

CAPACITY STATEMENT FOR ADVISORY SERVICES

About the TNGO Initiative

The Transnational NGO Initiative offers a unique resource to international NGOs through our ability to integrate applied, practitioner-oriented analysis, research and evaluation with academic research and education. The Initiative represents one of the major programmatic thrusts of the Moynihan Institute of Global Affairs at the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs of Syracuse University (New York, USA). The Initiative was established in 2004 in recognition of the growing importance of transnational (or international) non-governmental organizations (TNGOs) in world affairs. TNGOs and their networks have emerged as key players in shaping emerging answers to global challenges. Advancing our understanding of TNGOs as significant players in global affairs through research, education, practitioner engagement, and consulting lies at the heart of the mission of the Transnational NGO Initiative.

The TNGO Initiative comprises four areas of engagement. A **research** component is designed to better understand the challenges to governance, leadership, and effectiveness currently facing NGOs that work in a transnational context. An **educational** component is dedicated to training a new generation of students in the skills and perspectives they will need to work with or in transnational NGOs in the future. Third, a **practitioner engagement** component designed to facilitate learning among transnational NGO leaders and between such leaders and academic experts. Key parts of this component are the TNGO Fellowship Program and the TNGO Leadership Institute, which was launched in 2011. The fourth area consists of the **advisory services** of the Transnational NGO Initiative, which is outlined below. The TNGO Initiative is unique among academic centers in facilitating regular feedback between research, education, and practitioner engagement.

Advisory Services

Our approach

The **advisory services** component of the TNGO Initiative emerged as a result of the growing demand for applied and commissioned research and consulting within the transnational NGO sector. The goal of the advisory arm of the TNGO Initiative is to bring together the internal and external assessment needs of transnational NGOs operating in highly complex environments with the methodological rigor and conceptual grounding of university-based research. Most of our researchers have extensive background in practice, ranging from five to 15 years of practitioner experience. Our advisory approach differs from many other existing consulting groups because it combines this practical experience with ongoing academic research continuously focused on key challenges regarding governance and effectiveness faced by the sector. By drawing from state-of-the-art conceptual and analytical frames, data, and research methods, the advisory arm of the TNGO Initiative aims to function as a central element of the feedback loop between research and learning within the transnational NGO sector. While we feel strongly about the distinct value we can offer to TNGOs, we are also committed to only engage in research projects where we feel that our expertise and advisory approach can credibly add value and where the commissioned research and evaluation fits within our mission.

Our expertise

The researchers at the TNGO Initiative possess expertise in a wide variety of advisory fields, ranging from the analysis of organizational processes to leadership preparation programming, to the assessment of programs and projects. Possible advisory topics include:

Organizational governance and leadership: this includes talent management, leadership assessment, preparation, succession and transition through the programs of the TNGO Leadership Institute, and effective Board Chair/Board Executive Committee-CEO interaction.

Organizational change processes

Organizational performance assessment (including internal and external accountability, organizational effectiveness, and organizational learning)

Programmatic evaluations (assessment of program outcomes related to social development, governance, and Rights Based Approaches).

Strategic evaluations (supporting situational analysis and strategic planning processes of transnational NGOs)

The TNGO Initiative offers customized services ranging from short-term assessments to longer-term collaborations (our 'accompaniment' approach). Our services span across the entire spectrum of program-related tasks and phases, including program design and the creation of measurement frameworks, data collection and analysis (both qualitative and quantitative), and organizational learning and training. Our work on leadership development programming has also expanded significantly in the last years: we now offer customized in-house leadership development programming to ActionAid while we also are considering offering similar inputs into the in-house leadership development needs of Greenpeace, Oxfam, Save the Children US and World YWCA, among others. We are also considering the development of regionally focused leadership programs, together with Ford Foundation Egypt for the Middle East region, and with the Institute for Development Studies (IDS) and Oxford HR, an executive search firm specializing in NGO leadership recruitment, for European and African NGO leaders. In the area of leadership and management of organizational change in TNGOs, we have documented Save the Children's experiences with organizational change on their request, for instance, as well as the cross-organizational experiences of a range of TNGO members of the INGO Learning Group on Organizational Change which we facilitate.

Organizational capacity

The core personnel of the TNGO Initiative consists of a multi-disciplinary group of researchers and faculty from across the Maxwell School. The TNGO researchers possess extensive experience in working with and researching the not-for-profit sector across a variety of issue areas, sectors and geographic areas. We have experience across all major sectors, including international development, environmental protection, human rights, and conflict resolution/peace building, among others, and have particular expertise in working in a cross-sectoral and interdisciplinary context. The researchers of the TNGO Initiative are trained in a variety of research methods and approaches and draw from an extensive set of databases and literature that informs their work. Besides the staff at Maxwell, the TNGO Initiative can draw on a group of external experts consisting of practitioners and academics to accomplish tasks on a project-to-project basis. Another significant resource is the large number of highly qualified graduate

students at the Maxwell School who regularly support advisory project activities in reviewing relevant literature and collecting data.

We are based in Syracuse, New York, with additional facilities in Washington DC and New York City. However, the TNGO Initiative has the capacity to provide advisory services in any part of the world – both physically and/or at a distance. Furthermore, being a university-based advisory group, we are well-positioned to engage with local research organizations (both universities and other research centers) when necessary. When the project design allows, we are committed to partnering with local research institutions. We offer the following languages in the TNGO Initiative team: French, Spanish, German, Vietnamese, and Dutch. We can supply you with CVs of selected team members upon request.