

## The MCF commitment in Piéla / Burkina Faso

The Mindful Change Foundation (MCF) supports the work of the organization Yenfaabima ([www.yenfaabima.de](http://www.yenfaabima.de)) in Burkina Faso, which runs a treatment centre for mentally ill people and also visits the sick people in the villages and the prayer camps of the surrounding area. Through lectures and also with the performance of the film "La maladie du démon", the staff informs the population about mental illness.

MCF pays half of the salary of the psychiatric nurse Timothee Tindano and supports Yenfabimaa in the purchase of psychotropic drugs.

Every month we receive a report in which the work of Yenfabimaa is described in detail.

We also have met for several times the founder of this project, pastor Guitanga, and the the senior nurse, Timothee Tindano during the performance of the film "la Maladie du Démon", which was produced in Burkina Faso and which was shown in several cities in Germany last year.

### Here you find some extracts from these reports:

**April 2019:** One of our home visits was planned to convince the parents of a child (NY) suffering from epilepsy

of the need for further treatment. About one year ago NY was brought to the Centre of Yenfaabima

for treatment by his mother and his two uncles.

On the way back they had an accident with their

car. His mother broke both legs. According to the parents, it was the

demons of their sick child who had resisted treatment and had caused the accident.

Since then, no one in the family has wanted to take the child, for fear of

being punished like the mother. We were now concerned to sensitize the family so that NY could

be supported and accompanied for his aftertreatment at the Yenfaabima Center.



**May 2019:** Example of a pregnant woman (S.M.) who lives in a rural part of the community and who was visited on 26 May 2019 by a member of the staff of Yenfaabima.

Three months earlier, she had been brought to the Yenfaabima Reception Centre because of psychological problems related to pregnancy in the fourth month.

According to the relatives, she is to have her first signs of illness

in September 2018 in the Ivory Coast, while she

had worked together with her husband in the plantation fields. After all

treatments had failed, she was brought back to Burkina Faso by her husband

and was initially brought to the psychiatric ward of Yalgado University Hospital

Ouédraogo (CHUYO), where a treatment of unknown type was carried out.

One month later she broke off contact with the psychiatric service of CHUYO because

according to her parents, the cause of her mental illness were the ghosts of

forests (or plantations) in Côte d'Ivoire. This is why she was located in N., a

small town in the central plateau, to be treated by a healer. She's supposed to have been there

for a few days, and when the expected successes did not occur, her

parents returned her to her village to continue her treatment with absudes and fumigations.

The patient's stepfather learned of the existence of Yenfaabima and

decided to take her there. Here we diagnosed a paranoid schizophrenia.

She was treated, and by the grace of God, she gave birth a healthy girl.

The purpose of our visit now, was to encourage and enlighten her family,

motivating them to accept the treatment and to encourage her to take the prescribed medication.

**March 2019:** Patient T.B. is a pastor, he worked in the village of N. In September 2018 he had his first episode of schizoaffective psychosis linked to a grand mal epilepsy.

This combined disorder had led to the antisocial act of rape

whose victim was none other than a faithful member of his church. This act

had the consequence that he had to give up his pastoral ministry for some years and his

whole family was exiled to the village of B. - 50 km from Piéla. After

some failed treatment attempts in a prayer centre and treatment with fumigations

he was brought to the Yenfaabima centre, where treatment was begun with

sedative neuroleptics and an anti-epileptic. Subsequently

a good clinical course was observed. The purpose of this visit was

to listen to his desperate wife and the children and encourage them

to accept the illness of the patient and stand by his side, to help him to continue his treatment in

Yenfaabima reception centre. Our visit took place on 09 August 2019.

At the end of this visit there was a great joyful relief of his wife, his eldest

son and his cousin, who agreed to combat social stigma and to help the patient,

who had been stabilized during the treatment and who had no epileptic attacks within four months.

**October 2019:** Ms LD was received for her first consultation in Yenfaabima 48 days ago.

She was diagnosed with a mania with psychotic symptoms for which

a treatment had been initiated. We suggested that she should be monitored in our centre for 48 hours,

but she ran away that same day late at night (about

2 a.m.) to seek shelter in her house without the knowledge of her only daughter, who is at her side, but who is married in the capital Ouagadougou and is pregnant in the 8th month.

So, the team went to the patient's home the next morning, where she lived with little kids -still going to school. Trying to convince her to return to Yenfaabima was in vain. So, we decided to keep her at home but on condition that she accepts that a health worker comes in the morning and in the evening to give her the medication. She has accepted. She was accompanied for a week, and then she agreed to take medication on her own.



**November 19:** Mr. HA is a singer living in T. and is said to have had several episodes of a mental illness .For more than five years he has been treated by both traditional healers as well as through prayers - without success. He was first seen by Yenfaabima on 26 May 2019 for paranoid schizophrenia, tied on both hands with a traditional rope. He is a Patient who was quickly stabilized after two treatments within his family. Goal of the visit was to make him sing again, and above all to encourage him to continue his artistic work, which his parents did not want, because in their opinion he can be possessed by ghosts while singing. We have involved his situation into educational work in Yenfaabima for the social and work reintegration of the patients.

**December 2019:** Example of a home visit in the village of S., about 5 km from Piéla. Mr. L.D. has been a homeless mentally ill patient for 15 years, treated by Yenfaabima for about three years because of paranoid schizophrenia. We saw a very good compliance and stabilization after the first three weeks of treatment. However, Mr L.D. is faced with the problem of family reintegration. According to the family he could no longer live with them. The family was afraid that his demons would haunt the

whole family. That's why family members had built a small hut far away from the big farm, so that he had to live there alone.

It must be mentioned that since the beginning of Yenfaabima's treatment we payed all expenses related to his mental and physical health, sometimes also for his food. The purpose of the home visit was to convince his parents to reconstruct a hut within the family unit and to reintegrate him into the family. One week after the visit, the parents from Mr. L.D. responded well and built him a good house, where he now lives with his brothers and sisters.



**February 2020:** Example of a home visit in K. Mr L.L. was diagnosed as paranoid schizophrenic

three and a half years ago. He hadn't visited us for almost a year.

Our team visited him in his house more than 30 km east of Piéla,

to re-establish contact with Yenfaabima. To the surprise of the team, the

husband had been left by his wife and four children. In phases of

psychomotoric restlessness, he lived alone in his hut, and none of his children were allowed to bring him something to eat or approach him, because his illness

was interpreted as an obsession. His only brother, who cared about the family and the patient's health had died more than a year ago. After that the patient has no longer been accompanied to Yenfabimaa.

We had a fruitful meeting with his wife and other members of his family. The same day

he was taken by the psychiatric recovery team to the centre of Yenfaabima. He is in good health, and his wife has come to see him several times.

His return to his family and his social reintegration is planned for next month.

Dr Gesine Heetderks / MCF, June 2020

Mindful Change Foundation (MCF), Heidelberger Landstr. 171, D-64297 Darmstadt,

<https://mindful-change.org>, [info@mindful-change.org](mailto:info@mindful-change.org)

IBAN: DE64 5085 0150 0042 0046 50, BIC: HELADEF1DAS, Sparkasse Darmstadt