

Eight billionaires as rich as half the world

18th January, 2017



The world's eight richest men have as much money as half the world. A new report from the charity Oxfam said eight billionaires are as rich as the 3.6

billion poorest people in the world. Six of the world's richest people are from the USA. The richest is Microsoft founder Bill Gates, who is worth \$75 billion. Amazon and Facebook founders Jeff Bezos and Mark Zuckerberg both have wealth estimated to be around \$45 billion. Oxfam's report is called 'An Economy for the 99 Per Cent'. Oxfam said: "It shows that the gap between rich and poor is far greater than had been feared." It added that businesses and the "super-rich" are creating greater income inequality by avoiding tax and paying low wages.

Winnie Byanyima, Executive Director of Oxfam International, said: "It is obscene for so much wealth to be held in the hands of so few when 1 in 10 people survive on less than \$2 a day. Inequality is trapping hundreds of millions in poverty." She added that: "Across the world, people are being left behind. Their wages are [not going up] yet corporate bosses take home million-dollar bonuses." She said governments only care about big business and a "wealthy elite". Economist Mark Littlewood attacked the report as being unfair. He said: "As an 'anti-poverty' charity, Oxfam seems to be strangely [obsessed] with the rich." He said Oxfam should focus on ways to boost growth instead of complaining about the rich.

Sources: bbc.com / huffingtonpost.com / Oxfam.org

Writing

Everyone should get the same pay, whatever job they do. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

richest / money / billionaire / Microsoft / wealth / report / poor / businesses / tax / obscene / survive / inequality / poverty / wages / bonuses / unfair / growth / charity

True / False

- The world's eight richest people are men. T / F
- Six of the world's eight richest people are from the USA. T / F
- Facebook's Mark Zuckerberg is the richest person in the world. T / F
- A charity said the gap between rich and poor is closing. T / F
- Ten per cent of the world population has less than \$2 a day to live on. T / F
- Oxfam said people's wages around the world were not increasing. T / F
- An economist said it was fair for the charity to attack the rich. T / F
- The economist said the charity should complain more about the rich. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| 1. richest | a. shocking |
| 2. report | b. difference |
| 3. worth | c. increasing |
| 4. gap | d. article |
| 5. avoiding | e. executives |
| 6. obscene | f. value |
| 7. survive | g. wealthiest |
| 8. going up | h. increase |
| 9. bosses | i. live |
| 10. boost | j. keeping away from |

Discussion – Student A

- Should billionaires give lots of money to poor people?
- How do you become a billionaire?
- What do you know about the three rich men mentioned in the article?
- What does the title of Oxfam's report mean?
- What problems are there because of income inequality?
- Should everyone get the same pay, whatever their job?
- Did you like reading this article? Why/not?
- Should billionaires give lots of money to poor people?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. as rich as the 3.6 billion | a. rich and poor |
| 2. Microsoft | b. growth |
| 3. the gap between | c. tax |
| 4. creating greater income | d. hands of so few |
| 5. avoiding | e. poorest people |
| 6. so much wealth to be held in the | f. behind |
| 7. 1 in 10 people survive | g. inequality |
| 8. people are being left | h. elite |
| 9. a wealthy | i. on less than \$2 a day |
| 10. focus on ways to boost | j. founder |

Discussion – Student B

- Is it obscene that some people are so rich?
- What would it be like to have just \$2 a day?
- Why are there very poor people in very rich countries?
- What would you like to ask Bill Gates?
- Should company bosses get million-dollar bonuses?
- Why do governments only care about the 'wealthy elite'?
- How can governments help poor people?
- What questions would you like to ask Oxfam?

Spelling

- the yraciht Oxfam
- Microsoft nrefodu Bill Gates
- tiaestemd to be around \$45 billion
- far greater than had been redfae
- the "super-rich" are creating greater income eqautiynil
- agdoivin tax
- It is ensboce
- viuvres on less than \$2 a day
- hundreds of millions in pretyov
- teoroprac bosses
- million-dollar nssobeu
- focus on ways to tbsoo growth

Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. d	3. f	4. b	5. j
6. a	7. i	8. c	9. e	10. h

Role Play

Role A – Education

You think education is the best thing to get people out of poverty. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): aid, the Internet or micro-loans.

Role B – Aid

You think aid is the best thing to get people out of poverty. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): education, the Internet or micro-loans.

Role C – The Internet

You think the Internet is the best thing to get people out of poverty. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): aid, education or micro-loans.

Role D – Micro-loans

You think micro-loans the best things to get people out of poverty. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): aid, the Internet or education.

Speaking – Poverty

Rank these with your partner. Put the best things to get people out of poverty at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|--------------|----------------------|
| • healthcare | • community projects |
| • jobs | • the Internet |
| • education | • micro-loans |
| • aid | • migration |

Answers – True False

a	T	b	T	c	F	d	F	e	T	f	T	g	F	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.