'I quit an 8-5 o'clock job to give time to my family.'

FAMILY FIRST THEN CAREER
Tough Choices she made

LYNETTE NSUBUGA IS A GRADUATE OF MATHEMATICS, HAD A WELL-PAYING JOB, BUT QUIT TO HOME SCHOOL HER CHILDREN. SHE’S SO COMPOSED, HER NAILS MANICURED AND HAIR SO CLEAN AND SHINY, YOU WOULD LEAST GUESS SHE IS A STAY HOME MOM. NSUBUGA DOESN’T REGRET THE CHOICES SHE’S MADE.
CAROLINE ARIBA WRITES

Who is Lynette Nsubuga

“I am a Munyankore and I have been married to Chris Nsubuga for eight years. We have an eight-year-old boy and five-year-old girl,” Nsubuga passionately says. She first went to Nakasero Primary School, but when her father was transferred to the western Uganda, she went to Bweranyangi Girls School for Primary Seven. She then joined Bweranyangi Girls SS where she sat her S.6 and was admitted to Makerere University for a bachelor’s degree in math and physics.

“I am always inclined to counting things, there was just no way I could not do math,” she says. After school, she got a job with Ernest and Young as a receptionist, but quickly climbed the ranks to the accounts department. Two years later, she quit that job to become the worship minister at St. Francis Chapel in Makerere.

Two years later, she also quit working at St. Francis so she could pursue a master’s degree in maths, but she did not complete the programme. She says the teaching system was not the kind that made math exciting. “I do not plan on going back to finish that masters, however, if anything that would be good for my life came up, I would do it,” she explains.

How her family reacted

Before that dust had settled, the couple decided to home school their children. “Our families’ biggest concern in this seemed to be the children’s ability to interact with others in a healthy manner,” Nsubuga says.

“I am married to my best friend, we talk and we decide together,” Nsubuga says about her husband’s support of her decisions. She says that the two of them discussed the issue in depth.

She also noted that the other non-verbal concern was for her not developing her career and thus not being able to earn and “have her own money”, therefore, being totally dependent on her husband.

Home schooling her children

“When my son was ready to start school, I thought I would find a school that taught pupils how to think and not do as they were told,” Nsubuga recalls. The closest to that were international schools, yet they were expensive.

“We found a school on Entebbe Road, but my son would be stuck in jam for two hours and he always asked why we could not shift,” she says in a low tone.

Her worry was that her son asked many questions and she wondered if he would catch up in a bigger class. “I was haunted by the fact that I was not a trained teacher and to make matters worse, the first year was hard because my father was ill and we had to nurse him,” she narrates.

She put all that behind her and Nsubuga maintains that home schooling was a wise choice. She adds that home schooling is not expensive in comparison to the quality of education obtained. “We use the Christian Liberty Academy School System in the US. The fees for an annual curriculum are: Grades K-1: $300 (about shs360,000), Grades 2-3: $575 (about shs650), Grades 4-6: $575 (about shs650), Grades 7-8: $650 (about shs745),” she breaks it down.

“We are enrolled for a weekly sports programme with a group of other home-schoolers. I would put our annual budget for education at $1,400 (about shs1,650) including extracurricular activities for two children. This comes to about shs600,000 for each child per term which is cheap for an excellent education she insists.

She further explains that their schedule is synchronised with the Ministry of Education calendar. “We chose to do this so that during the holidays the children can interact with their friends who are not home schooled,” she explains.

Balancing school work and family

The trick that has worked for Nsubuga is talking to her child “They have their own minds,” she starts. She says they are curious, for example, when they want to put honey in beans instead of yelling at them, get a small plate; put a spoonful of beans aside for them to carry out their experiment.

Her children’s love for music

“Both of them love music. Lemuel is more inclined to instruments and composition, while Sinza is a vocalist,” she says.

Right now, Nsubuga gives them the opportunities to be involved in her music projects. “They have both sung on my soon released album and it also has an instrument piece composed by Lemuel,” she boasts.

More children...

“Biological, no, but children are a gift from God so if I had more, I would not be stressed. I consider them a blessing!” she says.
Keeping refreshed

"Whenever I am done with school, I spare time and catch-up with current matters," she says.

On most afternoons, Nsubuga goes to the studio to work on her music, or tend to church business and talk to people. "Just because I do not have an 8:00am to 5:00pm job, doesn't mean I don't have a purpose," she says.

Source of income

"I am married to a man who from the start said that any money made by any of us is our money," she says of her husband. However, she also tutors math during the holidays to her friends' children and gets some money from her music.

Typical day

Nsubuga wakes up at about 5:00am to read the Bible and pray. Between 5:00am and 7:00am, she and her husband prepare for work.

When school is done at 3:00pm, she attends meetings in church and other places or goes to studio. She leaves the children with their nanny.

Her free time

"During my free time, I go to the salon or read a book and occasionally watch a movie. I love inspirational and detective movies!" Nsubuga says. Monday is her day off and as such the nanny has been trained to supervise the school day for the children.

Children and television

She says her children are allowed to watch TV. "However, we explain to them why they are not allowed to watch certain programmes and the consequences if they do," she says. She feels it has worked, as the children have ended up having personal discipline at a young age.

How she feels about her husband being on TV

"At first I was scared that we were going to be a public couple. But the way I view life is that God gives us opportunities and this one is for my husband to talk to men and reach those he would not have," she says.

Regrets

Nsubuga believes she is living her dream. "Growing up, I told myself I did not want an 8:00am to 5:00pm job and wanted to be available for my family at all times," she says.

A word from the husband

"We made the decision to home-school together. We weighed the options and felt that homeschooling was the best education we could give," he says. But mostly, he says that they were fortunate that Lynnette did not want an 8:00am to 5:00pm job, therefore, home schooling fitted into her life plan.

Once in a while he helps out with the general subjects like math, English, science, history and he is the official teacher for God's word.