More than 100 orphan students across Rwanda have received school fees and essential school supplies through an initiative led by the Abdallah Kiromba Foundation (AKF) in partnership with the Zakat Foundation of America.

The Abdallah Kiromba Foundation, a Rwandan nonprofit dedicated to improving lives through education, healthcare, and social welfare, has for years been helping hundreds of students remain in school. The support covers tuition fees, books, and school materials—ensuring that no child is left behind due to financial constraints.

For this program, AKF partnered with the Zakat Foundation of America, a Chicago-based humanitarian organization that provides global aid through emergency relief, education, healthcare, orphan support, and seasonal initiatives such as Ramadan meals and Qurbani.

In Rwanda, where many families still struggle to meet education costs, such initiatives play a crucial role in removing barriers to learning. By easing financial burdens, they give children a stronger chance of completing their education and breaking the cycle of poverty.

Donati Niyonsaba, President and Legal Secretary of the Abdallah Kiromba Foundation, says the partnership is about more than covering fees. “Every year, we support these orphan students with more than just school fees. We provide books, pens, pencils, school bags, and counseling to ensure they can study effectively and thrive in school.”

The selection process is carefully organized. AKF works with community leaders to identify orphans from families unable to afford their children’s education. After registration at the community level, the foundation conducts home visits to verify circumstances before finalizing support.

Beyond financial aid, AKF collaborates with schools to ensure students receive the assistance they need. Monitoring and evaluation officers also follow up, ensuring students attend classes consistently while encouraging parents to remain engaged in their children’s education.

This year academic year, over 100 students benefited from the initiative with each

student getting the term’s school fees fully covered and school requirements. Beneficiries come from Gatsibo, Nyagatare, Ngoma, Rwamagana and Bugesera District in the Eastern Province. Gicumbi and Musanze in Northern Province, Kamonyi and Nyanza in the Southern Province, Rubavu in the Western Province as well as Kigali.

One of the beneficiaries, Angelic Twizeyimana—a widow and mother of six—says the foundation’s support has transformed her family’s life. Before, she relied on washing clothes for others to make ends meet, struggling to pay school fees for her children.

“My children are no longer expelled or delayed in starting school; they study well. Life has also improved, as I am now able to run a small restaurant business to support the rest of my family,” she says gratefully.

The need for such support is underscored by national data. In 2022, the Rwandan Parliament raised concerns about rising school dropout rates, particularly in rural communities. In six districts—including Nyanza, Musanze, Burera, Gisagara, Rutsiro, and Gatsibo—the dropout rate grew from 7.8 percent in 2019 to 9.5 percent over two years.

“Parents’ inability to send their children to school due to fees and other educational requirements is a major factor,” Niyonsaba emphasizes, adding that plans are underway to expand support to more districts as part of AKF’s broader vision of widening educational access.

For the Abdallah Kiromba Foundation, education remains a cornerstone investment in Rwanda’s future—one that promises brighter opportunities for the next generation.