

# AFIEGO's Weekly Energy News Roundup (May 18-22, 2020)

## Communication Strategy for promotion of off-grid solar energy

AFIEGO has developed a Communication Strategy for the promotion of off-grid solar energy in Uganda.

This strategy should be used by the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development (MEMD), Uganda Solar Energy Association (USEA), civil society organisations (CSOs), youth, the media and others to promote off-grid solar energy services in Uganda.

As many of you readers are aware, clean energy access in Uganda remains low with only 24% of Ugandans having access to grid electricity. This is despite the fact that about or over 10% of the national budget in the last five or so years has been awarded to the energy sector to increase electricity access among others.

In addition, over 90% of the Ugandan population relies on biomass to meet their cooking energy needs as electricity remains too expensive.

To address the above problems, the Ugandan government signed the Energy Africa Uganda Compact Agreement that sought to promote off-grid solar energy. The agreement, which was signed in 2016, was premised on the realisation that the majority of Ugandans remained without access to electricity because grid power is unaffordable. [Read more](#)

## Amour wants changes to oil agreement

Armour Energy, the Australian junior firm exploring for oil in the Kanywataba block in Ntoroko district, wants to renegotiate certain terms in its license with the intention of limiting its losses in case it sees a bleak future in Uganda.

The new demands appear to be testing Uganda's patience with the possibility of having the license cancelled. The company has not done any substantial work at the Kanywataba block since it invoked a force majeure in October 2019 due to the twin effects of heavy rains in the area that made the roads impassable to move its equipment and staff, and the latest pandemic of the coronavirus disease (Covid-19) that has seen Uganda slap a couple of travel bans. The company wants this lost time added to the period of its license.

"On April 9, 2020, the company wrote to the minister of Energy and Mineral Development of the Ugandan Government, advising that as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, it was unable and is being prevented from undertaking work on the 2D seismic program, based on a Force Majeure event that occurred," Armour said.

It then added: "The effect of this notice to the Minister means that the period of time during which the event of Force Majeure is operative, will be added to the end of the second exploration period."

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## KCCA should partner with Kiira Motors to supply eco-buses

The Minister of Finance, Matia Kasaija, has presented a \$12m (Shs 140bn) request to parliament's committee on the national economy to operationalise the Eco-bus project in Kampala central district.

It is proposed that special lanes will be put in place for the Eco-(sic) electric and combustion fuel-efficient buses starting at City Square in a ring road stretching to Jinja road, Nakawa, Ntinda-Bukoto, Kamwokya-Wandegeya and back to City Square.

The project dubbed Kampala City Roads Rehabilitation (KCRRP) is in line with the recently adopted National Development Plan III Integrated Transport Infrastructure Services Program whose major objective is to develop a seamless, safe, inclusive and sustainable multi-model transport system in the city.

The plan, if well executed, is intended to reduce the travel lead times in the Great Kampala Metropolitan Area (GKMA) from an average 4.1 min/km to 3.5min/km.

This will be achieved by significantly investing in the rehabilitation and maintenance of the transport infrastructure. This comes at the backdrop of a city which is annoyingly congested, disorganized, heavily polluted and ultimately places a very huge cost to the ordinary traveller in terms of healthy living and the man-hours lost in grid-locked traffic jams that has come to define Kampala. [Read more](#)

## Coronavirus widens climate rift between European and U.S. oil majors

Europe's top oil and gas companies have diverted a larger share of their cash to green energy projects since the coronavirus outbreak in a bet the global health crisis will leave a long-term dent in fossil fuel demand, according to Reuters' review of company statements and interviews with executives.

The plans of companies like BP (BP.L), Royal Dutch Shell (RDSA.L) and Total (TOTF.PA) are in step with the European Union's efforts to transition to a lower-carbon economy and away from a century-old reliance on oil, and reflect the region's widening rift with the United States where both the government and the top drillers are largely staying committed to oil and gas.

"We are all living differently and there is a real possibility that some of this will stick," BP Chief Executive Bernard Looney told Reuters in a recent interview, citing big declines in air and road travel, and a boost in telecommuting.

Global oil majors have all cut capital spending sharply as worldwide stay-at-home orders triggered by the coronavirus outbreak slammed fuel demand and sent oil prices to record lows.

But Europe's top five producers - BP, Shell, Total, Eni (ENI.MI), and Equinor (EQNR.OL) - are all focusing their investment cuts mainly on oil and gas activities, and giving their renewables and low carbon businesses a relative boost, according to Reuters' calculations.

[Read more](#)

## Renewable energy should be at the heart of virus recovery plans: IEA

The International Energy Agency on Wednesday called on governments to put clean energy at the heart of their coronavirus economic recovery plans, as it forecast the first slowdown in new renewable power installations worldwide in two decades.

The IEA warned that lockdown measures — which at their peak affected more than half the world's population — would have "far-reaching" consequences, as the world grapples with a crisis that has sent energy demand plummeting and threatens a deep economic contraction.

The agency, which had expected 2020 to be a bumper year for green energy, slashed its two-year forecast for growth in renewable capacity by nearly 10 percent.

Many countries have [however] pledged to increase their use of renewables to meet tough climate targets and the IEA urged governments to redouble those efforts as they plan for post-virus economic recovery. [Read more](#)

## Upcoming events

May 29, 2020; Kampala: Hold a radio talkshow on the relevance of implementing environmental laws amidst oil and forest degradation challenges to reduce the incidence of pandemics

Coronavirus: AFIEGO continues to call on communities and stakeholders to stay safe through following the Ministry of Health and World Health Organisation's guidelines.

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