

August 2026; Issue 8

STRONGER TOGETHER: OIL-AFFECTED COMMUNITY GROUPS TAKE LEADERSHIP IN ADDRESSING COMMUNITY CHALLENGES



EACOP project-affected persons after a training on community organising in Luseese village, Nabigasa sub-county, Kyotera district

In this newsletter:

- United by a common struggle: How community groups are strengthening the fight for justice for oil-affected communities
- Pictorial of our activities
- Lobbying
- In the media
- Upcoming events

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

Across oil-affected communities in Greater Masaka in southern Uganda and Bunyoro in western Uganda, people continue to face significant social, economic, and environmental impacts associated with oil exploitation.

Communities have experienced displacement, loss of land and livelihoods, inadequate and delayed compensation, environmental degradation, destruction of community infrastructure, and violations of their rights.

These challenges have been further worsened by delayed access to justice.

For several years, oil-affected communities have exercised their constitutional right to seek justice, hoping to obtain relief from courts for the suffering they have experienced.

Despite these efforts, many communities continue to wait for justice, even as oil projects continue to progress.

Despite these prolonged delays, oil-affected communities have recognised the importance of coming together to strengthen their ability to pursue justice and advocate for their rights.

When community members pursue

remedies to their concerns individually, they may remain isolated and even find it difficult to engage responsible authorities.

AFIEGO believes that oil-affected communities should be empowered to come together and undertake their own advocacy for justice and accountability.

Over the years therefore, AFIEGO has supported the formation and strengthening of community groups and built the capacity of oil-affected people to defend their rights and participate in community-led advocacy.

AFIEGO has supported the formation and strengthening of over 14 community groups across various oil-affected districts.

Some of these include the Buliisa Natural Climate Conservation Association (BUNCCA), Community Voice and Planning Organization (COVAPO), Buliisa Women's Group, Association of Greater Masaka EACOP-Affected Persons Petitioners (AGMEPP), Oil Refinery Residents Association (ORRA), Tuyende Mbele Women's Group, and Kyakaboga Elderly Persons Group, among others.

The groups represent more than 50,000 individuals affected by the Tilenga, East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) and oil refinery projects among others in Uganda.

Through these groups, the communities strengthen each other, demand justice, share experiences, and engage in advocacy, among others.

In this newsletter, we explore the growing role of community groups in advocating for justice among oil-affected communities.

In particular, in our **Word from CEO**, we bring you the story of Ms. Lydia Nabulya*, a 24-year-old youth from Lwengo district, and her fellow EACOP-affected people, who came together to form a group through which they can collectively address challenges facing their community.

Through the story of the Tulwanilile Obwenkanya (Let us fight for Justice) and other community groups, this newsletter highlights an important message: oil-affected people do not have to face the impacts of oil activities alone.

By coming together, sharing experiences, building solidarity, and undertaking their own initiatives, communities are strengthening their voice and ability to demand justice and improve their livelihoods.

Away from the above, in this newsletter, we also bring you our **pictorial** section through which we share some of the key activities that AFIEGO and our partners implemented this month (August 2026).

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

Finally, in **in the media** section, we bring you opinion articles written by AFIEGO staff and research associates, as well as media stories arising from AFIEGO's media engagements that were published in leading newspapers in August.

We hope that you will enjoy the newsletter.

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UNITED BY A COMMON STRUGGLE: OIL-AFFECTED COMMUNITY GROUPS TAKE LEADERSHIP IN ADDRESSING COMMUNITY CHALLENGES

“When one person speaks up about a certain issue, they can't be heard or taken as seriously as when many people come together and raise complaints about the same issue,” says Ms. Lydia Nabulya*, a 24-year-old youth from Kibundaza village in Lwengo district in southern Uganda.

Ms. Nabulya knows this from experience.

When construction of the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) began in her village around September 2025, cracks started appearing in her house.

At the time, Ms. Nabulya was away at school. Her brother informed her about the damage in November 2025, and when Ms. Nabulya returned home, she confirmed that the house had developed cracks, which she believed were caused by vibrations from the heavy machinery used during the EACOP construction.

The damage worried her because her paternal aunt and her children live in the house.

‘When I noticed that my house had started developing cracks, I was worried that it might collapse and fall on my people,’ she says.

Ms. Nabulya reported the damage to EACOP officials in January 2026 and again in May 2026. She filled in a grievance form and made several

attempts to follow up, including calling the company's toll-free line. However, she says the concern remained unresolved. Ms. Nabulya was not alone.

As the EACOP construction activities continued in Lwengo district, other community members reported challenges including damaged water sources, flooded gardens, destroyed crops, increased dust, noise pollution, damaged roads, cracked houses, and concerns over the exhumation of buried relatives.

EACOP-affected youth also raised concerns about the adequacy of the vocational training and start-up kits provided under the EACOP Livelihood Restoration Programme.

For Ms. Nabulya and other affected people, the experience of raising concerns individually showed them the limitations of acting alone.

In April 2026, AFIEGO organised community organising trainings in Lwengo district, where affected people discussed the challenges, they were facing and ways of responding to them. The communities were also trained in various effective community organising techniques to aid working together and more impactful advocacy.

Following the training, Ms. Nabulya and other affected people formed the Tulwanilile Obwenkanya group

in May 2026. The name means 'Let us fight for justice'. The group brings together 30 women, men and youth who have come together to support one another, identify common challenges and advocate collectively for EACOP-affected communities.

For Ms. Nabulya, coming together has changed how their concerns are received.

'When I used to complain alone, my issues did not get attention until we came together as affected people,' she says.

For the group, she adds, having their challenges heard and addressed is what they would call justice.

The experience of Tulwanilile Obwenkanya reflects a wider effort among oil-affected communities in Greater Masaka in southern Uganda and Bunyoro in western Uganda. Communities in these regions have increasingly organised themselves to identify shared challenges, develop joint advocacy actions and engage government authorities and oil companies collectively to address these challenges.

For several years, oil-affected communities have also pursued justice through courts of law.

However, delays in resolving cases have left many communities dealing with challenges related to land acquisition, inadequate compensation, loss of livelihoods,

environmental degradation, damage to community infrastructure and human rights violations.

Community organising has provided another avenue through which affected people can strengthen their voice and participate directly in advocacy while demanding that justice is done by courts of law.

STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY-LED ADVOCACY

Since 2012, AFIEGO has been supporting oil-affected communities to form and strengthen community groups as part of efforts to enable affected people to demand justice and take part in community-led advocacy.

Some of the groups include Buliisa Patience Alliance Group (BUPAG), Buliisa Natural Climate Conservation Association (BUNNCA), and Association for Greater Masaka EACOP PAPs' Petitioners (AGMEPP), among others.

Through the groups, members hold planning meetings, identify common challenges, and discuss advocacy strategies.

AFIEGO supports the groups through supporting community organising trainings, advocacy planning meetings, sensitisation meetings, exchange learnings, engagements with leaders and oil companies, and litigation, among others.

Through this support, communities have moved from simply reporting challenges to taking part in advocacy and inclusive litigation.

This year, oil-affected community groups have undertaken several advocacy actions. Among others, they have organised community solidarity visits, undertaken media engagements, participated in radio talk shows and written over 34 advocacy letters and petitions. These initiatives have been undertaken with AFIEGO's support, and the communities have engaged oil companies, the Chief Justice, the Inspectorate of Courts, the Uganda Human Rights Commission, the Minister of Energy and Mineral Development, the Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, the Minister of Water and Environment and the Judicial Service Commission among others.

Women and youth have also played an important role in community-led advocacy. Although they are disproportionately affected by oil exploitation activities and often face barriers to participating in decision-making, the community groups have provided platforms through which women and youth's confidence has been built, and they now take leadership in raising issues affecting their communities. This year, women and youth have led over 16 advocacy actions.

WHAT THE COMMUNITY GROUPS HAVE ACHIEVED SO FAR

Despite many of the challenges that

persist, community-led advocacy has achieved some results for communities. For instance, in August 2026, following community letters written to the Uganda Human Rights Commission (UHRC) in April 2026 and June 2026 requesting action and investigations into human rights violations caused by oil activities, UHRC officials visited oil-affected communities in Bulisa district. UHRC officials listened to the challenges faced by the communities, and committed to working together with the communities to possibly find solutions to these challenges.

In addition, community groups in the ecosensitive Albertine Graben have established livelihood initiatives that also promote climate action. These include forest-based enterprises (FBEs) such as maintaining nurseries for tree seedlings and beekeeping, alongside other initiatives such as handicraft making by the women's group in Kyakaboga village, Hoima district.

In Greater Masaka in southern Uganda, EACOP- affected youth who had been trained in different vocational skills raised concerns in June 2026 that the training and start-up kits they received were inadequate.

In a June 2026 letter to the EACOP Company's Managing Director, the youth requested intervention and a visit to affected beneficiaries to assess the quality and adequacy of the start-up kits provided under the EACOP Livelihood Restoration

Programme.

Consequently, a meeting between youth, EACOP officials and their sub-contractors was held at the Lwengo sub-county offices in June 2026.

During the meeting, youth presented their concerns, while EACOP officials said the beneficiaries had received what they had been told they would receive. Some faulty items, including sewing machines, were subsequently fixed however.



When women come together, their voices become stronger. Ms. Faridah Namugerwa, an EACOP-affected woman living with a disability in Kyotera district, secured the repair of her wheelchair, compensation for damaged crops, and poultry from EACOP in July 2026 following coming together with other EACOP-affected people to engage in advocacy.

WHAT NEXT FOR THE COMMUNITY GROUPS

Going forward, the EACOP-affected communities from Bunyoro and Greater Masaka plan to strengthen their joint coalition to bolster their collective voice and expand the reach of their advocacy.

They also intend to amplify their concerns through additional platforms, while pursuing joint green livelihood enterprises that build their resilience and reduce demand for fossil fuels.

These plans demonstrate that oil-affected communities are not only responding to the challenges they face, but are actively building the solidarity, skills, and platforms needed to sustain their own advocacy over time. They show that when communities organise, they are better placed to hold decision-makers accountable and to shape outcomes that affect their lives.

Sustaining this momentum, however, requires more than community effort alone. Government institutions, civil society organisations, and development partners must ensure that oil-affected communities are meaningfully supported to strengthen their organising, access justice, and build sustainable livelihoods.

AFIEGO remains committed to working with communities and calls on all relevant actors to play their part in ensuring that the progress communities have made continues to grow while challenges are addressed.

By CEO

Pictorial of our activities

AFIEGO SUPPORTS EACOP-AFFECTED PEOPLE TO SHARE LESSONS FROM EXCHANGE LEARNING



On August 14, 2026, AFIEGO supported the Association of Greater Masaka EACOP Project-Affected Persons Petitioners (AGMEPP) to hold a lesson-sharing meeting with EACOP-affected people from Greater Masaka in southern Uganda.

During the meeting, AGMEPP members shared lessons, experiences, and action points from their May 2026 exchange learning visit with oil-affected communities in Bunyoro in western Uganda.

The lesson-sharing meeting strengthened EACOP-affected people's advocacy capacity.

AFIEGO SUPPORTS OIL-AFFECTED YOUTH TO HAVE A SOLIDARITY MEETING WITH A CLIMATE ACTIVIST



On August 14, 2026, AFIEGO supported youth from EACOP-affected communities in Greater Masaka in southern Uganda to participate in a solidarity meeting with a climate activist.

During the meeting, the youth discussed the role of youth participation in advocacy.

The youth and communities also discussed ways through which oil-affected communities and climate activists can keep supporting each other to avoid feeling isolated.

AFIEGO SUPPORTS OIL-AFFECTED COMMUNITIES IN BULIISA TO ENGAGE JOURNALISTS REGARDING HUMAN-ELEPHANT CONFLICTS



On August 12, 2026, to mark World Elephant Day, AFIEGO supported Tilenga oil project-affected communities in Buliisa to share challenges arising from persistent elephant attacks with members of the media.

The community members attributed the elephant invasions to oil activities in Murchison Falls National Park and called for government intervention, including compensation for affected communities and a permanent solution to the human-elephant conflicts.

AFIEGO SUPPORTS TILenga PROJECT-AFFECTED PEOPLE IN BULIISA TO MEET WITH UHRC OVER HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS



On August 4, 2026, AFIEGO supported Tilenga oil project-affected people to have a meeting with officials from the Uganda Human Rights Commission (UHRC) in Kisomere village in Ngwendo sub-county, Nile parish, Buliisa district.

During the meeting, communities discussed the challenges oil-affected people face, including delayed justice, flash floods damaging crops, and human-wildlife conflicts, among others.

The UHRC officials committed to follow up with the relevant offices to ensure that the different issues are addressed.

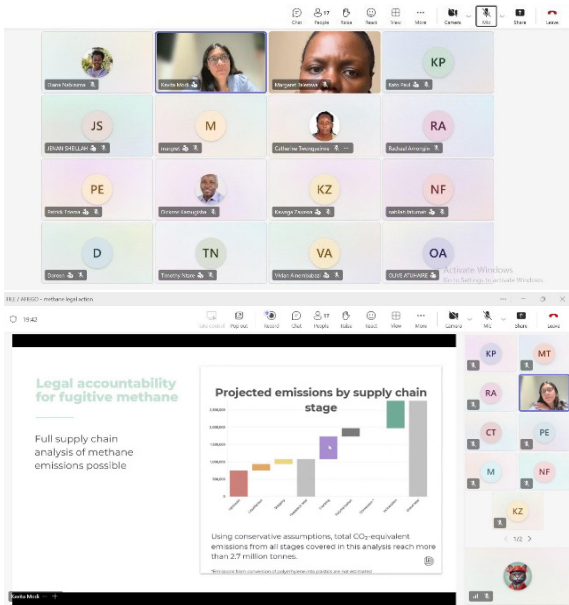
AFIEGO HOLDS MEETING TO DISCUSS JOINT RESEARCH ON THE ROLE OF CRITICAL MINERALS IN PROMOTING A JUST ENERGY TRANSITION



On August 18, 2026, AFIEGO held a meeting with its partners to discuss research on the role of critical minerals in promoting a just energy transition.

The research is being undertaken by AFIEGO and her partners. The aim of the meeting was to review progress on each section of the report, agree on how the sections would be consolidated, and set deadlines for completion of the report.

AFIEGO ORGANISES AN ENGAGEMENT FOR STAFF ON METHANE EMISSIONS, MONITORING AND LEGAL STRATEGIES



On August 19, 2026, AFIEGO, together with her partners, organised an online staff training on methane emissions, monitoring and legal strategies.

The aim was to strengthen staff's understanding of methane emissions, their impacts on climate change and human health, and opportunities for legal, advocacy, and community-based action to reduce methane emissions from fossil fuel activities in Uganda.

Lobbying

In August 2026, AFIEGO supported community members to petition the Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries. The communities asked the minister to direct oil companies to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the impacts of oil activities on agriculture and food security.

In addition, AFIEGO supported oil-affected communities in the Bunyoro and Greater Masaka sub-regions to petition the Chief Justice and Supreme Court. The communities asked the courts to prioritise and expedite the hearing and determination of pending oil project-related cases filed by communities.

AFIEGO also organised an X-storm to disseminate findings from research on the impacts of oil activities to Uganda's wetlands and Murchison Falls National Park.

COMMUNITY VOICE
JULY 2026

HOIMA RESIDENTS RAISE CONCERNS OVER DEGRADED RIVER



Communities living near River Kanyabwanga in Hoima district have raised concerns over the degradation of the river due to the EACOP construction activities.

The communities report that soil from the EACOP grading and other construction activities was deposited near the river valley. This soil flows into the river when it rains, affecting the quantity and quality of water in the river.

The above has resulted in declining water access for communities.

Farmers in Hoima and Kikuube districts who used to rely on the river to irrigate their crops report that they can no longer do so, especially during dry weather. As a result, they have to hire boda-bodas (motorcycle taxis) to fetch water from other sources. This has raised the cost of doing business.

In addition, communities report that chimpanzee-human conflicts have increased. They assert that the degradation of Kanyabwanga and other rivers that are connected to Mbarabala forest is forcing chimpanzees to move from the forest and into community land in search for water.

The communities are demanding that the EACOP Company takes remedial action to address the situation affecting Kanyabwanga and other oil-affected rivers in their districts.

To read about the social and biodiversity costs of the EACOP construction activities, see:
<https://www.afiego.org/downloads/petition-on-ecop-to-being-constructed-but-what-cost-june-2026/>
<https://www.afiego.org/downloads/research-brief-oil-impacts-on-wetlands-in-uganda-july-2026-2/>

OIL-AFFECTED COMMUNITIES OF BUNYORO AND GREATER MASAKA SUB-REGIONS

August 5, 2026

The Honourable Chief Justice,
Supreme Court of Uganda,
Kampala, Uganda.

Your Lordships,

RE: PETITION TO URGENTLY ADDRESS DELAYED JUSTICE AND ITS IMPACTS ON OIL-AFFECTED COMMUNITIES IN BUNYORO AND GREATER MASAKA SUB-REGIONS

We, the undersigned members of oil-affected communities in Bunyoro and Greater Masaka sub-regions, greet you. We write to urgently seek your intervention in addressing the delays in the administration of justice concerning our cases.

For several years now, our communities have endured the social, economic and environmental costs of the oil development projects. While these projects promise economic development at national level, the realities in our communities including significant social, economic and environmental impacts have caused us unbearable hardship. We have experienced displacement, loss of land and livelihoods, environmental degradation, inadequate compensation and violations of our rights. These consequences have been worsened by delayed justice through the courts.

As Ugandan citizens, we exercised our constitutional right to seek justice and filed several cases and appeals with the hope that the courts would provide solutions. But unfortunately, our cases have remained pending for years while the projects continue to progress. Because of these delays, our communities continue to experience further harm. For your reference, we have attached a detailed list showing the different matters filed, the courts in which they were filed and the dates they were filed.

We would also like to highlight the difference in the administration of justice while, when the government files a case against us, the rulings are issued within a short period of time. While, when we exercise our right to file cases or appeal to such legal redress, the processes regarding our cases remain in court for many months and in most cases, years.

We wish to note that this is not the first time we have petitioned the office of the Chief Justice regarding delayed justice and its impacts on our communities. We previously wrote to this office

COMMUNITY VOICE
JULY 2026

GROWING DEMAND FOR CLEAN ENERGY OUTPACES SUPPLY IN KIKUUBE



Communities around Bugoma forests in Kikuube district are increasingly embracing clean energy technologies including solar systems, energy-saving stoves and briquettes, as they seek to protect the forest and adapt to climate change. However, residents say limited access to clean energy products is slowing this transition.

According to a community mobiliser, about 30 people, many from village savings groups, expressed interest in purchasing larger, dual-sized stoves in July alone. However, most of the cookstoves available locally are demonstration units only, forcing interested buyers to source them from Hime.

The community mobiliser also notes that by the time products become available, many potential buyers have already spent their money on other pressing household needs.

The affected communities are now calling on clean energy suppliers, government agencies and development partners to establish local distribution outlets, make clean energy technologies more affordable, and expand practical training in briquette production and locally manufactured cook stoves.

OIL-AFFECTED COMMUNITIES OF BUNYORO AND GREATER MASAKA SUB-REGIONS

August 5, 2026

Hon. Frank Tumwazuz,
Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries,
Plot 16-18, Lugard Avenue,
Entebbe, Uganda.

Dear Honourable Minister,

RE: PETITION ON IMPACTS OF OIL ACTIVITIES ON AGRICULTURE AND LIVELIHOODS OF COMMUNITIES IN BUNYORO AND GREATER MASAKA SUB-REGIONS

We, the undersigned members of the oil-affected communities from Bunyoro and Greater Masaka sub-regions greet you.

We respectfully write to draw your attention to the growing impacts of oil development activities on agriculture, which is our primary source of income and also the backbone of Uganda's economy.

As you are aware, agriculture employs the majority of Ugandans and contributes significantly to household incomes, ensures national food security and supports the country's economic growth.¹ For our communities, agriculture is more than an economic activity. It is our way of life. We depend on fertile land to grow food, earn income, educate our children, access healthcare and provide for our families.

However, the development of oil projects in our communities has considerably disrupted agricultural production and put our livelihoods at risk. This arises from land acquisition, displacement, construction activities, environmental changes and inadequate restoration associated with the different oil development projects and their infrastructure.

We are very concerned that the agricultural sector which sustains millions of Ugandans has been greatly affected. We also note with concern that unless urgent measures are taken, there will be irreversible long-term impacts on food production, household incomes and development of rural communities.

We therefore highlight below some of our concerns;

¹ <https://www.fao.org/uganda/our-office/uganda-at-a-glance/en>

WORLD ELEPHANT DAY



Protecting elephants is about more than saving a species. It is about protecting ecosystems, safeguarding livelihoods, and promoting peaceful coexistence between people and elephants.

On this World Elephant Day therefore, IGEN-EA calls for the following:

- 1** Stronger elephant conservation measures that include protecting elephant habitats from destructive activities;
- 2** Better measures to address elephant-human conflicts; this protects communities and elephants; and
- 3** Inclusion of communities that live near elephant habitats into the tourism value chain to support conservation and community livelihoods.

East African governments should implement the above measures with the support of civil society and development partners.

www.igen-ea.org

Floods!

Due to the climate crisis and other factors, East African cities and community lands experience these.

Wetlands protect communities with intact ecosystems from floods.

New research shows that the EACOP and related pipelines' construction activities caused siltation of wetlands, which caused flooding of community gardens in various affected districts.



Protect Our Wetlands #WetlandsNotPipelines

In August 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 these are captured below.



by **THEKR TEAM** / August 6, 2026 Reading Time: 3 mins read



By **David Ainebyoona** - August 14, 2026



PHOTO: Mr. Godwin Kyosaba, a resident of Bugana Kichoolo affected by elephant invasions in Buliisa Sub-county, Buliisa District. (Image: David Ainabyoona/Kazi-njema News)

If people elsewhere in the world are celebrating elephants, communities in Buliisa District are struggling to understand how to live alongside them.



BY PML DAILY EDITOR | PML DAILY EDITORIAL

— August 15, 2026



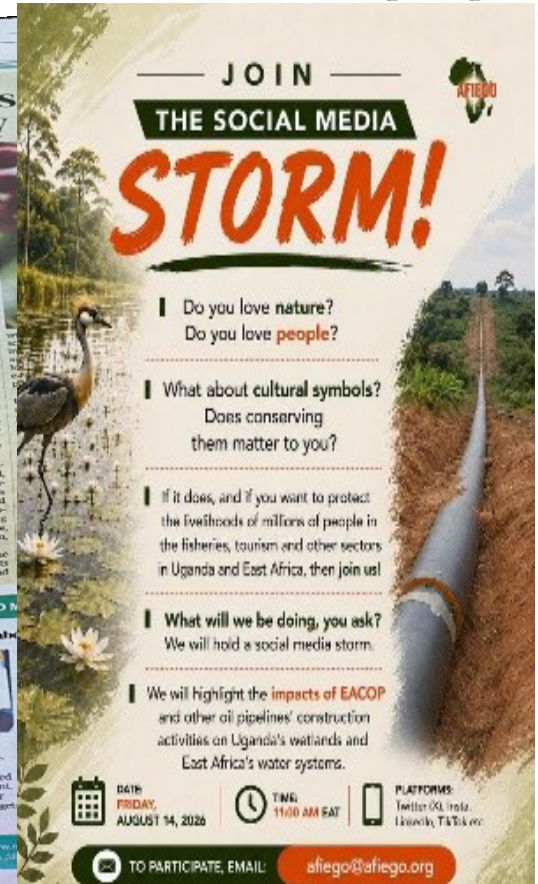
Doreen Asasira, an environmentalist and climate advocate (PHOTO/Courtesy)

KAMPALA – The call by the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development for Ugandans to move away from firewood and charcoal and embrace electric cooking is timely and deserves public support. However, as Parliament's Climate Change Committee heard this week, Uganda's transition to clean cooking

by **THEKR TEAM** / August 8, 2026 Reading Time: 4 mins read

Solar panels operate near a burned forest in Acharnes suburb, on Mount Parnitha, in northwestern Athens, Greece, on Aug. 27, 2023. (IMAGE: Courtesy | theKR Media)

Uganda's clean energy transition is no longer being held back by a lack of public interest. Across rural communities, households are increasingly embracing clean cooking technologies and renewable energy solutions because they understand the benefits these technologies bring



Upcoming events

September 03, 2026; Kampala: Convene a discussion with journalism and communication students on the media's role in climate change-sensitive reporting

September 10-11, 2026; Bunyoro: Conduct a solar energy training to equip community members with practical knowledge and skills on how to identify good quality solar energy products

September 17, 2026; Kampala: Support university students studying tourism and other related courses to engage various relevant authorities on the impacts of oil activities on the tourism sector

September 25, 2026; Bunyoro: Support communities to engage private sector players and relevant government institutions to enhance clean energy access

September 27, 2026; Kampala: Undertake research on strengths and weaknesses of Uganda's legal framework on critical minerals

September 30, 2026; Hoima: Support oil refinery-affected persons to participate in the hearing of their court case

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