

**March 2023; Issue 3**

**EACOP PROJECT: GOV'T MUST STOP INJUSTICES AGAINST THE AFFECTED PEOPLE!**



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**EACOP-affected people in Kikuube district**

### **In this newsletter:**

- EACOP project: Injustices against affected people should stop!
- Pictorial of our activities
- Lobbying
- In the media
- Upcoming events

Dear reader, welcome to AFIEGO's March 2023 newsletter. This month, AFIEGO convened a number of meetings with communities affected by the Tilenga and East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) projects in Uganda. AFIEGO met with affected communities from seven districts including Buliisa, Hoima, Kakumiro and Kikuube. Others include Kyotera, Lwengo and Rakai.

During the meetings, communities discussed the challenges that they are facing due to the aforementioned oil projects. In Buliisa district, the foremost challenges that the affected people discussed include: failure by the judiciary to, nearly two years later, fix for hearing an appeal that nine Tilenga-affected households filed in 2021 to protect their constitutional right to adequate and fair compensation. The people said that the judiciary's failure to dispense them with justice has emboldened companies to abuse their rights.

The people are among those that were displaced by TotalEnergies in 2017 to make way for the Tilenga Industrial Area. They rejected the low compensation offered by TotalEnergies and were sued by the Ugandan government in 2020. After the Masindi High Court ruled that they must accept the compensation they rejected, the people filed a case in Uganda's Court of Appeal in 2021. The case was yet to be fixed for hearing by the end of this month (March 2023).

Another challenge that the people discussed is the 'floods' or 'river of

creamy dirty water' that flows from the Tilenga oil project's Industrial Area in Buliisa, where a Central Processing Facility (CPF) is supposed to be constructed. The community members say that TotalEnergies is constructing the CPF in an area with many swamps and when rain falls, the swamps retain water.

The water also flows to people's gardens in about five villages in Buliisa district and to Lake Albert. Communities want to be compensated for the damage caused by the floods. More so, they are worried that their children could drown in the water, or that their goats, which drink the water, could be poisoned.

Further, the fact that the water flows into Lake Albert is giving the people a headache. They say that the lake could be contaminated. The people want TotalEnergies to find a permanent solution for the 'floods'. The people also decry the increased landlessness and food scarcity that arose after they were displaced for the Tilenga CPF project.

Away from the Tilenga oil project-affected persons, AFIEGO also held meetings with EACOP-affected people who are faced with many challenges, despite some of them having accepted compensation for their land that was taken for the EACOP.

Read about these challenges, which range from complaints over low compensation, failure to replace their property after receiving compensation, safety fears over living

near a pipeline and others in our **Word from CEO**. Recommendations to stop the injustices against the people are also made in our Word from CEO.

In our **pictorial** section, you will see some of the activities that we and our partners implemented this month. For instance, we organised a press conference in Kampala at which the Tilenga-, EACOP- and oil refinery-affected people shared the challenges they face in accessing justice from courts.

Furthermore, as shared above, we organised meetings with oil-affected people from seven districts to discuss the challenges that oil-affected people are faced with and solutions to address those challenges.

In addition, we supported journalists to visit oil-affected communities in Bunyoro to document the impacts of oil activities on people and the environment.

We also supported journalists to visit Bugoma forest host communities to discuss the challenges that the communities are faced with.

Furthermore, we organised a safety training for communities from eight districts that we work with in addition to organising engagements with communities to celebrate AFIEGO winning the Right Livelihood Award in 2022. You will see these and other activities in our pictorial section.

In our **lobbying** section, we bring you

some of the lobby and advocacy products that we disseminated this month. For instance, we supported nine Tilenga-affected households that filed a case in the Court of Appeal to write to the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, Chief Justice and Deputy Chief Justice to demand that their case is fixed for hearing. The case is aimed at protecting the people's right to fair and adequate compensation.

Further, we issued a press statement calling on the above-mentioned parties to ensure that justice is served by fixing the aforementioned court case for hearing.

In addition, with our Inclusive Green Economy Network-East Africa (IGEN-EA) partners, we issued a statement on International Women's Day calling on the Ugandan government to address barriers undermining women's participation in the green economy.

Finally, in **in the media** section, we bring you the newspaper articles written by our staff and partners that were published in the leading newspapers in March. We also bring you the media stories that were published following various media engagements that we held this month.

We hope you will enjoy the newsletter.

**Editorial team:**

**Diana Nabiruma**

**Rachael Amongin**

**Balach Bakundane**

### EACOP PROJECT: INJUSTICES AGAINST AFFECTED PEOPLE SHOULD STOP!

Alex Kyarimpa, a resident of Kijumba village in Hoima district, asks pensively, "Won't my house collapse?"

Our organisation, Africa Institute for Energy Governance (AFIEGO), has convened a meeting with community members in his village whose land and other property is being compulsorily acquired for the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) project. The meeting takes place on March 20, 2023.

Part of Alex's land is being acquired. The rest, on which his house sits, stands only a few metres from where the EACOP is set to be constructed.

"I think that there will be vibrations during the construction stage. These could break my house."

Topher, a village-mate of Alex's says, "I am worried about my children. Will they be safe living near a pipeline? They could also be sacrificed so that the project is blessed. I have heard that this happens with big projects. These EACOP people should have taken all this land so that I relocate elsewhere."

Other community members also express their fears and challenges with the EACOP. AFIEGO gathered these fears and concerns during meetings held this month with communities from seven EACOP- or Tilenga-affected districts.

The districts include: Buliisa, Hoima, Kikuube, Kakumiro, Kyotera, Lwengo and Rakai.

To give a platform to communities whose voices are often ignored, we share the communities' concerns below.

#### CONCERNS

**(a) Under-compensation:** The anger caused by the injustice of paying communities low compensation has not waned. During an engagement with civil society organisations (CSOs) in February 2023, the EACOP Company indicated that 71% of the EACOP project-affected persons (PAPs) in Uganda had been compensated.

However, the people argue that the compensation given is too little. Nelson Tibemnaya of Kijumba-Hoima says, "These EACOP people paid us Shs. 6 million for an acre of land. The Uganda National Oil Company [UNOC], which is acquiring land from our village for the finished petroleum products pipeline paid us Shs. 12 million for an acre. The money that the EACOP paid us is too little! We cannot replace our land with it!"

Richard S.\* of Kyotera district adds, "The EACOP people want to pay me only Shs. 25 million for an acre of my land. I angrily walked away from them when I saw the money they wanted to give me! I make that money after two planting seasons when I sell my crops! But they want to take my land for 66 years and give me very little value for it! That is unfair."

**(b) Unable to replace property:** Because they received low compensation, the EACOP-affected people say that they have been unable to replace all their property. Jackline Kyarikunda of Kijumba-



Hoima says, "I tried building a house with the money that I was given by the EACOP people but it was too little. I had to borrow money to complete the house. Even with the borrowed funds, I was unable to buy windows and doors for my house. What kind of compensation was that?"

**(c) Two-year uplift considered insufficient:** The EACOP-affected people say that they have been waiting for compensation since 2019 when they were formally notified that their land was going to be acquired for the EACOP.

Some of the affected people have waited for compensation for nearly four years as the compensation processes are still ongoing. The compensation they are receiving was reduced in value due to inflationary pressures. To offset these losses, the EACOP Company is paying an uplift to cover two years of waiting for compensation by the affected people.

However, the people say that this is not enough. Fiona Alinda from Bunyoro says, "When our land and other properties were assessed, a bar of washing soap cost Shs. 3,000. Today, the same bar costs Shs. 8,000. This means that the compensation we were paid after the under-valuation of our property is too little! These EACOP people should have paid us early! Since they did not, they should pay us an uplift covering four years!"

**(d) Orphan land:** Orphan land are small parcels of land that cannot be used for productive purposes which were left after the EACOP cut through the affected people's property. In

Bunyoro, some affected people say that they have orphan land between two pipelines: the EACOP and finished petroleum products pipeline. They can't use this land. Kenneth Ayebazibwe says, "We are living in fear for sure. Can one grow cassava between two pipelines? Won't we get problems? This orphan land should be acquired!"

**(e) Coerced to sign for compensation:** The charges made by EACOP-affected people that they were intimidated or coerced to sign for low compensation remain.

Gloria Kyalisiima from Bunyoro says, "For sure we were not happy with the little compensation that we were being given. However, these EACOP people told us that we cannot fight government, which would take us to court. Many of us don't even know what a court room looks like. We have never been inside one and we don't know how it operates. We got scared and signed for compensation."

**(f) Little attention paid to vulnerable families:** Under the EACOP project's Resettlement Action Plan (RAP), the EACOP project developers committed to pay special attention to vulnerable groups. However, there are cases where vulnerable groups haven't been adequately supported. Frank L. from Rakai district says that some people who received money on behalf of vulnerable people such as the mentally ill misused it.

Lydia N. from Lwengo says "One EACOP-affected family is so poor. The wife is OK but the man is mentally sick. He developed mental illness after signing the assessment forms.

He needs to transfer his powers of attorney to another person as a mentally ill person cannot enter into an agreement. Before they get their compensation, both the man, through the person who has powers of attorney over him, and his wife need to sign compensation agreements.

The family has failed to transfer the man's power of attorney to someone else as they are too poor. They need legal support and despite engaging the EACOP Company, they have not been helped. It is so sad," Lydia says.

**(g) Climate change concerns:**

The EACOP-affected communities are also worried about climate change. Nelson Tibemanya of Hoima says, "Many countries that produce oil in Africa suffer.

We are also worried because the oil companies and government are cutting trees to set up airports, oil roads, pipelines and others. How will our children live when trees are cut and the weather becomes harsh. We are very worried about climate change."

**CONCLUSION**

The EACOP-affected people deserve justice. They complain that the Ugandan government has left the running of oil projects to oil companies, which are abusing the affected people's rights without being held accountable by the state.

They make the following

recommendations:

**(i) The Ministry of Energy, Petroleum Authority of Uganda (PAU) and relevant MPs** as well as district leaders should play a more vigorous oversight role over oil companies to defend the affected people's rights. Government should not cede its powers to corporate interests.

**(ii) In addition, the EACOP Company should pay the affected people, who were** under-compensated, more compensation. The people want the compensation that they received to be topped up to reflect prevailing market rates.

**(iii) Further, the EACOP Company should pay the affected people who are yet to** receive compensation an uplift of four years, instead of two. This will promote fairness.

**(iv) In addition, the EACOP Company, Uganda Law Society, Mental Health Uganda** and other relevant entities should support vulnerable groups who need help to get their compensation.

**(v) The judiciary should also dispense timely justice as delays in hearing oil-affected people's** cases deters them from seeking justice.

**(vi) Finally, instead of investing in fossil fuel projects that tip the world closer to** worse climate change impacts, the Ugandan government should encourage investment in clean energy and other green economic sectors such as agro-forestry, tourism and others.

**By Dickens Kamugisha  
CEO-AFIEGO**

# Pictorial of our activities

## AFIEGO & OIL-AFFECTED PEOPLE IN PRESS CONFERENCE TO DEMAND FOR JUSTICE



On March 9, 2023, AFIEGO and oil-affected people from the Bunyoro and Greater Masaka sub-regions held a press conference in Kampala.

During the press conference, AFIEGO and the affected people discussed the judiciary's failure to dispense timely justice to oil-affected people.

AFIEGO and the affected people called for this injustice to end.

## AFIEGO AND COMMUNITIES DISCUSS CHALLENGES FACED BY EACOP-AFFECTED PEOPLE DURING MEETINGS



Between March 17 and 20, 2023, AFIEGO held meetings with EACOP-affected communities from six districts.

The meetings took place in the Bunyoro sub-region.

During the meetings, we discussed the challenges faced by the EACOP-affected people and the strategies that can be deployed to address the challenges.

## AFIEGO SUPPORTS MEDIA FIELD VISIT TO FOREST AND OIL HOST COMMUNITIES



Between March 21 and 24, 2023, AFIEGO supported journalists from various media houses in Uganda to visit oil and forest host communities in the Bunyoro sub-region.

The media documented the challenges that the people are faced with. It is hoped that such media engagements will raise public awareness and pressure to address the challenges that the people face.



## AFIEGO SUPPORTS TILENGA-AFFECTED PEOPLE TO HOLD RADIO TALKSHOWS TO DISCUSS THEIR CHALLENGES



On March 22 and 24, 2023, AFIEGO supported representatives of the Tilenga oil project-affected people to hold radio talkshows at Radio 7 in Masindi and Biiso FM in Buliisa respectively.

During the radio talkshows, the people raised stakeholder awareness of the challenges that the people are faced with. It is hoped that the media engagements will raise public pressure so that the people's challenges are addressed.

## AFIEGO TRAINS COMMUNITIES WE WORK WITH TO OPERATE SAFELY AMIDST REPRESSED CIVIC SPACE



Between March 16 and 17, 2023, AFIEGO staff and some of the community members we work with were trained to operate safely within the repressed civic space in Uganda.

The training, which took place in Hoima district, enabled the communities to gain knowledge and skills to continue with their important work.

## AFIEGO AND PARTNERS ENGAGE DUTCH EMBASSY OVER CLEAN ENERGY AND DEFORESTATION CHALLENGES



On March 29, 2023, AFIEGO and our partners from Uganda and the Netherlands engaged Dutch embassy officials in Kampala.

Among others, we discussed the challenges we face in promoting clean energy access and stopping deforestation.

We discussed ways in which the embassy could support us to address the above challenges.

## AFIEGO CELEBRATES WINNING RIGHT LIVELIHOOD AWARD WITH COMMUNITIES



This month, AFIEGO celebrated winning the Right Livelihood Award with communities that we work with.

We share photos from some of the celebrations here.



In March 2023, AFIEGO and our partners supported oil project-affected persons whose court cases have delayed to be heard or to be fixed for hearing to write to the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, the Chief Justice, Deputy Chief Justice and other stakeholders. The people demanded that their court cases are expedited.

Further, with our IGEN-EA partners, we issued a press statement calling on the Ugandan government to address barriers undermining women's participation in green economic sectors.

## AFRICA INSTITUTE FOR ENERGY GOVERNANCE

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March 9, 2023

Your Lordship,  
Justice Alfonse Owiny-Dollo,  
The Chief Justice of Uganda,  
P.O. Box 7085,  
Kampala-Uganda



Dear Sir,

### PETITION TO END INJUSTICES CAUSED BY DELAYED HEARING OF OIL CASES

#### Introduction

Greetings from Africa Institute for Energy Governance (AFIEGO). AFIEGO is a Ugandan incorporated company limited by guarantee for none profit whose main objective is to promote good energy governance to benefit poor and vulnerable communities in Uganda. AFIEGO works to promote access rights including access to public information, public participation and access to justice for redress.

Despite the many challenges our country is going through, we thank you as the head of the country's judiciary for your continued efforts to improve access to justice in Uganda.

To this end, AFIEGO and other local community representatives were requested by oil project-affected people (PAPs) as well as forest host communities in Uganda to present this petition to your office for action. The oil-affected and forest communities discussed in this letter include those affected by the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP), Tilenga, oil refinery and Kingfisher oil projects as well as those that neighbour Bugoma Central Forest Reserve (CFR).

#### Background

Between 2014 and 2021, the oil-affected people and forest host communities, with the support of civil society organisations (CSOs), filed five court cases in the High Court, Court of Appeal and Constitutional Court. However, to date, the cases remain unheard or unconcluded.

For example, in 2014, persons whose land was compulsorily acquired by the Government of Uganda (GoU) for a planned oil refinery in Hoima district filed a case in the High Court. The people sought to stop the violation of their constitutional right to prompt, fair and adequate compensation as provided for under Article 26 of the 1995 Uganda Constitution. To date, years

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March 9, 2023

Justice Benjamin Kabito,  
Chairperson, Judicial Service Commission,  
Kampala (U).

Dear Sir,

### PETITION TO ADDRESS DELAYED HEARING OF APPLICATION NO 191 OF

2021

#### 1. Introduction

Greetings from Africa Institute for Energy Governance (AFIEGO). AFIEGO is a Ugandan incorporated company limited by guarantee for none-profit whose main objective is to promote good energy governance in Uganda. AFIEGO also supports energy project-affected persons (PAPs) and other citizens to defend their constitutional rights and enjoy their access rights including access to information, access to justice and participation.

First, despite the many challenges in the country, we thank you for efforts aimed at supporting local communities and other vulnerable groups to access to justice among others.

Hopeful that your good office will help, AFIEGO was requested by communities whose land was acquired by the Ugandan government for the Tilenga oil project in Bulisa district to present their concerns to your good office. The people wish to express their dissatisfaction with Uganda's judiciary for the delay in fixing for hearing their case, civil suit no. 191 of 2021.

#### 2. Background

In 2017, the Government of Uganda (GoU) used its powers to compulsorily acquire 786 acres of land located at Kasinyi village, Nile parish, Ngwedo sub-county, Bulisa district. The land, which was acquired by TotalEnergies F&P (U) B.V. on behalf of the Ugandan government, was for the Tilenga oil project's Industrial Area. TotalEnergies is the operator of the Tilenga oil project.

The people that were affected by the compulsory land acquisition included 152 land owners and 622 asset owners. The above affected people accepted to give up their land to support development because the government committed to offer them fair and adequate

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### IGEN-EA CALLS FOR AN END TO BARRIERS UNDERMINING WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN GREEN ECONOMY

25<sup>th</sup>/November/2022

#### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE KAMPALA, NAIROBI & DAR-ES-SALAAM

Today, the Inclusive Green Economy Network-East Africa (IGEN-EA) joins the rest of the world to mark the International Day for Elimination of Violence against Women.

IGEN-EA is a network of over 35 civil society and private sector players from Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania. The network promotes green economic alternatives including sustainable agriculture and fisheries, clean energy, tourism and natural resources management in East Africa.

On the occasion of International Day for Elimination of Violence against Women, IGEN-EA is calling on East African governments, cultural institutions, religious leaders and other

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March 9, 2023

Justice Flavien Zeija, Principal Judge,  
High Court, Kampala-Uganda

Dear Sir,

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For example, in 2014, persons whose land was compulsorily acquired by the Government of Uganda (GoU) for a planned oil refinery in Hoima district filed a case in the High Court. The people sought to stop the violation of their constitutional right to prompt, fair and adequate compensation as provided for under Article 26 of the 1995 Uganda Constitution. To date,

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## In the media

This month, AFIEGO 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.



### **An Oil Rush Threatens Natural Splendors Across East Africa**

A multibillion-dollar oil drilling and pipeline project is displacing thousands of people in Uganda and Tanzania, and ravaging pristine habitats. Environmentalists are fighting to stop it, but the governments are all in.

By **Abdi Latif Dahir**  
Photographs by **Arlette Bashizi**

The reporter and photographer traveled throughout Uganda to see the oil project's impact.

• March 14, 2023 Updated 11:01 a.m. ET

**MURCHISON FALLS NATIONAL PARK, Uganda** — Under dense forest canopy sheltering elephants, rare birds and colobus monkeys, roaring bulldozers and excavators shatter the idyll, toppling ancient trees and carving roads to reach Uganda's newest source of riches: Oil.

"This is a sanctuary," said Ben Ntale, a Ugandan tour guide who has been bringing visitors to the Murchison Falls National Park for two decades. "But they are intent on destroying one of our greatest heritages."

An oil rush is now underway in Uganda, a verdant, landlocked country in East Africa which has signed onto a multibillion-dollar joint venture with French and Chinese oil companies, arguing that the revenues will fund schools, roads and other development. Drilling has already begun on the shores of Lake Albert, and in the pristine habitat of Murchison Falls National Park, workers are clearing areas to lay pads for oil wells. Land is being acquired and cleared to build a pipeline to carry the oil from the lush west of landlocked Uganda, through forests and game reserves in Tanzania, to a port on the Indian Ocean coast.



## Increase access, women participation in renewable energy sector

**EDITOR:** The drastic climate change, gender violence, poverty and low levels of business globally are increasingly due to governments' failures to increase access and women's participation in the renewable energy sector.

It is noted that there are a few technical women groups in the country and none in the renewable energy sector, which has contributed to women being left behind in terms of development.

The country needs to create a bigger space for women to access and participate

in the sector's activities because they are most vulnerable to the climate crisis, prone to poverty and are the ones who suffer most while getting fuel for cooking.

Today, 90% of Ugandans are still depending on the forests for wood fuel because the country has failed to put in place alternatives such as renewable energy, especially solar, which is clean, reliable and affordable.

Increased investment and participation of women in renewable energy, especially solar, will help expand green jobs for

women, combat the climate crisis and boost gender equality in the workplace. It will also reduce carbon emissions and the pressure imposed on forests.

Therefore, I call on the energy minister and other stakeholders to expand investments and increase access and participation of women in the renewable energy sector to improve their livelihoods and mitigate climate change in the country.

**Paul Kato, research associate, climate activists**

## Upcoming events

April 4, 2023; Kampala: Meeting with Natural Resources Committee of parliament to make recommendations to strengthen the national budget

April 5, 2023; Arusha: Hearing of the case against the EACOP project at the East African Court of Justice

April 13, 2023; Kampala: Petitioning the president to take action to stop destruction of Bugoma forest

April 17-20, 2023; Bunyoro: Gather women and youth's views on the current clean energy sector challenges and ways in which they can be addressed

April 21, 2023; Kampala: Cross-border engagement on how to stop the expansion of fossil fuels in the African Great Lakes region

April 24-26, 2023; Greater Masaka and Bunyoro: Community sensitisation engagements on citizens' role in addressing the climate crisis

April 27-28; Kikuube: Stakeholder sensitisation engagements on the tourism potential of Bugoma forest

## 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