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EAST AFRICAN
CRUDE OIL PIPELINE
HOST COMMUNITIES

NEWSLETTER

PEOPLE'S TRIBUNAL ON TOTAL ENERGIES ACTIVITIES IN AFRICA: COMMUNITIES CALL FOR JUSTICE AND REPARATIONS



Dear Reader,

Welcome to the August 2025 edition of the EACOP HC Newsletter.

This month, as part of the Africa Week of Action for Justice, Climate, and Community Rights, EACOP HC, in collaboration with our partners at the Oil Refinery Residents Association (ORRA), convened a People's Tribunal for Justice and Reparation. This important initiative provided a platform for affected communities to voice their experiences and seek accountability in relation to the operations of TotalEnergies in Uganda's Albertine region.

The primary objective of the People's Tribunal was to confront TotalEnergies by demanding justice, accountability, and energy sovereignty across Africa. The tribunal aimed to expose the company's widespread socio-economic, environmental, and human rights violations, challenge the fossil fuel colonialism driving its operations, and amplify the voices of frontline communities. Through testimonies and collective action, it called for reparations, corporate accountability, and a just, people-centered transition to sustainable, community-led energy systems grounded in indigenous rights and climate justice.

TotalEnergies: Unveiling a Legacy of Profit over People and Planet

In the heart of Uganda's Albertine region, where ancient lands meet the promise of black gold, a different kind of courtroom emerged this August. Not built of marble and mahogany, but of courage and conviction. Not presided over by robed judges, but by the wisdom of those who have borne witness to promises broken and dreams deferred.

During the Africa Week of Action for Justice, Climate, and Community Rights, the East African Crude Oil Pipeline Host Communities (EACOP HC) and the Oil Refinery Residents Association (ORRA) convened something unprecedented: a People's Tribunal for Justice and Reparations. We tackled and sought through the shadows of false promises, we put Total Energies under the lens. Here, in voices that have long been silenced, the true cost of oil extraction found its expression. Here, the communities affected by oil companies like TotalEnergies rose and spoke their truth.





This tribunal was not merely about grievance—it was about reclaiming narrative, about transforming pain into power, about declaring that those who suffer the consequences of corporate decisions deserve a place at the table where justice is served. The testimonies that emerged carried the weight of generations, echoing across the continent and beyond, joining a chorus that grows stronger with each voice that refuses to remain silent.



Clinton Bikorwa, a youth leader from Kikuube District, delivered a compelling address before the tribunal, articulating the demands of a generation calling for justice and accountability. He highlighted not only the environmental degradation and displacement caused by fossil fuel projects, but also pointed to a broader, systemic pattern of resource exploitation that extends beyond Uganda's borders. "TotalEnergies speaks of development," he asserted, "yet leaves behind communities more impoverished than they were before."

His testimony shed light on the underlying structure of modern fossil fuel colonialism: promises of development that dissipate quickly, leaving behind environmental degradation, social disruption, and economic injustice. Across Africa, the pattern is consistent—foreign corporations extract immense wealth while local communities shoulder the long-term costs. He emphasized the importance of the People’s Tribunal as a critical forum for exposing TotalEnergies’ human rights and environmental violations, and for advancing the broader struggle for climate justice and energy democracy.



The #KickTotalOutOfAfrica campaign, spanning August 18-24, 2025, represented more than protest; it embodied a continental awakening to the reality that true development cannot be built on the foundation of environmental destruction and community displacement. It was a declaration that Africa's energy future belongs in African hands, guided by African wisdom, serving African people.



VOICES FROM THE FRONTLINES: PERSONAL STORIES OF IMPACT.



Nyakato Olivia:
They promised jobs, but gave us nothing.

Nyakato Olivia, a mother of four from Buliisa District and a project-affected person under the Tilenga Project, testified on behalf of thousands whose lives have been upended by the disparity between corporate promises and on-the-ground realities in Uganda’s oil sector. While communities were assured that oil operations would bring jobs to offset the loss of livelihoods and land, Olivia faced systematic employment discrimination—qualified local residents were routinely overlooked in favor of workers from other regions and abroad.

Her situation worsened when she was abruptly dismissed from her job without explanation, leaving her family without income after already losing their ancestral land.

As she testified at the tribunal: “They told us our children would have work that we would benefit from the oil. But they bring people from other regions. Now our land is gone, our lake is polluted, and we have nothing.”

Her testimony underscored the dual injustice faced by affected communities and economic exclusion exposing how fossil fuel development has eroded both livelihoods and dignity.



**Kyamanywa
Juma:
The legacy of
lost land.**

Kyamanywa Juma carries the unresolved legacy of his grandfather, Kyamanywa Suwedi—a once-proud landowner whose fertile land sustained his family for generations. When oil companies began operations in the region, Suwedi’s land was acquired for project development under assurances of adequate, fair and prompt compensation that ultimately went unfulfilled. Despite repeated efforts to seek redress from government authorities, his appeals were met with persistent delays and vague promises.

Deprived of his primary means of livelihood, Suwedi struggled to provide for his family, and the prolonged uncertainty took a serious toll on his health. Until his final days, he held out hope that the government and oil companies would honor their commitments. That hope was never realized Up-to-date.

Today, Kyamanywa Juma and his siblings face the long-term consequences: dispossession, lack of access to education, and an uncertain future. What was once their inheritance now stands as a stark symbol of unfulfilled promises and systemic neglect.

Their experience reflects the wider human cost of Uganda’s energy development—where marginalized communities are displaced, their livelihoods destroyed, and the promised benefits of progress remain out of reach.



Tugume Rachel:
They stole my dreams and future.



Tugume Rachel's experience highlights the far-reaching and gendered consequences of oil projects in Uganda, where inadequate compensation and patriarchal control over land and resources have left women and children particularly vulnerable. When a portion of her family's ancestral land was acquired for the project, it was significantly undervalued by project assessors. The limited compensation received was controlled solely by Rachel's father, who used the payment to abandon his family and remarry, leaving Rachel and her siblings without support.

Now the primary caregiver, Rachel must navigate complex land tenure issues while struggling to secure a livelihood for her family. Her case underscores how flawed compensation processes, combined with entrenched gender inequalities, exacerbate the social harms of large-scale infrastructure projects. It illustrates how women and children disproportionately bear the long-term burden of displacement and disrupted family structures—impacts that extend well beyond the initial land acquisition.



Tumwine Julius:
The price of speaking the truth.

Tumwine Julius, a climate justice activist and project-affected individual, exemplifies the significant personal and communal costs of oil development in Uganda. His family was dispossessed of their ancestral land by oil projects based on unfulfilled promises of community development, leaving them landless and without adequate compensation. Financial hardship forced Julius to discontinue his education, prompting him to engage in activism by organizing fellow affected persons and advocating for their rights. In October 2024, he co-authored a petition outlining the adverse challenges faced by the oil project affected communities.

When Julius and other activists sought to deliver the petition to the companies' offices, he was arrested and detained without charge for three days. During his detention, authorities attempted to coerce him into abandoning his advocacy. Following his release, secured through legal intervention, he faced intensified harassment. A coordinated campaign involving local government officials, security forces, among others sought to isolate Julius from his community through direct threats, thereby undermining his grassroots organizing efforts.

His experience underscores the extreme measures employed by corporate and state actors to suppress dissent and silence environmental defenders within Uganda's extractive industries.

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Byakagaba
Geoffrey:
Wildlife and
People in
conflict.
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Byakagaba Geoffrey’s experience highlights the profound environmental and social impacts of oil development in the Murchison Falls National Park region. His family’s land was directly affected by pipeline construction and associated industrial activities, resulting in displacement, destruction of agricultural livelihoods, and increased human-wildlife conflicts.

The expansion of oil operations, notably the Central Processing Facility, caused severe flooding with contaminated water that devastated Geoffrey’s crops and farmlands, undermining his family’s food security and income. Concurrently, drilling activities displaced wildlife, including elephants, driving them into villages where they damage crops and threaten community safety. This disruption has led to at least nine fatalities from human-wildlife encounters, eroding what was once a balanced coexistence between people and nature.

Geoffrey’s story underscores the cascading consequences of prioritizing industrial development over environmental stewardship and community well-being in oil-affected regions.



Tumusiime Innocent:
Our dignity
sold for
pennies.

Tumusiime Innocent's experience illustrates the severe trauma resulting from forced displacement and inadequate resettlement associated with oil development projects. Upon acquisition of his ancestral land, Innocent and his family were relocated to the Kyakabooga resettlement camp under unfulfilled assurances of fair compensation and equivalent land replacement. The compensation provided was markedly insufficient, failing to account for the cultural, spiritual, and intergenerational significance of their ancestral land. Moreover, premature restrictions on land access impeded timely crop harvesting and preparation for displacement.

The conditions at the resettlement camp have further compounded their hardship, characterized by inadequate sanitation, overcrowding, and limited access to farmland and essential social services, all of which have significantly diminished their quality of life. The densely populated environment has also contributed to social tensions that were previously absent in their community. Innocent's testimony highlights how corporate-led resettlement initiatives not only fall short in providing just compensation but also precipitate additional challenges—including heightened poverty, social fragmentation, and the erosion of cultural heritage—ultimately leaving affected families in a more vulnerable state than prior to oil development.

BUILDING RESISTANCE: THE COMMUNITY RESPONSE

In the face of systemic corporate abuse and government inaction, affected communities have mobilized to demand accountability and assert their rights. Grassroots movements such as the East African Crude Oil Pipeline Host Communities and the Oil Refinery Residents Association have become vital platforms for resistance, documentation, and advocacy. The Community People's Tribunal serves as one strategic intervention within this broader movement—offering an alternative mechanism for justice where formal legal systems have failed. Through such efforts, communities are reclaiming the power to hold corporations accountable and to define their own models of development.

This local resistance is part of a wider continental and global struggle against extractive corporate practices. The “Kick Total Out of Africa” campaign, active in multiple countries where TotalEnergies operates, underscores the need for coordinated international pressure to ensure corporate accountability. During the Africa Week of Action, communities across the continent unite to expose TotalEnergies' harmful operations and demand justice. This transnational solidarity reinforces the message that affected communities are not alone, but part of a growing movement for energy democracy, environmental justice, and equitable development.



The resistance to TotalEnergies' operations in Africa transcends opposition to a single project—it reflects a broader movement for development that prioritizes environmental sustainability, social justice, and democratic governance over corporate profit.

The Community People's Tribunal concluded with strong calls for accountability, demanding that TotalEnergies be held responsible for the environmental degradation and social harm caused by its activities. Central to the tribunal's outcomes were demands for full reparations and a just transition toward community-led, renewable energy alternatives



Beyond financial reparations, affected communities are demanding meaningful consultation processes that respect their right to accept or reject projects impacting their territories, along with substantial investment in community-owned renewable energy alternatives that support sustainable livelihoods without environmental harm. The tribunal's long-term vision calls for robust accountability mechanisms that empower communities to hold corporations like TotalEnergies responsible for their actions, while promoting energy systems rooted in local ownership, ecological sustainability, and fair benefit-sharing that prioritizes African communities over corporate interests.

These demands reflect more than resistance—they articulate a forward-looking vision for energy democracy, where communities control their resources and shape their own development. Despite displacement, economic marginalization, and legal barriers, affected communities continue to organize, amplifying their voices across Africa and globally. The tribunal affirms their resolve to build a future where polluters are held accountable and reparations fund a just transition toward truly sustainable, community-led energy systems.

About us.

EAST AFRICAN CRUDE OIL PIPELINE HOST COMMUNITIES (EACOP HC): is an association of EACOP affected communities based in the Albertine region of Uganda, EACOPHC is dedicated to promoting sustainable environmental use, human rights and land rights of vulnerable communities.

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