

# CARTOONING FOR AFRICA FACTS

FACT-CHECKER'S GUIDE



MEDIA  
DEVELOPMENT



Africa  
Check





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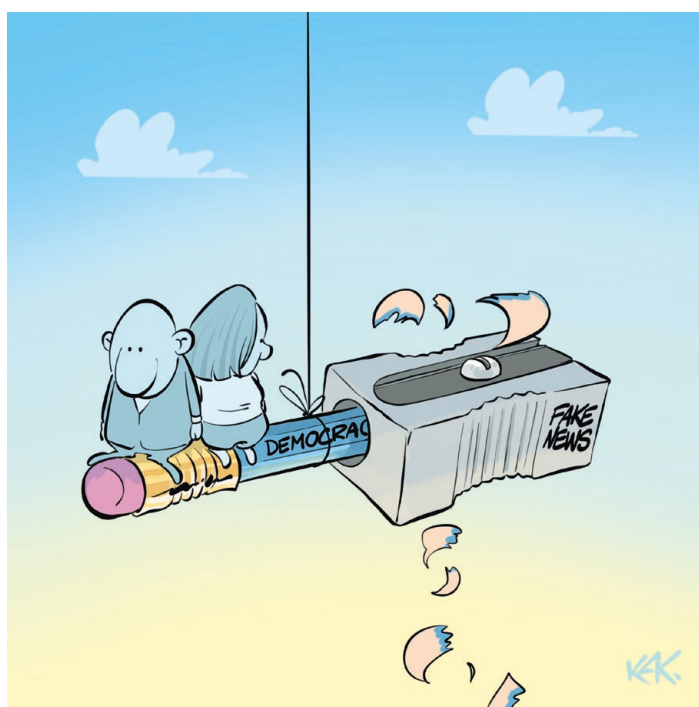
# INTRODUCTION

## DEFENDING JOURNALISM IN AFRICA AGAINST THE INFILTRATION OF DISINFORMATION AND PROPAGANDA

Disinformation in Africa, as elsewhere, is increasingly taking on the guise of journalism. Through video content, articles or 'investigations' that look professional, propaganda campaigns exploit the codes of the press to better manipulate opinion. This deceptive appropriation of journalistic formats is blurring the line between information and manipulation - and making it ever more dangerous.

In 2023, a fake 'news channel' supposedly based in Burkina Faso broadcasted on social media reports critical of the country's international partners, orchestrated by foreign agencies. In Mali, videos circulating on Telegram simulated reports from the field to justify military operations, even though they were produced thousands of kilometers away. In the Central African Republic, fake articles circulated on websites imitating recognized media spread conspiracy theories, claiming to be 'alternative journalism'. These are not isolated examples.

In this climate of information confusion, professional journalists are on the front line. Their work is regularly attacked, denigrated or parasitized by media



Kak (France)

counter-fires that imitate their formats while undermining their credibility. At Reporters Without Borders (RSF), we pay the price on an almost daily basis with the circulation of videos that use our faces, our graphics and our formats to make us say the opposite of what we say. And we have been able to prove that this content is deliberately created to undermine credibility, perpetuate vagueness and, in the end, make the facts fall by the wayside in favor of an ideology, often one of war and influence.



In the face of this offensive, fact-checking is an essential lever. Cartoonists also play a crucial role. Through their press cartoons, they offer a critical and accessible view of current affairs. In this spirit, we salute the remarkable work of fact-checking organisations on the continent, in particular committed partners such as Africa Check and Zimfact, which demystifies false information through rigorous investigations, and Cartooning for Peace, which uses press cartoons as a tool for education and resistance to manipulation. Their day-to-day commitment is a valuable compass

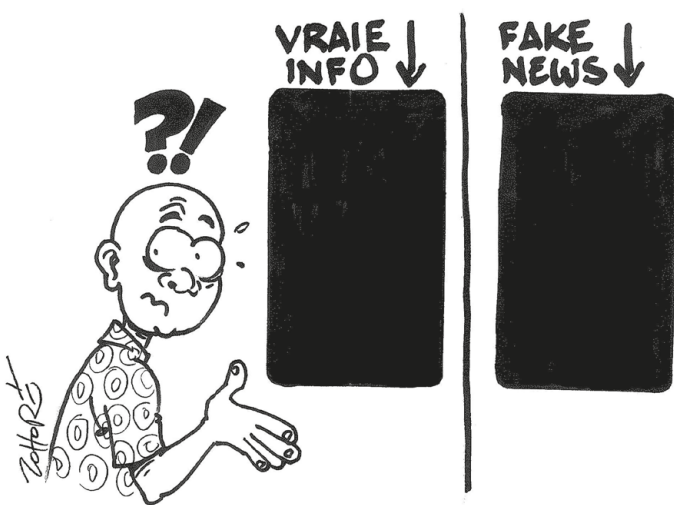
Alongside them, RSF has also launched the Journalism Trust Initiative, an international scheme that provides a transparent reference framework to distinguish

media that respect professional standards of independence, transparency and accountability. In Africa, several media have embarked on this process, affirming their desire to stand out in an environment blurred by manipulation.

Promoting reliable media, giving citizens the tools to identify them, making the digital platforms that host and distribute this content accountable: these are concrete ways of restoring trust. Disinformation that mimics journalism is not just a technical challenge: it is an attack on the public's right to be informed. In this context, defending ethical, rigorous and free journalism in Africa is more urgent than ever. And this illustrated fact-checker guide strives to work towards that goal.

Anne Bocandé,

Editorial Director of Reporters Without Borders



Zohoré (Ivory Coast) / "True news - Fake news"

This guide is divided into two sections.

The **first part** covers the importance of fact-checking in a world struggling with high volumes of misinformation and disinformation. It offers some simple tips to the public on how to identify and verify false information. Public participation is key in the battle against the spread of falsehoods in the media space.

The **second section**, offering extra resources and technical tools, is targeted at professional fact-checkers operating in an increasingly challenging environment in which **artificial Intelligence** is having both a positive and negative impact in the information ecosystem.

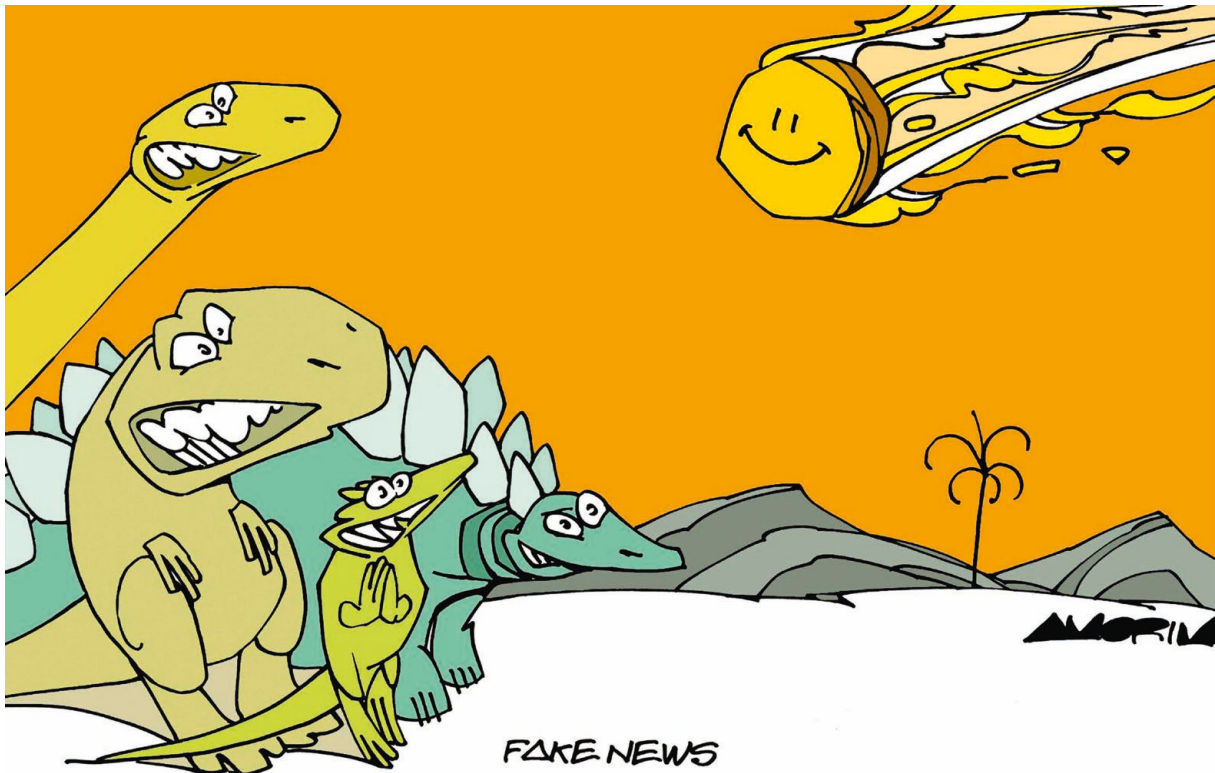
SECTION ONE  
**FACT-CHECKING  
IS FOR  
EVERYONE,  
NOT JUST  
JOURNALISTS**

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# DANGERS OF FALSE INFORMATION

False news can lead to poor health decisions, harden stereotypes, create social divisions and damage the public's trust in the media. Especially when these stories get shared a lot and attract traffic to dodgy and popular websites. False information can also cause real harm by:

- Preventing people from seeking or finding appropriate help
- Reinforcing myths around prejudice, particularly race
- Marginalizing individuals and communities
- Creating unnecessary fear and panic
- Preventing the appropriate allocation of resources or strategic responses.



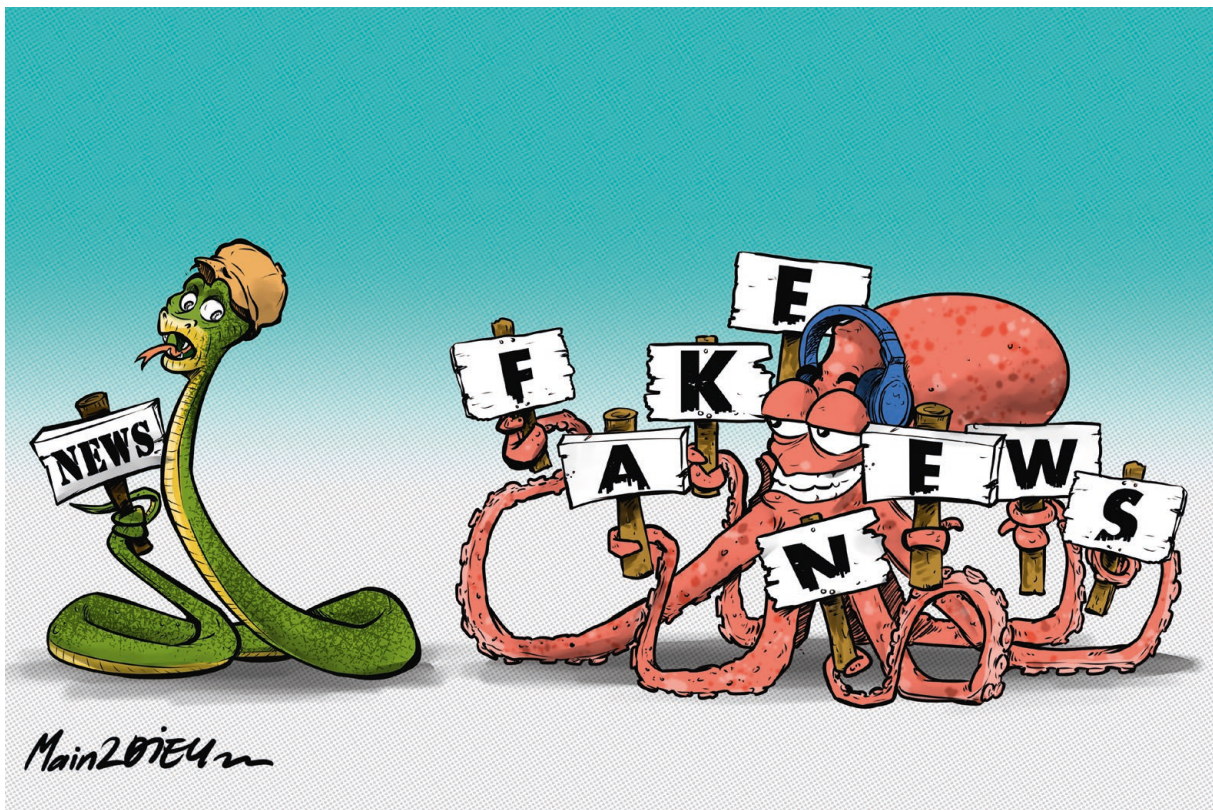
Amorim (Brazil)

# WHY FACTS MATTER

People make decisions every day based on the information available to them – on social media, we decide how to dress up in the coming days after looking at the weather forecast, we decide where to go on vacation based on information, pictures and booking prices that are shown to us. These decisions we make almost automatically. And then there are decisions such as who we're going to vote for in the next election or whether we're going to get vaccinated and make sure our children are vaccinated against certain diseases, and so on. And this is why we do fact-checking – to give people accurate information so that they can make well-informed decisions about issues that can have an impact on their lives.

Another reason to do fact-checking is because of the dangers of “he said, she said reporting”. This basically refers to citizens, and especially to journalists accurately quoting sources – but not verifying whether what they say is factually correct. Most internet users and journalists do this at some point. BUT if you quote claims with no scientific basis – especially when it's around health dis- or misinformation – and you don't include accurate information to the contrary based on credible research, the information provided to your audience is not only misleading and possibly damaging, it could actually be life-threatening.

Main2Dieu (Burkina Faso)





Let us take the following example to illustrate this point. In the early 2000s, the World Health Organization (WHO) was conducting a polio vaccination campaign in northern Nigeria. The local media began reporting rumors that this was not a polio vaccine, and that the WHO was giving people something more sinister - HIV (human immunodeficiency virus, responsible for AIDS) or fertility drugs, causing parents to boycott the vaccine.

These rumors subsequently had a negative impact on the vaccination campaign, and a polio epidemic spread across the Sahel.

Disinformation involves false information deliberately invented or manipulated and disseminated in order to mislead. The person sharing it knows it is false. Misinformation occurs when false information is shared unintentionally or by mistake. The person sharing it usually does not know it is false.

## SPOTTING FALSE INFORMATION

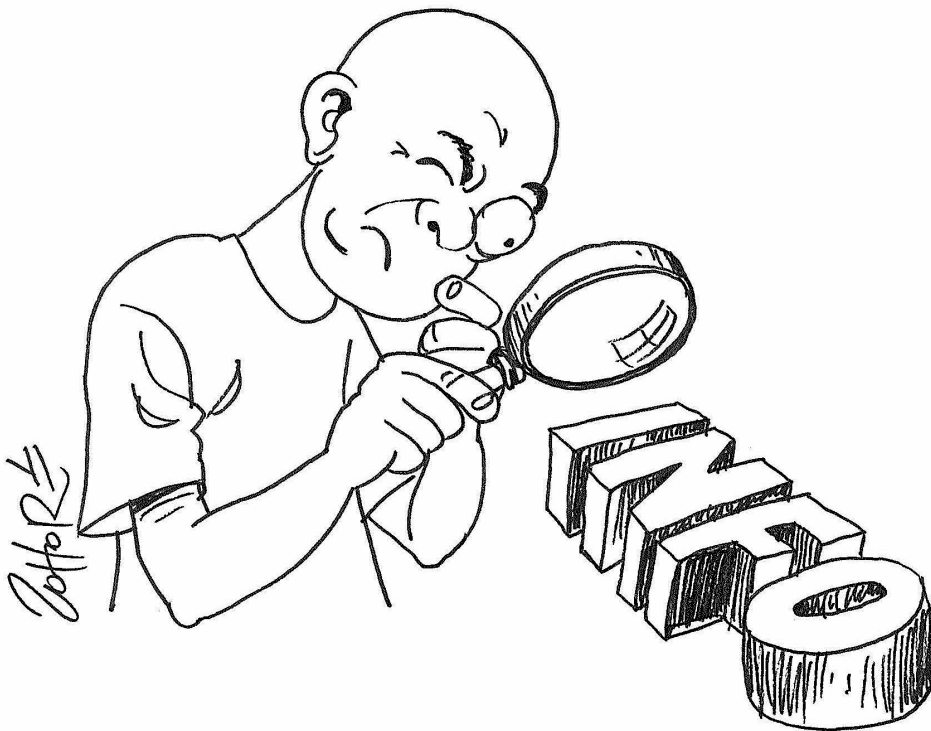
Widespread mis- and disinformation is a global problem, increasingly challenging the way we share information and perceive the world around us. While artificial intelligence plays a major part in that increase, social media has drastically increased the pace at which information is shared with a diversity of sources sharing information at a time. It has real effects on our society, politics, and public health.

The following steps will help you spot false information :

→ When you feel your emotions being triggered, be very suspicious. Does what you see make you feel happy, satisfied, scared or angry? Always ask yourself why someone would have

posted this. Science shows people react to information with emotion, rather than with reason. It does not mean information is always wrong when it triggers your emotions, but when it does, pause and check before you share it.

→ Remember that we all have bias based on our personal experience, where we come from, who we surround ourselves with and what we are exposed to. And the one that makes fact-checking very difficult, is CONFIRMATION BIAS: Research has shown that we tend to agree with information that comforts us in our beliefs. This explains why it's sometimes difficult to convince people of the facts even if you



Zohoré  
(Ivory Coast)

can back it up with scientific evidence. So, make sure you are not reacting to information because of your bias.

- Does the information sound too good, shocking or unlikely to be true? Then it probably isn't true. If a news report claims there is a wonder kid somewhere on earth with three brains, be very suspicious – although it's easier to fall for these posts or click on it out of curiosity than one thinks, especially at uncertain times when people are desperate for money – as we saw during Covid lockdowns. Scams like these are usually attempts to get your money or your personal information.
- It's always important to determine the source of information and whether you can trust it. When you suspect you're looking at imposter content, make sure the info is really from a trusted news source and check social media handles to see if they're the official handles of the

said news account. You may also have a look at other content on the same social media account or shared by the same person on other online platforms. People who share dis- or misinformation, have often done it before.



Main2Dieu (Burkina Faso)

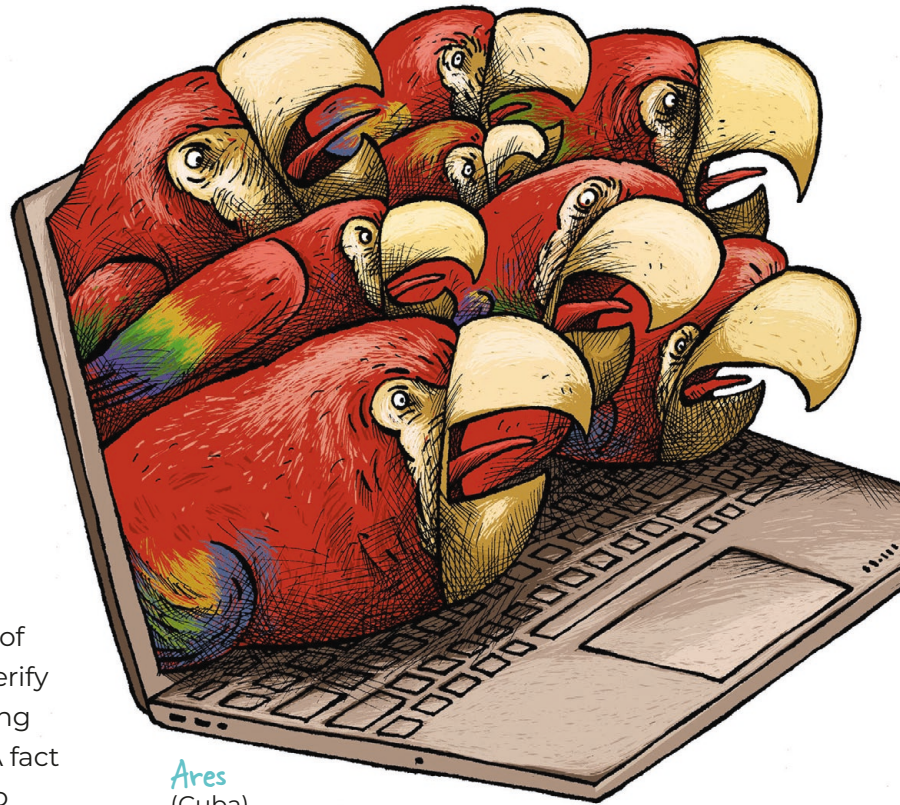


# FACT-CHECKING, AND VERIFYING INFORMATION

Fact-checking as a practice is a powerful defence against this threat. It helps stem the circulation of unverified or misleading information, and raises the public's awareness of how to identify this information and help stop its spread.

In simple terms, fact-checking is a set of practices and tools that allow you to verify information. It is the process of checking on information to get the facts right. A fact is something, or information, known to be true. Any type of content can be fact-checked: photos, videos, rumors shared on social networks or through the media.

Independence from political parties and State influence is fundamental to the integrity of fact-checking organisations. Indeed, the first principle in the International Fact Checking Network (IFCN) code of principles is “a commitment to nonpartisanship and fairness”. The IFCN was created in order to promote fact-checking in journalism. Given that they operate in an atmosphere of widespread and at times justified suspicion of the media, fact-checking organisations have stressed the need to explicitly reassure their audiences of their impartiality.



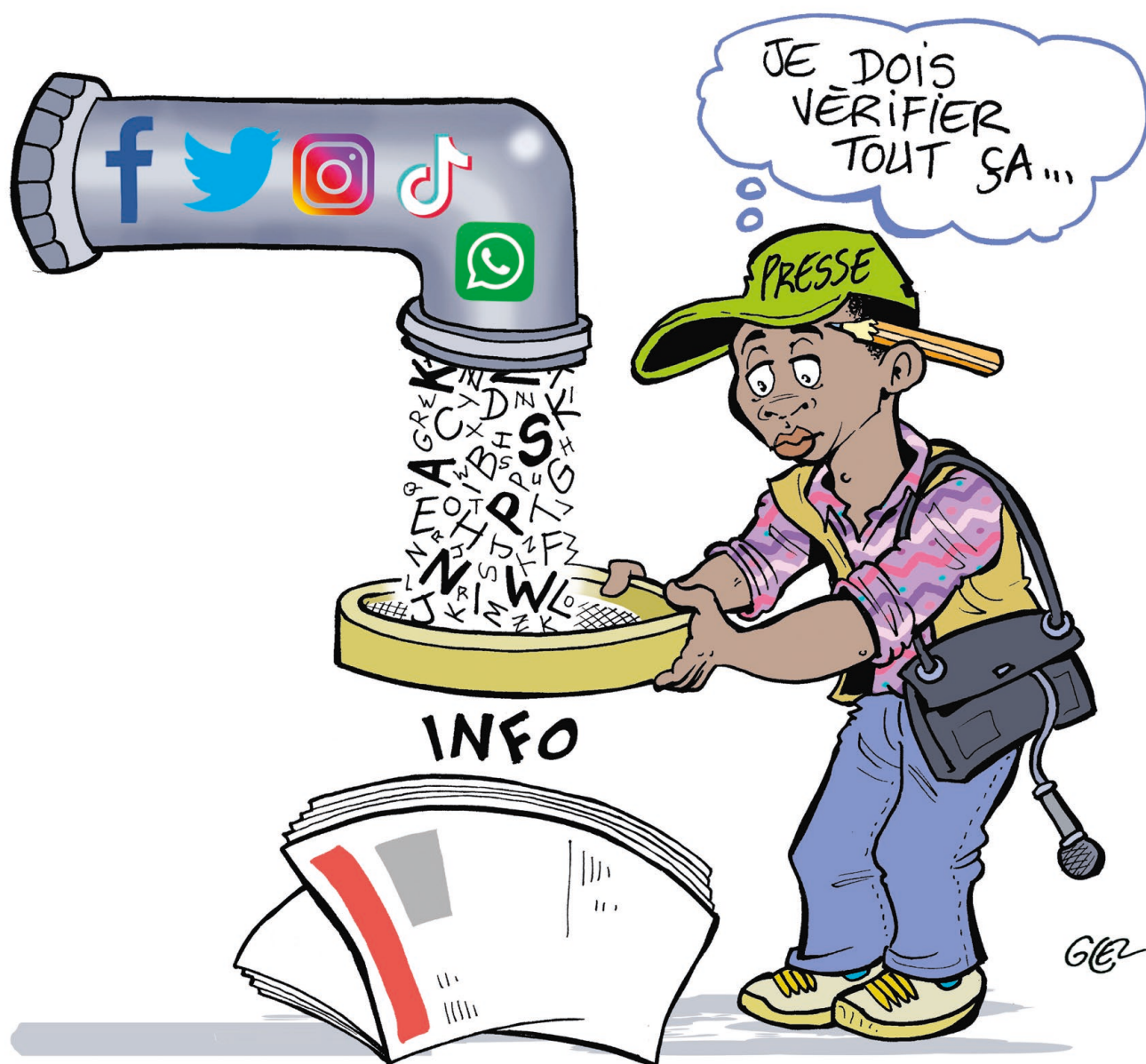
Ares  
(Cuba)

Verifying information should be a regular and systematic habit. Fact-checking isn't just the responsibility of journalists—it's something everyone should practice. Access to accurate information is essential for making informed decisions. To achieve this, both journalists and citizens must hold public figures accountable for their public statements.

Fact-checking also means ensuring that what we share is true. When in doubt, leave it out until you have solid evidence that the information is accurate.

## TIPS AND TOOLS: HOW TO VERIFY IMAGES, VIDEOS ?

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Glez (Burkina Faso)  
"I have to check all this"

FIRST AND MOST IMPORTANT: Techniques (and asking the right questions) are more important than tools. In fact, the images and videos we come across with are often not fake, photoshopped or tampered. Most of them are real images and videos that are shared out of context – for example, you’ll receive an image via WhatsApp taken at a violent protest in your area but when you have a closer look, the image was taken at a protest three years ago and/or in a different location. So how can we determine whether we’re looking at an old photo or video or one that’s used out of context?

You need to ask three questions: When was it taken? Where was it taken? What really happened?

To find answers to these questions, you need to do a Reverse image search. Reverse image search is just a fancy way of saying that you’re looking to find an image online. And instead of just typing in a phrase or a word and searching the internet for results, you’re uploading an image to see if and where the image has been published or used on the internet before. This is very helpful as you can often easily see if you’re looking at an old image that has been around for some time. The most important thing, however, is to try to find out at which event and where the original picture was taken.

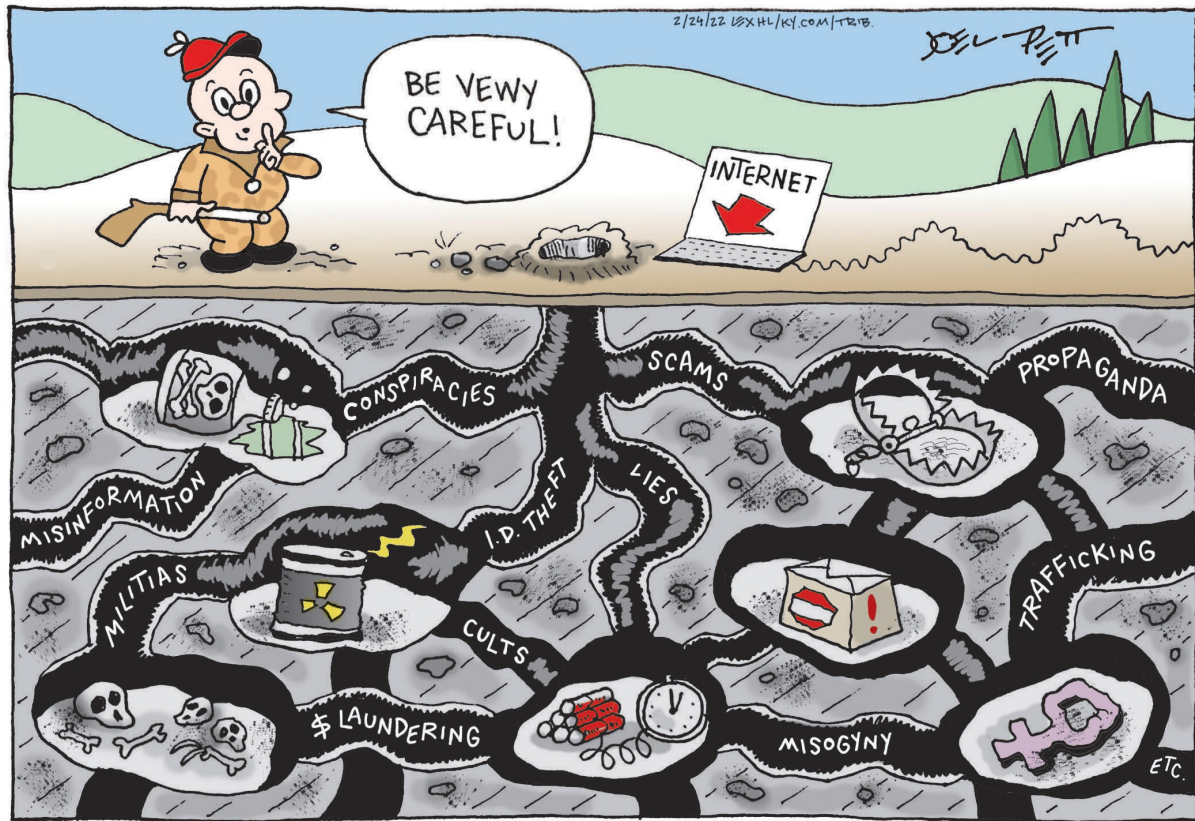
The most common Reverse image search tools are : Google images and Google Lens, TinEye, Bing, Invid RevEye. Note that with

RevEye, you can choose between all the image search engines like Google, Bing, Yandex and TinEye or use all of them at once. It allows you to perform a reverse image search by right-clicking on any image on a website. InVID is a usually a great help for video verification The process for verifying videos is similar. Just take a screenshot of a frame in the video and do a reverse image search with it. Or, have InVID do it for you with its keyframes function. Besides, video geolocation also helps. Geolocation is all about determining where an image or video was taken. And to do this, you don’t always need online verification tools; it’s often just a matter of being on the lookout for certain warning signs or red flags that might indicate that a picture or video is not used in the right context.

Be aware of deepfake videos that are becoming increasingly trendy on social media. The term “deepfake” is a merging of “deep learning” and “fake” – which use machine learning and artificial intelligence to create fake videos. To spot them, you could need careful attention to detail to notice any unusual scene or failed lip synchronization. You could also a reverse image search of screenshots of the video or search for keywords describing the event. Compare versions of the video from trusted sources to the video you are trying to verify. Besides, look for “jumps” in the video or clumsy transitions where something has been added or deleted. You can do this by moving through single frames of the video.



# WHAT CAN YOU DO (TO HELP FIGHT MISINFORMATION?)



Joel Pett (USA)

We all need to do our bit to break the cycle of misinformation, and not just leave it to journalists or fact-checkers. When a public figure makes a claim that affects your life, you need to ask for evidence. For instance, a claim about the number of foreigners “that steal your jobs” or a claim about “a new traditional remedy that cures COVID and all other viral remedies” clearly need checking. Whether the allegations relate to health, politics or some other field, they have to show us proof, and we in turn have to check whether the evidence is reliable.

In several African countries, the WhatsApp application has become the main means of communication between people and

members of the same family. That is why it is more important than ever to make sure the messages you share with your loved ones are true. When you receive the kind of message on WhatsApp or on other social media containing lots of suspicious claims - let us assume your mom is sending it to keep you informed, because she cares about you - you have the power to break the cycle of misinformation by asking yourself five (5) questions before forwarding the message:

→ Who wrote it? Can you really trust a message whose author is anonymous?

→ Can you verify the claims made in the message? Has a credible news site published the information with reliable sources?

→ Does the information frighten or anger you? If the message appeals to your emotions, be particularly careful. Fake messages about crime, new laws or foreigners tend to play on people's fears and prejudices.

→ Does the message contain shocking images, videos or audio? Have you checked that the images are not from another country or a different year?

→ Can you be sure it is not a hoax?

In addition to these five tips, you can raise awareness about the dangers and risks of dis/misinformation.



Thiago (Brazil)

# WHAT ABOUT FACT-CHECKING IN AFRICA?

“ One of the most striking challenges we have consistently observed is the low level of digital literacy. While providing training to fact-checkers, it becomes evident—even among professional journalists—that many lack access to adequate digital equipment.

This reality often requires us to begin with foundational digital skills before delving into the core fact-checking methodologies.

While this adds an extra layer of complexity to the training, it also makes the process more impactful and rewarding, as we witness first-hand the enthusiasm and joy of participants who are finally able to perform tasks they once deemed impossible.

This underscores the crucial role of capacity-building efforts in strengthening fact-checking ecosystems in contexts such as Angola.»

**Zedilson Almeida, General Manager,  
Manifexto Angola**

“ False information travels through humans in form of jokes/memes but can actually cause great harm. People need to be educated about the repercussions of these memes that promote misinformation.»

**Edgar M Karuhanga, Head of Training,  
Debunk Media Initiative, Uganda**

“ Fact-checking is essential as it upholds information integrity and supports informed public discourse, crucial in regions like Ethiopia where misinformation can undermine democracy and trust. Additionally, in conflict-prone areas, unchecked misinformation can escalate tensions and fuel instability, making diligent fact-checking vital for maintaining societal peace.»

**Abel Wabella, Executive Director,  
Inform Africa Ethiopia**



“With the power of the media and social media, misinformation has become more widespread, sometimes moving from the virtual to the real world. Demonstrating that the information conveyed (sometimes even by reputable media) is incorrect helps to calm tensions and wars.»

**Michèle Ebongue, Researcher,  
DataCheck, Cameroon**

“In our regions, fact-checking is about saving lives. A mis/disinformation about a situation can easily endanger lives. That’s why we created Congo Check. The matter has increased with AI, most of people believe what they see without any check, because of the low level of education. We always say, fact-checking is saving lives.»

**Rodriguez Katsuva, Co-founder and  
editor in chief, Congo Check! Democratic  
Republic of Congo**

“In countries in security and humanitarian crisis such as ours, access to true, factual information is essential, if not vital. I always say that information for society is like blood in a human body. If the blood is of poor quality, the body gets sick. In the same way, false or poor-quality information makes society sick.»

**Ange Levy Jordan Meda, Editor, Faso Check, Burkina Faso**

SECTION TWO

**PROFESSIONAL  
FACT-CHECKING**

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Professional fact-checkers require three critical elements to carry out their work diligently.

**Firstly**, a solid steel sense of conviction that misinformation is harmful to public good, and how people relate to issues.

**Secondly**, strong commitment to continuous capacity building and technical skills development to appreciate, and to work effectively in a dynamic media and communication ecosystem.

**Thirdly**, confidence that fact-checking initiatives, national, regional and global collaborations and networks are critical in highlighting the importance of facts and verifiable information for public good, transparency and accountability in governance and the entrenchment of democracy and respect of human rights.

The professional fact-checker can draw some operating guidelines under a **“Triple C” principle – Conviction, Capacity and Confidence.**

In a digital world overwhelmed by an information avalanche, it is practically impossible to fact check **every piece of information of public interest, even of immense public interest.**

The professional fact-checker must **prioritise focus on the most pressing public interest issues of the day. Contextually, environmentally.** These might differ, from space to space.

This section outlines, in a condensed format, some tips for professional fact checking and information verification.

**Fact-check it!**



Gado (Kenya)

# TRACKING THE TRENDS

- on how false or misleading information is spreading.
- on information and media consumption patterns by audiences
- on impact of changing technologies on information and media sectors
- on development of new conspiracy theories and organised propaganda
- on evolving platforms, and opportunities for increased collaborations



Glez (Burkina Faso)

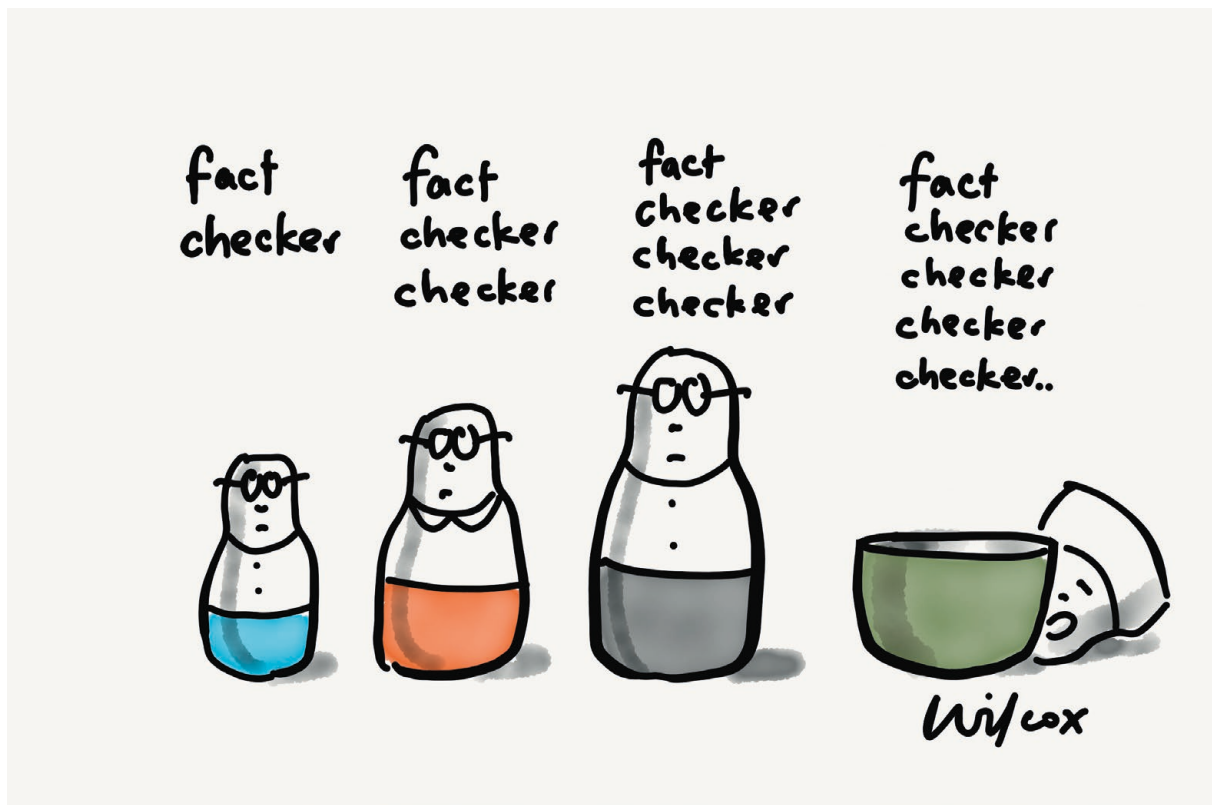
**The primary role** of professional fact checkers is to spot and flag instances of misinformation, disinformation and malinformation – prioritising focus on information around issues of great public interest.

This focus means professional fact-checkers resist getting sucked in, and therefore chasing for factual verification issues and information interesting to the public, such as community gossip and colourful stories around celebrities, public officials and high profile business executives.

Professional fact-checkers should try as much as possible to **track the trends** on what and how misleading information is being packaged or spread around issues of immense public interest such as **political statements, laws, regulations, promises by public officials in governance and public management institutions, private or public company policies and statements, programmes of non-governmental organisations (NGOs), management, state and delivery of public services.**

Many of these institutions are employing public relations and management executives who are sleekly pumping out tightly false to heavily doctored and misleading information into the media ecosystem.

**Issues of public interest** include health, governance, public finances and public finance management, promises by public officials including politicians, basic social service delivery, politics and democracy, the law and the judiciary, human rights, education, gender programmes, water and sanitation, food production and safety, environment and climate, safety and security,



Wilcox (Australia)

This distinction, of issues of public interest and issues interesting to the public, is critical for professional fact-checkers because some people sometimes confuse the two.

The professional fact-checker must be immune to such confusion because the **primary role of the fact-checker is to serve the larger public** by spotting and flagging false information prioritizing issues of public interest.

This means the fact-checker makes a judgement call on what issues will have the greatest impact on the public.

This has to be done timely, and contextually in order to:

- **Flag instances of false information.**
- **Explain the dangers posed by misinformation.**
- **Give pointers on how to identify and minimise the spread of misleading information.**

The information ecosystem is changing so fast and the professional fact-checker should stay updated through reading, collaborations and sharing information in national, regional and global fact checking networks. Without a clear education programme of following **the trends and changes**, the professional fact-checker can follow woefully behind.

# FACT-CHECKING ORGANIZATIONS' OBLIGATIONS TO THEIR AUDIENCE – TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

In fighting the scourge of misinformation, **professional** fact-checking organisations have an obligation to:

1. Clearly spell out their fact-checking processes.
2. Give references to sources of information.
3. Declare any other sources, and sources of funding
4. Before fact-checking any item, establish if it hasn't been tackled already. If it has, and is simply being repeated, save time and energy: re-run the fact checked information, and acknowledge the source. That's the value of networks, and collaborations.
5. Use AI Tools whenever possible to save time and energy, but declared and acknowledge this work openly.

This is **important for transparency, accountability and credibility**.



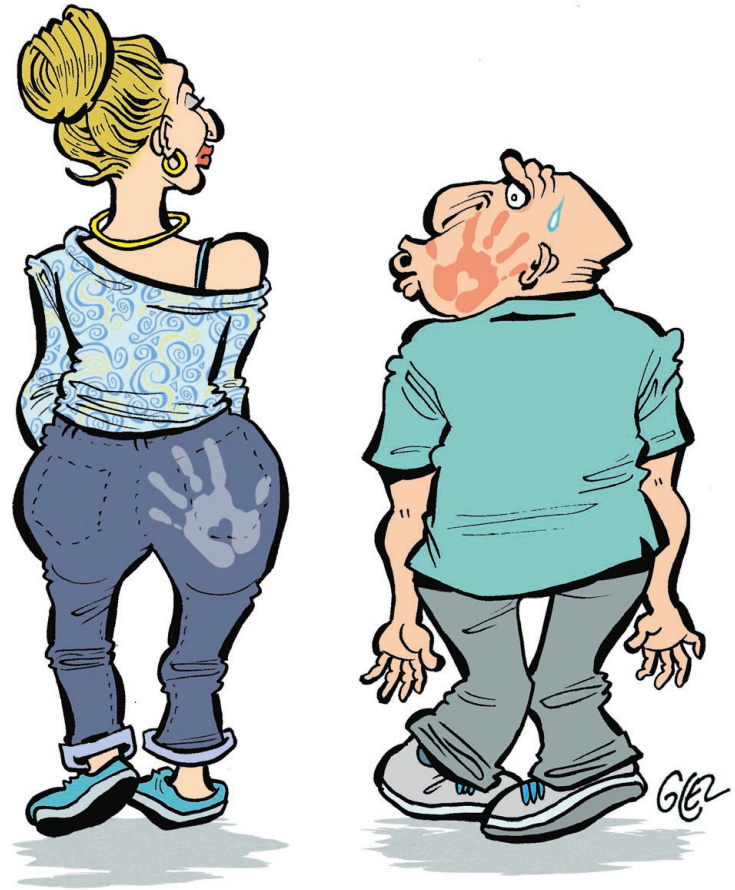
This is a key requirement of membership in the International Fact-Checking Network (IFCN), dedicated to providing technical skills, professional training and to assisting fact-checking organisations towards sustainability.



# GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE – SO WHO IS BEATING WHO?

For example, when fact-checking issues of alleged gender-based violence it is critical for fact-checkers to consider the following:

- **Understand the context** – explain what happened between the estranged parties, what do police or doctors reports say so that you get the facts right. Be mindful not to divulge the subjects' medical history.
- **Avoid perpetuating stereotypes** – Do illustrations accurately depict the dynamics of genderbased violence that are prevailing without fuelling existing stereotypes
- **Track the numbers** – only rely on statistics from authorities like the police, gender commissions, international agencies and NGOs. It is important to triangulate this data to ensure accuracy.



Glez (Burkina Faso)

No, video doesn't show father murdering baby in Gatanga Murang'a, Kenya – scene from Tanzanian educational movie

*Warning: This report links to distressing content.*

On 25 January 2022 Kenyan media reported that a man in Gatanga Murang'a county had killed his four-month-old son after an argument with his wife, by "smashing" the child against a wall.

"Mark Njunguna, according to a report filed at the Kihumbuini Police Station, had raised doubts on the paternity of the child leading to the confrontation", one report reads. It adds that the boy "died on impact".



A day later, a video went viral with the claim that it showed the murder. In the video, a man is beating a screaming woman while a child lies on the floor. The man then grabs and throws the child out of frame.

“A 23-year-old man in Gatanga Murang’a County knocked his 4-month old son against the wall leading to his death following a dispute with his wife”, reads one caption to the video, on Facebook.

“Kenyan man Kills 4-month old baby, over suspicion of paternity”, reads another.

The video – and its claim – has been shared on blogs and Facebook groups. A frame from the video has even reached South Africa, again with the claim that it shows the murder.

But was the tragedy really caught on camera? We checked.



### **Scene from ‘work of fiction’ on gender-based violence**

A reverse image search of a frame from the video led us to an article on pulselive.co.ke, which debunks the link between the video and the murder.

“This journalist has established that the video is from a Tanzanian film titled Sitamani

Kuolewa Tena (I don’t wish to get married again), a work of fiction”, the article reads.

It links to a longer video posted on YouTube on 26 January. This shows several incidents of violence against women and children. The clip in the viral video appears towards the end.

The video’s Kiswahili caption reads: “Trailer hii ya filamu ya sitamani kuolewa tena ni hadithi yakubuni haihusiani na tukio lolote la kweli hadithi hii imetungwa kwa lengo la kuelimisha jamii na kupinga ukatili wanaofanyiwa wanawake na watoto ukatili ambao umeenea katika nchi nyingi za kiafrica.

This roughly translates as: “This trailer is a work of fiction and does not show any real incident. It has been shot with an aim to educate society and fight gender-based violence, especially that targeting women and children, a vice that is spread throughout Africa.”

A man did allegedly murder his child in Gatanga Murang’a county in late January. But the viral video accompanying reports of the murder is a work of fiction, and does not show the murder.

# VERIFYING TEXT, IMAGES, VIDEOS AND AI CONTENT

The emergence of AI technology has ushered in a new dynamic to the fight against misinformation and disinformation, this includes;

- More and better quality mis-and disinformation, AI tools can generate content with unmatched speed and efficiency.
- During elections across the globe, there has been an influx of deepfakes, robocalls, fabricated confessions, speeches and news reports
- Personal privacy and dignity have been violated through non-consensual sexual content
- Scams and hoaxes have also become a bigger threat as they are now more difficult to detect

## What about videos, and AI content?

The use of AI has become prominent in this hyper-digital era further complicating the work of fact-checkers. Altering and fabrication of videos is now a common menace that requires a higher technical acumen to spot AI generated videos.

Here are a few points fact-checkers should consider when verifying videos:

The verification of text, images, videos and AI content demands diligent cross-checking of references across a range of platforms as indicated below:

- What was posted, if any on websites, official platforms?
- What does the source (principal author/producer or originator) have?
- What about other media sources, including live radio or TV broadcast content?
- What is the difference between original and AI generated content?
- What is the impact of the information?
- Where is the difference between an original video and one that is AI generated?
- What clues can one look out for to flag AI generated videos?
- What system, or AI Tool did you use to check and verify authenticity?
- Give a short and clear advice to the public on how to cross-check and verify this.

## ALTERED: This video of army officers performing a pro-Bobi Wine song is doctored

The clip has been edited, and the audio replaced.

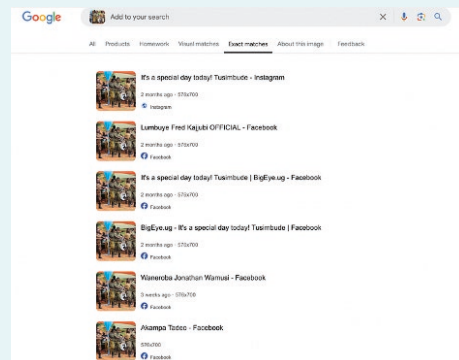
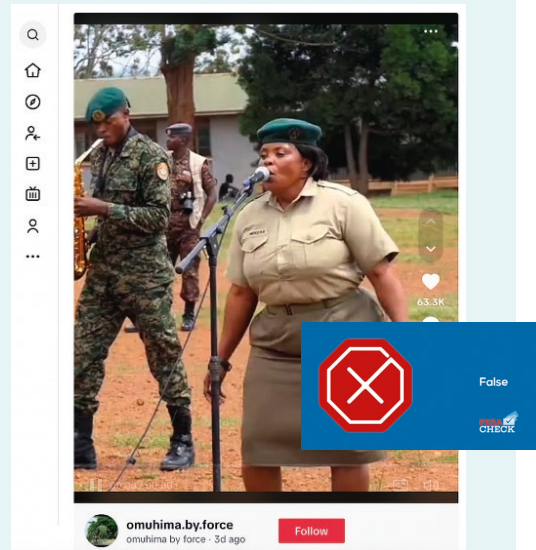
This [TikTok video](#) showing security officers singing and dancing to a song about Ugandan opposition politician Robert Kyagulanyi, alias Bobi Wine, is ALTERED.

The 58-second video is in Luganda. The same clip was [posted](#) on X (formerly Twitter).

However, a Google reverse image search on the video's keyframes established that the officers were dancing to a different song whose content is unrelated to Bobi Wine.

The search uncovered old clips ([here](#) and [here](#)) of the officers lip-syncing to Afrigo Band's "Jim." This Ugandan song about love and persistence contrasts with the claim's clip.

PesaCheck has looked into a TikTok video showing security officers singing and dancing to a song about Bobi Wine and finds it ALTERED.



*This post is part of an ongoing series of PesaCheck fact-checks examining content marked as **potential misinformation** on Facebook and other social media platforms.*

*By partnering with Facebook and similar social media platforms, third-party fact-checking organisations like PesaCheck are helping to sort fact from fiction. We do this by giving the public deeper insight and context to posts they see in their social media feeds.*

*Have you spotted what you think is fake or false information on Facebook? [Here's how you can report](#). And, [here's more information on PesaCheck's methodology](#) for fact-checking questionable content.*

*This fact-check was written by Senior PesaCheck fact-checker [Pius Enywaru](#) and edited by PesaCheck senior copy editor [Mary Mutisya](#) and chief copy editor [Stephen Ndegwa](#).*

*The article was approved for publication by PesaCheck's managing editor [Doreen Wainainah](#).*

## What about AI and your Fact-checking Toolbox?

However, it's not all doom and gloom for fact-checkers, there are a variety of AI tools developed to assist in the fact-checking process so as to counter the spread of fake news, these include:



- **Dubawa Chatbot** – The bot responds to user questions based on fact-checked articles published on the Dubawa website. This initiative leverages on Dubawa's database of fact-checked content to provide users with accurate information and debunk misinformation when queried.

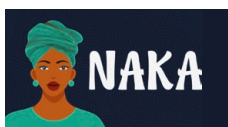
Claim: A recent claim submitted to the DUBAWA chatbot queried if electricity in Nigeria has been fully privatised.

Verdict: FALSE! Nigeria's electricity sector is partly privatised. While electricity generation and distribution are private, the government retains control over transmission, which plays a key role in regulation and pricing.

FALSE



- **Dubawa Audio Platform** – The Dubawa Audio Platform is a cutting-edge tool developed to automate the process of fact-checking radio content. It transcribes audio recordings, identifies fact-check-worthy claims, and supports fact-checkers in verifying the accuracy of information broadcasted on radio and other audio-focused platforms.



- **Naka** – Togo Check collaborated with the Africa Women Journalism Project to launch Naka, a Facebook messaging bot dedicated to tracking and verifying gender-related misinformation both online and offline in Togo. Naka is capable of receiving information from citizens in the form of text, audio, and video, which it then analyses, categorizes, and verifies to generate reports that help us understand and reduce these harmful narratives that threaten the democratic participation of everyone.



- **Claim Buster** is an innovative fact-check feature that helps people quickly and easily evaluate the credibility of online news stories. It utilizes advanced algorithms to scan for false claims, misleading statements, and other discrepancies in online news articles. The feature also provides users with additional sources of information, such as other news outlets, and fact-checking websites, to help them make more informed decisions about what they are reading.



- **Hoaxy** – visualizes the spread of claims and fact checking articles on social media. It helps track the dissemination of information and identifies sources that contribute to the spread of misinformation.



### Challenges posed by AI

AI is a tool that complements human expertise, not a replacement for it. Human fact-checkers bring critical thinking, context, and nuance to the process, which AI algorithms may struggle to replicate.

A new approach for detecting forged and manipulated videos. Their system combines forensic analysis with deep learning to detect fake videos that would slip past human reviewers or existing systems.

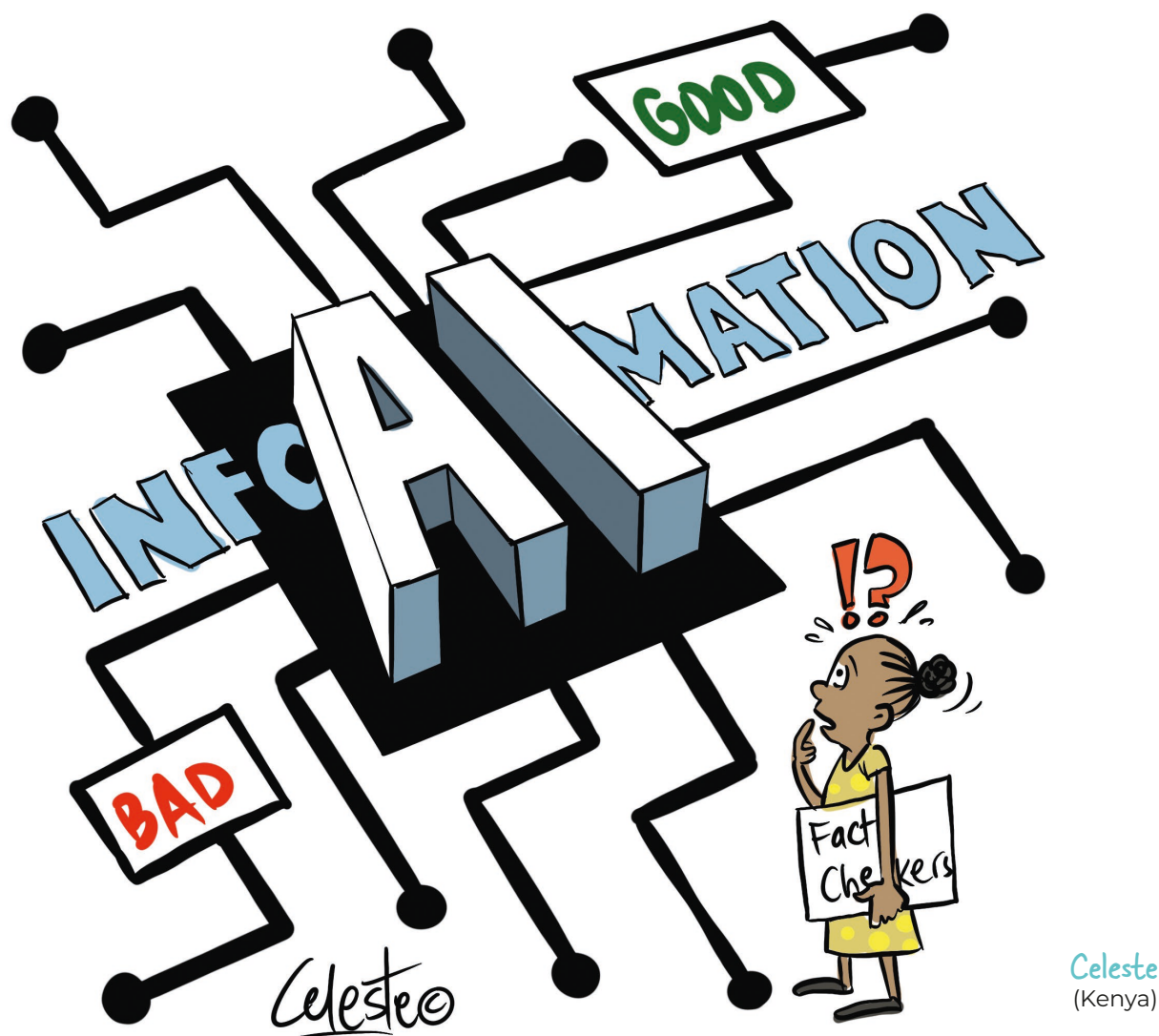
But fact-checking isn't usually so straightforward. A quote might be accurate, but misleading. Every news story is built on a subjective frame of what's included — or excluded. That nuance, however, is lost when researchers test a new AI model against benchmark datasets that catalog posts as true or false.

Since most AI developers are experimenting with this technology, some tools have been known to “hallucinate”, that is sometimes by providing inaccurate or exaggerated responses.

Fact-checkers must stay alert on this technology as well to avoid spreading falsehoods by surrendering their editorial responsibilities.







**For fact-checkers in Africa, Algorithmic bias** remains a big challenge as most of the AI tools have been developed in Western and Eastern countries. The existing datasets have little information on African countries, and where they exist, they lack contextual issues, leaving them open to accusations of perpetuating racial and social stereotypes.

Fact-checkers in these circumstances run a risk of misleading their audiences should they rely entirely on AI tools.

The absence of AI policies and regulation in many countries has raised a liability issue concerning the use of AI tools.

There are hardly any legal cases over the abuse of AI systems to spread false information, and there's justified fear that without any form of mediation from the developers, AI is also a deadly tool for the spread of "fake news".

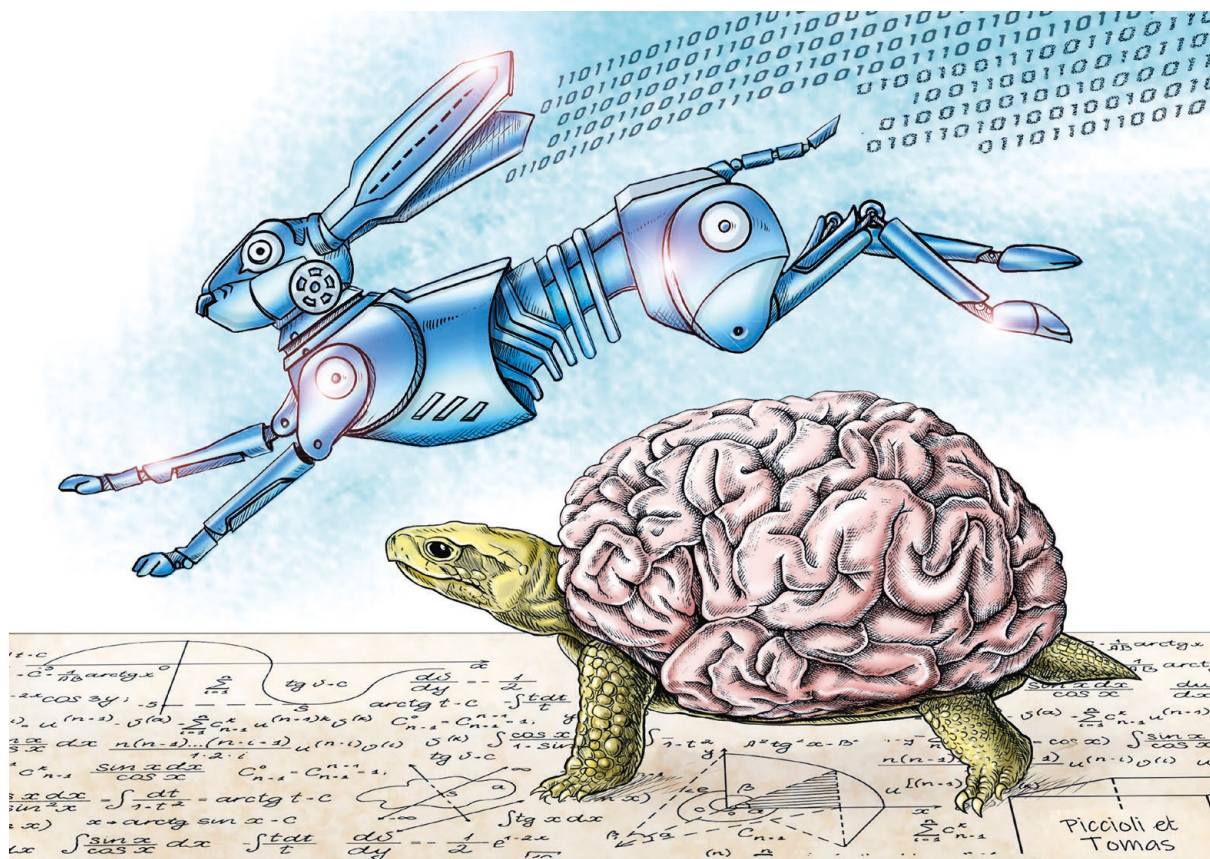
## What about the opportunities of using AI Tools?

In today's digital age, the spread of misinformation has become a significant concern. With the rise of social media and the ease of sharing information online, fake news has the potential to reach millions of people within seconds. This has led to a growing need for fact-checking, a process that verifies the accuracy of information before it is disseminated to the public. However, with the rapid advancements in technology, fact-checking has taken on a new dimension with the emergence of artificial intelligence (AI).

With its ability to process vast amounts of data and analyze patterns, AI has the potential to automate the fact-checking process, making it faster and more efficient. AI algorithms can scan

news articles, social media posts, and other online content to identify potential inaccuracies or misleading information. This not only saves time but also allows fact-checkers to focus on more complex tasks that require human judgment.

One of the key advantages of AI-powered fact-checking is its ability to detect patterns and trends. AI algorithms can analyze large datasets to identify recurring themes or narratives that may indicate the presence of misinformation. By identifying these patterns, fact-checkers can prioritize their efforts and target the most influential sources of fake news.



Tomas (Italy)



Furthermore, AI can also assist in verifying the credibility of sources. By analyzing the reputation and track record of news outlets, AI algorithms can assess the reliability of information. This can be particularly useful in combating the spread

of fake news from dubious sources. AI can also cross-reference information from multiple sources to identify inconsistencies or contradictions, further strengthening the fact-checking process.

### Areas that AI can assist in fact checking

- **Data mining** – Collecting and segmenting data in a quick and efficient way
- **Sorting and classifying claims** – prioritising what should be fact-checked based on the nature of a claim as well as its potential impact.
- **Identifying and labeling claims** – through machine learning AI tools can identify claims within text and audio-visual content
- **Compilation and distribution of fact-checks** – AI can be trained to compile fact-checks and package them for distribution as text, audio and video animations. With enough training content can be published in multiple languages.
- **Audience engagement** – AI Avatars can be developed to present fact-checking content to the public while chat bots can also engage the public by fielding queries and sharing insights on pertinent public interest issues
- **Real time fact checking** – comparing extracted data with available databases is a possibility when using AI.



Dlog (Tunisia)

## Fact Check: Did former US President Trump register interest in Zimbabwe mining sector?

April 15, 2024 in Fact Reports

**Claim:** A video clip circulating on social media shows former US President Donald Trump seemingly on the campaign trail, stating his interest in Zimbabwe's mining sector particularly Lithium and Diamonds to catch up with the Chinese and Russians who have 'taken up all the mines'. Below is a transcript of the short video.



"We have pushed for removal of sanctions on Zimbabwe, we want to participate in their Lithium and diamonds, we cannot be left out. The Chinese and Russians have taken up all the mines. From our geological maps there are huge lithium deposits in places like Mberengwa Chivi and..."

**Is this true or false?**

**Verdict: False**

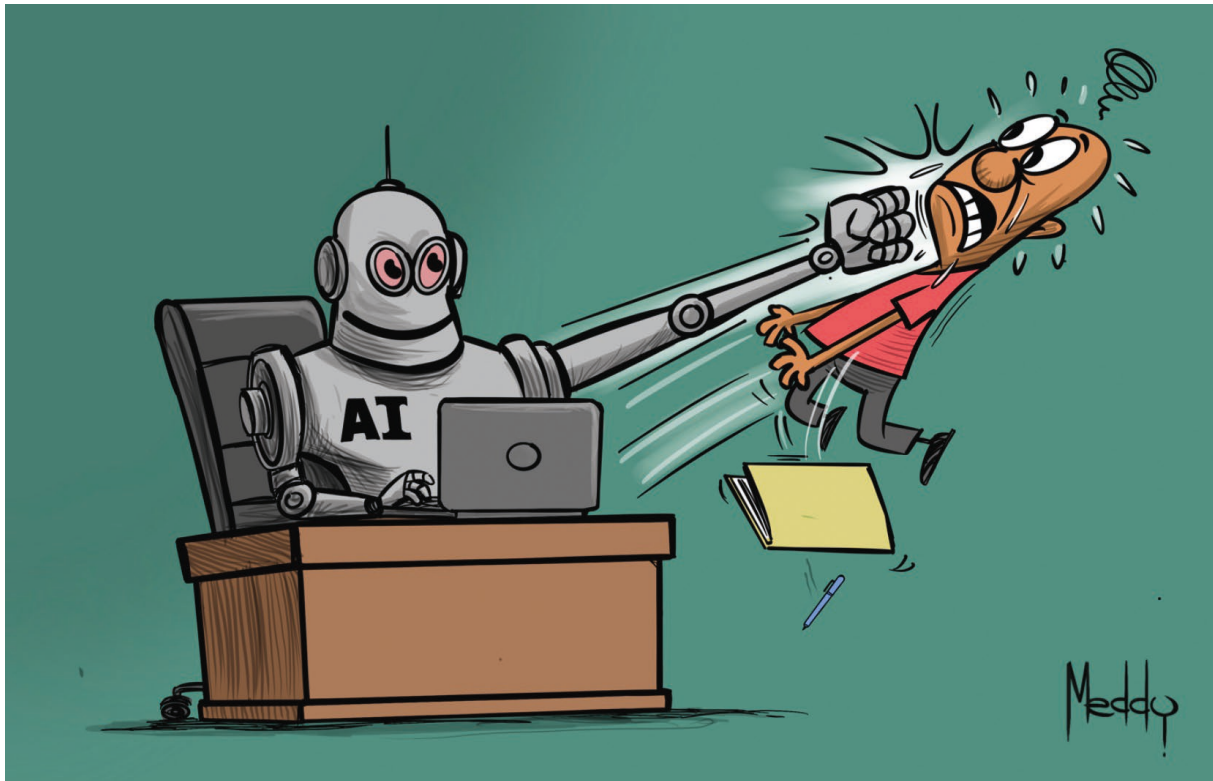
The viral clip is an Artificial Intelligence (AI) generated video of former US President Donald Trump was created with [TryParrotAI.com](https://www.tryparrotai.com) an online tool which manipulates and generates visual and audio content that depicts people doing or saying things they never actually said or did.

A google reverse image search has shown that the same parody video has been used multiple times on social media making fun of various situations.



Falco  
(Cuba)

## Artificial Intelligence and the media – Will AI replace you at work?



Meddy (Tanzania)

Professional fact-checkers have a big responsibility of tackling the subject of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in a balanced way.

AI is a fairly new and complex issue for many people, so it is important to accurately present the issues around it and demystify the subject. This can effectively be done through:

→ **Illustrating the impact of AI** on the status quo without exaggerating it

→ Fact-checkers have a mandate to **clarify how AI will work**, there are often misconceptions on the extent of its capabilities. There is also need to verify whether content is AI generated or not.

→ **Outline policy issues** – What are the new and existing policies guiding the use of AI? also clarify how the policies will impact users of the technology as well as how AI companies will be regulated.

# RESOURCES – WHAT'S AVAILABLE IN THE FACT-CHECKING WORLD?

There are also some resources that can assist fact-checkers in identifying claims, packaging and distribution of content.

- **Google NotebookLM / deepseek / ChatGPT** – Processing and analysis of large documents
- **ElevenLabs** – An AI tool that can convert text to speech, useful for the generation of AI podcasts

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# CONTRIBUTORS TO THE GUIDE

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## The organisations



**Africa Check** is the first independent fact-checking organization in Africa. Founded in South Africa in 2012, the organization works towards information integrity and is supported by philanthropic organizations and individual donors. Africa Check's holistic approach to fact-checking includes the publication of articles and fact sheets, media education, awards and training for journalists.



**ZimFact** was founded in 2018 as Zimbabwe's first fact-checking and media literacy organisation. It has established itself as a leading media brand in the country, committed to independent and professional provision of information of public interest, engagement and mobilisation of public participation in information verification and strengthening network collaborations in Africa, and globally.

**Canal France International (CFI)** works to foster media development all over the world, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, the Arab world and the European Union's neighbourhood. Our key priorities: pushing back on disinformation, promoting gender equality, protecting the environment and promoting democracy and citizen engagement. CFI operates under the umbrella of the French Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs and is a subsidiary of the group France Médias Monde.



**Cartooning for Peace** was created in 2006 at the initiative of Kofi Annan, Nobel Peace Prize and former General Secretary of the United Nations, and press cartoonist Plantu. Now chaired by French press cartoonist Kak, Cartooning for Peace is an international network of cartoonists committed to the promotion of freedom of expression, Human Rights and mutual respect among people upholding different cultures and beliefs, using the universal language of press cartoons.

This guide is available to everyone and can be downloaded from the websites of these organisations.





Cover: cartoon from **Main2Dieu** (Burkina Faso)

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