love cheese, especially certain varieties that require fresh,

rich milk. “Rwandan milk is even better than what we used in Sudan,” he says confidently. “It can produce more—and better—cheese.”

His dream factory would sit close to dairy-producing areas, supplying the local market and exporting to Arab countries where demand for that style of cheese is strong.

From university lecture halls in Khartoum to shop counters in Kigali, Muneer Hamid Issa’s journey is one of reinvention. It is a story of loss, resilience, and the quiet courage to begin again.

And as he expands Darfur Trading Ltd—branch by branch, idea by idea—he is not just rebuilding a business. He is rebuilding a life.