

**IN THIS MONTH'S EDITION,**

We highlight the ongoing environmental destruction and human rights abuses linked to TotalEnergies, its partners and the Government of Uganda in the Albertine region. Our in-depth reports reveal the devastating impact of the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) on local communities—displacing people, seizing land, and accelerating climate change. We also explore legal actions against TotalEnergies and the rising resistance to their harmful operations.

**A WORD FROM THE EDITOR**

The beginning of 2025 has seen intensified oil extraction at the expense of both local communities and the environment. Thanks to our dedicated field observers, we have gathered undeniable evidence of forced displacement, environmental degradation, and corporate impunity. This newsletter exposes these injustices and underscores the urgent need for global solidarity in the fight against EACOP. The struggle for justice continues.

*Mucunguzi Michael, Communication Department,  
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**Ndongo Village Water Crisis: A Community Left to Struggle.** The destruction of River Rutoha has left villagers without clean water, threatening health, food security, and livelihoods.

As deforestation and pipeline projects take their toll, who will hold CNOOC and EACOP accountable for this disaster? **More on page 2**

The case of Ibrahim Nyakagufu (pictured above): Land grabs in the Albertine region continue as farmers like Nyakagufu fight for fair compensation against corporate power.

Traditional knowledge and livelihoods are at risk as TotalEnergies denies rightful payments. Who will stand for justice? **More on page 2**

**THE HIDDEN COST OF OIL ACTIVITIES. PAGE 3**

## NDONGO VILLAGE WATER CRISIS – THE DESTRUCTION OF RIVER RUTOHA

One of the most distressing developments in the Albertine region is the destruction of River Rutoha in Ndongo Village, Kikuube District. On February 10, 2025, community observer Tumwine Julius reported that CNOOC, a major oil company, had cleared natural forests, disrupting the area's water source. For decades, this river sustained local communities, but EACOP's pipeline construction has now caused



*The slow death of once mighty River Rutoha*

This environmental disaster has led to a severe water shortage, forcing villagers to travel long distances for clean water. The loss of River Rutoha has pushed people to rely on unsafe water sources, increasing the risk of waterborne diseases like cholera and typhoid. Families who once used the river for drinking, cooking, and irrigation now struggle with food insecurity as their crops wither under dry conditions.



*A sign of the looming disaster? The difference in vegetation cover d the climate changes*

Deforestation has also led to drastic changes in weather patterns. Previously known for consistent rainfall, the area now faces unpredictable weather, making farming even more difficult. EACOP's reckless operations prioritize profit over the well-being of communities, and despite repeated calls for justice, authorities continue to turn a blind eye. How much longer will the government and international community ignore this ecological and humanitarian crisis?

## SELECTIVE COMPENSATION AND LAND GRABS: THE CASE OF IBRAHIM NYAKAGUFU

Land compensation injustices are worsening across the Albertine region. On January 16, 2024, TotalEnergies' contractor, Fulcrum Consulting, began clearing land for EACOP's feeder pipeline in Kabolwa, Buliisa District. Local farmer Ibrahim Nyakagufu (pictured below) was among those promised compensation for vital bush trees, aloe vera, and other vegetation. However, after filing a complaint, they were was informed on March 4, 2025, that his claim had been rejected.



Nyakagufu's story is not unique. Many farmers have fallen victim to deceptive compensation schemes. While TotalEnergies claims to have compensated affected individuals, the reality on the ground tells a different story. When payments are made, they are often inadequate, failing to reflect the true value of the lost land and resources. Many landowners are pressured into accepting low payouts under the threat of legal action or eviction.

Denying Nyakagufu compensation for his medicinal plants and protected bush trees is not just an economic loss—it is an assault on traditional knowledge and sustainable agriculture. For generations, these plants have been vital for natural and affordable medicine. By bulldozing them and refusing to compensate farmers, TotalEnergies is erasing a crucial part of local heritage.

Despite numerous petitions and legal battles, the government continues to side with multinational corporations over the rights of its people. Nyakagufu's case should serve as a rallying call for activists, legal experts, and environmental defenders to unite in holding TotalEnergies accountable for its blatant land grabs.



## LEGAL BATTLES AND GROWING RESISTANCE AGAINST TOTAL ENERGIES

**The destructive operations consistently undertaken by TotalEnergies have sparked a wave of legal challenges at both national and international levels. Affected communities, environmental groups, and human rights organizations have filed lawsuits demanding justice and accountability.**

One of the most significant cases is being heard in French courts, where activists argue that TotalEnergies has violated France's Duty of Vigilance Law. This law requires multinational corporations to prevent human rights abuses and environmental harm in their supply chains. Plaintiffs claim that TotalEnergies' operations in Uganda and Tanzania have caused massive displacement, loss of livelihoods, and irreversible ecological damage. Legal battles are also intensifying locally. Community representatives have taken their grievances to Uganda's High Court, challenging unlawful land acquisitions and demanding fair compensation. However, these cases often face delays, intimidation, and bureaucratic hurdles, as the Ugandan government remains closely tied to corporate interests.

Resistance against EACOP is not limited to the courtroom. Activists and local communities continue to organize protests and awareness campaigns despite facing harassment, arrests, and violent crackdowns from security forces. The grassroots movement against EACOP is gaining momentum, with international advocacy groups pressuring investors and financial institutions to withdraw their support for the project.

The fight against TotalEnergies is far from over, but the determination of affected communities and environmental defenders is sending a clear message: corporate greed will not be allowed to destroy lives and ecosystems without resistance.

### CRACKED HOUSES AND COLLAPSING COMMUNITIES – THE HIDDEN COST OF OIL ACTIVITIES

**As oil-related infrastructure expands, the communities in its path suffer. Residents of Avogera Village report that the construction of the Kamandindi-Avogera-Kasinyi road, undertaken by Pearl Engineering Limited (a subcontractor of TotalEnergies), has severely damaged homes.**

On February 12, 2025, TotalEnergies met with local residents, offering to renovate houses that had developed cracks due to heavy machinery and construction work. However, the community rejected these superficial fixes, demanding full compensation instead. Their resistance is growing, and they refuse to be silenced by half-measures.



*Community engagement exercises aimed at prompting Total Energies and its partners to address the impact of oil pipeline construction and related operations*

Beyond immediate structural damage, the long-term effects of heavy oil-related infrastructure are even more concerning. The continuous movement of massive machinery has weakened the foundations of many homes, creating unsafe living conditions. Cracks in walls, sinking floors, and collapsing roofs are now a daily reality for many families who once lived in stable houses.

Children and elderly residents are particularly vulnerable, as many homes are no longer safe to live in. Despite promises from TotalEnergies and its subcontractors, no meaningful action has been taken to truly address the situation. The affected residents are demanding full compensation to either rebuild their homes elsewhere or repair the extensive damage.

This case highlights the broader issue of corporate negligence and the failure of multinational companies to acknowledge the human cost of their operations. As resistance grows, the demand for justice becomes louder. It is imperative that international organizations, human rights defenders, and environmental groups stand in solidarity with these affected communities.

### At Tasha urge you to stand with us in

Raising awareness about the injustices caused by EACOP.

Supporting legal actions against TotalEnergies.

Advocating for sustainable energy alternatives.

Standing in solidarity with affected communities.

**Tasha Research Institute Africa: Justice for People, Justice for the Planet.**

