

Does Bob Geldof know it's 2014?

By [Steve Thorngate](#)

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I'm not a big fan of Adele's music, but this week I'm a huge fan of her as a human being.

Bob Geldof [was assembling a bunch of celebrities](#) to relive that "[Do They Know It's Christmas?](#)" glory 30 years later, but for Ebola this time. Never mind that a lot of people in Europe and North America have gotten a little more self critical in recent decades about things like paternalism, white-savior complexes, and the fact that Africa isn't one big country of backward horribleness. Geldof crudely tweaked some old lyrics, made his big PR plans, and started giving other famous people the hard sell to participate. Do it for the poor Ebola-stricken Africans who have never heard of Christmas! Despite the fact that Christianity has been in various ([Ebola-free](#)) African countries since the first and second centuries.

Adele didn't participate. Geldof, class act that he is, responded by [taunting her for being too busy raising a family](#). I can't improve on [Bryony Gordon's response to that](#):

This is as condescending as the song itself... The message is loud and clear, even if the music isn't: Geldof is here to save West Africa from Ebola, and Adele, with her peculiar un-celebrity desire to sod the limelight as she brings up a toddler, is a selfish little woman who must be publicly humiliated.

Later, we learnt that Adele had quietly made a private donation to Oxfam. But in the shallow, self-promoting world of celebrity, the simple and silent act of handing over money to charity is not the done thing - that's what we impoverished plebs do.

Instead, the rich and famous donate their precious time, and for this they expect to be celebrated and congratulated, as if before they flashed their expensively whitened teeth in the video for a song, we had no idea that

Ebola was a problem, or that thousands of Africans were spending their last days on this earth in unimaginable horror, bleeding from every orifice, unable even to be comforted by their family and loved ones.

Yup. I'll also join the social-media throng suggesting this song by African musicians as an alternative to Geldof's retro-heart-strings schmaltz:

[Buy it on iTunes](#) and support Doctors Without Borders.