

## Manowa-Sandaru Road Project Update - March 30, 2010

**TPF Executive Director Gen Fred Leigh traveled to Sierra Leone March 16-25 to inspect progress and resolve issues and adjust project plans as might be required.**

Prior to the trip it was clear that SLRA had not met pledged milestones for March 6 and 10 (start of the excavation and drainage work using local labor, and start of the bridges and culverts by the latter date). Delays were caused by: prolonged negotiations over the contracting for local labor wage rates; allocations of sections of the roads which would drive how many would get employment; and the subsequent delay in the procurement of tools based on the numbers needed by sections of the road. The use of local labor was an important strategic objective for TPF: infuse money into the local economy; involve the people in rebuilding and taking ownership for their road; and by the latter, and with tools in their hands, increase the sense of responsibility to maintain their road following damage by the rains. Thus gaining momentum on all fronts was the TPF Director's priority at the meeting with the SLRA Director of Maintenance on the morning of March 18. At 5:00 AM on March 19 we departed for Sandaru. The energized Director of Maintenance left even earlier to ensure we saw significant resolution of the problems when we arrived. The captioned photos below will show the progress from March 19-21.



**At the start of the road at Manowa Junction, workers are ditching their road and are supervised by a woman who was once an elected Kailahun District Councilor**



**Workers in the Manowa zone farther up the road**



**The Manowa zone is the first place where a culvert is required. The site pictured below needs four culverts and the SLRA workers were casting the four culverts on site according to the SLRA plan. This approach would get scrapped as we pointed out that if SLRA cannot generate 16 culverts per day they could not have all culverts on site by April 24. TT De Abreu, the TPF project coordinator, discusses the casting process with the site foreman.**



**As we arrive in Sandaru late on March 19, we see the people making a difference by ditching the road through the town.**



**Lucy Jibilla, in the white shirt, is the TPF Liaison Representative for Manowa-Sandaru road project. Here she sets the example. Women are a significant part of the local labor force in Sandaru.**



**The youth (teens) help and earn also. Compensation finally negotiated was: men would do the heavy digging/trenching at a rate of L15, 000 (\$4.00) per 10 meters; and women and youth would do the surface work at a rate of L10, 000 (\$2.65) per 10 meters.**



**In Sandaru, some boys work, some boys watch, and...**



**some boys baby sit while Momma works. Please note - the small children have pitched in voluntarily or to assist their parents and have not been recruited by TPF to work -- it is all for their road.**



**The men dig and the women spread the dirt for the grading that comes later in Phases III and IV.**



**Penguia Paramount Chief Jibilla shows the young workers how to mark the road for ditching.**



**The Paramount Chief marking one side of the road while the men ditch the other side leading to Sengema Bridge.**





**Paramount Chief Jibilla and SLRA Maintenance Director Gbembo (in the green shirt) watch the start phase of putting in a new bridge.**



**The SLRA workers begin to take down the Sengema Bridge. The long poles being installed are the scaffolding that will support the framework to be built for the bed of the new concrete bridge.**



**The SLRA Maintenance Director inspects the scaffold installation.**



**Ditching the road in the Woroma area.**



**Sandaru, as dusk nears on Saturday, the work continues.**



**This young woman does her part and expresses her feelings about the road's progress.**



**Sunday morning on the way back to Freetown the workers are gone. The old Sengema Bridge is closer to being replaced.**



**On March 25, SLRA began shifting the earthworks and drainage from local labor to an emphasis on machinery as negotiated with TPF. In effect, Phase II and III work are now occurring simultaneously. The photos below show results as of March 28. Some local labor will still be employed to support the machine grading and ditching, and the emplacement of the culverts.**



**Machine Ditching**



**On Saturday, March 27, 120 workers (including 30 women) from the Sengema community support the SLRA contactors putting in the deck slab for the concrete Sengema Bridge.**



**Previously in this report the culvert casting capacity problem was described as a major challenge. The solution is to move already cured culverts from an SLRA storage site. This process began on March 25.**