

Sierra Leone Travel Team Update - January 15, 2018

Another very productive day for the Travel Team. Here's the scoop from Herb:

We had our opening meetings at both the hospital and school. The hospital leadership is enthusiastic about the visioning session. Tom began his interviews at the hospital. Herb met with Mr Sengeh to review the school statistics. Jose downloaded the solar usage data in the admin building and classrooms and will send soon. Tom, Jose and herb took a tour of the school. There are many improvements.

Poured the slab for the toilets and started to build the walls. Poured the pillars for the cesspit. Yesterday's slab issue was that we needed to correct the elevation between the slab and the porch.

Allison and Emilia recoded a tour of the hospital, making concrete, solar array at centennial.

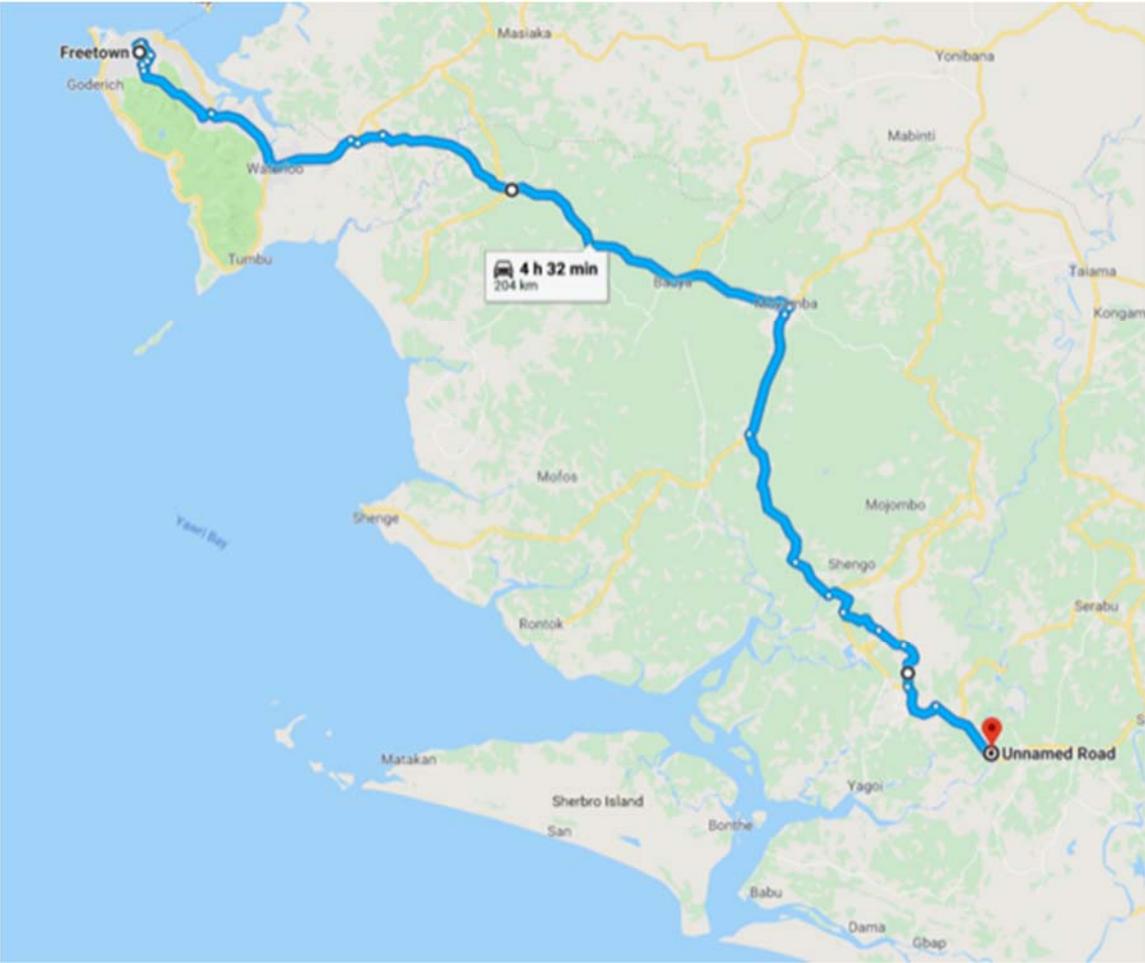
It looks like they are right on schedule. The construction is moving along nicely and Tom has jumped right in to the visioning process at the hospital. Allison and Emilia have a lot of video to take, making a record of all the work at CSS and talking to students and teachers about school and life in Sierra Leone.

Jose was already able to read the data from two of the three solar PV systems. This information is incredibly useful in determining if they are using the system correctly and in estimating how long the batteries will last. Once Jim, Jose, and I have had time to go over the data we'll develop a report for Jose to review with Mr. Sengeh and the CIIB. When I get the data cleaned up a little I will post it on the drive. A quick look has already yielded a lot of good information.

If you haven't been to Sierra Leone you may be curious as to why it took Herb, Jose, Tom and Joe 8 hours to drive the 125 miles from Freetown to Matru. Joe is an excellent driver as is Sullay (who drove the other team in ~6 hours) so that is not the source of delay. Almost half the road is paved so that portion goes quickly. Unless something happens...traffic in Freetown, flat tires, overheating radiators,...can all slow you down. Of course, once you make that big turn to the south at Moyamba Junction, things start getting interesting. The roads are not paved and are very dusty and often rough or 'washboard'. There's a nice stretch through the Sierra Rutile Mine but then it gets really rough with lots of boulders and potholes. And then finally, you board the ferry to get across the Jong river, one of my favorite parts of the trip. Centennial is just on the other side.

Tom

The Route to Matru



Some pictures from previous trips...

Paved Highway on the way to Moyamba Junction



Sometimes you have to visit the Shade Tree Mechanic



Here comes the ferry!



