# Transcript

## Standing together video

### Arif

My name is Arif Saeid. I'm originally from Afghanistan. I came to New Zealand in January 2000.

The political parties, what's happening there, forced us to leave Afghanistan.

For me personally, was because of my wife and my children. Our youngest child was born here, and he always tell us I am the only Kiwi in the family.

Myself and my wife, we studied counselling at the University of Auckland.

Then there we established this organisation called New Settlers Family and Community

Trust NFACT, which is by refugees for refugees.

So because of our experience in the refugee community, we knew the gaps and we knew

what can help the refugees.

I am proud that my wife is CEO of the organisation and she is doing very well.

And we are also lucky to have such a dedicated team here and their hearts are in the right place.

So they are doing very well with the resettlement of the 1500 Afghan evacuees in Auckland.

Refugees coming to New Zealand, imagine you are coming to a new country with a family of 4 or 5 people, with just a couple of suitcases of clothing, and that's all you have.

And have nothing in the house. How are you going to live?

So that is why people need some help at the beginning.

And the first year or two, are like honeymoon period.

So everything is new. They’re exploring new stuff and getting to know their neighbours or learn new things in New Zealand.

However, it's not an easy journey. It is very difficult because you leave everything behind.

You are coming from where you are born and grew up, and have family, friends, relatives.

You have studied, you have classmates or colleagues there.

And when you come to New Zealand, all of that is gone.

So you are on your own. You don't have that support. You need to start from zero.

There is a survivor guilt feeling for almost every single refugee.

We have had refugees, who did not eat for weeks, and we asked them why you are not eating.

And they said, oh, I put the food on the table, but I can't eat because I remember my mum, my dad, my brother. Do they have anything to eat? How are they? What are they doing?

So it is very hard. Yes.

Unfortunately, there are some cases of mistreatment or discrimination. Some of our ladies, had some bad experiences. For example, the headscarf was taken off and pushed them and told them, “go back where you come from.”

So, yeah, but it's not always it's not all. It is some. Yeah.

Everyone has the right to freedom to follow whatever they believe in or their religion or their beliefs.

A hate crime is something that should not, is not acceptable, and should not happen to anyone.

We are all human. We are all equal.

It doesn't matter if my skin colour is black or white or grey or whatever. It doesn't matter I shouldn’t be treated less than the other person.

But we are also obliged to respect others as well, the same way that we want to happen to us, to our self.

If I don't know something about a religion or a person, or a faith community or a special community, the best way will be to go and mix and mingle with them, share food with them, invite them for a cup of tea.

Go and participate in their events and gatherings and see what they are doing and why they are doing.

Rather than harming them verbally or emotionally or creating a problem in the community.

The best way is to just get on with each other, get on well, and get to know each other.

So again, we are all equal. We all have to respect each other and respect differences and live in harmony.

I wish for my community that there is no barrier for their achievement, especially for women and girls, and they should not be scared to apply for any job they feel confident to apply.

And I'm proud that they are all contributing to the country, which give us the second chance to live and also to be safe.

Yeah, yeah.