

October 2024; Issue 10

NO MORE EMPTY PROMISES: COP 29 DELEGATES MUST WORK TO END FOSSIL FUEL ERA



An oil-affected family from Buliisa district in Western Uganda following eviction from their home in May 2024; The family was evicted by the Uganda government to pave way for the Tilenga oil project.



Some oil-affected people with their lawyers in Kampala; The people are among the 42 households that were sued by the Ugandan government in December 2023 to pave way for the Tilenga oil project.



An oil rig in Murchison Falls National Park in Uganda; oil and gas activities negatively impact people and biodiversity, and need to be phased out.
Photo credit: The Independent

In this newsletter:

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Dear reader, welcome to AFIEGO's October 2024 newsletter.

As we count down to the 29th United Nations Climate Change Conference of Parties (COP 29), the stakes have never been higher. COP 29 will be held in Baku, Azerbaijan between November 11 and 22, 2024.

The stakes are high because on July 22, 2024, the earth's temperature was the **highest** ever recorded since 1940. June 2024 was also the **hottest** month on record globally. **Deaths** suspected to be connected to the heatwaves were recorded in the United States (US).

Uganda also recorded its share of climate change disasters this year. The most eerie was when following **torrential** rainfall, a rubbish landslide in Kiteezi in Kampala occurred, killing tens of people in August.

In prior years, heavy rains have caused landslides in Eastern Uganda, leading to chaos and death. The above and other climate change disasters demonstrate that the climate crisis is not just an environmental issue, it is an urgent social and economic crisis that must be decisively dealt with.

The COP 29, which will be held under the theme, "In solidarity for a green world", is therefore pivotal. The conference provides an opportunity for world leaders to say enough is enough, we must phase out fossil fuels quickly, fairly and equitably.

The expansion of the fossil fuel

industry across the globe, and in Africa where **\$70 billion** was expected to be spent on fossil fuels in 2024, is worrisome. Only \$40 million was expected to be spent on clean energy projects during the same period.

African leaders must reject fossil fuel projects that are not only driving the climate crisis but are also causing social and economic harms on the continent.

In our **Word from CEO and Partners**, we call on African and other world leaders to take action against the main culprits of the climate crisis, particularly the fossil fuel industry, at COP 29.

We call on the above stakeholders to put in place measures to end the fossil fuel era once and for all. Read more about this in our Word from CEO and Partners.

In this newsletter, we also bring you our **pictorial** section. In this section, we bring you the activities that we and our partners implemented this month.

For instance, we held two meetings with Project Affected Persons (PAPs) who were sued by the Ugandan government.

Government sued the PAPs to compel them to take low compensation and make way for the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP). The people are from the Greater Masaka sub-region in Southern Uganda.

During the meetings, we discussed the legal options available to the PAPs following government winning the case against them. The people also created a taskforce to support efforts to defend their rights.

In addition, we organised a training on climate reporting for journalists from various media houses in Uganda. The journalists generated story ideas to further climate awareness among their audiences.

Further, AFIEGO held a meeting with oil-affected women in Buliisa district. During the meeting, the women discussed the unique and engendered challenges they are faced with as a result of ongoing oil activities in their district.

We discussed ways in which to address the challenges in a gender-sensitive manner.

This month, AFIEGO also joined its partners under the Inclusive Green Economy Network-East Africa (IGEN-EA) in a dialogue on financial and fiscal incentives for the renewable energy sector.

The dialogue took place in Kampala. Its aim, among others, was to promote fiscal incentives to address financing gaps in the renewable energy sector.

AFIEGO also participated in a conference organised by Lund University in Sweden to discuss how researchers can support evidence-based advocacy by climate activists.

We also participated in a radio talkshow in Hoima district to sensitise the public on the importance of clean energy in addressing the climate crisis.

You will see the above and much more in our pictorial section.

In our **lobbying** section, we bring you some of the lobby and advocacy products that we disseminated in October 2024. For instance, we share a communique that was written by women engaged by AFIEGO.

The over 50 women wrote to the government requesting for the promotion of clean renewable energy in Uganda by addressing barriers to the promotion of renewable energy.

Further, we bring you a press statement that we disseminated following the Masaka High Court ruling against 80 persons whose land is being acquired for the EACOP in Greater Masaka.

The people were sued by government and court allowed the state to deposit the PAPs' compensation in court, despite the people's resistance.

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 the month of October.

We hope you enjoy the newsletter.

Editorial team:

Diana Nabiruma

Rachael Amongin

Barbra Kembabazi

Balach Bakundane

COP29 DELEGATES MUST WORK TO END THE FOSSIL FUEL ERA

Dear reader, on July 10, 2024, residents of Namasuba, around the Bata-Bata area in Kampala, awoke to heavy rain. The rain began around 9am, and being heavy in nature, it led to **floods** and traffic disruptions.

The damage went beyond traffic disruptions, however, as the floods claimed property and livelihoods. For one poultry **farmer** in the area, Mr. Alex Mpimba Musoke, the rains were especially devastating: he lost nearly 200 chicken, eggs and other items.

It was pitiful to watch images of his dead chicken on the local news, more so when one thought of what a hit to his livelihood he had taken.

The Bata-Bata floods and the economic losses they caused are one of the many climate and environmental degradation disasters that are happening with increasing frequency and severity not only in Uganda but the world at large.

Available information shows that the world has lost **20%** in agricultural productivity due to climate change. Further, globally, climate change-induced infrastructural damage has cost countries up to **\$845 billion** per year. Worst of all, some reports indicate

that **2 million** deaths occurred globally between 1970 and 2021 due to climate disasters.

Fossil fuels including coal, oil and gas, which account for **75%** of greenhouse gas emissions, and **90%** of carbon emissions, are by far the biggest drivers of global warming and therefore climate change.



A flooded section of Entebbe road and Mr. Musoke, who lost farm stock to floods
Photo credit: NTV Uganda

ENTER COP 29

Between November 11 and 22, 2024, world leaders, civil society actors, women, youth, indigenous people and others will meet in Baku in Azerbaijan.

The above stakeholders will convene for the United Nations Climate Change Conference (UNFCCC) which will include the 29th Conference of Parties (COP 29).

COP 29 will be held under the theme, "In solidarity for a green world" and it presents an opportunity for global leaders to confront the root cause of climate disasters that have cost millions of people like Mr. Musoke

their livelihoods while also causing death.

This root cause is failure to end the era of fossil fuels.

While climate COPs present an opportunity for delegates from various nations to advance plans for reducing further global warming, and supporting the communities most affected by its impacts, past COPs have presented largely lackluster results.

This is because some world leaders are in the chokehold of fossil fuel lobbyists, which has consistently undermined their capacity to take a bold stance against fossil fuels, making commitments on phasing out fossil fuels hard to secure.

However, as we approach COP29, various states' delegates, alongside civil society actors, youth, women, and indigenous groups, must unite to secure a realistic and equitable timeline for a fossil-free future.

Below are some reasons why phasing out fossil fuels is a must.

(a) Climate risks: As has been discussed in this article before, fossil fuels are the biggest drivers of climate change today.

Fossil fuels account for **75%** of greenhouse gas emissions, and **90%** of carbon emissions,

thereby driving global warming and climate disasters. Moreover, available evidence indicates that the world has lost **20%** in agricultural productivity due to climate change.

Further, globally, climate change-induced infrastructural damage has cost countries up to **\$845 billion** per year. Worst of all, some reports indicate that **2 million** deaths occurred globally between 1970 and 2021 due to climate disasters.

As climate disasters become more frequent and severe, more damages and losses, including the worst of them all, loss of life, are expected to increase. World leaders must save lives and livelihoods. They must phase out fossil fuels.



Arabica coffee, which is grown in Uganda, is **sensitive** to climate impacts. Failure to address climate change by desisting from developing pipelines such as the EACOP (R) stands to worsen the climate crisis and affect farmers.

Photo credit for picture on left: Solidaridad Network

(b) Mass displacement of people: For oil infrastructure to be developed, mass displacements of indigenous and other people often occur. These displacements take away people's capacity to enjoy key

social, cultural, economic and other rights. In Uganda and Tanzania for instance, development of the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) alone caused the displacement of over 13,564 households with over 86,000 individuals.

The people have suffered widely documented violations of their constitutional rights to own and use their property as they will, unfair compensation, delayed compensation and others.

The people have also suffered negative impacts to their livelihoods.

Fossil fuels not only drive climate change, they also drive under-development, especially for oil host communities.

They need to be phased out for clean decentralised energy that centres the wellbeing of local communities.

(c) Threats to biodiversity:

The exploitation of oil and gas has negative impacts on biodiversity.

From causing habitat loss to making protected areas more accessible to poachers, fossil fuels

increase the conservation risks for biodiversity. By driving climate change, the fuels also further risk the conservation of IUCN-listed endangered species not to mention other wildlife. In Uganda, available information shows that climate change has caused habitat loss, including in Murchison Falls National Park where oil and gas exploitation activities under the Tilenga oil project are ongoing.

Wildlife such as hippopotami have lost habitats, and crocodiles, which used to be abundant in the park, have **lost** breeding grounds.

Aerial surveys indicate that the park's biodiversity has **reduced**, thanks to poaching and climate change. Biodiversity loss has been recorded in the world too.

Yet humanity's wellbeing is tied to biodiversity's wellbeing. Per the **World Bank**, "the collapse of select ecosystem services provided by nature – such as wild pollination, provision of food from marine fisheries and timber from native forests – could result in a decline in global GDP of \$2.7 trillion annually by 2030."

To protect biodiversity, people and world economies, world leaders must decisively phase out fossil fuels.

(d) Repression: The world is increasingly becoming

repressive with **data** from Civicus showing that 96.9% of the world's population lives in countries where the operational space for civil society actors is closed, repressed, obstructed or narrowed.

Only 3.2% of the world's population lives in countries where the operational space for civil society actors is open.

The exploitation of coal, oil and gas often leads to further closing, narrowing, obstruction or repression of civic space, undermining civil liberties that are key for development.

Take Uganda for instance, the desire by the Ugandan government and its partners to exploit oil and gas has led to a crackdown of activists opposing oil and gas exploitation in the country.

A safety tracker that AFIEGO maintains indicates that at least 193 activists were arrested and/or detained by the Ugandan government between September 2022 and August 2024.

Some of the arrested people are students, civil society activists and community members affected by oil projects.

Any 'development' that

results in repressed civic spaces while causing climate and biodiversity crises should not be encouraged. Fossil fuels need to be phased out.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Fossil fuel exploitation also raises health challenges, worsens gender disparities, further marginalizes youth, increases school drop-outs especially amongst girls, and results in other impacts.

The above have especially been seen in Uganda.

In light of the above, the following need to be done by world leaders at COP 29:

- i. Put an end to the era of fossil fuels;
- ii. Identify and study alternatives that can replace fossil fuels for countries that are economically dependent on fossil fuels;
- iii. Establish a committee that will work towards ensuring that nations phase out fossil fuels; and
- iv. Establish an international tribunal that provides justice to victims of climate change disasters.

By CEO and Partners

Pictorial of our activities

PROMOTING HUMAN RIGHTS: AFIEGO SUPPORTS EACOP-AFFECTED PERSONS TO FORM TASKFORCE



On October 8, 2024, AFIEGO's legal team held a meeting with EACOP project-affected persons (PAPs) from Greater Masaka. The meeting took place in Masaka.

During the meeting, the PAPs were updated on an October 1, 2024 court ruling that was made in the case filed against them by the Government of Uganda (GoU). The people planned the next steps to take after the ruling, which was in government's favour.

In addition, on October 30, 2024, another meeting was held to form a taskforce that will fight for the rights of EACOP-affected communities in Greater Masaka.

The taskforce is composed of PAPs affected by court cases.

AFIEGO PROVIDES LEGAL SUPPORT TO YOUTH SUED BY GOVERNMENT



On October 31, the Chief Magistrates Court at Buganda Road in Kampala ruled that youth, who were arrested and detained by police in November 2023, had no case to answer. The youth were arraigned before court on their arrest.

The ruling came after AFIEGO's legal team provided support to the youth.

The youth were arrested as they walked to parliament to present a petition calling for the release of students who were arrested while protesting against the EACOP.

AFIEGO AND PARTNERS DISCUSS WAYS TO POWER EACOP-AFFECTED COMMUNITIES



On October 10, 2024, AFIEGO in partnership with 350Africa held a workshop to strategise on ways in which EACOP-affected people in Uganda and Tanzania can access clean renewable energy.

The meeting, which took place in Kampala, identified the opportunities and barriers for ensuring clean energy access for communities especially schools, health centres and others.

ENGENDERING HUMAN RIGHTS WORK: AFIEGO HOLDS MEETING WITH OIL-AFFECTED WOMEN



On October 16, 2024, AFIEGO organised a meeting with women from the oil-affected district of Buliisa. The women discussed the challenges they are faced with as a result of the ongoing oil activities.

Furthermore, they proposed solutions to the challenges they face. The discussions will guide AFIEGO in engendering our community work.

AFIEGO TRAINS JOURNALISTS ON CLIMATE REPORTING



On October 18, 2024, AFIEGO in partnership with BBEG Media trained journalists on climate reporting.

The training equipped the journalists with knowledge on climate change including the potential climate impacts of Uganda's oil projects.

In addition, they learnt about ethical and responsible reporting.

FUNDING FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY: AFIEGO JOINS IGEN-EA PARTNERS IN DIALOGUE ON FINANCIAL INCENTIVES



In October 2024, AFIEGO joined its IGEN-EA partners in a dialogue on financial and fiscal incentives for the renewable energy sector.

The discussion focused on taxation proposals for renewable energy as well as result based financing and opportunities among others.


AFIEGO AND PARTNERS DISCUSS SOLAR ENERGY PROMOTION IN MEETING WITH DUTCH EMBASSY



On October 22, 2024, AFIEGO staff and our partners participated in a meeting with Dutch embassy officials in Kampala.

During the meeting, AFIEGO and our partners discussed the efforts we are engaged in to promote off-grid solar energy access for women, youth and other marginalised groups.

In October 2024, over 50 women mobilised by AFIEGO wrote to the government requesting for the promotion of clean renewable energy in Uganda. Further, we and our partners issued a press statement following the Masaka High Court ruling against 80 persons whose land is being acquired for the EACOP in Greater Masaka. The above and others, including some of the meetings held by AFIEGO's legal team in October 2024, can be seen below.



IGEN
INCLUSIVE GREEN ECONOMY
NETWORK-EAST AFRICA

IGEN-EA CLEAN ENERGY HUB, FORT PORTAL CITY

About IGEN-EA
The Inclusive Green Economy Network-East Africa (IGEN-EA) is a network that unites over thirty-six (36) private sector players and civil society organisations from Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania. The network was formally launched in 2021.

IGEN-EA's mission
The network's mission is to promote green economic alternatives for environmental, social and economic development in Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania and the East African region at large.

IGEN-EA's focus areas
IGEN-EA focuses on advocating for investment in the following green economic alternatives: clean energy, sustainable tourism, agriculture and fisheries as well as natural resources management and forestry.

The clean energy hub
In 2024, IGEN-EA established a renewable clean energy hub. The hub is located in Kabarole district in Fort Portal in Western Uganda. IGEN-EA intends to establish more renewable clean energy hubs in the Albertine Graben (Western Uganda).

AFRICA INSTITUTE FOR ENERGY GOVERNANCE

Plot 1284, Space Centre Building, Bwate Njagere P.O.Box 34913, Kampala - Uganda
Tel: +256 (0) 393 228 323, Mob: +256 782 407085, Email: afiego@afiego.org, Website: www.afiego.org



October 4, 2024

COMMUNIQUE BY WOMEN CLEAN ENERGY CHAMPIONS: GOVERNMENT SHOULD DO MORE TO ENSURE WOMEN'S ACCESS TO CLEAN ENERGY

A. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Between September 19 and 20, 2024, Africa Institute for Energy Governance (AFIEGO) in partnership with the Inclusive Green Economy Network-East Africa (IGEN-EA) and with support from BothEnds organised a High-Level Women's Clean Energy Conference. The conference, whose main objective was to enable women to discuss how to strengthen efforts to promote clean renewable energy services for all in Uganda and the East African region, took place at Esella Country Hotel-Kampala. Over 50 women leaders from Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the Netherlands participated in the conference.

The first-of-its-kind conference was organised as part of AFIEGO and IGEN-EA's efforts to enable citizens shape implementation of Uganda's 2023 Energy Transition Plan (ETP). The ETP is the Ugandan government's blueprint for increasing universal access to modern energy.

The conference recognised the critical environmental, social, economic and cultural importance of universal access to clean, affordable and reliable electricity.

Further, the conference appreciated the role of women, other citizens, government, development partners and private sector's efforts in improving access to clean energy services. These efforts have been promoted through policies, laws and projects including Uganda's 1999 Electricity Act as amended, the National Energy policy, the Renewable Energy policy, the Electricity Scale-Up Project, the Free Electricity Connection policy and others.

However, the participants at the conference expressed concern that despite the above efforts, access to clean affordable and reliable renewable energy remains a challenge. Women's access to clean energy especially remains a challenge with available information showing that at national level in Uganda, of the 24% households with access to grid power, 52.4% are male-headed compared to 48.4% female-headed ones¹.

At the end of the two days' conference, the over 50 participants including the private sector, civil society, the academia, district women leaders, youth activists, journalists, religious leaders and

¹ Energia: https://www.energia.org/assets/2021/02/Country-brief-Uganda_Nov2020_final.pdf

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October 2, 2024

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
MASAKA & KAMPALA

EACOP PROJECT AFFECTED PERSONS (PAPS) DISAPPOINTED BY HIGH COURT RULING

The Masaka High Court yesterday (October 1, 2024) issued a ruling against the 80 Project Affected Persons (PAPs) with interests in 41 parcels of land affected by the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP). The people are from Lwengo, Kyotera, and Rakai districts in the Greater Masaka sub-region.

The ruling came after the Government of Uganda (GoU), through the Attorney General, filed a case against the affected people on August 20, 2024.

The ruling, which was delivered by Justice Lawrence Tweyanze, allows the GoU to deposit the affected persons' compensation in court.

Court also granted the following orders requested by the GoU:

- Vacant possession of the affected people's land so that it may be used for the EACOP project activities.
- Eviction and demolition orders against the affected people.
- Being discharged from any liabilities arising out of any claim and/or order arising out of the orders being sought by government.

However, court declined to provide for costs of the case to be paid by the affected 80 land owners or estate administrators or estate beneficiaries as was requested by the government.

Mr. Cosmas Yiga, one of the affected people from Kyotera district said after hearing the court ruling, "Losing this court case is heartbreaking but I will not give up fighting for what is right. As PAPs [project-affected persons], we are suffering deeply. Even those who received compensation are struggling. People's crops were destroyed and families are left desperate. We deserve better and I will keep standing for justice."



In October 2024, AFIEGO staff, research associates and youth champions wrote newspaper articles that were published in the leading newspapers. Some of the published articles are captured below.

16 NN Wednesday, October 2, 2024

COMMENT & LETTERS

EDITOR: Climate change impacts are again hitting the farmers hard this season.

In Uganda it is a mixture of heavy rains and unexpected severe drought while in Nigeria and Sudan the heavy rainfall floods are killing and displacing people.

Back to Uganda; September, October, November are usually rainy months. Starting August, farmers start preparing their gardens and by September they sow the seeds. In the western, eastern, northern and other parts of Uganda, farmers have lost hope for better yields this season due to unexpected drought.

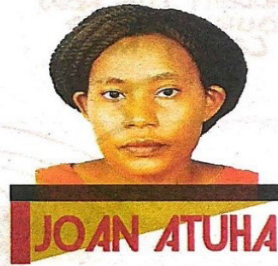
It is usually beans, maize and millet that are planted this season and some seeds have not germinated due to dry soils.

Climate change finishing off farmers this season

Rural people are beginning to understand the climate-change impacts due to all these happenings in a hard way. But then what could be the cause of these changing seasons?

The answer is the human activities that destroy nature that have caused all the severe impacts of climate change.

Wetlands have been reclaimed, thick bushes have been burnt to make way for cultivation while forests have been cut down for firewood and other purposes. All these and the burning of fossil fuels have greatly contributed to climate change. The effects of climate change affect everyone differently and at most times it is the



marginalised communities that face the worst consequences of climate change. Generally, the people who are the least responsible for climate change often suffer the greatest consequences.

Apart from severe drought and rising temperatures, other effects which often affect the farmers include heavy floods, rising sea levels, storms and heavy winds. When all these hit the gardens, they affect the yields thus causing food scarcity and famine.

Food prices are already high with many people in the villages unable to afford two meals a day. The economic times are hard as farmers are no longer benefiting from their work.

The Government through the Climate Change Department, Uganda National Meteorological Department and National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS) should advise ways of engaging the grass-root local communities on the adaptation and mitigation measures to reduce or control the adverse effects of climate change. The meteorological department needs to find possible ways of disseminating weather forecasts to the local communities for better preparations as most farmers are not aware of the seasonal changes. The national broadcasting networks should schedule specific times for weather forecasts.

The writer is the executive director of AFICAAJ

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What's the real cost of oil extraction in #Nigeria and #Uganda?

#RightLivelihood Laureates **Nnimmo Bassey** and Africa Institute for Energy Governance's **Diana Nabiruma** join **KTH Royal Institute of Technology** Climate Action Centre's podcast to reveal its profound impacts—and explore paths toward sustainable solutions.

🎧 Listen now ➔ <https://lnkd.in/dCf9Udmf>



Letters

LETTERS

We must maintain environmental integrity for a greener Uganda

Recently Buikwe District politicians recently reported that there have been numerous cases of deforestation in the area, resulting in the depletion of government forests, including Mabira forest that has been under attack by human activities.

The Prime Minister of Buganda, Mr Charles Peter Mayiga, called upon government to reduce the prices of electricity and gas so that people can transition to clean energy to curb the massive destruction of forests. These remarks were made during the celebration of Buganda's Independence Day at Nyenga Sub-county headquarters in Buikwe District and this issue should be handled carefully.

Forestry is crucial to the livelihoods of millions of Ugandans because they help Ugandans meet various socio-economic needs that in turn sustain human development and significant national earnings. However, Uganda's forests continue to be degraded due to human activities such as timber loggings, charcoal production, unsustainable agricultural practices and unregulated livestock grazing and according to the findings, the country has lost 41.6 percent of its forest cover in the last 100 years (1921-2021). In 1900, Uganda's forest cover stood at 54 percent and by 2017, it stood at a miserable 12.4 percent. Studies indicate that there will be no forests left in 40 years, if these destructive human activities continue.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030 goal 15 calls for protection, restoration and promotion of sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainability, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss. Uganda must consider embracing clean energy sources and prioritise forest restoration as envisaged in existing targets provided in vision 2040, subsequent National Development Plans 1&11 and the National Forest Plan (2011/11-2021/22), in which the target is to restore cover to 24 percent (1990 levels) in regard to the National Forestry and Tree Planting Act 2003 which advocates for practicing afforestation and reforestation practices for degraded forest resources in order to restore and



Upcoming events

November 02; Kampala: Participation in the renewable energy conference and expo

November 5, 2024, Buliisa: Community meetings to discuss formation of women and youth taskforces on oil and human rights

November 11, 2024; Hoima: Hearing of court case brought by the oil refinery-affected people against government

November 13, 2024; Online: Exchange learning amongst oil-affected communities from Uganda, Nigeria and South Africa

November 15, 2024; Arusha: EACOP court case appeal hearing at the East African Court of Justice (EACJ)

November 28, 2024; Online: Dissemination of a research brief on the tourism potential of Greater Masaka

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 boom. 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