

2018



Pélagie wanted to study hydrology, which we thought was a promising career choice. We sent her to one of West Africa's best engineering schools for three years, where she received a *Licence* diploma in 2015. She did unpaid internships for two years after that and then got a paying job in response to an ad in the newspaper. Her salary is 216,000 f CFA (\$394) a month. She married Bureima, who works for the Ministry of Agriculture, and they have a son Chabib.

2017

Pélagie successfully defended her thesis for the Licence degree in hydrology in 2015. Has had a string of internships since but no paying job yet. Her latest internship is with the American NGO, Self Help Africa. In the meantime, she married a man with a diploma from the University of Koudougou who works for the Ministry of Agriculture. They have a one-year-old son. (Solidarité.)

2016

Pélagie Yameogo decided to stop her studies in hydrology at the Licence degree and not go on for a Master's. She has been job-hunting for a year, meanwhile doing a series of unpaid internships. Her latest is with a US NGO WaterAid. She went to an excellent engineering school, so she should be employable, although the custom in Burkina is to insist in two years of internships before offering a paying job.



Pélégie, left, and her sister Jacqueline



Star Wars Pélégie in her new helmet

2015



Pélégie and Lydie of the university women's group at 2iE.

Pélégie is another special case. She wanted to study hydrology which, given Burkina Faso's water problem (it's in the Sahel), we thought was a good idea. There was an outstanding engineering school in Ouagadougou, but it was expensive. It goes by the acronym 2iE ("deux yeux" in French, or "two eyes"). We decided to go for it. She was a poor girl surrounded by the children of the rich and famous. But she kept her head down, studied well and after three years just got her Licence degree.

We visited her on campus in January 2015, accompanied by a member of a Burkina university women's group that works with us as volunteers to look after the girls.

Pélégie is undecided about a Master's and will make up her mind in September. Meanwhile, she's job hunting in the capital.



Pélégie, January 2015.

2014

Pélégie is a third year student in hydrology at one of Africa's best engineering schools, l'Institut International d'Ingénierie de l'Eau et de l'Environnement, better known as 2iE, in Ouagadougou. At the end of this year, she will get a Licence degree, if all goes well. We received a French government grant of 2,700€ (\$3,718) for Pélégie to go on to study for her Master's. We hope she will. That will cover only part of the tuition for this very expensive university. But it's worth it; 95% of its graduates find jobs within six months.



Pelagie's Mom's home

Pélégie finds herself surrounded by the children of the very rich. She comes from the opposite end of the spectrum. Her father was a subsistence farmer with three wives. He died in 2012. Her mother lives in a house without electricity with several family members, including Pélégie's youngest sister, Jacqueline, whom we also help.

When I asked in her first year if that bothered her, she said, "No; I keep focused on my objectives." She's strong.



We brought her Mom a 100 kg of maize when we visited in January (left).