

# Water Changes Everything: The story of *charity: water*

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Photographs courtesy of Scott Harrison,  
Founder of **charity: water**



Thirty-four-year-old Scott Harrison founded an organization called “*charity: water*” in 2006. Since he started *charity: water*, he has raised \$18 million to help one million people in sixteen countries around the world. This includes Rwanda, where he has helped eleven villages have clean drinking water.

When Scott was a little boy, he already showed signs of compassion. At age four, his mother became sick from carbon monoxide poisoning. He spent much of his time caring for her while he was growing up. He always showed he was capable of helping others.



*Above: Boys in Rwanda stand next to their new well. Their lives will be much different now that they have clean, safe drinking water. **charity: water** and Living Water International made this well possible.*

After Scott grew up, he got a new job throwing major parties in New York City. He made lots of money doing it, but only for himself.

Then Scott went on a trip to take photos for an organization called Mercy Ships. He took more photos of the sick people and the doctors than of the scenery. Wanting to see more, he stayed in



Liberia, a country in West Africa, volunteering with Mercy Ships.

Scott thought his photos of the people he met told a great story. Now he uses photos and videos to tell people why clean water is so important.

He wanted to make a difference because he knew that there were one billion people in the world without clean drinking water!



Scott chose water because he felt that of all the major problems in the world, water touched the most people. Plus, 80% of all diseases come from dirty water.

The idea of **charity: water** started on Scott's 31<sup>st</sup> birthday when he asked people to bring \$20 instead of gifts. The money that he raised from his birthday was enough to build six wells in Uganda!



The next year, Scott encouraged other people with September birthdays to do the same thing. They raised a total of \$150,000 that year.

*Did you know that \$20 can give a person clean water for twenty years?*

One out of every eight people on Earth does not have clean water.



Scott's work at ***charity: water*** takes him all over the world to help provide clean drinking water for a million people. Most people in developing countries rely on less than five gallons of water a day.



*Access to clean water helps girls have more time in school because they spend less time walking for water.*



Scott Harrison's favorite place is Ethiopia. He loves it so much because the people are willing to persevere to have clean water to drink. Scott has visited Ethiopia six times.

He recently returned from Haiti where he helped the victims of the 2010 earthquake get water.



*Left: A village gathers to see a well completed in Ethiopia, one of Scott's favorite places.*

If **charity: water** hadn't started, there would be a million people that would still be drinking dirty water. But Scott doesn't spend too much time thinking about it.



There are still one billion people who need access to clean drinking water. Scott says, "One of the biggest challenges is the enormity of the problem and figuring out how to solve the entire problem." But we can all be part of the solution.