Interviewer: Paul Cormarie

Participant name: Emmanuel Ganse

Participant organization: President of Benin’s Blogger Association

Date of Interview:03/08/2025

1. First Impressions: What struck you as most interesting and insightful about this interview?
   1. “American and French propaganda”
   2. Links between Pan-Africanism and Russia.
   3. How women are unique victims of disinformation because of harassment
   4. Trump is sometimes positively perceived due to some conservative positions
2. What political, economic, or development factors in Libya/West Africa enable adversary disinformation or challenge western efforts to build host government capacity for counter disinformation?
   1. Waves of disinformation happen during elections, covid, coups, and pan Africanist movements
   2. Social media constitute a huge risk of disinformation, much more than other forms of communication
      1. Tiktok and Whatsapp favorize local languages usage and can transmit false information faster.
      2. Amateur journalists and the general public like making “Buzz” around the private life of public personalities
      3. Influencers like Kemi Seba promote Russian narratives
   3. Misinformation spreads because of the information environment in Benin.
      1. Media is very dependent on publicity for financing
      2. Official information is often limited and encourages public to jump to conclusions.
      3. Journalists have to compete with influencers for information sharing. There is as a result a “race to sensationalism”.
   4. USAID being dismantled helps narratives that Trump isn’t too bad for some people. It would help Benin be more self-reliant and stop promoting LGBT culture.
   5. Perception of France is deteriorating and so is the EU. Especially because of the counterterrorism plane.
      1. France is seen as not having a partnership of equal with Benin which contributes to its negative image.
      2. USA had sensitive information it could not share. Also image that the USA was kicked out of Afghanistan, and Africans are scared that they might want to do counter terrorism here too next.
      3. China on the other side is much more discreet and contributes to infrastructure.
3. What existing counter disinformation initiatives (by host or supporting government) did the participant identify? (list)
   1. There is good financing for opportunities for young people by USAID, but they are often not flexible to new movements or challenges. Opportunities for women, LGBT, health, education will take a hit.
   2. Current civ mil ties are not good enough. There is communication but it is too slow to happen and often incomplete. Readers want to learn more in general is another source for disinformation.
4. What suggestions did the participant identify for additional programs (either issues that need to be addressed or specific programs that should be implemented)?
   1. There needs to be better education around fact checking and not automatically share information without reading.
   2. Bots must be reined in, including French bots. Chinese bots are especially present on Twitter.
   3. Democratize OSINT: have local trainers, have platforms that encourage people to participate, and increase volunteer participation.
5. What other contacts did the interview provide for follow-up interviews?

France 24 contact.