

THE DESIRE FOR  
AFRICA'S DESTINY  
TO BE IN AFRICAN  
HANDS IS PALPABLE  
AND INVIGORATING.  
**THIS COULD BE  
AFRICA'S CENTURY.  
IT SHOULD BE.**

AGI PATRON, TONY BLAIR

## OUR MISSION

**W**HEN AGI BEGAN three years ago, we set out to do something different. To support a new generation of African leaders who seek to make their countries more peaceful, stable and prosperous. To help these leaders bridge the gap between their vision for a better future and their government's ability to achieve it. And to do this from the inside, strengthening our partners' capacity to deliver programmes that will change ordinary people's lives for the better, from public services and rural development to infrastructure and job creation. Our approach is simple: Tony Blair draws on his ten years as Prime Minister to offer leaders the kind of advice on reform that only someone who has stood in their shoes can give, while AGI teams work shoulder-to-shoulder with public servants in each country to put in place the 'nuts and bolts' required to get things done, from managing the President's diary so that they spend their time on their priorities, through to systems for tracking the

implementation of the government's major reforms.

I know that these nuts and bolts can seem far removed from people's day to day lives, especially in Africa. But the truth is that if government doesn't work, then a country doesn't work: power stations and roads don't get built, essential services like healthcare and education don't get delivered, and the poor suffer most of all. And effective government plays a vital part in creating the conditions for private sector to flourish: the only route out of aid dependency. Where government is weak, the risk of conflict soars – by up to 45%, according to the World Bank. The international community can and does bypass the state to provide some essential public goods in the short-term, but that kind of aid can only be a sticking plaster. In the end, Africa will only fulfil its destiny if Africans are in charge of it. This simple point is AGI's founding principle.

## OUR IMPACT

2010 WAS AN IMPORTANT YEAR FOR AGI. With the support of our generous donors and partners, we have grown in numbers, impact and reach. We launched a new programme with President Johnson Sirleaf in Liberia, scaled up our work in Rwanda and Sierra Leone, and paved the way to work with reform-minded leaders elsewhere in Africa. We've also begun to draw out the lessons from our experience and to share these with African governments, the development community, and beyond.

One thing is clear: our fresh approach is delivering results. I want to tell a little of this story, and hope that reading it makes you want to learn more about AGI and the inspirational places we work. A letter like this can only ever scratch the surface of what we've achieved in

dying from malaria in hospital. We are proud to have played a role in this, alongside Sierra Leone's partners in the international community including the UK's Department for International Development. But the true credit for this achievement must go to the remarkable public servants in Sierra Leone's Health Ministry, like Dr Daoh, the Chief Medical Officer, and Dr. SAS Kargbo, its Director of Reproductive and Child Health. They demonstrate the same passion and dedication for saving lives in government as they did as physicians, but their impact is all the greater.

In February 2010 we launched our programme in Liberia. President Johnson Sirleaf, Africa's first female head of state, asked us to help strengthen her office's ability to drive reform. The recovery from the country's devastating civil war, which ended in 2005, is now well under way. Liberia has secured 100% debt relief from the

**“IMAGINE WHAT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE IN THE NEXT 5 YEARS IF A NEW WAVE OF AFRICAN GOVERNMENTS CAN KICK-START THEIR COUNTRIES' ECONOMIES AND ENSURE THAT THE GAINS OF GROWTH ARE SHARED EQUITABLY AMONG THEIR PEOPLE.”**

AGI CHIEF EXECUTIVE, KATE GROSS

a year; but perhaps can demonstrate something of the commitment and dedication of AGI staff to making government work for the poorest people in the world, and our profound respect for the true heroes in all this – our partners in Africa on whose shoulders the possibility of an African renaissance rests.

In 2005, one in seven children in Sierra Leone died before their fifth birthday: it was simply impossible for ordinary Sierra Leoneans to afford the fees to take their child to a doctor if they got sick. In 2010, AGI helped the Government of Sierra Leone to abolish these charges for pregnant women and young children. Implementing radical change like this is tough – but Sierra Leone did it faster and more successfully than most because, with our help, they got the nuts and bolts right. Writing this letter a year after this new policy was implemented, the results have been astonishing: three times as many children being treated as before, and 80% fewer children

international community, attracted billions of dollars of private investment, rebuilt roads and doubled electricity generation capacity. Presidential elections are due in late 2011, an important moment if the country is to continue on a path of peace and stability. Our independence is important to AGI: we will withdraw our staff during the campaign period, and have pledged our willingness to work with any government committed to reforming the country and lifting Liberians out of poverty once and for all.

Rwanda was where we launched our first programme back in 2008. And Rwanda has inspired me throughout AGI's journey since then: a country decimated by genocide 17 years ago is now home to one of the ten fastest growing economies in the world. I am so proud that AGI has played a small part in helping Rwanda to achieve this progress. Alongside its economic success, Rwanda is ahead of many of its peers in meeting the Millennium

Development Goals, for example halving infant mortality and bringing down the maternal death rate by two thirds since 2000. But as Rwandans are the first to say, there is still so much to be done. Half the population still live in poverty. Outside Kigali, the hi-tech dream remains just that, and the majority get by on subsistence farming. And Rwanda is on a complex political – as well as developmental – journey, with the outcome not yet clear. If these challenges are to be overcome, then the capacity and tools for change need to be in Rwandan hands.

That's why we were so excited to be working with the Government of Rwanda to develop the '*Strategic Capacity Building Initiative*', a pioneering new capacity de-

velopment programme which is being supported by the World Bank, UNDP, and the African Development Bank. The initiative will see external capacity building support aligned squarely behind priorities which the Rwandans have identified as critical to achieving the vision of middle-income status by 2017: growing the agriculture sector by 8% a year, doubling the number of households receiving electricity, and increasing private sector capital to 15% of GDP by 2012. As President Kagame said earlier this year, "Building institutions and capacity is not an end in itself but a means to political stability, economic growth and social inclusiveness and progress". This new approach to capacity development could become a blueprint for others: AGI is proud to be a part of it.



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SPEARHEADED BY TONY  
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IS NOT ALWAYS AN ISSUE  
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OFTEN OF CAPACITY, THE  
INSTITUTE WORKS TO  
SUPPORT GOVERNMENTS BY  
HELPING THEM IDENTIFY  
PRIORITIES, ACT AGAINST  
THEM AND EXPAND THE  
REACH OF REFORM.”**

USAID ADMINISTRATOR,  
RAJIV SHAH

## OUR PEOPLE, OUR PARTNERS

ONE OF AGI'S DEFINING CHARACTERISTICS is our commitment to learning. We are a restless organisation, always looking to understand how we can have greater impact; how we can measure our success and learn from our failures; and how we can tell our story to the widest possible audience. Our supporters will know we started small, working in three countries for our first three years as we incubated our new approach to development. We invested in learning the lessons from our work, beginning a project in 2010 to capture the aspects of AGI's unique approach which have greatest impact, and share these across the organisation, and outside it. At the end of 2010, on the back of two sets of independent evaluations of our work, our Patron Tony Blair spoke at the Washington think tank, the Center for Global Development, explaining publicly the key principles behind AGI's work for the first time.

We are never going to be an organisation seeking the limelight – it's not our style. But behind the scenes we will continue to invest in learning, and in sharing our learning with others that might benefit. To do this, we want to develop our partnerships with others in the international community. In 2010 we started a conversation with USAID, which has since turned into a formal

partnership in Sierra Leone. Next year we hope to do the same with other organisations who share our passion for tackling the big development challenges. The world is changing fast: new and unpredictable forces demand fresh thinking and new approaches, from the growth of new economic giants in China and India, to the Arab Spring, and the unfolding impact of the global financial crisis. There is cutting-edge work going on amongst leading development organisations, and we want to learn from it – and feed into it.

The passion and dedication of AGI staff is one of the things I love most about AGI, and what our partners know us for. We hire exceptional individuals from around the world, each sharing a powerful commitment to working on the nuts and bolts of reform in Africa and bringing their experience to bear in a new context – whether they come from running their own business, from the heart of government in Downing Street or the White House, from the consulting world in Washington, Paris, Lagos or Mumbai, from the development sector, or from international finance and investment banking.

## FUTURE PLANS

AT AGI, OUR ULTIMATE GOAL is to improve the lives of the citizens of the countries we work in. In Rwanda, Sierra Leone and Liberia, that's around 20 million people. But across the continent there are a billion more, 400 million of whom live on less than \$1.25 a day, most with no access to electricity or clean water. Economic growth across the developing world has lifted half a billion people out of poverty in the past 5 years. Imag-



ine what might be possible in the next 5 years if a new wave of African governments can kick-start their countries' economies and ensure that the gains of growth are shared equitably among their people. For this to happen, these governments need the support of the international community, but the kind of support which keeps Africans in the driving seat. Where a leader is elected to transform their country and the lives of their people, I want them to be able to call on AGI. With the assistance of our generous donors, I hope over the coming year that we will extend our impact by joining forces with a new set of reforming leaders in Africa. I look forward to what we can learn from them, and to the bright future we can help them build for their people.

If you are interested in working with AGI, joining our dedicated staff, or supporting our partnerships in Africa, please get in touch with me. Without you, our vital work would not be possible. Thank you.

*Kate Gross*  
Chief Executive, Tony Blair Africa Governance Initiative

## CHAIR'S MESSAGE

I AM DELIGHTED TO BE INTRODUCING the Africa Governance Initiative's second annual report. This year, the World Bank identified governance and leadership as "the most important factor driving Africa's future development". The work that AGI now does in Sierra Leone, Rwanda and Liberia is a direct response to that challenge, offering a unique approach which focuses on government capability to deliver results, whether in health, education, jobs, economic growth, or peace and security. There will be challenges and bumps in the road for AGI as it develops. We are well aware of the risks and complexities of the environments we work within. Charting an appropriate path for the organisation is a key focus for the Trustees.

Our work is possible only through the support of our generous funders and those who offer pro bono assistance to AGI, and I thank them for it. I also want to pay tribute to the commitment of those we work in partnership with and who work for AGI - for their professionalism, dedication and energy which has been an inspiration to all the Trustees, and which I saw for myself in Sierra Leone when I visited our programme there.

*Liz Lloyd, Chair of the Board of Trustee*

