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PROCEEDINGS REPORT OF THE COMMUNITY SENSTIZATION MEETING BETWEEN STREC AND EACOP PAPS AT KAMUSENENE VILLAGE, BUTOLOOGO SUB-COUNTY IN MUBENDE DISTRICT

The EACOP affected people posing for the group photo after the sensitization meeting at Kamusenene community hall

May 10, 2022

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1. Introduction

On May 10, 2022, Strategic Response on Environmental Conservation (STREC) organized community sensitization meeting at Kamusenene village one of the village being affected by the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) project in Butoloogo Sub-county in Mubende district. The participants were drawn from the three Sub-counties which include Madudu, Butoloogo, and Kitenga.

The oil and gas sector in Uganda is now in the production phase where the government has started acquiring permanent land for the EACOP oil project. The EACOP pipeline will be gateway to take crude oil to the International market. It will traverse in ten (10) districts in Uganda, 27 sub-counties and 171 villages.

It should be noted that in Mebende alone, over 813 residents will permanently loose their land to pave way the oil pipeline.

On February 1, 2022, the projects joint ventures partners, Total Energies, China National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC) and Uganda's national oil company signed the Final Investment Decision (FID) for the oil and gas in Uganda amidst the local and international pressure that the project will worsen climate change, and violation of human rights.

It was on the above background that STREC organized the sensitization meetings with the EACOP project affected communities in Mubende district to empower them with knowledge on their land rights and effects of oil activities verses environmental degradation and destruction of their livelihoods.

2. Objectives of the meeting

- To empower the oil pipelines affected communities with knowledge on their land rights and effects of oil activities verses environmental degradation and destruction of livelihoods.
- To gather communities' views on their land and property rights in regards to the oil and gas projects in communities for STREC's advocacy work.

3. Proceedings

3.1. Welcome remarks and introduction by Katondo Godfrey the chairperson Kamusenene

The meeting started with a word of prayer, self-introductions and then the Kamusenene village chairperson, Mr. Katondo Godfrey thanked STREC for the community engagement meeting. He noted that all the people in the meeting are directly affected by the EACOP oil project and need to be informed on their land rights and all developments taking place so that they can well plan for the likely effects.

He informed the meeting that as residents they welcome all oil developments but the main challenge they have is on low compensation rates for their land and crops. He noted that their properties were poorly valued.

The chairperson officially opened the meeting and promised to work with STREC who are pro people.

3.2. Introductory remarks from STREC's Ms. Suzan Namome

Ms. Suzan Namome, STREC's project assistant, appreciated all the participants including women and youth, and farmers in addition to community groups and local leaders for participating in the community meeting. She noted that STREC is registered youth-led community based organization dedicated in promoting sustainable management of the environment and respect for human rights.

Through lobbying, research and community education, STREC works with communities such as yours and leaders to ensure that oil and gas development do not damage community livelihoods and environment.

She said adding that STREC, having her offices in Mubende town. Ms. Namome further noted that this was not the first time that STREC was empowering community groups in Mubende. Early this year in February, we engaged over 30 participants including representatives from community youth groups and community local leaders among others on the negative impacts of oil and gas activities on the environment, she said.

She noted that the community engagement is part of STREC's efforts to empower more community groups in Mubende on the negative impacts of oil and gas activities on environmental conservation and mobilise them to demand for clean energy.

Ms. Namome further informed the meeting that the EACOP pipeline is being managed by Total Energies, CNOOC, governments of Uganda and Tanzania. She added that for Mubende district alone, the pipeline will cross through three (3) sub-county and 29 villages.

She therefore called on participants to share their experience regarding the human rights violation faced by the EACOP affected people in Mubende district, how youth and women groups and civil society can take part in efforts to resist oil and gas activities in our areas. Below are some of the participants' general views and comments on the EACOP project.

STREC's Ms. Suzan Namome (s) giving introductory remarks on the community engagement

Mr. Dennis Godfrey Kumbuga, representing youth's groups in Butoloogo Sub-county

Mr. Kumbaga started off by appreciating STREC for involving youth groups in the meeting. He noted that it is because of this oil company's negligence that our rich biodiversity in Mubende district is going to be destroyed. He also noted that rural communities need to be educated more on the impacts of oil activities on the environment further explaining that government must do more to engage with grass root communities to understand what their views are in relation to oil sector development. Mr. Kumbuga also called on STREC to facilitate other engagements with the oil companies and government.

Ms. Nalugooti Sarah appreciated STREC for empowering communities on the dangers of oil pipeline adding that STREC is the only community empowerment NGO to sensitive communities on the dangers of the oil pipeline. She noted that there are many violations that happen to project affected people ranging from delay compensation, low compensation and undervaluation of their properties. She added that their hands are tired since they do not have anywhere to report.

Mr. Magagga Ndumba also noted that the oil pipeline will be passing near their water sources and also wetlands. She asked whether the pipeline will not impact on those resources yet they depend on them. She also asked STREC whether government has prepared any exit plans after the oil activities.

Ms. Nabulya Betty from kigondo village also asked whether STREC can help communities to meet the Ambassador of France in Uganda. She noted Total energies that are behind the construction EACOP is from France. She added these developed countries are busy promoting energy transition in their countries and their company such as Total Energies is busy here exploiting fossil fuels.

Ms. Nkulunziza Geture, also noted that there are some people whose land was passed in between by the pipeline. She asked whether the other piece of land on the other side of the pipeline will as well be compensated.

Mr. Mukasa Willy from Katuula village said the biggest challenge is how to get local communities to engage financial institutions supporting these deadly projects in country. He noted that people can form groups such as the youth group to protest against these banks.

Mr. Kakooza Alozious from Kisagazi village noted that oil production has already started in Uganda with families being kicked out of their land. He said that fragile ecosystems such as Lakes and forests among others are already being degraded.

Mr. Kakooza called on community members to unite and take a stand against oil activities in sensitive eco-system such as lakes, forest and others explaining that if exploiting of oil starts in the country, sensitive ecosystems will be destroyed.

STREC's Suzan Namome concluded this session by appreciating all the input made by participants. She then called on participants to make recommendations and forge a way forward on what they can do to protect community livelihoods and respect human rights.

4.0 Recommendations and way forward

Participants made the following recommendations

- Participants committed to organise smaller meetings in their villages to share knowledge on the dangers of oil exploitation activities
- Participants requested STREC to organize a meeting with the Ambassador of France in Uganda
- Participants committed to engage local leaders to protect Greater Masaka from oil activities
- Participants called on STREC to organise a bigger forum where more community members will be represented so that more people are aware of the impacts of oil activities on the environment
- Participants also requested STREC to petition financial institutions in Uganda to distance themselves from supporting the EACOP oil project.
- Participants requested for exchange learning visit to other oil affected districts in Uganda.
- Further, participants recommended that STREC should form youth movement to resist oil and gas activities in our local communities.

5.0 Closing remarks from STREC's Cirrus Kabaale

STREC's Cirrus Kabaale thanked the community representatives for participating in the community meeting. He noted that the meeting will be used as a tool in other communities to raise awareness and empower communities to resist oil and gas activities in eco-sensitive areas. Mr. Kabaale called on community representatives to pass on the relevant information to other community members and inspire them to take action.

He encouraged community representatives not to wait for STREC or any other NGO to help them protect their environment but to mobilise fellow communities and engage district leaders and authorities to conserve the environment.

Mr Cirrus Kabaale (L) giving closing remark

Link to the published press release

https://daparrot.com/disgruntled-residents-in-mubende-district-who-have-directly-affected-the-construction/

Annex

Participant list

No.	Name	Sex	Village /organization
1.	Ssegujja Ivan	M	Nyondo
2.	Namirembe Lydya.M	F	Kigondo
3.	Mujwiga Fred	M	Buganyi
4.	Cirrus Kabaale	M	STREC
5.	Male Emmanuel	M	Katuula
6.	Zzamula Emanuel	M	Kisagazi
7.	Ssekalejja Paul	M	Nyondo
8.	MusalaSserevesta	M	Bututi
9	Mutebi Wilson	M	Sunga
10.	Mukasa Joseph	M	Saaka
11.	NakanyikeMagulet	F	Busooba
12	Dennis Kumbuga	M	Butoloogo
13.	Kagoza Leo	M	Kagoma
14.	Sselugo Richard	M	Lugala
15.	KabandaVisenti	F	Busooba
16.	Nalugooti Sarah	F	Kagoma
17.	Edward	M	Busooba
18.	Nansasi Betty	F	Katuula
19.	KakoozaAlozious	M	Kisagazi
20.	Ssemambo Richard	M	Kitanda
21.	NamulemFatumah	F	Kijaagi
22.	Kabuye	M	Kijaagi
23.	Katondo Godfrey	M	Bujuuko
24.	Mugerwa Issa	M	Nyondo
25.	Nabulya Betty	F	Kigondo
26.	Nanyonga Veria	F	Lugala
27.	Namatovuu Rs	F	Rusikizi
28.	Kasuujja Joseph	M	Busooba
29.	Namutebi Florence	F	Kisagazi
30.	Nampuuga Sarah	F	Kyambogo
31.	Mugenyi Aventino	F	Bututi
32.	Buwera Mark	M	Saaka
33.	Nabawanuka Eddy	M	Saaka
34.	Mutebi Nadad	M	Busooba
35.	Ddumba Mugagga	M	Kijaagi
36.	Ssekanjako John Charles	M	Katuula
37.	Nkulunziza Geture	F	Buganyi
38.	Namugenyi Prossy	F	Nyondo
39.	Suzan Namome		