

Just weeks after her story touched hearts, 16-year-old Sharia Noyimukiza has received the one gift she had long dreamed of—a sewing machine of her own.

Following the publication of her story, well-wishers through the Zakat Foundation of America reached out to the Abdallah Kiromba Foundation (AKF) with a simple but life-changing mission: to buy Sharia a sewing machine to help turn her passion for fashion into a profession.

The machine was delivered to her by Donat Niyonsaba Donati Niyonsaba, president of AKF while Sharia was undertaking her internship at a tailoring cooperative in Kabarore Town, Gatsibo District.



“I was so surprised when I heard that someone had bought me a sewing machine,” Sharia says with a broad smile. “I couldn’t believe it. I was very, very happy.”

For Sharia, the sewing machine is far more than a piece of equipment. It represents independence, opportunity, and the confidence to pursue bigger dreams.

“This new machine will help me continue my fashion design dreams,” she says. “It will help me start new projects anytime because I now have my own machine.”

She adds, “I want to thank my benefactors so much for this machine. Their kindness has given me hope.”

The support comes after years of challenges. Two years ago, financial difficulties forced Sharia to drop out of school temporarily when her family could no longer afford the school fees. AKF, with support from the Zakat Foundation of America, stepped in to pay her tuition and provide learning materials, enabling her to return to school.

Today, Sharia is pursuing Fashion Design at Ntoma Technical Secondary School in Gatsibo District and is now in Level Four, with hopes of completing her studies through Level Five.

She continues to receive educational support from AKF, something she says has completely changed the direction of her life.

“I don’t know what I would be doing today if I hadn’t met these well-wishers,” she

says. “They have continued to support my education and have helped me keep my dream alive. They are helping not only me but hundreds of orphans and vulnerable children.”

The sewing machine also allows her to dream beyond the classroom.

While many young tailors begin with simple garments, Sharia has set her sights on one of the most challenging skills in the profession—designing and tailoring suits for men and women alike.

“Many people say making suits is one of the hardest parts of tailoring,” she says. “Many women are afraid to venture into it, but I want to take on that challenge.”

She believes mastering suit-making will distinguish her from other designers.

“I know it is difficult, but once you do it well, it is more rewarding. I want people to know that women can also make excellent suits.”



Her father, Abdul Nibizihirwa, a farmer from Gatoki Village in Kabarore Sector, Gatsibo District, could hardly hide his joy as he watched his daughter’s dream move one step closer to reality.

“We are very grateful to AKF and the Zakat Foundation of America for giving Sharia this sewing machine,” he says. “It will greatly improve her skills.”

Until now, Sharia has depended on borrowing her elder sister’s sewing machine whenever it was available.

“Sometimes her sister needed it herself, so Sharia had to wait,” Nibizihirwa explains. “Now she can practice whenever she wants, and that will help her become even better.”

For the family, the gift removes one of the biggest obstacles standing between Sharia and her future.

For Sharia, every stitch she makes on her own machine is a reminder that dreams can become reality when compassion meets opportunity.

With continued support, determination, and now a sewing machine she can truly call her own, the young designer from Gatsibo is stitching together a future filled with possibility—one garment, one challenge, and one dream at a time.