

# Transfer Profile



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## The science-practice transfer profile of INEF

In accordance with INEF's self-image, the transfer of research results into practice is an important characteristic of our institute's work. However, the transfer of research results is not a one-way information service. In our view, it rather requires a target group-oriented translation that takes place in close interaction with the respective addressees in the form of a cooperative exchange in which both sides are open to learning experiences. Even if the scope and quality of science-practice transfer always depend on the commitment and expertise of the individual scientist, it is nevertheless necessary to provide an institutional environment and adequate support. Moreover, individual activities have to be embedded in a strategy adapted to the respective objective.

At the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Duisburg-Essen (UDE), knowledge transfer and the associated intensive exchange with actors from society, politics and business is also a central element of research and teaching activities. The activities of INEF and the Faculty of Social Sciences are thus part of the strategy for [transfer and cooperation](#) with which the UDE wishes to assume and promote its social responsibility. An essential objective of the UDE strategy for transfer and cooperation is to make a contribution on the part of science to dealing with the "major social, ecological, economic and technological tasks and transformations of the present" ([UDE 2021: Strategy for Transfer and Cooperation](#), p. 3; own translation). In doing so, the UDE is guided, among other things, by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations. These touch on topics that are at the heart of INEF's theoretical and empirical research.

A significant part of our transfer activities occurs within the framework of institutionalized cooperation with actors active in the policy-related or policy-advisory field. Transfer at INEF encompasses a broad portfolio: (1) policy advice and the academic support of policy advice, (2) creating networks and multi-stakeholder exchange, (3) brokering information as well as contextualizing political and social developments in the media and via formats that address a broader public. Ideally, our transfer is based on an exchange with our addressees, both in our various communication formats and in our research work.

## The INEF Approach: Institutionalized Transfer Partnerships

There are two different contexts, in which INEF shares institutionalized partnerships regarding the transfer between research and practice:

- Firstly, since its foundation in 1990, INEF has cooperated with the [Development and Peace Foundation \(sef:\)](#). The foundation's work focuses particularly on an exchange with decision makers in politics, administration, and civil society. Moreover, sef: makes up to date research accessible to a broader public by publishing, for instance, the series "[GLOBAL TRENDS. ANALYSIS](#)", which is jointly edited by sef: and INEF.
- Secondly, since 2002 INEF has been involved in a long-term cooperation as one of currently four publishing institutes of the "[Peace Report](#)", the central annual policy-oriented publication of German peace and conflict research, the publication of which is supported by the German Foundation for Peace Research (DSF).

## What is the aim of transfer at INEF?

We associate the following tasks and goals with our transfer activities:

- Policy advice in the narrower sense,
- shaping discursive spaces and institutional frameworks for exchange and networking between (state and non-state) actor groups,
- as well as brokering information for the purpose of political education, and contextualizing political and social developments in the media and via transfer formats with which we want to reach a broader public.

In various ways, INEF is active in the field of **policy advice**:

- (1) Selected application-oriented research projects within the framework of government-funded research also include a consultancy component, usually with a development policy and/or human rights focus, such as the current BMZ-funded project on "[Ways out of poverty, vulnerability and food insecurity](#)". Consultancy services are also provided through the expert activities of individual researchers for development cooperation institutions such as the Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ). As part of its studies and reports, INEF also prepares policy recommendations for multistakeholder partnerships with civil society participation, such as the one commissioned by the civil society members of the German Partnership for Sustainable Textiles on the [effects of COVID-19 on the textile industry](#).
- (2) Research projects that do not focus directly on the application aspect increasingly have a transfer component that aims to feed socially and politically relevant aspects of research results back into public debates, thus instigating an exchange of ideas with disseminators. This is currently taking place, for example, within the framework of the DSF-funded project "[Party Competition](#)

[and Collective Jihadist Radicalization in Sub-Saharan Africa](#)" through joint workshops between academics and civil society actors.

- (3) Translating the respective research results in a manner suitable for the political realm is, for instance, the aim of the [presentation of the Peace Report in Berlin](#) and in the state of North Rhine-Westphalia. This event-driven form of communication directly reaches political decision-makers in parliament and government.

Next to these activities, which are geared towards direct policy advice, INEF helps creating **discursive spaces, networks and multi-stakeholder exchanges**, for example through the corresponding formats of sef. Of particular note are the annual [international expert workshops](#), in which academics and practitioners from politics, business and civil society exchange views on selected key topics of global cooperation and the associated challenges in a trusting atmosphere. INEF has also been able to gain extensive experience regarding multistakeholder exchange through almost twenty years of cooperation in the "Working Group on Peace and Development" (FriEnt).

In addition to the publication series already mentioned, **brokering information** and particularly **contextualizing** political and social developments scientifically takes places on various levels of communication and through different formats. For example, application-oriented INEF research projects, such as the current BMZ-funded project "Ways out of poverty, vulnerabilities and food insecurity", are accompanied by their own project publication series in which research results are presented in a practice-oriented manner.

## How does INEF organize the transfer of knowledge?

In order to achieve our goals, transfer at INEF is designed in particular as an exchange. The focus is on **preparing and communicating application-oriented research results in a manner that suits the respective audience**

- through own publication series,
- via direct exchange between science and practice,
- in dialogue with a wider interested public and through public relations work.

Traditionally, the emphasis lies on written communication. Apart from the *publication series* "[GLOBAL TRENDS. ANALYSIS](#)", "[Peace Report](#)" and "[INEF Report](#)" vital instruments are in particular the [project-related publication series](#) such as the "AVE Studies" and the "AVE Good Practice Series". In the Institute's own "[Development and Peace Blog](#)", INEF researchers also address socially and politically relevant current developments and contextualize them with a view to broader discussions.

When conducting transfer via publications, the possibility of obtaining feedback from readers is, based on experience, very limited. Therefore, it is rather difficult to assess the impact of specific publications. Consequently, in a direct reciprocal exchange between researchers and practitioners – for instance by way of a [workshop](#) – it is easier to assess which and what form of research results are more likely to be 'high in

demand'. In addition, one can test and adjust one's own assumptions regarding the 'usability' and 'communicability' of research contents and results. Furthermore, critical feedback and content-related inputs from practitioners and politicians can feed back into INEF's research. Due to its institutionalized exchange relations, INEF can contribute to consolidating and communicating the particular state of the art in practice and research regarding particular questions of transfer.

INEF staff members are also available as experts for media inquiries and at public events. At the latter, they seek dialogue with a broader interested public as moderators or input providers.

A further element of the transfer of research results are different forms and formats of *public relations activities*. These include the [sef:/INEF News](#) published together with the sef., the newsletter "[INEF Updates](#)", the institute's [website](#) (German/English), press releases, [Twitter](#), media interviews, the [annual report](#) (in German only) and our "[INEF Insights](#)" which are published at longer intervals.

An important aspect of research transfer is the **development of research questions and the implementation of projects with the direct involvement of practitioners**. This does not refer to one-dimensional acceptance of research questions by potential contractors with respect to application-oriented projects. It is rather about systematically using the potential for exchange, which comes with application-oriented projects (proximity to departments, implementing agencies and/or non-governmental organizations.), in order to take reciprocal needs and evaluations or the expertise, which exists on all sides, continuously into consideration throughout the project cycle.

To **ensure the quality of its transfer activities**, INEF supports the advanced training of INEF staff members (including INEF Fellows) in the field of science communication. This also includes courses by external trainers, such as media training, training seminars on various aspects and formats of science communication, as well as various forms of "in-house events" in which INEF staff members reflect upon their transfer experiences and share those with colleagues.

