



## COMMUNITY PROPOSALS TO PROMOTE AN INCLUSIVE AND JUST ENERGY TRANSITION IN UGANDA

To address the climate crisis and promote universal access to modern energy in line with the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 7, the Ugandan government has put in place a number of policies, laws and plans.

Among these is the Energy Transition Plan (ETP), which was launched by Uganda's Minister of Energy in December 2023. Among others, the plan is aimed at guiding Uganda's efforts to promote a transition to modern energy.

Other stakeholders including development partners, civil society organisations (CSOs), the private sector and others are also promoting a just energy transition (JET). But, what does a JET mean for communities?

In April 2024, Africa Institute for Energy Governance (AFIEGO) conducted a community energy visioning exercise

covering seven districts including Buliisa, Hoima, Kakumiro, Kikuube, Kyotera, Lwengo and Rakai in Uganda.

The purpose of the exercise was to understand the energy that communities aspire towards using in the context of the JET. Through the exercise, AFIEGO also sought to understand the barriers that communities face in efforts to access clean energy and the solutions that they propose to address those barriers.

Through this brief, AFIEGO summarises what a JET means for communities and the recommendations they make to enable the clean energy transition. The objective of this brief is to enhance stakeholder awareness of community aspirations for a JET to support government and others' efforts to promote universal access to clean energy and take climate action.

Before assessing what community aspirations for a clean JET are, we asked the communities to share the lighting, cooking and productive energy that they currently use. The communities identified kerosene lamps, candles, solar and grid power as their most used forms of lighting energy. Cell torches are also used.



When it comes to cooking energy, firewood is the most used, followed by charcoal and grid power. Biogas, LPG and kerosene stoves are used as well. In terms of productive use, grid power followed by fossil fuels including diesel or petrol as well as solar and firewood are the most used.

Asked to envision the future and define the types of lighting, cooking and productive energy that the communities would want to use, the communities identified grid power as their most preferred type of lighting energy. This is followed by off-grid solar. The communities indicated that off-grid solar would have been their most preferred if it were not for counterfeit products that mar customer experience, as well as the high initial purchase cost for good quality solar technologies.

In terms of cooking energy, the communities expressed a preference for charcoal, followed by biogas and firewood after which grid power and gas follow. The communities noted that they were aware of the negative impacts that the use of charcoal and firewood has on the environment, and on women's health. However, efficient affordable alternatives are not easily accessible. Gas, which is a fossil fuel that contributes to climate change, has also been publicised by the Ugandan government as an alternative fuel, driving its preference by communities. For productive use, the community leaders expressed a preference for grid power followed by solar and diesel/petrol, after which biogas and firewood follow.



The community leaders observed that they were aware of the negative impacts of continued reliance on firewood, charcoal, diesel, petrol and gas on the climate, environment, their livelihoods and especially women's health.

However, they observed that the following challenges were undermining their use of cleaner forms of energy. It is the same challenges that made it difficult for communities to envision an energy future that is based solely on clean energy.

ENERGIES	CURRENT ENERGY USES	WHAT ENERGY WOULD THEY WANT TO USE	CHALLENGES HINDERING
LIGHTING ENERGY	Solar energy Hydro power Cell torches	MEN	
COOKING ENERGY	Fire wood Charcoal Grass COALS		
PRODUCTIVE ENERGY	Fuel Fire wood Solar Electricity		

The challenges are: expensive grid power; unreliable grid electricity; and quack electricians that cheat customers. Others include counterfeit solar batteries; lack of durability of off-grid solar products; and bad weather that limits the capacity of off-grid solar. Yet others include: technical challenges relating to off-grid solar products; maintenance challenges of off-grid solar products; and the nature of local houses that do not support grid or off-grid electrification.

The communities observed that a JET would be enabled if government ensured access to off-grid and grid power, lower power prices and reliable grid electricity. Further, the communities observed that a JET would be enabled if the off-grid solar sector was better regulated to address the challenge of counterfeit products and if solar products were subsidised.

Government and its partners should implement the above recommendations. Further, civil society and other actors should increase community sensitisation efforts on available clean energy alternatives to enhance their uptake by communities.



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