



NATURE TALK AFRICA (NATA)

NATA'S Q4 REPORT

RIISING STRONGER ON THE FRONTLINES.



Group photo of members of the Nyakasini Horticulture group, ORRA & NaTA's representatives after conducting a monitoring and evaluation assessment at Oweki's home in Nyakasini Village, Kabaale sub-county, Hoima on October 29, 2025.

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WELCOME REMARKS

Dear partners and supporters,

As we ended the fourth quarter, 2025, we are pleased to reflect on and share the remarkable milestones achieved by (NaTA) through your solidarity and support. This 4th Quarter, 2025 NaTA's report, offers a glimpse into the impactful activities implemented by NaTA and her partners, and also other events/activities by our allies, which we participated in. At NaTA, in the last three months of 2025, we focused so much on the protection, self-care, and general empowerment of our grassroots Environmental Human Rights Defenders and activists for justice and strengthening the capacity of community organizers for climate, social, and environmental justice amidst the ongoing oil and gas development projects in our communities.

Through our collective efforts with our partners and supporters like you, we continued to build resilient communities and drive social, climate, and environmental justice for our communities in the Albertine region, particularly in the districts of Hoima, Buliisa, and Kikuube districts where major oil and gas activities are taking place. Community and grassroots EHRDs and activists, as well as the organizers, continue to face more challenges, risks, and threats. Some of these are recurrent, while others are emergent and need urgent action.

In this report, you'll discover how solidarity support can lead to positive social change, and specific activities we conducted to support the women and young changemakers. In addition, you will also find the opportunities that represent us with capacity building, experience sharing to amplify our community voices, networks, and solidarity building. At Nature Talk Africa, as we carried out the above, we also identified moments that made us develop our action points and demands, as they are well explained in this piece. We hope these updates give you deeper insight into our unwavering commitment to creating lasting environmental, climate, and social justice for vulnerable communities where natural resources are being extracted and their surroundings.

Thank you for being a vital part of this journey. We are excited to explore the new opportunities that the 2026 brings to champion community justice through empowerment, conservation, and sustainability together. We remain determined to build the capacity of our grassroots defenders against all odds and partner with more like-minded individuals and organizations. Together we can.

Kind regards

Emmanuel Ongyeer,

Programs director and partnership lead.

For Nature Talk Africa.

ACTIVITIES NATA IMPLEMENTED AND PARTICIPATED IN

AMPLIFYING THE VOICES OF GRASSROOTS DEFENDERS

In partnership with the Oil Refinery Residents Association (ORRA), on October 8, 2025, we published a documentary titled “[Environmental Human Rights Defenders under Siege](#)”. This documentary showcases the challenges faced by land and environmental rights defenders in the Albertine region, Uganda. We remain determined and ready to strengthen the resilience of our grassroots defenders in our oil-host communities. We call for solidarity and collaboration to create a safe and secure work environment for our defenders and community activists.

In December, 2025, Nature Talk Africa (NaTA) published a research titled “[Safeguarding Environmental Human Rights Defenders in Uganda’s Oil and Gas Sector: Assessing Risks, Protection gaps, and Enabling mechanisms in Hoima, Kikuube, and Buliisa Districts](#),” with support from the IFAD through the Alliance for Land, Indigenous and Environmental Defenders (ALLIED) under the ALLIED Data Working Group small grants.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF OUR RESEARCH/BRIEF FINDINGS: ASSESSING RISKS, PROTECTION GAPS, AND ENABLING MECHANISMS IN HOIMA, KIKUUBE, AND BULIISA DISTRICTS.

These research findings reveal that Uganda’s oil and gas sector, particularly in the Albertine region, covering Hoima, Kikuube, and Buliisa districts, has attracted significant investment from multinational companies such as TotalEnergies, CNOOC, and the Uganda National Oil Company (UNOC). While these projects are promoted as engines of economic growth, they have also generated widespread social, environmental, and human rights concerns. Communities have experienced forced evictions, loss of livelihoods, environmental degradation, and restricted civic space, creating a high-risk operating environment for Environmental Human Rights Defenders (EHRDs) and Environmental Human Rights Promoting Organizations in these communities. EHRDs in Uganda represent a diverse group, including grassroots community monitors, civil society activists, journalists, legal advocates, women defenders, and youth leaders. They play a critical role in documenting environmental harm, monitoring corporate and governmental compliance, and advocating for accountability and community rights. However, their work is frequently met with harassment, arbitrary arrests, smear campaigns, surveillance, digital threats, and gender-based violence. Women defenders face unique vulnerabilities, including sexual harassment, stigmatization, and marginalization from decision-making processes. Despite Uganda’s constitutional guarantees and statutory provisions, significant gaps exist in the protection of EHRDs. These include weak institutional coordination, limited enforcement of environmental and land laws, insufficient gender-sensitive policies, inadequate awareness and application of international human rights standards, and underdeveloped rapid response and support systems. Corporate actors have also not fully adhered to international standards such as the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs), leaving defenders exposed to ongoing threats.

To cope with these risks, EHRDs rely on informal coalitions, partnerships with civil society organizations (CSOs) such as SNEHRD, WHRDN- Uganda, AFIEGO, and NAPE, media advocacy, digital security measures, and limited to no legal or psychosocial support. While these strategies enhance resilience, they remain fragmented, underfunded, and insufficiently coordinated to provide comprehensive protection. The study provides targeted recommendations for multiple stakeholders as outlined below:

COMMUNITY BUILDING FOR SOCIAL & CLIMATE JUSTICE AND ENVIRONMENT & HUMAN RIGHTS PROTECTION.

For example, on November 3, 2025, the Kijumba community petitioned several offices of government and oil companies in Hoima, and our different groups of community organizing (chapters) conducted peaceful protests. The [Kijumba](#) demanded for protection of their water source and compensation [Kyakaboga](#) chapter demanded Hoima High Court to decide the Refinery People's court case against the government through the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development, which has taken over ten (10) years without serving the community people justice, yet in December 2023, the same court served government justice against the 42 families affected by Tilenga in Buliisa district within 4 days. This same court granted the government rights to acquire the land, which they handed over to TotalEnergies for their oil developments, among others.



Group photo of Kijumba residents demanding for their communal water spring be safe from EACOP, and on your right, two young gentlemen who lost their father in 2024 joined Kyakaboga action to demand Hoima High Court to decide on community court case.

2. On October 29, 2025, NaTA, in partnership with ORRA, conducted a monitoring and evaluation assessment of the Nyakasinina blue-green farmers' group and Nyahaira youth initiatives. These groups have developed more activities than those they initiated from our campaign "Reactivating Indigenous Knowledge and amplifying local voices in climate actions". They have diversified their projects, and they are very hopeful for growth. For example, the [Nyakasinina Blue-Green Farmers' group](#) has now registered as Nyakasinina Horticulture Group with Hoima District Local Government as a recognized self-help group having their district-recognized certificate, and they have opened up an X account to share about their initiatives. The Nyahaira Youth Initiatives has also submitted its documents for registration, and many others. Their major challenges remain a lack of access to technical and financial support to enable them to expand on their productivity as well as add value to their products. Therefore, NaTA and ORRA call for collaborative and solidarity support in building these groups that are now taking the lead on climate adaptation, and also the protection of justice within our communities as a regional farmers' learning site and a practical teaching and learning agricultural center.



Group photos with Nyahaira youth initiative members (Orange t-shirts) and Nyakasinina Horticulture group members (Green t-shirts) after monitoring and evaluation engagements on October 29 & 30, 2025 in Nyahaira and Nyakasinina villages. In the middle photo, we were having a discussion with the Nyahaira youth initiative members.

3. On November 28, 2025, NaTA conducted a legal empowerment training for 40 EHRDs in the Albertine region. This was on their right to assemble and express themselves. It was a learning session. These community defenders acknowledge the facts that they do not even know about the existing international principles, mechanisms and procedures as well as local laws and policies to be observed in natural resources utilizations or by corporations/states in protecting/governing the rights of people as they conduct their extractions such as the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, the indigenous peoples' rights and others. There is a real challenge that calls for consolidated efforts from community-based organisations, national and international organisations, and with supporters such as foundations and donors to channel support in creating awareness about these existing mechanisms, principles, and procedures to alert more community people to start monitoring their implementations, document and report on them amidst oil and gas development projects in our communities and other similar vulnerable communities.



Julius Ochokdogu in green t-shirt smiling at our grassroots EHRDs mostly the illiterate adults and women who called for community awareness and education in local language on international mechanisms as well as local laws and policies.

4. On November 4, 2025, and on November 20, 2025, our programs director, Emmanuel Ongyeer, represented Nature Talk Africa at the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Youth Cluster and at the UPR Access to Justice Cluster meetings, respectively, co-convened under the guidance of the National Coalition of Human Rights Defenders, where we shared on the progress of Ugandan's government in implementing their accepted Recommendations from other countries in the 2022 UPR. We shared our views and developed draft reports to contribute to a civil society alternative report for Uganda for the upcoming 2027 UPR review to guide advocacy and engagements at both national and international levels.



A group photo after the Youth Cluster engagement on November 4, 2025 in Kampala



A group photo after the Access to Justice Cluster engagement on November 4, 2025 in Kampala

5. On November 18, 2025, ORRA and NaTA were honored to host the Makerere University Rotary Peace Center with people from different countries at our Kyakaboga Resettlement Office, Buseruka sub-county, Hoima district. We shared our efforts in promoting environmental and human rights, collective actions for social and climate justice, amidst oil and gas development projects. We pointed out several challenges/issues

including an increasingly reduced civic space and generally a hostile work environment for community people voicing out our concerns, the grassroots EHRDs, and justice activists are met with surveillance, arrests, intimidations, blackmails, and these have resulted in silencing many voices, it has resulted in fear and stress among our active defenders yet we have less to no access to psychosocial support systems to address this disease among ourselves. We called for solidarity support in amplifying community EHRDs' needs in addressing their mental health and other concerns.



Christopher, team lead ORRA, addressing the Makerere University Rotary peace center members at our community office compound in Kyakaboga Resettlement Village, Hoima on November 18, 2025.

6. Legal Empowerment training on UN Human Rights Mechanisms (December 19, 2025 at Kontik Hotel, Hoima City.)

NaTA in partnership with ORRA, East African Crude Oil Pipeline host communities conducted a two-day legal empowerment training for 30 grassroots HRDs from Hoima, Kikuube, Buliisa, and the Greater Masaka sub-region, focusing on compliance with and application of UN human rights mechanisms in oil and gas contexts. Participants received in-depth, context-specific training on the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, climate change and human rights, the right to a clean, healthy, and Sustainable environment, and practical engagement with UN Special Procedures, Treaty Bodies, and the Universal Periodic Review (UPR). Something that was very new to all participants from within our communities and they demanded for more trainings to be conducted to create awareness and educate them about these UN procedures and standards for better community-led observation implementations of the UPR as we continue to defend rights. The second day emphasized collective analysis and joint reporting, with participants beginning the design of a thematic report documenting patterns of violations against defenders and affected communities themselves.



Grassroots organizers/defenders attending the UN mechanism training at Kontiki Hotel on December 19, 2025 in Hoima City during a mind refreshing time.

This activity also created a platform for reflection of the year, 2025 and planning for the 2026. Grassroots organizers and justice activists gathered and shared their lived experiences and perspectives of their work.

This was a very important and special event that proved to us the value of coming together as a family and sharing our thoughts. With our local partners; Oil Refinery Residents Association (ORRA) and East African Crude Oil Pipeline Host Communities (EACOP HC).

Our annual convening and gathering will always be for reflection of the past year, planning for the year ahead and healing activities such as storytelling, food earnings and games.

CHALLENGES FACED AND ACTION POINTS AND DEMANDS MOVING FORWARD

- **Continued risks and threats call for rapid solidarity support for at-risk community-based organizations, individual defenders, and organizers for social, climate, and environmental justice.** Increasing threats to community-based organizations and individual organizers need urgent action. When the political environment worsens, it results in a reduced civic space: rights defenders and activists can be mistakenly or intentionally arrested as terrorists, government opposition, and can be considered anti-development, among others. Community-based organizations are very vulnerable, and some are already listed as anti-development, which has caused fear amongst many grassroots individual defenders.
- **To overcome targeted risks to youth and women grassroots EHRDs and activists, regular peer-to-peer capacity-building sessions are needed.** We call for unity in empowering grassroots EHRDs and activists, that is to say, youth and women defenders who are faced with numerous gender-specific challenges, from community segregation to name-calling. We have to do regular peer-to-peer conduct general support for capacity building in evidence-based reporting for all community organizers through conducting needs-specific trainings, such as videography and photography for community EHRDs and activists in the Albertine region.
- **To overcome increasing criminalization of EHRDs, a functional EHRDs protection mechanism must be developed to push for the Environment and Human Rights over profits in vulnerable communities where extractions of resources are taking place:** We demand that the people's agenda is prioritized by all leaders, right from community leadership, in all government offices, and Businesses and corporations must respect them. We call on neutral leaders, like religious and cultural leaders, to join this struggle for the people's agenda that prioritizes people and planet over the profits of the greedy corporations, states, and some selfish individuals.

CONCLUSION:

Partner with us and amplify our community initiatives and actions, support our actions by sharing our work with your networks, and donate to our causes. Thank You.



ABOUT US

Nature Talk Africa (NaTA) is a community youth-led, non-profit organization based in Hoima district, the mid-western region of Uganda. The organization was founded in 2023 and fully registered as a community-based organization in 2024. NaTA was founded by young leaders who were directly and indirectly affected by the major oil projects, including the Oil Refinery, the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP), the Tilenga project, and the Kingfisher project implemented by TotalEnergies, China National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC), and the Government of Uganda in Hoima, Kikuube, and Buliisa.

Nature Talk Africa (NaTA) is advancing climate justice, land rights, and sustainable livelihoods. NaTA empowers communities through land restoration, agroecology, environmental and human rights advocacy, and resilience-building. NaTA supports women, youth, and Indigenous groups to restore degraded landscapes and promote equitable, community-led solutions.

CONTACT US;

Email: naturetalk.africa@gmail.com or
info@naturetalkafrika.org

PHONE: +256(0)392588854

Our [Website](#): (Under Development at final stages.)
Details of our work can be accessed on our [X, formerly Twitter](#)