

Ring Lecture Series, WiSe 2023-2024  
**New Frontiers of Research on Welfare in the Global South**

Convenors: John Berten, Alexandra Kaasch, Minh Nguyen, Huy Tran

# Private Giving for Public Goods: The Expanding Role of Philanthropy in Global South Welfare

07. December 2023, 16:00 – 18:00 c.t., Zoom event



Scan for registration

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Philanthropy – the act of private giving for activity to improve human welfare – has emerged as an increasingly influential element within social policy programmes and governance. In the context of social policy and protection, philanthropies differ from charities focused on humanitarian or emergency disaster assistance and instead make large investments to address fundamental social welfare needs including health, education, housing and poverty. Between 2016-2019 flows from 205 foundations amounted to USD 42.4 billion with health and education being the two largest social policy areas receiving funding – and their effects are especially significant within Global South economies, whose social policy agendas continue to be reliant on external actors, designs and finance.

In the context of economic recessions and shrinking public finances in the global North, governments and international organisations have recognised and welcomed philanthropic actors as key partners for social policy finance and delivery. Philanthropic actors are also considered important ‘knowledge makers’ and ‘knowledge distributors’ producing data, funding research, and increasingly shaping what policy makers, governments and international organisations ‘know’ and think about social problems and how they should be solved. As such, they have influence not only in terms of programmes on the ground but also ‘ideational’ and normative social policy directions across different levels of governance and sectors – all key concerns for social policy theory and study. Evaluating the capacity of philanthropy to effectively address social policy priorities, and understanding the implications for democratic accountability and the transfer of ideas about normative goals and instruments of social policy, becomes more urgent as the blurring of boundaries between public and private action takes root.

**Professor Rebecca Surender** is a Senior Research Fellow at the Department of Social Policy and Intervention, University of Oxford. Her research centers primarily on health policy and social policy in developing countries. Recent research in South Africa has included evaluating the impact of the Child Support Grant; assessing the use of mobile phone technology for health outcomes of patients; examining the politics and policy dynamics of the National Health Insurance (NHI) reforms; and assessing the role of regional bodies such as the African Union in health policy making in Africa.

She has worked as a consultant and advisor for various multilateral and government agencies including the World Bank, UNRISD, United Nations Women's Directorate, UNDP, UK DfID and SA's DSD and is a member of the Editorial Boards of Global Social Policy and Journal of International and Comparative Social Policy.

Rebecca Surender has held a number of senior administrative positions within Oxford University including University Proctor in 2013 and Pro Vice-Chancellor for Equality and Diversity (2014-2021). She is a member of Advance HE's EDI Strategic Advisory Group and serves as a Special Advisor on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion at the London School of Economics. She is Vice Principal of Green Templeton College.