

### *Kamankay I, Kasokira Section*

#### **Self-Help Road Work Increases Accessibility in Chiefdom (January, 2023)**

The end of the rainy season in November marks the seasonal beginning of self-help road work in Kalanthuba. Self-help means maintenance by local villagers with hand tools supplied through an innovative tool library operated by the Chiefdom in each of its five Sections.



Kalanthuba Regent Chief James M. Kamara visits with self-help road workers.



Chiefdom Speaker Samson S. Koroma distributes hand tools from the chiefdom tool library to villagers for self-help road work, as Regent Chief James M. Kamara looks on.

The main focus of road maintenance is on making the chiefdom's two main north-south trunk routes passable and keeping them open. A western route and an eastern route connect the more populated southern sections of the chiefdom with the two northern sections. As of January, both routes are open at least to motor bikes.

The western trunk route runs from Kamankay (village) in Kasokira Section in the South through Kamakatheh Section and the eastern portion of Kamakihila Section to Kakarima (village), the northern-most village in the northwest section of Kakalain. The eastern route extends from Kamankay (village) in the South to Kawungulu in the northeast section of Follagudu.

In early November 2022, villagers were hard at work on Danah Hill, a steep and rocky portion of the western trunk route just south of Kamasaypayna in Kamakatheh Section. The ability of vehicles to navigate Danah Hill is needed for effective access to the health post and primary school located in Kamasaypayna. After several days of hard labor on the hill, a Toyota land cruiser was able to make it up the hill in mid-November.

The chiefdom's tools library makes tools available at each of the five section-headquarters villages. Tools are signed out by a chiefdom or section officer and must be returned. Shovels, spades, sledge hammers, chisels, and pickaxes are available. Road work is scheduled for Fridays in the two northern sections and Saturdays in the three southern sections. Each section has a road-work leader who organizes and supervises the work.

Former Regent Chief Daniel S Koroma explains that every village has a strong incentive to assure accessibility by motor bike in order to maintain the accessibility of markets, health facilities, and schools. Responsibility for actually doing the road work falls to able-bodied youth—the young men of the village. What the chiefdom supplies are tools, scheduling, and organization—what CePAD leader Daniel Sara Turay terms an “enabling environment.”

While hand tools can accomplish a significant amount, there are limits to their utility. Maintenance and repair of culverts and bridges require more than hand tools. Engineers with Seli Hydroelectric Project (Bumbuna Dam, Phase II) have recently rehabilitated a southern portion of the Western trunk route, including replacement of a large, broken culvert south in Kasokira Section (see photo). The number of culverts in need of replacement, however, is much greater. Moreover, former Chief Koroma reports that more sustainable improvement of the trunk routes—sustainable through the rainy season—depends on improving water drainage from the road surface, now mostly non-existent.