

How Buying A Scarf Can Save A Life

The Obakki Foundation has an ambitious goal: to give the gift of water to a thirsty world. We catch up with this Canadian clothing brand to find out **how buying a scarf can save a life**.



Treana Peake is the woman behind the conscious Canadian clothing label [Obakki](#), but she's also a philanthropist: her [Obakki Foundation](#) focuses on providing clean water and education in Africa. We caught up with her to talk about why this issue matters so much to her.

What is the Scarves For Water program?

The scarves for water program works by connecting each individual scarf colour to a specific village. Once we sell 500 scarves in any colour, the associated village gets a clean water well, agricultural training, a seed package and everything else they need for a fresh start. We like to connect our donors specifically to the area's that they're helping. So if you bought the chalk scarf, for example, we'll tell you when Mayual (the associated village) gets a clean water well, and update you with the changes in the community for years to come. It's important for us that our donors know the impact that they're making.

Why Water?

345 Million people in Africa live without water. The lack of this basic necessity is an issue that affects all other areas of life.

Children and women often have to travel far distances to find water, and at times are limited to drinking from unclean water sources such as rivers or ponds that carry water-borne diseases. Children and the elderly are particularly susceptible to becoming ill from these diseases.

Many children can't attend school because they're in search of water or are ill as a result of water-borne ailments, diminishing future opportunities for growth through education. The few wells that are functioning are often used excessively because of the high demand for water, causing mechanical breakdowns and leading to territorial conflict amongst communities and tribes for access to water.

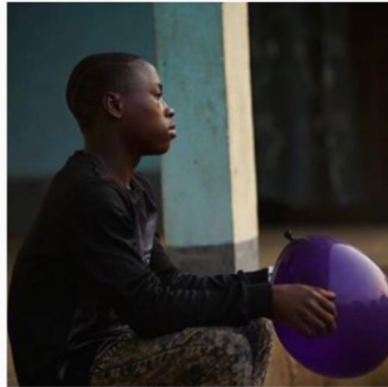
Why Africa?

Africa is a continent with a population as diverse as it is inspiring, yet one aspect most communities in Africa share is a tenacity to survive. Many have faced unimaginable hardships, including war, famine, and disease as they struggle to provide their families with basic human needs.

The Obakki clothing line, together with angel investors, covers all administrative costs, allowing 100% of all donations to go directly to our projects.

What was the moment in your life that was a turning point, where you knew you had to do something?

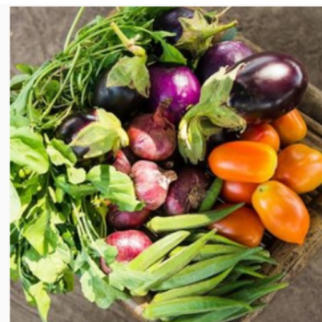
When I was a young girl, my mom and I were really struggling to make ends meet. One day an envelope of money was anonymously slipped under our front door and without it I'm not sure what would have happened to us. Every year after that the envelope would appear and although I never found out who the person was, I never forgot that selfless generosity. That act of kindness that was offered to me and my mom, with nothing expected in return, made a huge impact on me. That person became a role model for the kind of person I wanted to be when I grew up and I still try to live up to those standards.



Obakki Foundation/ Instagram

Why do you think the Western World (for the most part) is totally oblivious to the harsh realities people face in parts of the world, having NO access to something we take for granted every day?

It's difficult to imagine how other people live when we're caught up in our own lives and struggles. When you go and spend time with the people you're helping and see firsthand what it's like to have something you take for granted every day, it changes you. You have to help.



Obakki Foundation/ Instagram

What is the biggest lesson you have learned on this journey?

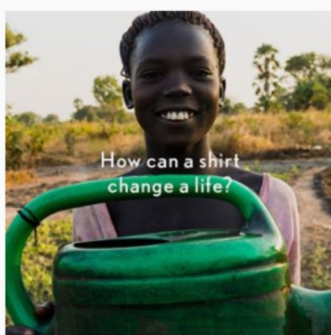
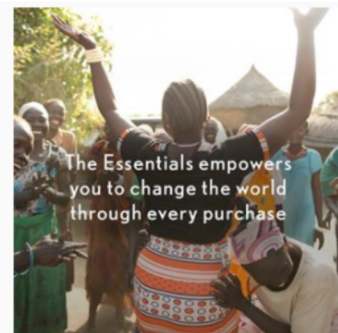
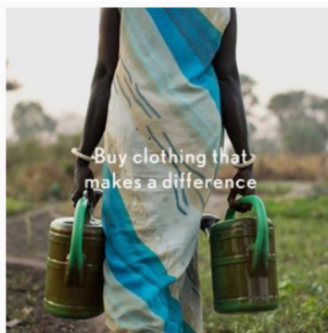
The biggest lesson is that every effort matters, no matter how small. It could be drilling a water well that brings clean water to thousands of people or spending time with someone who needs a friend. Making the effort to help will always matter. And the best part is, you'll end up feeling so good for having made that effort.

By focusing on quick yet sustainable water projects, we can save lives, reduce vulnerabilities and give dignity. With water, overall health is vastly improved. Waterborne diseases and impurities are reduced and living conditions become more stable. Communities are able to create thriving gardens. These gardens improve food security and create an internally supplied source of food.

Eventually, these gardens can lead to economic initiatives as well, providing an income stream for communities. Villages and community members don't have to fight for access to clean water, significantly reducing conflict. Children are able to attend school since they don't have to spend their days in search of water, allowing children to pursue their education.

Do you have any tips on how we can save water at home?

- Install water saving shower heads and ultra-low-flush toilets
- Just turning off the water while you're brushing your teeth can save up to 8 gallons of water per day. Try not to let the water run when you're washing your face or doing the dishes.
- Take a shorter shower. Showers can use between 6 and 45 litres of water every minute. You can purchase aerated shower heads, which combine water and air and reduces water waste.
- Repair leaky taps and faucets indoors and outside. A small drip adds up over time.
- Water plants with a watering can rather than with a hose to reduce wasted water AND overwatering. I leave a rain bucket outside, I try to water my plants with the rainwater I collect in the bucket.



To date, the Obakki Foundation has drilled 1,000 water wells in South Sudan, bringing clean water to over 2 million people. In Cameroon, Treana has supported various orphanages and created 12 schools, including vocational programs and farming projects, giving thousands of young students an opportunity to reach their potential. In Bidi Bidi, the world's largest refugee camp in Uganda, we are working to transition it from a crisis settlement to a sustainable city, with projects focusing on clean water, education, women's initiatives and other basic needs.

Donating to Canadian based [Obakki Foundation](#) means that 100% of your donation goes to the cause. Obakki Foundation administrative fees are covered by [Obakki fashion brand](#). You can click the link to buy a scarf and save a life.