

Ugandans protest rising fuel prices ("Walk to Work"), 2011

- [\(mainly or initiated by\) people of color](#) [1]
- [an example of paradox of repression](#) [2]
- [included participation by more than one social class](#) [3]

Timing

February 2011 to June 2011
2011

Location and Goals

Country:

Uganda

Location City/State/Province:

Kampala

Location Description:

This is the Capital city of Uganda

[View Location on Map](#)

Goals:

To convince the Government to comes up with a plan to lower the prices of fuel and essential commodities.

To convince the government to set priorities based on the needs of the people by stopping all forms of irresponsible expenditure and channel resources in areas that benefit the ordinary citizen.

Methods

Methods in 1st segment:

- 001. Public speeches

Methods in 2nd segment:

- 001. Public speeches
- 071. Consumers' boycott
- 191. Alternative transportation systems

Methods in 3rd segment:

- 001. Public speeches>speaking tour

Methods in 4th segment:

- 001. Public speeches

Methods in 5th segment:

- 001. Public speeches
- 196. Civil disobedience of "neutral" laws

Methods in 6th segment:

- 001. Public speeches

Additional methods (Timing Unknown):

- 001. Public speeches
- 028. Symbolic sounds

Segment Length:

3 weeks

Classifications

Classification:

Change

Cluster:

Democracy

Economic Justice

Human Rights

Group characterization:

- Advocates of Human Rights
- Motorists
- civil society groups
- consumers

Leaders, partners, allies, elites

Leaders:

Leaders of Activists for change (A4C) movement

Partners:

opposition party presidents, Forum for Democratic Change's Kizza Besigye, Democratic Party's N Robert Mao, Uganda People's Congress' Olara Otunu and former JEEMA party president Kibirige Mayanja; opposition party MPs and civil society organisations.

External allies:

Not known

Involvement of social elites:

Not known

Joining/exiting order of social groups

Groups in 1st Segment:

- leaders of opposition parties

Groups in 2nd Segment:

- civil society groups

Groups in 3rd Segment:

- Human rights advocates

Groups in 4th Segment:

- Ugandan elders

Groups in 5th Segment:

- Motorists

Groups in 6th Segment:

- Some members who feared for their lives exited

Segment Length:

3 weeks

Opponent, Opponent Responses, and Violence

Opponents:

The president, Yoweri Kaguta Museveni and his supporters

Nonviolent responses of opponent:

The police approached the leader of the group and offered a government vehicle to take him to work instead of having to walk.

Campaigner violence:

No campaigner violence

Repressive Violence:

Police were on the streets all the time to prevent the protesters from protesting.

Police used tear gas

Success Outcome

Success in achieving specific demands/goals:

1 point out of 6 points

Survival:

1 point out of 1 points

Growth:

2 points out of 3 points

Total points:

4 out of 10 points

Notes on outcomes:

The people realized that it is possible to change the regime in the future if they unite.

The neighboring countries like Kenya continued this campaign later after it ended in Uganda.

The Walk to Work was a campaign that happened in Uganda led by the leader of The Forum for Democratic Change, Kizza Besigye. Its main goal was to curb the high cost of living as result of high food and fuel prices.

This campaign started after the general election in February 2011 and ended in June 2011. Though the leader of opposition lost the election in Uganda, this campaign propelled his “cause to the top of the agenda and won him far greater popularity than during the general election.

Besigye was joined by a coalition of opposition parties called Alliance for Change who encouraged Kampala residence to “commute on foot twice a week to show solidarity to those who could no longer afford the high cost of transportation”.

This provided an avenue for the poor, the middle class and the sympathizers to express their grievances to the oppressive government led by Museveni. This support increased when the security officers sprayed tear gas to innocent civilians merely walking in the streets. Support for the protesters increased again when the leader of opposition vehicle window was smashed and himself sprayed with tear gas until he literally lost sight for a while and smashed his face in the back of a track.

To include people who could not join the protest on the specified two days each week, the protesters changed their tactic, they required that at five o'clock in the evening every day, motorist would hoot their horns for five minutes.

To achieve the goal of convincing the government to change its policies on commodity prices was not easy for the walk to work campaigners. Nevertheless, there were a number of achievements which were close to the main goal. The campaign “challenged the myth of Museveni as a kindly old man in a hat”. His oppression to the protesters and especially the leader of opposition Kizza Besigye proved to Ugandans that that myth was not true.

The walk to work campaign proved it wrong to believe that Museveni was too pervasive and Ugandans too passive for civil disobedience. When the walk to work campaign continued in the streets even after Museveni called it off, this showed the people “for the first time in twenty five years that they can defy the government”. The walk to work campaign has shown Ugandans “the way forward for future actions against the regime”. This is not only true for Uganda but the whole of the Eastern Africa region. People in these countries have joined the people of Uganda to protest on the streets of their respective countries pressuring governments to lower prices of essential basic needs and set priorities according to the needs of the people.

Research Notes

Sources:

<http://thinkafricapress.com/uganda/walk-work-yields-results-uganda>

<http://www.irinnews.org/Report/92546/EASTERN-AFRICA-Consumers-traders-feel-the-burn-as-prices-skyrocket>

Name of researcher, and date dd/mm/yyyy:

Joseph Kiranto, 29/03/2013

[Back to top](#)

A project of Swarthmore College, including Peace and Conflict Studies, the Peace Collection, and the Lang Center for Civic and Social Responsibility.

Copyright Swarthmore College.

[Creative Commons License](#)

Global Nonviolent Action Database is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 3.0 Unported License](#).

Original website design and artwork created by [Daniel Hunter](#).

Permissions beyond the scope of this license may be available at <http://nvdatabase.swarthmore.edu>.

Registered users can [login](#) to the website.

Source URL (retrieved on 09/20/2020 - 05:17): <https://nvdatabase.swarthmore.edu/content/ugandans-protest-rising-fuel-prices-walk-work-2011>

Links:

[1] <https://nvdatabase.swarthmore.edu/category/pcs-tags/mainly-or-initiated-people-color>

[2] <https://nvdatabase.swarthmore.edu/category/pcs-tags/example-paradox-repression>

[3] <https://nvdatabase.swarthmore.edu/category/pcs-tags/included-participation-more-one-social-class>