



# Mining Reclamation at Bandafayie

In early May 2008 ground was finally turned at Bandafayie, Nikikoro Chiefdom. In conjunction with our local partner, the Conservation Society of Sierra Leone, this heavily impacted alluvial diamond mining site has been reclaimed and restored for organic agricultural purposes to be managed by a local co-operative. After sitting as pits and piles for over ten years the land was heavily compacted. Heavy machinery was required to manipulate the former diamond mining site prior to hand labour encouraging environmental stewardship in the mining sector.

*encouraging environmental stewardship in the mining sector*

A local mining company, Swanfield (SL) Ltd., donated the use of a D6 bulldozer to break the compacted earth and turn the soil in exchange for the fuel and the operator costs. Accessing



of the project. The work was delayed considerably by the need to revisit the land use agreement with all the local stakeholders; the Bandafayie community, local miners, the Paramount Chief, and the Bandafayie agricultural co-op. The mining reclamation activities were preceded by a community sensitisation and awareness campaign which garnered the interest of two currently active mining companies in Kono (Swanfield and Kariba Kono) in further mining reclamation activities.



In total, 5.5 acres was restored into nine large plots. The machine work lasted for four days leaving another 5 acres or so to be restored at a later date. After the machine work turned the hard packed soil, a total of forty-one local people including women and youth spent twelve days collecting and transporting soil, leveling the ground, and establishing plots suitable for agriculture at wages above the standard for mining.

The plots were then plowed and planted with five bushels of rice prior to the rainy season. Trees are

machinery in the Kono District is profoundly challenging and prohibitively expensive, such that the generosity from Swanfield proved integral in the success



currently be rooted in a nursery and will be transplanted in July to support soil conservation on the site as the natural vegetation was completely removed by the past mining practices. Other crops aside from rice will also be planted on the nine plots for diversity and value added production.

*developing the capacity of local people and seeding local food security*

In the near future an emphasis will be placed on the production of medicinal plants to supply the *Sierra Leone Association of Traditional Medicine* who are currently building a hospital in Koidu Town in the Kono District. This mining reclamation project has brought together local people with local government and mining companies interested in environmental stewardship, tapping roots for local food security and sustainable livelihoods. Restoring the landscape and inspiring hope for the local people.



**Sustainable Livelihoods**

