At 78 years old, Ibrahim Sebashari has witnessed a dramatic transformation in his life. Living in Nyarunebwe Village, Busasamana Sector of Rubavu District, near the border with DR Congo, Sebashari once faced extreme poverty. Just three years ago, his only land was where his house sits on, and finding enough food was a daily struggle for his family.

But things began to change when he received a pair of sheep from the Abdullah Kiromba Foundation through the support of Zakat Foundation of America—a gift that marked the beginning to a sustainable living.

The livestock not only provided food and income; they brought him dignity and a renewed sense of purpose.

The pair of sheep reproduced, and after selling three, Ibrahim was able to buy a small plot of land. He now cultivates crops like beans, Irish potatoes, maize and vegetables. His family eats from the harvest, and his wife sells the surplus at the local market. In a good season, they harvest up to four sacks of Irish potatoes.

“Thanks to the foundation, may God continue to bless them,” Sebashari says with deep gratitude. “If your sheep gives birth, give one to someone else so they can also build a life.”

*Ibrahim Sebashari looking after his flock in Nyarunebwe Village, Busasamana Sector of Rubavu District,*

**The Spirit of Sharing**

Theophile Nisingizwe, a resident of Nyarunebwe in the same district, also received two sheep three years ago. He cared for them diligently, and over time, they multiplied. When he sold some, he used the money plus savings to buy a Rwf.600,000 —cow, which is now expecting a calf. He still has three sheep left.

The livestock has been life-changing in this village. With the income from his animals, Nisingizwe pays for his family’s health insurance (Mutuelle de Santé) and has abundant fertilizers to boost his farming activities.

His five children are all in school, including his youngest. “I thank Abdullah Kiromba Foundation for everything. I also plan to pass on a sheep to my neighbor in a few

months,” says the father of five.

The livestock initiative launched by the Abdullah Kiromba Foundation began three years ago with the distribution of 1,000 animals to 500 households—including 600 goats and 400 sheep—to help households escape poverty through sustainable farming and improved food security.

The impact has been far-reaching. Since distributions were done equitably among Muslims and non-Muslims who were identified by local leaders. The program has reached different parts of the country where each sector received 100 animals, including: Kabarole Sector in Gatsibo District, Kabuga in Gasabo District, Runda in Kamonyi District, Nyange in Musanze District and Busasamana in Rubavu District.

**Small Gifts, Big Change**

Issa Rudasingwa from Mushinga in Gasizi, Rubavu District, received two sheeps in April 2022. As the sheep grew, he benefited as they reproduced and he started making compost fertilizer at his home, which enriched his soil and improved crop yields.



*Issa Rudasingwa, at his home in Mushinga, Rubavu District*

After his sheep reproduced, Rudasingwa was among the first to share by giving a lamb to his friend and neighbour Jacques Rucogoza.

“Sharing with neighbors who don’t have livestock is very important in our culture,” says Rudasingwa. This helps improve the welfare of your neighbors and ultimately the whole village.

Jacques Rucogoza, who leaves a government-built house says all he had was a house and poor agriculture harvests. But this has since changed when he received the sheep from Rudasingwa.

Rucogoza attributes his improved yields to this community-sharing model and  has vowed to also give a lamb to another person as soon it his sheep gives birth. “If my sheep multiply, I’ll sell some—but I must first share. A sheep is like any other treasure.”

He now grows vegetables in his small kitchen garden and sells the extra manure to other smallholder farmers to earn extra money for basic needs at his home.



*Issa Rudasingwa seated outside his neighbour's house Jacques Rucogoza (Right)*

Livestock distribution is done in collaboration with local leaders, focusing on vulnerable families who can responsibly care for the animals and have land for grazing.

Issa Higiro, the founder of the Abdullah Kiromba Foundation, says sustainability is at the core of this livestock program. The idea is to help families become more self-reliant, stay healthy, and have enough food in the long term.

"We only give out female animals, and beneficiaries are required to pass on the first female offspring to another family. This way, the gift keeps growing, from one household to the next," Higiro said.

The Abdallah Kiromba Foundation's livestock initiative has proven to be a transformative program, fostering financial resilience and food security within communities. By encouraging a culture of giving and sustainability, the initiative not only uplifts individual households but also strengthens communal ties, ensuring a lasting impact for generations to come.

The foundation focuses on socio-economic development by providing vocational training and skills-building opportunities, supports healthcare and well-being for vulnerable families, and enhances education access for orphans and disadvantaged children by covering school fees, supplies, and mentorship.