

Private Giving Foundation

How the Canadian Red Cross is helping people due to the crisis in Ukraine



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Janet Johnson
Chief Development Officer,
Canadian Red Cross

Jo-Anne Ryan, Executive Director, Private Giving Foundation (PGF) interviews Janet Johnson, Chief Development Officer, Canadian Red Cross on the situation in Ukraine.

Jo-Anne: The Canadian Red Cross has been at the forefront, providing all kinds of assistance towards the humanitarian crisis in the Ukraine. What are the priorities?

Janet: As always, our top priority is to do whatever we can to support people impacted by the ongoing conflict. In practice, for the Canadian Red Cross, this means working hard to bring in as much support as we possibly can for our Ukraine Humanitarian Crisis Appeal, which goes towards providing urgent emergency relief such as food, water, medical supplies and first aid both in Ukraine and for people who have fled to neighbouring countries. The Canadian Red Cross is also assisting authorities with the safe passage of people, helping to evacuate people from areas under attack. Thanks to the generosity of many Canadians and Canadian companies, the Canadian Red Cross has contributed personnel, equipment and funds to the response in the region. The strength of the Red Cross is our global movement, and our ability to coordinate among national Red Cross societies to deliver urgent humanitarian aid where it's needed most.

Jo-Anne: For a response like this, how does the Canadian Red Cross coordinate with the global Red Cross movement and other national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies?

Janet: In Ukraine as with any country, the local national Red Cross society leads humanitarian response efforts. Other national Red Cross organizations contribute personnel, equipment and funds based on needs that are identified. Humanitarian aid has arrived in Ukraine from many other Red Cross movement partners. In addition to funds, the Canadian Red Cross has also sent nine humanitarian experts to the region, as well as emergency relief items such as blankets, tarps and cooking supplies.

More broadly, there is coordination and collaboration among Red Cross societies in Ukraine, Poland, Romania, Moldova, and other neighbouring countries where people impacted by the conflict have fled. Red Cross societies in neighbouring countries are providing assistance to refugees, whether this is food and shelter or first aid. For example, in Poland, where most of the people from Ukraine have fled to for safety, the Red Cross has 450 medics working around the clock to provide healthcare and psychosocial support.

Jo-Anne: I understand the Canadian government provided matching funds. How does that work?

Janet: The Government of Canada has matched a total of \$30 million in individual donations¹, which was reached relatively early on in the appeal. Canadians have been very generous, and we are so grateful for their trust and support.

¹Canadian Red Cross

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The needs in Ukraine and neighbouring countries are urgent and growing fast, and we are thankful to be able to contribute to the humanitarian response. All gifts make a difference for those impacted so we hope everyone will choose to give even without a matching challenge.

Jo-Anne: I see some people are gathering supplies such as food, clothing and medical equipment to send to Ukraine. Do you accept donation of supplies? Can you share why or why not?

Janet: We do not accept in-kind donations of food, clothing and other items. Cash donations allow us the most flexibility to provide local Red Cross societies in Ukraine, Poland, Romania, Moldova and other countries with the funds to buy what they need from the suppliers and local partners they know best. While gifts of general supplies are well-intentioned, miscellaneous items donated might not be what is needed in the response efforts and would incur storage, processing and transportation costs. While we appreciate the willingness to help, this is why we encourage cash donations, so that national Red Cross societies have the autonomy to secure what they need most at any given time. The Canadian Red Cross has very talented logisticians on our team, and they are working hard to help make sure people are getting their urgent needs met.

Jo-Anne: Once the invasion in Ukraine comes to an end, what kind of help will still be needed and what will the Canadian Red Cross do?

Janet: This conflict marks an escalation following eight years of crisis, beginning with the annexation of the Crimea in 2014. For years, the Red Cross has been actively working to provide emergency relief for people on either side of the line of contact who have suffered from violence, trauma and economic hardship. Disrupted access to food, water and electricity has been a regular occurrence, while mines and unexploded explosives have injured or killed several hundred.

The Canadian Red Cross is ready to help our sister societies as the crisis evolves. Looking forward, we anticipate the toll of this conflict will result in long-term humanitarian needs, and the Red Cross will be there to help.

I would also like to acknowledge that the Canadian financial sector has also been responsive through the Canadian Bankers Association. TD, along with other banks, acted quickly and generously donated to the Red Cross' Ukraine Humanitarian Crisis Appeal and opened their branches for customers to donate to help respond to the humanitarian needs in Ukraine and surrounding countries. So, I want to thank TD for that, and as I said, any gift can make a difference.



Red Cross volunteers assist people arriving from Ukraine at the Isaccea border with Romania. Photo: Romanian Red Cross

A Concert for Peace

On March 22, 2022 at the Notre-Dame Basilica in Montreal, the Korwin-Szymanowski Family Foundation (KSFF), existing PGF fundholders, presented a *Concert for Peace* to support the humanitarian mission of the Folkowisko Foundation. Organized by violinist Nadia Monczak and actress Claudia Ferri, in collaboration with Marta Korwin-Szymanowski of KSFF, the event attracted over 1600 people in attendance and thousands more Online. \$180,000 has been raised so far.

The Folkowisko Foundation is a Polish cultural organization located close to the Ukrainian border which, thanks to its contacts and know-how, has grown into one of the biggest humanitarian aid points in Europe, providing assistance to some of the 2.3 million refugees that have crossed into Poland and 6.5 million more who have become internally displaced.

With the support of over 1000 international volunteers, the Folkowisko Foundation has been providing aid on the ground since the first days of war.

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A Concert for Peace presented by the Korwin-Szymanowski Family Foundation. Credit: Tam Photography

Since February, they have sent over 2000 tons of humanitarian aid to Ukraine and signed cooperation agreements with many Ukrainian municipalities. They are also helping refugees by organizing housing assistance, setting up humanitarian villages on the border, providing Ukrainian hospitals with modern equipment, sending power generators, ambulances, sorting and transporting tons of humanitarian aid daily to the areas most affected by war.

KBF CANADA is working closely with the [Folkowisko Foundation](#) to collect funds, provide due diligence and monitor the project to ensure that donations have the greatest impact.

To learn more or to support this project, please visit <https://www.kbfcanda.ca/en/projects/peace-concert/>



Trucks filled with humanitarian aid for Ukraine from the Folkowisko Foundation. Credit: Folkowisko Foundation

Philanthropy as a Family Affair

With so many heart-wrenching problems depicted in the media, and approximately 86,000 charities in Canada², you can't and aren't expected to help every cause that you come across. Developing a family philanthropic plan can allow you to unite the family around shared values while engaging different generations.

Philanthropy is defined as giving “time, treasure, and talent”³ to help make life better for other people. At certain times, some family members may be in a better position to give money, while others may find it easier to give time. Both giving and volunteering are important aspects of a family giving plan.

Children are never too young to learn about the importance of giving back to those in need. Getting them interested in a cause that matters to them is a great first step. This can spark an interest in charitable giving that can stay with them for life. For young children, dividing their allowance between three piggy banks can be a helpful strategy. Each piggy bank is earmarked for spending, saving, and sharing of any money received. Examples of projects that appeal to young children include saving animals and donating food and toys to help those less fortunate.

One way to involve the whole family while minimizing administrative time is through establishing a Donor-Advised Fund (DAF), which can be in your family's name. It's a simple, tax-effective way to establish a legacy of giving as an alternative to establishing a private foundation. And with the PGF, the minimum is \$10,000 which makes it more accessible to many. A DAF is a fund held within the PGF, for the sole purpose of supporting charitable organizations that you care about. When you contribute cash or securities to a DAF, you receive a donation receipt up front. The funds are invested and grow tax-free. Family members can select charities to receive funds from their DAF on an ongoing basis.

With the PGF, in some instances, the family makes the charitable decisions together. In other situations, each adult child is allocated a specific dollar amount to spend on charities of their choice. DAFs allow you to “donate now and decide later”. So, when unexpected events arise such as the situation in Ukraine, families can react quickly to support charities with funds from their DAF to support organizations who are providing humanitarian assistance and lifesaving aid to those affected by the crisis in Ukraine.

²CanadaHelps.org “The Giving Report”.

³ Time, Treasure, Talent: Canadian Women and Philanthropy 2014.

“A single act of kindness throws out roots in all directions, and the roots spring up and make new trees.”

Amelia Earhart

Celebrating 1 Billion in PGF Contributions!

TD was the first financial institution in Canada to launch a donor-advised fund program in October 2004. Charitable contributions to PGF surpassed \$1 billion as of January 2022, and over \$450 million has been distributed to charities since inception. On behalf of the PGF Board of Directors, we would like to express our sincere thanks to our donors for creating a legacy of giving to support the causes that matter to you and to make a difference in the lives of many.



We welcome your questions and comments. Please direct them to joanne.ryan@td.com or call **416-308-6735**.

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