

# THE EACOP IS BEING CONSTRUCTED, BUT AT WHAT COST?



**2026**

**SUMMARY OF THE  
PUBLICATION**

## INTRODUCTION

The publication, “The EACOP is being constructed ... But at what cost?”, was co-produced by Africa Institute for Energy Governance (AFIEGO) and Uganda's oil-affected communities in June 2026.

It examines the **socio-economic impacts arising from the construction** of Uganda's oil projects, particularly the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) and the Tilenga feeder pipeline.

Previous publications have focused on the impacts of the projects' compulsory land acquisition activities.

This publication documents the impacts of the construction of the EACOP and Tilenga feeder pipeline while discussing whether Uganda's oil revenues could help address the country's clean energy access challenges.



## HOW FAR HAS CONSTRUCTION GONE

At the time of publication, the development of Uganda's oil infrastructure was ongoing. The report notes that the EACOP had reached approximately 82% completion by April 2026, according to publicly available information.

Although official figures regarding the completion status of the Tilenga feeder pipeline were not publicly available, communities reported that the feeder pipeline was in more advanced stages of development than the EACOP.

Construction is racing ahead. Are communities being protected at the same pace?





## Where the information in the publication comes from

The data in the publication was collected for over nine months, from September 2025 to May 2026, from oil-affected communities in eight districts.

A desktop review was also undertaken to examine whether the oil revenues received by Uganda between 2013 and 2025 have contributed to addressing the country's energy access challenges.

## KEY FINDINGS: WHAT COMMUNITIES ARE TELLING US

- **Land taken without consent:** Sub-contractors dumped excavated soil on community land beyond the agreed 30-metre pipeline corridor, without payment to or permission from the affected land owners.

- **Livelihoods buried:** Farmers could not plant on land used for soil dumping. As a result, some households lost access to productive land that they depended on for farming and income generation. Several affected individuals reported that by June 2026, they had still not received compensation for these losses.

- **Flooding and mudslides:** Construction in wetlands has altered water flow, flooding gardens that never used to flood. Farmers described losing nursery beds, vegetables and other agricultural investments due to mud run-off associated with construction activities. Given that the pipelines traverse wetlands and marshlands, communities expressed concern that these impacts could persist beyond the construction phase.

- **Roads destroyed or closed:** Residents in Hoima, Kikuube, Kakumiro, Lwengo and Kyotera reported that heavy construction trucks damaged roads, creating potholes in some districts that became impassable during rainy periods. In some instances, roads that communities had relied upon for years to access markets, schools, health facilities and social services were blocked entirely, forcing residents to travel much longer distances. Elderly persons seeking hospital services were especially affected.

- **Hidden social costs:** Communities also report rising school drop-outs linked to

elephant-human conflict and dust-related illness, family breakdown, and gender-based violence connected to the influx of project workers.

- **Impacts on vulnerable groups:** Community leaders reported that some Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) lost access to their gardens and water sources due to road closures. Blind persons, in particular, struggled to navigate unfamiliar routes and experienced repeated falls while attempting to reach essential services.

- **Energy access remains a major challenge:** Uganda continues to face a significant electricity access gap, particularly in rural areas. The publication notes that:
  - Uganda has approximately **5.4 million rural households**.
  - Only 18% of rural households have access to electricity.
  - Moreover, frequent power outages continue to affect electricity reliability across the country.
  - Ugandans suffer, on average, **as many as 200 hours of power outages per month with the outages** largely being seen during daylight working hours.
- **Potential use of oil revenues:** The publication argues that oil revenues already generated could have made a substantial contribution toward improving rural energy access. It estimates that:
  - Providing small solar home systems to households without electricity would cost **approximately UGX 2.88 trillion (about USD 771 million)**.
  - Uganda's reported **oil revenues of over USD 868 million between 2013 and 2025** could have financed such an initiative.
  - **However, these revenues would not be sufficient** to fully finance the expansion and strengthening of Uganda's national electricity grid, which requires several billion dollars in investment.

## WHAT MUST HAPPEN NEXT

AFIEGO and affected communities are calling for:

- 1. Fair and prompt compensation** for households whose land was used to dump soil without consent.
- 2. Compensation for crops and gardens destroyed** by the EACOP and Tilenga construction activities.
- 3. Rehabilitation of damaged roads** and reopening of blocked community access routes.
- 4. Concrete measures to reduce noise** and air pollution harming beekeeping livelihoods.
- 5. Deliberate attention to the needs of persons with disabilities** affected by the projects.
- 6. Stronger government oversight** of the EACOP Company and TotalEnergies E&P Uganda (TEPU).



**7. A recognition that oil revenues will not promote universal access** to clean energy necessitating avoiding, minimising or mitigating oil impacts to communities. These need to engage in productive activities to access clean energy, yet oil activities are destroying some communities' productive capacity.

**8. Active citizen and civil society engagement** with government to ensure these recommendations are implemented.



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