



ORGANIZED BY:



MEDIA PARTNERS



Advanced Course on Verification and new narratives on fact checking for Namibian journalists

Windhoek, Namibia
7-9 June 2022

#PeriodismoÁfrica

ADVANCED COURSE ON
VERIFICATION AND
NEW NARRATIVES
ON FACT CHECKING
FOR NAMIBIAN JOURNALISTS

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PREPARING FOR THE NEXT INFODEMIC



What is an infodemic?

A rapid and far-reaching spread of **both accurate and inaccurate information** about a topic, such as a disease



SOURCE: [Merriam-Webster](#)

IMAGE: [WHO/Sam Bradd](#)



Isn't information a good thing?

- Infodemics are **overwhelming**
- Misinformation preys on **confusion & uncertainty**
- Most people **don't have the time** or the **skills** to verify everything they read
- Misinformation moves **fast**



How to fight the next infodemic

- Infodemics are overwhelming
- Misinformation preys on confusion & uncertainty
- Most people don't have the time or the skills to verify everything they read
- Misinformation moves fast
- Provide a **clear message**.
- Watch for confusing topics; **demystify** them.
- Be/share sources of **accurate information**.
- **Preempt** the next false claim!



africa • coronavirus • covid-19

Fighting the Covid-19 infodemic – five strategies for African fact-checkers

The Covid-19 pandemic is far from over, still taking lives and livelihoods across the world. Recovery from the crisis has been slowed by a g...

14 December 2020



For more strategies and guides...

Much of this talk is adapted from published materials



A useful communication resource

A practitioner's guide to **the**
principles of COVID-19
vaccine communications

Verified 



CENTER FOR
PUBLIC INTEREST
COMMUNICATIONS
UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

Covid19VaccinesCommunicationPrinciples.org

Emotion and messaging

Clear explanations and avoiding panic





**“Does this make me
scared or angry?”**

A red flag for misinformation.



Covid-19 was a perfect storm

- Caused **fear** or **panic**
- Extremely **confusing**: Not everyone is a health expert
- New and sudden **changes** to everyday life
- Many responded with **denial** or **anger** to the pandemic

Advice from Verified and the CIPC:



Evoked the Right Emotions

Recommendations



Avoid using shame, fear or sadness in calls to action. We are likely to tune out messages that use sadness or shame to retain our positive sense of self, and fear messages can be immobilizing.



Tap into hope, pride and parental love to motivate people to act and affirm their positive sense of self.



Adapting lessons from Covid-19

- Understand the **fears** of your audience
- **Demystify** topics, your readers shouldn't need any expert knowledge
- Teach basic **media literacy** strategies like: “**Stop before you share**”
- Misinformation **repeats itself** (as we will see)



Messages matter

Recommendations



Overcome abstraction with messages that situate the importance in terms of local threat, likelihood, timeliness, and possible harm to people like you.



Use definitions and details rather than acronyms and jargon.



Identify messages that are consistent even as knowledge evolves—like the process for creating a vaccine.



Build a narrative. Situate facts within stories of individuals reclaiming control of their lives to make them believable and relatable.



Try flipping the themes of choice, regret and control and frame them in a positive way to increase vaccine uptake.



Fact-checking is not just responsive. **Teach your audience** how to spot & debunk misinformation

Becoming a **useful resource**

For you and your audience

Publish guides & factsheets



GUIDE: How to verify breaking news, in a year of crisis

2020 has not been short of major news events – and the year's not over yet. How can you know if what you are seeing reported is accurate?

10 September 2020



GUIDE: How to craft accurate science journalism out of press releases

Some research press releases may be more about institutional reputation than science – and in depleted newsrooms, this inaccurate PR could b...

09 September 2020



GUIDE: Simple steps to adjusting for inflation - and why it matters

Inflation reduces the value of money over time. Adjusting for inflation helps you accurately compare changes in prices over time. It also re...

14 August 2020



Useful topics:

- How to spot & debunk false information.
- Basic statistics, numerical literacy.
- Guides to understanding new/important legislation.
- Any complex, newsworthy topics.
- Information YOU might need.

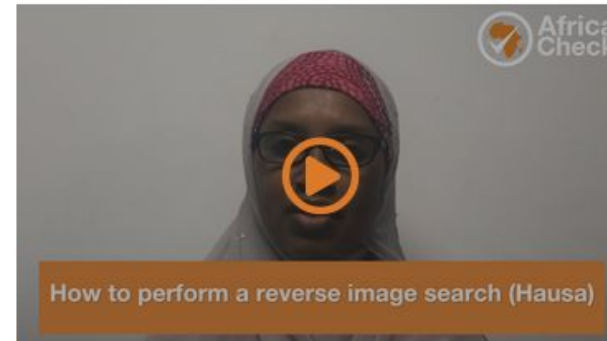
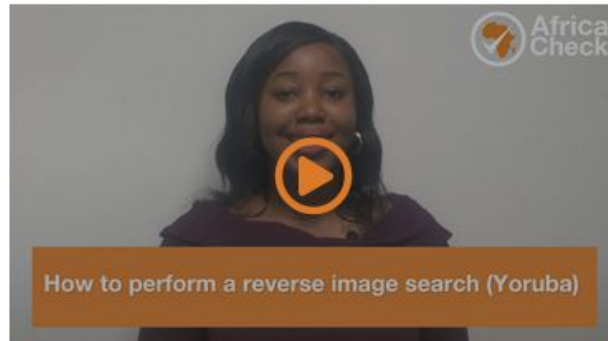
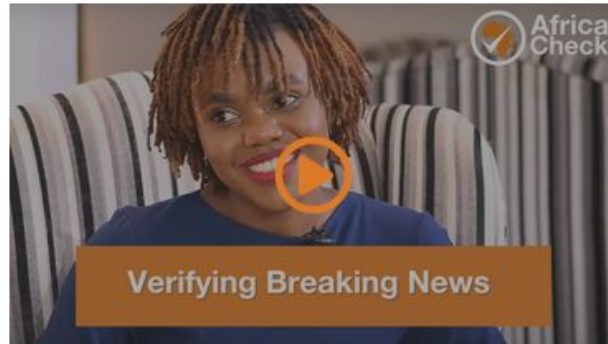
Media literacy is always a good start



Our media literacy work

Videos

Blog



[Find out about our media literacy work](#)



What is **pre-bunking**?

“A vaccine against misinformation”

Publishing accurate information **before** inaccurate claims start circulating.



Examples from Africa Check



FACTSHEET: What you need to know about vaccine approval in Nigeria

As the world counts down the weeks to a safe and effective Covid-19 vaccine, we look at the steps that would have to be followed before the...

28 October 2020



FACTSHEET: How are drugs and vaccines approved in South Africa?

As the world waits for an effective Covid-19 vaccine to be developed, the processes by which medicines are approved have received increased ...

01 September 2020



Early AI-supported Response with Social Listening

COVID-19 online conversations in 20 pilot
countries



Africa Infodemic Response Alliance

A WHO-HOSTED NETWORK

Knowing **what** to pre-bunk

What matters to your audience?

Look out for trends in misinformation



FRA / DEU / ITA / ESP / **ENG**

INFODEMIC COVID-19 IN EUROPE: A VISUAL ANALYSIS OF DISINFORMATION

A fact-checking report by AFP, CORRECTIV, Pagella
Politica/Facta, Maldita.es and Full Fact

[Download the full report here](#)





An example from... everywhere?

➡ Forwarded many times

Saudi Arabia locked down, no flights in and out

TANZANIA total lockdown.

BRAZIL plunges into its deadliest chapter.

SPAIN has declared an emergency extendable until March 2021

UK announced one-month lockdown

FRANCE 2 weeks

GERMANY for 4 weeks

ITALY also followed today.

ALL these countries have confirmed that the **THIRD WAVE** is more deadly than the first So we have to be very careful and **Take All Precautions**.

Please become a communicator of the Alert among friends and family ... **SAVE**

EVERYONE YOU CAN FROM THE THIRD WAVE.

We can't take the 2nd LOCKING PHASE AS IF NOTHING HAS HAPPEN.

...

History tells us that the 3rd wave is more dangerous than the 1st, as was the case from 1917 to 1919 with the Spanish flu. Millions of people died.

Protect yourself and your family.

Stay safe, wear a mask, keep social distance.

* COVID-19

DO NOT keep this information to yourself, share it with your family and friends.



09:03



NELSON MANDELA BAY IS THE 'HOT SPOT' IN SOUTH AFRICA!
The Covid-19 2nd WAVE IS HAPPENING!
It's a 'KILLER' & the World is going back into 'HARD LOCKDOWN!'
With an average of 10+ Deaths per day in Nelson Mandela Bay,
ignorance is the main cause of the Infection Spike.

Spain has declared a State of Emergency which may extend to March 2021...

UK ANNOUNCED ONE MONTH LOCKDOWN,
FRANCE 2 WEEKS.

GERMANY FOR 4 WEEKS

ITALY ALSO TO FOLLOW SHORTLY...

ALL THESE COUNTRIES CONFIRMED the SECOND WAVE IS MORE DEADLIER...

SO WE HAVE TO TAKE UTMOST CARE AND MAINTAIN ALL PRECAUTIONS*.

PLEASE ALSO BECOME COMMUNICATORS OF THE ALERT AMONG ALL FRIENDS AND RELATIVES... SAVE EVERYONE FROM the SECOND WAVE...

WE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO TAKE THE 2ND PHASE OF LOCKDOWN...

Yes, history tells us the Second wave is more dangerous as was the case in 1917 to 1919 with the Spanish Flu. Crores of people died.

Protect yourself and your family.

Stay Safe,

*COVID-19 VERY IMPORTANT READING *



Africa Facts Network



Build a library of good data



INFO 

FINDER |

**Making it easier
to find reliable data**



Share with other fact-checkers

- What claims you're seeing,
- How you're debunking them,
- The response from your audience.
- New techniques and tools.

ENTER THE

AFRICAN FACT-CHECKING AWARDS

A computer monitor is positioned on the right side of the image. The screen shows a webpage header with the text 'NEWS blog' in white on an orange background. A magnifying glass with a silver handle and a brown frame is held over the screen, focusing on the word 'NEWS'. The background of the entire image is a dark grey with faint, light grey line art illustrations of African architectural structures and human figures.

[#FactCheckYourAfrica](#)



The African Fact-Checking Awards

- Honours fact-checking journalism by journalists and students across Africa
- Fact-checking entries should verify the accuracy of a claim on an important topic that originated in or is relevant to Africa
- To find out more, go to africacheck.org/what-we-do/african-fact-checking-awards
- Entries close at midnight GMT on 15 July 2022.



Questions?

Africa's
Past
Under
Review

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