

September 2021; Issue 9

EACOP RAP DISCLOSURE EXERCISE: THINGS THAT WENT WRONG AND MUST BE RIGHTED



EACOP-affected people following a sensitisation meeting by AFIEGO.

The sub-contractors of the EACOP developers failed to comply to national and international standards during the Resettlement Action Plan (RAP) disclosure to the EACOP-affected people.



AFIEGO and its Save Bugoma Forest Campaign (SBFC) partners following a meeting with the Speaker of Parliament, Hon. Jacob Oulanyah, this month.

The Speaker accepted a motion to save Bugoma forest to be tabled before parliament.

In this newsletter:

- A beautiful lie? Assessing compliance to national laws and IFC standards in the EACOP RAP disclosure
- Pictorial of our activities
- World Tourism Day: Turn Bugoma forest into a national park
- Lobbying
- In the media
- Upcoming events



Dear reader, welcome to our September 2021 newsletter. This month, Uganda joined the rest of the world to celebrate World Tourism Day.

The celebrations were marked on September 27, 2021 in Uganda. Through the Ministry of Tourism, government promised to do more to attract investment and tourists to Uganda.

While the above commitments were being made, Bugoma, a biodiverse forest that is home to over 600 chimpanzees and the endemic Uganda mangabey, was being cut down. What an ironic conundrum. No doubt, this destruction must be stopped!

Through this newsletter, allow us to share this [article](#) that our partners under the Inclusive Green Economy Network-East Africa (IGEN-EA) penned.

The article makes a case for turning Bugoma forest into a national park to harness its great tourism potential. Join us in calling on government to do the above.

We also invite you to join us to speak with one voice so that government, parliament, oil companies, financial institutions as well as national and global human rights bodies among others do more to protect the rights of the 20,631 people whose land is being acquired for the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) in ten districts in Uganda.

The above call is being made because this month, we met with community-based monitors who observe and report on the human rights situation of the EACOP-affected people. We met

with monitors from six of the ten EACOP-affected districts.

During the meeting, we discussed the challenges the EACOP-affected people are faced with. Notably, we looked at the challenges that arose during the disclosure of the Resettlement Action Plan (RAP) report for the EACOP-affected people.

The exercise started in August 2021 and through it, the EACOP-affected people were shown the government-approved compensation due to them. The disclosure was concluded on September 3, 2021.

In our Word from CEO and Partners, we show that a number of things went wrong during the disclosure exercise.

There was failure to get informed consent from the affected people, lack of full disclosure and transparency by the companies, intimidation of the affected people and others.

For instance, local council leaders were used to threaten the EACOP-affected people with court action if they refused to sign the project-affected persons (PAPs) disclosure slips showing the approved compensation due to the affected people.

The local language-speaking affected people also lacked independent interpreters and legal representation to help them understand the English PAP disclosure forms they signed.

Further, to date, many communities don't have full information as regards the key environmental resources they depend on that have been affected by the EACOP.

The above failures violate commitments made by oil companies to comply to their own 2016 Land Acquisition and Resettlement Framework (LARF) as well as the IFC Performance standards.

If the above challenge is not addressed, Uganda is headed for disaster. Read about this, and the recommendations we make, in our Word from CEO and Partners.

In our **pictorial**, we bring you some of the activities we implemented this month.

For instance, with our Save Bugoma Forest Campaign (SBFC) partners including community representatives, we held a meeting with the Speaker of parliament.

We discussed ways in which parliament can save Bugoma forest from sugarcane growing, land grabbing and oil threats.

We also held two meetings with leaders and MPs from the Parliamentary Forum on Climate Change (PFCC).

Our meetings led to the MPs agreeing to table a motion before parliament to save Bugoma forest. The motion is set to be tabled.

In addition, we held community empowerment meetings in which we trained community leaders on how to use the media and harness the green economic tourism opportunities available in their areas.

Furthermore, we participated in the

International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) World Conservation Congress and highlighted the cross-border impacts of Uganda's oil and gas activities, threats to civic space for women and other environmental defenders and others.

Our and our partners' efforts registered a win when motion 39 on improving civic space for human rights defenders was approved by IUCN members.

We did much more as is captured in our pictorial section.

In our **lobbying** section, we bring you a petition that the SBFC submitted to the speaker of parliament to stop the destruction of Bugoma forest.

In addition, we bring you a letter that we wrote to the Ministry of Energy requesting for a copy of the EACOP Bill, 2021.

We also bring you a letter that we wrote to the same ministry requesting for a copy of the Electricity (Amendment) Bill, 2020.

In **in the media** section, we bring you some of the articles that were published from our media interviews in addition to articles that staff and our partners wrote.

We hope you will enjoy the newsletter.

Editorial team:

Diana Nabiruma

Rachael Amongin

Balach Bakundane

A BEAUTIFUL LIE? ASSESSING COMPLIANCE TO NATIONAL LAWS AND IFC STANDARDS IN THE EACOP RAP DISCLOSURE

"It's a beautiful life". That is the title of a song that was released in 2007 by the rock band, Thirty Seconds to Mars.

The song, whose video was shot in Greenland, features the impact that global warming has had on communities in the country.

While this article isn't about the song per se, the song title aptly captures the state of the 20,631 people whose land is being compulsorily acquired for the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) project in Uganda.

How so?

THE LARF

In December 2016, CNOOC (U) Ltd, Total E&P (U) B.V. and Tullow Oil (U) Ltd alongside the Ugandan government put in place the **Land Acquisition and Resettlement Framework** (LARF).

Tullow exited Uganda but CNOOC and TotalEnergies remain. Alongside the Ugandan and Tanzanian governments, the two are the developers of the EACOP project.

The above-mentioned companies described the LARF as the over-arching policy framework that would guide compulsory land acquisition projects for Uganda's Lake Albert Development project. According to the LARF, the project consists of the Tilenga, Kingfisher and EACOP projects among others.

The LARF identified 12 principles that CNOOC, TotalEnergies and their sub-contractors would adhere to to address "displacement impacts ... [and] improve

the livelihoods and standard of living of Project Affected Persons [PAPs]" among others.

These principles include:

- a) **Avoiding or minimising** resettlement;
- b) **Compliance with national laws**, the IFC Performance Standards and the companies' own internal policies;
- c) Ensuring active and **informed stakeholder participation**;
- d) Ensuring that land acquisition processes are conducted in **a culturally-appropriate manner**;
- e) Ensuring that compensation is at **full replacement value**;
- f) Giving vulnerable people targeted assistance and;
- g) Establishing a **grievance handling mechanism** that would resolve grievances in a timely manner among others.

The above principles are in line with the IFC Performance Standard 5 on land acquisition and involuntary resettlement which provides for:

- i). **Avoiding or minimising** displacement;
- ii). Compensating PAPs at **full replacement cost**;
- iii). Ensuring **transparent** compensation processes;
- iv) Engaging affected communities through **information sharing** and **consulting communities** among others and;
- v). Establishing a **grievance mechanism** to address PAPS or host communities' concerns in **a timely fashion**.

BROKEN PROMISES & BEAUTIFUL LIES

Have the above commitments been complied with?

On September 21, 2021, AFIEGO organised

a meeting with community-based monitors from six of the ten EACOP-affected districts. The meeting took place in Kampala and monitors from Hoima, Kikuube, Kakumiro, Mubende, Lwengo and Kyotera districts participated.

During the meeting, an assessment of the EACOP Resettlement Action Plan (RAP) disclosure exercise that commenced in August 2021 and concluded on September 3, 2021 was undertaken.

The assessment showed that not only are the EACOP developers failing to effectively implement commitments in the LARF, they are also not adhering to the IFC Performance Standard 5. We show how below:

(a) Lack of informed consent/participation:

The majority of the EACOP-affected people do not speak English. However, during the RAP disclosure exercise, the affected people were shown and signed English RAP disclosure forms that contained the approved compensation due to them. No independent interpreters were allowed to enable the affected people independently understand the compensation due to them.

"Many community members told us that they did not understand the forms they signed. They asked if we could help them to engage the companies so that they can go through the disclosure exercise again with independent interpreters so that they can be sure that they agree to what they signed," a community-based monitor from Lwengo said during our September 21, 2021 meeting.

(b) Lack of full disclosure: Moreover, the EACOP-affected people complained about the lack of full disclosure or

transparency. They said that while they were shown the total sum of compensation due to them, there was failure to show how the compensation was arrived at.

"The compensation for *bibanja* [land] was shown. However, when showing the compensation for affected property, no breakdowns were given. The affected people were shown the lumpsum fee accruing from their affected property.

The people say they don't know how this compensation was arrived at if no breakdown showing how many of their coffee plants, cassava plants and others are to be compensated for," another community-based monitor from Lwengo district said.

An English RAP disclosure form. Local language-speaking PAPs say they signed the forms without independent interpretation, denying them an opportunity to give informed consent.

(c) Full replacement costs won't be met:

Further, the EACOP PAPs have waited for compensation since 2018 for some and May to June 2019 for others. Under principle 5, Uganda's 2017 **Guidelines for Compensation Assessment under Land Acquisition** provide that "If the compensation award has not been paid within one year from the project cut-off date, the [valuation] report shall be reviewed annually at 15%".

In compliance with this principle, the EACOP-affected people were informed that they will be paid 30% over and above the value of their property. This 30% payment is being called the uplift. It is to be paid to compensate for the delayed compensation.

“However, the PAPs say that the uplift of 30% is unfair as it doesn't address the land appreciation costs and economic losses that the PAPs have suffered while waiting for compensation. They say that they won't be able to replace their property.

Women who have suffered as a result of being abandoned by their husbands also need to be supported. Family heads in Mubende abandoned their families after they were told to stop using their land,” community-based monitors from Mubende and Lwengo districts said.

(d) Insufficient grievance handling mechanism: The EACOP-affected people in Kyotera district have complained about the unfair compensation rates set for their crops by the district.

A community-based monitor from Kyotera explains, “Coffee plants were given a value of [Shs.] 33,000 in Kyotera while those in Lwengo were valued at [Shs.] 88,000. We feel this is unfair and have complained but have not been helped.

During the RAP disclosure, some affected people were desperate and they signed the RAP disclosure forms allowing to receive compensation, even for their under-valued crops.

However, 12 families stood their ground and refused to sign. They are being engaged and coerced to sign yet the value for crops is too low!”

(e) Intimidation and coercion: The affected people who stand their ground and refuse unfair compensation are intimidated. The community-based monitors who empower the affected people are intimidated too.

“Actually, many affected people signed the RAP disclosure forms because L.C.1 chairpersons told them that they will be taken to court if they dispute the compensation and refuse to sign. People fear court so they signed under duress.

There is also a man who has a big house. The EACOP people told him that they are going to build him a smaller house in a style he doesn't like and he must accept it,” one community-based monitor at the meeting said.

(f) Cultural and other negative impacts under-undiscussed: The IFC Performance Standard 8 on cultural heritage provides that “Where a project may affect cultural heritage, the client will consult with affected communities within the host country who use, or have used within living memory, the cultural heritage for longstanding cultural purposes.”

The views of the affected people are supposed to be incorporated in decision making. However, communities largely remain unaware of the cultural and other impacts of the EACOP as these have been under-discussed at community level, while benefits are hyped.

A community-based monitor from Greater Masaka said, “We have just learnt today that the EACOP is set to affect wetlands in our area of cultural, national and international importance. We didn't know this! Yet communities rely on these wetlands for water, food and income from fishing”.

The wetlands affected by the EACOP can be seen in the table below:

No.	Name	Classification	Biodiversity importance
1.	Sango-Bay-Musambwa Island-Kagera wetland system in Rakai and Masaka	Ramsar site	-Hosts 16.5% of the population of Grey-headed Gulls and; -Hosts globally endangered mammals such as Elephant, Black and White Colobus Monkey and a subspecies of the Blue Monkey. Source: https://rsis Ramsar.org/ris/1641
2.	Nabijuzi Wetland System in Masaka, Sembabule, Mpigi	Ramsar site	-An Important Bird Area; -A spawning ground for mudfish and lungfish; -Supports globally threatened bird species and the endangered Sitatunga and; -Of cultural importance to the Baganda as it hosts several totems. Source: https://rsis Ramsar.org/ris/1639
3	Lake Nabugabo wetland system	Ramsar site	-An important migratory stopover-destination for migratory bird species; -At times during the year, holds more than 15% of the world's population of the Blue Swallow and supports five globally threatened and near-threatened birds and; -Supports a high diversity of plant species. Source: https://rsis Ramsar.org/ris/1373
4.	Mabamba Bay Wetland System in Wakiso and Mpigi	Ramsar site	The site supports an average of close to 190,000 birds and is part of the wetland system which hosts approximately 38% of the global population of the Blue Swallow. Source: https://rsis Ramsar.org/ris/1638
5.	Lutembe bay wetland system	Ramsar site	

RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the above, the following should be done:

i). The EACOP RAP disclosure exercise should be re-implemented with the participation of an independent oversight multi-stakeholder committee to enable fairness.

ii). Community members who have refused unfair compensation have a right to do so and should be supported by district leaders as well as civil society to ensure that they get the right compensation.

iii). MPs from the EACOP-affected districts

and parliament as a whole should use their oversight powers to hold the Uganda National Oil Company (UNOC) as well as the Petroleum Authority of Uganda (PAU) and government at large accountable for the compensation abuses under the EACOP project to end them.

iv). The Uganda Human Rights Commission (UHRC) should investigate the intimidation and human rights violations against the EACOP PAPs with a view of taking action to end the violations.

v). The UHRC should also use its powers to protect the civic space in the country to enable CSOs and community-based monitors to continue promoting and defending human as well as environmental rights in Uganda. The recent Uganda NGO Bureau's illegal actions of attempting to stop operations of selected CSOs should be condemned and punished.

vi). Development partners and financial institutions that are interested in the EACOP project have a responsibility to ensure that the people's rights aren't abused. They should withdraw or withhold their support until the people's rights are respected.

vii). UNESCO should engage the EACOP project developers with a view of finding alternatives to avoid development of the EACOP in Ramsar sites.

By CEO and partners

Pictorial of our activities

September 9, 2021

AFIEGO and our Save Bugoma Forest Campaign (SBFC) partners including community representatives participated in a meeting with Hon. Jacob Oulanyah, the Speaker of Parliament. The meeting took place at parliament.

Communities and the SBFC submitted a petition to the speaker to protect Bugoma forest from sugarcane growing, land grabbing and oil threats.

September 16, 2021

The Speaker of parliament requested the SBFC to engage parliamentarians to table a motion before parliament to enable action to save Bugoma forest.

Consequently, SBFC organised a meeting with MPs on the Parliamentary Forum on Climate Change in Kampala.

The MPs agreed to table a motion before parliament for action to save Bugoma forest. The motion was put on the order paper on September 28, 2021 and is set to be tabled.



September 3, 2021

AFIEGO organised a meeting with Tilenga project community-based observers in Buliisa district.

During the meeting, the court case through which nine families are appealing against a high court decision compelling them to accept low compensation so that their land can be taken for the Tilenga project was discussed.

September 22, 2021

AFIEGO organised a meeting with EACOP community-based monitors from six of the ten districts affected by the project. The meeting took place in Kampala.

During the meeting, the EACOP RAP disclosure exercise was discussed. Green economic opportunities in the EACOP-affected districts were also discussed. The monitors were also trained on how to use the media.



September 24, 2021

Furthermore, AFIEGO and our partners under IGEN-EA organised radio talkshows in Bunyoro and the Greater Masaka sub-regions.

The talkshows were also participated in by district and cultural leaders as well as community representatives.

We sensitised communities on their land rights as well as the green economic opportunities in their areas.

September 1, 2021

To support the EACOP-affected communities who are intimidated by security agencies, AFIEGO and our partners organised a meeting with community representatives to discuss how to improve civic space for communities.

A petition to end intimidation against the communities was developed from the meeting. It was shared with government, security agencies and oil companies in Greater Masaka and Kampala.



September 8, 2021

In addition, AFIEGO and our partners, Community Transformation Foundation Network (COTFONE), organised a radio talkshow to discuss the intimidation against the EACOP-affected communities.

The talkshow, which was also participated in by communities, took place at Masiko FM in Greater Masaka.

Communities demanded that the intimidation ends.

September 9, 2021

AFIEGO participated in the IUCN World Conservation Congress in Marseille, France.

AFIEGO presented on the cross-border impacts of Uganda's oil activities, civic space challenges faced by women environmental defenders and others.



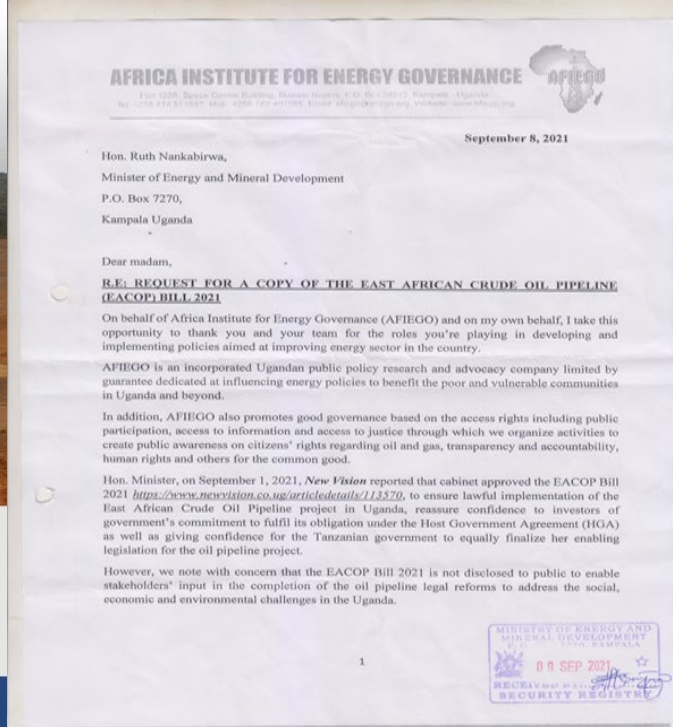
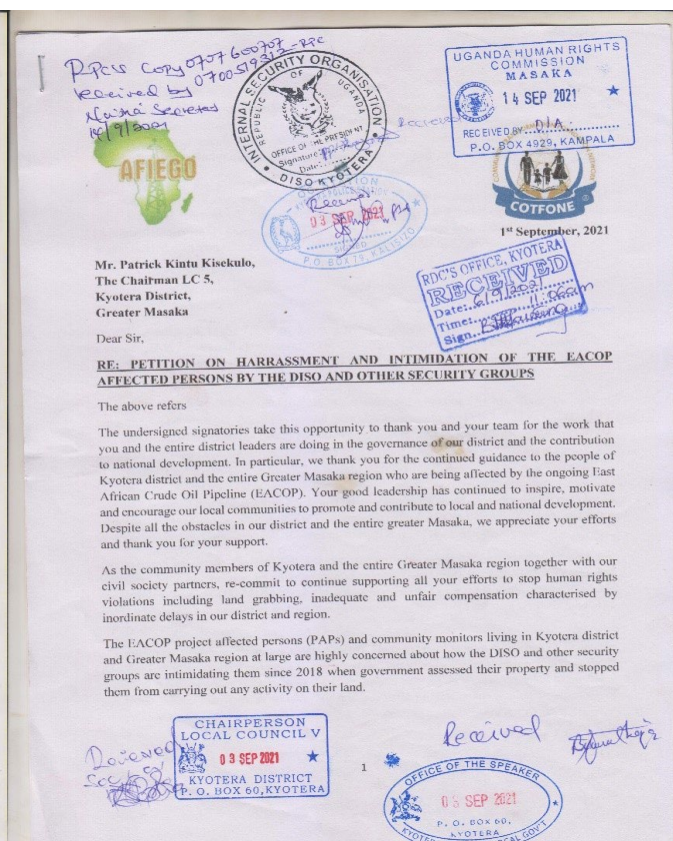
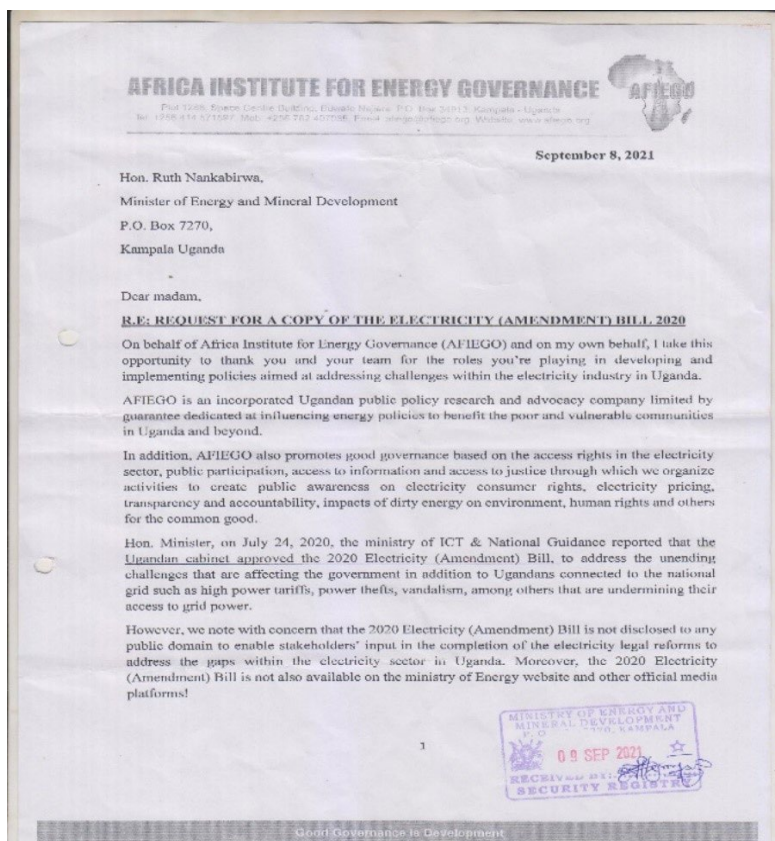
Following AFIEGO and our SBFC partners' engagement of the Speaker of parliament and other parliamentarians, a motion on saving Bugoma forest was put on parliament's order paper on September 28, 2021. The motion can be seen below.

- (II) COMPENSATION OF VICTIMS OF THE LORD'S RESISTANCE ARMY (LRA) AND NATIONAL RESISTANCE ARMY (NRA) INSURGENCY IN VARIOUS PARTS OF THE COUNTRY [Attorney General] **[Thursday 30th September, 2021]**
- (III) THE STATE OF HEALTH CARE SERVICES DELIVERY IN UGANDA AND BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS
2. RESPONSE BY MINISTER TO URGENT QUESTIONS-
Hon. Minister for Security
 - (a) On Government's action to calm the situation in Apaa Village, arising from insecurity caused by bow and arrow wielding persons from Adjumani District – by Hon. Akol Anthony, MP Kilak County North
 - (b) On reported armed attacks on a Military Facility in Zombo District – by Hon. Nambeshe John Baptist, MP Manjiya County/Chief Opposition Whip
3. **MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT URGING GOVERNMENT TO PROTECT AND CONSERVE BUGOMA FOREST IN KIKUUBE DISTRICT**
 Mover: Hon. Nyakato Asinansi, Hoima City Woman Representative
 Seconders: Hon. Isingoma Patrick Mwesigwa, MP Hoima East Division
 Hon. Aseera Stephen, MP Buhaguzi County East
4. **MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT URGING GOVERNMENT TO DE-GAZETTE KYALUBANGA FOREST RESERVE IN NAKASONGOLA DISTRICT**
 Mover: Hon. Sekyanzi Bernard Kirya, MP Budyebbo County
 Seconders: Hon. Mutebi Noah Wanzala, MP Nakasongola County
 Hon. Kyoto Ibrahim Mululi, MP Budiope County West

This month, the SBFC including community representatives submitted a petition to save Bugoma forest to the Speaker of parliament, Hon. Jacob Oulanyah.

Furthermore, AFIEGO supported EACOP-affected communities from Greater Masaka to petition district leaders, security agencies, Petroleum Authority of Uganda, oil companies, Uganda Human Rights Commission (UHRC) and the UN Human Rights Uganda office among others to end intimidation against the EACOP-affected people.

AFIEGO also wrote letters to the Minister of Energy requesting for a copy of the EACOP Bill, 2021 and the 2020 Electricity (Amendment) Bill.



In the media

This month, staff, research associates, and youth champions wrote newspaper articles that were published in the leading newspapers. The media also published articles from the media interviews we held this month. Some of the published articles are captured below.

Amending Electricity ACT: What to focus on

On July 31, Ruth Nankabirwa the Minister of Energy and Mineral Development, said the Government is in the formal process of amending the Electricity Act 1999 to directly supply electricity to the industrialists other than going through distribution companies. However, amending the electricity Act to directly supply electricity to the industrialists will not lower the power tariffs and is not the priority right now to solve the challenges faced in the electricity sector.

Over the years, stakeholders and electricity consumers have stated that the challenges in the electricity sector are attributed to the outdated Electricity Act 1999, which has since become an outdated law to address the emerging issues, such as deemed power, high power tariffs, issues of compulsory land acquisition, Over-reliance on the grid and economic setbacks, among others.

The ministry has over the years been working to amend this Act, but is moving at snail's pace, yet the sector is facing a lot of challenges.

Focus on the following:

High power tariffs: Even after commissioning the 183MW hydropower dam, the power tariffs remained the same.

The prices include sh751.9 per unit for domestic consumers, sh645.6 for commercial consumers and sh361 for large industries.

If the service fee and Value Added Tax (VAT) costs are added to the above prices, domestic consumers pay nearly sh1,000 per unit.

The cost paid by the commercial and large consumers also increases. These costs are too high and continue to keep 74% of the Ugandan population from accessing grid power.

Deemed power: Power prices remain high because of the production of deemed energy. According to the Auditor General, by June 2020, the deemed energy was sh110.79b, causing a strain on government resources.

This deemed power negatively impacts on the



consumers through high power tariffs, which may be a hindrance to electricity demand, hence hindering economic growth.

Uganda's total installed capacity currently stands at over 1,268.9MW as per December 2020 statistics from ERA, the peak domestic and export demand for power is 723.76MW.

In effect, as at December 2020, Uganda was producing 545.14MW of excess power and not consumed, but had to be paid for. The excess power (deemed energy) that is being produced has increased as a result of dams, such as Achwa II. The old 1999 electricity cannot address such emerging issues in the electricity sector.

Over-reliance on the grid: Uganda is over-reliant on grid-based hydro and other power. While Uganda's grid-based installed capacity is over 1268.9MW, Uganda produces only 13.9MW of off-grid power.

To meet the energy needs of the majority of citizens, who cannot afford grid-based power, it is important for the Government to undertake measures to increase investments in the off-grid energy sector. Therefore,

amendment of the electricity Act will help the Government increase investment in the off-grid energy.

Constant disconnection and unreliable power supply in hospitals: Hospitals are still facing a challenge of electricity disconnection due to unpaid bills, but the underlying problem is the weak Electricity Act of 1999 because it does not have any provision to ensure hospitals access affordable and reliable electricity.

Economic setbacks: Unaffordable and unreliable power supply in Uganda has caused a lot of economic challenges.

Ugandans have suffered economic setbacks because of the outdated Electricity Act and other electricity failures, such as faulty meters, bad power purchase agreements, unfair concessions, inflated and delayed monthly bills, weak regulation, ignoring the recommendations of Parliament and delayed justice to determine cases.

Therefore, the new law should focus on:

- To provide funds for investing in transmission lines before commissioning the dams to avoid deemed power that leads to high power tariffs.
- To provide for compulsory land acquisition in line with Article 26 of the 1995 Constitution.
- To penalise distribution companies for power outage and compensate the affected users for the loss suffered due to blackout.
- To provide for alternative power supply.
- To also put a limit on borrowing money to invest in grid power that leads to high return on investment, which makes power very expensive.
- To hold Government officials who sign bad power purchase agreement liable for losses to government through corruption.

The writer is a lawyer

BUGOMA FOREST BOUNDARIES SHOULD BE OPENED

EDITOR: There have been media reports about land conflicts overwhelming Kikuube district leaders because of developments taking place in the area.

Developments such as oil and gas plus sugar cane growing have led to massive land grabbing from the poor. Residents are regretting why the developments came in their areas. Many people in the Bunyoro are in fear of their land being taken by investors and the rich.

Recently, residents of Nyairongo, Rwenaho, Kabegaramire and Rwenkobe in Kabwoya sub-county, Kikuube district were seeking the intervention of Kikuube district local government after receiving eviction



email us at letters@newvision.co.ug or SMS: Text Letters to 8338

threats from Hoima Sugar company. The intimidations have created tension and resulted in Bugoma host communities not accessing the forest for water, firewood, local herbs and their gardens. The communities need immediate intervention from the Government. Eviction threats have become rampant

among the Bugoma communities due to delays in opening forest boundaries and the Government's failure to allocate money for the process.

The above scenarios have led to increased land conflicts in Bunyoro sub-region, especially Kikuube where there is both sugar cane growing as well as oil and gas activities.

Since 2016, the massive destruction of Bugoma forest reserve has been taking place under the watch of the authorities, with some officials supporting the sugar factory activities. Now that part of the forest has been

cleared, the factory has started encroaching on land of the host communities. This means that most of Bugoma communities are likely to become landless if Hoima Sugar evicts them.

The boundaries' opening was supposed to be done in February, but was delayed. The Government needs to open the forest boundaries to enable the host communities understand the demarcations, reduce the tension among host communities and increase conservation of the critical ecosystems.

Therefore, I call on the Kikuube resident

district commissioner, Kikuube district environmental officer, Ministry of Water and Environment, environmental Police, National environment Management Authority, National Forestry Authority (NFA), Ministry of lands and urban development and the President to ensure that there is immediate opening of Bugoma boundaries to reduce tension in surrounding communities.

Paul Kato, research associate at Africa Institute for Energy Governance (AFIEGO) Katop.adyeeri@gmail.com

PHYSICAL PLANNING HAS BEEN IGNORED

EDITOR: Last week, the media reported that only seven districts have physical development plans across the country. It is not good for a country to lack the physical development plans, which are critical for development planning.

Many districts and cities in the country are grappling with degradation and disorganised urban development because of lack of the physical development plans.

The failure to implement the physical development plans in all the districts and the cities is likely to increase degradation of forests and wetlands across the country, in favour of expansion of settlements and disorganised urban areas.

It should be noted that among the seven districts with physical development plans, only



email us at letters@newvision.co.ug or SMS: Text Letters to 8338

Wakiso is able to fund it.

This means that there is still a big gap for the Government to fill. A lot needs to be done to enable districts to have physical development plans.

We all know that in May 2019, the Cabinet approved the creation of 15 cities in a phased manner, over the course of the next one to three years.

This means that all the new created cities will need expansion. In the process, the critical biodiversity is likely to be under a

lot of pressure from the local people, investors and the rich.

Physical development plans are needed because they help in the fight against urban and rural poverty.

They address environmental challenges, maximise the use of land and other resources, facilitate orderly development and introduce beauty in our settlements.

The physical development plans are needed to ensure proper development of the new districts and cities, in addition to saving of critical biodiversity such as wetlands and forests which are under a big threat.

I call on all the district physical planners and the lands ministry to roll out physical development plans across the country.

Paul Kato, research associate at Africa Institute for Energy Governance, Katop.adyeeri@gmail.com

Museveni should assent to Climate Change bill

I am appealing to President Museveni to sign the climate change bill, which the parliament passed on April 27, 2020 into law. Climate change is one of the major threats to Uganda's sustainable development and efforts to end poverty. More so, it's important to note that the poor and vulnerable citizens are hit hardest by climate change effects.

Uganda has experienced increased adverse weather patterns such as prolonged drought in the north, landslides in the east, and devastating floods, all of which have continuously affected the vulnerable and marginalized poor Ugandans.

Climate change is likely to increase food insecurity in Uganda, shifts in the spread of diseases like malaria, soil erosion and land degradation and flood

damage to infrastructure and settlements, just to mention a few.

Furthermore, global emissions of greenhouse gases are still on the rise due to climate change. Even with our commitment to cut net global emissions to zero by 2050, the concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere will continue to increase for the coming decades, and average global temperatures will increase unless we sign the bill into law to find basic ways to mitigate and adapt the effects of climate change.

Ireen Twongirwe
Kampala.

Upcoming events

October 1, 2021; Hoima: Radio talkshow on benefits of clean energy vis-à-vis oil

October 6, 2021; Kampala: AFIEGO staff capacity building workshop on outcome harvesting

October 12, 2021: Greater Masaka and Bunyoro: Community engagements to address grievances related to the EACOP project

October 14, 2021; Hoima: Radio talkshow to update communities on ongoing efforts to save Bugoma forest and EACOP case in the East African Court of Justice

October 15, 2021; Kampala: Media training on the impacts of oil and gas activities

October 19-20, 2021; Bunyoro: Media field visit to oil-affected areas

October 22-30, 2021; Bunyoro and Greater Masaka: Community distribution of IEC materials on the EACOP case in the East African Court of Justice

About Africa Institute for Energy Governance (AFIEGO)

AFIEGO is a non-profit company limited by guarantee that was incorporated under Uganda's Companies Act. AFIEGO undertakes public policy research and advocacy to influence energy policies to benefit the poor and vulnerable. Based in Kampala-Uganda, the non-profit company was born out of the need to contribute to efforts to turn Africa's clean energy potential into reality and to ensure that the common man and woman benefits from this energy boom. Through lobbying, research and community education, AFIEGO works with communities and leaders to ensure that clean energy resources are utilised in a way that promotes equitable development, environmental conservation and respect for human rights.

Our Vision

A society that equitably uses clean energy resources for socio-economic development

Our Mission

To promote energy policies that benefit poor and vulnerable communities