



## **Manowa-Sandaru Road Project Update** **And** **New Development Initiatives - January 7, 2011**

Taia Peace Foundation (TPF) Executive Director Maj Gen (ret US Army) Fred Leigh (and VP for Rural Development of Taia, LLC) went to Sierra Leone in early December, 2010 to accomplish the following tasks:

1. Coordinate with the Sierra Leone Road Authority (SLRA) to complete rehabilitation of the 18-mile Manowa-Sandaru road following the halt in repairs during the May-November rainy season
2. Confer with consultants of Enterprise Development Services, LTD on their proposal to assist the Taia/TPF new initiative to foster growth in agriculture productivity in the Penguia Chiefdom in line with the World Bank and GOSL goals to achieve food security and increase production of commercial crops for export
3. Initiate a Taia/TPF partnering relationship with the Penguia Chiefdom and the Kailahun District government in their efforts to achieve the GOSL goals regarding sustainable development of agriculture for Food Security and Commercial Agriculture growth
4. Coordinate and participate in the ceremony awarding 50 one-year scholarships to secondary and tertiary students from Penguia Chiefdom
5. Meet with the Paramount Chief Kekety of Yawei Chiefdom (west of Penguia) to begin a partnering relationship for development similar to that achieved in Penguia.
6. Meet the new US Ambassador and his staff to update them on our activities

### **The Manowa-Sandaru Road Project**

We met with the SLRA engineering staff responsible for the road on the morning of Dec 1, and subsequently met with the Director of SLRA. There was high praise from the Director about this unprecedented initiative by Taia and TPF, and he said SLRA wants to participate in celebrating completion of the road. SLRA gave us their estimate of what would be required in terms of equipment, time and funds. Heavy equipment had already been positioned and some of the culverts that were needed had also been positioned. They project completion by January 31 2011. In the following days, we traveled the road several times. Most of the road repaired between January and June 2010 withstood the effects of the rainy season, but there are areas that need major rework. The following photos provide a view of the effects of the rainy season.



**Culverts will be needed here. Mother Nature said so!**



**A hill going from Sengema to Sandaru shows erosion caused by the down hill rush of water.**





**Downhill from Sandaru toward a location that will need culverts**



**Fill, grading, new ditching and roller work is needed here.**





**Culverts prepositioned by SLRA. Note the forest canopy over the roadway -- this keeps the road from drying, thus trees will be cut back in such areas.**



**Roads to and from the new concrete bridges held up well, however there is serious erosion from the bridge roadway heading toward Manowa.**





**A woman leaving the new Woroma concrete bridge approaches the eroded portion of the road.**



**Looks bad, but a good surface -- ditching, re-grading and a roller will fix this.**

The photos focus on examples of where there is significant repair and finishing work required. During this trip we traveled several roads in Kailahun District and the Manowa-Sandaru road is clearly the best of the dirt roads despite the damage caused by the rains and the work not yet finished when the seasonal rains forced a work stoppage. When this final phase of work has been accomplished, SLRA, the people of



Peje Bongre and Penguia Chiefdoms, and the donors who funded this initiative can be proud of their contribution to sustainable development in a small, isolated corner of Sierra Leone. **ALL OTHER DEVELOPMENT IN THE AREA IS MADE POSSIBLE BY THE IMPROVEMENT OF THIS ROAD.**

### **The TPF Agriculture Initiative in Penguia Chiefdom**

In June 2010 the World Bank announced grants to underdeveloped nations for the purpose of promoting food security and the expansion of commercial agriculture for export. The government of the Republic of Sierra Leone (GOSL) was awarded \$50 million to achieve these critical objectives essential to sustainable development. TPF began exploring ways in which we might partner with either the World Bank agencies or the GOSL to play a role in these efforts. As we gathered information, we decided to focus on Kailahun District in general, but with a focus on the Penguia Chiefdom if possible.

In late October we began a dialogue with Paramount Chief (PC) Jibila as to our intentions to determine if he and the key leadership would welcome such a partnership. In keeping with the Taia/TPF philosophy, we wanted the peoples' involvement in determining what was to be the shape of the partnership. On arrival in the chiefdom, the TPF Executive Director (ED) and the PC collaborated on a strategic visioning workshop designed prior to travel by the ED. The PC prescribed the participants as requested by the ED and the 2-day workshop was set for Dec 5 and 6.

Penguia Chiefdom has five sections, each with a Section Chief. The chiefdom has an elected District Councilor to Kailahun District and each section has two elected wardens, a total of five men and five women. The participants, totaling seven per section, included the aforementioned plus representative leadership from the farmer organizations, women organizations, and the youth organizations.

The photos below show the workshop in process. The results of the strategic visioning will follow the photos.



**The ED explains the workshop process to the PC prior to the arrival of the participants. PC then leads traditional Muslim and Christian prayers that always precede a collective endeavor.**





**Paramount Chief Jibila explains the importance of this workshop for the focusing of thinking within the chiefdom as to how to increase agriculture productivity of food crops, cash crops, and livestock for the enhancement of local development.**





**TPF Executive Director Fred Leigh explains the workshop process and what it hopes to achieve by the end of the first and second days.**

The workshop approach used was a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis structured to arrive at actionable goals for each Section and the Chiefdom as a whole. Participants were asked to shape their thinking and dialogue within a timeframe of two years; i.e., look back two years and look forward two years. Using structured time limits to facilitate focused effort, the following outlines the strategic visioning process:

1. What were the Section Chiefdom agricultural accomplishments in the past two years?
  - Accomplishments
  - What factors contributed to those successes in agriculture
2. Given what you concluded in answering question 1., what are the Section/Chiefdom goals for agricultural growth and food security in the next two years?
3. Describe current agricultural activities and potential opportunities by answering the following:
  - What must we not do because they will block achieving our goals?
  - What should we do more of that will help us achieve our goals?
  - What must we start doing to achieve our goals?
4. Given your accomplishments, stated goals, activities and potential opportunities described in answering questions 1-3, what are your prioritized action strategies?
  - a. Determine what you need and the priority.
  - b. Identify the potential source for your needs: self-help, Kailahun District, Ministry of Agriculture, NGOs, and TPF?
5. Next Steps

The photos that follow show the Penguia participants working the issues.









ED clarifies how to write a goal statement, which is action-oriented and includes its own performance measurement.



ED and recorder discuss accomplishments in the past two years.





Strategic visioning work progresses -- group work gets recorded.



On day 2, the recorders for each section examine other section's results to identify and discuss concurrences that point to chiefdom issues, outcomes, and goals.





**Workshop is finished. A proud group really stepped up to the challenge of exchanging ideas and discovering some stretch actions for the individual sections and the Chiefdom.**

Here are the Penguia Chiefdom level goals for increasing sustainable agricultural development to ensure food security and increased revenue from commercial agriculture production:

- I. Increase agriculture lands for production by 1000 acres in 2011 (includes swampland, upland and flatland).
- II. Increase cash crop (coffee, cocoa, palm oil) by 75% in 2011.
- III. Increase food crop production (rice, cassava, vegetables) by 75% in 2011.

Seeds, cassava stems, nursery seedlings for cocoa and coffee, organic fertilizers and pesticides, machinery to help clear land, machinery to irrigate more efficiently, and agriculture extension training to teach “best practices” are critical needs if the goals are to be met.

If the people achieve a significant portion of their goals both within their Section and the Chiefdom as a whole, the women who ready products for local and external markets will need the small machines for grinding the cassava, cocoa, and coffee, and rice mills. These machines will not only enhance productivity, but selling the already ground or milled commodity adds value and increases profits.



Increased profits are essential to sustainable development and self-sufficiency. One rice milling machine and materials to build a work shed costs approximately \$650 USD. A cassava grinder is even less.

On the next day the PC, District Councilor and the TPF ED traveled to Kailahun District to meet with District Chairman Thomas Nyuma to discuss the workshop results and prioritize needs to achieve the Chiefdom's agriculture growth goals.



**Kailahun District Chairman, Thomas Nyuma, Penguia Paramount Chief Tamba Jibila, District Councilor for Penguia, Daniel Mangar, and Fred Leigh, TPF Executive Director.**

## Taia/TPF Scholarship Initiative to Support Education as a Component of Development

In early October District Councilor Mangar contacted the TPF Chairman to Jeffrey Wright to ask if we could fund 50 one-year scholarships for Penguia Chiefdom secondary and college level students. The Chairman and the ED discussed the desirability of doing this with particular concern about equity issues and transparency in the process.

The Chairman said that the contributions from the Segal Family Foundation (<http://segalfamilyfoundation.org/>) and from Adrian Pasdars efforts through Band From TV (<http://bandfromtv.org/>) could fund the initiative. TPF informed Councilor Mangar of its intent but asked that the Chiefdom comply with the following criteria to qualify:

- There must be gender equity between male and female students in proportion to their representation in the student population.
- There must equity between the religions (Muslim, Christian, Other) in proportion to their representation in the student population.
- Each of the four citizens who represented the Chiefdom at the inaugural TPF fundraiser in New York during the 2009 Clinton Global Initiative should receive one scholarship to be awarded as they desire.
- The criteria for academic merit should conform to standard practices in Sierra Leone.

TPF required that a matrix be provided reflecting the name, gender, religion, and dollar amount for each recipient. To further enhance transparency, we prepared certificates naming the student and notating the amount of the award.



Prior to the award ceremony, the Paramount Chief met with Section Chiefs and other key elders and explained the scholarship initiative, TPF criteria, and the merit process. He said he recognized that some would be disappointed or would be suspicious, but he asked the chiefs and elders support this important development initiative and facilitate harmony.





**TPF ED answers a question about the scholarships prior to the arrival of other participants.**



**Councilor Mangar describes the ceremony process. To his right are TT De Abreu from Taia/TPF and Section Chiefs Lahai and Dauda-Kowa.**





**The Meeting ends -- TIME FOR THE CEREMONY.**



**The students wait to march in for the award ceremony.**





**Paramount Chief Jibila introduces the program, explains the selection process and the TPF criteria, and expresses the Chiefdom's gratitude for this initiative.**



**TPF ED addresses the audience and challenges the students to stay committed to excellence.**





**TPF'S TT De Abreu (honorary Penguia Chief) sits with the awardees as the ceremony begins.**



**A secondary student accepts his scholarship certificate.**





**A secondary student receives her award.**



**A father receives the award on behalf of his college student.**





**A mother receives the award on behalf of her college student.**



**The students flash their scholarship certificates.**





**The ceremony ends.**

At the close of the ceremony, the PC thanked TPF for supporting education in the Chiefdom. The audience applauded this contribution to the education of their children.

TPF is grateful for the generosity of the Segal Family Foundation and Band from TV, which funded the one-year scholarships.

### **Introducing Taia and TPF to the Yawei Chiefdom**

Immediately after the scholarship award ceremony, we traveled to Yawei Chiefdom.

Yawei Chiefdom lies directly west of the Penguia Chiefdom. This chiefdom is situated within the Gori Hills region, and Taia, LLC has been issued a mineral exploration license in this area. Paramount Chief Kekety of Yawei supported Taia's being issued the license in part because of the enthusiastic support of Taia expressed by Paramount Chief Jibila. PC Jibila praised the Taia/TPF commitment to development and persuaded PC Kekety to join him in backing Taia's license application.

We were welcomed warmly in Yawei. PC Jibila introduced TT De Abreu and TPF ED Fred Leigh. TT presented the customary package of kola nuts to the PC, and the audience applauded this traditional gesture. PC Kekety introduced his chiefs, staff and several of them made welcoming remarks. The ED and the PC conversed and exchanged basic information (getting to know each other in a personal way).

PC Kekety's opening remarks for all to hear can be characterized by these words: 'We welcome you and want you to succeed. We know of your good reputation in Penguia. We are farmers and not miners. We want to help you succeed -- we want this relationship to be like "the left hand washes the right hand, and the right hand washes the left hand"' 'He then commented about how he and PC Jibila had worked together to help Taia secure the concession.

In his response to PC Kekety's remarks alluding to partnership, the TPF ED used a similar metaphor from his grandmother: 'If you want a good clapping sound, the left hand and right hand must work together—and we are committed to ensuring that all of us can applaud this partnering'.

The photos that follow reflect this initial coming together of Taia/TPF and the people of Yawei Chiefdom:





**PC Keketey, on the right, tells his people who we are and why we have come. To his right are PC Jibila, TPF ED Fred Leigh and TPF's TT De Abreu.**



**TPF ED and PC Keketey engage in “getting to know each other palaver”.**





**TT De Abreu has presented the customary kola nuts on behalf of the delegation and shakes hands with the PC. We smile because the audience cheered at our recognition of this traditional gesture.**



**A view from the audience -- we noted that no women were present, so in our learning for effective partnering within Yawei Chiefdom, we will need to know and be sensitive to the culture in this chiefdom. Women would have been present in Penguia Chiefdom.**





**TPF ED describes the Taia/TPF philosophy as it relates to sustainable development and the TPF role in working with the Chiefdom leadership and people to build good partnerships whereby all benefit from this the left hand right hand collaboration.**



**As we prepared to leave, children were all over these strangers, so we took a photo—some smiles, some poses, some funny faces—at the end of a good day in Yawei Chiefdom.**

“This trip covered a lot of ground. The people want to improve their lives and especially the lives of their children. If there is to be sustainable peace, there must be sustainable development that nurtures hope and make dreams possible. Hopefully TPF and you who read this can contribute to that outcome.” – Fred Leigh