

TAIA  
PEACE  
FOUNDATION



Laying the Foundation for Peace







## Foreword

The Taia River flows through central Sierra Leone supplying fresh water to nourish the land and foster life. Taia Peace Foundation (TPF) seeks to partner with rural Sierra Leonean communities by serving as a conduit for those things that help promote socio-economic well-being and self-reliance.

Sierra Leone is a nation on the rise. Its infamous civil war ended a decade ago, and its post-conflict success is unsurpassed anywhere else in the world. Still, hard work lies ahead if this well-earned peace is to last. Though rich in natural resources, Sierra Leone (like many other African nations) has struggled historically against economic stagnation, social tension and political instability – all symptoms of the “resource curse.” Taia Peace Foundation exists to assist rural African communities in breaking the curse.

While many organizations are engaged in providing relief to countries like Sierra Leone, Taia Peace Foundation's aim is to reframe the concept of humanitarian aid to Africa by acknowledging and emphasizing the Continent's essential role in catalyzing its own reawakening.

## What We Do

Established in 2007, Taia Peace Foundation is the charitable arm of Taia Lion Resources (TLR), a leading ethical and socially responsible mineral exploration company currently operating in Sierra Leone. Taia Peace Foundation works within the concession areas held by Taia Lion Resources, mainly in the Kailahun and Koinadugu Districts, among the remotest and poorest districts in the country.



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Through an emphasis on education, job creation, and the promotion of self-reliance, TPF makes a social investment in parallel with TLR's commercial investment to augment the positive impact of the latter's presence within its areas of operation and to assist in unlocking the optimal development potential of our partner communities. Taia focuses with equal enthusiasm on mineral rights and human rights.

The people of remote Kailahun and Koinadugu Districts, like most rural Sierra Leoneans, face significant challenges - isolation from the rest of the country and the world, elevated infant and maternal mortality rates, high unemployment, low economic growth, and discouragement among the youth.

To help address these challenges, Taia Peace Foundation engages local stakeholders and leaders (men, women and youth) in identifying, discussing, prioritizing, planning and implementing development projects that will have the widest possible positive

impact on their communities. The goal is to produce multiple systemic project outcomes that will result in sustained socio-economic development and an enhanced quality of life for all.



## Taia Peace Foundation Philosophy

- The historic and current ways of providing "aid" to places like Sierra Leone can be improved upon and strengthened.
- The capacity to identify development encumbrances is strongest at the local level - a lack of access to capital is not synonymous with a lack of access to wisdom or self-awareness.
- Our role is to understand the factors inhibiting economic growth and social cohesion and support community-partnered projects to counter-act them.

- Strategies and initiatives built on shared responsibility and partnership, as opposed to patronage, serve rural African communities most effectively - true sustainability requires self-reliance.
- Job creation and sustainable support for education are more powerful than traditional "aid."
- Our most valuable tool is our capacity to listen.
- Our most valuable resource is trust.



## Current Priorities

**Infrastructure:** Roads in rural Sierra Leone are often dangerously under-maintained and deteriorated. Good roads are essential to generating positive socio-economic change. Rebuilding roads is often the first step toward sustainable development, providing vital access to local, national, and international markets; emergency health care services; qualified educators; and national security services; etc. TPF's most significant infrastructure project to date, undertaken with funding support from Tiffany & Co., was the rehabilitation of the 18-mile Manowa-Sandarou road serving approximately 40,000 people (project reports available).

**Agriculture:** The agriculture potential in Sierra Leone is massive, but farmers require proper seeds, inputs, equipment, and techniques if they are to achieve food security and generate greater revenues through the increased production of commercial cash crops for domestic and international distribution and sale. To farmers in Penguia Chiefdom, Kailahun District, TPF provided 500 acres of seed rice and the down payment on a tractor so as to increase local rice output by 70%. Funding for the project was provided by Band From TV.

**Women's Issues:** Women's economic empowerment is critical to reducing poverty in rural African settings. Women are more likely to invest their income to the broader benefit of their community than men. Economic gender inequity produces counter-productive cultural realities that undermine sustainable development aspirations and contribute to high maternal and infant mortality rates. Absent educational opportunity, teen-age girls are vulnerable to subordination and are given to marriage and child bearing too soon. During Sierra Leone's civil war, rural women and girls were often victims of sexual violence, abduction and other atrocities. There remains a need for trained, culturally sophisticated counselors and psychologists to assist with female victims. Female genital mutilation persists. Together with women in Penguia Chiefdom, TPF is designing a woman's empowerment program around farming, agriculture processing, and silk weaving.

**Youth Issues:** Sierra Leone is needful of rural development opportunities geared specifically toward youth - i.e., skills training for employment, suitable employment, safe sex/birth control education and drug/alcohol education. Youth unemployment, disenfranchisement, and disillusionment were significant drivers behind Sierra Leone's civil war and, collectively, remain a primary concern going forward. TPF has maximized youth employment in its infrastructure rehabilitation projects and has provided equipment to local youth soccer clubs. In Diang Chiefdom, Koinadugu District, members of the youth soccer league re-built their local clinic's birth-waiting center in exchange for support from TPF.





**Healthcare:** Sierra Leone suffers from one of the highest infant mortality rates in the world and the life expectancy at birth is a mere 47 years. Improved access to healthcare and health education decreases maternal and infant mortality rates and lessens the impact of routine illnesses and ailments as well as more dangerous diseases such as malaria and HIV/AIDS. Also, there exists an urgent need for trained nurses and other medical personnel, new and improved clinics, as well as power generation for treatment rooms, birthing centers, and refrigerated pharmaceutical storage facilities. TPF is collaborating with International Surgical Health Initiative (ISHI) to develop wide-reaching healthcare strategies and initiatives to serve our partner communities.

**Education:** Qualified teachers and quality learning materials are critical for the education of new generations of Sierra Leoneans. Many teachers require training toward certification – uncertified teachers are unpaid by Government. Unpaid teachers don't teach. Scholarship assistance to teachers seeking certification will have tremendous positive impact on education. Schooling, when available, is not free, so too many children will never go to school and, therefore, will neither be literate nor optimally contributive to socio-economic or democratic development within their communities. With the support of the Segal Family Foundation, TPF has provided 50 scholarships to meritorious female and male primary, secondary, and college students of diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds in one chiefdom. Our five-year, five-chiefdom plan is to support an additional 1,250 students as well as 250 uncertified teachers seeking accreditation.

**Safe Drinking Water:** Access to clean water is limited in many rural areas throughout the country - many communities are in need of new wells, reservoirs, and/or pipe systems. TPF has identified water as a priority in Diang Chiefdom.

**Environment:** Old, artisanally mined-out areas are dangerous and festering – the need exists for the reclamation of these areas to more economically and environmentally advantageous conditions. With a grant from The Tiffany & Co. Foundation, TPF is developing a project to reclaim, refocus, and revitalize 200 mined-out acres in Penguia Chiefdom (project proposal available).



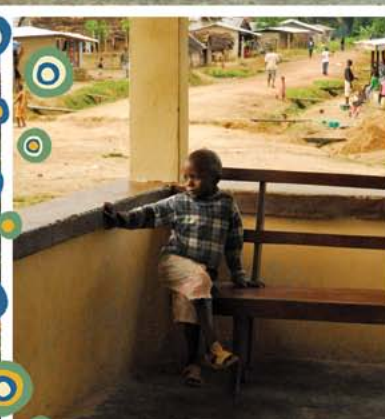
## Collaboration

Collaborative partnerships with like-minded groups are essential to our success. Taia Peace Foundation works closely with the Government of Sierra Leone and is continually looking for opportunities to work with other effective governmental, non-governmental, and corporate partners.

## Support

Funding for Taia Peace Foundation comes from a number of corporations, including Taia Lion Resources; private foundations; and individual donors.





## UNDP

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*"God bless your organization. We, in Sierra Leone, wish a cordial relationship between your organization and the citizens of [our country]. Extend our sincere greetings to your donors. **We wish them God's blessings, for they have blessed us with a road.**"*

– Sahr Gbembo, Director, Sierra Leone Road Authority





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