17th Käte Hamburger Lecture – 10 February 2016

Financialization of Humanitarian Aid

Prof. Dr Susan Erikson
Associate Professor, Faculty of Health Sciences, Simon Fraser University

Discussant Dr Sung-Joon Park, Dept. for Anthropology and Philosophy, MLU Halle-Wittenberg
Moderator Prof. Dr Ansgar Belke, Chair for Macroeconomics, University of Duisburg-Essen

Gerhard-Mercator-Haus, Lotharstr. 57, 47057 Duisburg
18:30 – 20:00 (registration from 18:00)

Please register by 5 February 2016 at events@gcr21.uni-due.de.
In the 17th Käte Hamburger Lecture, Prof. Susan Erikson, a former fellow of the Centre in Duisburg, will test the hypotheses that venture investment in humanitarian aid 1) upends old systemic global inequalities and 2) introduces benefits likely to increase recipient country sovereignty over time.

Venture capitalists are changing humanitarian aid financing. Long-standing government-to-government models of global cooperation and international development assistance are being transformed by new forms of finance that prioritize making profits for private shareholders. Some scholars argue that these forms of assistance are new models of global cooperation that will benefit millions (Collier), but both the forms and consequences beg more critical study, theorizing, and analysis, particularly in the most vulnerable places in the world. Private equity, extreme mortality bonds, and patent acquisition, for example, are new elements of humanitarian financing that introduce new opportunities, vulnerabilities and risks to global publics. But these new financial dealings are occurring mostly outside of public view.

The Käte Hamburger Kolleg / Centre for Global Cooperation Research seeks to contribute towards a better understanding of the possibilities and limits of transboundary cooperation. By building a learning community, researchers from different disciplines and world regions develop an innovative framework for contemporary cooperation research that enables the exploration of new options for global public policy. We aim to become a crucial hub for this emerging branch of research. We aim to understand the role of transboundary cooperation as an essential part of public policy addressing global challenges.