

December 2020; Issue 12

AFIEGO'S 2020 IN REVIEW: WHAT WE DID, LEARNED AND ACHIEVED



AFIEGO staff, our partners and women who live around Bugoma forest protest against destruction of the forest in November 2020. In 2020, AFIEGO and our partners worked to save the forest and protect other ecosensitive areas amidst the EACOP, Tilenga and Kingfisher oil projects.

We also promoted oil-affected communities' land and other rights in addition to promoting clean energy in Uganda and the African Great Lakes region.

In this newsletter:

- Key 2020 achievements: Five-minute catchup
- AFIEGO's 2020 in review: What we did, learned and achieved
- Civic space reduces further in Uganda in 2020
- Pictorial of our 2020 activities
- Lobbying in 2020
- In the media in 2020



Dear reader, welcome to AFIEGO's final newsletter of 2020. In this issue, we provide an account of what AFIEGO, with the support of our dear community, national and international partners, did and achieved in 2020.

The year 2020 was difficult for many due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Many lives were lost and millions of people fell ill; countless people also lost their livelihoods. We commiserate with those who were affected and hope that 2021 will be a better year.

To alleviate some of the suffering caused by the pandemic, AFIEGO, with the support of our partners, provided COVID-19 relief support to **communities** and **COVID-19 district taskforces** in the oil region.

Further, despite the COVID-19 setbacks, AFIEGO and our partners worked hard to realise several achievements in 2020. These include:

- Influencing the enactment of key policies and laws. For instance, following **four years of lobby and advocacy** by AFIEGO and our partners to ensure that the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) puts in place the **Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and National Environment (Audit) regulations**, NEMA put these regulations in place in March 2020. This was a major win for the promotion of SEA, conduct of environmental compliance audits and others to protect the environment amidst oil risks and threats.
- Furthermore, steps were taken by AFIEGO and our partners to promote the enactment of a **Solar Energy Policy** for the promotion of off-grid solar energy access especially amongst rural and poor communities. AFIEGO **trained youth champions** to advocate for the enactment of a Solar Energy Policy by the Ministry of Energy.

AFIEGO and our partners also **drafted a Solar Energy Policy** for adoption by the Ministry of Energy.

- AFIEGO also worked to influence the **2018 Land Acquisition Bill** in addition to the **Land Acquisition, Resettlement and Rehabilitation (LARR) Policy** that are under development by the Ministry of Lands. AFIEGO produced a **research report**, *Assessing the impacts of the oil refinery land acquisition and resettlement project on the affected people*, which made recommendations to influence the above-mentioned laws for the protection of communities' land rights and the environment.
- Furthermore, AFIEGO worked for the **implementation of existing land laws** amidst the oil refinery, Tilenga, Kingfisher and East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) projects. AFIEGO undertook efforts such as organising community sensitisation meetings, radio talkshows, use of court cases and petitions to stop the abuses of oil-affected communities' rights. Wins were made. In **November 2020 for instance, government committed** to ensure that the 5,000 EACOP-affected people, some of whom having been waiting for compensation since 2018, **would be compensated in early 2021**.
- In relation to the oil refinery project, in June 2020, **government commenced road construction processes** to the Kyakaboga oil refinery settlement in Hoima to enable the over 70 families that are in the settlement to access markets. The construction commenced following advocacy by AFIEGO and the affected people. The road construction is good for **restoration of the people's livelihoods**.
- In addition, AFIEGO worked with our community, national and international partners to internationally highlight the social,

environmental and climate change dangers of the EACOP project in Uganda. We joined our partners and engaged the United Nations (UN), Standard Bank, African Development Bank (AfDB) and others to highlight these dangers and call for their end. In November 2020, AFIEGO and our partners also filed a court case in the East African Court of Justice (EACJ) to stop the environmental and social dangers of the EACOP project.

- Further, AFIEGO pressured NEMA to make **a decision on the EACOP's Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) report**. We demanded that NEMA complies with the law and makes a decision on the EACOP ESIA report. NEMA had failed to make the decision over 500 days after the EACOP ESIA was submitted to the authority. This violated the law. Following pressure, **NEMA approved the EACOP ESIA report in December 2020**. Knowing the decision on the EACOP ESIA will **support civil society organisations (CSOs) to ensure compliance to the ESIA certificate conditions** to protect the environment and community livelihoods amidst oil risks.

- Relatedly, in 2020, AFIEGO assumed the chairmanship of the **Save Bugoma Forest Campaign (SBFC)**, a coalition of CSOs and private sector operators working to protect Bugoma forest from land grabbing, oil and sugarcane challenges. With the SBFC, **AFIEGO mobilised** communities living around Bugoma

forest, Ugandans, Bunyoro Kingdom, the media, the European Union (EU) and eight EU ambassadors, the East African Wildlife Society and others to stop destruction of the forest. **Legal research** was also conducted to identify legal options that are available to save Bugoma forest. **Three court cases** were also filed to stop the destruction of the forest. By the end of 2020, **pressure was being maintained** to stop destruction of the forest by Hoima Sugar Ltd.

- AFIEGO also worked for the promotion of clean energy as opposed to dirty fuels in the African Great Lakes region. Due to our work, 266 women in Kasese district were trained to make energy-saving cookstoves and women in addition to youth from Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) continued to **reject oil activities on Lake Albert, Lake Edward, Queen Elizabeth National Park and Murchison Falls National Park**.

The above and other achievements are elaborated on in our **Word from CEO**. This newsletter also highlights the key activities we implemented in 2020 in the **pictorial, lobbying** and **in the media** sections.

We hope that you will enjoy the newsletter and we wish you a happy 2021.

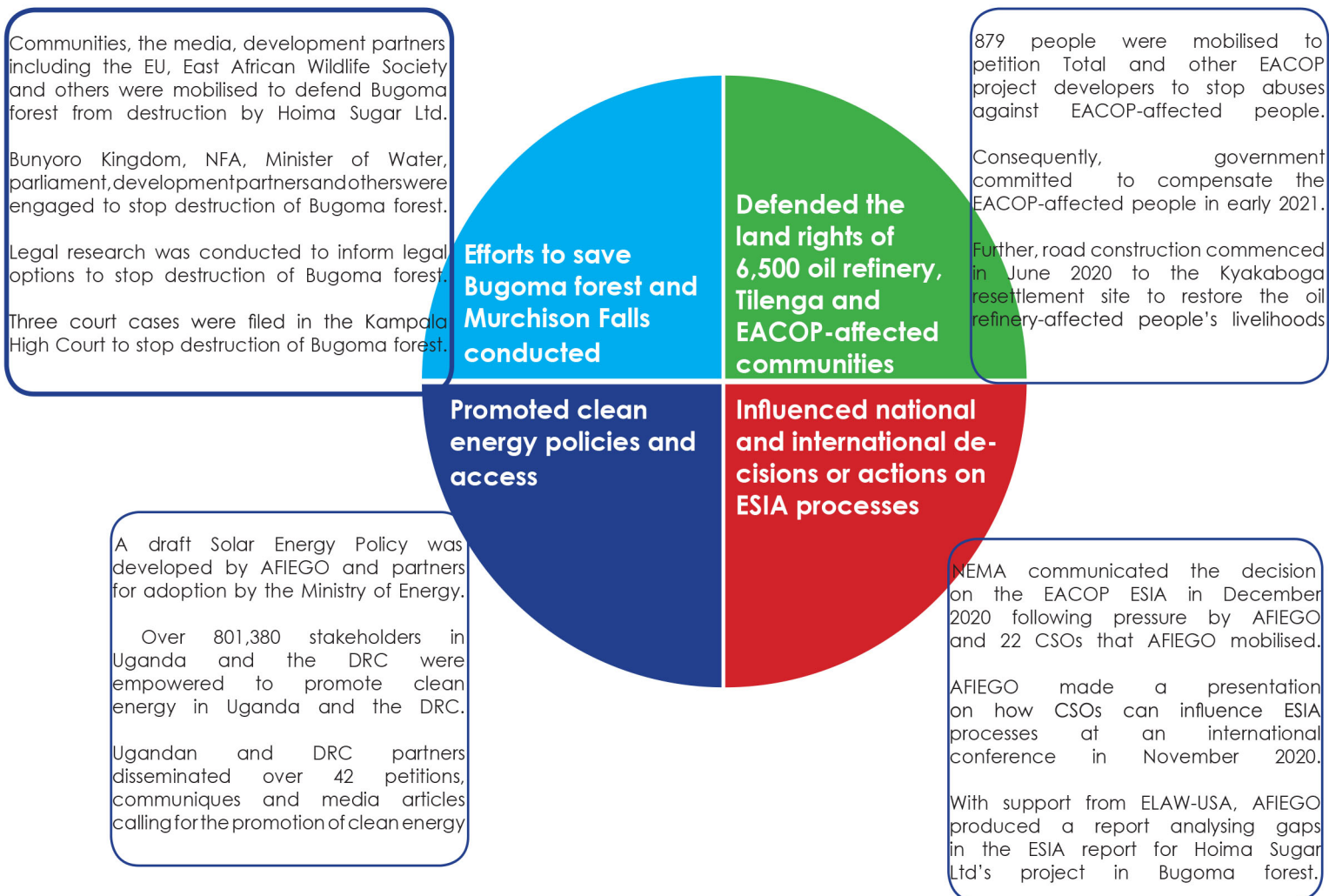
Editorial team:

Diana Nabiruma

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Key 2020 achievements: Five-minute catchup



Key 2020 achievements continued

Promoted corporate climate change and human rights accountability in EACOP project

With our partners, engaged Standard Bank in June 2020 over its financing of the EACOP

Participated in the UN's Business and Human Rights Forum in November 2020 to highlight the human rights implications of the EACOP

Worked with our partners to petition the African Development Bank over the EACOP dangers in April 2020

Petitioned and held a meeting with Total in December 2020 over the dangers of the EACOP project

Successfully closed two programmes and produced documentation

Closed the GLA-Just Energy Transition (2016-2020) and SRJS (2016-2020) programmes; started production of documentation materials to highlight achievements, lessons and challenges

Provided COVID-19 support to over 1,750 community members and to COVID-19 district taskforces in the oil region

AFIEGO'S 2020 IN REVIEW: WHAT WE DID, LEARNED AND ACHIEVED

The end of any year is often marked by stock taking. Organisations and individuals look at the goals they set at the start of the year and assess whether the goals were met. With 2020 being a difficult year, many people counted staying healthy or being alive as an achievement in itself, and rightly so. Staying safe, healthy and making it through 2020 ought to be celebrated.

In addition to keeping our staff and the communities we serve safe, AFIEGO also implemented various projects and registered key achievements in 2020. I have the honour of presenting these to you.

AFIEGO'S 2020 ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

In 2020, AFIEGO and our partners did and achieved the following:

(a) Mobilising stakeholders to save Bugoma forest from land grabbing, oil and sugarcane threats: The year 2020 commenced when Bugoma forest was on the brink of destruction. By the end of 2019, courts had ruled that 8,000 hectares of Bugoma forest land that were being disputed over by the National Forestry Authority (NFA) on one hand and Bunyoro Kitara Kingdom (BKK) in addition to Hoima Sugar Ltd (HSL) on the other belonged to BKK and HSL.

Court also gave NEMA the authority to determine whether the forest land remained forested or it would be converted into a sugarcane plantation by HSL.

To be allowed to destroy Bugoma forest, HSL completed and submitted an ESIA report to NEMA in 2020. AFIEGO and our partners could not let the forest be destroyed.

With AFIEGO as the chairperson of the Save

Bugoma Forest Campaign (SBFC), between June and December 2020, we mobilised or engaged stakeholders including host communities, Ugandans at large, BKK in addition to development partners including the Dutch embassy, the EU and eight EU ambassadors to join efforts to save the forest. We also engaged NFA, NEMA, parliament and the Ministry of Water and Environment to save the forest. **Some of these partners** including the Minister of Water and Environment, State Minister of the Environment, NFA, communities and the EU **joined efforts to find solutions** to save Bugoma forest.



In 2020, AFIEGO and the SBFC engaged Hon. Sam Cheptoris, the Minister of Water and Environment (photo on left), the Dutch embassy led by the Acting Ambassador, H.E. Joris van Bommel (photo in centre) and the EU delegation to Uganda led by H.E. Attilio Pacifici (photo on right) among others to save Bugoma forest.

Media campaigns to save Bugoma forest: In addition, the vigorous campaigning that we and our partners did resulted in media support to save Bugoma forest. **Over 47 media articles in the national and international press were published to highlight our saving Bugoma efforts.** Notably, media houses such as Vision Group dedicated September to October 2020 to publishing media stories via its print and electronic media platforms to highlight the dangers of destroying Bugoma forest. AFIEGO and our partners supplied expert information that informed the news articles.

Filing court cases to save Bugoma forest: Court cases, which were informed by the legal research that we undertook in 2020, were also filed in the Kampala High Court in September and October 2020 to stop

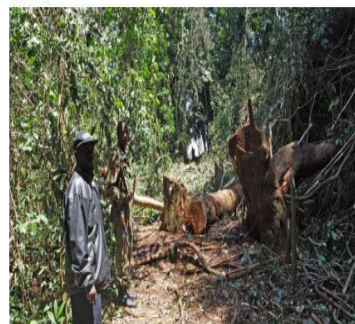
destruction of Bugoma forest.

The pressure from all the above activities resulted in the protection of Bugoma forest for a while. While NEMA issued HSL an ESIA certificate in August 2020 allowing the company to destroy the forest, the pressure created stopped HSL from destroying the 8,000 hectares of Bugoma forest. In November 2020, the NFA reported that the company had degraded only 20 hectares. This is unfortunate and we hope that in 2021, legal efforts among others will stop destruction of the forest.

Nema sued for allowing sugarcane growing on forest land

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2020

Twitter Facebook LinkedIn Email



Conservationists have asked the court to order NEMA to stop allowing sugarcane to be planted on forest land.

Together with our partners under the SBFC, we filed court cases to save Bugoma forest from destruction

(b) Analysing Hoima Sugar ESIA report:

With the support of our partners including Environmental Law Alliance Worldwide (ELAW)-USA, Netherlands Commission on Environmental Assessment (NCEA) and Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL)-USA, AFIEGO analysed and influenced the Hoima Sugar Ltd ESIA processes. For instance, we produced a report that showed the gaps in the ESIA report that HSL submitted to NEMA. The gaps analysis report was also used to educate host communities. The report was also shared with stakeholders including CSOs, government officials, the EU delegation in Uganda and others in November 2020. The findings from the report were also disseminated



through media reports in October 2020. These activities **contributed to the rejection of destruction of Bugoma forest by Ugandans and others as Hoima Sugar Ltd's ESIA report was found wanting.**

(c) Successful lobbying for enactment of SEA, other regulations:

Away from our work on Bugoma forest, AFIEGO undertook efforts to ensure the enactment of relevant environmental policies and laws. We campaigned for the completion and enactment of the ESIA and SEA regulations in addition to other relevant policies and laws. I am happy to report that in March 2020, **NEMA put in place the 2020 National Environment (SEA) and 2020 National Environment (Audit) regulations.** This will support efforts to protect the environment and community livelihoods from oil threats.

(d) Pressuring NEMA to comply with environmental laws in EACOP ESIA decision-making:

Furthermore, AFIEGO worked for the implementation of environmental laws that were in place in 2020. In this vein, AFIEGO engaged NEMA to comply with the 1998 Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) regulations. While the regulations provide that NEMA must make a decision on any ESIA report within 180 days from the date an ESIA report is submitted to the authority, over 500 days after stakeholders made comments on the EACOP ESIA report elapsed before NEMA made a decision on the EACOP ESIA.

In October 2020, AFIEGO mobilised 22 CSOs who wrote to NEMA calling on the authority to make a decision on the EACOP ESIA. In November 2020, AFIEGO also undertook online exchanges with NEMA over failure by the authority to make a decision on the EACOP ESIA report. **In December 2020, a decision on the report was finally communicated.** CSOs are now armed to access the EACOP ESIA certificate of approval to enable sensitisation of stakeholders for compliance.

(e) Championing community participation in Tilenga ESMPs review process:

Relatedly, in August 2020, AFIEGO mobilised 21 CSOs who wrote a protest letter to NEMA over failure by the authority to ensure community participation in the review of the 28 draft Environmental and Social Management Plans (ESMPs) for the Tilenga project that had been developed by Total.

In June 2020, Total invited CSOs to review and make comments on the Tilenga oil project's draft ESMPs. While the ESMPs outline how the potential environmental and social impacts of the Tilenga project will be avoided or mitigated for communities and others' benefit, oil host communities weren't invited to review and make comments on the draft ESMPs. This not only violated the principles of natural justice but also Uganda's laws. AFIEGO engaged NEMA and **in an August 20, 2020 letter to AFIEGO, the authority noted that it would consult communities on the Tilenga ESMPs.**



AFIEGO also supported court cases for cancellation of the Tilenga EIA certificate (L) and the oil refinery-affected people's court case against government over delayed and unfair compensation (R).

(f) Defending citizens' environmental and land rights amidst EACOP project:

With our partners, AFIEGO implemented a vigorous campaign to stop the environmental, climate change and

social risks of the EACOP project. In this vein, in June 2020, we engaged financial institutions such as Standard Bank to stop the EACOP project's dangers. We participated in a meeting with the bank in addition to the bank's Annual General Meeting (AGM) in June 2020. We also undertook media engagements to pressure the bank to support clean as opposed to dirty energy.

Furthermore, we mobilised over 879 stakeholders to petition Total and the other EACOP project developers in November 2020 to stop the project's dangers. Further, with our partners, in November 2020, we filed a court case in the EACJ to stop the environmental and social dangers of the EACOP project.

Some wins were registered. For instance, our advocacy through petitions resulted in **government committing to compensate the EACOP-affected people in early 2021.** Other partners contributed to this achievement. Furthermore, in December 2020, we held a meeting with Total to discuss how to stop the dangers of the EACOP project.

(g) Advocating for land policy reforms: In October 2020, AFIEGO published the research report, *Assessing the impacts of the oil refinery land acquisition and resettlement project on the affected people.*

The report, which assessed the socio-economic conditions of the affected people as at 2012 and as at 2019 to 2020, showed how gaps in land laws, poor implementation of existing land laws and other factors increased landlessness, poverty, school drop-out rates including amongst girls and others amongst the oil refinery-affected people.

The report made recommendations to strengthen land laws such as the 2018 Land Acquisition Bill, the LARR Policy and others that are under development.

(h) Advocacy for a solar energy policy: In 2020, AFIEGO also advocated for enactment of a Solar Energy Policy to promote the use of off-grid solar energy. In this vein, we trained over 1,600 women and youth champions to engage government for a solar energy policy, authored newspaper articles to sensitise Ugandans on the relevance of a solar energy policy and drafted a solar energy policy to guide the Ministry of Energy to put in place one.

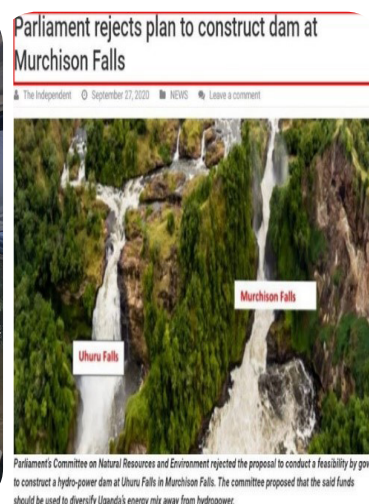
Unfortunately, 2020 ended without the solar energy policy being put in place. This is curtailing efforts to increase off-grid solar energy access.

(i) Cross-border movement building for clean energy: Between January and June 2020, AFIEGO also supported film screenings, radio talkshows, dissemination of photo story calendars and other efforts in which over 800,000 people in Uganda and the DRC were sensitised to promote clean energy alternatives in the Greater Virunga and Ituri landscapes.

Consequently, between January and November 2020, the women and youth clean energy champions that we sensitised undertook advocacy efforts in which they wrote or disseminated over 42 petitions, communiques, newspaper articles and others calling for the promotion of clean energy and green jobs in Uganda and the DRC.

The women, youth, CSOs and fisherfolk's activities continue to contribute to calls to build back better in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, locust invasions and other disasters that have been attributed to environmental degradation.

AFIEGO also provided **COVID-19 support to oil-affected communities and districts**. In addition, AFIEGO provided support to our Save Bugoma Forest Campaigners and AFIEGO staff who were arrested by the Uganda Police in September 2020 during efforts to save the forest. This support enabled the campaigners to continue working to save the forest.



AFIEGO and our partners during a meeting with the EU and eight EU ambassadors to discuss how to save Bugoma forest, Murchison Falls and Zoka Forest from destruction (L). In September 2020, parliament rejected development of a dam at the falls (R). The falls remain under threat however.

CHALLENGES

Despite the above achievements, a number of challenges still existed by the end of 2020. These included:

- i. Bugoma forest still remained under threat of destruction by HSL among other land grabbers.
- ii. Further, Murchison Falls still remained under threat as government insisted on conducting a feasibility study to determine whether a dam will be developed at the falls.

iii. In addition, the judiciary was still weak in as far as making decisions on environmental cases is concerned. Courts make decisions that negatively affect environmental conservation efforts.

iv. Furthermore, NEMA's violation of environmental laws continued, which puts the environment at risk of degradation.

v. Communities were also yet to be consulted on the Tilenga ESMPs, putting the environment and their livelihoods at risk.

vi. In addition, despite the dangers of the EACOP project, the developers were still insistent on developing the pipeline in ecosensitive areas such as forests, wetlands, near lakes and others.

vii. Government's commitment to compensate the 5,000 EACOP-affected people may also not be realised as government often breaks its own commitments.

viii. The Solar Energy Policy was also yet to be enacted by the end of 2020.

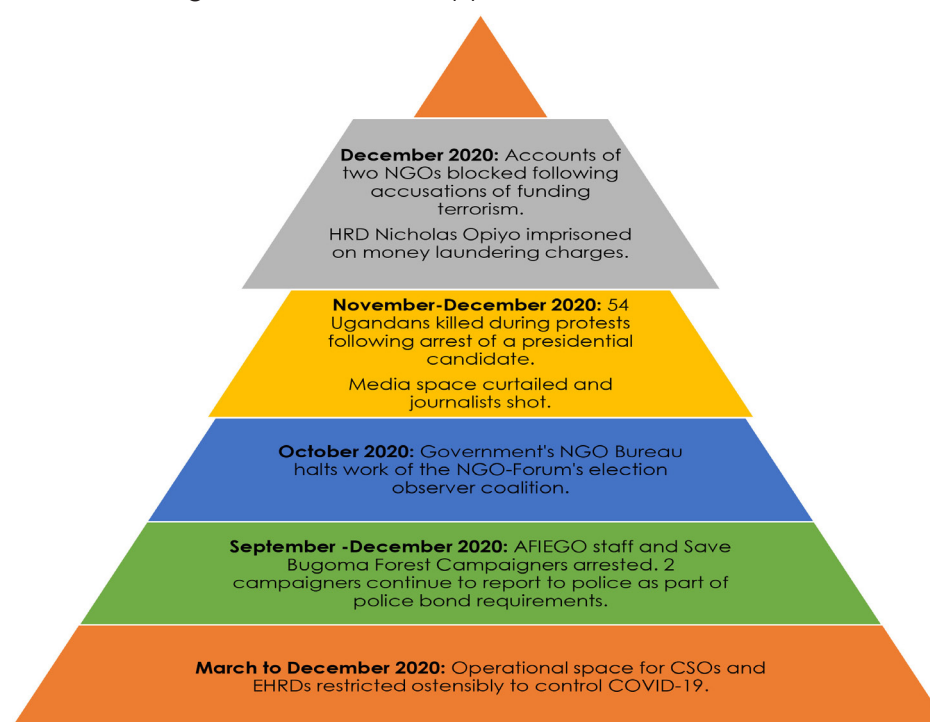
ix. Dirty energy projects such as government's licensing of Ngaji oil block that covers Queen Elizabeth National Park and Lake Edward were also on course.

Despite the above challenges which we hope to address in 2021, we would like to thank all our partners who enabled us to attain the achievements that we did. We hope to continue working with you in 2021.

**Dickens Kamugisha,
CEO, AFIEGO**

CIVIC SPACE REDUCES FURTHER IN UGANDA IN 2020

The year 2020 was a hard one for environmental and human rights defenders (EHRDs) in Uganda. The COVID-19 pandemic and restrictions that were put in place by government to stem spread of the disease in addition to the 2021 General Election campaigns further shrunk the already limited civic space in Uganda. In the image below, we highlight some of the violations against EHRDs that happened in 2020.



IMPLICATIONS

The reduction of civic space has had and will continue to have far-reaching implications. At the moment, Uganda is faced with many ills and challenges. These include land grabbing, failure by government and companies to pay prompt, fair and adequate compensation to project-affected persons (PAPs) in conformity with the law and grabbing of forest and wetland land. Others include abuse of oil-affected people's rights to education, access to economic opportunities and others.

Vulnerable groups such as women, youth, girls, the elderly, rural communities, the disabled and all those who continue to live at the margins of life have no space to voice their own concerns. They have been surviving thanks to the work of CSOs.

However, because government uses unjust laws such as the 2016 Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO) Act and Public Order Management Act (POMA), arrests and detains CSO staff in addition to interfering in the operations of CSOs through using Resident District Commissioners (RDCs) and other security

officers, CSO operational space is constrained.

Other factors constraining civic space include freezing CSOs' bank accounts, slapping EHRDs with trumped up charges, break-ins into CSO offices, rigorous reporting requirements for CSOs and an unfair judicial system. The COVID-19 pandemic and its restrictions is another factor.

When CSOs are constrained from operating, they engage in self-censorship, do not play their watchdog role, fail to hold government accountable, become afraid to defend communities' human rights and others. Overall, good governance, democracy and economic development cannot be realised without protecting civic space.

CALL TO ACTION

In 2021, we are calling on Ugandans to task government to respect Ugandans' civic space through striking bad provisions out of relevant laws, respecting laws that protect civic space, reducing the administrative burden of CSOs and others. Partners should also support EHRDs to defend their civic space.

Pictorial of our 2020 activities

AFIEGO ASSUMES CHAIRMANSHIP OF SAVE BUGOMA FOREST CAMPAIGN, WITH PARTNERS, LAUNCHES FOREST LIFE MATTERS CAMPAIGN



In 2020, AFIEGO assumed the chairmanship of the Save Bugoma Forest Campaign (SBFC), a campaign aimed at saving Bugoma forest from land grabbing, sugarcane growing and oil threats.

With our partners under the SBFC, we launched the FOREST LIFE MATTERS campaign in June 2020. We undertook a number of activities and made several gains under the campaign as will be shown in this pictorial.

SAVING BUGOMA FOREST: AFIEGO AND PARTNERS ENGAGE NFA AND PARLIAMENT



As a first step to saving Bugoma Forest, AFIEGO and our SBFC partners engaged the NFA in a June 24, 2020 meeting. Several meetings were held with the NFA in 2020.

These meetings resulted in NFA allowing the SBFC to join NFA's legal efforts in the Court of Appeal and others to save Bugoma forest from land grabbers. This is key for protecting the forest.

AFIEGO also engaged with parliament's Natural Resources' Committee (NRC) in July 2020. The committee adopted positions such as pushing for government compulsory acquisition of Bugoma forest land in private hands. This position was yet to be pushed with the executive by the end of 2020.

In the photos are NFA officials led by Mr. Tom Okurut, the NFA Executive Director (top photo), members of the NRC led by their Chairperson, Hon. Keefa Kiwanukwa (bottom photo), and the SBFC members (both photos) following the engagements.

BUGOMA FOREST: AFIEGO AND PARTNERS ENGAGE MINISTRY OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENT IN 2020



Following the engagement with NFA, AFIEGO and our SBFC partners engaged Hon. Sam Cheptoris, the Minister of Water and Environment and Hon. Beatrice Anywar, the State Minister for Water and Environment.

The engagements, which took place in July and November 2020, enabled us to find joint solutions to protect Bugoma forest.

Among these is the planned boundary re-opening of the forest by government to address land disputes and resolve threats to Bugoma. In the photos are the SBFC members with the ministers.



AFIEGO AND PARTNERS IN MEETING WITH EU TO SAVE BUGOMA FOREST



In addition, in July 2020, AFIEGO and our SBFC partners met a delegation from the European Union (EU) to discuss ways the EU would support efforts to save Bugoma forest.

The delegation was led by the EU Ambassador to Uganda, H.E. Attilio Pacifici.

The meeting resulted in engagement of parliament by the EU to discuss how government could save Bugoma forest.

A field visit was also organised in November 2020 by the EU in partnership with the SBFC to support saving the forest.

In the photos are H.E. Pacifici (C), other EU delegation members and the SBFC team after the July 2020 meeting (top photo) and during the November 2020 field visit (bottom photo).

AFIEGO AND PARTNERS ENGAGE BUNYORO KINGDOM TO SAVE BUGOMA FOREST



To save Bugoma forest, it was imperative to engage Bunyoro Kitara Kingdom (BKK), which is claiming Bugoma forest land.

In August 2020, AFIEGO and our SBFC partners engaged the kingdom which reiterated its commitment to seeing Bugoma forest being conserved.

Consequently, BKK protested NEMA's issuance of an ESIA certificate to Hoima Sugar Ltd in August 2020. More engagements with BKK are needed.

In the photo at the top are officials from BKK led by Hon. Andrew Byakutaga, the Prime Minister of BKK, and SBFC members following the August 2020 meeting.

AFIEGO also mobilised host communities and Ugandans at large through community meetings, online meetings, media engagements, radio talkshows, social media campaigns and others to save the forest. Some of the media engagements can be seen in the bottom photo.

AFIEGO AND PARTNERS COMMISSION LEGAL RESEARCH TO SAVE BUGOMA FOREST



In July 2020, AFIEGO and our SBFC partners commissioned legal research to assess the legal options available to save Bugoma forest.

The research enabled AFIEGO and our partners to file court cases in September and October 2020 to save the forest.

In the photos are some of the SBFC members during discussions with lawyers to commission the legal research.

AFIEGO AND CSO PARTNERS IN ENGAGEMENTS WITH EACOP PROJECT DEVELOPERS



Throughout 2020, AFIEGO and our partners undertook engagements to stop the environmental, climate change and social dangers of the EACOP project.

We engaged the EACOP project developers, Standard Bank, the AfDB and other actors to address these dangers.

In the photos are AFIEGO staff during a meeting with the EACOP project developers in February 2020 (top photo) and following a CSO meeting to draw an EACOP campaign strategy in September 2020 (bottom photo). The September 2020 meeting was co-organised with 350Africa.org.



AFIEGO SUPPORTS EACOP-AFFECTED PEOPLE TO ENGAGE DEVELOPERS OVER RIGHTS ABUSES



Between October and November 2020, AFIEGO organised the EACOP- and other oil-affected people from eight districts to petition the EACOP and other project developers to stop abusing their land, education and environmental rights.

A total of 879 people, including the affected people, signed a petition calling on the developers to stop abusing the oil-affected people's rights, including their land rights.

In November 2020, government committed to pay the EACOP-affected people's compensation in early 2021. The people have waited for compensation since 2018 or 2019.

In the photos are some of the affected people that were engaged. Several small engagements were held to promote safety amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

AFIEGO AND YOUTH LEADERS STRENGTHEN OIL-AFFECTED COMMUNITIES' KNOWLEDGE ON OIL IMPACTS



Between January and June, 2020, AFIEGO partnered with women and youth leaders from oil-affected districts to implement movement building efforts for clean energy.

We organised film screenings, radio talkshows, undertook media interviews, shared weekly energy news updates and disseminated photo story calendars among others highlighting the environmental and social impacts of oil exploitation. Over 501,145 stakeholders including women and youth were reached under these engagements.



The lessons gained pushed youth and women champions to demand that the Ugandan government promotes green economic alternatives. The youth produced over 42 advocacy materials demanding for this. They also continue to push for a green economic recovery as Uganda builds back from the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the photos are the youth after a film screening (top photo) and women in Kasese district after receiving photo story calendars (bottom photo).

AFIEGO SUPPORTS DRC CSOS TO STRENGTHEN COMMUNITIES' UNDERSTANDING OF OIL IMPACTS



Between January and July 2020, AFIEGO supported our CSO partners in the DRC to strengthen communities' understanding of oil and gas impacts.

Our partners organised film screenings, radio talkshows, community in addition to regional meetings and distributed Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials to communities to raise their awareness on oil impacts. Over 300,235 stakeholders were reached.

The lessons gained strengthened advocacy to promote clean energy in the African Great Lakes region.

In the photos are community members who live around Lake Albert in the DRC following a film screening.



February 24, 2020

COMMUNIQUE CALLING ON PRESIDENT YOWERI MUSEVENI TO STOP FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR A HYDROPOWER DAM AT MURCHISON FALLS

Parliament should also censor the minister who presented the resolution to cabinet to allow a study for a dam at Murchison Falls

1. Introduction and background

On February 17, 2020, Africa Institute for Energy Governance (AFIEGO) and our partner civil society organisations (CSOs) held a meeting at AFIEGO's head office in Kampala.

The objective of the meeting, which was participated in by over 18 CSO and community leaders, was to discuss government's insistence on carrying out a feasibility study to develop a dam at one of Uganda's most iconic falls, the Murchison Falls, amidst public resistance.

The meeting was organised after the State minister for energy, Hon. Simon D'Ujanga, appeared before the Natural Resources Committee of parliament on February 11, 2020.

During his appearance, Hon. D'Ujanga told MPs on the Natural Resources Committee that government had signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Bonang Power and Energy Ltd in December 2019 to conduct a feasibility study for a dam at the Murchison Falls in Murchison Falls National Park (MFNP).

The minister said that the MoU was signed following a directive from the president.

The CSO and community leaders' meeting questioned why government was insisting on developing a dam at a time when investment in hydropower dams have only increased Uganda's indebtedness amidst little to no socio-economic returns and many failures in the energy sector.

The CSO and community leaders at the meeting identified some of the failures the energy sector as being:

- Government has borrowed and invested over \$3 billion in dams and distribution lines in the last five years yet grid electricity access remains low – it stands at 24%



ASSESSING THE IMPACTS OF THE OIL REFINERY LAND ACQUISITION AND RESETTLEMENT PROJECT ON THE AFFECTED PEOPLE (2012 - 2020)



A RESEARCH REPORT
BY
AFRICA INSTITUTE FOR ENERGY GOVERNANCE

OCTOBER 2020



Both ENDS
Connecting people for change

Promoting access to off-grid solar energy services for environmental conservation and livelihoods in Uganda



An article by an AFIEGO staff that was published by the New Vision newspaper

A courtesy photo of a technician installing solar panels in one of the markets in Uganda



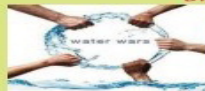
Communication Strategy
April 2020



ACTIVITÉS PÉTROLIÈRES DE L'UGANDA: IMPACTS SUR LES COMMUNAUTÉS DE LA RDC

L'Ouganda, voisin de la République démocratique du Congo (RDC) au nord-est, participe actuellement à des processus visant à exploiter ses 6,5 milliards de barils de pétrole. Les gouvernements de pétrole confédérés en Ouganda sont situés dans le bassin du lac Albert, partagé entre l'Ouganda et la RDC. Les activités pétrolières dans et autour du bassin du lac Albert auront donc un impact sur les pêcheurs, les femmes, les jeunes, les agriculteurs et les communautés du paysage de l'Ituri et du Grand Virunga en RDC. Cette affiche décrit les impacts potentiels des activités pétrolières en Ouganda sur les communautés en RDC.

Différends sur l'eau



L'Ouganda prévoit de répondre aux besoins domestiques en eau de ses communautés et de prélever de l'eau du lac Albert pour soutenir les activités pétrolières. Plus de 500 000 mètres cubes d'eau (500 millions de litres ou 25 millions de bidons de 20 litres) seront détournés par jour pour répondre aux besoins du secteur pétrolier et domestique. La demande accrue du secteur de l'eau qui affectera le lac Albert pourrait accroître les tensions et l'insécurité entre les communautés en Ouganda et en RDC.

Risque de pollution par les hydrocarbures



Le lac Albert risque d'être pollué par les activités pétrolières en Ouganda, car les activités pétrolières dans le pays seront menées à l'intérieur ou à proximité du lac Albert. La pollution du lac Albert constitue une menace pour les communautés en plus de l'accès des communautés ougandaises à une eau saine et propre.

Baisse de ressources halieutiques



La pollution du lac Albert due aux déversements d'hydrocarbures et aux déversements de produits chimiques en plus des perturbations dans le lac dues aux activités pétrolières en Ouganda pourraient entraîner une baisse des captures de poissons. Cela aggraverait la pauvreté des familles de pêcheurs en Ouganda et en RDC.

Impacts climatiques et biodiversité



Les activités pétrolières en Ouganda entraînent la production d'émissions de gaz à effet de serre (GES) avec un seul projet entraînant la production de 14,3 millions de tonnes de carbone par an. Les émissions contribueront au changement climatique et entraîneront des impacts tels que les inondations, le temps sec prolongé, le manque de nourriture, la destruction de biens, les déplacements communautaires et autres. Ces impacts se feront sentir en Ouganda et en RDC.

En outre, l'environnement qui soutient l'agriculture et d'autres activités en Ouganda et en RDC sera détruit par les activités pétrolières en Ouganda. Les communautés et les OSC devraient appeler les gouvernements ougandais et congolais à évaluer tous les impacts de cette affiche en évitant les activités pétrolières dans les zones écologiquement sensibles.

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BUGOMA FOREST AT RISK: ASSESSING THE ADEQUACY OF THE ESIA REPORT FOR THE KYANGWALI MIXED LAND USE PROJECT BY HOIMA SUGAR



EVALUATION REPORT
SEPTEMBER 2020



Ituri: des ONG préoccupées par l'impact de l'exploitation pétrolière au lac Albert

Posted By: admin on: May 08, 2020 In: Opinion No Comments

Print Email

Au chef-lieu de la province de l'Ituri, Bunia, les organisations de la société civile de l'environnement et des droits humains regroupées ont, ce jeudi 7 mai 2020, organisé une conférence de réflexion sur les conséquences de l'exploitation du pétrole sur les écosystèmes dans la région du Graben Albertin.

THE FOREST IS A SANCTUARY FOR CHIMPANZEES WHICH MUST BE PROTECTED TO STRENGTHEN TOURISM

PHOTO BY MIRIAM NAMUTEBO



Kamugisha handing over a petition to Kiwanuka, the chairperson of the natural resources committee, which commended the environmentalists for their campaign

ACTIVISTS PETITION HOUSE OVER FOREST

By Henry Subanjaka

Environmentalists have petitioned Parliament for its intervention in the pending destruction of Bugoma Central Forest Reserve, for a sugarcane plantation.

Appearing before the parliamentary committee on natural resources, yesterday, the environmentalists that have since started a save Bugoma Forest Campaign, want the government to compensate those claiming ownership of the forest, to save it.

"We believe that Parliament has the mandate to use its legislative and oversight powers to save Bugoma forest for the common good and equitable development," Dickens Kamugisha, the executive director, Africa Institute for Energy (AFIEGO) said.

In their petition to Parliament, the environmental activists said two companies – Hoima Sugar Ltd and MZ Agencies, are in the process of cutting down over 10,000 hectares of the over 41,000 hectares of Bugoma forest for sugarcane growing.

They noted that on March 10, this year, MZ Agencies obtained a court order to chase away National Forestry Authority (NFA) and UPDF soldiers that were guarding Bugoma Forest from being destroyed for sugarcane growing.

Parliament has a

responsibility to stop government officials from conspiring with land grabbers to destroy Bugoma Forest.

Indeed, the forest must be saved at all costs, so that it continues to play its important role as a tropical rainforest with ecological, climatological and socio-economic functions," Kamugisha, the interim chairperson Save Bugoma forest crusade, told the MPs.

The forest is a sanctuary for chimpanzees which, according to the activists, must be protected to strengthen tourism in the country.

COURT RULING

On December 8, last year, Hoima Sugar Ltd and Bunyoro Kibira Kingdom got a court ruling ordering NFA and her agents to stop guarding the contested part of the forest (Muhangaseema sector of Bugoma) to enable Hoima Sugar to use the said land as it wishes.

In the appeal, NFA had requested court for orders to preserve and protect Bugoma Forest.

However, the judge ruled that the applicants, NFA, had failed to prove that there is a threat to Bugoma forest.

Consequently, NFA's case in the High Court was dismissed. NFA appealed and the case is pending hearing.

They noted that Hoima Sugar Ltd is in the final stages of an Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) process that may pave way

for a certificate of approval from NEMA to commence destruction of Bugoma forest.

"Parliament should intervene to put the process on halt. The case will be overtaken by events if NEMA goes ahead to issue the ESIA and the forest is destroyed," Joan Akiza, the programme and legal officer at National Association of Professional Environmentalists (NAPE), said.

The committee, chaired by Kiboga County MP Dr. Keza Kiwanuka, commended the environmentalists for their campaign to save the forest.

He said the committee would study the petition and also interact with responsible government agencies, such as NEMA, NFA and lands ministry, for action.

According to Kiwanuka, the committee had visited Bugoma and Mabira forests and was disappointed at the level of encroachment.

Andrew Kaluya (Kigulu South) the committee vice-chairperson, said: "These courts have done us a disservice, we are on a weaker side."

"There is a ruling which we think can be overturned in the appeal process."

The committee which is set to meet the environmentalists again, however, said Parliament's intervention will be taken after thorough scrutiny of the petition to avoid sub judice since the matter is in court.

Reject Nema's approval of Bugoma forest giveaway

A forest be must safeguarded or protected best in its original form. The project geared at giving away 22sq miles of Bugoma forest in Hoima District for sugarcane growing will have far-reaching implication on the eco-system in the country.

Despite the Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) studies, there were inadequate public consultations for such a project. Public hearings should have been organised to gather views from the public for guidance before Nema made a final decision. It's a big shame for the government and its agency Nema, for failing to fulfil its mandate of safeguarding the environment as provided for in the National Environmental Act 2019.

It is now a big problem that this

government prefers investments such as sugarcane growing than preserving the country's natural forests. What happened to Mabira forest is what is happening to Bugoma forest today and we should not allow a repeat of that.

Nema's claim that only a portion of grasslands and degraded forest shall be converted for sugarcane growing is ill-advised. The same grassland can be used for planting trees through afforestation so that forests can regain their natural state and environment. The forest is facing a lot of pressure from all communities around it - from Kabwooya, Kiziranfumbi, and Buhimba Kikuube. Pressure is also exerted by refugees from Kyangwali, oil and gas activities, timber deal-

ers from Hoima and Kikuube, and even some individuals who have land titles on the forest land. This is in spite of the fact that the forest serves several economic functions to the Bunyoro communities and beyond.

The Bunyoro-Kitara Kingdom should review her agreement with the sugarcane investor and stand with the Banyoro, the grand sons and daughters of Omukama Kabalega, who say the forest should be conserved for the benefit of posterity. The Banyoro, environmentalists, conservationists, and politicians must combine efforts to save Bugoma forest.

Sandra Atusinguza, atusinguzasandra@afiego.org

CSOS DEMAND FOR RELEASE OF SAVE BUGOMA FOREST CAMPAIGNERS

September 16, 2020 Written by Earth Finds Published in Environment 0 comments



COURTESY PHOTO Two of our group members were arrested on their way to a radio talk show at Spice FM in Hoima.

Civil society actors and tourism operators working under the Save Bugoma Forest Campaign (SBC) to stop illegal sugarcane growing and oil activities in Bugoma forest and the ecosystems around the forest are demanding for an immediate release of nine of their members who were arrested by police in Hoima district.

"Our members travelled to Hoima to participate in a peaceful demonstration aimed at stopping the destruction of Bugoma forest for sugarcane growing and to stop the risks of oil activities to critical biodiversity resources."

Two of our group members were arrested on their way to a radio talk show at Spice FM in Hoima. The two were set to discuss the risks and dangers of destroying Bugoma forest for sugarcane growing and allowing oil activities in critical biodiversity areas including rivers, lakes, national parks, forests, wetlands and others.

The talk show was also aimed at providing information on the planned peaceful protests where the civil society leaders were supposed to walk from Hoima and Kikuube districts to Bugoma forest

Environmental activists mobilise against Hoima Sugar products over Bugoma forest

By Kazi Njerna Reporter - September 28, 2020 120



Mr. Dickens Kamugisha, Save Bugoma Campaign Chairman addresses journalists on Sunday against destroying Bugoma forest.

A group of environmental conservation activists have announced a series of activities aimed at mobilising Ugandans to boycott products of Hoima Sugar Limited over the company's stance on Bugoma Central Forest Reserve.

The National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) gave nine square miles which is part of Bugoma forest to Hoima Sugar Limited to grow sugarcane, a move that has not augured well especially with conservationists and tourism enthusiasts.

About Africa Institute for Energy Governance (AFIEGO)

Africa Institute for Energy Governance (AFIEGO) is a public policy research and advocacy organisation dedicated to influencing energy policies to benefit the poor and vulnerable. Based in Kampala, Uganda, the organisation was born out of the need to contribute to efforts to turn Africa's 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 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 energy resources for socio-economic development

Our Mission

To promote energy policies that benefit poor and vulnerable communities