



JOE WALKER AND FRIENDS

Kampala to Fortportal road safety walk Report 2024.

Theme: Creating awareness about road safety and a healthy lifestyle as a tool for social economic transformation.



Safe Roads, Save Lives

#GetHomeSafe
#JoeWalker



SUMMARY REPORT

The problem.

According to the Uganda Police Force Annual Crime Report 2023, which was released in February 2024, there was a 15.5% increment in traffic offences. There were 23,608 crashes of which 4,179 were fatal, 12,487 serious and the others minor. The number of fatal crashes increased by 30%.

More than 13 people are killed per day in road traffic crashes in Uganda, translating to 4,806 deaths in 2023 a 6% increase compared to 4,543 in 2022. The majority of the victims are pedestrians (1,675) and motorcycle riders (1,520), followed by passengers on motorcycles (614). The traffic and road safety officers attribute many of these deaths and injuries to careless and reckless road behaviour of riders, cyclists and drivers. These fatalities and injuries can be reduced greatly if we have strict, consistent and incorruptible enforcement, backed by regular awareness coupled with the improvement of the state and design of the roads.

This is why Joseph Beyanga aka Joe Walker, has been on a mission since 2018 to get the stakeholders involved, to play their part, using the Joe Walker and Friends road safety campaigns. These walks are geared towards supporting the national and global effort to reduce road traffic death by 50% by 2030 as declared by the UN General Assembly in September 2020.

The campaigns that have been carried out so far include:

- The “Stay in Your Lane” campaign, which sought to hold road users in Kampala accountable through pictorial naming and shaming of errant road users in 2018.
- The “Joe Walker and Friends - Safe Roads, Save Lives” campaign where Joe Walker and his friends walked 342km from Kampala to Bushenyi to create awareness about road safety in 2022.
- The #TooYoungToDie campaign which was a walk from Kampala to Mbale, covering a distance of 240km . This focused on identifying the main causes of road crashes in the eastern region.
- The 2024 #GetHomeSafe campaign, which was a walk from Kampala to Fort Portal, covering a total of 342km focused on identifying and creating road safety awareness on the most used route to Uganda’s tourism city.

Safe Roads, Save Lives

#GetHomeSafe
#JoeWalker



The team at the Karuzika Palace on arrival in Fortportal.

Kampala to Fort Portal road safety walk: #GetHomeSafe.

The Kampala to Fort Portal road safety walk flagged off on 26th Feb 2024 by Hon. Gen. Katumba Wamala, was done among other things, to facilitate active exchange of information among participants, create awareness on how we can use and make our roads safe, and provide a platform for various stakeholders to brainstorm on how to improve road safety.

During the walk, various stops were made along the route in municipalities, towns and trading centres of Bujjuuko, Mityana, Mubende, Kyenjojo, Lusalira, Kyegegwa, and Fort Portal City. Joe Walker interacted with boda boda riders, roadside communities, school-going children, taxi drivers, traffic police and other road users in a bid to share knowledge and create awareness, as well as listen to the problems faced by the people on the roads. Among the activities that the Joe Walker team carried out was, giving out copies of the Highway Code (both in English and Luganda) to school communities both secondary and primary schools, painting Zebra Crossings on particular roads, giving out

Safe Roads, Save Lives

#GetHomeSafe
#JoeWalker



reflector jackets, and providing tips and advice. While many of the road users had differing complaints, the main ones that cropped up and were observed during the walk included the following.

- The roads are said to be narrow at some sections, with sharp corners, poor visibility, and lack of maintenance of the drainage and pedestrian sidewalks. Some sections, especially those under construction, are completely impassable for all users.
- There is lack of signage and markings.
- Enforcement is lacking, inconsistent, and characterised by “handshakes”.
- There is vandalism of the road furniture especially the road signs between Kyenjojo and Fort Portal.
- Reckless driving happens, characterized by overtaking in corners, speeding, and excessive overloading by taxis, especially those working on inter district routes, and the boda-bodas.
- The urban centres are growing but the road infrastructure and markings have no provision for high pedestrian populations, slow moving cars within the towns and those loading passengers.
- Despite having many schools along the roads, there are hardly any clearly marked school zones and at most points, school children need aides to make it across the road safely. Where there are none, it’s a race between them and speeding vehicles.
- More than 95% of boda bodas we interacted with have ever had any basic formal training on riding and road use. Many actually do not understand road signs.
- Driving under the influence and substance abuse by drivers and riders is very common as raised by the law enforcement officers, passengers and even fellow drivers – with the most abused substances including marijuana and alcohol.
- There is a lack of and respect for taxi/bus stops. Taxis stop anywhere in corners and in the middle of the road to pick up and load passengers within the urban areas and highways.

Recommendations.

All these issues may not be fixed overnight but we can win by taking one resolute step at a time. Here is a summary of the recommendations on what can be done to improve road safety on Kampala-to-Mubende-to-Fort Portal Highway.

The recommendations have been aligned with key stakeholders.

Safe Roads, Save Lives

#GetHomeSafe
#JoeWalker



Design, Implementation and Monitoring Team (MOWT, URF and UNRA)

- Expedite the construction process of the Mityana to Kyenjojo stretch of the Kampala to Fort Portal Highway.
- Adopt the use of ICT in the enforcement of traffic regulations to eliminate human interference and corruption.-Police should be equipped with body cameras, however, automated speed camera points should be mounted along highways.
- Rethink the material used to make road signs so that it has greater durability say ten (10) years. A budget line should also be run for reinstating the vandalized road furniture.
- Widen the road, especially around sharp bends to improve visibility and eliminate blind spots.
- Review the road designs to improve the walkability of roads especially in urban centres, to cater for the growing urban population most of whom are pedestrians and those who use motorcycles.
- Rethink the management of public transport and have clear leadership structures and systems for all public transport sectors to enforce discipline and safety measures among the actors.
- Review the process, cost and ease of acquiring driving licenses for both cyclists and drivers in different regions of the country.
- Provide strict measures to enforce speed limits, especially in urban settlements

To policy

- High raise road side curbs (like the ones on the Entebbe Road aisle) should be made a standard in urban areas to keep errant drivers in their lanes.
- Road marking and safety signage should be allocated a budget line. As a matter of policy, roads should not be commissioned/or earmarked for construction without a component for road signage and marking. Most car models after 2015, have been equipped with lane control, eyesight, and cruise control technology, these depend on road markings and signage to aid drivers improve road safety.
- Penalty points for the vandalism of road furniture, and compromising road safety should be raised. For example, driving in the wrong lane whilst opposing traffic should attract an instant fine of 500,000shs for cars and 250,000shs for boda bodas. Knocking down road signage should be guided by the equal fee of that signage.

Safe Roads, Save Lives

#GetHomeSafe
#JoeWalker



- Side walkways should be made a matter of policy for road sections through urban areas, these could also be protected by guard rails, take the example of the Kampala Northern Bypass.
- As a matter of policy, the education ministry should inculcate, in the new curriculum, the teaching of road and traffic laws and guidelines to all school children to instil road discipline at an early age.
- As it is with boda bodas, all day school children walking by the road need reflective material on their uniform to increase their visibility on roads.
- Roadside businesses should be banned by policy from walkways and even penalised. These tend come to life in the evenings causing pedestrians to share the narrow road with boda bodas and speeding vehicles.

Conclusion.

From the policymakers, designers, and constructors to road users and enforcement teams, there are guiding principles that we all use. At the centre of it all, safety for each one of them should always be a priority to ensure we avoid road crashes. Given the safety record of our roads, we need to urgently put our hands together to improve the walkability of our roads, improve the visibility of the school children, ensure strict enforcement of the road and traffic laws, rethink public transport and make boda bodas safe for the riders and the passengers. This will take some time and will only be successful if we are willing, committed and ready to take the first step. Just like our walk from Kampala to Fort Portal, we have to be willing to take the first step and be committed to the journey of making our roads safe and saving lives. The terrible reality of losing 14 people every day has to be reversed so everyone can #GetHomeSafe.

Safe Roads, Save Lives

#GetHomeSafe
#JoeWalker

Daily Account of the Kampala Fort Portal Walk

DAY ONE - 26th February 2024



The team at the flag off with the Chief Guest Gen. Katumba Wamala.

The team of almost 100 people started off at 6:45am at the Independence Monument, Nile Avenue, flagged off by Hon. Gen. Katumba Wamala Minister of Works and Transport. He urged drivers to take extra care and protect the walkers. The minister retaliated the government's commitment to crack down on errant drivers starting with those of government cars; review the infrastructure to make it safe for all road users; and improve safety of pedestrians.

Our first stop was Bulaga. It was also a stopping point for some of the walkers. After refreshing, we hit the road again and this time the cloud cover that had been our shed the entire morning was peeling off and the heat setting in.

Read more: <https://joewalker.org/2024/02/26/kampala-to-fort-portal-day-one-ends-successfully/>

Safe Roads, Save Lives

#GetHomeSafe
#JoeWalker

DAY TWO - 27th February 2024

We set off from Bujjuuko at exactly 7am and walked the ups and downs and corners of Jeeza in the morning drizzle. Amidst the rain, we saw crazy drivers speeding on wet roads, overtaking in corners with compromised visibility, boda bodas carrying three children on one bike going to school and young ones braving the rain, walking to school. Just like it is in Mengo, Wakaligga, Nateete, Busega, Bulenga, Buloba, and Buyala, so it is in Bujjuuko and Mityana – there are no pedestrian walkways and even those that exist have seen unruly traders turn them into roadside markets under the sleeping eyes of the authorities.

As we trekked out of the corners of Jeeza and crossed from Mpigi into Mityana, the roads got friendlier for pedestrians; we didn't have to jump over some merchandise and squeeze between drainage channels and makeshift boda boda stages. At Kamuli we were welcomed by a memorial sign of Omuzaveri XP Semujju Waswa Francis, who perished in a road crash as he returned home with friends after a church service.

Read more: <https://joewalker.org/2024/02/27/day-two-the-daily-struggle-of-pedestrians-on-ugandan-roads/>



Safe Roads, Save Lives

#GetHomeSafe
#JoeWalker

DAY THREE - 28th February 2024

We set off from Mityana at 7:26am where we headed to Kyakatebe. The weather was quite merciful to us. We zoomed out of Mityana town to Naama. The road under construction is interesting – very wide with a fast double lane in the middle and two side lanes to serve town traffic, cyclists and pedestrians. If that’s the design, it will greatly ease traffic congestion and save lives – that’s hoping the lanes are respected and proper pedestrian crosswalks installed.

Our first engagement of the day was with the boda boda riders at Naama. **In all their decisions money comes first; they say there is no money to buy helmets, reflector jackets or even acquire a rider’s license.** We have never walked, with fine white dust, loose stones, and no place for pedestrians to use.

Read more: <https://joewalker.org/2024/02/28/a-dive-into-day-3-of-kampala-portal-trek/>



The team walking through the dusty and stoney road under construction in Mityana.

Safe Roads, Save Lives

#GetHomeSafe
#JoeWalker

DAY FOUR - 29th February 2024

We kicked off the day with an interactive session with the pupils of Kyakatebe Primary School. We taught the children the ABCs of road safety and armed them with a few tips to cross the roads safely. At 7:57am, it was our turn to put those tips into action as we hit the road heading towards Mubende. The first thing that hit Joe Walker was the writing on a truck, “No Money is Enough”.

It stayed with him as we navigated that broken stretch of the road. The traffic was a bit light – few speeding taxis, flying buses, loads of overloaded boda bodas and extra hot temperatures. As Joe Walker continued to reflect on that statement, he came up his own, “No money is worth one recklessly risking their life”. **We found them getting ready to go for the burial of their colleague who was killed in a road crash the day before. They all raised issues of speeding in built up areas, reckless drivers overtaking in the corners, rampant drink driving and riding, high cost of quality helmets, broken roads and lack of any speed barriers.**

Read more: <https://joewalker.org/2024/02/29/day-four-no-money-is-worth-risking-your-life/>



JoeWalker after an assembly address with pupils of Kyakatebe Primary School.

Safe Roads, Save Lives

#GetHomeSafe
#JoeWalker

DAY FIVE – 1st March 2024

With our eyes set on scaling 15km from Kyenda to Mubende before 9am, the #JoeWalker Kampala to Fort Portal road safety awareness walk crew set off at 6am. We were set for engagements with boda boda riders, roadside market vendors, and then the municipality leaders. Our first stop was in Mubende Municipality and our first engagement was with the Market Vendors Association. **“We can no longer send our kids to the shops because you’re not sure they’ll return alive. Accidents are finishing our children,”** lamented one vendor. **“UNRA should close their Mubende office, they’ve abandoned us to suffer with their contractors. This Mityana-Mubende road is finishing us. When they handed over the road to the contractor, did they also abdicate their responsibilities?”** asked another one. **“Why has the government ignored our cries for too long? Aren’t we taxpayers? Aren’t they enjoying all the taxes we pay? Why are they not paying attention to our roads?”** That was another one. **“We want speed humps at the market,”** requested another one.

Read more: <https://joewalker.org/2024/03/01/day-five-joe-walker-friends-reach-mubende/>



JoeWalker sharing with the Mubende Town Council Mayor.

Safe Roads, Save Lives

#GetHomeSafe
#JoeWalker

DAY SIX – 2nd March 2024

We entered Tooro Kingdom shortly after 11am. We were welcomed by Minister of Education in Tooro Kingdom Owek. Godfrey Rwembebera Adyeeri and other kingdom officials, plus the Kyegegwa OC Traffic Afande Kwasiabwe. We were in Kyegegwa by 5pm. After all the protocols and mobilisation of logistics were done, at about 6pm we started painting the Zebra Crossing. By 8pm, Kyegegwa had its only Zebra Crossing; hopefully it will change the narrative around road safety.

We had great support from Tooro Kingdom, Deputy Town Clerk Douglas Mugenyi, and the OC Traffic Police Kyegegwa and his team.

Read more: <https://joewalker.org/2024/03/02/day-six-joe-walker-enters-tooro-kingdom/>



Zebra painting session of the only zebra crossing in Kyegegwa town.

Safe Roads, Save Lives

#GetHomeSafe
#JoeWalker

DAY SEVEN – 3rd March 2024

We set off from Kyegegwa at 6:50am, and by 7:18pm, we were at our campsite. One of the things that stands out today on the Kyegegwa to Kiregesa stretch is that drivers have made that Miryante stretch a black spot that needs serious attention because of the speeding, racing and reckless overtaking. The road markings have long faded, and the signage is intermittent. Another issue that needs attention is broken-down trucks abandoned on the road with no proper safety signs. From Mityana to Kiregesa, broken trucks abandoned on the road seem to be a frequent occurrence and only on a few occasions will you see them with proper safety precautions.

Read more: <https://joewalker.org/2024/03/03/day-seven-joe-walker-celebrates-birthday-highlights-road-safety-concerns/>



The team walks through Matiri Forest

Safe Roads, Save Lives

#GetHomeSafe
#JoeWalker

DAY EIGHT - 4th March 2024

From Kiregesa as you descend into the valley, you can't avoid seeing the dangerous sharp corner and what looks like a bit of narrow road. Locals and doctors at Kyenjojo District hospital say many have lost their lives there. We trudged into Kyenjojo town, where we were welcomed by S3 students of Kyenjojo SS. We proceeded together to their school after a simple march through town for a brief chat on road safety. Their knowledge of road safety made us think about how many children know about it. Children are the biggest victims of road crashes. We need to teach them when they're still young and be their role model as they are driven, ridden or walked to school. From Kyenjojo town we hit Ngenzi where we met TV and radio show host Patrick Kamara, with locals on the roadside. They had sad stories to tell; what looks like a joy and thrill for motorists is tears for residents.

One man narrated about losing two brothers including his twin. Some have been driven to believe that spot is haunted. While we were still talking, we witnessed a case of reckless driving of a government vehicle overtaking in a corner, blind to an oncoming car. The cries of the people are real. We trekked on and in Nyarushozi just before Kaihura, we met Traffic Police at their checkpoint. They echoed what has become their soundtrack – political interference in their enforcement. We also noticed that the road signs have been totally vandalized and it's just poles standing bare, with no signage. This is a fairly new road, which makes us wonder who is stealing the signage and why the government doesn't make this thuggery expensive.

Read more: <https://joewalker.org/2024/03/04/day-eight-were-almost-there/>



JoeWalker takes a selfie with Students of Kyenjojo Senior Secondary School.

Safe Roads, Save Lives

#GetHomeSafe
#JoeWalker

DAY NINE - 5th March 2024

We set off from King Oyo Model Farm in Bugaaki and at 10:25pm crossed into Kabarole District. By 3pm we were in Fort Portal City, the seat of Tooro Kingdom. We were joined by students, leaders and administrators from Uganda Pentecostal University at Kaswa, who also brought us tonnes of refreshments. As we emerged out of Mpanga Tea Estates, we were joined by the DPC of Fort Portal City who later handed us over to OC Traffic, Mr Atwijukire. Along the way, we were joined by our partners from Stanbic Bank Uganda led by the regional branch manager, Ms Mable Nsemere. We chatted a lot about road safety and why everyone should be concerned.

As the numbers of walking groups were swelling, the roads were getting narrower. Thank God for the Police controlling the traffic flow at this point, otherwise it would have been chaotic. Slowly we trudged on to our final stopping point of the day. As we walked past Mpanga market, we were reminded of the lady who was recently squeezed to death by the truck at the narrow Mpanga Bridge. As a sign of appreciation of the initiative, Joe Walker was officially welcomed as a son of the soil and handed a flag of Tooro Kingdom.

Read more: <https://joewalker.org/2024/03/05/day-9-joe-walker-friends-reach-portal/>



JoeWalker and Friends at the King Oyo's palace locally known as the Karuziika palace

Safe Roads, Save Lives

#GetHomeSafe
#JoeWalker



DAY TEN – 6th March 2024

We drove to St. John’s Cathedral in Fort Portal City. Several road safety advocates, city leaders, area MPs, the clergy and regional police leadership and later the RCC joined the #JoeWalker team that had just concluded the Kampala to Fort Portal road safety walk. We all joined hands for a road safety awareness march around the city, then painted a Zebra Crossing and proceeded to church for a thanksgiving service.

During the service, the Dean of St. John’s Cathedral Kabarole, the Very Rev. Can. Ezra Musobozi, acknowledged efforts of the #JoeWalker team for taking up the challenge to create awareness and fight the “persistent notorious enemy engaging in a ground war claiming thousands of Ugandans”. The dean wondered why we seem to tolerate the misuse of our roads claiming many lives. Using Isaiah 6:8, he challenged all of us to step out of our comfort zones to fight for our nation. “Whatever the cost, go and make a change,” he said. The #JoeWalker road safety initiative is a “fundamental response delivering a special important message,” noted Mr. Albert Aheebwa, the Speaker of Fort Portal City. “We need people who can make a difference; but each one of you has an impact to make.

There’s nothing good that will never be criticised, don’t get frustrated when you’re criticised,” he said. “When we lose young people to avoidable road crashes, we are losing human capital, slowing down development, we are getting poorer as a nation,” he concluded. The regional police commander Afande Ruhweza James Akiiki challenged his Traffic Police officers to “concentrate on enforcement of traffic regulations and leave ‘revenue’ issues to URA”. “Some of these crashes stem from compromised enforcement.

If anyone is in the wrong, let the law take its course with no exceptions,” he stated. Referring to the African proverb, “A tree can only be bent when it is still young,” Hon. Irene Linda Mugisa said parents play a key role in nurturing responsible road users and that people are best taught when they’re still young. After the thanksgiving service at church, we hit the road to St. Leo’s College Kyegombe for an interactive engagement with students. That ended out our activities for the day.

Read more: <https://joewalker.org/2024/03/06/day-ten-what-a-day/>

Safe Roads, Save Lives

#GetHomeSafe
#JoeWalker



GRATITUDE NOTE.

The #JoeWalker Kampala to Fort Portal road safety awareness walk came to a conclusion on 6th March 2024 with a series of activities around Fort Portal City. We are thankful to everyone who stopped their daily activities to participate in our engagements, the community leaders who mobilised people to attend and participate in our interactive sessions, and everyone who stopped to give us a bottle of water, sugarcane and bananas.

We are also grateful to roadside communities who cheered us on when the energy was running low and feet were getting heavier. We thank the schools that offered their facilities for our overnight camping when we had no alternative for a place to lay our heads and for granting us a platform to share the road safety message with the students. Kyakatebe Primary School, Kiregesa Primary School, Kyenjojo Secondary School, St Leo's College Kyegobe and Uganda Pentecostal University, we appreciate you.

To all the roadside restaurants that took our orders and had the patience to keep our food warm when we took several hours to arrive before the scheduled time, to lodges, motels and hotels that gladly hosted us especially Palm Star Motel that offered us accommodation for all the time we were in Fort Portal – thank you. A special heartfelt thank you goes out to individuals who responded to Joe Walker's personal appeal and sent us some money when we were running very low on resources. The special angels who sent us money before we asked for help have no idea the difference they made – it was amazing. To the families who welcomed us into your homes with open arms and shared a meal with us, we pray God's blessings upon you all.

To our corporate sponsors – **Jubilee Allianz, Coca-Cola Beverages Uganda, Stanbic Bank, and National Drug Authority**, we just can't thank you enough. Your partnership and collaboration have no price tag. Thank you for believing in the initiative and trusting us to carry your brand. The support in cash and in kind made a huge difference in putting together the logistics for a successful campaign.

Thank you to the media led by my "parents" **Nation Media Group**, without you streaming and beaming our road safety message to your audiences, we would be winking in the dark. To our road safety partners the Police, I really can't thank you enough, we have never experienced this kind of support, openness and sharing freely and participation in the road safety activities. The same passion and enthusiasm in enforcement will make our roads safer.

A big and heartfelt appreciation to our hosts; the Mayor Mubende municipality and his team whose welcome and participation in our campaign were simply amazing; the

Safe Roads, Save Lives

#GetHomeSafe
#JoeWalker



Mayor and the leadership of Fort Portal city who were responsive to our calls; and the amazing St. John's Cathedral Kabarole and Bishop Patrick Kyaligonza Road Safety Programme who walked some mileage with us.

We are grateful to the collaboration led by Hon. Alex Ruhunda, for the procession we had in town, the sensitization activities, and the Zebra Crossing painting in the city. We deeply appreciate the partnership, it made a big difference.

To our hosts Obukama bwa Tooro and His Majesty King Oyo, we thank you immensely. The welcome at the border, the road safety activities in Kyegegwa and Kyenjojo, the experience at King Oyo's model farm, the reception at the King's Palace, and the session at Rukiiko truly honoured us. We appreciate the support of the Government of Uganda through the Minister of Works and Transport, Gen Katumba Wamala who flagged us off.

To our prayer partners, thank you for persistently and consistently covering us with the blood of Jesus. With Him everything is possible, and the success of this walk is a true testament.

#GetHomeSafe

Safe Roads, Save Lives

#GetHomeSafe
#JoeWalker



JOEWALKER KAMPALA TO FORTPORTAL IN THE NEWS.

<https://www.monitor.co.ug/uganda/news/national/joe-walker-completes-300km-road-safety-walk-from-kampala-to-fort-portal-4546918>

<https://www.kfm.co.ug/news/joe-walker-set-for-kampala-to-fort-portal-road-safety-trek.html>

<https://www.monitor.co.ug/uganda/video/joe-walker-extends-road-safety-campaign-to-mubende-4543408>

<https://nexusmedia.ug/kampala-fort-portal-journey-the-joe-walker-team-marks-day-four-of-trekking-to-raise-road-safety-awareness/>

<https://explorer.co.ug/the-joe-walker-campaign-and-rwenzori-diocese-partner-to-enhance-road-safety-with-zebra-crossing-in-fort-portal-city/>

<https://grapevineheadlines.com/article/joe-walker-completes-300km-road-safety-walk-from-kampala-to-fort-portal/>

<https://businessfocus.co.ug/coca-cola-beverages-uganda-goes-extra-mile-for-road-safety/>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HMgpdedq_xg

<https://www.pulse.ug/business/major-road-safety-campaign-kicks-off-next-week-courtesy-of-ccbu/xgh5y7t>

<https://nilepost.co.ug/business/189210/coca-cola-goes-an-extra-mile-for-road-safety-in-uganda-with-new-partnership>

Safe Roads, Save Lives

#GetHomeSafe
#JoeWalker



Joe
Walker

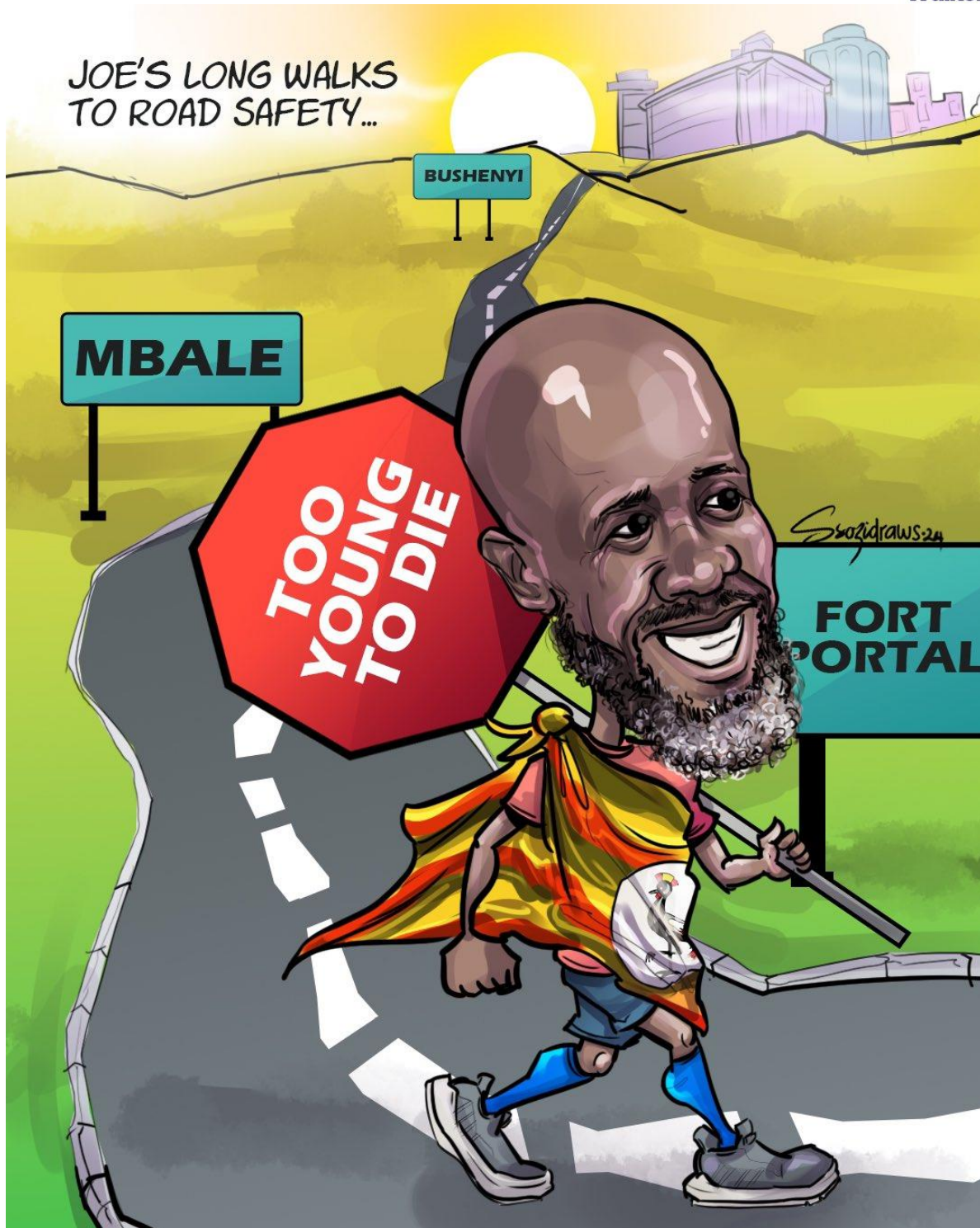


Safe Roads, Save Lives

#GetHomeSafe
#JoeWalker



Joe
Walker



Safe Roads, Save Lives

#GetHomeSafe
#JoeWalker