



Laying the Foundation for Peace

Manowa-Sandaru Road Project **Update – January 20, 2010**

In mid-December Maj. Gen. (ret. US Army) Fred Leigh, Executive Director of Taia Peace Foundation, traveled to Sierra Leone to launch the project and coordinate with the Sierra Leone Road Authority (SLRA), the Kailahun District Chairman, and the government officials responsible for the Manowa-Sandaru road.



TPF Executive Director Fred Leigh and TPF's TT De Abreu meet with leaders and residents of Penguia Chiefdom.



Fred Leigh with newly elected Paramount Chief Jibilla of Penguia Chiefdom

Of great importance was the need to meet with the traditional leaders and the people of the chiefdoms living along and affected by the road project. TPF wanted their understanding and feeling of inclusion as the rehabilitative work progresses on their road. During this trip the Executive Director also visited the US Embassy and briefed Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) Glen Fedzer (acting US Ambassador to Sierra Leone) on the project and encouraged him to go see the project. On January 8 the DCM made the trip accompanied by SLRA staff and the Kailahun District Chairman Tom Nyuma. The DCM's presence was a strong signal of US interest in the success of the project, and the leaders and people were impressed and appreciative that he had made the arduous trip up the road.



Town meeting at Manowa with local leaders, DCM Glen Fedzer of the US Embassy and Kailahun District Chairman Tom Nyuma



Phase One of the Project



Phase One of the project involved mobilization of equipment, personnel, clearing of the brush, cutting down trees, removing tree stumps, rocks and top soil.



To speed this phase, SLRA has relied on heavy equipment, D8 and D6 dozers.

Mid-January SLRA reported that the crews had cleared 12 kms. from Manowa toward the Penguia Chiefdom, and 3 kms from Woroma in the Chiefdom toward Sandaru. SLRA estimated that 80 % of Phase One would be completed by January 29.