

Nsubuga's journey from disability to law degree dreams

Wycliffe Nsubuga is a reminder that our greatest limitations are often the ones we place on ourselves. From scoring As on his examinations to building a business that sustains his dreams, this young man refuses to let his physical disability define him.

BY ANGELLA NAKIYUKA

When the Uganda Certificate of Education results were released, Wycliffe Nsubuga eliminated doubt whether a disabled child could amount to anything. The 20-year-old Nsubuga had passed every subject, scoring As, Bs, and Cs across the board.

For most students, such performance would be a moment of simple pride. For Nsubuga, it was vindication, proof that his wheelchair would never limit what his mind could achieve.

"I took my studies seriously because I never wanted failure to be attached to my name just because I am disabled," he explains. Those words capture the philosophy that has guided him through twenty years of life; disability is never an excuse. Today, as he prepares to transition to the Uganda Advanced Certificate of Education, Nsubuga's dreams stretch far beyond the classroom walls. He envisions himself in a law degree programme at university, inspired by Grade One Magistrate Willy Atono, who is visually impaired. If Atono can interpret the law without sight, Nsubuga reasons, then he can argue it from a wheelchair.

A challenging beginning

But the boy who now dreams of becoming a lawyer entered the world under circumstances that offered little hope. Twenty years ago in Nakibizi village, Buikwe district, Nsubuga was born with a physical disability that left him unable to walk. Before he turned one year old, his parents left him in the care of his paternal grandmother, Joyce Naseje, as they departed for the city in search of better opportunities.

Growing up, Nsubuga believed his grandmother was his mother. She was the only parent he had ever known, the only constant presence in his earliest memories.

While others in the village whispered that keeping a disabled child was a waste of hope and resources, Naseje promised she would never abandon her grandson, no matter the hard-

ships they would face together.

"My grandmother held my frail hands whenever I felt sad," Nsubuga recalls.

Finding strength in friendship

Nsubuga who was a boarding student at Jinja Secondary School, makes many question how a young man in a wheelchair managed the demands of boarding life. His answer is friendship.

Two classmates became his pillars of support, assisting him with daily tasks that his condition makes difficult.

"My friends helped me bathe, feed, and wear my uniform," he explains with visible gratitude. "I cannot imagine how hard life would be without them."

Rather than allowing his disability to isolate him, Nsubuga built relationships that sustain him.

Turning vacation into venture

When the senior four vacation began, most students scattered to their homes seeking rest. Nsubuga saw something else entirely; opportunity.

He approached his grandmother with an ambitious plan to start a poultry farming business, raising broiler chickens for sale. His love for animals and entrepreneurial spirit had collided, and he was determined to see where they would lead. His grandmother hesitated. She worried about the physical demands of caring for chickens. How would he manage the feeding, cleaning, and monitoring required? But Nsubuga's enthusiasm was impossible to resist. He convinced her that with minimal assistance, he could handle the responsibility, just as he had handled every other challenge life had presented.

Using money he had saved from well-wishers' gifts and previous holiday earnings, Nsubuga purchased twelve young broilers. With help from his friends, he constructed a simple but sturdy coop in the family backyard. Every morning at dawn, assisted by his younger siblings, he would feed his chickens and

clean their living space.

Learning through struggle

The path was not smooth. Nsubuga quickly discovered that raising healthy chickens required knowledge he did not yet possess. He turned to social media, researching proper feeding techniques, vaccination schedules, and hygiene practices. His phone became his classroom, and his determination became his teacher.

"The biggest challenge I faced was lack of professional advice," he admits. But where others might have given up, Nsubuga persisted, learning through trial and error, celebrating small victories, and growing more confident with each passing week.

His dedication caught the attention of neighbours, who would stop by to offer advice or simply admire his work. The chickens grew plumper and healthier, and so did Nsubuga's sense of purpose.

When market concerns arose and he initially struggled to find buyers, the same neighbours who had watched his journey began purchasing his chickens directly.

Dreams beyond the village

Nsubuga's ambitions extend far beyond poultry farming. Having proven that he can excel academically while running a business, he now sets his sights on higher education and, eventually, law school.

His inspiration, Magistrate Willy Atono, proves daily that disability need not prevent professional success. Atono's achievements have shown Nsubuga what is possible when determination meets opportunity.

But dreams require resources. When asked about his poultry business, Nsubuga reveals another motivation behind his entrepreneurship.

"I am already planning to buy more fowl to gather funds for my treatment," he shares quietly. "My body has become weaker lately, and I do not wish to beg."

He will continue his poultry farming to afford medical shots scheduled for April. Even as his physical condition presents new challenges, his response remains consistent; find a way forward without becoming a burden to others.

In Nakibizi village and beyond, Nsubuga has become a beacon of hope. His life demonstrates that with determination and the right support, anyone can soar regardless of the challenges they face. He has taken what the world saw as weakness and forged it into his greatest strength.



SHARING SUCCESS

By January, Nsubuga had sold all his chickens. But more importantly, he had discovered something priceless; the ability to create his own opportunities. Rather than stopping, he began sharing what he had learned. He organised small gatherings in his village to teach other young people about poultry farming, offering advice on how to start similar projects. His message was consistent and powerful; disability does not disqualify anyone from pursuing their dreams. Hard work and passion are the only requirements.

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