

Rode Kruis | [‘Gouden Kronen Plan’](#) (special mention Fly in the Eye Award 2023)

After Red Cross Flanders already went wrong in 2020 with the [‘A belly for a belly’](#) campaign, it is this year Red Cross Netherlands that has come up with an very misplaced ‘exchange’. The [‘Gouden Kronen Plan’](#) (‘Golden Crowns Plan’) calls on dentists in the Netherlands to donate the golden crowns they remove in their dental practice to Red Cross. With the proceeds, the Red Cross then supports ‘vulnerable families in disaster-prone areas’. The idea of encouraging Dutch healthcare institutions to work for ‘a safer and healthier life’ of families worldwide is obviously a good one, but the way it is being done here considerably misses the mark. In particular, the ‘exchange’ of discarded gold crowns for human lives is painful. The [‘Golden Crowns Plan’](#) webpage first shows a picture of three anonymous black children, accompanied by the text ‘Donate your golden crowns to Red Cross’. Subsequently, the question is asked whether you, as a dentist, are aware that ‘you can save lives with such a removed gold crown?’ That the word ‘save’ is still being used in the sector in 2023 is very unfortunate, especially when it is claimed that human lives can be saved by something that is being discarded. As one participating dentist describes it on the site: ‘No one actually says “no” to the request to donate a golden crown.’ In between, it is reported that the money raised will indeed be used for specific purposes, such as safe drinking water, better farming techniques, and disaster training, but by then the harm has already been done. On top of that, the title that is used here, i.e. ‘your participation is worth gold’, again hits the wrong note due to the ‘funny’ ambiguity (the slogan [‘This little boy is worth gold’](#), which is used as well, even more hits the wrong note).

Besides the Golden Crowns Plan, the Red Cross video [‘From war to crisis, this is Syria in 2022’](#) also caught our eye in a negative sense. In this reportage, part of the television programme *Floortje back to Syria*, Red Cross ambassador Floortje Dessing travels to Syria six years after her last visit to the country. Despite being more informed and engaged than most INGO ambassadors, Floortje too does not escape the pitfalls of the white saviour and the INGO ambassador genre in particular, including explanatory and compassionate white point of entry and the ‘necessary’ misery porn. Therefore, this video receives a special mention from us, as do some other problematic ambassador videos: [‘Ambassador Do in Bangladesh’](#) by Cordaid and [‘Paul and UNICEF’](#). And in the category misery porn, this year special mentions go to [‘Winter aid in Romania’](#) by Hulp Oost-Europa, [‘Distressing stories of Rohingya refugee women’](#) by Tearfund (and EO Metterdaad), [‘DR Congo, hell on earth’](#) by Red een Kind, the television commercials in [2022](#) and [2023](#) by Hart van Kinderen, and the Facebook campaigns [‘Help a child like Ahmed’](#) by CARE Nederland and [‘It does make sense’](#) by Wilde Ganzen. In addition, AMREF Flying Doctors again receives a special mention from us, this time for the up-the-breast video about their achievements in [collaboration with VvAA](#) (and for maintaining the slogan ‘for a healthy and strong Africa’). Finally, however briefly, we do not want to leave the quite shocking text [‘The Liliane Fund in Tanzania’](#) unmentioned (just scroll down when you get to the website): ‘Tanzania is a poor country. (...) Many Tanzanians are poorly educated. (...) Their ignorance feeds prejudice and fear.’ Liliane Fund thus gets a special mention too. Save the Children, traditionally the outside category of misery porn, is not nominated for a Fly in the Eye for the first time in six years (and even receives a special mention from us in the Highflyer category).