

TAIA PEACE

Laying the Foundation for Peace

Manowa-Sandaru Road Rehabilitation

Kailahun District, Sierra Leone
2009-2011



*"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

The Road to Sustainability

Taia Peace Foundation's first major project was the rehabilitation of an 18-mile feeder road in Kailahun District, connecting the village of Sandaru in Penguia Chiefdom to the town of Manowa in Peje Bongre Chiefdom and linking approximately 40,000 people to the larger national road network. Funding for the project was generously provided by Tiffany & Co.

The Issue

Prior to rebuilding the road, vehicle access to this extremely remote region was severely limited - during the rainy season, the route was often impassable. This hampered access to emergency medical care and national security services and severely restricted any trade or economic opportunities with the rest of the country or the world. Rampant unemployment caused discontent amongst the youth, and the community registered one of the nation's highest infant and maternal mortality rates. With no means of entry for ambulances, women experiencing complicated pregnancies were particularly vulnerable.

The Project

Through town meetings and consultation with the leaders and people of the area, Taia Peace Foundation determined that the rehabilitation of the Manowa-Sandaru road was an important and necessary first step in assisting this community ravaged by conflict but hopeful of rebuilding. Through a partnership with the Sierra Leone Road Authority (SLRA), Taia Peace Foundation began work on the road in December 2009. Maximizing local employment on the project, particularly for women and youth, was an important strategic objective for Taia. Women were employed, not only in providing food and water to workers, but also in performing some of the roadwork itself and were paid equivalent wages to men in performing the same tasks. This approach helps break the cycle of a male-dominated workforce and promotes more widespread community ownership of the project.





The Results

Upon the completion of the road, the affected communities enjoyed immediate and measurable quality of life improvements. Government agencies are now present more consistently. Ambulances are available for expectant mothers suffering labor complications. Patients now travel to the larger regional towns of Kailahun and Kenema or even the nation's capital, Freetown, to receive critical medical care. The cost of outside goods - fuel for generators and motorbike taxis, for example - has dropped owing to reduced travel times for distributors. New cell phone towers are being erected in the area. Improved access to outside markets is now helping to disrupt the cycle of poverty that has plagued the area, and the goals of self-reliance and food security are increasingly within reach.

An isolated and neglected people are now re-connected to their country and the world and reconnected, as well, to a previously moribund sense of hope - all owing to a community's voice being heard and to a new road - a road toward lasting peace.




For more information about Taia Peace Foundation, its projects, and how to donate, visit www.taiapeace.org or call +1 (718) 643-0277



Taia Peace Foundation

45 Main Street, Suite 1008
Brooklyn, NY USA 11201
+1 (718) 643-0277

@taiapeace 

facebook.com/taiapeace 

47A Ronsabs Drive
off Spur Road
Freetown, Sierra Leone
+232 76 259440



info@taiapeace.org
www.taiapeace.org