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Posted on November 20, 2014 by Eddie

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Category: Observations

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ruYQY6z3mV8

A lot has been said about the re-(re)-release of the Band Aid single and an awful lot of it is far from positive; try these views from Africa, for example. For my own part, I feel rather conflicted. The record is dreadfully patronising and rather insulting, but it's done with good intentions and written in a way to capture the attention of the rather jaded British public. I'd never allow fund raisers working for me to use words and images like that, but it is trying to do something good.

However, while trying to be balanced and charitable, I do have one huge problem with the whole Band Aid thing; it portrays Africans as people who need things doing for them and aren't able to address their own problems. Of the six countries which have been affected by the current Ebola outbreak, two (Senegal and Nigeria) have contained it effectively (which is more than the USA managed) and Mali seems to be on top of it. With the right resources and preparation Africans countries are doing a good job.

Not only that, but, believe it or not, there are some really talented musicians in Africa; why were none of them invited to take part in Band Aid? Well, never mind, because a group of Africans have produced a far better single, with a much more positive message about the Ebola outbreak. It is mainly in French, with bits of Bambara and English thrown in, but it is excellent.

Of course, Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone do need support. This outbreak is a dreadful thing and had grown to a frightening extent before it was clearly identified. Well done to Bob Geldolf and Co for doing their best to raise some money to help, butÂ let's not give the impression that Africa is helpless. There are many rich Africans who have contributed vast sums to medical charities; they just did it quietly and without a lot of fanfare.

If you receive this blog post by email and can't see the video, you can find it here.