Muslims worldwide celebrated Eid al-Adha on May 16, 2024, but for families in Rwanda's Gatsibo district, Kigali city, Kamonyi District and Rubavu district, as 100 ophans together with their families the festivities were extra special. Zakat Foundation of America, in collaboration with Abdallah Kiromba Foundation – joined forces to bring joy to over 1,085 Muslim and non muslim families.

Children, elderly, women and communities at one of the Mosques in Kabarore sector feasting during celebrations of Eid Al Adha

Following Eid prayers, the foundations distributed meat across three Mosque locations in Simbwa, Gitoke, and Kabarore., Masjid Nusra of Kamuhoza in Kigali City, Masjid Noor of Muganza in Kamonyi district while the district of Rubavu will receive their Eid June 17th 2024.

The president of the Abdallah Kiromba Foundation, Donat Niyonsaba, oversaw the distribution in Gatsibo with other colleagues and volunteers.

"The meat was distributed to families, individuals, mothers, women, children, and anyone in need," Niyonsaba said. The smiles on the faces of children, mothers, and elders who might not otherwise have been able to afford meat was evident and powerful reminder of the power of charity."

"I want to express my sincere gratitude to The Zakat Foundation of America, and the Abdallah Kiromba Foundation, along with the tireless efforts of our local mosque Imams and authorities, who came together to bring Eid cheer to families," Niyonsaba pointed out.

Eid al-Adha, also known as the 'Feast of the Sacrifice', commemorates Prophet Ibrahim's unwavering obedience to God when he was willing to sacrifice his son. Traditionally, Muslims celebrate it with prayers, feasts, and charitable acts.

Asiya Tumukunde and her 6-year-old daughter who received four kilograms of meat at Kabarore Mosque said, "Jazakum Allahu Khairan "meaning Thank you in English.

"The gift of meat was more than just food; it was a symbol of compassion, understanding, and the true spirit of Eid. It allowed us to celebrate this holy

occasion with our loved ones and feel a sense of unity within our community," Asiya added.

Zakat Foundation of America works with local shepherds and farmers to raise livestock suitable for Qurbani sacrifice as part of the ongoing 2024 Udhiyah/Qurbani program.

Eid al-Adha brought a vibrant atmosphere to all three mosques in the area, each offering warm hospitality with traditional Eid meals. For some Muslims, like Abouba Ngabo, the journey to celebrate with their mosque community was long. "But it makes it all worthwhile," Ngabo said. "The food is fantastic, and it feels like a true homecoming."

High meat prices in the market due to the economic situation make it difficult for some rural communities, and families to afford it. Yet, this suggests a potential need for protein supplementation, particularly for vulnerable groups like pregnant women and children.

The Muslim women of Simbwa Cell were represented by Sofia Naramukaniye, who echoed Asiya's sentiments. The woman expressed her deepest gratitude to the foundation on behalf of the women, emphasizing the joy and relief the donation brought to families, especially those struggling financially.

Sofia Naramukaniye, the representative of Muslim women in Simbwa, Gatsibo District

"We, the Muslim women of Simbwa Cell, are particularly grateful for this initiative," Sofia pointed out. "Many of us shoulder the responsibility of caring for our families, and this donation alleviated a significant financial burden during Eid."

Niyonsaba reminded the families and residents that Zakat Foundation of America in partnership with Abdallah Kiromba Foundation has other ongoing programs which include among others, empowering teen mothers and youth boys with tailoring skills so that they can support themselves and their families.

The donations were also distributed in Ruyenzi in Kamonyi district , Kamuhoza in Kigali city and Mbugangali and Busasamana in Rubavu district . While at the mosques some youth Muslims Like Abouba Ngabo revealed that was a long journey

to get here, but celebrating Eid with the mosque community makes it all worthwhile. The food is fantastic, and it feels like a true homecoming."

In May this year, the Abdallah Kiromba Foundation and the American NGO equipped the Leutrim Hoxha Tailoring Center at Simbwa Cell with 30 new sewing machines and all the required materials

Zakat Foundation of America is a US-based Muslim-run charity organization that channels the sprint of Zakat into a global vision of social development.

May Allah reward whoever made it possible

"Jazaa Allah Khayran Man Jaeal Dhalik Mumkinan"