



## Policy

# Transparency and Information

### Objectives and principles

Through its transparency and information policy GIZ aims to improve transparency and accountability, and to strengthen the exchange of knowledge and information. The policy is designed not only to provide the public with data and documents on GIZ's work and results, but also to foster an intensive exchange of information with partners in project countries, clients and cooperation partners.

GIZ is helping implement the international agreements (such as the Paris Declaration) that call for greater aid transparency and predictability. It is also applying the internationally recognised OECD-DAC Quality Standards for the Evaluation of Development, which include the publication of results. As a legal entity under private law that Germany's federal ministries use to discharge their public-law mandates, GIZ is also, as a matter of principle, bound by the provisions of the German Freedom of Information Act.

Moreover, GIZ supports mutual accountability between partner and donor countries, and advises partner country governments on domestic accountability vis-à-vis their parliaments and civil society.

By communicating and publishing information GIZ also promotes the exchange of knowledge and experience with other development cooperation and international cooperation (DC/IC) institutions, universities and research institutions as well as with private sector and civil society organisations (companies, business associations, NGOs, political foundations etc.). This benefits not only GIZ's cooperation partners, but also GIZ itself. On the one hand this is how we disseminate our approaches, topics, lessons learned and attitudes, and in so doing further enhance our reputation in the international debate. On the other hand we also learn from the experiences of other organisations. This helps us avoid mistakes, innovate and further strengthen the effectiveness of our measures.

Our transparency and information policy is based on the following principles:

### Transparency

GIZ supports international efforts to improve aid effectiveness and foster mutual accountability by publishing clear, detailed, easily accessible and timely information. It shares its knowledge and experience with other organisations.

Furthermore, GIZ is bound by the provisions of the German Government's Public Corporate Governance Code and guided by the Code's recommendations on transparency. GIZ publishes an annual Corporate Governance Report online, in which it discloses the remuneration received by its managing directors and reveals what proportion of the management and supervisory boards are women.

GIZ promotes transparency and exchange by making a great deal of information available to the public. This includes important corporate documents (e.g. annual reports, annual financial statements, organisation charts, and conceptual and strategy papers), sector-related information materials (e.g. brochures and films), and public relations products (e.g. the magazines *Akzente* and *GIZ-Brief*). We also publish project-specific documents and data (e.g. short project descriptions and evaluation reports), job advertisements, and invitations to tender (for services and the procurement of materials and equipment). These products are supplemented by materials supplied to our partners in project countries (e.g. on planned or incurred expenditure for GIZ measures), clients (e.g. on planned and ongoing projects and programmes) and cooperation partners (e.g. on specialised topics).

## Confidentiality

We cannot publish protected personal data, unless the individuals concerned have given their consent in accordance with the Federal Data Protection Act. Neither are we allowed to release sensitive corporate information, especially concerning management issues, background political knowledge and network knowledge.

Nor can innovations or products be made public before they are ready to be launched, unless developing them necessitates cooperation with external actors. This is decided on a case-by-case basis by the GIZ managers responsible.

Where externals are intensively involved in GIZ's value creation process, we encourage them to participate in our sector networks and information management processes. This applies particularly to consulting firms with responsibility for contract and cooperation management, individual consultants and auditors. The GIZ managers responsible decide on a case-by-case basis whether or not the persons concerned should be involved in these processes.

## Copyright

Some knowledge exists in the form of works protected by copyright (e.g. studies, books and films). The principles outlined above mean that GIZ endeavours wherever economically expedient to acquire copyrighted works such that they can be passed on to and used by third parties. If we succeed, we can then pass these works on to third parties in accordance with the aforementioned general principles. In the case of copyrighted works produced by GIZ itself, we normally encourage their dissemination. We have to make exceptions to this where special GIZ corporate policy interests are affected, or where GIZ's obligations toward its clients so dictate.

## Economic efficiency

GIZ is bound by the principle of economic efficiency. When information is communicated and published, an appropriate balance must be struck between the costs and benefits.

## Reciprocity

Cooperation activities are especially important as a means of transferring knowledge and expertise, accessing new knowledge and closing knowledge gaps. When cooperating, GIZ shares its knowledge directly and particularly closely through personal contact with the actors concerned. This open approach to utilising knowledge should be reciprocal and respect intellectual copyrights. GIZ should decide on a case-by-case basis whether it is appropriate for an external actor to be given access to in-house information sources. When such access is granted, this should be accompanied by measures that enable GIZ to gain increased access to external sources.

## Guidelines for publishing and communicating information

GIZ uses various communication channels to publish and transfer information. The various information categories are listed and described below.

### The general public

The following documents and data<sup>1</sup> are made available to the general public in print and online media.

I. Data and documents published		
Document / data set	Medium	Language(s)
<b>Important corporate documents</b>		
Annual reports	giz.de / print	DE
Evaluation reports	giz.de / print	DE, EN, FR, ES
Annual financial statements	giz.de	DE
Basic brochures	giz.de	DE, EN
Conceptual and strategy papers	giz.de	DE, EN
Organisation chart	giz.de	DE, EN, FR, ES, PT, RU, AR
<b>Specialised information</b>		
Sector brochures	giz.de	DE, EN
Information on specific topics and services	giz.de	DE, EN
<b>Public relations products</b>		
Akzente magazine	giz.de / print	DE, EN
GIZ-Brief magazine	giz.de / print	DE
<b>Personnel</b>		
Personnel report	giz.de / print	DE
Job vacancies	giz.de	DE, z.T. EN
<b>Procurements<sup>2</sup></b>		
Early project information	GTAI	DE
Services	giz.de	DE, EN
Materials and equipment	print / TED <sup>3</sup>	DE, EN
Construction work	giz.de / TED	DE
<b>Project-specific documents and data</b>		
Project information	OECD	DE, EN, FR
Brief project descriptions <sup>4</sup>	giz.de	DE, EN
Project websites <sup>5</sup>	Internet	Official language of project country
Evaluation programme	giz.de	DE, EN
Short evaluation reports	giz.de	DE, Official language of project country

<sup>1</sup> Overview as at October 2011.

<sup>2</sup> For details on GIZ's tendering procedures please visit: <http://www.giz.de/en/procurement.html>

<sup>3</sup> Invitations to tender above a certain value, which is revised annually (currently EUR 193,000 for services), are published on an official EU page: <http://ted.europa.eu>

<sup>4</sup> See page 4, box II.

<sup>5</sup> On project websites, information on GIZ-supported projects is published in consultation with the project partners.

## **DC/IC partners in project countries**

As well as providing information to the general public, GIZ also supplies its DC/IC partners in project countries with more extensive information on its measures. How frequently this information is supplied varies from partner country to partner country, and depends on the requirements of the partner government. The following information is regularly supplied to each project country government via the German Embassy in that country:

- contract value of the current project phase in EUR;
- duration of the project phase;
- expenditure incurred;
- planned expenditure for the forthcoming reporting period.

If the partner so requests, the information on incurred and planned expenditure is broken down by individual cost category. How often this information is supplied usually depends on the requirements of the partner government. There are restrictions on the publication or dissemination of information on staff expenditure. Data must be provided in such a way that is not possible to identify the salary or other personnel costs relating to a specific member of staff (personal data). The staff member's right to determine what information is divulged must be observed, as must the data protection legislation.

Independently of this formal communication of information through the German embassies, at project/programme level there is also an intensive exchange of information with those organisations that are partners of German development cooperation in the country concerned. How intensive this process of exchange is, and what information is exchanged, are usually not formally defined.

## **GIZ's commissioning parties**

With GIZ's main commissioning party, the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), formalised procedures have been developed through which a great deal of information is exchanged on planned and ongoing TC measures. This includes among other things an exchange of information during the planning phase of a TC measure, followed by communication both on its implementation progress and on its results once it has been completed.

GIZ has also agreed information exchange and reporting procedures with other clients. When cooperating with other federal ministries, for instance, GIZ develops client- and project-specific information transfer formats. For the Federal Environment Ministry (BMU) and the Federal Foreign Office, for instance, formalised reporting procedures already exist.

## **GIZ's cooperation partners**

By communicating information to DC/IC partners, universities and research institutions, the private sector and civil society, GIZ also fosters the exchange of knowledge and

experience with other institutions. GIZ staff members communicate directly with their colleagues in other organisations in their respective areas of responsibility. The knowledge can be communicated verbally or in writing, depending on the availability of materials. Decision on whether or not knowledge should be transferred should be taken on a case-by-case basis, applying pragmatic criteria.

GIZ regularly plays an active part in international forums (e.g. conferences), and publishes most of the results of its work in appropriate publications or on online platforms. It participates actively in networks and information platforms operated by third parties (e.g. BMZ sector teams, the development cooperation extranet, online platforms). In certain cases it is also possible for external actors to participate in GIZ networks and gain access to selected GIZ information systems.

## **Information confidentiality**

The restrictions on the publication and communication of information mainly affect the following categories of data and documents.

### **Personal data**

The Federal Data Protection Act obliges GIZ to protect personal information. These data can only be communicated and published for legitimate company purposes, and only insofar as this does not compromise the protected interests of the individuals concerned. GIZ publishes online the names, areas of responsibility, email addresses and/or telephone numbers of the managerial staff and desk officers assigned to particular projects or topics, but it does not usually publish any other data.

Regarding the communication or publication of personal data on consultants or employees of consulting firms, contractual details can only be published with the consent of the individuals concerned.



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### Sensitive and confidential information

The communication or publication of sensitive and confidential information (including corporate and business secrets) is not allowed due to the risk this would pose for the security and wellbeing of the company. This applies not only to management knowledge, background political knowledge and network knowledge, but also to information on cost calculations (overheads), and on innovations and products not yet ready for launch, unless their development necessitates cooperation with external actors. The GIZ manager responsible decides what information can be transferred on a case-by-case basis.

### Publication of contracts and agreements, and third-party information

Where the publication of information on contracts and agreements affects the rights of third parties, the consent of those parties must be obtained. In cases where third-party information is to be passed on or published, this information must first of all be examined by the GIZ manager responsible to determine whether it includes any business secrets or other sensitive and confidential data.

### In-house papers and reports, and internal communication

In-house papers and reports are designed to provide GIZ staff members with information and guidance. Decisions on whether or not to make these materials available to third parties in certain cases are taken by the responsible GIZ managers.

The communication or publication of drafts or internal emails would jeopardise open exchange within the company. Here too, the responsible GIZ managers can decide to make this information available to third parties in certain cases.

### Contact

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## II. Online presentation of GIZ projects and programmes

GIZ aims to publish on its website short project descriptions containing the following information on all the projects and programmes it implements:

Key project data	Project description
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project title</li> <li>• Commissioning party</li> <li>• Country</li> <li>• Sector</li> <li>• Lead executing agency</li> <li>• Overall term</li> <li>• Term of the current phase (start and end date)</li> <li>• Contact</li> <li>• Project number</li> <li>• Pledged total volume for the current phase</li> <li>• Last update of brief project description</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Context</li> <li>• Objective</li> <li>• Approach</li> <li>• Results - what has been achieved so far</li> </ul>
	<b>Further information sources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Links to other pages on the GIZ website</li> <li>• Links to external websites (e.g. project website)</li> </ul>

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