

July 2026; Issue 7

LIGHTING THE WAY: IGEN-EA SKILLS WOMEN TO POWER COMMUNITIES WITH CLEAN ENERGY



Solar installation trainees during an April 2026 assessment by Uganda Vocational and Technical Assessment Board (UVTAB) at the IGEN-EA clean energy hub in Kikuube district

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Dear reader, Uganda's clean energy sector is expanding much faster than the education and training system can supply qualified professionals.

The existing curricula in universities, technical colleges and vocational institutions remain heavily focused on conventional electrical engineering with limited emphasis on renewable energy technologies such as solar and energy efficiency among others.

As a result, there is a significant skills gap in the clean energy sector. Experts estimate that Uganda needs **up to 500,000** trained technicians for the off-grid solar, e-mobility and other sectors. Unfortunately, only about **1,000** are currently trained.

The percentage of women working in the distributed renewables energy (DRE) sector is also low. A 2021 workforce **survey** for the sector showed that while the sector was employing close to 30,000 workers, only 28% were women.

Distributed renewable energy systems **are** systems such as stand-alone solar home systems (SHS), mini-grids and others that are independent of the grid.

Recognising the challenge that low skills in the distributed renewables energy sector poses to efforts to enhance clean energy access in Uganda, AFIEGO worked with members of the Inclusive Green Economy Network-East Africa (IGEN-EA) to set up four clean energy hubs and demonstration centres.

IGEN-EA is a network of over 36 East African civil society and private sector players who promote green economic alternatives including clean renewable energy. The network, which is hosted by AFIEGO, uses the clean energy hubs to raise community awareness of the benefits of clean energy alternatives.

Limited awareness of these alternatives and

their benefits bars uptake of new and efficient technologies.

Further, IGEN-EA members partner with government, civil society and private sector entities to skill community members, who would otherwise have limited skilling opportunities, in clean energy.

These community members then become clean energy ambassadors, who not only raise awareness amongst their communities of available clean energy technologies but also support community members to install and maintain pico (small) SHS in their homes.

Emphasis is placed on skilling women, and in our **Word from IGEN-EA**, we bring you the story of one community member who was trained at the hub, and how she is benefitting, or should we say, lighting up her community.

Her story demonstrates the impact that investing in communities creates in the struggle to promote clean energy access.

In this newsletter, we also bring you our **pictorial** section through which we share some of the key activities AFIEGO and our partners implemented this month (July 2026).

In the **lobbying** section, we share some of the lobby and advocacy products that we as well as our partners produced and disseminated this month (July 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 July. We also bring you some of the media stories that were published following AFIEGO's engagement of the media in July 2026.

We hope that you will enjoy the newsletter.

Editorial team:

Diana Nabiruma

Babra Kembabazi

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POWERING CHANGE: IGEN-EA EQUIPS WOMEN TO LEAD THE CLEAN ENERGY REVOLUTION

"When I first heard that a woman like me could be trained as a solar technician, I was shocked," Sandra Agodenze, 20, says.

The resident of Kikuube district in western Uganda adds, "I could not bring myself to believe that I, a woman, could climb walls, and install solar for fellow community members."

When she was convinced by Mr. Robert Birungi of the Inclusive Green Economy Network-East (IGEN-EA) that even women can be good solar energy technicians, deep-seated cultural norms that undermine women's participation in the clean energy sector took hold of Agodenze.

"I thought to myself: won't I destroy the equipment? I also had other discouraging thoughts," Agodenze says.

She was eventually convinced by Mr. Birungi, who hosts the IGEN-EA clean energy hub in Kikuube district, to participate in a training for solar energy technicians.

Agodenze was trained alongside 15 other community members, ten of whom were women. The training took place in 2025 at the IGEN-EA clean energy hub in Kikuube district.

ABOUT THE IGEN-EA CLEAN ENERGY HUBS

IGEN-EA, which is currently hosted by AFIEGO, established four clean energy hubs and community demonstration centres between 2024 and 2025. AFIEGO supported the setting up of the hubs and demonstration centres, which are located in Fort Portal, as well as Kikuube and Buliisa districts.

The hubs are hosted by IGEN-EA member

organisations while the demonstration centres are hosted by IGEN-EA's community allies with IGEN-EA's support.

The hubs and demonstration centres were established following community visioning exercises conducted by IGEN-EA member organisations in 2022. The exercises showed that community awareness of existing clean energy alternatives and their benefits was limited.

As such, communities expressed that even when access to finances was not a problem, biomass (firewood and charcoal) as well as diesel-powered irrigation water pumps among others would be their energy of choice.

The communities indicated that they were unaware of other alternatives, hence the above choices.

The clean energy hubs and demonstration centres were therefore set up to showcase available clean energy alternatives and their benefits for lighting, cooking and other productive uses. It was hoped that this would enhance awareness and uptake of clean energy.

To date, over 304,469 community members have been sensitised on or have visited the clean energy hubs and demonstration centres. By July 2026, over 24.9% of the community members that visited the clean energy hubs had bought clean energy products.

In addition, between September 2025 to date, the hubs and IGEN-EA member organisations such as Community Watch Tower (COWAT) have supported the sale of 2.3 tonnes of briquettes, an energy-saving biomass that supports communities to take climate action.

IMPORTANCE OF CLEAN ENERGY HUBS

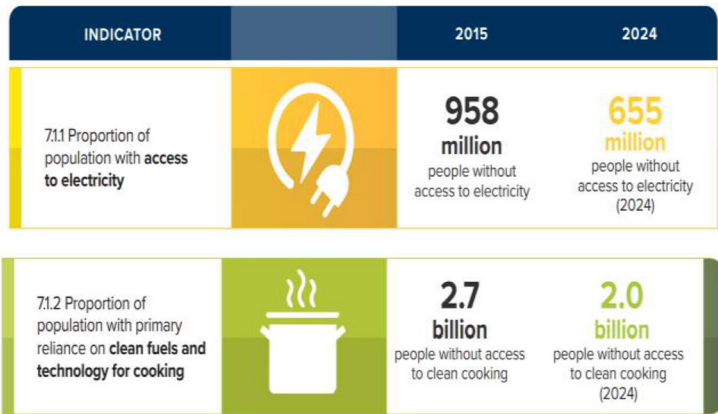
The IGEN-EA clean energy hubs are serving an important role. First, they are aligned with the Ugandan government's plans. Under the country's National Development Plan (NDP) IV, the Ugandan government set a target of setting up clean energy hubs and innovation centres as part of its efforts to enhance clean energy access.

In addition, while gaps in access to electricity and clean cooking energy are being closed in various continents such as Asia, Africa and Uganda lag behind. Available information shows that worldwide, **655 million** people were without electricity in 2024. Of the top 20 countries without access, **18** were in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA).

As regards clean cooking, **2 billion** people were without access to clean cooking worldwide in 2024. Of these, **970 million** were in SSA. Up to **1 billion** are expected to be without access to clean cooking in SSA by 2027.

In Uganda, only **2.8%** of the population cooks with clean energy including electricity and biogas while just over **20%** have access to electricity. Nearly 40% have access to solar energy however.

The IGEN-EA clean energy hubs are supportive of efforts seeking to close the clean energy access gaps seen in Africa.



Graphics (left column) showing clean energy access gaps across the globe; the majority of people without access to clean energy are in SSA.

Source: International Energy Agency et al

SKILLING CHALLENGES

The majority of Ugandans with access to clean energy have off-grid solar energy technologies. This heightens the demand for solar technicians.

Private sector industry experts however say that despite the growing market and demand for competent solar technicians, most Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions that are engaged in the training of solar technicians provide limited practical exposure to installation, operation and maintenance of solar systems.

Consequently, graduates end up requiring significant additional employer-led training before becoming productive in the workplace. The experts also say that there is weak collaboration between academia and industry. Employers consistently report shortages of competent solar technicians, energy auditors, battery technicians, mini-grid operators, productive use of energy specialists, and renewable energy engineers.

In addition, women and youth remain underrepresented in technical renewable energy careers due to limited targeted training programmes, gender stereotypes, inadequate mentorship opportunities and financial barriers to technical education. This reduces diversity and limits the available skilled workforce needed to accelerate the adoption of clean energy.

IGEN-EA EFFORTS TO ADDRESS SKILLING GAPS

To contribute to bridging the skills gap, in September 2025, the Uganda Solar Energy

Association (USEA) partnered with the IGEN-EA clean energy hub in Kikuube district to provide solar installation training for women and youth.

As was earlier indicated in this article, a total of 15 trainees were enrolled, comprising ten women and five men. Upon successful completion of the training, the trainees underwent competency assessments by Uganda Vocational and Technical Assessment Board (UVTAB) to enable the successful trainees to receive certification as qualified solar technicians.

Agondeze was among those that were certified. Today, she is a clean energy ambassador and practices her skill in her community.

She says, "The solar energy training showed me that women can be technicians in male-dominated fields and they don't come to any harm.

I also got to really like solar energy and started appreciating its benefits because of the training. I got myself a solar home system and it now acts as an inspiration for other community members. When they see my home with constant light and hear about the benefits, they are forced to engage us and ensure they also acquire one."

CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

Uganda's transition to clean energy will depend not only on expanding access to renewable energy technologies but also on developing a skilled workforce capable of installing, operating, maintaining, and promoting clean energy technologies.

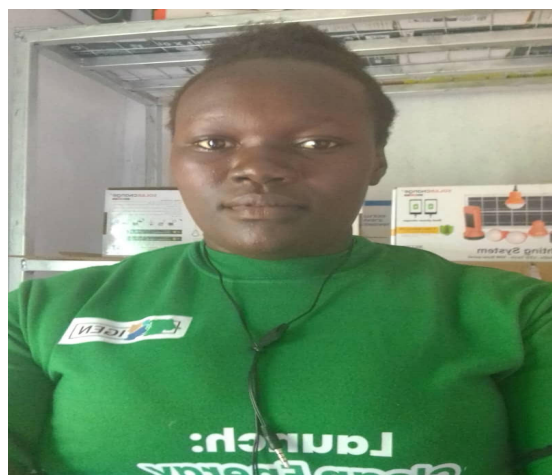
To ensure that the existing skills gaps in the clean energy sector are bridged, government, through the Ministry of Education and Sports, should integrate comprehensive clean energy courses into TVET and higher education curricula, ensuring that graduates possess the technical skills required by the rapidly growing

clean energy sector.

In addition, government should put in place a comprehensive national professional certification framework covering the entire renewable energy value chain. The certification of solar installers remains inconsistent, with many technicians operating without nationally recognised competency-based certification. Government should close this gap.

There is also need for the government to urgently enact a law to address the worsening problem of solar counterfeit products on the market. The counterfeit products remain one of the single biggest obstacles to building confidence in communities regarding clean energy alternatives and their benefits. The law should provide punitive penalties for those who import and sell counterfeit clean renewable energy products in Uganda.

Last but not least, IGEN-EA should engage other stakeholders to build capacity to establish more hubs and demonstration centers in all districts across the country. The hubs and demonstration centers have the potential to help citizens including those deep in the villages to understand the various clean renewable energy technologies and their benefits as well as to be able to identify and differentiate the right products from counterfeits.



By IGEN-EA

Pictorial of our activities

AFIEGO SUPPORTS COMMUNITY DIALOGUE ON ACCESS TO JUSTICE



In June 2026, AFIEGO supported community members from EACOP- and Tilenga oil project-affected districts to convene a meeting.

The community members who participated in the meeting include those that filed court cases against the Ugandan government over compensation challenges. The cases were filed with AFIEGO's support between 2021 and 2026.

During the meeting which took place in Buliisa district, community members discussed the challenges that they face in the pursuit for justice.

They agreed on strategies to address the challenges.

AFIEGO SUPPORTS EXCHANGE LEARNING BETWEEN EACOP-AFFCETED PERSONS AND WOMEN BEEKEEPERS



In June 2026, AFIEGO supported selected EACOP-affected community members from the Greater Masaka sub-region to participate in an exchange learning with women beekeepers from Kyakaboga village in Hoima district.

During the exchange learning, the EACOP-affected community members gained knowledge on how oil-affected women can rebuild their livelihoods based on green economic alternatives following being displaced for oil projects.

AFIEGO'S LEGAL TEAM HOLDS STRATEGISING MEETING WITH AFIEGO STAFF



On July 20, 2026, AFIEGO's internal and external lawyers held a meeting with AFIEGO staff. The meeting took place in Kampala.

During the meeting, the lawyers discussed some of the cases that they are litigating. AFIEGO staff shared advocacy strategies that they believe can strengthen the strategic litigation efforts by the legal team.

AFIEGO's litigation is aimed at protecting oil-affected communities' rights, fostering biodiversity conservation and supporting climate action.

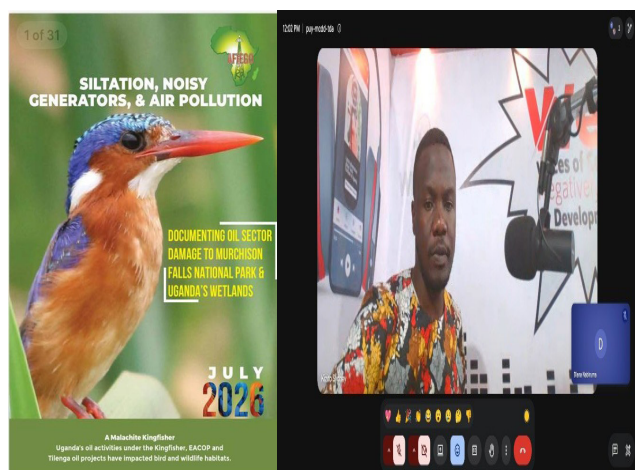
IGEN-EA PARTICIPATES IN POWER AND ELECTRICITY EXPO TO AID LEARNING



On July 14, 2026, IGEN-EA members participated in the Power and Electricity Expo organised by the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development at UMA showgrounds in Kampala.

IGEN-EA members gained knowledge on emerging clean energy technologies with a view of sharing this knowledge with community members.

AFIEGO PUBLISHES RESEARCH ON OIL IMPACTS TO SELECTED WETLANDS

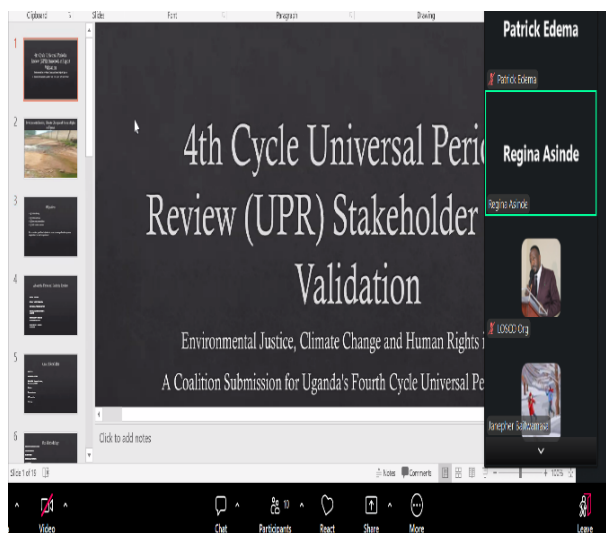


On July 28, 2026, AFIEGO released a research brief that documents the impacts of the EACOP and related pipelines to selected wetlands in Uganda.

AFIEGO also undertook media engagements to publicise key findings in the research brief.

It is hoped that the research and awareness raising efforts will foster stakeholder action to promote the conservation of wetlands and biodiversity amidst Uganda's risky oil projects.

AFIEGO JOINS PARTNERS TO VALIDATE HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT TO THE UN



On July 7, 2026, AFIEGO joined its partners under the Environmental Rights Organisation Uganda Chapter (EROG-UG) in a validation meeting.

During the meeting, AFIEGO and its partners discussed a report that EROG-UG was preparing to submit to the United Nations (UN).

The report is aimed at informing the review of Uganda's human rights record during the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) on Uganda and other states in 2027.

AFIEGO contributed information on the human rights violations seen in the country's oil and gas industry for the report.

Lobbying

In July 2026, AFIEGO supported concerned oil host communities to write to the Minister of Energy as well as the Minister of Water and Environment among others. The communities requested information on the actions that the ministers are taking to address methane emissions from the country's oil and gas industry.

In addition, AFIEGO supported oil-affected women beekeepers to publish stories highlighting the impact of the EACOP construction activities on their beekeeping project.

Further, AFIEGO published IEC materials to raise stakeholder awareness of upcoming research that the organisation was set to publish as well as the role of methane emissions in the climate crisis.

METHANE — AND ITS — ROLE IN THE CLIMATE CRISIS



A POWERFUL GREENHOUSE GAS

Methane traps over 80 times more heat than CO₂ over 20 years.



SHORT-LIVED, BIG IMPACT

Reducing methane now can slow warming in the near term.



SOURCES AROUND US

From fossil fuels to farms and waste, methane emissions are preventable.



SOLUTIONS FOR OUR FUTURE

Stronger policies, better practices, and collective action can make a real difference.

LESS METHANE. LESS WARMING. BETTER FUTURE FOR ALL.

Maj. Gen. Kabinda Otafiri,
The Minister of Water and Environment,
P.O. Box 200, KAMPALA
16 JUL 2026

Dear Sir,

RE: REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ACTIONS TAKEN TO ADDRESS METHANE EMISSIONS IN UGANDA'S OIL AND GAS SECTOR

We write as members of oil-affected communities in Uganda's Albertine region, including communities living in and around areas affected by the Tilenga, Kingfisher, EACOP, and other oil-related activities.

On September 9, 2025, the Natural Resource Governance Institute held a validation workshop at the Sheraton Hotel in Kampala to discuss a civil society report on methane emissions abatement in Uganda's oil and gas sector. We understand that this report was meant to help the government strengthen its legal and institutional framework for addressing methane emissions, especially as Uganda prepares for oil production.

The workshop brought together people from government, civil society, academia, the media, and the private sector, including representatives from the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development, the Petroleum Authority of Uganda, NEMA, TotalEnergies, UNOC, and others. Reports shared with us indicated this was a stakeholder engagement and validation process, but no binding commitments were made by the government.

Earlier this year, *The Independent* published an article titled "Methane Challenge in Uganda: Can oil development and climate responsibility coexist?" The article raised important issues that concern us directly as communities living closest to oil activities. It explained that methane is a gas that cannot be seen easily, smelt, or felt, but it can have serious climate and environmental consequences if not properly monitored and controlled.

From what we gather, the civil society report and the workshop discussions in 2025, as well as the media article in 2026 point to the need for methane-specific mitigation measures, baseline data collection, transparent reporting, public access to emissions information, clear penalties for non-compliance, and stronger coordination among all relevant actors.

The National Climate Change Act, 2021, also provides a basis for government action on measuring emissions, national reporting, data verification, lead-agency reporting, obligations of private entities, and regulations for the effective implementation of the Act.

It is on that premise that we, now, write to you to ask what the government of Uganda has actually done to control methane emissions from Uganda's oil and gas sector.



KAKUMIRO COMMUNITIES CALL FOR SUPPORT TO RESTORE TREES AND WETLANDS AFFECTED BY OIL ACTIVITIES



Communities living along the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) corridor in Mpasaana Town Council, Kisita Town Council, Nkoora Town Council, and Katikara Sub-county in Kakumiro District are appealing for support to restore trees and wetlands that have been degraded by oil activities.

During an environmental restoration sensitisation meeting organised by community monitors and attended by the Area Health Inspector, residents discussed the impacts of environmental degradation and explored ways to address climate change through tree planting and ecosystem restoration.

Community members expressed their commitment to protecting the environment but cited a lack of quality tree seedlings as a major challenge.

They now appeal to civil society organisations, government agencies, environmental groups, and well-wishers to support their efforts by providing indigenous, and climate-resilient tree seedlings to help restore degraded landscapes and strengthen community resilience to climate change.

OIL & BEES: HOW AN OIL PIPELINE IN UGANDA IMPACTED BEEKEEPING

Keturu Nwameebemba wakes before sunrise every day.

The resident of Kyakaboga village in Hoima district prepares her children for school, after which she rushes to her garden.

She engages in farm work such as planting, weeding or harvesting, depending on the season.

Twice a month, she joins the other 20 women that are part of a beekeeping project by Iyendebere women's group. Keturu is the general secretary of the group. The women visit their beekeeping project in Kyakaboga village to inspect their beehives among others. They also harvest honey twice a year.

HOW IT BEGAN

The women embarked on the beekeeping project in 2022 with the support of non-profits.

Over the years, organisations and networks such as Africa Institute for Energy Governance (AFIEGO) and the Inclusive Green Economy Network-East Africa (IGEN-EA) have provided technical and other support for the project.

The project was aimed at restoring the women's livelihoods and incomes after they were displaced by the Ugandan government for an oil refinery project beginning in 2012. The women were resettled in Kyakaboga by government in 2018.

The women lost their livelihoods after being displaced.

"We went through a lot of challenges. We felt hopeless but the beekeeping project offered us shiny new hope," Keturu says.

She adds, "We started small, with beehives made out of bottles, jerrycans and boxes. Then we got 24 traditional beehives. We started harvesting more honey and we saved the income we got."

Once we had a good amount, we started a chair hire and crafts business from which we made more money. We would lend this money to our members so that they would capitalise their businesses, or take their children to school."

OIL & CRUSHED HOPES

Unfortunately, disaster struck! Through their sub-contractors, TotalEnergies E&P Uganda began developing the Tilenga feeder pipeline through Bulisa and Hoima districts in 2024.

The construction activities included site clearance, trenching as well as laying, welding and burying of the pipeline among others.

Hon. Dr. Monica Museneru Musana,
The Minister of Energy and Mineral Development,
Kampala, Uganda

Dear Minister,

RE: REQUEST FOR UPDATE ON ACTIONS TAKEN TO ADDRESS METHANE EMISSIONS IN UGANDA'S OIL AND GAS SECTOR

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COMMUNITY
VOICE

JUNE 2026

RESIDENTS RAISE CONCERNS OVER WATER ACCESS CHALLENGES IN KYOTERA DISTRICT



Residents of Kasanvu Village in Kakuuto Sub-county, Kyotera District, have raised concerns about the water access challenges they are facing due to ongoing construction activities associated with the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) project.

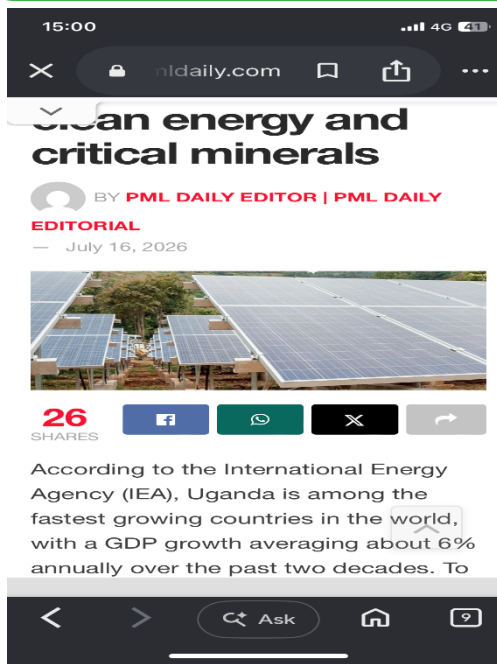
The community says that access to their main water source has become difficult because the EACOP corridor now separates residents and livestock from the water point. Deep trenches and piles of excavated soil along the construction route have further complicated movement within the village.

During rainy periods, the affected areas become muddy and slippery, making it difficult and unsafe for people and animals to reach the water source. The challenge has particularly affected women, children, older persons, and cattle keepers who rely on the water source for domestic use and livestock watering.

The affected residents are calling on the EACOP Company to assess the situation and establish a safe and accessible alternative water source on the side of the village where both community members and livestock can easily access water.

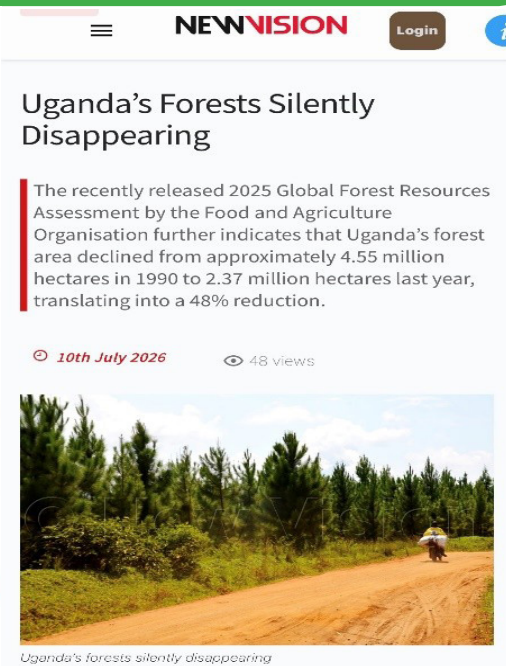
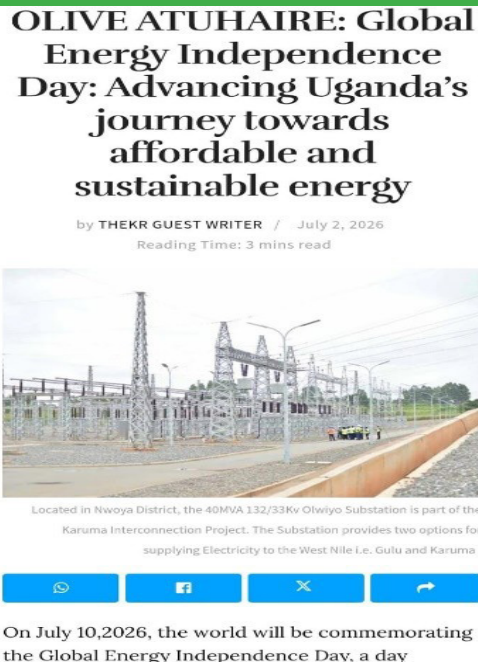
In the media

In July 2026, AFIEGO staff and research associates wrote opinion newspaper articles that were published in leading newspapers. In addition, the media published stories from the media engagements undertaken by AFIEGO. Some of the published articles are captured below.



Oil Activities Damaging Uganda's Wetlands, New Research Shows

Christopher Kirza · July 28, 2026 · 1 minute read



Oil Projects Threaten Uganda's Wetlands, AFIEGO Report Warns

By Samuel Muhimba | Tuesday, July 28, 2026

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Upcoming events

August 3, 2026; Online: Disseminate a publication documenting AFIEGO's litigation journey before the East African Court of Justice

August 7, 2026; Bunyoro and Greater Masaka: Organise community meetings to disseminate research findings on the impacts of oil activities on Uganda's wetlands and Murchison Falls National Park

August 10, 2026; Bunyoro and Greater Masaka: Support AFIEGO's legal team to hold updates sharing meetings with oil-affected communities

August 17, 2026; Kampala: Hold a meeting with university students to discuss the establishment of green jobs clubs at various universities

August 20–21, 2026; Hoima: Organise a briquettes-making training for oil-affected communities

August 27, 2026; Kampala: Support oil-affected communities to visit distributors of clean energy technologies to discuss opportunities for clean energy entrepreneurship

August 31, 2026; Bunyoro: Organise training sessions for women and youth to discuss the role of critical minerals in the clean energy transition

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