

2026/ SUCCESS STORY

UNHCR Canada

About UNHCR Canada

UNHCR Canada connects Canadians to global humanitarian efforts, enabling them to respond to crises and support long-term recovery and resilience for displaced communities.

Uses CanadaHelps for

- Charity profile
- Securities giving
- Campaign-specific giving, and more

With CanadaHelps, UNHCR has gained greater visibility and donor exposure, resulting in increased donations, including **an all-time 647% growth in overall charity profile donations and a 104% increase in securities revenue in 2 fiscal years.**





ABOUT UNHCR CANADA

UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, was established in response to displacement following World War II. **Today, UNHCR operates in over 130 countries, providing critical support to refugees and displaced populations worldwide.**

Its work spans emergency response, protection, education, livelihood support, and durable solutions such as resettlement and integration.

At its core, **UNHCR Canada** connects Canadians to global humanitarian efforts, enabling them to respond to crises and support long-term recovery and resilience for displaced communities. While the organization has a long-standing global presence, its Canadian fundraising operations have evolved significantly over the past decade, growing into a robust, multi-channel program.

UNHCR Canada responds to humanitarian crises globally, from conflicts in the Middle East, Ukraine, and Venezuela to silent emergencies in the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of Congo. **The organization emphasizes flexible funding to ensure it can pivot quickly to emerging needs and support protracted crises that often last years.**

"This global reach and flexibility are central to our work, and we want to enable Canadians to be part of a broader humanitarian community that can respond quickly to crises while supporting long-term recovery for displaced people around the world."

- Rami Azzam, Private Sector Partnerships Officer, UNHCR

RELATIONSHIP WITH CANADAHELPS

Since 2017, UNHCR Canada has maintained a valuable partnership with CanadaHelps. The organization leverages CanadaHelps for securities donations, peer-to-peer (P2P) fundraising, and community engagement via their charity profile campaigns and CanadaHelps communications.

"It speaks volumes that alongside our internal systems, we continue to lean into our partnership with CanadaHelps and find significant value in the platform," shared Rami.

UNHCR Canada has seen enhanced digital fundraising with CanadaHelps, including a **7.5% increase in one-time donation revenue via Charity Profile** and **104% increase in securities revenue via custom forms** in 2 fiscal years, as well as a **647% growth in overall charity profile donations** since registering with CanadaHelps.

Overall Fundraising

UNHCR Canada takes a multi-channel, integrated approach to fundraising, ensuring consistency across all touchpoints while adapting quickly to global events.

Multi-Channel Campaigns

UNHCR Canada employs a wide range of channels, including digital advertising, email, television, direct mail, telemarketing, and search marketing, to drive awareness and donations. Campaign messaging is aligned across platforms, allowing the organization to respond quickly to emerging crises while maintaining a cohesive donor experience.

Direct Mail & Traditional Giving

Direct mail continues to be a key revenue driver, particularly among a donor base that appreciates staying informed through impact updates and compelling stories. *"Traditional channels remain highly effective, with many donors continuing to engage through mail-based giving. We invest considerable effort in design and content development, carefully balancing storytelling with accurate facts, statistics, and impact reporting that resonates with our supporters,"* emphasized Karima Tarib, Senior Donor Retention Specialist.

Major Gifts & Corporate Partnerships

UNHCR Canada also builds strong relationships with major donors, corporate partners, and foundations. These partnerships focus on long-term engagement and stewardship, supporting emergency response work and broader organizational goals. While the organization encourages unrestricted gifts across all donor levels, they work closely with major supporters to align giving with both donor priorities and UNHCR's needs.

Peer-to-Peer Fundraising

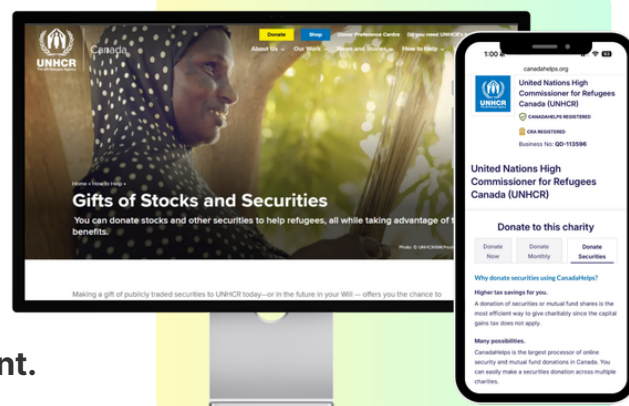
Peer-to-peer (P2P) fundraising offers UNHCR Canada opportunities for deeper engagement. Supporters who want to organize community events receive materials, merchandise, and print resources. Past initiatives included cycling events and personal fundraising campaigns from staff members and community advocates.

Digital Fundraising with CanadaHelps

UNHCR Canada integrates CanadaHelps into its broader digital strategy, using the platform to expand reach and streamline donor engagement.

SECURITIES DONATIONS

Securities donations through CanadaHelps represent an important component of UNHCR Canada's fundraising mix. **CanadaHelps facilitates the giving via dedicated custom donation forms (CDFs), issues the tax receipt, keeps the donor informed at each stage of the process, and transfers the proceeds to the charity's bank account.**

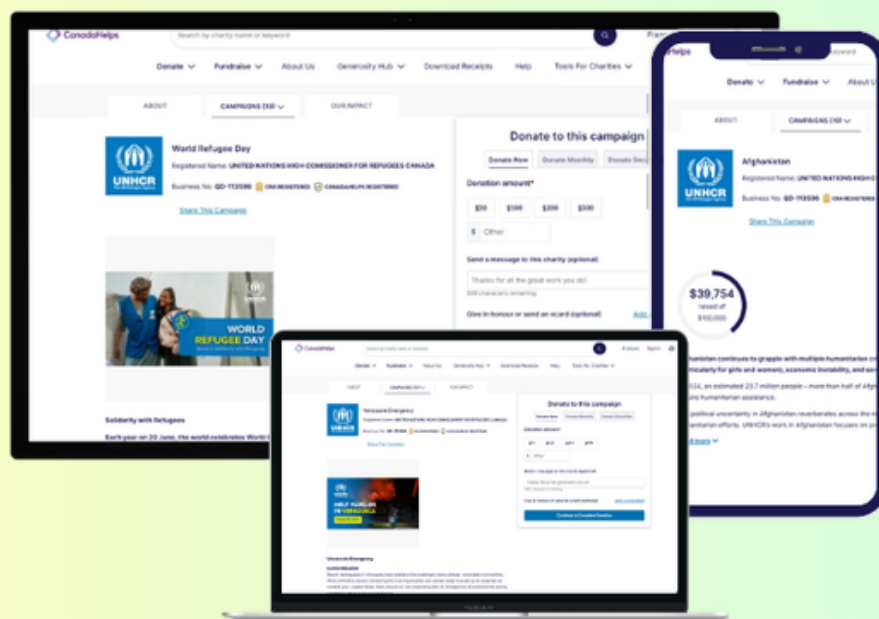


The platform enables UNHCR Canada to both streamline the processing of these complex gifts and for donors to maximize their tax benefits. This specialized giving option complements the organization's broader digital strategy.

CHARITY PROFILE & CAMPAIGN PAGES

UNHCR Canada maintains an active charity profile on CanadaHelps with multiple campaign options, allowing donors to direct support to specific initiatives. ***"The CanadaHelps profile enables targeted giving by clearly connecting donors to specific campaigns and their impact,"*** shared Rami.

The profile features campaigns for underfunded crises, emergency appeals, and thematic programs, giving donors clear choices about where their contributions make an impact while supporting the organization's flexible funding priorities.





PEER-TO-PEER FUNDRAISING PLATFORM

CanadaHelps hosts UNHCR Canada's peer-to-peer (P2P) fundraising, providing supporters with tools to create personal fundraising pages for community events and campaigns. This external hosting eliminates the need for significant back-end technology investment while offering donors who want deeper engagement a straightforward avenue to rally their networks for refugee support.

"The platform empowers supporters to take a more active role in fundraising through peer-driven initiatives," shared Rami.

CRISIS RELIEF PAGES

UNHCR Canada's crisis-related campaigns are also featured on CanadaHelps' Crisis Relief Center (CRC) pages, which are designed to support emergency response efforts in Canada and around the world. These pages bring together charities and campaigns with a shared goal, making it easier for donors to discover and give to specific crises.

Several UNHCR Canada campaigns continue to be featured on CanadaHelps CRC pages, including World Refugee Day, Global Disaster Relief Appeal, and Crisis in the Middle East. This collective approach not only increases visibility for UNHCR Canada's work but also helps donors make informed, timely contributions to urgent crises.



PLATFORM COMMUNITY BENEFITS

Beyond transaction processing, UNHCR Canada values its presence within the CanadaHelps community ecosystem. The organization benefits from platform-wide communications, featured placement opportunities when timely stories emerge, and access to donors who discover causes through the CanadaHelps website, expanding their reach beyond direct acquisition channels.

"The CanadaHelps platform allows us to stay active within their community, and when we have compelling stories to share, the CanadaHelps team amplifies our message through their email network and website highlights," highlighted Rami.

Results with CanadaHelps

UNHCR Canada has seen meaningful benefits from integrating CanadaHelps into its fundraising ecosystem.

Past fiscal year:

12.5% increase in monthly revenue via Charity Profile

111% increase in securities revenue via custom forms

Past 2 fiscal years:

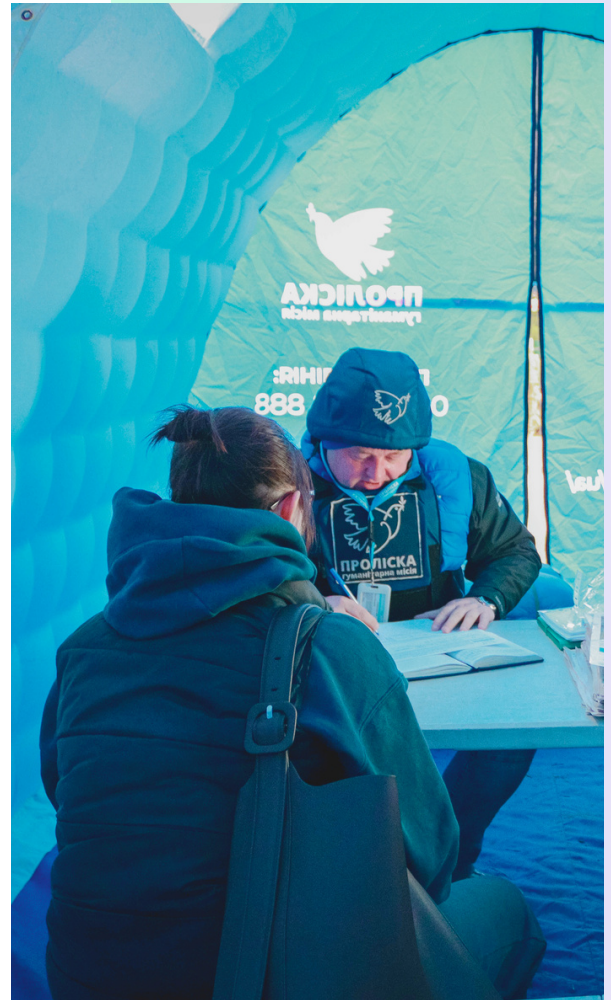
7.5% increase in one-time donation revenue via Charity Profile

6% increase in overall revenue via Charity Profile

104% increase in securities revenue via custom forms

All-time:

~647% growth in overall charity profile donations since registering with CanadaHelps



INCREASE IN REVENUE

The organization has seen steady growth in digital giving, driven by accessible securities donation forms and engaging campaigns on Charity Profile that resonate with supporters. This includes a **104% increase in securities revenue via custom forms** and a **7.5% increase in one-time donation revenue on the Charity Profile** in the past 2 fiscal years.

SUSTAINED PARTNERSHIP

Alongside its robust internal digital infrastructure and expanding staff capacity, UNHCR Canada continues investing in the CanadaHelps relationship. This strategic choice reflects the platform's ongoing value proposition, particularly for specialized giving options that would require substantial resources to develop independently while serving relatively focused donor segments.

EMBEDDED DIGITAL GIVING

The integration of digital giving tools within traditional channels has created seamless donor experiences. QR codes and vanity URLs in direct mail pieces allow supporters to respond through their preferred channel, meeting donors where they are while capturing online transactions that provide richer data and lower processing costs.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Access to the CanadaHelps donor community provides exposure beyond UNHCR Canada's direct acquisition efforts. **Platform features present the organization to over 5 million donors on the platform who are actively seeking causes to support.**



Why UNHCR Canada Recommends CanadaHelps

UNHCR Canada values CanadaHelps as a strategic partner that complements their internal fundraising operations.

The platform handles specialized giving formats like securities donations efficiently, eliminating the need for internal infrastructure development in these focused areas.

Peer-to-peer fundraising capabilities provide donors seeking deeper engagement with professional tools and support without requiring dedicated staff resources.

Most significantly, the organization appreciates participating in the broader CanadaHelps community.

“CanadaHelps is an essential partner in extending UNHCR Canada’s reach – connecting us to a broader community of donors and making it easier for new audiences to discover, support and contribute to our impact through accessible, trusted giving options.”

— Sameya Khan,
Associate, Private Sector
Partnerships, UNHCR Canada

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UNHCR Campaigns & Focus Areas

UNHCR Canada runs a mix of evergreen and seasonal campaigns to support both immediate and long-term needs. Here are a few.

RAMADAN CAMPAIGN

UNHCR operates a Zakat-compliant Giving Fund that allows Muslim donors to fulfill their religious obligations while supporting refugee protection work worldwide. This annual campaign reaches donors specifically during the Islamic holy month.



WINTER CAMPAIGN

This major annual appeal focuses on winterization efforts in Ukraine, Afghanistan, and the Middle East and North Africa region, highlighting urgent needs for winter relief items such as blankets, heaters, mats, cash assistance for increased winter expenses, and shelter reinforcement. The campaign emphasizes tangible donation impacts with specific price points from individual blankets to refurbished tents.

“We connect the campaign to the harsh Canadian winter experience to illustrate how drastically temperatures drop in these regions,” highlighted Karima.

AIMING HIGHER CAMPAIGN

This evergreen initiative focuses on higher education access for refugees, addressing a critical pathway to long-term integration and self-sufficiency for displaced youth and adults seeking to rebuild their futures through academic advancement and professional development.

“Access to higher education helps transform displacement into opportunity, empowering refugees to build sustainable futures for themselves and their communities,” shared Sameya.





HARDEST HIT CAMPAIGN

This global campaign highlighting climate disasters' disproportionate impact on refugees represents UNHCR's commitment to addressing how drought, flooding, and climate emergencies create food shortages and livelihood disruptions for forcibly displaced communities worldwide.

UNDERFUNDED CRISIS FOCUS

A core campaign theme centers on supporting silent emergencies in countries like the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of the Congo that face severe underfunding despite persistent displacement.

These initiatives rely heavily on unrestricted funding since they don't often align with national priorities for many donor countries, making individual giving essential to maintaining life-saving programs. Monthly giving programs particularly support this flexible funding model.



"We try to raise as much unrestricted funding as possible... to be able to pivot. Flexible funding is essential, allowing UNHCR to respond quickly and effectively to evolving crises." — Karima



EMERGENCY RESPONSE APPEALS

UNHCR Canada maintains exceptional agility in launching emergency appeals when humanitarian crises emerge or escalate. The team works rapidly across all channels – digital, television, telemarketing, direct mail, and email – to pivot messaging and provide Canadians immediate opportunities to respond to breaking situations, whether widely covered conflicts or silent emergencies receiving limited media attention.

"Whenever a humanitarian crisis makes headlines, you can be certain our Canada team is working to adapt our programs quickly so Canadians have immediate opportunities to provide meaningful help," shared Rami.

For more information about UNHCR Canada and how to support their mission, visit www.unhcr.ca

Charity Impact

UNHCR Canada provides comprehensive responses across immediate emergencies and long-term displacement challenges facing 129 million forcibly displaced people globally.



- **Emergency Response & Core Relief:** UNHCR delivers immediate life-saving assistance in crises, providing shelter, clean water, healthcare services, protection, and basic necessities to refugees and displaced populations. The organization maintains facilities and distribution centers throughout conflict regions, with staff deployed to ensure timely aid reaches those most vulnerable during acute emergencies and ongoing displacement situations.
- **Education Services:** Education programs provide displaced children and youth access to learning opportunities, from primary schooling to the Aiming Higher initiative focused on higher education. These programs recognize that education is both a fundamental right and a critical pathway to long-term integration, self-sufficiency, and hope for refugee families facing uncertain futures.
- **Livelihood Assistance:** UNHCR provides cash assistance and livelihood support, enabling refugees to meet their families' needs with dignity rather than dependence. This approach respects refugees' agency and decision-making while supporting local economies in host communities. Programs focus on integrating refugees into economic systems where they're hosted, promoting self-reliance and contribution.
- **Resettlement & Integration:** Beyond emergency response, UNHCR works toward permanent solutions through resettlement to third countries, local integration in host communities, and facilitating safe returns home when conditions allow. These durable solutions recognize that most displacement situations become protracted, requiring long-term approaches that restore refugees' ability to rebuild stable, secure futures.
- **Opportunities Through Sports:** UNHCR highlights the impact of sports for displaced communities, particularly refugee youth. UNHCR profiles stories of professional athletes who have overcome adversity to make it to global stages. It demonstrates how sports provide hope, open opportunities, and create pathways for integration. Across Canada, refugees are connecting with their communities and building new lives through the power of sport.

"This campaign focuses on how sports can offer hope, a sense of belonging, and a means of protection. It bridges cultures, fosters connection, and gives young refugees a space where their strength and resilience can shine," emphasized Attiya Hirji, Private Sector Partnerships, Senior Associate.
- **Unrestricted Funding for Flexible Response:** Central to UNHCR's effectiveness is raising unrestricted funds, which allow for the rapid deployment of resources to emerging needs across more than 130 countries of operation. This has enabled the organization to maintain presence in underfunded crises, respond to new emergencies, and invest in long-term solutions without restriction to specific geographic areas or program types.

Goals Ahead

UNHCR Canada aims to grow its base of unrestricted funding, particularly through monthly giving, to better respond to protracted and underfunded crises.

Sports for Inclusion & Refugee Empowerment

UNHCR Canada is using football's global platform to engage new audiences, elevate refugee voices, and raise awareness about forced displacement. Building on its partnership with Canada Soccer, UNHCR Canada has connected with supporters through a range of events and activations, including a special screening of *Next Goal Wins*, in partnership with Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF), featuring Congolese-Canadian footballer and refugee advocate Nyota Katembo and discussions on the power of sport to create belonging, break down barriers, and unlock opportunities for displaced communities.

A key part of this effort is UNHCR's *More Than a Game* campaign, launched in honour of the FIFA World Cup 2026 and fronted by UNHCR Global Goodwill Ambassador Alphonso Davies. As the first footballer and first Canadian appointed to the role, Davies' journey from being born in a refugee camp in Ghana to captaining Canada's Men's National Team reflects the hope, courage, and potential that can emerge when refugees are given safety and opportunity.

Trust, Transparency & Donor Stewardship

At UNHCR Canada, trust is the foundation of every donor relationship. **The organization is committed to responsible and ethical fundraising practices that prioritize transparency, accountability, and meaningful stewardship of every contribution entrusted to its care.** By providing clear information about humanitarian needs, sharing evidence-based stories from the field, and reporting on the impact of donor support, UNHCR Canada enables Canadians to make informed giving decisions and understand the difference their generosity makes.

This commitment extends beyond fundraising to ensuring that resources are directed where they are needed most. Through rigorous oversight, regular impact reporting, and a focus on both immediate humanitarian response and long-term solutions, UNHCR Canada strives to uphold the highest standards of integrity while maximizing support for refugees and displaced communities worldwide.

Impact Reporting & Donor Stewardship

The Global Report launched during World Refugee Day 2026 highlights UNHCR's accomplishments across multiple operations, including winter assistance, Syria response, climate emergency work, and various world emergencies from the past year. This stewardship piece demonstrates accountability to donors while celebrating collective impact across diverse crises and geographic regions.

Enhanced CanadaHelps Collaboration

UNHCR Canada is exploring additional collaboration opportunities with CanadaHelps, including other crisis relief fund participation focused on refugee needs and coordinated communications around key campaigns like World Refugee Day, Ramadan, and the winter appeal to maximize reach and donor engagement across both platforms. ***"By strengthening strategic partnerships like CanadaHelps, we can expand our reach, engage new supporters, and mobilize critical resources for refugees when they need them most," shared Sameya.***

Meet the Speakers



Rami Azzam

Rami Azzam is a Private Sector Partnerships Officer with UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, where he supports digital fundraising and partnership initiatives across multiple markets. He brings extensive experience in nonprofit fundraising, donor engagement, and digital strategy.



Karima Tarib

Karima Tarib is a Senior Donor Retention Specialist at UNHCR Canada, specializing in donor stewardship and engagement. She works to strengthen supporter relationships and foster long-term impact for refugees and displaced communities worldwide.



Attiya Hirji

Attiya Hirji is a Senior Associate, Private Sector Partnerships, at UNHCR Canada. With a background spanning international development, digital fundraising, and community engagement, she is passionate about building partnerships that create meaningful change for people forced to flee.



Sameya Khan

Sameya Khan is an Associate, Private Sector Partnerships, at UNHCR Canada. Drawing on experience in humanitarian programming, donor engagement, and content development, she supports fundraising initiatives that help deliver protection and assistance to refugees around the world.

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