



SOCIAL COHESION EVENT

APRIL 2026

**CELEBRATING DIVERSITY - STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY
CONNECT- CULTURAL EXCHANGE PROGRAM**

OUR CULTURE - OUR IDENTITY

24 APRIL 2026 AT TE ATATŪ SOUTH COMMUNITY CENTRE - MAIN HALL

EVENT OVERVIEW

On 24 April 2026, HOPE Worldwide-Pakistan organised a social cohesion event titled “Our Culture – Our Identity” at Te Atatū South Community Centre as part of the Welcoming Communities program.

The event brought together people from more than 18 ethnic backgrounds to celebrate culture, identity, connection, and belonging. It created a welcoming space where migrants, refugees, families, youth, volunteers, community leaders, and local residents could come together, share experiences, and build meaningful relationships.



PURPOSE OF THE EVENT

The purpose of the event was to strengthen social inclusion, intercultural understanding, and community belonging among Auckland’s diverse communities.

Through cultural performances, music, shared food, conversations, and community engagement, participants were encouraged to celebrate their own identity while also learning about the cultures and stories of others.

WELCOMING AND OPENING

The program began with a **karakia**, creating a respectful and inclusive opening for the gathering.

This was followed by a welcome address from the **Welcoming Communities team**, acknowledging the importance of social cohesion, community connection, and creating spaces where everyone feels valued and included.

CELEBRATING DIVERSITY

The event highlighted the richness of Auckland's multicultural communities. Participants shared culture through performances, music, traditional dress, food, and storytelling.

The gathering provided an opportunity for people from different backgrounds to connect in a safe, friendly, and respectful environment.



BUILDING WHANAUNGATANGA

A key outcome of the event was the strengthening of whanaungatanga – relationships, connection, and a sense of belonging.

Participants were able to meet new people, build trust, share their journeys, and feel part of the wider community. The event helped reduce isolation and encouraged stronger relationships between different ethnic groups.

PRACTISING MANAAKITANGA

The event also reflected the value of manaakitanga through hospitality, care, respect, and welcome.

Food, conversation, music, and cultural sharing helped create a warm community atmosphere where people felt accepted, respected, and valued.



COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

More than 18 ethnic communities participated in the event, demonstrating the strength and diversity of Auckland's community life.

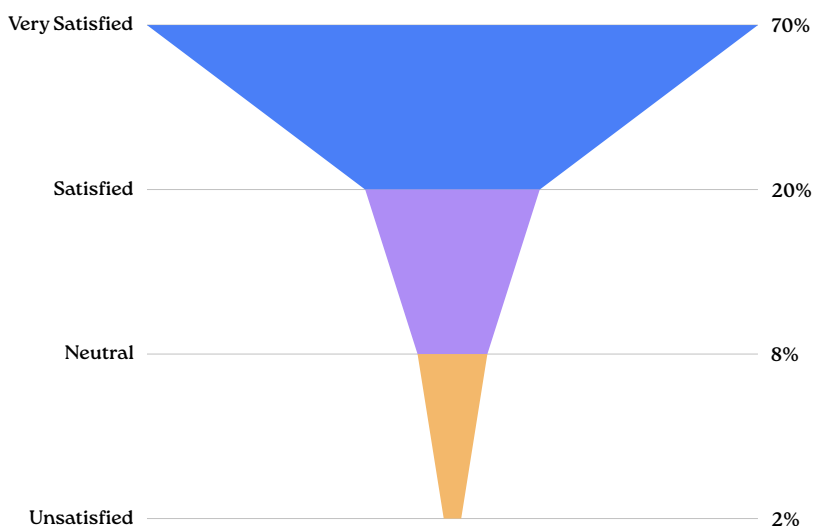
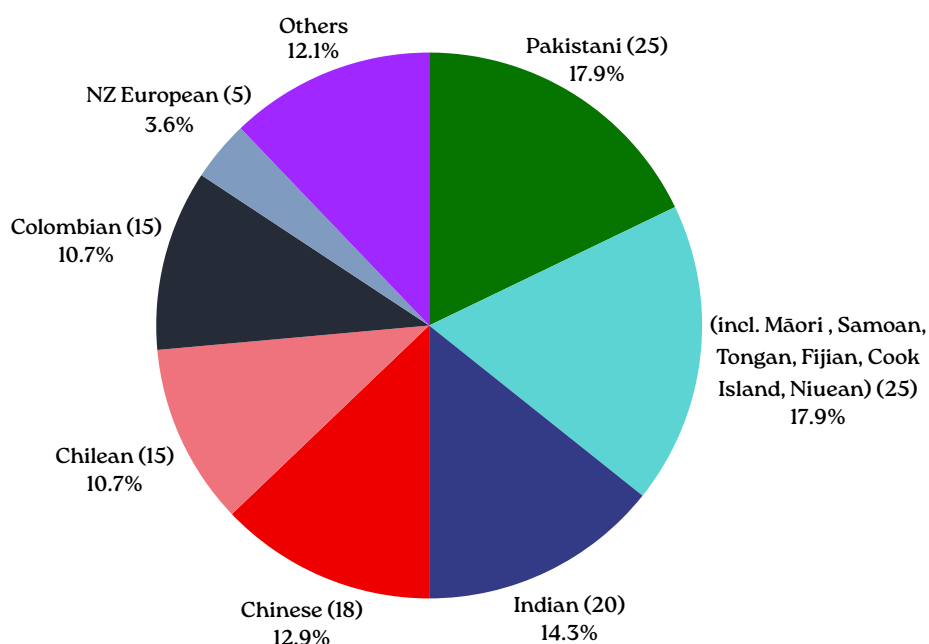
The event brought together people from different cultures, faiths, languages, and backgrounds with a shared commitment to unity, peace, and mutual respect.

SOCIAL INCLUSION IN ACTION

"Our Culture – Our Identity" was a practical example of social inclusion in action.

It supported new residents and diverse communities to feel welcomed, connected, and confident to participate in community life. It also created opportunities for intercultural dialogue and stronger community understanding.

Ethnic Representation at Cultural Exchange Program (Total = 140)



Participant Satisfaction - Cultural Exchange Program

CULTURAL PERFORMANCES

A highlight of the event was the range of **cultural performances** presented by different communities, reflecting the rich diversity of those who attended. These performances created a vibrant and inclusive atmosphere, allowing participants to share their traditions, identity, music, and cultural pride with others.

A special feature of the program was the **haka performed by Tangata Whenua Māori**, which added great meaning and significance to the event. The haka acknowledged the importance of Māori culture as tangata whenua of Aotearoa New Zealand and provided participants with an opportunity to experience and appreciate the strength, unity, and cultural expression of Māori tradition.

These performances enriched the event by promoting cultural understanding, respect, and celebration of diversity, while also strengthening community connection and social inclusion



PROJECT KHAIRIYAT - WELLBEING WITHOUT BARRIERS

Strengthening Wellbeing, Inclusion and Community Connection
Across Diverse Communities

Supported by: The Trusts Community Foundation (TTCF)

Grant Reference: Application No. 41702

Project Period: October 2025 – March 2026

Report Date: April 2026



“Creating safe, culturally inclusive spaces where communities can connect,
heal, and grow together.”

OUTCOMES AND IMPACT

The event contributed to:

- stronger community relationships
- increased intercultural understanding
- greater sense of belonging
- reduced social isolation
- improved connection between ethnic communities
- increased participation of migrants, refugees, families, youth, and volunteers
- stronger links with the Welcoming Communities program



FEEDBACK FROM PARTICIPANTS

Participants shared positive feedback about the **“Our Culture – Our Identity”** event and expressed appreciation for the opportunity to connect with people from different cultures and communities.

Many participants said the event helped them feel welcomed, included, and connected. They appreciated the cultural performances, shared food, music, conversations, and the warm environment created through manaakitanga and whanaungatanga.

PARTICIPANT VOICES

“I felt welcomed and respected. It was beautiful to see so many cultures together in one place.”

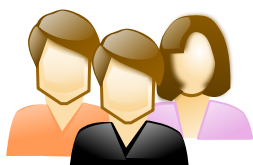
“This event helped me meet new people and feel more connected to the community.”

“I am new to New Zealand and I have never had this kind of opportunity before. Thank you HOPE Worldwide-Pakistan.”

“I have lived here for many years, but this was the first time I felt so connected with different communities.”

“The programme was very meaningful. It helped us understand each other’s cultures and build friendships.”

“The food, music, cultural performances, and conversations made everyone feel included.”



CONCLUSION

The Social Cohesion Event was a successful and meaningful community gathering. It celebrated cultural identity, strengthened relationships, and promoted inclusion across Auckland's diverse communities.

HOPE Worldwide-Pakistan remains committed to supporting welcoming, connected, and inclusive communities where everyone feels respected, valued, and able to belong.





THANKS

A special thanks to our
valuable Partners

