

Documentary series 'Besmet'™ from 30 November on Canvas

The four-episode series focusses on the major health challenges and ITM's search for solutions.

10-11-20



Dit is de omschrijving

In the four-part documentary series 'Besmet' (Infected), scientists from the Institute of Tropical Medicine in Antwerp (ITM) look for answers to mind boggling questions about healthcare and disease control. The fact that these are increasingly under worldwide pressure is something we are all experiencing at first hand today. The documentary makers were present when ITM scientists were confronted with what they had long feared: a new infectious virus spreading across the globe.

Suddenly we found ourselves in the midst of a pandemic, a global health threat which ITM scientists have been warning against for years and which they are fighting every day with their research in laboratories and in the field.

In each episode of the series, we follow inspiring scientists dedicating their lives to a common challenge: the optimisation of international healthcare. The film crew accompanies them to remote villages in Congo, the Amazon rainforest in Brazil, agricultural fields in Ethiopia and ethnic minorities in remote parts of Vietnam. But ITM scientists are also at work along Belgian motorways, in our front gardens and residential care homes. And, of course, in their labs in the stately buildings of ITM in Antwerpen. Their research has great effects, from the jungle of the Congolese Equatorial Province to the headquarters of the World Health Organisation in Geneva.

From malaria to corona and more

Today, we are forced to face the facts. COVID-19 has turned our lives upside down and all of us have woken up to the harsh reality of infectious diseases. ITM has been gathering knowledge about old and new diseases for over a century. The research that is carried out helps to better understand and combat pathogens that are a possible threat to health worldwide. In recent months, we have discovered how crucial this kind of research really is. 'Besmet' makes it clear that COVID-19 is not the only threat, and provides a unique insight into the workings and history of ITM.

Together with researchers from the Institute, we examine how well we are prepared for new disease outbreaks and what awaits us as a result of accelerated globalisation and global warming. Throughout the history of the Institute, the key lesson scientists learned from their expertise in global disease control is to be vigilant. And how do we tackle the biggest threat according to ITM's researchers: human behaviour? Find out in the documentary series.

From 30 November, every Monday evening on Canvas en vrt.nu.