

Wanyoto tips university students on jobs, politics

MUKONO

By Henry Nsubuga

The National Resistance Movement (NRM) women's league chairperson, Lydia Wanyoto, has advised university students against targeting civil service jobs.

Wanyoto said the mentality has kept most of the fresh graduates miserable, praying for the current civil servants to retire so that they can also get employment.

"It is high time we got out of that small box and think wider. Remember 78% of Ugandans are below the age of 30. We, therefore, cannot fix that big number into the few available civil service jobs," she said.

Wanyoto made the remarks during the Uganda Christian University (UCU) governance debate for universities organised by the department of public administration and governance last week.

The symposium, which was held under the theme, *Constitutionalism and rule of law*, was funded by the African Union under the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM).

Wanyoto was challenged by the students who faulted the ruling NRM government for failure to sort out the challenge of unemployment, despite the fact that education is costly today.

The students also expressed dismay at the fact that the civil servants do not want to leave offices to create space for the fresh



Wanyoto shaking hands with some of the student leaders who attended the symposium at UCU last week

BETWEEN THE LINES

■ The NRM chairperson for the women's league said 78% of Ugandans are below the age of 30 and so they cannot fix that big number into the civil service jobs which are only 430.

graduates. They said some of the longest serving civil workers are lobbying for the extension of the retirement age which is currently stands at 60 years.

"The solution to unemployment is not in civil servants' retirement. Imagine a minimum of 45,000

students have graduated this year from over 67 different chartered universities. Therefore, retiring one civil servant cannot cause any impact," Wanyoto said.

Leah Nambuya, a student, raised concern saying though the young people are the majority in the country, the increased monetisation of politics has limited their participation, even when they have the zeal, love and ability.

She said the current politicians have greatly affected the future of the young generation because they give out money to influence voters.

"Money has continued to be our biggest obstacle which has limited many of us who are potential

leaders," Nambuya said.

She also advocated the law limiting the use of money by the candidates as the country prepares for the general elections in 2021.

In her response, Wanyoto said it is not true that money limits capable leaders from taking leadership positions, saying it is only the cowards who have such fears.

"I have examples of the Arua byelection where NRM's candidate Nusura Tiperu, who had all the resources, was defeated by People Power's Kassiano Wadri. You also saw MP Kyagulanyi Sentamu winning NRM's Sitenda Sebalu in the Kyadondo East byelection. Who of the two was well-off financially?" she said.

Wanyoto challenged universities and other higher institutions of learning to consider grooming potential leaders who will take up the mantle from the current leaders.

"We need to see most of the fresh blood of university students and graduates join politics and stop making contributions only on social media. Join not to fight but to learn," she said.

Migai Akech, a Kenyan-based APRM's governance expert, said money has nothing to do with politics. He said it is all about one persuading his or her fellow constituents.

Martin Kizito, the head of department of public administration and governance, said they have always groomed leaders and seen many becoming successful in the main stream politics.