Press release

This is a joint press release by the German Development Institute / Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE), the German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP), the German Institute for Global and Area Studies (GIGA) and the Kiel Institute for the World Economy (IfW).

Research Network Sustainable Global Supply Chains

International research network investigates global supply chains: How do we create sustainable value?

Berlin, 1 March 2021. Against the backdrop of COVID-19, the debate about a Due Diligence Act and the persisting inequality in the global economy, a new network is stepping up research into the sustainability of global value chains. Supported by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), the Research Network Sustainable Global Supply Chains will see leading researchers pool their findings, initiate new research projects and develop recommendations for practitioners. The network will be headed by four German research institutions: the German Development Institute / Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE) (which also hosts the network office), the German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP), the German Institute for Global and Area Studies (GIGA) and the Kiel Institute for the World Economy (IfW).

“How sustainable and resilient are global supply chains really? COVID-19 has made clear that this question affects us all, from international corporations and SMEs with global operations to individual consumers doing their weekly shopping. Consequently, through their work, the researchers make a key contribution to the current discussion on the design of global supply chains, a discussion which we are seeing and conducting in Germany and at European and international level,” stresses Norbert Barthle, Parliamentary State Secretary to the Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development.

Strengthening research

The network thus seeks to contribute through its research activities to greater sustainability in global supply chains. It initiates new research projects, pools the specialist knowledge of leading researchers around the world and organises conferences and dialogue events with political decision-makers and other interest groups.
The website www.sustainablesupplychains.org is the central hub of the international network, on which it compiles and analyses research findings regarding sustainability in global supply chains. These findings include specialist articles on topics such as economic upgrading, social and labour standards, environmental and climate impacts, sustainability standards and corporate responsibility. The network runs a blog and a podcast on which it discusses research findings, new ideas and trends, as well as resulting policy recommendations. From early 2022 onwards, visitors to the website will find an electronic annual report on the current state of research.

COVID-19 pandemic shows the importance of fair supply chains

“The rising number of voluntary and statutory commitments to uphold environmental and social standards in international supply chains provides researchers with an opportunity to systematically investigate the impact that these commitments have on retail, working conditions, wages and the environment, particularly in developing countries,” says Jann Lay from GIGA. “The COVID-19 pandemic illustrates beyond doubt the importance of ensuring that supply chains are fair;” adds Melanie Müller from SWP. “This applies, for example, to access to vaccines or the sudden cancellation of orders, which plunges textile workers into unemployment overnight without recourse to social security payments.”

The Research Network Sustainable Global Supply Chains will hold its first virtual meeting with policy-makers and civil-society representatives on 9 March. During the meeting, new research findings will be presented and engaging discussions conducted on the Due Diligence Act and other topics. You can find more information on the event here: https://www.die-gdi.de/en/events/details/research-network-sustainable-global-supply-chains/

Listen to the first episode of the Shaping Sustainable Supply Chains podcast with Gary Gereffi, Director of the Global Value Chains Center at Duke University in North Carolina, and Tilman Altenburg from DIE and find out about the challenges facing sustainable global supply chains: https://shaping-sustainable-supply-chains.podigee.io/

Contact:
Research Network Sustainable Global Supply Chains Sekretariat
Gideon Ndubuisi
Email: info@sustainablesupplychains.org
Phone +49 (0)228 94927-335

German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP)
Candida Splett, Head Communications
Email: candida.splett@swp-berlin.org
Phone +49 (0)151 5330 5048
About the Research Network Sustainable Global Supply Chains
The Research Network Sustainable Global Supply Chains is headed by four German research institutions: the German Development Institute / Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE) (which also hosts the network office), the German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP), the German Institute for Global and Area Studies (GIGA) and the Kiel Institute for the World Economy (IfW). It will see leading researchers pool their findings, initiate new research projects and develop recommendations for practitioners. The network is supported by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).