

AFRICA INSTITUTE FOR ENERGY GOVERNANCE



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April 11, 2023

To: Mr. Phillipe Grouicx,
The General Manager,
TotalEnergies E&P (U) B.V.,
Kampala (U).



0312426000

Dear Sir,

RE: REQUEST TO COMPENSATE COMMUNITIES AND FIND LASTING SOLUTION TO FLOODS FROM THE TILENGA CPF AREA

Greetings from Africa Institute for Energy Governance (AFIEGO), a public policy research and advocacy organisation that supports oil-affected communities to defend their rights. AFIEGO has empowered oil-affected communities for over a decade to protect their rights.

Some of the communities that AFIEGO has empowered and works with include those affected by the Tilenga, oil refinery, finished petroleum products pipeline and the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) projects among others.

For the furtherance of our community rights protection work, between January and March 2023, AFIEGO held meetings with leaders and communities that neighbour the Tilenga Industrial Area in Buliisa district. The purpose of the meetings, which took place in Buliisa district, was to discuss the emerging human rights and environmental challenges that communities are faced with due to the Tilenga project.

During the meetings, a number of challenges including the destruction of communities' gardens by 'floods' from the Tilenga Industrial Area was discussed; a Central Processing Facility (CPF) is supposed to be built in the industrial area.

Fears that the 'flood' of water from the Tilenga Industrial Area could contaminate Lake Albert and its potential to poison animals were also discussed. The destruction of trees due to site clearance works for the Tilenga project was also discussed.

Generally, communities are concerned by the environmental destruction and floods as we discuss below.

GENESIS OF FLOODS

As you may recall, beginning in 2017, TotalEnergies compulsorily acquired 786 acres of land from over 600 asset owners in Kasinyi village, Ngwendo sub-county, Buliisa district. The land was acquired to enable TotalEnergies to set up a CPF among other infrastructure in what is called the Tilenga Industrial Area.

The compulsory land acquisition is yet to be completed to date as some affected households filed a case in the Court of Appeal following rejection of the low or unfair compensation that was offered by TotalEnergies.

Regardless of the above, in May 2021, TotalEnergies contracted MontaEngil to undertake site preparation works at the Tilenga Industrial Area. Communities started experiencing a number of challenges including dust pollution during dry weather and a lot of water run-off – ‘floods’- during the wet season.

The first ‘floods’ were experienced in 2022. In August 2022, communities’ gardens containing crops such as watermelon, grafted oranges, jackfruit trees and others were destroyed. Through their L.C.1 chairperson, communities wrote a letter to TotalEnergies’ General Manager on August 4, 2022.

Despite an August 13, 2022 visit by Total’s Community Liaison Officer (CLO) and representatives from the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum Authority of Uganda (PAU) who assessed the damage done to communities’ crops, no action was taken to stop the floods and to compensate the affected communities. It is notable that over 50 households with approximately 500 members were affected by the floods of August 2022.

FLOODS IN 2023

Today, communities are experiencing fresh flooding following the commencement of the long rains in March 2023. The floods begin in the Tilenga Industrial/CPF Area, which hosts a number of swamps per information from communities. The ‘floods’ travel through about five villages including Kasinyi, Kirama, Kigwera South East (SE), Kigwera South West (SW) and others. The floods/water flows up to Lake Albert, per information from communities.

Communities are worried that not only will Lake Albert be contaminated but that their children are at risk of catching water-borne diseases. They are also worried that their animals, which drink the water from the CPF Area, could get poisoned. Moreover, gardens belonging to several households have also been destroyed.

The communities say that despite engagements with MontaEngil and others, no solution to stop the floods has been found. The last engagement was held in November 2022 at the Kasinyi L.C.1 offices in Buliisa district but todate, the floods from the CPF Area continue to flow through the villages.

ENVIRONMENTAL DESTRUCTION

Buliisa is a traditionally hot district and to make living there bearable, communities plant and maintain trees. However, as seen in other districts such as Hoima where oil infrastructure has been set up, trees in the CPF Area were destroyed. Communities are worried that this is going to put them at risk of experiencing harsh dry seasons.

REQUESTS

Through this letter therefore, communities make the following requests:

- i. **TotalEnergies should work with L.C. 1 chairpersons** of the affected villages, the Buliisa district leadership, PAU and the Ministry of Energy to assess the damage done to communities’ gardens due to the ongoing (2023) floods;

- ii. **Thereafter, TotalEnergies should compensate communities** for the crops that they have lost as well as the income they stand to lose (including future income) due to the destruction of their crops, some of which produce fruits for sale for many years;
- iii. **Communities that lost crops in 2022** and are yet to be compensated should also be paid;
- iv. **In addition, the Ministry of Water and Environment (MWE)** should work with PAU to test the water run-off from the Tilenga CPF Area to determine the chemical contents therein and the risks they pose to children, domestic animals and Lake Albert. The MWE should sensitise communities on the contents of this run-off;
- v. **Further, the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) should ask** TotalEnergies to stop the ongoing works at the Tilenga CPF Area until foolproof measures to stop the floods from the CPF Area are put in place;
- vi. **In addition, NEMA should task TotalEnergies to replant the trees** that they cut in Buliisa district; and
- vii. **Finally, instead of investing in risky oil activities that are causing destruction** to community property, TotalEnergies should invest in helping communities to access off-grid solar clean energy.

We thank you in advance for your cooperation in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

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Dickens Kamugisha,
CEO-AFIEGO

SIGNATORIES -HOUSEHOLDS AFFECTED BY FLOODS

No.	Name of affected person	Sex	Village	District
1.	Kaahwa James	M	Kigwera	Buliisa
2.	Muhangi Charles	M	Kigwera	Buliisa
3.	Bitadwa David	M	Kigwera	Buliisa
4.	Acurabe Wilson	M	Kigwera	Buliisa
5.	Kigwabya Jackson	M	Kigwera	Buliisa
6.	Byarufu Rony	M	Kigwera	Buliisa
7.	Bosobozi Oscar	M	Kigwera	Buliisa
8.	Byakagaba Geofrey	M	Kasinyi	Buliisa
9.	Kabonesa Slyvia	F	Kasinyi	Buliisa

10.	Atugonza Wilis	M	Kigwera	Buliisa
11.	Nshemerirwe Babra	F	Kasinyi	Buliisa
12.	Businge John	M	Kigwera	Buliisa
13.	Asiimwe Nafital	M	Kikogoro	Buliisa
14.	Kato Yosamu	M	Kikogoro	Buliisa
15.	Ifaimu Ibra	M	Kasinyi	Buliisa
16.	Gubaza Steven	M	Kasinyi	Buliisa
17.	Tundulu John	M	Kirama	Buliisa
18.	Atinwe Ronald	M	Kasinyi	Buliisa
19.	Katusiime David	M	Kasinyi	Buliisa
20.	Mugisha Jelousy	M	Kasinyi	Buliisa
21.	Mugume Richard	M	Kasinyi	Buliisa
22.	Mugume Gabriel	M	Kirama	Buliisa
23.	Kusemererwa Enid	F	Kigwera SW	Buliisa
24.	Businge Ramoso	M	Kigwera SW	Buliisa
25.	Akugizibwe Oscar Dolo	M	kigwera	Buliisa
26.	Aliganyira Jackson	M	Kigwera SW	Buliisa
27.	Odarwa Patrick	M	Kasinyi	Buliisa
28.	Kutegeka Hariet	M	Kikogoro	Buliisa
29.	Tholith Emmanuel	M	Kasinyi	Buliisa
30.	Eliya Frank	M	Kasinyi	Buliisa
31.	Kaahwa Jacklis	M	Kigwera	Buliisa
32.	Ulonyi Jowell	M	Kasinyi	Buliisa
33.	Balijunaki David	M	Kasinyi	Buliisa
34.	Kabasindi Rosemary	F	Kirama	Buliisa
35.	Gabu Geoffrey	M	Kasinyi	Buliisa
36.	Wandera Kennedy	M	Kasinyi	Buliisa
37.	Kasisaki Dolika	F	Kasinyi	Buliisa
38.	Asiimwe Julius		M Kasinyi	

CC

- The Minister of Energy and Mineral Development

- The Minister of Water and Environment
- All MPs from Buliisa
- The Executive Director, PAU
- The Executive Director, NEMA
- The L.C.V Chairperson, Buliisa district
- The RDC, Buliisa district
- Local Council 1 chairpersons of affected villages