

THE STORIES: GOODSON



First name: **GOODSON**

Last name: **EZENAGU**

Age: **28**

Country of origin: **NIGERIA**

Living in **Italy** since: **2013**

SHORT SUMMARY

Goodson Ezanagu was born in Alor, Nigeria. He has a younger sister and attended elementary school. His parents died as a result of conflicts between villages bordering the city of Alor. Goodson was only 7 years old, he and his sister were raised by their grandmother and a maternal aunt. Goodson started working at the age of 12 at a clothing store in Lagos.

“...MY GREAT RESOURCE WAS TO TRUST PEOPLE I MET ALONG MY PATH”

GOODSON' STORY

Goodson's parents, farmers, were killed in the village of Agoleri, by a group of guerrillas from the town of Umuleri. The conflicts were frequent between villages for both ethnic and economic issues. Goodson reports that one night they entered the house and in a violent way they attacked and killed his parents, stealing their crops and goods. From that tragic moment, he and his

5-year-old sister lived with her maternal grandmother, and since they had no economical resources they were unable to continue with their studies. After one year Goodson went to live with his maternal aunt in Onitsha where he attended elementary school. At the age of 12 he moved to Lagos and found work at a clothing store.

CONFLICT AND ESCAPE

In 2011, Goodson moved to Maiduguri the capital of the Borno State where he worked as a chef's assistant in a restaurant. Life was very hard. He had to endure the suffering of his family and the strong terrorist presence of Boko-haram. In April 2013, a series of attacks in the city of Baga, inside the Borno State, led him to leave and head to Libya. Goodson worked in Libya as a painter, often subject to racist discrimination, but he does not lose sight of his goal. He wanted to earn money to get to Italy and apply for asylum. In August 2013 with the hope to live in Italy, he embarked on a boat.

STRUGGLING IN THE NEW SOCIETY

Goodson landed on the coastline in August 2013. He was assigned to an emergency project run by an association in Perugia called *'Arcosolidarietà Ora d'Aria'*. He integrated easily both in the host structure and the community. The association submitted a request for asylum, but was rejected. Goodson appealed to the Civil Tribunal in Perugia and received subsidiary protection in 2015. Meanwhile, he joined a second *'SPRAR welcome project for refugees'* where he continued to study the Italian language.

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BELONGING AND GIVING BACK TO SOCIETY

Goodson obtained the subsidiary protection thanks to the inclusion in the 'SPRAR' project, and managed to get a job at the 'Umbrò Restaurant' in Perugia, a well-known place of cultural and social events. He works there since 2015 and is very respected by all staff. The work at the restaurant puts him in touch with local people, creating a social network and important friendships that allow him to better face his painful past.

He lives alone in Perugia and continues to play football during his free time. He still thinks about Nigeria, but he looks forward to his life in Perugia, Italy.

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