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CONSULTING

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Profile Tosca Bruno-van Vijfeijken | Principal Consultant



Summary

An experienced INGO consultant, leadership coach, change management expert, author, evaluator and analyst with strong knowledge of international development, civil society organizations, leadership development, organizational development/organizational change, social development and gender and leadership. Excellent strategic, organizational, team management, communication and mentoring skills. Strong analytical, research and evaluation skills. Co-author of upcoming Oxford University Press book on the future of transnational NGOs and of several academic articles in peer reviewed journals; author of many practitioner-oriented reports, blog posts and essays.

Experience

Tosca's experience spans think tanks, NGOs, the World Bank, UN and academia. She has worked on civil society issues and social development since 1988. Prior to being the Principal Consultant at Five Oaks Consulting, Tosca worked in a European think tank focused on governance in Sub-Saharan Africa and the Caribbean; various UN agencies and an American NGO in Cambodia; as Social Development Specialist in the World Bank; and as 'pracademic' at the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Management at Syracuse University, USA, where she directed the Transnational NGO (TNGO) Initiative. The TNGO Initiative focuses on the governance, leadership and effectiveness of transnationally operating NGOs.

Tosca has worked at the grassroots level in Cambodia as well as with top leaders of global, complex NGOs. She has produced published research, analytical reports, evaluations, essays and other 'thought leadership' outputs. She is a co-author of a book manuscript under contract with Oxford University Press about the future of global North founded INGOs; the book argues provocatively that we should not take such a future for granted for quite a few INGOs, 20-30 years from now.

Tosca has directed, managed and administered programs and had led multiple teams. She has engaged in senior leadership training with over 250 NGO leaders, taught graduate level students including many mid-career students, mentored young professionals in international development, coached executive NGO leaders and facilitated strategic planning meetings as well as workshops.

She works on governance issues from a place of experience, having volunteered on several boards (InterAction, the US national platform for INGOs; Public Interest Registry, the whole sale operator of the Internet domain name .ORG which 10.5 million NGOs and nonprofits use across the globe; ProLiteracy, a premier adult literacy nonprofit in the US; and Cadasta, the start-up organization which supplies communities on their way to empowerment tech tools for accessible, affordable documentation of land rights. Tosca can provide a sector level overview of the changes INGOs should expect and has analyzed the effectiveness of change management approaches used by NGOs - she occasionally interacts with NGO boards on these topics. Organizational culture work is one of Tosca's particular interests.

Clients

Tosca launched her independent consulting practice in January 2019. Thus far, she has worked with Oxfam America on thought leadership as to the future of 'influencing NGOs'; with Transparency International on a review of its National Chapter accreditation process; and with Population Council and ProLiteracy on leadership development and executive coaching. Tosca has offered retreat facilitation services as well as organizational development support to WildLands Network, and has provided evaluation services to the Jewish Distribution Committee (JDC). She continues to teach as occasional Adjunct Instructor at the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University (USA). She is an Ambassador in the Leap of Reason Ambassador network, an invitation-only group of high-profile nonprofit leaders, analysts, funders and consultants whose mission is to encourage a high performance-orientation among NGOs and nonprofits. Tosca also acts as InterAction Fellow in an honorary, voluntary role. InterAction is the largest coalition of INGOs in the United States. Tosca supports InterAction members in thinking through what 'next generation' norms INGOs should consider adopting in the near to mid-term future, to remain relevant, legitimate and effective.

From 2005-2018, while at Syracuse University, Tosca led several consulting teams on change management as well as senior leadership development, with Save the Children, Oxfam, ActionAid, CARE, Greenpeace, Amnesty International, CIVICUS and Population Council as clients.

Areas of support and focus

- skillful change management
- understanding of NGO sector level changes
- cutting edge leadership development
- organizational culture work

- review of governance arrangements
- design and facilitation of planning meetings, strategy retreats and training
- organizational learning and evaluations
- organizational diversity, equity and inclusion strategies
- gender and leadership work
- feminist leadership work
- virtual team leadership

Consulting philosophy

Tosca believes in accompaniment, not ‘sage on the stage’ or ‘fly in, fly out’ styles of consulting. She prefers to work with a defined set of organizations in which mutual trust, honesty and truly deep understanding of the organizational identity, mindset and DNA (culture) of client organizations is growing ever stronger. Tosca typically specializes in mid to large size, globally operating INGOs that have ambitious global agendas and frequently have complex organizational forms, although she also enjoys working with start-up, ‘rebel’ type of actors in civil society who challenge ways of working. And she enjoys exposing the two types to each other, to spur innovation.

Work history

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| 2019 - | Principal Consultant, <i>Five Oaks Consulting</i> , USA

InterAction Fellow (honorary), <i>InterAction</i> (the largest coalition of INGOs in the US)
Moynihan Research Fellow (honorary), <i>Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University</i> , USA
Ambassador, <i>Leap of Reason community</i> (honorary – an invitation-only community of professionals promoting an outcome orientation among NGOs) |
| 2003-2019 | Director, Transnational NGO Initiative, <i>Maxwell School</i> |
| 1995-2001 | Social Development Specialist, <i>World Bank</i> (headquarters as well as Vietnam) |
| 1993-1994 | Independent consultant, working with <i>UNDP</i> and <i>PACT</i> (an American NGO), Cambodia |
| 1992-1993 | District Electoral Supervisor, <i>United Nations Transitional Authority for Cambodia (UNTAC)</i> |
| 1986-1992 | Program and Research Officer, <i>European Center for Development Policy Management (ECDPM)</i> , Netherlands |

Full CV and list of publications available upon request

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