

Support for the Dutch global health doctor

(formerly known as ‘tropenarts’)

In January 2018, Dutch media reported that the training programme of global health doctors in the Netherlands is at risk of coming to an end because of lack of funding by the Dutch government. This critical situation is becoming more and more urgent because a solution with sustainable financial support is not yet achieved.

The KNMG (Royal Dutch Medical Association) and many other health organizations are appealing to the Dutch Minister of Health, Welfare and Sport Bruno Bruins to support this medical programme financially, and IDA Foundation joins this appeal.

IDA Foundation works with many non-governmental organisations and other health organisations that benefit from the work of passionate graduates who have completed these studies. After completing their clinical and theoretical training, the doctors often work as generalists in challenging environments in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) worldwide. They are a true asset in these countries, providing clinical care and strengthening health systems by training local staff they leave behind after their stay. This local capacity building in health systems is an aspect we believe is vital for the global health development of LMICs.

But the benefits go beyond the contribution to development in LMICs. By working in low-resource settings, these global health doctors learn to take decisions and work in challenging environments, improving their ability to work in medical situations they would not encounter on a daily basis in their own countries. This makes them very adaptable and flexible health leaders, whether in LMICs or elsewhere. They have experience and knowledge that will undoubtedly contribute to the development of health worldwide.

IDA Foundation joins many others in asking the minister to provide funding for the training programme in global health and tropical medicine, as we believe it is a health programme that contributes to global health development. It is a unique programme that the Netherlands should be proud of.