

# ACCESS TO TRAVEL

How the Bike Project Helped Arezou\* Overcome Post-Abortion Depression

[www.migrationpolicy.org.uk](http://www.migrationpolicy.org.uk)



## BACKGROUND

Arezou arrived in the UK in 2023 with her husband and 7-year-old daughter. The family was placed in temporary accommodations provided by the Home Office, living in a hotel alongside other asylum seekers. The ongoing uncertainty of the asylum process, combined with the fear of rejection, had a significant toll on Arezou's mental health. The stress and anxiety eventually led to a tragic miscarriage, after which Arezou experienced severe physical and emotional health issues. She was hospitalised for a prolonged period and diagnosed with post-abortion depression.

To manage her depression and anxiety, Arezou's doctors prescribed medications. However, these medications caused excessive drowsiness, leaving her inactive and further deepening her feelings of hopelessness and isolation. Her deteriorating mental state affected her relationship with her husband and daughter, and she frequently expressed thoughts of ending her life.

## SOLUTION

Recognising Arezou's need for mobility and outdoor engagement, a request was made to the Bike Project on her behalf. The project approved the request and provided Arezou with a bike, which proved to be a pivotal step in her recovery.

With the bike, Arezou began to venture outside regularly. She participated in various social activities, including volunteering at local charity organisations and in church. She was doing a volunteer job of preparing meals for those in need, engaging with her community, and rebuilding her sense of purpose.

Arezou's newfound mobility also strengthened her bond with her daughter. They would go on bike rides together, explore the area around their hotel, and enjoy quality time outdoors. This shared activity helped repair their relationship and provided Arezou with a renewed sense of motherhood.

## IMPACT

The bike project had a profound impact on Arezou's mental health and overall well-being. She reported feeling more energetic, positive, and connected to her community. Through volunteer work at charity organisations and her daughter's school, Arezou regained a sense of belonging and purpose.

## AT A GLANCE

**MOBILITY** can play a crucial role by promoting physical activity, reducing isolation, and encouraging social engagement.

**COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT** and volunteering help individuals regain a sense of purpose and belonging.

**SMALL INTERVENTIONS**, such as providing a bike, can have a significant impact on an individual's mental health and overall quality of life.

**ENCOURAGING** outdoor activities can strengthen family bonds and improve relationships

**AUTHOR: ASMA MALIK**

Outreach and Community Engagement  
Coordinator

\*For privacy and data protection purposes, the name "Azerou" is a pseudonym used to protect the individual's identity. All personal details have been anonymized to ensure confidentiality.