



German Development
Institute

Deutsches Institut für
Entwicklungspolitik (DIE)

Annual Report 2011 – 2012

Development-Policy Communication Today

It is commonly believed that “good things speak for themselves”. But this is not the case! A research institute that offers policy counselling and training like the German Development Institute / Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE) should not limit itself to peddling ‘research for researchers’. In order to disseminate academic know-how smart ‘knowledge marketing’ is needed. The modern and international approach adopted by the DIE Communications team, therefore, suits our policy field and its international orientation. With its introduction of more efficient and innovative instruments for knowledge marketing and communications, the DIE is well positioned to target specific audiences with content, recommendations and strategies.

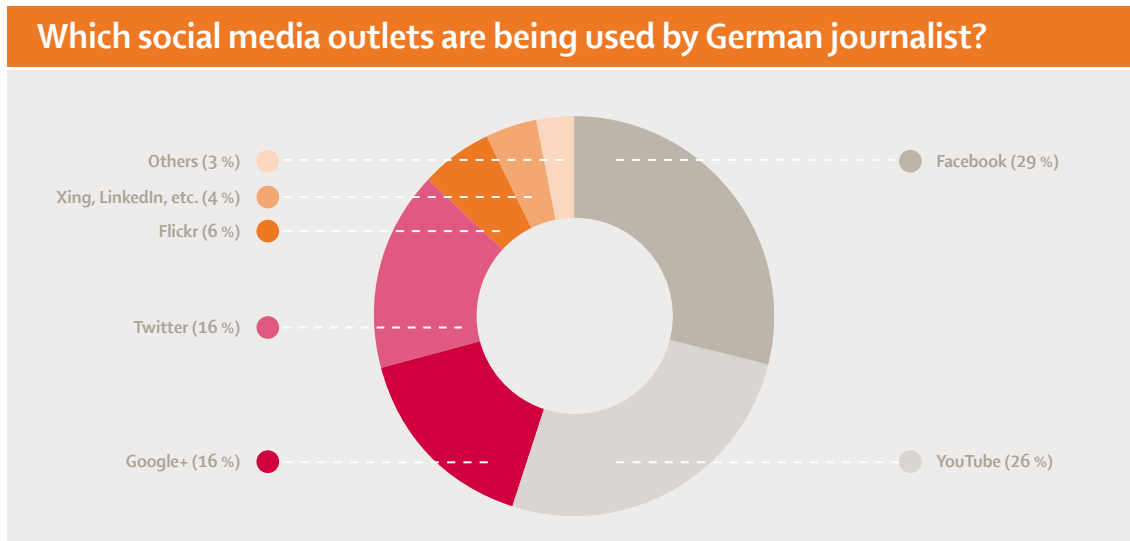
In addition to its series of academic publications – “Briefing Paper”, “Discussion Paper” and „Studies“, with the introduction of the weekly *Current Column* in October 2008, the DIE has created a format for

authors to clearly state their views and position themselves on current development-policy issues. The 50 *Current Columns* published annually in both German and English constitute a series that is recognised as an important source of information for politicians and policymakers, development practitioners, academics and the media. The series covers not only such diverse topics as the post-2015 development agenda, the rise of the middle class, land and water grabbing or poverty reduction, but devotes itself to special foci, such as the International Year of Sustainable Energy for All and the Rio+20-conference in 2012. In addition, the media partnership with ZEIT-Online enables the German version of the *Current Columns* to reach readers beyond the usual development-policy suspects.

Find out for yourself:

www.die-gdi.de/en/Publications/The-Current-Column/

The most recent communication innovation is the new DIE website, which will be launched at the beginning



Source: News aktuell: Recherche 2012 – Journalismus, PR und multimediale Inhalte

of 2013. The new website signals a paradigm change – from communications focused on internal structures towards content of current interest and subject-oriented presentations of DIE academic know-how. Its clearly structured, modern design enables all visitors to more easily locate the key topics among the current themes, publications and events. The new strategic direction of the Institute is prominently visible on the Welcome page; offering direct links to the five new cross-departmental narratives (see also the Strategy Chapter, page 18).
Visit us at: www.die-gdi.de

“Do you still read – or have you already begun to surf the Web?” The Internet has dramatically changed the way information is acquired. When was the last time you pulled an encyclopaedia off the shelf? Nowadays we use search engines and Wikipedia to learn about the world, yet for young people, these now ‘traditional’ features of the Internet are ‘out’ and social-media platforms like Facebook, YouTube and Twitter

are ‘in’. Although the *intelligentsia* long regarded Facebook and other social-media platforms as non-professional, today world-renowned scientists systematically use the Facebook network – with its one billion users – to present their ideas and research results. The latest trend in this regard are interactive events, where the audience and panellists as well as online-participants are posting comments, questions and photos live from the event via social-media platforms.

Social media platforms also become more important for media relations. According to an online survey among 1,400 journalists by “news aktuell”, a subsidiary of the German news agency (dpa), 78 percent of the respondents still rely on information distributed by E-Mails or acquired by search engines. But 41 percent of the journalists are already using social media platforms for their investigations or research at least once a week. And with internet-connected smart phones, the trend towards social media will further increase.

As a consequence, the German Development Institute is present on social-media platforms including Facebook, Google+, YouTube, LinkedIn and XING. By the end of 2012, the DIE-Facebook page had more than 2,800 fans. Not surprisingly, our largest Facebook user group is 25-to-34-year-olds, followed by 18-to-24-year-olds. Facebook enables us to reach a largely international audience, especially in developing and emerging countries – demonstrating that today’s social-media networks are indispensable tools for communicating our ideas and research results.

Follow us at: www.facebook.com/DIE.Bonn

Another innovation of the last two years is the introduction of the Institute’s YouTube channel that features short German and English-language videos about the German Development Institute and DIE-produced interviews with national and international guests, including politicians, renowned scientists, high-ranking representatives of the UN and the

World Bank, as well as attendees at the Global Governance School.

See for yourself at: www.youtube.com/DIEnewsflash

By and large, DIE’s development policy communication is focused on electronic media. Since the Institute does not work on just environmental policy and resource management topics, but also claims to use resources sparingly and sustainably, it was only logical for the DIE to cut back on printing and shipping its publications in favour of disseminating them electronically. The *Publication Update* was launched at the end of 2011 as a monthly electronic info-letter that presents short descriptions of all DIE publications in an attractive layout, with links to the authors and the original files – free of charge. As a result, we were able to reduce print copies of our academic publications to a bare minimum.

Subscribe to the *Publication Update* at: www.die-gdi.de/en/Newsletter/

How often do German journalists use social media for research?



Today the German Development Institute still makes use of traditional instruments such as press announcements, printed publications and mail orders, although the focus has shifted to electronic communications and all the features of Web 1.0 and Web 2.0. However, our Annual Report is still available as a print

Matthias Ruchser

Matthias Ruchser is Head of Communications at the German Development Institute / Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE). He publishes on a regular basis on topics related to renewable energy sources,

copy. The Institute's communications about development policy are distinguished by their topical orientation, professionalism and use of both traditional and innovative instruments for communication. We leave it to others to communicate through slogans only.

Desertec and power from the deserts, sustainable energy for all, the German "Energiewende" and the renaissance of coal.

