

## Back to school...

Eric got home from work one Wednesday evening and was greeted by his wife, Bunmi. He had been in meetings all day and had barely had time to grab lunch. He was famished. His wife took one look at him and knew exactly what he needed. She winked at him, assuring him she had just the meal for him. While she set the table, Eric went upstairs to freshen up.

Bunmi loved being a wife, mother and a career woman. She found joy in the everyday moments she shared with her family and the responsibilities that came with her job. Even her friends never stopped wondering how she was able to balance both worlds of family and career. She assured them she could not do it alone. Eric was a great husband and father as well.

She heard Eric's footsteps on the stairs and as she turned towards him, the first thing she noticed was that he was no longer smiling; instead there was a look of dread on his face. She immediately asked him what the matter was but all he did was shake his head. Whatever it was, Bunmi was sure it wasn't good.

Eric looked at his lovely devoted wife. He saw the concern etched on her face as she fussed over him. He knew he had to say something to her but he could not find the words to tell her they could no longer afford the school fees of their twin girls. Their joint income had not changed for a while, and with inflation at a current high of 17.1% and the naira losing its value by almost 300%, the spending power of their income had suffered a devastating blow.



They had both agreed at the inception of their marriage that their children would have access to the best education they could afford. This was why as soon as the twins were old enough, they were enrolled in the best of schools. His baby girls had settled in nicely in school. They even took ballet and piano classes. His wife had always been proud of how well he took care of them. And now...

Eric took a deep breath and faced his wife; he held her hands in his and looked into her eyes. He explained the mail he got from the school which he read as he stepped out of the shower. The fees had been increased by a large percentage. Their children would have to switch to a more affordable school and they might have to make a few adjustments to their social spending to pull through this recession.

Bunmi stared at her husband in disbelief. She knew that none of it was his fault, but it still did not stop her heart from aching. Her eyes welled up with tears as she looked upstairs towards the girls' room wondering how they were going to break the news to them. "Probably during dinner tonight" she thought. Oh, dinner! She rushed to the kitchen, hoping the meal was not already ruined. The smell of burnt food welcomed her, and she sighed in defeat. This was not how tonight was meant to play out.



One of the reasons they had selected the present school was the opportunities it afforded their children. The international standard of education and exposure was what made the school unique. She had hoped their daughters would enjoy that until graduation. Between her income and Eric's, they had been fine. But now, things had changed. If only they had found a way to grow their income...

Could this be your dilemma? Are you in a similar situation...being stung by the recent inflation and devaluation? Grippled by the storm of recession our economy is currently wading through? Having to change your lifestyle and sometimes even disappoint the ones you love because you cannot meet their financial demands? With good financial planning and Stanbic IBTC Asset Management as your wealth partners, you can keep that smile on the faces of your

loved ones because that's why they've got you.