



EMWOSE
Women from ethnic minorities in social enterprise

Interview form

Overview

Name: Gemma Vecchio

Company: Casa Africa

Website: <http://www.casafrica.it/>



My name is Gemma Vecchio, I'm Afro Italian. I'm an Italian citizen. I started volunteering in junior high school in Eritrea. I've been afraid to give bandages and injections...

After a few years we came to Italy and I started doing this job to help. Many were moving away from Ethiopia, from Eritrea, there was someone from South Africa. In Italy there was no humanitarian refugee status. They came by plane, not by boat like now.

Once their 1 2-month visa expired, it was an excuse, they were sent away. I tried to help these people. I tried everything to hide them because they'd end up in hell where they came from. After the fall of Eritrea, socialism in Ethiopia began to return back

We bring food to families, Italians, non-Italians, whoever needs it, I cook. Before, the food counter helped us but for a few years it hasn't given us anything, so we go ahead with donations, fundraising dinners, charity sales and we collect the money to do the shopping for those who can't.

To those who come to us, we teach Italian first, then we try to train them. To integrate. We help mothers with children, with school enrollment, we look for work for adults, we collect clothes, we bring food to the homeless, as in this period. every day we go to Termini station to bring food

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fashion course

We bought computers and started a computer course, we have 500 volunteers a year, 50 guys a day. Then we have a fashion course, then a glass painting course and then a course for carers. To those we bring food to, we don't just bring food. We want to redeem them morally, put them in the fabric of society. It is an ambition. None of us are paid, it's pure volunteerism... if anything, we put the money out of our own pockets...we're the ones who are struggling to resist because we are not colluded with politics, politicians or religion. We go forward with respect for everyone. You have to work for the funds, but we have too much to do to go begging. It's a problem when you have dignity.

Full video [here](#)

