

## Ebola, inequality and lobbying: tales of gain and big p...

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This [is from Oxfam's new report on inequality](#), out today:

*Companies have responded positively to the Ebola crisis: some pharmaceutical companies are investing in research to find a vaccine, the full costs of which are not yet known. The three pharmaceutical companies that are members of the International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers & Associations (IFPMA) and that have made the largest contribution to the Ebola relief effort, have collectively donated more than \$3m in cash and medical products.*

*But the amount of money that has been spent on Ebola and other activities that have a broader benefit to society needs to be looked at in the context of their expenditure on corporate lobbying to influence for their own interests. These three companies together spent more than \$18m on lobbying activities in the US during 2013.*

*To put the funding for the Ebola crisis in perspective, the World Bank estimates that the economic costs to Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone was \$356m in output forgone in 2014, and a further \$815m in 2015 if the epidemic is slow to be contained. The largest increase in wealth between 2013 and 2014 by a single pharma-related billionaire could pay the entire \$1.17bn cost for 2014 — 15 three times over. Stefano Pessina increased his net worth by \$4bn, from \$6.4bn to \$10.4bn in a single year; the largest single increase in wealth of all the billionaires listed with pharmaceutical and healthcare interests.*

This is the reality of inequality: billions suffer and a few gain in ways they can never enjoy.

We have a world where values and wealth appear unrelated issues.