

YOU CAN BE THEIR REFUGE



UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

“Peace is much more than just the absence of war. It is a state in which no people of any country, in fact no group of people of any kind, lives in fear or in need.”

Gerrit Jan van Heuven Goedhart, the first UN High Commissioner for Refugees, accepting the Nobel Peace Prize on behalf of UNHCR in 1954.



FAR INTO THE FUTURE



Three years became seven decades

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the UN Refugee Agency, was established by the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1950 to help Europeans displaced by the conflict of the Second World War. UNHCR was only supposed to last three years. 70 years later tens of millions of people remain displaced worldwide. We remain the leading organization charged with protecting refugees and other forcibly displaced people.

Our work has never been more important or relevant. We provide help, hope and home to people who have been forced to flee by violence, conflict and persecution.

One world

Ann Atkinson remembers sitting in a darkened movie theatre at just five years old, intently watching the grainy, black-and-white newsreels of refugees fleeing Poland and Czechoslovakia in the aftermath of the Second World War.

“I didn’t know what I was seeing until later.”

The long lines of grim-faced people, many carrying their meagre worldly possessions on their backs, had a far-reaching impact on her. Ann believes that despite the geographical distance from regions that need our help, we are all connected. Today she is a dedicated UNHCR donor. Ann has also put a gift to support refugees in the future, in her will.



“I began to learn that we are all in one world.”





Ann Atkinson

The right thing to do

You, and many other Canadians, have been at the forefront of UNHCR's work since its inception. You've rallied to help in countless emergency situations where people were in desperate straits, giving them access to clean water, warmth, food, shelter, seed money, medical and basic household supplies.

In recent years we've led the world in the resettlement of refugees. Canadians pioneered the model of private sponsorship of refugees. Six years ago we opened our arms to 25,000 refugees from Syria.

Alex Tom is the head of UNHCR Canada's Private Sector and Partnerships. He says, "Canadians are committed to the value that recognises the importance of inclusion, openness of spirit and generosity. It's seen as the right thing to do."

Karen Whiting, an Assistant Representative for Protection, says that every individual refugee story strikes her on a personal level. "Every day that I work for UNHCR, I am struck by the fact that as a Canadian, I have been incredibly lucky to benefit from a stable and secure situation growing up and for me and my family to be able to thrive. This should be the right of everyone, everywhere."





More vital than ever

There is little sign today of the tide of displacement ebbing. Over the past two decades the number of displaced people has doubled. Large-scale conflicts remain unresolved and new ones force more people to flee. Climate change and environmental factors are having a growing impact. Today, there are some 80 million people who are globally displaced in more than 130 countries due to violence, conflict and persecution. The number of resettlement places has dropped in spite of soaring needs. There are more people under our protection than at any point since the Second World War.

Alex Tom acknowledges the reality. “Our goal is obviously to go out of existence. But the trends are showing us that the number of displaced people is increasing. Countries are unable to address the root causes of displacement. They have difficulty fixing the issues, and that leads to more need for emergency response. Going forward we will need a lot more presence on the ground. Our work is more vital than ever.”

The Need Grows

Meanwhile the gap between the demand and resources available continues to grow. Annual funding needs are increasing. While we rely heavily on contributions from governments, state funding is under threat.

You can be there to provide clean water and food to a family

Our ability to respond relies more and more on the generosity of our individual donors, people like you.

Take Daphnée Gagnon-Beaule, a donor from Lévis, Quebec. At 16 years old she had a very clear vision and goal. She raised money through friends and events for water distribution systems to give refugee families access to clean, safe water needed for cooking, cleaning and drinking.



“I’m still young, but I have a big dream - to change the world. I am determined to do everything I can to help others. You don’t have to be rich or be a hero to help. It can be everybody with a big heart.”

Daphnée Gagnon-Beaule

Big Heart

Big Dreams



You can be there to help someone use their skills to find new purpose

Claire Weeks and her husband, Peter Wing, have a strong sense of social responsibility. They're grateful for their lives in Canada, honouring that by supporting regional, national and international humanitarian and other charitable organizations. They're both retired physicians, living in Vancouver. Claire and Peter have named UNHCR in their will.

"It just feels like the right decision for us," Claire says. "My heart really goes out to refugees. I think they have an extremely hard time amongst all of the populations in difficulty. You look at people who were very highly skilled in their own countries and were forced to live in dire conditions, not practising or sharing their skills. I think it's a very sad situation and UNHCR is doing a terrific job under the circumstances."



Claire Weeks and Peter Wing

You can be there to ensure access for a family seeking asylum

Gulamabbas Najafi, understands what it's like to be a refugee. In 1972, during Uganda's brutal regime of Idi Amin, Najafi and his family were forced to flee their homeland.

**“You are expelled overnight. You don't know where you are going to end up,” he recalls.
“We left with only a few small belongings in a suitcase and hardly \$50.”**

He feels blessed to be living in Canada. After fleeing Uganda, he and his family arrived in England as refugees. An accountant working in senior management, Gulumabbas eventually immigrated to Canada, where he now lives and works. He believes that refugees who are given an opportunity will pay it forward. “Given a chance, these people really flourish and then will continue in the cause of charity, because they themselves have come as refugees.”



Open Arms



You can be there to welcome families starting a new life

Gulamabbas's belief is clearly illustrated in the story of how one Canadian community opened their arms to people in need of a home. Forty years ago, Father Gauthier, a priest at a church near Edmonton, Alberta, asked for volunteers to help sponsor a family of Vietnamese refugees. Though Vicky and Leona were two busy young mothers with children of their own, they didn't hesitate to help. Soon after, they were matched with Huong Tran, a Vietnamese widow with six children. The family had languished for months in a Malaysian refugee camp.

Vicky and Leona's families and the Trans became close friends, celebrating birthdays and weddings together. The youngest Tran daughter, Nhung, became a doctor. Inspired by the kindness her family was shown and saddened by the images of war in Syria in 2015, Nhung became a refugee sponsor. Decades after her family came to Canada through the kindness of two strangers, Nhung was able to extend the circle of generosity – she welcomed two Syrian families through private sponsorship.

You can be there to give food and shelter

Graham Knope and his wife Carol Miller have put a gift in their will to UNHCR so that they can continue to provide immediate assistance in the future.

“I would love to know that when my wife and I are not here, we'll continue to help people in need. The work of UNHCR is vitally important, and so concrete. We want to be able to provide tents or latrines. We want to help by giving food and cash assistance. It's practical - and lifesaving.”

“We're pleased that our children are in our will, we want to share some of our estate with them. But we also have the opportunity, through a legacy gift, to help others in need too. To make a lasting difference for others. It's often difficult to make major gifts during our lifetimes. Leaving a legacy gives us that opportunity and it is a privilege.”



Graham Knope and Carol Miller

You can be there at the moment they need you most

The decisions and actions you take now will have an enormous impact on the generations to come.

As a committed supporter of UNHCR, we ask you to consider making a gift in your will to ensure that we'll always be ready to save and rebuild lives. It's a powerful, meaningful way to have an enormous impact on the outcomes of displaced people in the future.

You can make a decision to change lives. You have the power to give help, hope and home, to people who need it in the future.

A gift in your will is a simple means of making a larger gift than would be possible during your lifetime. It has no impact on your current assets, cash flow or your lifestyle today. It's also one of the most efficient ways to give as it can reduce, or even eliminate, the tax burden on your beneficiaries, since your estate will receive a tax receipt for your gift.

Empowerment



Our promise for the future

People forced to flee their homes have made extraordinary efforts to survive. You can enable people to thrive, not just survive. You can continue to help the forcibly displaced and the stateless regain hope, rebuild their lives and find solutions for their futures.

The steps you can take

If you feel that this is right for you, speak to your lawyer or notary about drafting or revising your will. Let them know that UNHCR Canada is a qualified donee, as defined by the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) and we can issue charitable tax receipts. Our address is 802-2 St. Clair West, Toronto, ON M4V 1L5.

Will wording

You can choose to leave UNHCR Canada a specific sum of money, a percentage of your estate, or the residue of your estate.

Specific Amount: “I give to UNHCR Representation in Canada the sum of \$_____ to be used for its general purposes.”

Percentage of Estate: “I give to UNHCR Representation in Canada _____ percent of the value of my estate to be used for its general purposes.”

Residual Gift: “I give to UNHCR Representation in Canada _____ percent of the rest, residue and remainder of my estate for its general purposes.”

More information

For more information on how your gift can make a significant difference for the future of displaced people around the world, please contact Kudzai Riva, Director of Planned Giving, at UNHCR Canada by e-mail at rivak@unhcr.org or by phone at 416.926.7974.

We're happy to provide additional information on other giving vehicles. You can find further information on legacy gifts and download our bequest wording at unhcr.ca/gifts-in-wills.

Finally, if you are comfortable letting us know, we would be honoured to hear about your legacy and thank you for being there for those who will need you in the future.



A woman wearing a light pink hijab and a dark grey parka with a fur-lined hood is looking out over a city from a bridge. The background shows a river, a bridge, and city buildings under a soft, hazy sky. The text is overlaid in white at the bottom of the image.

You can be there.

You can be their refuge,
far into the future.

unhcr.ca/gifts-in-wills



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