

June 2026; Issue 6

INVISIBLE THREAT: UNDERSTANDING METHANE EMISSIONS AMIDST UGANDA'S OIL ACTIVITIES



A well pad where drilling activities are underway near Lake Albert.
Photo credit: Uganda Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development

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Dear reader, welcome to AFIEGO's June 2026 newsletter.

On June 11, 2026, the Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, Hon. Henry Musasizi, presented Uganda's UGX 84.3 trillion 2026/2027 national budget as approved by Parliament.

The priority areas named in the budget include agro-industrialisation, tourism development, science and technology (including ICT and the creative arts) and mineral-based industrial development (including oil and gas).

The budget allocates UGX 473.51 billion for mineral-based industrial development, mining, oil and gas. These funds are supposed to be spent on mineral exploration and certification, capitalisation of the Uganda National Mining Company, establishment of mineral markets and buying centres, development of an oil refinery and the planned operationalisation of the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP).

The planned operationalisation of the 1,443-kilometre EACOP that is meant to transport crude oil from Kabaale (Hoima) in Uganda to the port of Tanga in Tanzania for export signals that Uganda is proceeding with large fossil-fuel infrastructure at a time when the global energy transition and climate science point to the need to sharply reduce

reliance on fossil fuels.

Our concern is not only about Uganda's refusal to align with climate science by promoting renewables over oil and gas long-lived but also about the greenhouse gases oil and gas operations emit, particularly methane.

Methane is an invisible, odorless, colorless and flammable gas and comes the second most abundant anthropogenic greenhouse gas after carbon dioxide, **accounting** for about 11% of global emissions.

Why invisible? Methane cannot be smelt and seen by naked eyes. It should be noted that methane emissions **come** from both natural and human activities.

In the oil and gas sector, methane is **emitted** through leaks, venting and flaring during the extraction, processing and transportation of coal, oil and gas. According to International Energy Agency (IEA), most methane emissions across the oil and gas sector **come** from upstream activities such as extraction, gathering systems and processing facilities which account for 80% of the total emissions. Methane is more than 28 **times** as potent as carbon dioxide at trapping heat in the atmosphere.

In response to global concern, some countries and international actors have announced methane abatement initiatives and policy

measures. For instance, after the 29th Conference of Parties (COP29), the European Commission with support from Canada, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States partners launched a Methane Abatement Partnership Roadmap intended to accelerate reductions associated with oil and gas.

Following the launch of a new roadmap, over 140 member companies with assets in more than 70 countries on five continents and covering over 40% of the world's oil and gas production and over 70% of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) flows joined the partnership.

While such steps are important, announced policies and measures in many countries remain insufficient to address the scale and urgency of the climate crisis.

However, Uganda is yet to develop comprehensive strategies, laws or enforcement mechanisms specifically targeting methane abatement in the context of oil and gas development.

Without robust, transparent policies, strict regulatory limits, independent monitoring and commitments to eliminate routine venting and flaring, investments in oil infrastructure risk locking the country into long-term

emissions and exposing communities to harms from pollution and climate impacts.

In our **Word from the CEO**, we discuss why methane emissions from the oil and gas sector cannot be ignored.

In this newsletter, we also bring you our **pictorial** section discussing the activities that AFIEGO and our partners implemented this month (June 2026).

In the **lobbying** section, we share some of the lobby and advocacy products that we and our partners produced and disseminated this month (June 2026).

Finally, in **in the media** section, we bring you some of the newspaper articles written by our staff and partners that were published in the leading newspapers in June 2026.

We hope that you enjoy reading this newsletter.

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Why methane emissions need immediate action

Every Ugandan deserves a healthy and stable climate, whether they are a farmer waiting for the rains to cultivate their crops, a fisher relying on healthy lakes and rivers for a livelihood, a pastoralist searching for greener pastures or simply a person in need of clean air to breathe and safe water to use. Unfortunately, all these are under threat as another greenhouse gas besides carbon dioxide quietly accelerates the climate crisis

In this edition, we turn our attention to methane emissions from Uganda's oil and gas sector, a concern that is invisible yet deeply connected to climate change, public health, livelihoods and the future we are building for our communities.

In September 2025, Natural Resources Governance Institute (NRGI) convened a validation workshop bringing together civil society, academia, government, media and private sector actors to help shape a stronger legal and institutional framework for methane abatement in Uganda's oil and gas sector.

This was a timely and useful step. However, much more still needs to be done to ensure that methane reduction is treated as an urgent national priority rather than an afterthought.

Uganda's oil projects including the Tilenga project are among the new oil and gas developments that could emit 2,300 kt of methane annually before 2030. This is an equivalent to the current methane emissions from fossil fuel production in Europe.

Public reporting has also already raised concerns around gas handling and flaring plans, reminding us that methane

management is not a future issue but a current one. If left unchecked, methane emissions can worsen climate change, intensify droughts and heatwaves, and threaten agriculture, water resources and household livelihoods, as discussed below.

Why methane emissions matter

Accelerating climate change: Methane is considered one of the most harmful greenhouse gases associated with climate change. While methane persists in the atmosphere for about 12 years compared to carbon dioxide that lasts over 300 years, methane is more than 80 times effective at trapping heat for 20 years.

According to the International Energy Agency (IEA)'s Global Methane Tracker (2025), methane has contributed up to 30 percent of global warming seen since the industrial revolution. Therefore, cutting down on methane emissions is one of the quickest and most efficient ways that states can reduce global warming in the near future.

Furthermore, the development of new oil and gas projects in Uganda makes methane reduction a serious challenge for the state. The Global Energy Monitor (GEM) June 2025 briefing titled, "The Next Methane Surge" identifies the Tilenga and Lake Albert oilfields in Uganda as one of the new global oil fields which will contribute to methane emissions in the future.

Moreover, the report emphasises that only ten new oil and gas fields in the world, including Uganda's Tilenga project, are estimated to produce more than half of methane emissions in all future oil and gas developments till 2030.

What is the impact? Uganda is a country where nearly 70 percent of its population relies directly on agricultural activities for their sustenance, jobs and income. In this case, climate change will pose great danger to the lives of the population due to rising temperatures, droughts, floods and unpredictable rains which will affect their crops, livestock and fishery activities. All these events related to climate change will result in reduced yields, high food prices, low-income levels and increased poverty levels especially in rural areas.

Threats to biodiversity: Uganda's oil exploration projects are mainly located in the Albertine Graben area which is not only one of Uganda's most ecosensitive areas, but also one of Africa's most biodiverse. The region is home to over 50% of Africa's bird species, nearly 40% of Africa's mammal species as well as 14% and 19% of Africa's reptile and amphibian species respectively.

Methane emissions contribute to climate change, which in turn threatens biodiversity conservation. Climate change can cause habitat loss, destruction of breeding grounds, loss of forage and others which make biodiversity conservation efforts more difficult.

Moreover, heatwaves associated with climate change can affect amphibian and other species such as fish that live in water, causing their death.

The biodiversity loss risks presented by climate change present grave concerns for Ugandans' livelihoods, with those in the fisheries and sustainable tourism sectors being most at risk of losing their livelihoods.

Human health and air pollution: While inhalation of methane does not have any

adverse impacts on human health at normal levels in the atmosphere, methane is one of the significant precursors of ground-level (tropospheric) ozone which is one of the most dangerous types of air pollution. In reaction to nitrogen oxide and sunlight, methane produces ground-level ozone causing respiratory problems among others.

According to the IEA, mitigation of methane emissions will lead to a reduction in the pollution caused by ground-level ozone while at the same time slowing down the rate of global warming. Therefore, reduction of methane emission results in both health and climate benefits.

People who live around the oil and gas facilities also risk exposure to pollutants like benzene, toluene and xylene which occur in conjunction with methane in venting, leaking and flaring activities. Inhalation of these pollutants causes conditions such as asthma, chronic bronchitis, decreased lung function, headaches, cardiovascular complications and cancer among others. Infants, pregnant women, the elderly and those with preexisting respiratory conditions are particularly susceptible.

Social and economic impacts: Methane emissions have negative impacts associated with climate disruption and have direct effects on livelihood and human wellbeing. Agricultural, fishing and livestock sectors which employ millions of people in Uganda are increasingly becoming more vulnerable to the changing climate. Poor harvests decrease income and create food insecurity for households and communities, thus making them rely more on humanitarian aid.

Further, women and girls tend to be disproportionately impacted because they have the major responsibility of fetching water, growing crops and taking care of their families.

With the increasing number of droughts and less dependable sources of water, women have to spend more time fetching water and fuel for cooking, which leaves little time for schooling and earning a living.

Also, young people who comprise of the highest percentage of Uganda's population suffer greatly from the lack of job opportunities due to the reduced productivity of agriculture and rural economy. These social impacts highlight that methane emissions are not only an environmental issue but also a development, gender equality and human rights concern.

Increased pressure on public spending:

Methane emissions impose significant economic costs that extend far beyond environmental damage. As methane contributes to worsening air pollution and accelerates climate change, Uganda faces rising healthcare costs associated with respiratory illnesses, heat-related diseases and other pollution-linked health conditions. These growing demands place additional strain on an already constrained health sector, reducing the government's ability to invest in preventive healthcare and other essential public services

Worse still are the economic costs of inaction on climate change. Climate change results in an increase in occurrence and severity of droughts, floods landslides and other natural disasters hence the government spends billions trying to respond to these problems instead of using the same amount of money in developing the country.

According to [a report](#) by the Ministry of Water and Environment (MWE) of Uganda, costs of inaction on climate change range from

US\$3.2 to US\$5.9 billion within a decade with the biggest impacts being on water, followed by energy, agriculture and infrastructure. The increasing cost of responding to climate change means that the government will not be able to finance other crucial sectors such as education, renewable energy and agriculture among others.

Recommendations

To safeguard Uganda's people, biodiversity and climate commitments, AFIEGO recommends that:

- i. The Government of Uganda (GoU) should raise public awareness about methane risks to inform communities, policymakers and the media about the health, biodiversity and climate dangers of methane emissions.
- ii. Prioritise funding and incentives for clean and renewable energy projects like solar, wind and community-scale renewable projects that create jobs, expand energy access and reduce reliance on fossil fuels.
- iii. Immediately suspend exploration and production in sensitive areas such as Murchison Falls National Park to protect biodiversity, ecosystem services and community livelihoods.
- iv. Uganda should adopt strict regulations to abolish gas flaring and venting.
- v. Uganda should join the Global Methane Pledge and actively participate in international methane reduction initiatives to access technical assistance, financing and capacity building for reducing methane emissions from agriculture while leaving fossil fuels, including oil and gas in the ground.

By CEO

Pictorial of our activities

AFIEGO SUPPORTS AGMEPP TO ENGAGE EACOP-AFFECTED COMMUNITIES IN KYOTERA DISTRICT



In June, AFIEGO supported members of the Association of Greater Masaka EACOP PAPs Petitioners (AGMEPP) to meet with EACOP affected families in Kyotera district. During the meeting, community members shared the challenges they continue to face as a result of the ongoing EACOP project construction activities including delayed compensation, limited access to water sources and community roads.

Also, women, youth and Persons Living with Disabilities (PLWDs) highlighted the impacts these challenges have had on their daily lives.

Members of AGMEPP encouraged community members to work together in advocating for their rights and committed to continue supporting efforts aimed at addressing the above-mentioned challenges.

AFIEGO AND IGEN-EA CONVENE A MEETING TO DEVELOP THE NETWORK'S STRATEGIC PLAN



On June 12, 2026, AFIEGO supported the Inclusive Green Economy Network-East Africa (IGEN-EA) to convene a strategic planning meeting that brought together members from Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania.

The meeting provided an opportunity for participants to reflect on the network's progress, share ideas and contribute to the development of IGEN-EA's three-year strategic plan.

The strategic plan will guide the network's efforts to promote green economic growth, environmental sustainability, and inclusive development across East Africa.

AFIEGO ORGANISES AN EXCHANGE LEARNING FOR EACOP-AFFECTED COMMUNITY GROUPS IN GREATER MASAKA



Between May and June 2026, AFIEGO organised an exchange learning between the Association of Greater Masaka EACOP PAPs Petitioners (AGMEPP) and Tulwanilile Obwenkanya, a newly formed community group from Lwengo district.

The exchange learning provided an opportunity for members of Tulwanilile Obwenkanya to learn from AGMEPP's experiences and strengthen their capacity to advocate for the rights and welfare of communities affected by the EACOP project.

AFIEGO SUPPORTS AN EXCHANGE LEARNING FOR OIL-AFFECTED COMMUNITIES FROM BUNYORO AND GREATER MASAKA



On June 25, 2026, AFIEGO organised an exchange learning between EACOP-affected persons from Greater Masaka and oil refinery project-affected persons from Bunyoro sub-regions.

During the engagement, participants shared experiences, challenges and lessons on community mobilisation, advocacy and access to justice.

They also discussed the importance of unity in advancing community rights and addressing the impacts of oil developments.



AFIEGO FACILITATES GREATER MASAKA EACOP-AFFECTED PERSON'S VISIT TO THE IGEN-EA CLEAN ENERGY HUB



In June 2026, AFIEGO facilitated a visit for Greater Masaka EACOP project-affected persons to the IGEN-EA community clean energy hub in Kikuube district.

During the visit, participants explored practical clean energy technologies that can improve household livelihoods while protecting the environment.

The visit provided participants with an opportunity to learn about affordable and sustainable energy solutions.



AFIEGO'S LEGAL TEAM HOLDS A TRAINING ON CIVIC SPACE AND COMMUNITY ADVOCACY



In June 2026, AFIEGO held a legal training for community activists to discuss recent court decisions affirming Ugandans' constitutional rights to freedom of expression, assembly, association and participation in public affairs.

During the meeting participants were guided on the importance of ensuring that public statements are accurate, evidence-based and supported by credible information especially when raising concerns about environmental impacts, displacement and other issues affecting communities.



Lobbying

Between May and June 2026, AFIEGO produced and disseminated a policy brief on Uganda's critical minerals highlighting the need to ensure that mineral development creates benefits for communities while protecting people and the environment. In addition, AFIEGO produced a community publication documenting the social impacts of EACOP and Tilenga feeder pipeline's construction activities. Further, AFIEGO issued IEC materials to mark World Environment Day and share litigation updates among others.

AFIEGO
AFRICA INSTITUTE FOR ENERGY GOVERNANCE (AFIEGO)

BRIEF ON UGANDA'S CRITICAL MINERALS

COMMUNITY VOICE
MAY 2026

COMMUNITIES DEMAND INCLUSION IN BUGOMA FOREST RESTORATION EFFORTS

Bugoma forest host communities are demanding community inclusion in the ongoing restoration of Bugoma Central Forest Reserve (CFR). The restoration is being undertaken by Hoima Sugar Limited (HSL) following an order that the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) made to HSL in September 2021. Through the order, NEMA tasked HSL to restore 4,854.7 hectares/18.73 sq. miles of one of the few remaining tropical rainforests in Uganda. Since the order was made, the Bugoma forest host communities have been demanding that HSL complies. With the restoration efforts having been formally launched by NEMA and HSL, communities are demanding that NEMA shares periodic information on the restoration efforts with them. The communities are also demanding that their leaders are supported to periodically visit the restoration sites to ensure that HSL is complying with NEMA's order and is planting indigenous trees. The communities also want HSL's sugarcane growing project in Bugoma CFR stopped.

AFIEGO MAJOR WIN

A High Court Judge in Kampala issued a **judgement on May 21, 2026** that provides reprieve for Ugandans seeking to enjoy their rights and freedoms of association, peaceful assembly and others. The ruling arose from a June 2024 case filed by four youth climate activists against four police officers. **AFIEGO** supported the youth to file the case. In the suit, the youth averred that the police officers who arrested them abused their aforementioned rights, and freedom from detention beyond 48 hours. Following their arrest in October 2022, police detained the youth for six days before producing them before court. The judge agreed with the youth, noting that their detention beyond 48 hours was unlawful. The judge ordered government to pay damages of **Shs. 10 million** to each of the youth.

DEFENDING RIGHTS | PROTECTING FREEDOMS | BUILDING CLIMATE JUSTICE

IGEN

On **World Environment Day 2026**, IGEN-EA urges the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development to accelerate the establishment of community clean energy hubs across the country to expand access to sustainable energy and strengthen climate resilience. This supports environmental conservation and the protection of natural ecosystems.

World Environment Day 2026

AFIEGO

THE EACOP IS BEING CONSTRUCTED, BUT AT WHAT COST?

A community publication on the social impacts of the EACOP construction activities

JUNE 2026

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?

In the media

In June 2026, AFIEGO staff and research associates wrote opinion articles that were published in leading newspapers. Some of the published articles are captured below.



Rising vandalism undermines Uganda's electricity reliability

Monday, June 01, 2026



UETCL engineers disassemble a vandalised tower line inside Kakira Sugar Plantation in Jinja District on October 31, 2022. PHOTO/TOBBIAS JOLLY OWINY

By Guest Writer

What you need to know:

- Uganda must safeguard its power infrastructure, ensure reliable electricity, and create a more prosperous future for all.

Uganda's electricity sector has made significant strides, with the national grid now spanning 5,295 kilometres and electricity access reaching approximately 57 percent of the population, with 38 percent on-grid and 19 percent off grid.



World Environment Day is celebrated annually on June 5. It emphasises global action for the protection of the environment. This year's celebration was under the theme "Planned for nature, for climate, for our future." This theme highlights the urgent need for sustainable living, ecosystem restoration, clean energy, and sustainable livelihoods and robust cooperation for a safer planet.

World Environment Day was established in 1972 during the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm and observed annually since 1974. It is a day for member states to reflect on and reaffirm their commitment to environmental protection and sustainable management.

The environment forms the bedrock of mankind's socio-economic survival. It provides the resources that sustain the nation's key sectors like agriculture, tourism, and industry. Over 100 billion animals are generated from Uganda's rich biodiversity, with nearly 87 percent of rural households relying directly on the ecosystem to meet daily needs. Additionally, the environment plays a crucial role in maintaining life on earth. It provides essential resources such as air, water, and food, as well as raw materials for industry and energy production. Moreover, it regulates climate, supports biodiversity and offers recreational and cultural benefits.

However, environmental protection is one of the most pressing issues of our time. As human activities continue to impact the natural world, the need for sustainable practices has become more urgent than ever. From climate change and deforestation to pollution and biodiversity loss, which has made the environment to be under constant threat.

According to the National Environment Management Authority reports, Uganda loses approximately 2.6 percent of its land annually due to environmental degradation, primarily from poor waste management, water pollution, and soil erosion. In Kampala, wetlands that historically provided flood control and water purification have been significantly reduced, exacerbating flooding during rainy seasons and increasing the city's vulnerability to climate change impacts.

It is noted that the Oil and Gas sector presents some environmental concerns, including ecological disturbance and biodiversity loss emanating from impacts on wildlife populations and precious, sensitive aquatic resources such as deltas and shorelines degradation of sites with international conservation status such as Ramsar sites pollution and disappearance of endemic species overfishing and water contamination.

Therefore, as we celebrate this day, it is imperative to note that environmental protection is a shared responsibility that requires action at all levels. And it calls on governments, businesses, and individuals to implement sustainable solutions and reduce environmental damage by adopting eco-friendly habits, supporting conservation efforts, and advocating for strong environmental policies.

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DOREEN ASASIRA: Ugandans Deserve Electricity That Improves Lives, Not Just Promises Progress

BY PML DAILY EDITOR | PML DAILY EDITORIAL
— June 12, 2026



Doreen Asasira, an environmentalist and climate advocate (PHOTO)

9 SHARES

KAMPALA – Every few years, Uganda's electric sector undergoes a major change that is presented as the solution to the country's energy challenge. New projects are launched. New investments are announced. New institutions or leaders take charge. Yet the fundamental concerns raised by citizens remain remarkably consistent: electricity is expensive, power supply is unreliable, and millions of Ugandans still lack meaningful access to energy.



Olive Atuhaire: Thank You Uwa for Protecting Bugoma Forest Reserve

by THEKR GUEST WRITER / June 17, 2026
Reading Time: 2 mins read



Early last week, the media reported that more than 100 people from different parts of Bunyoro have been arrested by the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) for allegedly carrying out illegal activities in Bugoma National park. While the arrests have sparked mixed reactions, they underscore Uganda Wildlife Authority's (UWA) commitment to protecting one of Uganda's most valuable natural resources. I would like to thank the government of Uganda through UWA for the commendable work

theKampalaReport.com — Private

Upcoming events

July 03, 2026; Hoima: Organise a radio talkshow on Uganda's critical minerals, their role in promoting a Just Energy Transition and associated environmental risks

July 09-10, 2026; Bunyoro and Greater Masaka: Support IGEN-EA to conduct a clean energy entrepreneurship training for women and youth

July 13, 2026; Online: Disseminate a publication documenting AFIEGO's litigation journey before the East African Court of Justice

July 17, 2026; Hoima: Organise a community and staff training on using social media in a changing landscape

July 24, 2026; Bunyoro: Support a tourism stakeholders' visit to the IGEN-EA clean energy hubs to discuss linkages between tourism and the hubs

July 28, 2026; Online: Disseminate key messages to commemorate World Nature Conservation Day

July 30, 2026; Online: Disseminate a research brief on the impacts of Uganda's oil pipelines to Murchison Falls National Park and selected wetlands

About AFIEGO

Africa Institute for Energy Governance (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 transition. 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