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EAST AFRICAN
CRUDE OIL PIPELINE
HOST COMMUNITIES

NEWSLETTER

A Year of Green Revolution in the Heart of Africa



Dear Environmental and Human Rights Stewards, in this month's inaugural newsletter, on the dusk of 2024 and the dawn of 2025, we bring to you an exclusive wrap up of EACOP HC's project implementations, achievements, challenges and our purposeful path for 2025. We stand at the threshold of transformative promise. The echoes of our past achievements resonate like resilient seeds germinating beneath our quiet landscape, promising green renewal and climate just. This month marks not just a turn of the calendar, but a pivotal moment in our collective journey towards a

HIGHLIGHTS

- Breaking Free from Fossil's Grip
- Planting seeds of change
- Challenges through 2024, Looking Ahead for 2025

just energy transition. Our communities are progressively shedding the shadows of fossil fuel dependency, emerging as living testaments to environmental stewardship and human rights advocacy. Together, we are cultivating a future where sustainable development and community resilience intertwine like robust, interconnected roots, drawing strength from shared vision and unwavering commitment.

Breaking Free from Fossil's Grip

The Albertine region, a jewel in the crown of Africa's rich natural resources, has been deeply impacted by the oil and gas industry. Despite promises of economic development and improved livelihoods, many local communities have faced adverse consequences, including involuntary displacement, forced evictions, loss of livelihoods, and destruction of cultural values, environmental degradation, increase in human-wildlife conflicts, increase in school dropout, early children pregnancies, increased gender based violence among others.

The oil and gas activities have disrupted our traditional ways of life, distorted our heritage, leading to a growing sense of frustration and disenfranchisement among the oil project affected communities'. While oil companies together with our governments continue to promise economic upliftment, they have instead cast a long shadow of displacement and social havoc in the hearts of the communities. The land that once thrived with life and tradition now bears the scars of industrial encroachment, leaving its people grappling with loss and uncertainty.

Planting Seeds of Change

However, despite all of that environmental torment and social degradation, we as the East African Crude Oil Pipeline Host Communities have overcome, achieved and done a very commendable transformation of our homes since the evolution of oil in the Albertine region. This year is yet to mark a pivotal shift in our region's energy narrative. Through collaborative efforts with local communities and other like-minded stakeholders, we've achieved several groundbreaking milestones that light the path toward a sustainable future.

1. The Permalab Project: Women Leading Environmental Renaissance

Like a flourishing garden tended by dedicated hands, our women-led environmental and livelihood sustainability demonstration farm has blossomed into a beacon of hope. This innovative project serves a dual purpose: protecting our precious environment while providing

sustainable income sources for oil-affected women. Here, traditional farming wisdom meets modern conservation techniques, creating a sanctuary where both nature and communities thrive. Our women participants, once displaced by oil activities, now stand as proud stewards of the earth, nurturing both their families and the environment.



2. The Fight for Clean Energy.

In the critical journey towards sustainable development, transitioning from fossil fuel dependency to clean energy sources represents a transformative pathway for environmental preservation, community resilience and climate justice. Green energy technologies like solar energy, use of biogas offer profound advantages like providing clean and reliable source of energy for both cooking and lighting, provide long-term economic stability, create local employment opportunities, and protect ecological systems from destructive extraction practices. Through community engagements, youth and women empowerments meetings and participating in global stakeholder engagements, we have managed to preach the gospel of green energy so as to change the narrative from fossil- fuels. Unlike the EACOP oil project, which threatens biodiversity, community livelihoods and climate justice. Renewable energy sources represent a regenerative approach that harmonizes human progress with environmental integrity. In 2025 we are continuing to widen our scope to influence and demand for investment in clean energy infrastructure in terms of policies, financing and technology transfer. We believe communities can break free from volatile fossil fuel markets, reduce carbon footprints, and establish resilient, self-sustaining economic models that respect both human rights and ecological balance.



3. Community-Based Journalists: Youth Voices Rising

Our youth-led community Journalists program launched and has emerged as a powerful force for truth and accountability. These passionate young documentarians serve as the eyes and ears of their communities, meticulously recording the multifaceted impacts of oil activities. Through their lenses and pens, they capture the social, cultural, political, environmental, and economic transformations reshaping our landscape. Their first hand data and work has become an invaluable testament to our struggles and triumphs, ensuring that our stories reach beyond our borders.



4. Building strong community Resilience against the EACOP oil project and expansion of fossil fuels in the region

Our community engagements have woven a tapestry of resistance and hope across the region. From our launch of building a community-led fossil-free social movement, we sparked off an engine of resistance and resilience among the oil affected communities. This fueled and marked our first step to several successful community led non-violent actions.



(a)The April 15th, 2024 action. Community led non-violent action against the Hoima high court eviction order and ruling against the 42 Tilenga oil project affected households.

The April 15th, 2024 Action set a pace for community resilience as grass root project affected persons gathered and held the first ever community and oil project affected led non-violent demonstration at Hoima high court challenging the unfair eviction of the Tilenga community from their land as well as addressing the violations of their human and land rights. Though our advocacy and lobby engagements, we have written and drafted a number of petitions, letters, blogs, social media fliers and opinion articles as documentations and exposure of the negative effects and violations exhibited by the oil and gas activities happening in the Albertine region.

<https://eacophc.org/download/buliisa-evictions-statement/?wpdmdl=3001&refresh=67948f23e74541737789219>



(b)The August 26th, 2024 action. Community led non-violent action challenging the violations of human and environmental rights associated with EACOP oil project

The August 26th, 2024 Action, which stands as a testament to our collective voice, where over 360 directly oil project affected communities called for the halt of the EACOP project because of the violations of

human, environmental rights and threats to climate change associated with the EACOP project activities. On the morning of August 26, 2024, the communities ensnared by the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) project together with associated projects like Tilenga, Kingfisher and oil refinery embarked on a momentous demonstration, known as the August non-violent Action. This large-scale protest was a resounding cry for justice, driven by deep-seated grievances over insufficient compensation, environmental devastation, and disruptive displacement, this positively resulted into various media engagements from various media houses and platforms in regard to the issues raised by the oil affected communities. What began as a peaceful assembly of over 360 community participants at Kitara Senior Secondary School in Hoima City soon evolved into a dramatic clash as tensions soared between the demonstrators, government authorities and security forces, and this remains a big challenge in the year 2025 as our civic space for grassroots environmental and human rights defenders continues to close, despite the fact, we shall continue to fight in solidarity for climate justice until our demands are heard and acted upon. (<https://eacophc.org/download/eacop-project-affected-communities-memorandum-of-demands-26th-august-2024/?wpdmdl=3053&refresh=67949233160e41737790003>)



5.Engaging Financial institutions to defund fossil-fuel promotion activities.

(a)EACOP Project affected communities calling on China financial institutions not to fund the EACOP project

Also through sowing in our community mobilizations and empowerment meetings, we held our first ever community-led press conference in the oil affected host communities. Our press conference was challenging Chinese financial institutions to defund the EACOP

project and rule out any hopes of financing this multibillion environmental destruction in form of fossil-fuel investment thus demonstrating our growing local, national, regional and international efforts to end the fossil fuels era and demand for a just clean renewable energy transition. It is such efforts that have discouraged a number of investors and banks from financing the EACOP project which motivates us to continue pushing for the defunding of this project from any future aspiring investors.

<https://eacophc.org/download/statement-by-eacop-host-communities-about-news-that-china-would-fund-the-pipeline/?wpdmdl=3077&refresh=67948f1fa1ee51737789215> and the protest letter to standard bank <https://eacophc.org/download/protest-letter-to-standard-bank-over-eacop-august-05-2024/?wpdmdl=3057&refresh=6794923311e49173779003>)



Through our community mobilization and organization, we concurrently organized a non-violent action led by the EACOP project affected communities demanding Chinese financial institutions not to finance the EACOP project because the project activities threats on community livelihoods, environment and climate change



6. Triumphs in Biodiversity protection.

We, at EACOPHC stand as guardians of the Albertine precious heritage. Our environmental campaigns in collaboration with the project affected youth echo like drums of resistance across the EACOP corridor, rallying communities to protect these irreplaceable ecosystems. Through our persistent advocacy, community sensitization, mobilization meetings and community engagements, we conducted the Save Murchison campaign as well as the Save Bugoma forest campaign. Through these two campaigns, we expose how each pipeline, each access road, each processing facility chips away at the delicate web of life that makes our Albertine region a global biodiversity hotspot. We refuse to let corporate greed transform our natural cathedrals into industrial sacrifice zones, fighting each day to preserve these sacred spaces for generations yet unborn.



7. Exchange learning initiative: Bridging Continents, Connecting Causes

Our journey of environmental solidarity goes beyond borders. From 21st–25th of October 2024, marked another significant milestone in our journey as we ventured to the Niger Delta. This profound exchange with communities who have weathered five decades of oil production offered invaluable insights and lessons. Their experiences serve as both a warning and a guide, strengthening our resolve to lead a different path for the Albertine region. Its these same lessons and similar impacts as oil affected communities from the West and East of Africa that we carried with us to the COP19 last year in Baku, Azerbaijan and influenced the discussions and policies held and drafted. With such exchange learning

experiences, we are yet to embark on a community screening program so as to create more awareness and continue to make a firm resilient foundation for the project affected people to fight strong against this oil curse .

[\(https://rightsinddevelopment.org/news/climate-change-niger-delta/\)](https://rightsinddevelopment.org/news/climate-change-niger-delta/)



The EACOP oil project and its related oil multinational corporations' harvest billions from beneath our soil, their reckless pursuit of fossil fuel profits sows' seeds of destruction in our gardens, poisons our streams, and scars our ancestral lands. Like a swarm of locusts, they descend with promises of prosperity, only to leave behind barren fields and broken communities. As environmental stewards, we shall not stop the fight -we believe in climate justice and the responsible parties should be accountable for the damage they are causing to our pristine landscapes and people of the Albertine. As we kick start 2025, these implementations and achievements fuel our determination. Like the mighty rivers that flow through our lands, our movement grows stronger with each passing day, carrying the dreams and determination of our communities toward a greener, cleaner and more just future.

Challenges through 2024, Looking Ahead for 2025

Our path as defenders of nature and human dignity has been marked by thorns of intimidation and harassment. Like shadows stalking environmental truth-tellers, security operatives have repeatedly disrupted our community meetings, branded our peaceful advocacy as 'incitement,' and attempted to silence our voices through arbitrary arrests and surveillance. Our field officers navigate a landscape of fear, where documenting environmental violations or speaking up for displaced families can lead to threatening phone calls or surprise visits.

Despite these challenges, we stand unwavering, for we understand that every great cause for justice has faced resistance, and every successful movement has weathered storms of repression.

As the dawn of 2025 approaches, we are cultivating roots of renewal across the Albertine region. Our vision blossoms into a vibrant needlepoint of non-violent community actions, where art installations will speak the language of environmental justice, and community radio waves will carry the voices of affected persons to every corner of Uganda. We are cultivating spaces for constructive dialogue with government stakeholders, seeking to nurture the growth of civic space where environmental defenders can flourish without fear. Our legal advocates will continue challenging unsustainable activities in Murchison Falls National Park, while our creative team develops innovative advocacy approaches - from powerful street theater performances to compelling documentary films and community experience-sharing screenings. Like a mighty tree spreading its branches, we will extend our reach through media initiatives, launching our own radio talk shows to amplify community voices and fostering a new era of environmental consciousness in Uganda.

Additionally, we are working on the ambitious "Zero Fossil project" roadmap, developed in collaboration with local communities as an initiative of embracing clean energy under the guidance of the Repower Afrika campaign and look at the launch of the Albertine Green Hub to incubate local environmental solutions and also advocate for a safe space for local environmental human rights defenders.

Special Dedication.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our community volunteers, our link-minded partner organizations locally and international supporters worldwide. As we set the ball rolling for 2025, we invite you to join us in building on this momentum. Whether through volunteering, donations, or spreading awareness, every action contributes to our shared vision of an environmentally sustainable fossil free region.

" We're not just preserving nature; we're nurturing hope for generations to come."

Get Involved

Your participation is crucial! Join our efforts to promote sustainable development, advocate for climate justice, and safeguard community rights. Whether it's attending a workshop, sharing your story, or joining a local initiative, your voice matters and the change we fight for begins with us.

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. The organization was formed in 2019 to promote and advocate for the protection of environment and human rights in areas affected by the proposed East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP)

EACOP HC works with oil project affected communities, youth, women, religious and local government leaders to ensure promotion of environmental justice and human rights in the EACOP oil project affected areas. Through lobby, research and community education, EACOP HC works with vulnerable communities, cultural, religious and local government leaders to ensure that natural resources are utilized in an environmentally conservation manner and land rights of vulnerable communities are protected.

Reach out to us with your questions, suggestions, or to contribute to our next newsletter. Together, we can create positive change and build a sustainable future for all.

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