



September Edition 2024

NAPE Newsletter



Environmental Aspects and Human Rights

EDITORIAL

The relationship between environmental protection and human rights is not just an abstract concept, it is a reality that is felt daily by communities across Uganda. Our environment is not only a source of natural beauty but also a critical foundation for livelihoods, health and well-being yet this foundation is increasingly under threat from activities that prioritize profit over people and sustainability.

At National Association of Professional Environmentalists (NAPE), we are deeply concerned about the impact of ongoing oil and gas projects such as East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP). These developments have far-reaching consequences for local communities who face the risks of displacement, loss of livelihoods and environmental degradation. The challenges posed by these projects are not only ecological but are also fundamentally about human rights. Every Ugandan has the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment and this right must be protected.

NAPE has redoubled its efforts to address these critical issues. We have engaged in dialogue with policy makers and stakeholders to ensure fair compensation and adequate resettlement for those displaced by EACOP. We have also launched community-driven initiatives, empowering women and local groups to lead the fight against environmental injustice.

However, advocacy alone is not enough. We must hold corporations and government entities accountable for actions that harm both the environment and human rights. We must also ensure that development projects in Uganda do not sacrifice the well-being of our people for short-term economic gains. As we continue to push for environmental justice, we call upon all Ugandans to join us in this fight.

Protecting our environment is not just about preserving Uganda's natural heritage; it is about securing our future and ensuring that every person regardless of their background or where they live can enjoy their fundamental human rights. At NAPE, we remain committed to this cause and we will continue to stand with the communities at the front lines of environmental and human rights advocacy.

Together we can build a future where development is truly sustainable and where human rights are respected and upheld for all.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. **The Pain of hosting the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) and related Feeder Pipelines.....3**
2. **The Pipeline-Affected Persons in Kiboga and Kyankwanzi Urged to Unite and Demand for fair Compensation.....5**
3. **Communities Rise Against Injustices of oil and gas in Uganda.....7**
4. **Unfortunate Kiteezi landfill collapse in Kampala-Uganda Could Have Been Avoided..9**
5. **The Devastating Impact of Mercury Use in Small Scale Artisanal Gold Mining: A call to Action.....10**
6. **Exploring Farmer-Managed Seed Systems In the Era Of Climate Change and Corporate Capture.....11**
7. **NAPE programs in partnership with Partners 2024.....13**

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A little effort towards saving the environment and fight for human rights is better than no effort

As we end September, we are excited to share the latest updates and achievements from National Association of Professional Environmentalists (NAPE) Uganda. The month of September has been of significant strides as we continue towards our mission to advocate for environmental justice, promote sustainable development and empower communities across Uganda. In our continued effort to strengthen the team, I am pleased to announce the expansion of our team at NAPE with the recruitment of four talented professionals who will significantly enhance our capacity to drive environmental sustainability in Uganda.

In this edition, we highlight the voices of those on the frontlines of environmental justice. We share stories of grassroots activism, legal victories and policy advancements that are paving the way for a more just and sustainable future. We also reflect on the ongoing struggles faced by communities affected by environmental degradation and displacement calling for stronger policies and inclusive approaches that protect both people and the planet.

At NAPE, we are committed to advocating for the rights of nature and the rights of people. We believe in a world where environmental protection and human rights are interwoven, where every individual has a voice and where the dignity of all is recognized. As we work together to address these interconnected challenges, let us continue to stand firm in our commitment to justice, equity and sustainability.

Thank you for your continued support and dedication to our shared mission. Together we can create a world where environmental protection is synonymous with human rights.

In solidarity,

Frank Muramuzi
Executive Director, NAPE

The Pain of hosting the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) and related Feeder Pipelines

By; Rajab Bwengye Yusuf (Oil Governance Officer)



Photo by NPCA Online

EACOP line development in Uganda –Courtesy photo –August 2024

Community pains related to EACOP and related feeder pipelines began to come to the limelight on July 23, 2019 when NEMA invited the public to submit their comments on the Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) for the oil pipeline project and since then there have been controversies over the far-reaching challenges that will come along with the EACOP.

Thereafter, The Hoima (Uganda) – Tanga (Tanzania) route was selected as more secure and at a cheaper cost. Therefore, a lower tariff for the 3.5 – 5 billion US Dollar Investment for a 24-inch diameter 1,445km long, buried and heated East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) from Kabaale, Hoima in Uganda to Chongoleani in Tanga-Tanzania to be developed to transport crude oil spearheaded by the licensed upstream oil companies in Uganda with participating interests by the Governments of Uganda and Tanzania. The pipeline will have a loading pad in Kabaale, six pumping stations and 27 heating stations along the route together with a facility to load crude oil on to tankers at Chongoleani interlinked by a 12-inch diameter 45km long feeder pipeline from the Kingfisher oil development field CPF located in Buhuka and a 95 km long feeder pipeline from

the CPF in Buliisa –Kasenye village-Gwedo Sub County.

The Front-End Engineering Design (FEED) for the pipeline was undertaken by Gulf Interstate Engineering (GIE) and the project is a partnership between Governments of Uganda (represented by UNOC) and Tanzania together with the upstream licenses in Uganda and funded through project finance arrangement and Uganda hosts 20% (296Kms) of the pipeline that traverses 10 districts while Tanzania will host 80% (1,147kms) that traverse 8 regions and 24 districts. Ownership of the Pipeline operation is as follows:

Total Energies (62%) Uganda National Oil Company (UNOC, 15%) Tanzania Petroleum Development Corporation (TPDC, 15%) China National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC, 8%).

The above major Operator Total Energies states that the project right from Tilenga required the acquisition of 6,400 hectares of land impacting 19,159 households including everyone with assets impacted by the project such as permanent or temporary structures or an economic activity but

many close to 120,000 upstream and downstream communities risk facing negative impacts that will come in form of loss of land through forced evictions, loss of food and climate change effects in form of floods among others. In Uganda alone, the pipeline will traverse 10 districts, 25 sub counties and 172 villages while in Tanzania it will traverse 25 districts in 8 sub regions of Kagera, Geita, Shinyanga, Tabora, Singida, Dodoma and Tanga.

In Uganda, Mubende district 33 villages will be crossed, Kakumiro 25 villages, Kyotera and Kikubbe districts 20 villages, Lwengo and Sembabule 19 villages each etc. Past research estimates that close to 120,000 individuals will be directly and indirectly affected with roughly 13,000 households across Uganda and Tanzania accounting to more than 86,000 individuals anticipated to have already lost or will lose land as a result of EACOP.

(<https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-d&q=how+many+people+will+be+affected+by+EACOP+both+in+Uganda+and+Tanzania>)

Many communities have cried foul play in getting their compensation and resettlement packages signing on fake compensation letters and taking more than 6 years after a 6 months cutoff date to get any compensation and this has left many communities in Kitegwa B village, Kabaale sub county Hoima, Luandala, Buhuka, Nyairongo, Kakindo, Gwedo cursing the coming of EACOP and related feeder pipelines in their localities saying that their land has been illegally grabbed disregarding the fundamental principle of FPIC which recognizes IPs' inherent and prior rights to their lands, territories, resources and respect their legitimate authority and requires processes that allow and support meaningful choices by indigenous peoples' development path .

The above FPIC principles in land acquisition have been abused during land acquisition under Tilenga, Kingfisher oil project and now under East African Crude Oil Pipeline forcing government backed by oil corporates to even take oil host communities who refuse compensation to courts of law on their own land which is total shame to the Ugandan government.

https://www.newvision.co.ug/category/news/govt-sues-41-people-for-shunning-sh711m-eacop-NV_195669

<https://www.observer.ug/index.php/news/headlines/82430-govt-sues-80-landowners-over-rejecting-land-compensation-for-oil-project>

Furthermore, other communities along EACOP right of way have on many occasions in various districts such as Masaka, Kyotera, Sembabule, Buliisa, Kikuube districts have been forced out of their homes by unknown security operatives and kidnapped into unknown areas, tortured and in some occasions dumped on the road sites living them in a hopeless state.

On June 4, 2024, Stephen kwikiriza a local resident of Buhuka in Kyangwali sub county – Kikuube district that hosts the Kingfisher Oil field and related feeder pipelines an anti EACOP activist was abducted in Kampala by plain-clothed officers from the Uganda People's Defence Force (UPDF). His whereabouts and condition remained unknown despite efforts put by a legal team and civil society activists to locate him in various military and police detention centres only to be found abandoned on a road side in the western Uganda district of Kamwenge 8 days later tortured and in very bad shape. This unfortunate incident came on the heels of another concerning development where seven youths from the Oil host districts were arrested on May 27, 2024 for attempting to deliver a petition outlining the adverse effects of EACOP including land loss, environmental degradation and violations of human and community rights.

See link below by NAPE calling for unconditional release of these activists;

<https://themail.com.ng/nape-demands-unconditional-release-of-anti-eacop-activist-arrested-for-holding-peaceful-demonstration/>

The EACOP further has been identified as a key environmental disaster. Already, the ongoing development of feeder pipelines is degrading forest and rangeland ecosystem resources along its right of way in Kikuube and Hoima districts. Furthermore, just in merely 296 kms in Uganda alone, the EACOP will traverse undulating grass and farmlands, hills with open plateaus, open grassland, wetlands in Gomba and Ssembabule districts and a relatively flat landscape towards Mutukula near the border of Tanzania.



From Hoima District, EACOP corridor passes in between Wambabya and Bugoma Forest Reserves through a modified section of Taala Forest Reserve in Kyankwanzi District heading in the South Eastern direction near the Eastern border of Kasana-Kasambya Forest Reserve in Mubende District. This risks these ecosystems and defeats the reasoning of the EACOP planners especially in this era when climate change is biting lives of millions of communities across the globe.

This could in future culminate into a regional conflict if the Lake Victoria and Nile ecosystem transboundary resources are polluted by Oil spills from this EACOP line.

These challenges justify why EACOP should be fought at all costs. Unfortunately, even the ESIA report of EACOP available mentions the total direct and indirect benefits that will accrue from EACOP project but no effort is made to weigh these against the substantial risks that will come along with this project socially and environmentally clearly expressed in figures. This makes the economic analysis of this project vague and out of touch with the realities of life in present day Uganda and the World at large.

Furthermore, the pipeline will encounter several watercourse crossings including the Kafu River between Hoima and Kakumiro districts, Nabakazi River between Mubende and Gomba districts, Katonga River between Gomba and Ssembabule districts, Kibale and Jemakunya rivers in Kyotera District for approximately 90 kilometers on the right of way EACOP corridor crossing a substantial zone of wetlands as it approaches the border of Tanzania through the North-Western corner of Lake Victoria.

The Pipeline-Affected Persons in Kiboga and Kyankwanzi Urged to Unite and Demand for fair Compensation

By; Mushabe Franklin (Board Member, NAPE)

During a visit to NAPE's Community Green Radio in Kiboga, the board chair emphasized the importance of sustaining the media campaign to address the pressing concerns of the oil pipeline affected persons in Kiboga and Kyankwanzi districts until they are resolved. This call to action aimed to amplify the voices of the affected communities ensuring their issues receive wider coverage and engagement.

By leveraging Community Green Radio as a medium of communication, NAPE sought to create awareness, spark meaningful discussions and drive change. Community Green Radio has been instrumental in empowering local communities, providing a platform for sharing concerns and experiences related to oil pipeline development.

The affected communities have to be vocal about delayed compensation. The chairman emphasized the importance of unity among the affected persons stressing that collective action would amplify their voices and accelerate the compensation process.

He advised communities to: organize, register and formalize community groups to facilitate communication and negotiation with authorities. Keeping detailed records of property valuation, losses and agreements to support compensation claims. Collaborate with local councilors, Members of Parliament and district officials to help in advocating for their rights. Consult with lawyers knowledgeable about environmental and land rights to guide the

compensation process. He said that he was aware the government was fronting the fact that the pipeline will boost Uganda's oil production but many families will be left struggling to make ends meet. He noted that the challenges associated with the pipeline mostly include; Delayed compensation meaning the payments have been slow leaving families without adequate resources. Inadequate valuation where property assessments have been disputed leading to unfair compensation offers. All these result into loss of livelihoods through destruction of farms, forests and water sources which all put together threaten community livelihoods. The operations usually result into long term irreversible environmental degradation/damage which results into health risks.



Prof. Ephraim Nuwagaba (Board Chairman, NAPE) speaking to Oil Pipeline Affected Persons during the community visit in Kiboga and Kyankwanzi District

The chair urged communities to always access the radio at all times they feel there is some pressing information that needs to be shared with the wider audience for debate and conflict resolution. In other words, as the Board chair emphasizes the utilization of Community Green Radio and other platforms to raise awareness about the affected persons' struggles as media circulates information much faster. As NAPE we will always provide technical assistance if you demand for it. We will offer you expertise in environmental impact assessment reviews, advocacy and policy engagement.

After your issues have been shared on social media then we can also help in facilitating and mediating dialogues between affected persons, government agencies and oil companies to see how best the disputes can be resolved to reduce damage.

However, he said the government and oil companies should try to prioritize transparency, accountability and fairness in the compensation process. In doing so the government and companies in instances where compulsory land acquisition must happen then timely compensation should be expedited to alleviate suffering.

Fair property valuation should be conducted with thorough assessments to ensure just compensation. There should be a well laid out environmental safeguarding policy to help in mitigating long-term environmental harm. Until communities come together to defend their territories, there will always

be persons or communities to continue to cry foul over delayed compensation. NAPE's guidance and support offer hope for a more equitable resolution. By uniting and demanding fair compensation the communities of Kiboga and Kyankwanzi can reclaim their rights and rebuild their lives.

Communities Rise Against Injustices of oil and gas in Uganda

By; Precious Naturinda (Senior News Editor CGR Program)

National Association of Professional Environmentalists (NAPE) continues its unwavering fight for environmental justice and human rights in Uganda particularly in the oil-rich Albertine region. Communities in Buliisa, Hoima and Kikuube districts have faced significant challenges as oil and gas companies like Total Energies push forward with projects like East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) and the Tilenga project. The stories from these regions highlight the resilience of local people as they stand up against the injustices associated with land acquisition, forced displacement and inadequate compensation.

"Signing in Darkness": A Call for Free, Prior, and Informed Consent.

In the Albertine region, residents like Beatrice Nyamahunge have found themselves unknowingly signing away their land rights without adequate information or understanding of the consequences. Nyamahunge along with 1,846 others affected by the feeder oil pipeline project did not receive fair compensation for the land acquired for a 200-meter buffer zone. In such cases NAPE has been at the forefront by empowering communities through education, advocacy and legal support to resist these injustices.

Through persistent advocacy, the communities in the oil-rich regions have begun to see positive changes. Total Energies that was initially reluctant to compensate for the 200-meter buffer zone has now agreed to survey the land and begin compensation procedures. These achievements underscore the importance of informed resistance and community solidarity in the fight against environmental and human rights violations.



Nyamahunge showing a form she ignorantly signed



Judith Berorwoth, a resident of Buliisa district resisting to forced evictions.

The oil and gas sector in Uganda's Albertine Graben has experienced significant growth since the discovery of commercial oil reserves in 2006. Currently, the industry is in the development phase preparing for the production of petroleum resources. This progress has led to the initiation of several key projects including the Tilenga project, the Kingfisher oil project, East African Crude Oil Pipeline, central processing facilities, feeder pipelines, the Kaabale industrial park, and the Hoima-Kampala Petroleum Products Pipeline.

However, since 2020 efforts to secure financing for the East African Crude Oil Pipeline have encountered obstacles. On August 30th 2023, developers and the Ugandan government represented by the Minister

of Energy and the Petroleum Authority announced plans to commence construction of the EACOP in the first quarter of 2024. Unfortunately this has yet to materialize due to ongoing financing difficulties particularly with European banks.

Although there was hope for support from the Exim Bank of China reports as of June 17th 2024 indicate that no significant progress has been made in finalizing the deal. Additionally, NAPE and allied organizations continue to pursue legal action in French courts against Total Energies alleging violations of the French Duty of Vigilance Law concerning the rights of oil host communities including human, land and environmental rights.



The oil project affected persons carrying placards protesting against EACOP. Photo-credit-URN



NAPE's Community Green Radio continues to serve as a vital tool for raising awareness and promoting community rights. Through this platform communities can share their experiences, report issues and build knowledge about the exploitation of natural resources. The radio facilitates dialogue and helps organize local resistance movements such as the listeners' clubs and exchange visits which foster solidarity and mutual support among communities affected by different oil projects.

Read more: <https://www.greenradio.ug/signing-in-darkness-oil-host-communities-struggle-to-attain-justice-for-their-land-in-the-face-of-the-east-african-crude-oil-pipeline-eacop-and-central-processing-facility-cpf-developments-in-uga/>

Unfortunate Kiteezi landfill collapse in Kampala-Uganda Could Have Been Avoided

By; Joan Akizza (Legal Officer)



The collapse of landfill in Kiteezi, Kasangati Town Council, Wakiso District

On 9th August 2024, a significant landslide struck the Kiteezi garbage dump in Kasangati Town Council, Wakiso District in Kampala. The 36-acre (14-hectare) Kiteezi garbage dump has been the only one serving the whole of Kampala, a city home to an estimated four million people. A huge hill formed by the build-up of rubbish collapsed burying houses on the edge of the site while the residents were asleep. It is reported that 1,000 people had been forced to leave their homes because of the landslide and more than 34 lives were lost and many more injured.



Not only authorities like NEMA and KCCA but entire government should take responsibility of this unfortunate event that led to the loss of many lives. This has left questions on what role the authorities should have played in avoiding such an incident from claiming people's lives and properties. It has been noted that the Kiteezi dumping area was supposed to have been decommissioned years back through a planned public private partnership decommissioning that did not happen because there was no government guarantee given at that time. In the instance that decommissioning did not happen, there could have been other measures put in place to prevent such a man-made disaster from claiming lives of people.

These measures could have been turning waste into energy through anaerobic digestion or waste to energy incineration. This would prevent debris build up in landfills and reduce greenhouse gas emissions and provide renewable energy. However, the authorities ignored all the available options and nature had to take its course there by impacting the lives of individuals and causing disastrous environmental consequences such as pollution and damage to human health and loss of lives.



Could the failure to decommission in 2012 have been due to lack of funds to support the decommissioning process or could it have been due to the politics at play within the Kampala City Council Authority.

These questions and more remain unanswered as people continue to weep over the loss of their loved ones and loss of their property.

In 2012 there was a Warning made by the Director of Public health for KCCA on how the landfill had critical cracks and significant waste piling which could have a significant risk to both human and environmental safety. Even with such warnings there was still no action taken to avert the unfortunate incident. The government in action to save lives of people in the Kiteezi incident remains one that is regrettable looking at the force employed when evicting people from wetlands which they hold titles issued by the government.

This gross violation of human rights, damage to property and loss of lives is one that shouldn't go unaccounted for by the relevant authorities. Kiteezi was not a landfill but a dumping site claimed to be a landfill hence there is need for government to come up with a landfill. There is also a need to look at turning our waste to wealth through generation of Biogas, organic manure, recycle and reuse. These interventions would address pilling of waste leachates and conservation of the environment.

The Devastating Impact of Mercury Use in Small Scale Artisanal Gold Mining: A call to Action

By; David Kureeba (Expert in charge of Chemical Management and Biodiversity, NAPE)

Small Scale Artisanal Gold Mining (SSAGM) has been a source of livelihood for many communities across Uganda and the use of mercury in these processes present significant environmental and human health challenges. The National Association of Professional Environmentalists (NAPE), in collaboration with the Ministry of Energy Mineral Development (MEMD), the National Environmental Management Authority (NEMA), Uganda National Association of Community

and Occupational Health (UNACOH) are conducting a comprehensive baseline survey on the use of mercury in SSAGM across several sites in Uganda and the findings are yet to be published. However, from NAPE's experience working with communities dealing in artisanal gold mining in Buhweju, Kassanda, Namayingo and Busia Districts, Mercury a toxic substance is widely use as one of the methods of extracting gold from ore.

When released into the environment, mercury contaminates soil, water and air causing long-term damage to ecosystems. In aquatic environments, mercury accumulates in fish and other organisms entering the food chain and posing serious health risks to humans including neurological damage, kidney damage, respiratory problems and birth defects. The communities we are working with are using mercury to extract gold with bare hands and feet.

Contaminated water was being released into unprotected ponds which would eventually end up in water streams and wetlands near the mining sites due to flooding and heavy downpours.



Open pits used for waste disposal at a gold mining site, highlighting poor waste management practices in Buhweju District

Miners particularly those washing ore often work without protective gears directly exposing themselves to mercury vapors. Nearby communities are indirectly affected through environmental contamination, particularly through the release of waste water.



Women washing ore with bare hands and applying mercury without any protective gear in Kasanda District

To mitigate the devastating impact of mercury in SSAGM, NAPE is recommending measures to enhance awareness about mercury's dangers and proposing promotion of alternative gold extraction methods.

These include: Promotion of mercury-free extraction techniques such as gravity separation or cyanidation. Provision of training to miners on safe handling, disposal of mercury, and alternative methods. Strengthening of regulations and enforcement to prevent illegal mercury trade and use. Establishment of health services to monitor and treat mercury-related illnesses. Implementation of programs to clean up contaminated sites and restore ecosystems. Promotion of Borax use in gold extraction in SSAGM though more research is being carried out.

Exploring Farmer-Managed Seed Systems in the Era Of Climate Change and Corporate Capture

By; Betty Ninsiima (Gender and Community Support Officer)

In the face of climate change, corporate capture and neo-liberalism, farmer-managed seed systems (FMSS) have emerged as a vital strategy for small scale farmers particularly women to maintain control over their seed sovereignty.

FMSS empower farmers to conserve, exchange and improve crop diversity ensuring food security and resilience. We delved into the advantages and disadvantages of FMSS and their implications on women in this challenging era.

FMSS allows farmers to maintain control over their seeds free from corporate influence. Farmers conserve and promote diverse crop varieties enhancing resilience to climate change. FMSS reduce dependence on expensive commercial seeds and puts to an end terminator seeds and their associated high costs of growing and storing them. Farmer-selected seeds are often better adapted to local conditions. FMSS foster community exchange and innovation. It enhances Cultural preservation through Traditional seed varieties and farming practices which are preserved.

However, the FMSS often operate outside formal seed regulatory frameworks which is often challenged by locals as it aims at disfranchising the local farmers.

Due to high levels of advertisement on social media by corporations FMSS-produced seeds may struggle to compete with commercial seeds and because of the environmental contamination with agrochemicals and climate change related impacts, the local seeds have been affected.

Women are the custodians of seeds but due to policy challenges women are disadvantaged to take control of seed selection, conservation and exchange. Women being the primary care givers would be benefiting from improved food availability.

FMSS create income-generating opportunities for women. Women's traditional knowledge of seed management is valued. FMSS help women adapt to climate change impacts though challenged.



Betty Ninsiima (Gender and Community Support Officer, NAPE) during Workshop on Farmer Managed Seed Systems in Nairobi, Kenya

While women would be at the Centre stage of farmer managed seed system, they often encounter stereo type challenges such as lack access to land, credit and training. Cultural barriers such as patriarchal norms most times they also restrict women's participation. Women's multiple responsibilities often limit time for seed management. Due to climate-related vulnerabilities women are disproportionately affected by climate-related disasters.

Farmer-managed seed systems offer a powerful tool for small-scale farmers particularly women to build resilience in the face of climate change and corporate capture.

While challenges persist, FMSS promote seed sovereignty, crop diversity and community innovation.

To support FMSS, there is need for policy reforms to recognize and support FMSS in national policies. Capacity building to provide training and resources for women farmers. Market access so as to create platforms for FMSS-produced seeds. Climate-resilient agriculture so as to Integrate climate-resilient practices into FMSS.

NAPE programs in partnership with Partners 2024



Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung Director, Katrin Voss (2nd left) and Germany MP Corneille Visiting the NAPE Green radio studio and celebrating the Prestigious award given to the radio for amplifying voices of Grass root women by Farm Radio International Canada -19th May 2024.



Woman kind Worldwide UK Partners participate in the NAPE led community story telling event on the dangers of EACOP on their livelihoods April 19th 2024 at the NAPE Green radio Home in Kiboga district.



American Jewish World Service partner (Sheila Muwanga) Join Women of the NAPE led Grass root Movement to call for Climate Justice and an end to all forms of violence against Women and Girls –August 22nd 2024

Kamusime Thomas of the European Union(centre) was shown the ecological foot prints being left by the EACOP feeder pipelines in Kabaale sub county-Hoima District by Rajab –NAPE Head of Programs (in Black Hat)



NAPE and her Partner Crossroads International in a joint Photo with Scholars of the Social Change Program after completing a Pre –placement training on 25th July 2024 at Onomo Hotel Kampala. NAPE is a beneficiary in this program hosting 2 Scholars for 2 years till end of 2026. 2nd Left (front row) is Ms. Ruth Kemigisha the Scholar taking up the accounting docket at NAPE.

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Stay Connected

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