

# **An introduction to City of Sanctuary Sheffield & The Sanctuary**

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**City of Sanctuary Sheffield**

# Outline

- **The Global & UK context**
- **Definitions, Facts and Figures**
- **What's happening in Sheffield**

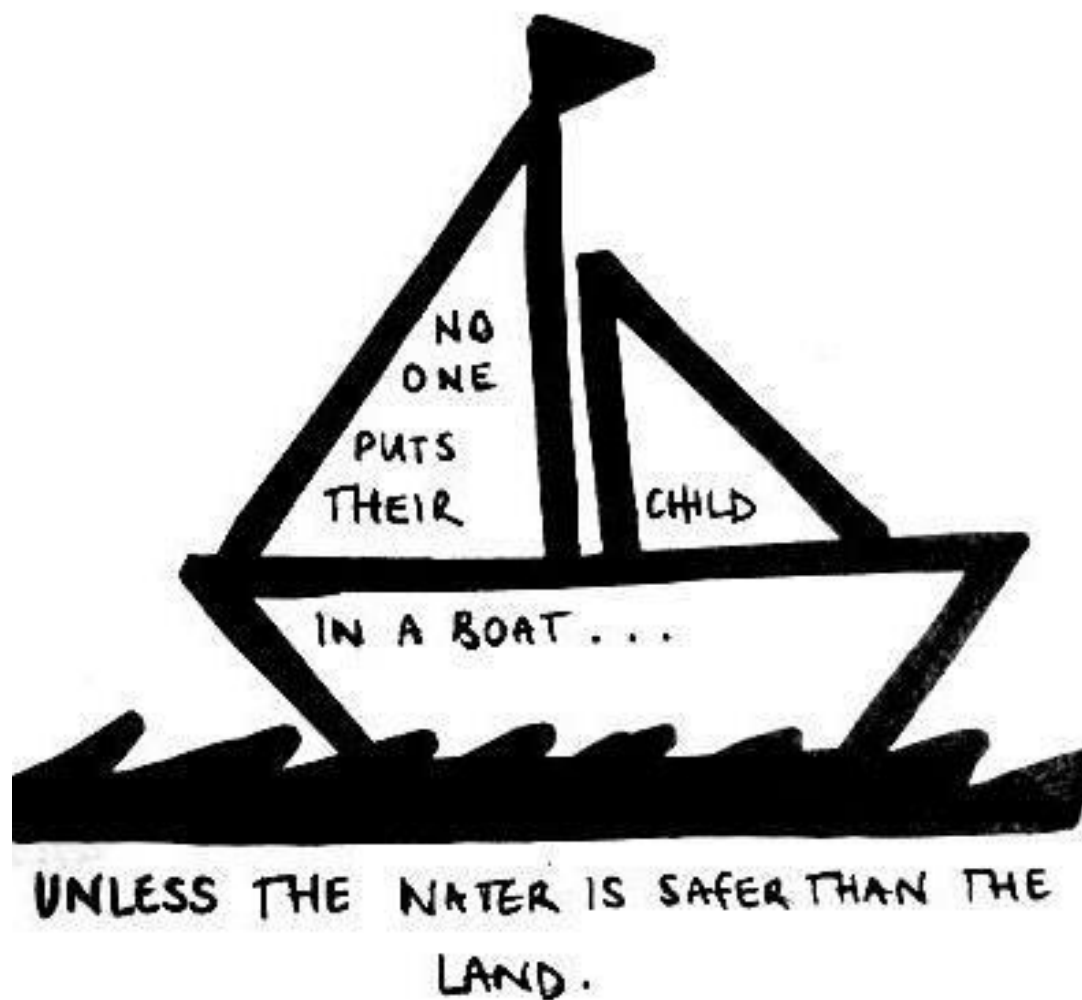




City of Sanctuary  
**Sheffield**  
Creating a Culture of Welcome



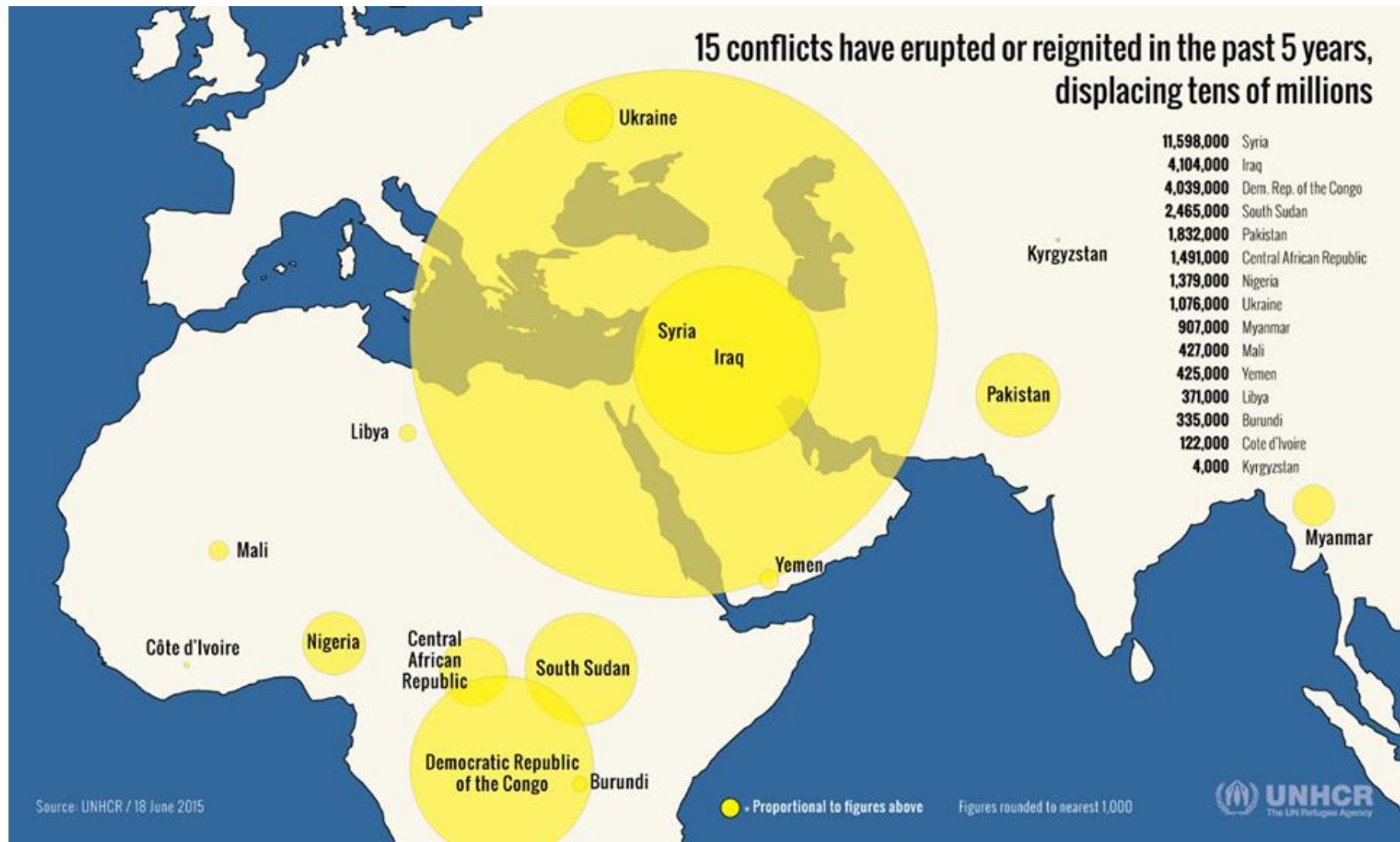
Lesvos, 29 October, 2015



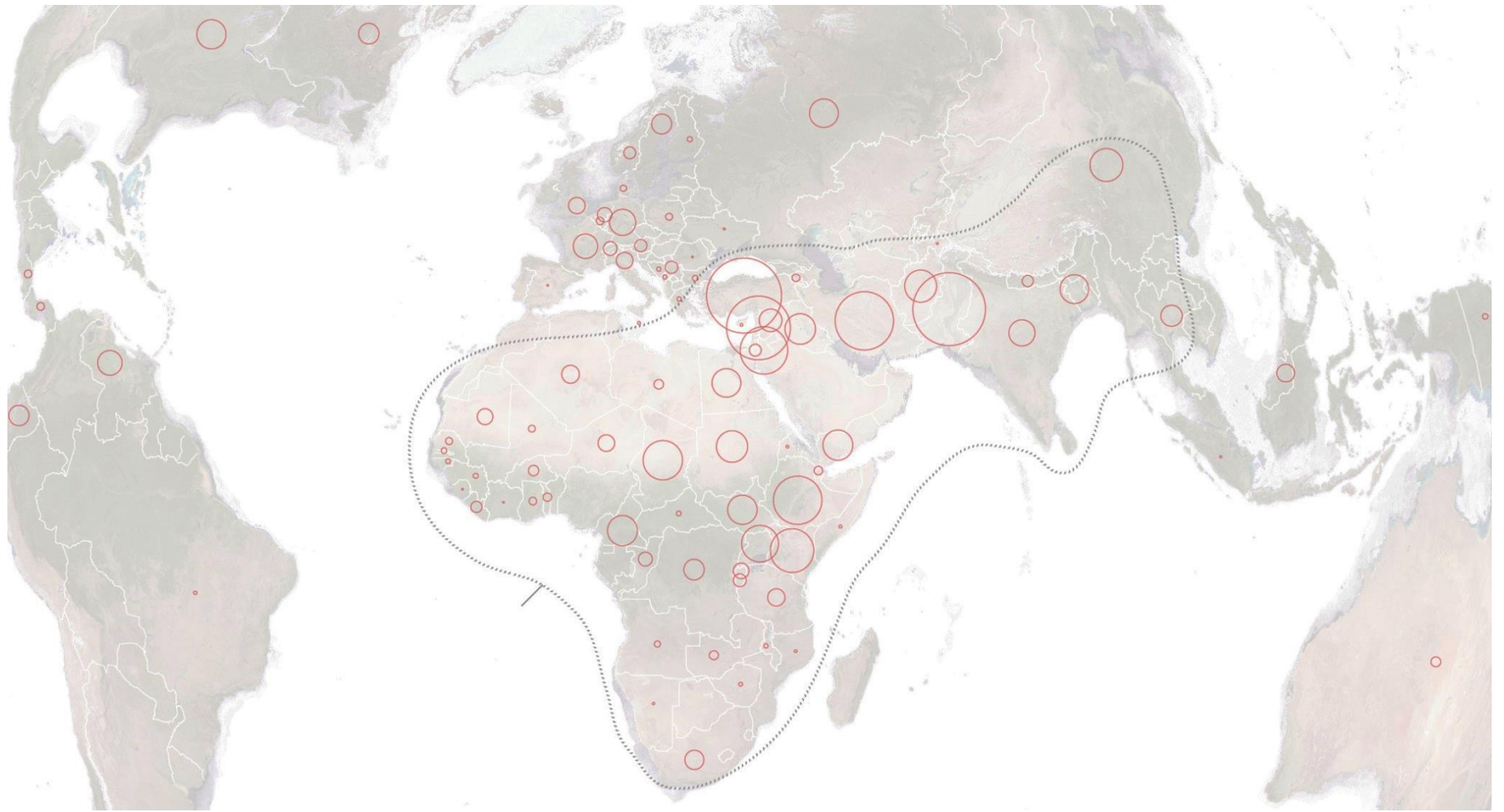
'Home' by Warsan Shire



## Refugees come from all over...



**Most refugees flee to neighbouring countries...**



# What is an asylum seeker?

Everyone has the **right to seek protection** and **claim asylum** in a state outside their country of origin.

An **asylum seeker** is somebody who has applied for **refugee protection** from the UK government, and is awaiting a decision.

A **refugee** is someone who has been **granted asylum**.





# What is a refugee?

*"A person who owing to a **well-founded fear of being persecuted** for reasons of **race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion**, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being **outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events**, is **unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it..**"*

*UN Geneva Convention, 1951*





# Some key facts and figures

**In the past year 68.5million have been forced to flee their homes**

**86% of the world's refugees seek safety in the – usually developing – countries that neighbour their own.**

**In 2017/18, 27,044 people applied for asylum in the UK.**

**Top countries were Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Sudan, Albania, Eritrea**

**In comparison to the rest of the EU, the UK receives relatively low numbers of applications for asylum (less than 4% of EU applications). Germany, Italy & France get most.**



# National Issues



- People seeking asylum **struggle to meet their essential living needs** and are **not allowed to work**.



- People seeking asylum can be detained **indefinitely** without knowing when they'll be released.



- Refused asylum seekers are now being charged **up front** for secondary health care.

# The Picture in Sheffield



- 794 **asylum seekers** in Home Office accommodation
- Probably hundreds more refused asylum seekers who are destitute

But..

- Sheffield was the first to join the Gateway protection scheme
- Sheffield is rich in asylum-supporting organisations and individuals
- Sheffield was the first City of Sanctuary

# City of Sanctuary Sheffield



- Founded 2007 – to create Culture of Welcome
- Now 100+ in UK, and Schools of Sanctuary, Theatres.. etc.,
- Awareness raising in schools, community, faith groups, professionals
- Welcome new arrivals to the city
- Manage a weekly multi-agency drop in at Victoria Hall
- Chair the monthly Refugee & Migrant Forum
- ...
- *“Increasingly seen as the key organisation facilitating collaboration and coherence in the asylum sector in Sheffield”*



# Events...



- 2012 – G4S takes over asylum housing, SCC Asylum Team disbands
- 2015 – Refugee Crisis
- 2015/16 – Northern Refugee Centre closes

# Partnership



- **Sheffield Council**
- **Citizens Advice**
- **British Red Cross**
- **ASSIST**
- **Voluntary Action Sheffield**
- **University of Sheffield**
- **University of Hallam**
- **Mulberry Practice**
- **S Yorkshire Refugee Law & Justice**
- **S Yorkshire Migration & Asylum Action Group**
- **Methodist Church**
- **Sheffield Quakers**
- **Chilypep**
- **Sexual Health Sheffield**
- **Shelter**
- **Conversation Clubs**
- **SAVTE**
- **Solace**



The Sanctuary



The Sanctuary







The Sanctuary



The Sanctuary





- “If I didn’t come here I don’t know what I would do”
- “It’s so good to have a safe place where I can be myself and mix with others who understand”

“Working from the Sanctuary has enabled us to almost double the amount of appointments and people we can see..

.... The Sanctuary is a welcoming space and following our appointments we notice that many of our service users remain downstairs to socialise, enjoy hot drinks and engage in other groups going on

....having one space where lots of organisations operate from has enabled us to work closely as a sector but it also makes it much easier for service users to find which reduces anxiety around travelling to lots of different appointments in different places.”

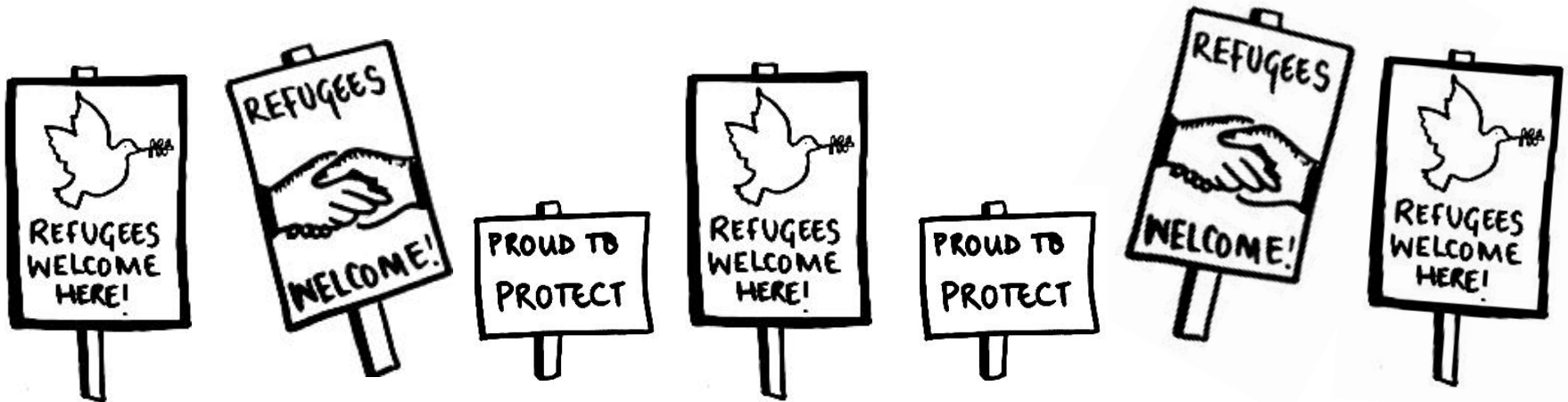
(British Red Cross)

Work in progress..

- Basement refurbishment
- Volunteer Management
- Advice provision
- Funding..

# How can you help?

- Keep informed
- Spread the word
- Join the movement!





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