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**1st AUDIO**

**Title of Audio: (New Recording 23)**

**Good afternoon sir, thank you so much for your time, sir. We are in Lagos today. 26th of April, 2023. And I am with Mr Akorede Ogunbunmi. Your position sir**

I am the general manager of Radio One 103.5 FM, a partner of Africa Check for about four years now

**Precisely when sir?**

2019

**How did you first come in contact with Africa Check?**

I first heard about Africa Check through word of mouth from a colleague who attended the training organized by Africa Check. Later, Africa Check also got interested in our organization.

**What drew them to you, sir? I mean semantically, maybe your policies, programming, advocacy?**

It must be our editorial content. Radio One is a NEWS, Stock and Sports Station. That must have been the reason why they struck a deal and we had an agreement. And they have programs with us, some on commercial and some on non-commercial basis. Like, we have a program called Media Watch every Monday. We have a 15-minute segment in the program called Africa Check Segment. Whereby they come to give results of their fact check over time on different areas. They also have Health Facts, where they give us fact checked results on health information and misinformation, fake news etc.

**How often do you share the content from Africa Check?**

Like I said, we share it every Monday during Media Watch. We have a segment where one of the editors comes and shares with us on air. They ask questions, they roll out the results of the items they have fact checked during the course of the week.

**Why do you do the sharing sir?**

We believe that we live in a society where fake news is all around. They are a lot of fake news and people yearn for knowledge and they want to know the truth. More so, People want to know how not to misinform, be misinformed, and how not to be fed with fake news. And when you see checks based on empirical facts, that makes the program interesting to the audience.

**What are your criteria for sharing with your audience? Do you see this as part of your cooperate social responsibility to the public or based on request?**

Basically, being a media organization, we are into journalism and we are supposed to be objective. We are supposed to report the truth, facts and not fake news. With the advent of fact checking made popular by Africa Check, we felt it will enhance and enrich our media content. Because if we are a News, talk station, we should strive to serve the audience with facts and truth. So, any opportunity to fact check any information that is going on on the public stage is an advantage.

**During the election, how helpful was Africa Check in verifying Election related claims for your station?**

Basically, we’ve had only one general election since our partnership began (with Africa Check). In 2019, we’ve not really gone deep. But towards the electioneering for 2023, since last year Africa Check has been coming up with results of information that have been fact checked. They have had to relate and broadcast some of the results on Media Watch. Some of the information served in the media space has been fact checked and some of them have been found to be false. Then during the election proper, 2023, Africa Check was sending us fact checked content, and we pick some of them and relate them.

**Why did you pick some of them and not all?**

Because, at that time, we were loaded with electioneering reports and contents. Then, towards the election like I told you, that we have media watch on Mondays, so if they come up with anything on election, it goes in there. Be it electioneering or the transition process, it goes in there every Monday. Whenever they have anything related to politics or electioneering, it goes in there too. During the election we were constrained by time, so we didn’t have much to talk about their fact checked materials.

**I will be a bit a little technical here. I want to distinguish fake news, disinformation and misinformation. On all of this, has Africa Check been helpful along these lines**

Yes, it has been helpful (on each of these three) in terms of training of our staff. They have been very helpful in the training of our staff.

**Are there remarkable instances around elections you found Africa Check contents helpful? Whether in the gubernatorial or any of these election**

Yes, I think I remember one. Let me give you an instance. There was a material sent in by an editor with Africa check. A claim that Peter Obi, the Presidential Candidate of the Labour Party has withdrawn from the race and asked his supporters to vote for Atiku Abubakar of the People Democratic Party. So, it was found to be incorrect. Debunked by the chief spokesperson of the party. Yunusa Tanko.

A**nd if not for Africa Check, maybe…**

Well, it was already in the public space.

**To debunk it, Africa Check came in handy**

Yes.

Then another, there was an SMS going around claiming that voters can locate their polling unit when they send their PVC Nine code to 8014.

**Can you share this with me later on sir?**

Yes, I can

These are some of the materials that we found in one of our titbits during election day.

**Now talking about Health. We’ve had Ebola and Covid-19 as major public health emergencies. Did you use Africa Check contents for fact checking claims during any of these two periods?**

We were not in partnership with Africa Check during Ebola times. For Covid-19, there was even a whole quarter dedicated to Covid- 19 sponsored by Africa Check on our station. It involved drama and expert opinions. Professor Tomori featured a lot of time on that program. He spoke a lot of time. During the program, they will be called to the studio, they will answer questions from the audience, and they will analyse the drama series. It was held every week, on Wednesdays, it was a one-hour programme. Then there was another program on Covid-19 too. On health facts we have …

**You have Media Watch on Mondays; do you have a segment for health?**

We have Health Facts. And it still runs

**Which is also a segment**

No

**For how many minutes?**

It is 15 minutes, sponsored by Africa Check.

**That means Africa Check sponsors two programs**

No, they don’t sponsor Media Watch. We give it out to them for free. They can share any information, not only about health. Any fact checked material and result not only on health but on anything. But Health Fact is basically health on all these Covid-19, concoctions and everything. Fact (Africa) Check give interesting result about them. It is a whole lot of information that we got through Africa Check, about Covid, particularly. On Health Facts, there are other health issues (which) they come up with results, within 15 minutes.

**We are now trying to measure your expectations and the result so far. When you were going into the partnership with Africa Check, what were your expectations? Would you say your expectations are being met?**

Yes, they are being met tremendously.

**Let’s focus on your expectations first**

The major one that we had was, when we looked at the mutual benefits, we were thinking that they will bring contents that will enrich our content and then they will train our staff. In both areas we have benefitted tremendously. In terms of training, I myself have been a beneficiary of their training at some point and a number of our staff. Then in terms of content enrichment, wow, it has been superb.

**Looking at Health and Development, where do you think your partnership has given you higher dividends? You have partnered with them during the election, and you do with health. Comparing the two, which one will you score higher in terms of impact?**

Because we have more content on health, I will say, it’s health. Like I told you, they had a devoted program for Covid-19 for one hour every, for about 15 or 20 weeks. They had a five minutes ‘informatia’, that they were running twice in a day for 20 days, which they sponsored too in pidgin and English, immediately after we came out of Covid lockdown. One runs in the morning, another in the afternoon for 5 minutes, making 10 minutes each day. Different contents both in English and Pidgin.

**Mainly on Health Contents?**

More on health content. Politics come in through Media Watch. Basically now, through Media Watch.

But meanwhile, our staff who have gone through their trainings, have been able to fact check on their own, on different desks. They have fact checked on Politics, communication, and different segments.

**So, you are talking about enhancing the capacity of your staff across desks**

Yes, because we have given them trainees across desks.

**But above all, Health stands out**

Yes, health stands out, because of their emphasis on public health.

**In terms of impact, what should Africa Check do more or increase, to enhance its complementary role with you?**

We will always be Oliver Twist in that regard. Like I said, we are into media practice and media is basically journalism. We share information, we pass information, we fact check information, we seek expert opinion on issues, and we want truths, we want facts. We cannot be overloaded with information. With their fact checking materials, we can never be tired of Africa Check’s contents.

**But specifically, are there areas where you think they should do more**

I think they respond to public emergencies, that is why we have health more that time. And during elections too, they came up with political materials more. But the sponsorship from their side was not as robust as that of health.

**Are you saying they should increase the sponsorship of political programs?**

Exactly.

I will also say that they have enriched the capacity of others too.

**What do you mean by others?**

Those they have trained.

**Your Personnel?**

Yes, our Personnel, I am sure that is how they train others too. Because we are not the only partners. I remember I introduced some media organizations to them, which they dealt with. They are still dealing with some, they stopped with some and they deal with Newspaper organizations too. By doing that I believe that they are also teaching people how to fish, they are not giving them fish alone, they are teaching them how to fish. I think they are doing well.

**Ok**

**You have told me that they should increase sponsorship of Political Programs**

Well, politics, in terms of governance.

**More like civic…**

Yes, more like civic responsibility, and participation in governance. They can do that not necessarily during elections. To promote inclusive governance and civic participation.

**Would you like to continue your partnership with Africa Check?**

As long as we can, we will be willing to continue with the partnership. Because it has been a worthwhile and beneficial relationship. Because they also realise the operational cost, so they don’t shy away from supporting in terms of training and even some payments. They support us with funds for programs. So, the partnership is very rewarding. It is something that we want to continue at any time.

**Thank you very much, sir. I am really grateful for your time.**

**2nd Audio**

**Title of Audio: (New Recording 24)**

**So, you were saying something about the need to expand what they do on civic issues, the way they do on health. And I was saying, this relates to peaceful coexistence too. So, what will be your recommendations sir?**

While I appreciate their emphasis on health because it talks about the existence and well-being of people. But when you look at Nigeria and many African countries, we have our existence threatened by civil conflicts, misinformation, disagreement among tribes, and incitements. If Africa Check can also expand, improve and emphasise more on inclusive governance, civic participation, and peaceful coexistence and make people know that they are the government. People have been alienated from government, and that is the reflection you see in the attitude of people in governance issues; lethargy in elections and voters’ apathy, etc. By the time there is more awareness, Africa (Fact) Check will do a lot in this regard. People have had misconceptions, misinformation, and disinformation, because, politicians have actually caused most of these problems. They’ve used ethnicity, and religion to make people want to kill each other. But, by the time we have facts coming out on events and personalities, corrections to claims by politicians particularly, I think the society will be improved, public participation in governance will be improved, and not necessarily holding public office, but holding government accountable. Africa Check can do a lot more, just like they emphasise more on health, because they did a lot on health. If they can do that, it will go a long way. And it would boost their own image and contribution to the development of Nigerian society.

**So, they will be striking a balance between public health and the health of the polity**

Exactly.

**Which is all about well-being anyway.**

Exactly, it is also about wellbeing.

Because a fragile polity/society is also a threat to the existence (of individuals)

**Hmmm. The existence of individuals is threatened.**

Exactly.

**Thank you very much, sir.**

**3rd AUDIO**

**AUDIO TITLE: Ayo Jagun Street 2**

**Good afternoon ma, thanks for your time. Today is 27th April 2023, and I am with Miss Arase Kuale.**

**Please, how did you know about** **Africa Check?**

I have worked with one of the staff \*\*\*\*\*

One of the Staffers of Africa Check?

Yes. He actually was one of the people that trained me on my journalism skills. I run a medical show at Correct FM on Sundays. I had invited him because at that period, Covid-19 \*\*\*\*. And Africa Check was running its campaign about fact checking, commissionalism. \*\*\*\*\* Everything you see, \*\*\*\* people drinking salt, the ones from the spiritual sector, everybody was confused. So, one thing we had to do, because there is so much information out there, information was saturated, we have to be careful. Because, the same way you are so willing to bring out that information, it is the same way, it will put you on the wrong map, they will change it for you. and the disgrace. And your name won’t be popular when you are putting on proper information, it is when you put the wrong one, your identity will be known. So, I invited him \*\*\* to speak about fact checking information, and he actually corrected a lot of misconceptions, ideas and self-medication some people had made during that period. So, that was how I got to know\*\*\*\*\*

**So, do you share the content you receive from Africa Check with the public?**

Yes. After we started the partnership, we have a small part of the show dedicated to using information that Africa Check had clarified to create awareness. Correct FM has other 5 stations across Nigeria, so, that content is all round. I have parents that live in certain parts of Nigeria. \*\*\*\*\*\*

**Are there specific criteria for sharing?**

Before they even send information, at that point in time, there would be a lot of things trending. \*\*\*\*\*\* When people used to wash, some people believe that \*\*\* you are washing, your clothes \*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

Specifically, around elections, did you find Africa Check contents helpful in dealing with fake news, misinformation and disinformation? I would like you to speak about specific instances.

Awesome. We had a two-day training after 2019. The thing with such training is that you already know that it is not happening at that point in time to use what you’ve learnt. But in such cases like the elections, I found it very relevant. Like I said before, as a presenter, \*\*\*\* is there, it would be so easy for me to just take what you see out there. Like ‘o, this person sent me that video’. He even had to be clear on it, don’t share what you were not present in. If you are going to share it, make sure *(you ask the person who sent it)* ‘let me see you there in the video’ so that I will know that it is you that the video is from. And that is the awareness that such projects have. Because it is so easy for anyone to \*\*\*\*\* I remember the tools they shared with us to help us confirm what dates videos (are made and shared).

This present election, there was a particular mail that was sent to us, so we were trying to confirm the incident that happened at \*\*\*\*. It was the idea of when they didn’t allow the election to happen on Saturday. We received the news fresh, as it happened. So, my knowledge of these tools. \*\*\*\*. We now used some of the \*\*\* tools we’ve got to research and find out. So, when we had confirmed and checked and found that the video was fresh, and we also confirmed from the source. The person was actually present. Like I said, if you say you are there, snap yourself, let me see you there. So, all these things are there, before we are able to put out the video or audio they have sent. This is somebody reporting from the \*\*\*. And funny enough, we saw that other people are using it. But sometimes, that ginger/enthusiasm to want to be the one to put it out there. By now, everybody is aware, you will mess up. \*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

Sometimes, some people were posting what has happened since. So, we also use the idea of Team …. There is this community, that you create when you are reporting something. Not only report updates now, especially when people are sharing content from other places. People that have friends in other states, \*\*\*\*\* we are encouraged to do that because we have been reminded and trained that it is not just taking what is in your front and taking what is in social media. Know people there, reach out to them, just call and tell them to send \*\*\*\*. Those are some of the issues. And the next day too, follow up. It is also easy to start announcing results. Like “Good morning \*\*\* what are you doing? \*\*\*\* ma, I was not the one that announced two hundred thousand votes. Let me hear from INEC’s mouth. \*\*\*\*\* This election was very special, people turned to journalists, and everybody became an electoral officer. So, you have to be sure. It took a lot of patience, but also reminders like this that you cannot be \*\*\*\*\*

**Talking about health now, can you recall instances, where the trainings or tools from Africa Check helped in preventing fake news, misinformation and disinformation around public health?**

Our station caters for people at the grassroots. \*\*\*\*\*. One thing I will say \*\*\*\* information like diseases such as Cancer, AIDS, \*\*\*\*. The information we got from them was enough to help us educate. And from there, I can even say that I got topics. Issues that it would have been hard for me to get information, from the one they gave, I can now further my research and call resources persons, to be able to attend to it. I gave examples of cancer and AIDS. Because those two… in the time we had this \*\*\* I think I covered a lot of Cancer reports. So, I was busted, I know it busted cancer. We had to be very careful with the information we put out. I think there was information we put out that busted cancer.

**That was trending?**

\*\*\*\* I saw people forwarding it. \*\*\*\*\*. And also, on heart care, there was some information that they put out there. And it was not just about diseases. There was also information that concerns the health workforce. What has to deal with \*\*\*\*\* No, so the person is not… Information that has to do with health care as of then. Even during the Covid-19 era, there was a lot of debunking of \*\*\*\*. Because everybody was commenting ‘What is the government going to do about it?’ Even when there was Omicron. When the thing started giving people headaches, this one too came out. \*\*\*\*

**Now, if you want to scale them, what do you think they should do more?**

I think they should increase\*\*\*\*\*\*put more effort and to expand. Going after \*\*\* to expand the conversations in smaller states, ***like community radios.*** So that when you are done, you are taking samples from these communities, how did they \*\*\*\*\*

Now this last election is seen that there was a kind of threat to the health of the polity, because of fake news, misinformation and disinformation. Compared with what they are doing on public health, do you think they should consider doing similar things around civic education and peace education, as someone on the team?

\*\*\*\* Sir, the thing is, you cannot do all \*\*\*\*\*. Sometimes when you centre it, you accomplish more. It’s not that they break down and have separate medical shores. They have to give a segment. After you segment \*\*\*\*. \*\*\*\* But they can attempt to do it. But I feel like they might have to have more resources because they switch regions each period \*\*\*\*. They attend to security matters differently. \*\*\*\*\* **It has to be tailored to communities.** It has to be tailored, adopted to that particular area. Unlike health. Health you can start from up and start bringing it down, but with peace education, you have to start with how they settle matters. \*\*\*\*\*. Let me give you an example, \*\*\*\*. In the North, the way they handle area issues is different. There is no way of saying this one person does little things that he will say that creates a difference in the environment. Even those in the south would say it, there is a difference. So, however we want to do it, the way we operate in the North, we cannot operate in the South or the East or the West. The way we operate in the South…\*\*\*\*. We have to know, how do we do it\*\*\*\* who are the \*\*\* that will help motivate the public\*\*\*. Because people go back \*\*\*\* as much as you like to agree, that you have \*\*\*\*. But, local government agents is very important in some state. Local influencers, they are more \*\*\*\* than the politician. Because if the local government chairman says this, you will fear the one that is near there than the one in Abuja. So, however, they want to approach it, it is better to find out how they \*\*\*\*(***it should be tailored to the community***), and use the information tools that will appeal to them. It has to be deliberate and a bit more strategic.

**This comes against the backdrop of the amount of misinformation, fake news and disinformation that came after, and with the election.**

And it also fuels certain misconceptions. So, if you get from this area what they are, you can know what you are passing. Because sometimes when you come and experience how to live in some places. I’ve lived there, what you are selling, I \*\*\*\*\*. Two different things. Some places, the \*\*\*\*. The misconception that I’ve never been involved\*\*\*\*\*, from lifestyle. **And which is causing friction and widening the gap.** \*\*\*\*\*

So, there can be general health policies, streamlining it, \*\*\*\*, tailoring it \*\*\*\*. It is good to start from the up and then bring it down. At this point in time, if they want to go strong, it has to be at the community level.

**When you say up, what do you mean? From the cities?**

What I mean was, if there can be like an umbrella in use to give themselves like a template. The kind of information they want to \*\*\*\*\*. So, pick one and then you start. \*\*\*\*

**Okay. Thank you very much ma.**

**4TH AUDIO**

**AUDIO TITLE: Ayo Jagun Street**

**Good morning sir. This is just to enable Africa Check to do better as an entity and also in collaboration with its partners. so, I’ve been engaged to conduct this evaluation. Thank you very much, sir. I am here today with Mr Jas Will Stephen, 27th April 2023 in Lekki. It is my pleasure and honour to share out of your time.**

Can you remind me of your name too, please?

**Ok, Professor Gbemisola Animasawun**

**I will like to know how you came to know about Africa Check**.

We are in the media, so our job involves meeting people on a daily basis. So, in this case, they approached us. If I recall, it was 2 to 3 years ago, it should be at the peak of the Covid -19. If I can recall the project is with respect and a fallout of the Covid-19. So, they came and approached us and said that they wanted a partnership.

**So, they approached you**

Yes, they said they wanted a partnership with us.

Ordinarily, we are averse to partnership. We are a private organization; we have our overhead to run a company. We pay salaries, we pay tax and incidentally, this is Nigeria, business is not very easy. And this is Lagos. \**In audible*\* you are practically providing everything yourself. You provide your water; you provide your electricity and all of that. So, for this reason, on a private note, we decided that partnerships that does not involve the exchange of money, you know what, you can keep it there. Whatever we want to do as a way of contribution, you can go ahead and do that. However, because of the nature of this project, we decided to accept on a Minimum Pay Basis. When I use the language ‘minimum pay’ it is not anything when compared to what we have on our rates ordinarily. In fact, it is a far cry. If I recall, I think it’s $500 that we agreed upon that we will be getting on a monthly basis for the purpose of having this partnership done.

**How often do you share/broadcast the Africa Check content?**

It is on a weekly basis. It is a weekly radio program, we are not prints, we are not social media. We are basically on radio.

**Do you share mainly on your radio station or do you share also on your social media handles?**

Yes of course, we have social media handles. But primarily, the contract term was for radio. The exceptional difference is that in our own case of Correct FM, we have six stations.

**All in Lagos or…?**

No, there is one in Lagos and one in Ibadan covering the South-West. All are called Correct FM, but, operating on different frequencies. And because we have a central program schedule, it means that if it is running at 8 am in Lagos, it is running at 8 am in all other 5 locations. So, I just told you Lagos, Ibadan, Calabar and Enugu for the South and there is Kaduna and Kano for the North. So, that is the major advantage that Africa Check enjoys by the issue of this partnership.

**Do you have a particular audience in mind when you share? Do you have a target audience?**

For radio business, it will be very wrong to say there is a generic audience. But there is always a target audience. But again, by virtue of the fact that we are dealing with Covid -19 here. All and all became interested in knowing, ok what do I need to know about Covid-19. There were a lot of misconceptions flying around. At the onset, it was even linked to 5G. It was liked to a lot of misconceptions. It had a religious colouration at some time. People started tying it to 666 at some time. So, that is why we picked an interest. So, apart from the fact that we are helping our audience to get better information on what really is true, we too are benefitting from the content that we are generating by virtue of the information we are sharing with Africa Check.

**This study focuses on both health and development, so my next round of questions should be about the elections. Did you find Africa Check contents helpful in verifying or fact checking False claims in 2019 and 2023?**

Yes, I will tell you how. I recall that there was a training section where two members of my staff who were major producers instrumental in producing the output were invited to that training.

**In 2019 or 2023?**

No, definitely not this year (2023). So, it should be 2019 or 2020 or 2022, I don’t remember the year. And the training was basically on fact Checking. And members of the media were invited, I guess they were also partners with Africa Check then. Members of the media, some were radio, some were TV, some were basically social, for online purposes, like \*\*\*, they were all there. Now the training was comprehensively on Fact checking. Which also dwelled on many other issues outside of Covid-19. Politics, you know that is one area where there are too many stories and too many authorities. Look at what is happening with Labour Party now. Same party, different factions. This person is on TV telling, he’s telling you this is what happened, this person is on TV issuing a statement and you are not sure whom to believe. So, the training we received from Africa Check helped a lot.

**In 2019?**

Specifically, even in 2023. Because we covered the 2019 (the last) election, but we did a better job in 2023. Based on the feedback from the training we received from Africa Check. I will tell you how. Remember I said we run 6 states of the country with Correct FM alone. Now, other sisters’ stations Access 24, covers Otta and Lagos. ***So, they are more like community radios***. So, we merge both stations to carry out the coverage. By this I mean, we share resources and content So, while we have live guest appearances at Access 24 discussing elections, we also had live guest appearances on the 6 channels of Correct FM discussing elections. And then we had a spread of correspondences, reporters in all those locations and even outside the locations where we have our stations.

You will recall that this election is the election that was fraught with the most misconceptions and stories of election really didn’t happen here, but it happened here. The skills we garnered from that training with Africa Check helped us to x-ray information even before putting them on air. Let me remind you that NBC prior to every election will put out statements. In fact, these statements come in form of warning, reminding radio stations, and media houses generally, to be careful with what they put on air. In fact, we almost got into trouble on one occasion, because, all adverts, all discussions with respect to political parties should end a day before the election. Access 24 one of our stations almost ran foul of it, but we quickly recalled and ended that advert 48 hours before the election.

While the election was going on, a couple of stations were already putting out results. And some returning officers who were zealous were trying to put up reports, but we held back. The law said that only INEC can declare election results. Whether they are seen to be fraudulent or fake, they are the authority. So, we have to wait. Sometimes, it looked like we were slow, but we never got into trouble. It is what we find on the official website of INEC that we put out.

Our staff Onafori Araese who is the presenter and one of the producers of the show. She is in Lagos. Be reminded that the program is produced centrally from Lagos and then aired across the stations.

**Why did you leave Otta**

Because Otta is not correct FM, Otta is Access 24. We only brought in Otta for covering of the Election. The contract/partnership with Africa Check is strictly with Correct FM. And for a good reason too, Correct FM runs in Pidgin English. **Pidgin language is the Lingua Franca**. It is more of a Lingua Franca than conventional English. So, they quickly understood that and told us to run that. So, Onafori brought her experience from that training to bare in what took place in that election. I was very happy because I could sleep (**as the head of the organization**) knowing that things wouldn’t go wrong (**and** **you have a skilled and a skilled hand**).

**More technically, I want to make a delineation of fake news, disinformation and misinformation. Along these three lines, have you found Africa Check’s contents helpful?**

Yes. It is very obvious. A news is fake when it is totally untrue. When it never happened. It is very easy to manipulate people stories like that on social media. It breaks. Take for instance, an election was held in Ghana in 1993, as far back as 1993 and there was some element of violence. A syndicate can decide to pull that picture and just place 2023 on it and indicate that this happened in Abule here in Lagos. And before long, it goes viral. Social media just blows it out of proportion. (**especially WhatsApp**). Some people are in a group to just be the first to share. That was made very clear in that training - ‘Do not be quick to share.’ And then there were also mechanisms that I cannot remember.

**So that really helped in preventing you from falling victim of Fake News, even sincerely?**

So, there were mechanisms on how we can find out. Predating, even the sizing of pictures. I remember clearly, sizing of pictures can help you to know that this is a suspect. And according to the training we received, they said, once information is a suspect, don’t be in a hurry to bring it out. You need to verify. And then, even after doing our first layer of verification, if you are not sure, you can again check with Africa Check. Just share with them and then they will tell you to ‘give us a few days.’ In fact, that is part of what informs our content for Covid-19. You know there was a misconception on the fact that if you take the vaccine, it helps with Libido. It was Africa Check that confirmed that the story is not true. *(in fact, some even said it helps in reducing \*\*inaudible and incomplete statement\*\**) So that checks and balance is very helpful.

**So, it has been very helpful in preventing you from falling into the trap of fake news, misinformation and disinformation?**

And you know, for us we disseminate the information. We are the authority. Once we get a news that is fake and we pass it on as fake, that is the ripple effect. So, NBC will come for us on the one hand and on the other hand, we could lose audience. Because once the audience notice eventually that, “oh that thing is not true, it never happened or this is not how it happened”, then your credibility comes into question. So, I must tell you that it was really helpful.

**Specifically, now on Public Health emergencies. We’ve had Ebola before you came into partnership with Africa Check. But since you came into partnership with Africa Check, have you found their contents helpful along these three lines of tackling fake news, misinformation and disinformation?**

Yes, we have.

**And have there been instances to share where it was timely and if not for this?**

Yes. I just gave you one clear example of the story around the vaccine. That came to us directly. So, even before Africa Check sent us information, we had written them. Onafori Araese came to me and said “Oga look at this story about this whole thing making the round.” And I said, No. if you are not sure, send the information to Africa Check. Let them confirm or say that this is not truth. They needed a few days to do this and they responded. And that formed one of our contents. I’m sure your people have a collection of everything we’re putting on air. What I could do is to find out from Emma, which of the days we have that content specifically.

**So, let’s talk about what you think can improve the quality of what Africa Check does. What do you think Africa Check should do more? By this I mean, given what has happened in this Election or the aftermath of the election, we’ve seen a direct threat to our peaceful co-existence as a people, coming from misadministration or manipulation of information, or what you may even call information maloperations. That is the deliberate use of misinformation, fake news and disinformation to cause chaos. Now, we have also seen what Africa Check has done in terms of public health. So, looking at the two, do you think they should improve or increase what they do on civic education or engagement or peace education, so that we come to par. They’ve done a lot about the health of the individual, I think the health of the polity and the polity must be saved.**

Just like we are shaping our physical health. You just took the words out of my mouth. They need to do more, we are not saying what they have don’t is not enough, but there is room for a better approach to how it works. So, one, while they are expanding the scope of the partnership. In partnering with Correct FM for instance, Correct FM covers 6 states, what happens to the other states? So, they need to expand the scope of coverage. I do not know how far they have gone; I am only making an assumption. Because, disinformation, information is important to one and all.

**In fact, for me, it is becoming a threat to National Security now**

Absolutely. In fact, at the peak of this election, Nigeria was standing/sitting on the keg of gun powder. There was tension. There was much more tension than what happened in EndSARS and Covid-19. And this was because of what you could consider as very minute, vague statements that can be misinterpreted, with no attribution and it goes viral. So, with what I have seen Africa Check accomplish thus far, they would do a better job if they expand their scope and then do this beyond public health and get involved in the Polity.

Training and retraining. This was one of the things I learned from the BBC. Reminders are key. It is not enough to do one-off training and let people go. I just told you some benefits we derived, but, ask me when was the last time I went back to check the records again. We get carried away with the many things we have on us, deadlines here and there. But reminders keep media houses on their toes. So, if they can expand the scope of their trainings, and the frequency of the training. Sometimes the training doesn’t even have to be physical. After the first two trainings while we were with the BBC, there is something called offsite mentoring. Now, once specific individuals who have been trained, Africa Check can keep in touch with them and assign mentors to them. Who speak directly with them, ‘what are the challenges you have had since you were trained?’ ‘How did you deal with them?’ ‘How can we come in?’ So, this time, it does not require bringing 50 persons (***into one hall, for two/three days***). It will just be two persons that are sent to a particular station and they manage their problems, remind them of \*\*\*\*, get feedbacks and then leave. And then at other times, it will just be a phone call (***or Zoom Meeting***), where there is a face to face meeting even though it is not physical. And then, expand the scope of the partnership to cover more media houses. There is absolutely no reason why I should be selfish about it. BBC had over 300 partner stations at the time I was with the BBC. In Nigeria alone. Again, there is a catchment area depending on the project. BBC had a lot of projects, not just public health. There was public health and development. For instance, I was in PANDA. PANDA has to do with maternal and child health, as it has to do with childhood pneumonia. So, they were training partner stations, producers of health programs on the misconceptions associated with pneumonia. Take for instance, the common misconception that pneumonia is caused by cold. That if you don’t cover up, if you drink cold drinks, or if you sleep on the floor and all that. So, it became very clear to the producers and that is what they pass on their various programs. That yes, cold may predispose one to pneumonia, but it is not a causative factor. So, that has lived with me ever since then. So, if I am going to run a radio program on health now for instance, there is no way I will be passing the wrong information. And more so, we were also instructed that, you are not a professional by the way, you are just a medium. So, why not call the doctor, call the paediatrician or the pharmacist, and have him in the studio with you. People will rather listen to them, than listen to you, who becomes a doctor on the day you are running a health program, you become a pastor you run a (religious) program on Sunday, you become an imam on Friday. It doesn’t work that way, that is why I said there is a need to for them to expand the scope of their partners as well as the coverage (the catchment area).

I will give you another typical example. Northern Nigeria has the least in terms of education, but hello, Northern Nigeria is the most educated when it comes to political consciousness.

**In fact, they have the highest level of what I call Political Literacy**

Thank you. I’m happy you are in academia and you know exactly what I am talking about. The average Hausa man who does not know anything about what is happening in \*\*\*show has a transistor radio and is following BBC Hausa.

**Not only that, I was surprised to see German correspondents in Kano. I was like, but you have BBC, you have UOA, what are you doing with German Correspondents. Well-Staffed.**

\*\*\* has their base there.

So, they follow the development completely. So, when you see them voting and you are saying they are voting along to tribal lines, they understand the polity completely. ***Meanwhile, that is your own perception*.** So, we say “the Aboki doesn’t know anything”, and we are making a big mistake. Why are they still ruling us, it is not just the figures, they know how to manipulate the figures, and they know how to play the game. So, we would be making a mistake if we are not reaching out to a huge audience of that nature. You will be losing a large chunk of your audience, if what you are doing is domiciled in Lagos because Lagos is commercial. You are domiciled in the areas where people “**who *are the so called educate or literate stay***”

Do you know that before we took pidgin language seriously here, BBC News has already set up BBC Pidgin news? Guess what, they do not have a radio station in Nigeria. BBC does not have any channel in Nigeria. But BBC is partnering with almost all the stations we have in Nigeria. So, if you go to Wazobia FM now, you have the BBC channel running there. They opened our eyes to the value of the social network. If you go there now, on their website, it is busiest after jw.org. After jw.org in Nigeria, BBC Pidgin comes next. People are always there to pick contents. Including many other radio stations. People even just go there for fun, to read the life stories of people. Omo na BBC o, na him come Nigeria come dey teach us say our Pidgin is a universal language. It is fast becoming a universal language. If you go to Brazil, there is huge Yoruba community in Brazil. If you go to UK, there is a mighty Nigerian community. And once they know you can speak pidgin; they will leave the English and start speaking Pidgin.

So, if Africa Check still has funds that they want to expand their project, I think that’s the way to go.

**Thank you very much. I am really grateful for your time sir. Ese gan.**

**5TH AUDIO**

**AUDIO TITLE: (Isaac John Street)**

**Good afternoon sir. Today is 28/04/2023 and I am with Ikechukwu Oyemeke of Wazobia FM Lagos.**

**Please I will like to know, what is the mandate of your institution, Wazobia FM.**

So, basically, Wazobia FM was established because of the desire to share information with the populace. We are also consumers of broadcast content, especially radio. The essence of grassroots language was now considered in reaching them. And the most commonly spoken language in Nigeria that cuts across boundaries, tribe and ethnicity, is ‘Pidgin’. It is actually owned by Lebanese by the way. So, we decided to put it to test and it worked.

**How did you put it to test?**

At first according to the testimony. Sometimes we hold seminars. \*\*\*\* When we wanted to start, people were saying we should broadcast it more. \*\*\*\*\* Cool Fm – the Hit music FM, they’ve been successful with that. Cool FM, Nigeria Info and Wazobia they also own Arewa. That one is Nigeria Info version of… that one is in Hausa and it is in Kano. So, we decided to do the pidgin thing, because they saw the need and the desire to communicate to those at the grassroots in the language they will understand. And it worked. After that, a lot of stations have come after.

Sometimes I also serve in the capacity of a chief editor and as a broadcaster as well.

**When was the first time you knew about Africa Check?**

\*\*\*\*\* Used to be my editor. He used to do my morning bulletin. So, when he moved, \*\*\*\* when he was moving to comedy, so I’ve known Africa Check since then. That was about 5-6 years. But the aspect of using Africa Check’s resource persons and contents started in December 2021. I’ve gone for a fact checker’s 3 days training somewhere here in Lagos. West Africa Media and Broadcast Academy. They conducted it with the support of the American government. We (my station) had an agreement with them, and that agreement is for them to continue their advocacy and campaign against fake news misinformation and disinformation. When we got back to the station, my program manager called me and assigned me the responsibility to champion that course by making sure, on a weekly basis we deliver content to educated, media literacy, explainers, as well as fact checks on disinformation \*\*\*, so, he gave me that responsibility. Yes, I had gone through the fact check training, but I also needed to work with experts in the field, to really understand and know how to drive, in terms of content and resources. I had been seeing Africa Check’s content on Twitter and Facebook. So, it just came that, ‘talk to Africa Check’, so, I spoke with them. And at that time, it also happens that Africa Check has been on this radio advocacy. So since then, I’ve been working with them.

**So, you fully subscribed to them in 2021 or 2022?**

2022 January.

**How often do you share their content?**

Weekly. Expect for once. After we had started, sometimes in November 2022. I applied for another Fellowship then with Dubawa, the fact checkers arm of Premium Times. Then, I started using my own checks. But, the last two I had recorded before I proceeded on this lane, they were contents from Africa Check. \*\*\*\*

**How do you share? Mainly on Radio or social media platforms as well?**

Mainly on the radio. The sharing is basically for broadcast purposes.

**And mainly for your target audience?**

Yes, target audience. And Wazobia FM commands about 30-40% of radio \*newsmanship\* in Lagos.

**Can I confirm that?**

That’s why I said 30-40%. If I am not overreaching, I would say 35%. But it can’t be less than 30% of radio newsmanship in Lagos. And Wazobia FM is across the country. Wazobia FM is in Abuja, Port Harcourt, Kano and Onitsha. Lagos aisthe head office. It’s been like that reaching them in that Pidgin Broadcast and the beauty of also having to translate the documented English version that Africa Check releases. How to transcribe to pidgin and delivering it in pidgin is two different things. Written fact checks and broadcasted fact checks, especially when you have to transfer to another language is another interesting part of it.

**Do you do this across the five stations?**

No, it’s just Lagos.

**Now I want us to reflect on the last elections. We have issues of fake news, misinformation and disinformation. At any point whether at the subnational or the national elections, did you find Africa Check contents helpful on any of these three – misinformation, disinformation or fake news?**

Yes. I found Africa Check content really useful. There was this situation room they established during the election. Catherine will always put me up to it and send contents to me. That was the time I even now used my social media tool as part of spreading their content. I also worked with my Wazobia digital editor. So, I shared it with them, there was a way they designed really short graphics that you can just put on your story and all. Yes, it was really helpful and useful.

**Are there specific instances you can recall, where you found that if not for their contents you would have erred or goofed?**

There were a lot of information, so much that we were working on it as they were coming. So, this a sample of what is said they were sending to me from their situation room.

**So, you didn’t need to speak to it much, you just post it**

Yes, I just post it on my stories and I also give it to my digital editor in Nigeria Info and Wazobia FM.

**Now public health is also an area of concern for them. In Lagos and Nigeria, we’ve had Ebola and Covid-19. Was there any time that you found their contents helpful in correctly educating the public against fake news, misinformation or disinformation during the Covid-19 crisis?**

The heat of Covid-19 had gone before we started. But I think I used a couple of contents from them in terms of public health campaigns, especially as it concerns Covid-19. I can’t remember, but specifically, I wouldn’t be able to say unless I go over to my archive and check.

**Talking about expectations so far. Would you say going into partnership with them, are your expectations being met?**

If there is any possibility of scoring it 101 over 100, I will. Personally, for my \**Mismas…\**

**Do you have a means of feedback from your Mismas?**

The feedback that my station usually have is in form of callers who call in. They would be like “This una fake news thing, thank God say una dey do am o”. I have people who call me from their offices and they listen to this one. I have a lecturer in Yabatech, Dr Oye. He would always tell me… because I call it fake news time.

**What time?**

It is usually Mondays and Fridays, at 5 pm

**How many minutes?**

It depends. Minimum 8 minutes, sometimes 25 minutes.

But the feedbacks have been very interesting. \*\*\*\*\*\*

**Again, still on this, are there specific aspects of misinformation, disinformation or fake news which you think you can do better in helping with?**

In the area of electioneering, we discovered that the way misinformation and fake news were used, exposed me to understand that we have a long way to go. In terms of civil engagements, engagement with the people, advocacy, educating them and informing them on the right information. Like catching them with the right information before the wrong one comes.

**There is this inoculation theory. Maybe what you mean is inoculating them with the right…**

So, when they are armed with how to know and how to understand that this is not the way to \*\*\*, or it is not possible for this person to. So, education basically.

**This takes me to the next question; would you recommend to Africa Check to do what they are doing in terms of public health in civic and maybe peace education?**

Yes, I will. Because, when you go ahead in fixing religious concerns, tribal concerns, interest and power concerns. When the people who play these antics come, they will be meeting people in the space where they have known already. **Even where they can even discern.** For instance, people who do not know that there is nothing wrong in being a Yoruba man, \*\*\*awo pupa\*\*. Once they already know that there is nothing wrong with it, once they already know that there is no threat. If any politician or any mischief-makers come in with that idea. They will just tell them, “No wahala, no worry yourself. **With an Igbo man, no problem, with Hausa, no problem.**” So, that idea.

**So, the same thing should be extended?**

Yes.

**What would you think they should do less of?**

I don’t really think they should do less. Because, we wouldn’t know when the next pandemic will come, so, I wouldn’t expect them to do less on health. The tensions we are now facing from elections will call to double up that effort in that regard. And having been exposed to certain weaknesses regarding our ethnic and religious interests, we can begin to build that unit, bonding and tolerance through certain programs that will create awareness **and correctly inform and educate**. So, being a Muslim is not a reason for you to be against someone who is a Christian and being a Christian is not a reason for you to be against someone who is a Muslim. Whoever is caught up in your space of religion does not pose a threat to you. So, tolerating differences will go a long way to help people when these mischief-makers come with their antics. For instance, many people think that the election was not really an election, if you notice now, the election has come and gone, and nobody is talking about \*\*\*. If we go to sleep on it now, 4 years’ time, it will be worse, because, there is been a pattern. In 2015, if you remember, the Oba of Lagos threatened to throw Igbos into the lagoon. Then there was Jimi Agbaje contesting against Ambode. None of them was necessarily an Igbo candidate, but because they perceive an Igbo man would always do opposition, so, they saw them as a threat in terms of numbers, so they create that fear. So, it is a fear factor basically. Then in 2019, the same Jimi Agbaje in PDP contested against Sowoolu. And it looks like the Igbo were well populated, the Agor Palace crisis during the election and others. So, it’s always like that. Then this 2023 election, they came up again with it. As if it was not enough for them, the Labour Party Candidate has an Igbo mother \*\*\*\*. When it could no longer hold water, they now resorted to no man’s land. So, it always comes with this pattern.

So, but, if you start driving that message early enough, **the way you do with public health.** Because now nobody will go and use salt water mixed with lime to bathe to combat a sickness. So, it helps. So, in the next election, 2027, anybody that will be coming with antics “a ti mo yin (we know you), \*\*\*we understand better now”. That kind of message will bring people to that spirit and consciousness.

**Okay. Thank you very much, I appreciate your time sir.**

**6TH AUDIO**

**(IKEJA)**

**Good evening**

Good evening sir

**Mr…**

Mr Tosin Ejaelonibu

**What is the name of your organization?**

I work with Radio Now 95.3 FM. It is radio station based in Lagos state, Lagos Island to be precise.

**What is your position there?**

I am a producer there and we do public service journalism, mainly. Our core vision is public service journalism.

**What do you mean by public service journalism?**

It is a journalism that is meant to serve the people, get the people informed, and help them understand the key concepts about governance. And also help them with the right information to hold their leaders accountable.

**So, do you have a target demography or it’s the general public**

You know the core essence of radio is also simplicity, because it is radio, we try to break down the conversation to everyone. Even though we don’t do Pidgin English, we don’t do any other language apart from English, but we try to make the conversation understandable to even the average man.

**When and why did you come in contact with Africa Check?**

So, the first time I came about Africa Check was during my Youth Service Corp. They did an online training for Journalists.

**When was that?**

2020

Somebody sent me the link to register and I was picked as a participant. It was a 4-day training. We were introduced to the world of Fact Check. They talked about how to use fact checking tools. We were also taught how to inculcate fact check in our daily reporting. It was an eye opener for me because it was the first time, I was going to be attending a training on fact checking.

**Since then have you sustained your interaction or working with them?**

Yes. Later I attended a Master class for fact checkers. It was just like a refresher course to help us. It was also like an interactive session. Challenges we could have encountered and we could ask questions. Challenges we encountered while trying to fact check and new innovations and methods that researchers in Africa Check have used that they feel could work for us were shared with us so as to have them.

**Since then, have you been sharing content from Africa Check?**

Yes, I have been sharing content from Africa Check.

**How often do you share?**

Africa Check and some other fact checking organizations were useful for me and my organization during the 2023 elections. Because, when you do a good job, people will recognise the good work with you. And because radio is conversational, they believe that it is like their own, it is like a family. So, when there is a particular information that they feel they need clarification for, they call. And when you don’t have direct access to the sources, you just have to rely on organizations like Africa Check to help you fact check.

**Do you share Africa Check content only on your radio or plus your other social media platforms?**

I don’t share on my social media platforms. We don’t share on our social media platforms. So, when we use their content to fact check a claim, e name them as our source.

**Mainly in your Bulletins or just on radio?**

On radio and even on our social media pages, when we use their contents to verify a claim, we credit them as the source of our information.

**Do you have criteria for sharing or you just share their content?**

As a journalist we have pointers to look out for facts. If they make the pointers and if they are satisfied with the pointers and if we feel like it’s good enough, then we go ahead to share.

**We’ve had two or one elections since you joined, I think 2023 election will be the only one.**

Yes

**We talked of fake news, misinformation and disinformation. On each of these, during this last election, whether at the gubernatorial or presidential, did you find contents from Africa Check helpful in any way?**

I really find them helpful even pre-election, during and post elections. Because you meet a lot of people that made a lot of claims on social media and it was really a battle for media organizations. And when you don’t have the resources and fact checking desk in your organization, you just have to rely on organizations like Africa Check, like ***Gubawa*** and rest. So, it has really been helpful Whether they like it or not, they are Partners in the progress of Nigeria’s democracy. We find them very credible and whatever information that we need from them, we go to their website or sometimes their social media pages and we check if there is any relevant information concerning the claims or something somebody is trying to verify. Like is said earlier, because radio is conversational and interactive, and when people see you as a credible source, they keep calling you that “I saw this thing, they said they are fighting in this so-so place, they said they’ve killed 3 people in this so-so place. ” So, all this kind of things, you need people that are credible sources over there. And if you don’t have the resources, you have to rely on fact checking organizations like this.

**Still on this 2023 election, were there instances that you can recall, that it was the content(s) from Africa Check that really came handy for you?**

Ok, let me site one. I think during the governorship election in Lagos. We area a radio station based in Lagos and Lagos was a hotspot. So, we got a call from one of our callers, because we had a special election coverage. So, we got a call from one of our callers saying that in his area, \**Pospsi North and Gun Palace Wheel*\* – not his polling unit, he heard that they are telling people not to vote at all and they were disenfranchising people. He talked about seeing the video. We went online and it was Africa Check that fact checked it that the video is an old video, not a new one. We find stuff like that and we really find them useful. Even during the presidential elections, Lagos was a hotspot. We just have to thank God for organizations like Africa Check and fact checking organizations entirely too, because we don’t have the resource. We also have to thank the Civil Societies too, who deployed observers, some of the them were partners in progress also. They deployed enough observes. There was one that we partnered with; they were called ‘Connected Development’. They had about 20,000 observers across the country, we were connecting to their observers to get fresh updates on what is really going on in every part of the country (spot assessment). So, that was how we were able to overcome all those challenges at that time.

**You know Africa Check have done a lot about health. During Covid-19, did you find their content helpful in terms of public health education?**

Yes, they were very helpful. Because during the Covid-19, there were a lot of misinformation and disinformation also. People were trying to do all sort of things. It is a new disease; it is a new scare. People were coming up with all sort of remedies. Even if fact check didn’t get to a lot of people, but at least, fact checking has moved *trajectorially* from what it was in 2019 to what it is right now. They were really helpful. Thank God for Media organizations also for picking up their fact check and telling people that this is not true. So, it was helpful.

**Are there instances like that of Gun Palace, that you can recall, pertaining to Covid-19?**

I remember that there was this talk about Covid-19. I could remember then Africa Check fact checked it about a talk that Covid -19 was like a fever. And people could just do some leaves and some herbs. They talked about some herbs that people could do and once they drink it, they will be fine. And even influencers. Let me go the line to communication theory. You know we have the two-step flow theory, where people intend to believe to get information from people that they believe/ know are able to digest information better than they do. So, a lot of people got information from those people, thank God for Africa Check coming out to say that No, this doesn’t work.

**Going forward can you say expectations have been met? If you want to access their performance and the score of fact checking support they have provided.**

Yes, I think they have tried well. I think they have done well. They have trained a lot of journalists in fact checking in this country. They have also helped newsrooms set up their own fact checking desk, which I think is good. They’ve sponsored TV programs. There is one on News Central TV, I think is called ‘Check’ and goes on I think 8 pm every Friday. I will say they’ve done well.

**Do they have such on your own radio station?**

No. They’ve done well. But as I said that they cannot take the burden alone. But they have done really well.

**Comparing what they have done in terms of Public Health with what they have done in terms of elections and civic education, do you think they should scale up what they do in civic education as well, given the threats of misinformation in the last election we had?**

I think the problem is not about scaling. Yes, there is still more work to do. I once advocated that we don’t need to training journalist alone, I think we need to start training influencers also on fact checking. Because this people get a lot of information every day and they to need to know how to digest these things. Like I mentioned earlier because of the two-step fold theory, that’s the major problem we had during the 2023 elections. A lot of the social media influencers and opinion leaders were using their various platforms on the major news they have to propagate fake news or misinform people. I think they need to be trained also, especially when it comes to identifying their biases. So, they need to be trained also.

**You mean they need to train these influencers, to also help them to identify their biases?**

Yes. It is very essential because we saw a lot of them.

I think there should be a way to bring down fact-checking, just like we bring down journalism. There should be a way to bring it down to members in the rural communities.

Yes, it is good we have started having factchecking programs in various media platforms, I think we should start having indigenous also.

**Like the Pidgin and Yoruba?**

Yes. In pidgin and in Yoruba. That is why I said that influencer, we have a great deal. Even the so-called On-Air Personalities should also be trained to fact check. Especially in the South-West, here, people rely on this indigenous way of doing news reviews, using their various languages like ‘Koko Ninu Iwe Iroyin’. These people are also influencers in their own way. If they are well-trained in fact checking and they are being taught how to inculcate it in their daily routine, then, I think there is going to be a reduction in misinformation and disinformation.

**Do you think this can help us tackle misinformation, disinformation and fake news around elections to prevent violence?**

That is why I said the message has to be spread across. They have done so well. They have even taken it to schools to teach skids, which is fantastic. But I feel even the man who is going to drive me should be taught, even just the basics. He doesn’t need to know how to use fact checking tools, but how to be critical about information. The pointers he should know, the pointers he should look at, to know that I have to be sceptical about this information before sharing. I think that will also be good. I think there should be a partnership with social media platforms too. Some social media platforms need to upscale their detection of fake news. Some news are just too obvious that it is fake. Just because it’s going to… it is going to be difficult, because these people rely on the traffic that is being brought to their site, so it’s going to be difficult. But they just have to take that step. Social media is a tool now that nobody can do without. So, when you take that step, they will have to adjust, they will have no choice. When you find out that this thing is fake, you bring it down, when you find out that it is fake, you warn the account owner. Facebook has to do that.

**So, what you are saying that, the way accounts are suspended when they are reported, can we say accounts that propagate fake news…**

Accounts that propagate fake news should be warned. To misinform is not a sin, but to disinform is a sin and fake news too is a sin. When you discover that somebody keeps posting fake news and is still disinforming people, and it’s becoming a pattern, you know that this person is coming towards an agenda, which may be trying to propagate propaganda; and you know that that account has to be dropped. That is why I said that they need to opt their tools also. Thank God that Artificial intelligence (AI) is already helping in some of these things. What will help in those social media companies is that they have to start inculcating indigenous languages into their programming. By that, when someone is using his indigenous language to propagate fake news, the AI can detect and warn the account owner. If you say humans should do this work, it may be cumbersome, and you need to employ a lot of people. Thank God for Artificial Intelligence, it can help you detect and warn the account owner. And if the person doesn’t desist, t the account has to be dropped. That will really help a lot.

Let’s leave social media alone, Nigeria is still a country that has not gotten out of the two-step flow theory

**What is this two-step flow theory?**

The two-step flow theory talks about how people don’t pick information directly, they pick from influencers, they pick from opinion leaders. Because they believe that those people have a greater way to digest information and they have a better understanding of the information system. And it can be in different fields. Some people can have different sources for different information. Some people will tell you that, when it comes to medicine, this is who I go to. When it comes to agriculture, this is the source I rely on. When it comes to news and current affairs, this is what I rely on. That is why I said the influencers. They need to be trained and we need to tell them that they need to make conscious efforts. Because it is about nationhood. If you decide that because you want to make some quick bucks and want to destroy the country, don’t forget, when everything comes to bunkers. If you think that you will get to escape, what if you don’t get to escape?

**In all, what do you think they should do more and what do you think they should do less? You’ve spoken more about what they should do more anyway, but what do you think they should do less of?**

I think they need to shift their focus from not only training journalists like I mention earlier. Yes, they have been doing a lot of trainings on journalists in recent times, but I think they need to start shifting their focus to other areas and to other people that they feel are involved in the information ecosystem and start training them also. I think with that they will have a …. Yes, they know that journalists are the first line of \*inaudible\*, they need to start shifting their focus to others also. I think with that, yes.

**Thank you very much.**

**7th AUDIO**

**AUDIO TITLE: NEW RECORDING 26**

**Thank you ma, please ma, your name**

My name is Lamir Sadiq. I am currently the head of investigations at Daily Trust Newspaper.

**How did you know about Africa Check?**

I think I knew about them at the time in 2019, they were about to do some training and somehow they partnered with my organization. I was then Editor \*\*\*\* when I gave my name. So, they were going to have a training with us and I was part of those who participated in that training since then I’ve known about Africa Check.

**Since then, have you been sharing/making use of their content?**

Since then, I will say that I have been following them on social media. So, sometimes I see their contents. Because the truth is there are a lot of fact check hubs now. We share what they…\*\*\*\*

**Okay, how do you share? On your social media platform or strictly your institution’s platform?**

Especially through WhatsApp, mostly through WhatsApp. Because, mostly you find that maybe they’ve done a fact check on something and the news spread falsely on different groups on WhatsApp. So, there is a counter on any fact check hub, ***to correct that misinformation***.

**Do you have a specific audience that you share with, or do you just share with the general public?**

General.

**Do you have an idea of the size of your audience (the audience you share with)?**

It should be in their hundreds because it is in groups.

**Do you have any criteria for sharing?**

I share only when I see that perhaps there is misinformation that is being spread and Africa Check has done a particular fact check. That is when I share.

**Talking about elections, we know fake news, misinformation and disinformation have become weaponized, during 2019 and 2023, do you find Africa Check contents helpful in tackling any of this?**

Maybe in 2019, because in 2023 I was not even around. \*\*\*\* But in 2019, I will say yes. Because around February, we begin to have \*\*\*\* fact check. For Africa Check, it was like a colleague was doing something \*\*\*\*. But after that, you could see that, fact check hub like ICI came up, Dubawa came up, etc., but that was later.

**Can you recall any remarkable instances, when their contents really proved timely and helpful?**

Hmm, I can’t

**Talking about public health, we’ve had Ebola and we’ve had Covid-19. Did you find their content helpful in tackling misinformation, fake news and disinformation around Covid-19?**

I’m not sure if they were the ones that did fact check on Salt. Then there was this information that if you take salt water, and I knew that there was a fact check that was done and they looked at the negative implications for \*\*\*\*. This kind of stopped a lot of people from going ahead and \*\*\*\* whereby they could take salt water. I am not sure they \*\*\*\*\*\*\*.

**Talking about your expectation and impact and after that training, would you say your expectation have been met or are being met since that training?**

What that training did for us is that, for the first time we were really hearing about fact check.

***In 2019?***

Yes. I didn’t really know about fact check till that time. \*\*\*\*. It opened my eyes to new possibilities. As at the time that most of the disinformation we are having was not as much as we are getting now. And so far, I will say that, Africa Check opened my eyes to the possibility to be able to understand there are people who are there to churn out disinformation and misinformation and what I do to quickly tackle this.

**Would you say it has improved your performance in any way?**

It did because it was because of that training that I began to look out for fact checks and then gradually I began to see that this is a new itself in journalism. Then I went ahead to even do another training in fact checking with Dubawa. That was \*\*\*\*\*

**Based on the training, have you established a fact checking desk in your organization?**

I am not sure whether it is based on the training, our fact checking desk \*\*\*. Our fact checking desk came up like two years ago.

**That will be 2021?**

Yes. It came in 2 years ago.

**Given the rate of misinformation and disinformation in the last election and the milage I think they have acquired in public health. Will you recommend replication of a similar thing for peace or civic education?**

Yes. There is a lot of misinformation, especially that \*\*\*\*. So, if they are really going to look into that area, I think it will be good.

**So, what do you think they should do more of based on your position as the head of investigation, as a journalist and as a citizen? You wear many caps.**

I think if we are to look at security matters, there is a lot of tension and disinformation around it, especially on social media. You find that there are a lot of certain things happening, people have become \*\*\*\* and that creates a lot of tension and that creates a lot of scare \*\*\*\*\*\* that has not happened yet. For instance, in a state like Plateau state, some of those things they are used to happening, you find that someone goes on social media to say this thing is happening, meanwhile it has not really happened yet. So, if there is going to be a project, at least to tackle especially security matters.

**And what do you think they should do less of?**

Less of? Why should they do anything less? If they do something on the health matters… We have a lot of challenges in Nigeria, we have a lot of sectors that need concentration and interventions. But the truth is that, it depends on what is the trending thing at the moment. For example, during the election, politically, there would be a lot of fake news, you can’t say do less of that. And also, security matters, there is a lot of fake news. Even in the economy, there is a lot of fake news. So, I wouldn’t say do less of any for now, but I would say that the major thing I would love to see a lot of concentration in security, public health and also even politics. Even politics, because, politics raises a lot of tension in people and before you know it, it easily triggers a security issue. So, I will love to see more in that area.

**Thank you very much ma.**

**8th Audio**

**Audio Title: P.O.W MAFEMI CRESCENT**

**Today is the 8th of May and I am with?**

Miss Ojoma Akor, Health Editor, Daily Trust

**What again do you do in the organization, I mean your place in the organization?**

I also report health activities, and I edit, that is where I am a health editor.

**Do you have a column too?**

The column I will say is the health \*\*\*\* both the weekends and the dailies.

**How did you come in contact with Africa Check? And when was your first contact?**

My first contact with Africa Check was in 2018. They had a training on fact check for health journalists in Abuja. So, I believe someone recommended me to them and I got their invite and I participated. During the training program, some of us were selected to give information, reporting health accurately. So, I was one of the \*\*\*that spoke during that time, I think in September 2018. Then I also had trainings with them online and also had another one with them in April 2021 in Lagos.

**So, since then, have you found their content helpful and have you been sharing their content?**

Yes, I’ve found their content helpful and the fact that they are the best when it comes to fact checking especially in Africa. Another opportunity that I have in sharing their content is that they partner with Daily Trust. There is a partnership with Daily Trust where they were also giving stipends to Daily Trust, to fact check. So, it is collaboration on health, fighting health misinformation. So, they did that for over a year to two years. With that, aside \*\*\*\*we were doing it every week on health misinformation in partnership with Africa Check.

**Since then, how often have you been sharing their content?**

Well, I can’t say I have done that so frequently, but when I see fact checks related to Africa Check, maybe on Facebook, there could be \*\*\* what we’ve not done so frequently \*\*\*. When I see content maybe saying “Women when you take this, you will get…” Since, I am in health, normally anything that has to do with Africa Check related to health on WhatsApp groups, I share them.

**Why do you share the way you do?**

I share because it helps enlighten the public about health in particular. I share because I know that most of their fact checks are 100% accurate. \*\*\*\*

**Do you have an estimate of the size of the audience you share with?**

Maybe I should start with the one we shared via our media house. We know they have millions of subscribers. They have millions of readers in Nigeria, especially across the world.

**In sharing, do you have any criteria? Or you just share. Do you try to say I will share this, I won’t share that?**

Most times, I share what I think the public would want to read. If for instance, they are saying that pawpaw leaves do not help cure Typhoid fever or anything around health that there had been misunderstandings and misconceptions. \*\*\*\* because I needed to inform the public. Then another one I remember I shared very well was during the time of Covid-19. I shared a lot of Africa Check contents on Covid vaccines, Covid -19 Variants and the like.

**Talking about the election, we have seen how misinformation, disinformation and fake news have become weaponized. Have you found Africa Check contents helpful in countering fake electoral ministers of misinformation?**

Since I know they do fact check in all spheres and I have come across them, but the rate of it is what I don’t know. Like I said since I already have that confidence in them, I know that they would have been doing a whole lot of stories.

**But you have not been making use of anything…?**

Yes, for elections, I have not.

**So, you’ve been restricted to health mainly?**

I’ve been reading them, but I can’t say I have categorically shared their contents on elections.

**During the Covid-19, I will like you to elaborate if there were specific facts that you found helpful in countering public health misinformation.**

In fact, early last year I did a report on “Covid-19: How Facebook contributes to vaccine hesitancy among Young Nigerians.” There was a lot of misinformation on Facebook during that period. Africa Check took time to fact check some of those videos on vaccines and they will now put that this is misinformation. So, in my report, if you go online, I shared some of those false videos that were fact checked. Like some said, it causes the mark of the beast, it causes infertility, it will make you die before your time and all that.

**Would you say your expectations have been met?**

Yes, they have been met. In fact, among other fact checking organizations and mechanisms, I tend to put Africa Check above them. Because, during that time of their training, so many tools were shown to us. \*\*\*\*\*. So, I really think they helped me, so my expectations have been met. And I hope to continue utilizing it.

**We have seen how fake news and misinformation were all weaponised during the last election. Would you recommend a replication of what has been done in public health for maybe civic or peace education, in the light of what we went through with misinformation and fake news?**

I will strongly recommend it. Because the same way it was able to help a large percentage of the public to overcome health misinformation, it will also help the public to overcome misinformation when it comes to their civic responsibilities. Because a lot of people were misled because of disinformation and misinformation.

**So far, what do you think they should do more of?**

If the wherewithal is there, they should go all spheres. They should not be limited.

**You mean every area of public interest?**

Yes, public interest is the keyword. whether it has to do with the military or security issues. Security issues is one area I don’t know if they’ve been doing a lot. They may. Maybe, for instance, they say this is where \*\*\*\* was killed in Kaduna recently, meanwhile \*\*\* was killed five years ago. So, security is another area I think they should start doing. And in the field of science too. Well, they’ve done that with Covid-19 and they have a network where they always talk to editors. So, I think they should replicate it in all spheres if they have the means.

**What do you think they should do less of?**

I don’t think of any.

**I will like to know why the partnership stopped.**

I think it had a time frame. It was defined from the beginning. And people were expected with time to continue. And I think Africa Check wanted was for us to have a fact check desk, where we fact check stories.

**For all your departments or just on health?**

What they do is that, if Peter Obi did something now…

They do all spheres. It is a fact checking page. A page in Daily Trust dedicated to fact check.

**And that can be ascribed to the partnership with Africa Check?**

In part, it contributed. You know we have a partnership with Dubawa too.

**Thank you very much ma.**

**9th Audio**

**Audio Title: Abuja.**

**Go ahead**

My name is Mohammed Rabiu Ali, I work with Nigeria Television Authority, here in Abuja Headquarters.

**What is your position or Rank?**

I am an Assistant Manager, News.

**When did you get to know about Africa Check and how?**

I got to know about Africa Check in 2015 if I am not mistaken. Before the election.

**And what was the context?**

They were in Kano then, when I was in Kano. There were in Kano to sensitize and enlighten the journalist on fact checking reporting. I happen to be one of the ones that had the privileged to be among the participants. So, that is how I got to know Africa Check.

**And since then, have you been making use of their contents?**

Definitely. We used their content in the 2015 general elections. And then I still have the documents. In 2019 election and 2023 elections. Not particularly myself, but I even inform others (my colleagues in the newsroom) on fact checking reporting, and how to use the tools of fact checking. Definitely, Africa Check really impacted me, since then.

**Since then, how often do you share their content?**

Not really sharing their content, but using the contents in my reportage.

***So, the contents have been in a way instructive for you?***

For me and for those who will vet my story and those who will listen to the story. You know there are a lot of fact checking the news.

**In sharing your content that has been cooked, so to say, using their tools. How often do you do this? And how do you do this, do you do it only on TV or on your social media platforms?**

No, not really. I only use their content on TV since I am a TV person. So, I only use it on TV.

**Do you have an idea of the size of your audience?**

Do you mean NTA? **Yes**. NTA has a very big and large audience.

***Can you put a figure to it?***

You know, we have 200 million Nigerians. At 9 o clock, everyone is willing to watch NTA. Approximately I cannot tell you the figure.

***So, millions? Your audience is in millions?***

Yes, millions.

**Do you have criteria for sharing?**

Yes, we do have criteria for sharing our content. We cannot just release our content anyhow.

**So, what are these criteria?**

For our colleagues, Channels, TVC and other media, we share contents, but an outsider who comes looking for our contents have to follow certain criteria. By seeing the manager News, when he approves, he will now send your request to the General Manager if it is a local station. But like here in the headquarters, when you see the Manger Reporting, he will ask you to see the DDN, and when you see the DDN - that’s the Deputy Director News, then you take it to the high level before we release our contents.

**Thank God we’ve had three elections since you joined. In any of these elections, did you find Africa check contents or training helpful during any of these elections? Maybe 2015, 2019 or 2023**.

Yes. Like I told you, Africa Check was in Kano in the 2015 election and they taught us so many things. It’s not only NTA, myself, and other media houses (were there as well). Then I’ve never come across Africa Check again, but, still, I am using their contents.

**Can you remember any particular instance, in which if not for you, based on the training you received, there would have been fake news, misinformation or disinformation, during any of these elections?**

Definitely, particularly in 2015, I covered Kano North senatorial district. And there was inconclusive in the gubernatorial election. So, I was asked to cover Bichi Local Government Area. Had it not been for fact checking, I would have misled so many people. ***The whole Nation actually***. Of course, because NTA is a (wide station). I was there and information was going around that APC didn’t allow PDP to vote. And I came live, I interviewed both the party members of the APC and PDP, and they responded. Without having this kind of knowledge and being so critical on fact checking, with the information I have, I would have just said yeah or I will just also follow my colleagues and say yes, they are not allowing PDP members to vote.

**Meanwhile, that was not true?**

Definitely.

**Down to 2019 and 2023, any similar event?**

2019, I also covered the presidential and Gubernatorial elections in Kano. But we didn’t experience any …. You know 2019 was somehow free and fair, despite some challenges. And in 2023, I was with the presidential candidate of NNPP, Kwankwaso. I was in a team to handle his campaign and also the election. The only one I covered is the presidential election because I was attached to him, only.

**And in the course of your coverage, did you come close to anything like misinformation, fake news or disinformation, which you now deployed your fact checking skill?**

In 2023, we didn’t experience any problems, not much. Because I only centred on presidential candidates, which is easier than the previous ones.

**Africa Check also does a lot on public health. I wouldn’t know if you have found any of their contents helpful in public health education, especially during Ebola and Covid-19.**

I have never come across anything that has to do with health from Africa Check. But there is one Afri… Something. I don’t know if they are collaborating. But Africa Check is only with fact checking reporters and basically on election coverage.

**Now, we’ve seen how misinformation, fake news and disinformation were weaponized in this last election. Do you think Africa Check should do more in civic education, to let people know that they are responsible for what they share?**

Apart from what they’ve done in the past, more need to be done in terms of enlightenment and making people know about all these things in circulation. I think there’s a need for them to do more in terms of public enlightenment and educating the electorate.

**Would you say your expectations have been met since you subscribed to… or since that training?**

Like I told you earlier, since that time, I have been using their tools in terms of reporting elections. Not only elections, even if you have any piece of anything \*\*\*, there are tools that they gave us that you can use to know whether that evidence is true or fake. So, I have those documents with me, and whenever I come across this kind of thing, I resort back to the document (tools).

**Does Africa Check run any program on NTA? Whether on health or development or election.**

Not really.

**Can they push for that, can they apply for that?**

You say they have a program on health, and we have a help desk, we have political days. We can work together. The only thing is that we sit down, we share ideas and then if they have a program they will be airing. Like programs for health, election and civic education. They can bring it to NTA, we sit down, we negotiate and we will be airing their program. Like the way we do with other Non-Governmental Organizations or private organizations.

**What do you think they should do more going forward with journalists and for the Public?**

Training and retraining, it is very vital, especially for journalists. When you train a journalist on an issue, not only him, he spread that information and it impacts (that knowledge) ***on his performance***. So, I think Africa Check should do more in terms of training of journalists if it is health, political programs and civic education. If they can do that, the training will really help.

***More like capacity building?***

Yes, capacity building workshop.

**What do you think they should stop doing? Or do less of?**

I don’t have anything negative with Africa Check. Because I really enjoined their program with ‘Ajikobi. I hope I have some of my pictures with them. I was so active during that time, we shared ideas then.

**In your station, do you know others who have benefitted?**

In my station, I was the only person that benefitted from that program from NTA. Because they requested from my station and then the station submitted my name. But there are other media branches. Not only in Kano but all over the country.

**Do you now have a fact checking desk?**

In NTA? I don’t know, let me ask my colleague. ‘Aliyu, do we have a fact checking desk here in NTA’ *(Aliyu responds: ‘No’).* No, I know we don’t have such a desk.

**It will be nice if you have.**

Yes, it will be nice. I remember UNICEF they have a desk on children. And when I was in Kano, I happen to be the Vocal person (they call it the vocal person) in NTA Kano for UNICEF. I think if they can have a fact checking desk here in NTA, we will appreciate

**Thank you very much.**

**10th AUDIO**

**AUDIO TITLE: DOMINO’S PIZZA 2**

**Thank you very much. I will like to get to know you, the name of your organization and your place in the organization or institution.**

My name is Lanre Olagunju. I am presently the Fact Check Editor at The Cable. The Cable is an online news platform. One of the leading news platforms in the country. We also have a fact check arm in the organization, where we publish regular fact checks on politics, health, climate, entertainment and other areas of value.

**How did you first come in constant with Africa Check?**

I ventured into fact check in 2018. When I got into the fact checking community, Africa Check was one of the leading names and platforms when it comes to fact checking in the continent. There is no way as a fact checker that you would miss the name. Either from colleagues mentioning it, or either from some of the debunks they’ve done. It was majorly Africa Check at that point in time, and then shortly after it was Dubawa.

**In subscribing, what convinced you? Why did you eventually subscribe after your first contact?**

For me, what I usually do is that, once I get into a particular community, I like to get the most recent update. So, I can actually know, what inspires that community, and how often they share data that affect people who are going to be major stakeholders in that system. Joining that group was essentially so I can be abreast of every piece of information, every fact checks and probably opportunities that are available.

**Since then, have you also been sharing their contents with others, within your own universe, so to say?**

Maybe this might also be a good time to say I also worked at African Check at some point. I hope that doesn’t negate the essence of this research.

**No, does not. It even helps it.**

**Was that after 2018?**

Yes, after 2018. I was a freelance contributor. And I think my profile is still on the Africa Check website. Ordinarily, as a contributor, you should expect that I will share my own content, I will share the content of other colleagues. While other colleagues are working on their reports, I will turn and say, ‘wWhatdo you think about this idea?’. So, there was a sense of responsibility to that. So, I share it. Even till now, I still get the aggregate of fact checks and nnewslettersand sometimes when I see things, I share. Also, I share with the ‘*Obon*’ community of fact checkers that you have, so that you can critique, you can look into how a particular report was presented, and also for the sake of that togetherness.

**Do you share mainly within your professional ecosystem or to the general public and do you also do this on your social media platforms or strictly in your official capacity?**

It will depend. When I share my report on my Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and practically all my platforms or platform that I think people need to reach \*\*\*. Protest in Nigeria and how the military was going back and forth and saying we did this and we didn’t do that. So that became topical in the country. So, yes, I share them. But sometimes when it is about a particular report, or maybe I am working on a report and Africa Check has done that report, sometimes three (3) years ago. Maybe a kind of report that is in alignment with what I am working on, so, I don’t have to share that, if they have not shared. Sometimes you just share with a particular community where that conversation is ongoing. For instance, WHO says that you much have 10 doctors to 100 persons and maybe the conversation is going on somewhere. You can find out if Fact Check has done it this before. So, you just share that to buttress a conversation. Aside from that, if I think that this topic has to do with members of the public, yes, I could share that on Facebook.

**So, that means you share with your professional colleagues, and if it is of interest to the general public, you share too?**

Exactly.

**Do you have an estimate/size of your audience in both contexts – both of your professional Universe and the general public?**

If you say the size of my audience, it might be quite difficult to put a figure to that. Because, you also know how social media works, in terms of the power of the retweet. If you share something on your social media it goes out of your hand. So, if should put a figure to it, maybe a range, I would say between 500,000 to a million. Cos there are times I have shared something on Africa Check and then people send them back to me, ***not knowing that it started from me.*** It might be difficult, maybe that range. But if I’m going to put a figure to my own followers, I do not have so much of huge followers on social media as such.

**Looking at our elections since 2015, we’ve seen how misleading claims, false claims, misinformation, fake news and disinformation became weaponized. Did you find contents from Africa Check helpful to counter, debunk or correct any of these weaponized issues?**

Yes, absolutely, there is no doubt about that. Because Africa Check is the leading platform in the continent. One of their fact checks that was very useful to me; we have this short fact check review, where they debunk things that have been attributed to politicians that essentially, they did not say. That for me, actually stood out. Sometimes you find a quote that Obasanjo said this, Atiku said this, Tinubu said this, and you will be wondering where was it said. So, they have many fact checks in that category. A lot of them. I think it’s under the Facebook third party and program. In fact, at some point, I made a list of them. So, that was very important. So, yes, they did.

**Is that list something you can share?**

I’m trying to look for it.

**That means, in all elections, since you met them, their contents have been very helpful during elections for you.**

Absolutely.

**We’ve also had public health challenges. We’ve had Ebola and Covid-19. Were their contents also helpful for you in countering fake news, misinformation or disinformation? And I will like, specific instances, please.**

Absolutely. So, there is this particular report. At that point in time, I and some other fact checkers also founded a fact checking platform called ‘Check Naija’. And we come to try to debunk many facts check with respect to Covid-19, Africa Check was that leading platform. Especially when it comes to things like tangerine can kill covid, hot water and salt… Africa Check had a lot of that. So, yes, during Covid, Africa Check was very helpful.

**Measuring your expectations and impacts now. Which aspects of your expectations have been met since you subscribed to Africa Check now as an outsider because I know at some point, you were an insider?**

Some of the expectations for me is the fact that the fact checks at Africa Check do not only bother on Nigeria only. And as a fact checker who is also a member of that community and also looking at how other Africa Nations are also fairing against disinformation. Africa Check is that major platform that actually does that. From my experience with Africa Check, I have tried to ensure that the fact checks we do at The Cable are not just concerning Nigeria only. Though sometimes you want to ask yourself ‘Are you sure Nigerian readers are interested in these things?’ But from the feedback, I think they are. So, Africa Check will give you fact check videos about Uganda, about South Africa; South Africa claims are mostly debunked; from Ghana and from Kenya. That is one leading edge and expectation that I really subscribe to.

**You’ve told me it has helped you to do better in conducting fact checking and enhancing the work you do. We’ve seen how misinformation became weaponised in our most recent elections. Given the success Africa Check has recorded in public health education, would you recommend a replication of that in civic and peace education, towards educating people to know that they would be responsible for what they share? I’m speaking against the backdrop of how fake news and misinformation became weaponized towards even creating tensions along ethnic and religious lines in the 2023 election**.

Yes, Absolutely. If there are other areas of human endeavours or social problems that you think fact checking and sharing appropriate information can help, why not? I think a good example is - I cannot remember the particular fact check now – because these days editors are even struggling with a mirage of information. So, it is possible that you read something somewhere on Financial Times and it might be attributed to New York Times. But I remember that during the times we have a certain Sunday Igboho drama in Nigeria. Africa Check did a couple of fact check where old videos were used to buttress that there was chaos in Ogbomoso in Oyo, and that’s it. If you watch during the Covid-19 pandemic, during health, yes it can also work in the areas of ensuring that we have peace and stability.

Another area where there seems to be some form of ‘Sweet Chaos’ (if that is a permissible word to use), is also in the area of sport. I think Africa Check is also leading when it comes to sport disinformation. A good example is the drama between Messi and Ronaldo; a lot of misinformation. Things Messi never said, things Ronaldo never said; things they never did. And sometimes they just take them out of context. The Hakimi matter is also there; about the wife. I’m yet to see a major platform that will do a debunk. I know that Africa report’s operational report is nudging that it might be fake. But all I’m trying to say is that, if it worked with health, yes, it can also work in ensuring peace and stability and other areas of life as well.

**What do you think they should do more of, generally?**

Is it more of, or something they are doing, that they need to do more?

**Yes.**

So, I think that they need to increase their publicity in all of the African Countries in which they are established. One of the other brands that I think is doing that so much with a bit of aggression is CDD, and they are doing it explicitly well. Yes, I know Africa Check moved into radio some three years ago if I’m correct…

**Yes, they do radio programs, I found out in some radio stations that I have been to. Like 30 minutes programs.**

Exactly. So, I think that is something they might actually want to build upon and maybe also extend it to Television, Television especially. I’m still looking at where we are going to have a lot of collaboration with fact checking communities and Television. Because, if social media is the platform where information is being shared. And most times fact check is critically always doing catch up. But, if we can enhance fact checks on TV and radio and it is happening in real time, yes, I think that fact check mechanism will be enhanced. So, that when a claim has gone around saying that 5 -10 million people and then your fact check is barely reviewed by 500,000 people. If that fact check is enhanced on the radio, at the same time on TV, yes, you can be rest assured that every corner of the country, will have been informed.

**What do you think they should do less of?**

Oh, I really don’t think that…. Well, if you have a pandemic, what do you really want to do less of?

**And we have pandemics now anyway**

We have misinformation pandemic as well. So, why do you want to do what is worth, less? The only thing they might also want to look into is, what particular strategy is working well, and which one is not working well. And then that might now become…

**A periodic review of strategy then. Maybe they should have KPIs. Like for each strategy, there should be a KPI then.**

Exactly. So, which particular one is taking much money, time and resources, without getting the maximum result? That might be internally. But from the outside, I think that everything they are doing now is towards ensuring that we have a saner information ecosystem where our political conversations are healthier and sane.

**I’m really grateful sir.**

**11th AUDIO**

**AUDIO - TITLE: DOMINO’S PIZZA 3**

My name is Timothy Bamidele. I am the program manager, Institute for Media and Society. I am one of the *Media aides* in Nigeria and we are based in Lagos.

**How and when did you come in contact with Africa Check?**

I will say more than three, four, five years ago. Even before I joined project management, at the Federal Radio Cooperation of Nigeria, I have had engagement with them. And while, as the \*\*\* editor, also as *final*, those were part of the things I developed for the directorate of FRCN where I also worked.

**How long did you spend at Radio Nigeria?**

I spent close to 16 years or more. As at the time I left, I was one of the team bridge, \*\*\* media director where I also gained Speaker status. I also took some training with Africa Check in terms of fact checking and supervision. \*\*\*\*

**Since you joined have you been sharing their contents?**

Aside the fact that prior to my joining this team,\*\*\* but as the program manager for the Institute for Media and Society, some of our programming require that we… we have a pillar of our work which actually coincides with information technique, and one the strategy we use is to build the capacity of media practitioners to be able to understand this terrain and to have the skills to be able to do that. In pursuance of that, that is one aspect. Another aspect is that we also raise platforms for the network of our journalists in Nigeria to be at par and abreast with fact check news from all reputable partners in Nigeria that you don’t know and in Africa, such as Africa Check, Dubawa and a host of them. Because our \*\*in participation\*\*of media space have made sure is to work with them as friends and partners. That is why even when we want to be \*\*creative\*\*, we pull our resource persons from this pool of experts. We pull from the academic and we also pool from practitioners. We believe that when we mix theoretical framework, understanding the information atmosphere, coupled with measurements that are actually going to work, we will run that session and prior to this election, our misinformation, will face up to 40 or more. It came up to 60. \*\*\*\* We also have a platform, that we use to first track something, that will gather verified and\*\*\* hunt them. Because some of them are not the sponsors of our interaction with them. We do realize that they are about taking absolute advantage of the work of partners in the field of fact checking. We realize that there are enormous challenges with our broadcast organization, and few of them have it. So, if stories have been fact checked, you will know. Going on our implementation of some of our programs, we thought, ok, let us create a hub, to now bring them into what has been done. So that they won’t fall into the same lacuna in their in \*\*\*\*.

**What is the name of that hub sir?**

We call it hotfake.com.

This is of which that, it is in the spirit of collaboration. And the way we structure it, we are not claiming ownership, neither did we take ownership. We give credit to organizations that have done the work. And we also encourage our partners to \*\*\*\*. Our utmost objective is to ensure that Media \*\*\* in Nigeria because we observe that the rest are not really strong. They don’t have all the patience to \*\**fact check*. But looking for organizations that *have done the work*, we do sort of, putting it together and… We also have platforms, so that we let them know this has been fact checked. So that when they are using \*\*\*\*, they won’t fall victim, they are guided and then there are conversations on what is… Some of them their capacity to fact check has not been fully strengthened, but sin ome of our programming, we have seen that. And in one of the \*\*\* within me can do, is also, \*\*\*\* some of these reputable organization \*\*\*\*\*\*. So that is why we also prioritize/engage them as partners in \*\*\*\* which in the recent past we’ve done. And within a couple of weeks, we will still be meeting some of these partners like Dubawa, and Africa Check. Our own way of looking at it is working together, collaborating, and creating platform for \*\*\*\* organizations and media houses. Those stories would have been fact checked, we follow them and then we will have strong editorial gatekeeping. It is like \**politics\** and judgement. Some of the partners we work with will be embarrassed that some judges do not even know the precedence of some judgements. Because there is no hub that gives them the understanding that this same pattern they are treating, has been treated as if it is the outcome. And we assume they are the first judgment. Our colleague that did some research realizes that they don’t know that the same judgement they passed, has been passed in Bauchi. They just see that there are \*\*\*\*. The studies that were done by some of our partners, actually reveal that, these guys honestly do not know.

**And the public will allege corruption**

It’s not alleged corruption. It was during this baseline approach, that we do realize that… because there is a dearth of information. Even though there is a kind of platform, like a hub, which you are trying to work on, that is not bringing them on the same page. Our brother \*\*\*\* is one of the judges in one of the South West states, who happen to be a friend, and I shared the thing after it was developed by our partners. The judge was embarrassed, he said “They had content, he even interpreted this… thank you” Honestly speaking, I’m being sincere. You could have imagined the size of the broadcast phase in Nigeria. We work with community radio, with campus radio, with public radio, with private radios.

**That means your audience runs into thousands, then?**

Yes, technically speaking.

So, what we do, is to be able to build their capacity to take advantage. We just returned yesterday from Port Harcourt, where we did capacity on \*\*\* journalist on teacher’s storytelling. And it was after a baseline study. So, I am saying all of this, that the best we can do as development of Nigeria and NGO, is to be able this identify these gaps. Aside the fact that we have a dearth of fact checkers. As much as we could provide intervention as other partners do, we are looking at what is the outcome? Have they taken it up? Are taking advantage of? So, we say ok, ‘Let’s stay with this platform and let us see what…’ And what we are doing, we are taking it one after the other and we also narrow what we are doing, but now within the electoral cycle.

**That takes me to the next question. Did you find Africa Check contents helpful in our recent elections in tackling misinformation, fake news and disinformation?**

It will be unfair not to be able to \*\*\*\* about what \*\*\*\* fantastic work. Because, in house, we also have our team, that will just look at the space and the approaches and the model. So, within us it has been \*\*\*\* as one of the finest \*\*\*\*in the industry; collaborating, open and you can see the sequence in what had to be done. We also have a reputation, so, we will not be careless too, to say some people are fact checking only to discover that it was done by \*\*\*\*. As much as it \*\*\*\*\*. But because we are open too, that is why it is not all\*\*\*\* we are deliberate about the choices of those ones. Because in the process, some of our younger colleagues \*\*\*\* and we realize that they are not much clear. So, I can say….\*\*\*

**Are there remarkable instances, you can recall, where if not for your intervention of being able to fact check, there would have been a misrepresentation of certain events**?

Let me say this. We have a pool of technologists that we have trained, \*\*\*\* for that matter, and we have \*\*\*\*\*\*. It’s like feedback. There are times, some of us we allow people sometimes advertise their ignorance. \*\*\*\* you won’t say that, you want the best; we won’t say you didn’t get it. So, when you look at such interaction, when you look at such engagements and the feedback. Then you will be \*\*\*, not primarily about us, it is about our target space. And you know it ripples. If the broadcast media, journalists, editors, producers, presenters, if they get it right, you can be very sure by the space of information, would have been thoroughly purified. And then we have a reasonable level of confidence, that they won’t carry fake news on Radio Nigeria. Not only because they don’t have their own in-house mechanism, but because they are also working with people that can support **and guide.** So, for me with that is a win-win. But we also want to see many of them coming on board, **and being able to fact check on their own;** we want to see many of them fact check for themselves, and we want to see maybe in some other program opportunity. Assigning some of them to be mentored by Africa Check, and some of them by Dubawa. All of this thing, the bottom line of funding. If there are funding, we have \*\*\*\*and will can grade that separate and assigned. But because funding is limited, then we have to be \*\*\*\* in the way we \*\*\*\*. Because our own bottom line, is based on our \*\*\*\*document, to help even our media professionals in fighting fake news and misinformation, by using this platform and all. They have reason to do more, still gain from measurement, and observation \*\*\*. So far so good, I think they are working ….

**Now about public health information or public health education. Have you also found Africa check contents helpful in tackling… We saw the weaponization of misinformation and fake news during Ebola and Covid-19. During these periods, did you find Africa Check contents helpful in tackling….?**

Well, I could only refer to that time,\*\*\*\*\* when were in the heat of Covid-19. By reason of the deeds and the directorate that I was in, Africa Check is one of the facts checking organizations that we look on. Because as at that time, the death was not strong, that’s the truth. So, Africa Check is one of the fact checkers, that we look at what they have of done. We have a lot of programs that time ran on air. And one interesting lesson that I like that time, our traffic on Facebook “wake up”, it was interesting. So, then I can see that when people are at home, they turn to social media for information.

**Measuring the impact now, how would you rate the impact/ contribution of Africa check on your performance?**

Maybe I should be generous with you with this rating, on this basis. Interestingly enough we have a project document that is actually looking at the electoral cycle. And because of the deliberateness of Africa Check, I know that prior to the election, we will assume that it is a big deal for media organizations to look at disinformation. But for me, I believe that the bottom line of whatever we would have done at that time, aside other things we would have done, was to be able to save \*\*\*\*

**Is the document available to the public?**

No, I have not said the document was produced or generated. You may not necessarily publish it. But sometimes they are still in the public domain. In the sense that, what we do in the media, we still let them know the pillars of our result areas. Results areas on misinformation, I think is 4.21. They are not reading it perse. It is obvious in our pillars that fake news is none of it. So, it is not **a stand-alone document.** For instance, when we engage our trainers, we read to them, PU ads. We let them know because it is an open trait. When we share with them Africa Check has done, we are not taking ownership. We are not saying we did it. No, it is not us. We tell them that we want you to rise to that level to be able to do it on your own. So, that’s the nature of our intervention. And because we also deliberate during that period, \*\*\*\*. There is a kind of \*\*\*\* So, what we are thinking, we are really giving it, practical approach to it. So, when we are grading it and say excellent. We want to see our media practitioners with the capacity to do all this. Though the capacity is being built, but it has not become top notch. This is what colleagues are doing, and this is what you should not allow to happen to your radio station. If you don’t see it, don’t \*\*\* it, it has not been fact checked. Now it has been fact checked, you can now refer, and give credit. That has been done, you cannot measure. That outcome is not our \*\*\*\*. \*\*\*\* Because for them is a win-win too. Because, if they are reading fake news, they are vulnerable to NBC, they are vulnerable to Politicians asking them. So, I will propose that they take advantage of the training.

**So, what do you think Africa Check should do more of?**

What I am thinking is that we should be able to have more collaborative activities. Although, from our own side, we believe that, we work with them, and be more of their resource persons. And maybe in the future when we have some other complaints, we should be able to speak to them as mentors for some of these broadcast people we are training and mentor them until they are able to stand on their feet. And you know that will have some sort of obligation. We are thinking towards that.

**Given the success Africa Check has recorded in Public Health education, would you suggest a replication of that template for civic and public peace education, against the background of the weaponization of fake news in the last election?**

The only way I will answer is that you don’t take a \*\*\*\*. If a template has been built successfully, if you are attacking it with a new strategy/idea, you might just look at the way it will fit in. And if it fits in well, will it \*\*\*. For me, the moment a strategy is working, if you are pulling it with a new idea, let’s put it properly and let it work. Because, when you do your measurement and evaluation, you will some gaps. \*\*\*\*. When we do training, we give perspective in training. So, the training that was done before the election, was pre-election, the training that is being conducted now is post-election narrative. And the same template, but now in post-election. **Now putting it in proper context.**

**Thank you very much, sir.**

**12th AUDIO**

**Audio Title: ABUJA 2**

**Good Afternoon, Today Is May 12, 2023, Please, Introduce Yourself Ma**

My name is Iyechinu Sasetu

**And what is your Position in Your Organization?**

I’m a journalist

**Are you a Producer or a Presenter?**

Yes, news reporting, producer, and presenter. I produced a health show; I also present a health program.

**When and how did you come in contact with Africa Check?**

Honestly, I can’t remember. you know people share links in different groups. I think maybe I saw a link somewhere and I applied for something. I can’t remember how I first got in touch with them.

**Since then, have you been making use of their content?**

Yes, sometimes. there is a WhatsApp group that we have and that they have. and sometimes they post content, and I go there and check. sometimes, I see something and I need verification, I reach out to people that I know in the organization and ask. even on their social media platform like Twitter, they usually post verified information.

**Do you share their content?**

If something comes up in a group I belong to, and I must have seen something that they had verified, I share it. or after a while, maybe to get education on something we have seen earlier, and if I remember, I send it back that this has been verified, it is either true or not or partial.

**Besides sharing for work purposes, do you share their content for social purposes? Maybe on your WhatsApp, Twitter or other social media platforms that are not necessarily work-related?**

Yes. if I get the information and maybe a family member or relative had asked or had seen, and I know it’s false and I see that it was either verified or not by Africa check.

**In doing that, do you have any criteria for sharing, or you just post? Any criteria to know whether you should share or not?**

I think I trust them enough to see that any information from them is accurate. once I see information from there, I don’t need to ask again really.

**Coming back to the recent election. you don’t know when you joined exactly, but we’ve had the 2019 and 2023 elections. and we saw the misuse, abuse or weaponization of information evident in fake news, disinformation and misinformation, did you find the contents of Africa check helpful, during elections, whether at the subnational or national level?**

The previous election, yes. I was always ready to see ‘is this information true or not’. and because I follow them on Twitter, so usually I see their tweets. for this election, yes. for this election I remember following them during campaign season, when the candidates were going around, having debates and all of that. they were either debunking the information or not. yes, it was actually useful. you know candidates can just come out and talk about anything. sometimes I will see they either say it’s true or it’s partial, and I will be like, ‘So this person actually did not say the right thing or this person was accurate here. yes, so it helped

**Any particular instance?**

I can’t remember the particular information. but there was something that Peter Obi said about a figure he gave and they were able to verify that that information was not true. It wasn’t the accurate figure. But I can’t remember exactly what it was now.

**We’ve also had two major public health emergencies, Ebola and Covid-19. during any of these two, did you find Africa check content helpful whether against fake news, misinformation or disinformation?**

Very much so. do you remember during the Ebola season, when the salt and water thing came up? I think that it was even the period that I came in contact with Africa Check. So, that period was really important for me, because then, I didn’t even know how to verify information. I didn’t really know a lot that information could actually be misleading, that people could put out content, just to mislead people. It was really helpful at that time when they started to debunk some of those rumours. For the Covid-19 also, especially with the vaccine. People talking about it and there is so much information out there and you don’t know what is true or not, what is accurate or not, what is partially true or not. so, it was really helpful. Because I trust them enough, so, when I see information they put out on social media, I totally trust it to say, ‘ok, yes, this has been verified, this is accurate or this is partial or not.

**Like the election, any significant or any one of note about public health during that time?**

No, I can’t exactly pinpoint anything.

**I mean the way you could recall for the Public Health**

If you are looking into the emergency, I can’t remember exactly what now. It is just so much information at that time, and because of the work I do, I am constantly trying to see what is accurate. Honestly, I can’t pinpoint and say this…

**That if not for Africa Check, maybe things would have gone horrid.**

**Next, we want to look at your expectations and impact since you subscribed to Africa Check. In terms of expectations, have your expectations been met or are they being met?**

Well, it’s not that I had big expectations. Maybe because I am in the business of Information sharing as well. So, giving accurate information is very key to me, and I do health journalism and you know how important health information is to the public. Once I get an information, I try not to share it immediately, but once I see information from Africa Check, I immediately… I trust the information to be true, to be accurate. So, I think that’s basically the expectation for me that what they put out should be accurate. That they know their job, that they know what they are doing. And so far, yes. At least I haven’t seen any other platform or any other person coming to say ‘No this information that they put out was actually true or not’.

And I have been to a few trainings online and physically as well. The first training I had on fake news, misinformation, and disinformation, was from Africa Check. So, it helped me to categorize between this and this and it has helped me in my work as a health journalist and even in my social life. That even when relatives, family members or loved ones or friends give some information, if I am not sure at that time, I will tell them ‘No, let’s verify them later.’ So, the expectations have just been, that I should be able to get verified and accurate information, and so far, they have met that.

**So, if they’ve done that in terms of public health, and against the backdrop of the weaponization of misinformation, or information disorder in the last election, would you suggest a replication or expansion to cover civic education and peace education, arising from the success recorded in public health education?**

Yes, the expansion would be good. Especially for peace education. The tensions are high all over the country right now. So, if there is accuracy in what is being reported or what is being put out, I know that it will help to douse a lot that is happening. Right now, we don’t even know what is going to happen on May 29, tensions are really high right now. If that expansion will be done, it will be good. For civic education, we also need to know that we have the responsibility as individuals or citizens **for whatever we share.** We actually have the responsibility.Yes, the expansion would be good. I would suggest that.

**Now, what do you think they should do more of, generally now? As somebody in the business too?**

Recently, I have not been seeing updates from them on WhatsApp. Then I used to get broadcast messages that they sent out, but somehow, they stopped. For about a year now, I have not gotten any. Maybe they should also collaborate with media organizations more. To find a way to infiltrate and partner with as many media organizations. Permit me to mention this. There is something BBC Media Action does, where they partner with practically every radio station. It is basically on radio.

**So, that is a Model?**

So, maybe you can use that. They produce the content and they share it on radio. So, I think it is something African Check (can adopt). Because we are in the business of information sharing, there are so many presenters and there are so many news reporters like me and most of the time, we are eager to give information and we are out for accurate information. If I’m on air and I get an alert for something that happened, I should be able to know who to reach out to at that time, I should be able to know where to go to verify if that information is true or not.

**So, maybe having like a kind of help desk? That can be easily bounced to confirm contents.**

Maybe not a desk in the physical form, but someone or a platform that can be easily reached. Someone that can easily answer and say ‘Okay, let me check this right now’ before I am able to say it on air. But partnership is really key. They should not just put out information, we should be able to have a one-on-one with them on live appearances and all of that. We should be able to reach out to them one-on-one.

**We’ve said what they should do more of, what should they do less of?**

Less? I don’t think there is anything they should do less of. Because information is growing. So much is growing and doing less of that now will be like you’re bringing down the momentum. So, I don’t think there is anything that they should do less of right now.

**Okay, Thank you very much ma. Thank you so much for your time.**

**13th AUDIO**

**AUDIO TITLE: AGUIYI IRONSI STREET**

**Good afternoon sir. Thank you for your time Dr Bakare Lawal. Today is May 6, 2023 and we are here in Abuja.**

**Please I will like to know how you came in contact with Africa Check?**

The first time I met Africa check was a Facebook event that was held in Abuja here. I met with the founder – I can’t remember his name now – with some guys that also came from the first draft then. We were just looking at the new media reportage for health care among other things. Then, I was leading communications for Nigeria Centre for Disease Control and I was also acting in my capacity as the founder of EpidAlert, which is one of the good use of new media in health care. So, that was my first interaction with Africa Check

What year sir?

It was 2017/2018.

Since then how often have you been sharing contents with Africa Check?

Because of how close I am to the work we do; I am almost like in contact with Africa Check. Sometimes I see a local news item that needs further critique, I will send it to my contact in Africa Check to appraise it. So that they can do a newsroom level relationship to it. To make sure that we protect the citizens from (fake news). And sometimes it is a matter of personal consumption too, like ‘oh this is not true, this is true’. Looking at the national global update sometimes they fact check different materials from place to place, so I just use that for personal use.

**How do you share sir? On radio? Beyond giving them the feedback, do you share with people on your social media?**

Yes, social media. Primarily on social media / new media. Sometimes I also do distribution with other journalists, so that they can use it. These journalists can now be…

**So, beyond journalists, do you have a specific audience, you share with? And who are this people?**

I do. My primary audience is through EpidAlert. And we have about 60 something thousand people there, majority are not even in Africa. 40% of our audience are outside Africa, North America actually, the other 60% are here in West Africa. We have a lot of global leaders in health care, health protection and disease outbreak. So, that is the audience.

**Fact check is also important during elections. I will like to know if you found any content from Africa Check relevant or useful during 2019 and 2023 elections, especially in combating fake news, misinformation and disinformation?**

Yes. I saw evidently the work Africa Check did in supporting newsrooms and civil society organizations in the whole election campaign factchecking. Basically, staying as a self-appointed independent umpire, looking at what everybody is saying, staying apolitical, and just helping citizens to make sense of it, helping newsrooms to do better, putting newsrooms in an ecosystem, so that there is like a joint effort; more like a peer review, community-based approach. I saw that in 2019, I saw that in 2023.

Are there remarkable instances, where you evidently saw that if not for what Africa Check did, a particular information would have been…?

For me, profound effort is the anonymity. So, you may not be able to say that it’s Africa Check that did it. But the one I saw in this 2023 election, one of the voice note that Atiku was having – I’m trying to remember the exact news item. The first time I say it, I just sent it to my contact in Africa Check, that please, this item needs to be fact checked and disseminated quickly. And I can see that that happened. If it was them that did it, or someone else, what I just know is that, it went in and it became known to everyone that this was not true. So, everybody knew that it was fake news in a very short period of time. In the past it would have gone round and everybody will just accept them as the truth.

It also became a thing in this last election that you will be fact checked as a political platform or politician. So, if you like, lie or mal-align somebody else by trying to say what did not happened. You know that somebody somewhere **(in 24 hours at least**) will fact check you. I know that Africa Check is behind that kind of work and other guys are also in a coalition. Again, most of them went anonymous, so you won’t be able to say it was this person that did this, which is also a good one.

**We’ve had Ebola and we’ve had Covid 19. During these two episodes, did you find Africa Check contents helpful in tackling fake news, misinformation and disinformation?**

During Ebola I ran one of the best platforms for Ebola. I ran Ebola Alert which transitioned into EpidAlert. Then, I didn’t know Africa Check. I got to realise that Africa Check has been in town since Polio of Nigerian North. That was the beginning of Africa Check that the misinformation around that Polio vaccine and infertility. I got to realise that that was the beginning. I didn’t know them when I was doing the work on Ebola. My work on Ebola was to use new media to educate and also disinform those who has been misinformed, so that we can get them to know the right thing to do.

We became what we called ‘the glue’ in the information system for the country and our method became almost like a standard practice across the region particularly in the public sector. We literally embedded what we did in EpidAlert in Nigeria Centre for Disease Control today. So, if you see good communication practice out of there, it came from EpidAlert. The first creation and promotion of the social media handle of NCDC, it was EpidAlert that propagated it. I ran it for like 9 months.

But, for Covid-19, before Covid-19 I knew that the whole conversation on bringing in good practice of managing information was becoming a thing. But for Covid-19 evidently, Africa Check played a significant role particularly for the African audience in managing misinformation on Covid-19. I saw their work in trying to ensure that most of the community information that was coming out, particularly those that had high impact in terms of performance on social. They were able to pick it, appraise it, get the right information out and use a network of journalist to disseminate it. I am in that network of journalist and I see their feeds from time to time. On my work on Covid-19 and because of the kind of work I do now, I felt that that we need a major policy shift in how government disseminate information, and I am happy that that happened. Which is that all countries’ data must not be hidden. So, when somebody goes online to search for Covid-19, he should be able to find localise information. And I am happy that the Big-Techs align to this. I know that google did it, Facebook did it, I think that Twitter also did it. So, if you go online and search Covid-19, you will get the information hyper localised. So, if am living in DC, I will get information on DC US, I can even get on my Zip code. So, that was my main interest in Covid-19. I just did a Blog on it. I know that all of the global leaders got it. But I also saw that it happened, but if were the one that, influenced it, I don’t know.

Moving to the specificity, in terms of controlling news, making sure that that continuous information is rolling out, Africa Check played a critical role in that. Which was something I couldn’t do, because I was busy with other sectors. Africa Check was able to sit down and aggregate newsrooms, aggregate key health journalist, put them in a single place and make sure that whatever they find, they procreate, find a good answer to it and transmit it, so that these guys can amplify. I know that that happened and they must have developed a lot of communication materials. They did a lot of training and retraining of journalists. And I know that a couple of academic matrons too stated to happen.

**Measuring the expectation and impact for you. Which aspect of public health were you expecting the strongest impact in when you subscribed to Africa Check?**

The part of public health that always generate information neediness. There are lot of community education on public health, but every time you generate information, some time, people don’t even expect the information. The use of road for instance – road safety has a bit of public in it, but are people always looking for information on that? But, when it comes to those particularly novel innovations in public health, they naturally are prone to misinformation. Vaccine development, where people hear there is new vaccine, even where is a new medication, people can be easily be misinformed around it. So, those things are key, when we generate new medication, new innovation, they always naturally…

Another one is hazards. Hazard naturally, people are going to be looking for information. For those who are into the business of misinforming, that is the moment they use. Either as a matter of generating traffic to their channels, because whatever you say, people want to go towards it. Again, that is the other area that I feel

**In the area of politics – elections now. Which aspect of electoral misinformation, disinformation and fake news do you think Africa Check needs to improve on?**

How do we desensitize politicians from weaponizing information? How do we draw a policy? Because politicians back in the day, probably there used to be a lot of election violence, in this election there was violence but not as bad as probably recorded. And that’s because, politicians have been made to realise that electoral violence is a waste of everybody’s time and resources. Now, we have not been sensitized against developing misinformation as a weapon of winning elections. You can see in this election that people went out to develop materials that were evidently fake. They were using all of the deep fake technologies to reproduce people’s voices, people edited pictures and videos to interpret what people didn’t mean. If for instance, you can say some thing for me otherwise, there is a way you can re-twist it and you can start to feel that the person means otherwise. How much work we can do? Because that is tackling things at source. It is going to be use of Artificial Intelligence (AI), it is going to be use of some advance technologies. So that we are faster. Or we do things that don’t scale, by building a network or outsource managers and verifiers. That as the information is probably hitting digital media for the first time, there is like a Shazam that speaks that ‘look, this is the first time this is coming up, so, take, verify’. And when they verify, they are able to issue another digital asset, that wherever that thing goes, it just carries that this is fake on top of it. That needs to happen because we cannot be chasing the consequences all the time. Because, the moment it is already out there, people are already fighting and killing one another, somebody’s reputation has been destroyed, people have voted the wrong candidate, the wrong candidate is in power sometimes on the basis of… Even on the African continent, look at Sudan now. Going to the backend of it, you will see a pocket of misinformation there. I think to a large extent; we have a lot of work to be done in tackling it.

**Riding on what you just said, we saw how information, fake news and misinformation were weaponised and we have seen the success recorded by Africa Check in public health. Would you suggest that a replication of that template in public health should be done maybe for civic and peace education, to tackle the menace of weaponization of fake news?**

Tactics for tactics, I may not able to say one will work. Because to treat hunger is not to treat thirst. One is food and one is water, and they are not the same thing, as much as both of them will pass through the oesophagus. Because of that I would say, strategically, yes, we need a response. When you get to the tactical side of it, there might be need for modified approach. Because, the behaviour of the key source of power in the ecosystem of public health is different from the source of power in political setting. In that context, if you use the direct tactics you used in public health, the political space might even create a bigger problem for you. But at the strategic level, tactically we need to appraise **what will work**. We can pick experiences, if you look at the ‘*Que Anons*’ of this world, I am talking about the US political environment; even advanced technologies, to spread misinformation, and they are winning. So, that is an ecosystem where they have advanced technology. So, we much be tactically differentiated as much as we are strategically saying, you need to go in this direction of making sure that we are able to remove misinformation in the whole policy, in the whole conflict.

**Reflecting now, what do you think Africa Check should do more of and less of?**

In terms of more of, the world is moving very fast. So, the use of technology needs to be embedded in the core of the work that Africa Check is doing. I know that they are beginning to apply technology. This is the age of software, we are even moving past software now, moving into Artificial Intelligence and if you know the way deep fakes work now, you can see the pope putting on a Balenciaga and it’s not true, and you can see people arresting Donald Trump, and it’s not true. Artificial intelligence is capable of doing that. Africa Check’s business, is not even human being that are crafty enough in terms of capacity development to develop real crafts to develop those things. It is now everywhere. Anybody that can generate a good AI prompt can tell machine “make the president of Nigeria urinate on the National Flag, make it a video that can trend on social media”. And it will generate a good and real video. He doesn’t need to know how to use any editing software, it’s just a matter of prompt. And those platforms are so cheap, with $100 you are already on for the whole year. So, if you have to tackle misinformation, you have to be as technologically savvy. That’s number 1.

Number 2, is in the legal framework, that has to take care of this. The laws that are binding us as a society around misinformation and disinformation are still weak. Sometimes they are repressive of media, sometimes they are not even able to tackle the real issues, they are not as agile as the source of misinformation. So, Africa Check needs to play a little more role in advocacy and **engaging lawmakers.** No, this is for institutional legislation now, where we are developing laws that can control our interaction as a society. Because our laws need to be faster. The law makers are still running snail mail, while social issues are moving quite faster. So, I think Africa Check needs to develop a legislative interaction system and agenda, that also appraises even laws, from time to time. It could be annual; it could be bi-annual. And then, now scale capacity to bring in newsroom together.

In terms of what they should do less, I would argue that maybe Africa Check should do less of direct to consumer.

***How do you mean sir?***

So, I am going to give you an example now. Do you know what they call www consortium?

***No, I don’t.***

But you use the web. There is a consortium that is behind how the people that build web products behave. You don’t need to know those people, but the people that publish web have to follow the consortium’s template to get the work done. That is how you tackle stuff at skill. And because you have to work at that level, you put a bit of rigour in making sure that you accomplish skill. Because it is till you accomplish skill that your work is evident. So basically, I am challenging Africa Check that how do you do more with the newsrooms, with the media as a whole. Because, I know that sometimes those guys are not doing enough work so, your impact may not be felt till they do the work. So, that will force them to reimagine how they need to get the work done through. So, they have to be working through. Of course, there have to be a lot of direct to consumer, but if they do less of direct to consumer and they still want to ***improve institutions***, they will be forced to reimagine and proper innovate better in that their indirect stand.

**By consumers here, who do you refer to?**

I mean the general public that consume media output. Because, those are the real victims of misinformation. It is the driver, the conductor, the guy selling, those are the real people. ***And they are the ones who spread it fast actually.*** In fact, they are that don’t know the nuances. They just say ‘oh, can’t you see that Buhari is coughing on the…’ they will just send it to their dad, their dad will just send it to their daughter in America, before you know it has gone global. So, the work that has to be done between them and the people in the middle, which is the real media guys, it will mean they have to reimagine themselves, but again that will be the part to skill.

**Thank you very much, sir.**

**14th AUDIO**

**AUDIO TITLE: POW MAFEMI CRESCENT 2**

**Good afternoon, sir. Today is 17th May and I'm with Joseph Njoku of the NCDC. So, can you tell us more about yourself, please?**

I am a consultant and infodemic manager I consult with these organizations based on ‘infodemic’ management

I had a background in Political Science. I went on to take public health trainings in infodemic management, as well as Covid- 19 advocacy and communications foundations with the WHO, the Vasin Alliance, UNICEF, as well as in John Hopkins University.

**So, you are an infodemic expert.**

**When was the first time you came in contact with Africa Check?**

I came across a few articles during the Heat of Covid-19, but unfortunately, I didn't delve as deep as I was supposed to. So, it was impassive, because I saw that they were also actively involved with debunking and giving out information that helped to fill information void that existed which chief makers used to create disinformation.

**So, that was during Covid-19 maybe 2020?**

Yes, around 2020.

**Since then have you been a partner or subscriber to their content?**

Not quite. But then we met recently in Kano where African Check was part of an infodemic management conversation that \*\*\*. They were very well represented. And their Rep there did a great job in explaining certain things that Africa Check has done, they're currently doing, and even gave some hotline numbers that infodemic managers can view and make use of to get real time fact checked information. So, it has been quite enlightening from that time.

**Since then have you been sharing their content anytime you come across it?**

Yes, anytime I come across it on Twitter. I think I follow them on LinkedIn. So, once it pops up in my timeline, I tweet and share as I do other news.

**Do you have a particular audience you share with?**

For Twitter, there is no specific audience. I like to describe twitter as a market place. Everybody, both people who are media focused as well as other area focused are also on twitter. So, I just retweet and it cut across everybody.

**Okay, that means you have no criteria for sharing**.

No.

**Okay? Now we've had elections. Just recently, we had 2022 election. Now, thank God you shadow political science and public health. Now, during any of these elections 2015, 2019 or 2023, did you find the contents of Africa Check helpful whether in debunking fake news, disinformation, misinformation any form of information disorder?**

So, because I am not currently practicing in my field of origin, which is political science, I've not actually had cost to actively engage in political conversations in the Internet space. Having come across certain articles from Africa Check once in while during this period, yes. So, if I will actively be practicing it, it would be helpful?

**Now let's go to your main domain, your current domain, that's public health. We've had Ebola, we've had COVID-19. During any of this, did you find the content of Africa Check for tackling any form of information disorder?**

Yes, at some point particularly the COVID-19. There were so many rumours, actually not just one. So, one of the most popular one was regards to taking Chloroquine, to cure Covid-19. So, I think around that time, Africa Check released an information around that clarifying things that was a wrong information. I used that to engage in conversations both online and offline to help people who didn't have core knowledge of public health to understand that rumours like this, not just this, ought not to be and should not be found disseminated. As it would constantly put fear on both online and offline populations.

**Now since then, what aspect of public health do you think Africa Check should do more in?**

First of all, I'd like to mention that they are doing a great work across all fields of public health, they are doing great. However, in all the fields, something that is lacking is rapid response. I've noticed that they are not quick in terms of responding or debunking messages that are sent to them directly to fact check, so that the health professionals in the field will leverage on their own insights to keep spreading the right information. So, if they could do more in the area of being quick in responding to instant messages. Because, sometimes we get rumours from the field and we just want to reach out to Africa Check and send them, like “this is making the rounds across WhatsApp groups as well as maybe Twitter or Facebook groups. What do you think? Is it an authentic news? Is there any article or insight you want to give to help us to debunk it?” Many times, you don't get the response, so it stalls the process.

Sometimes we know that these information are not correct, based on our preliminary training, in fact checking. But we need something authoritative that we can reference; like, based on this research, based on this scientific evidence, this is clearly false information. So, I want Africa Check to improve on that.

**Since you've been familiar with them, have you been influenced in any way? Has there been any improvement in what you do regarding fact checking?**

Of course. I keep making mention of the (man) I met in Kano.

**What’s his name please?**

Mr Orwell. After that it was an enlightening encounter and from then on it shift the way I go about my debunking or prebunking business. So, I want to be more evidence based. I want to do more evidence-based debunking. And that's a result of new light from Africa Check does to \*\*\* check information so as to mitigate misinformation and disinformation.

**Now, taking you back to your source of origin. Given the relative success recorded by Africa Check in public health education and we've seen the weaponization of information disorder, do you think you can replicate that template or adapt it for civic and peace education?**

I will say adapting it. Because, \*\*\*\*\* has been identified by electronic media with regards to what is currently going on now. So, if that can be improved on, then of course it can be ready to be deployed across not just civic and peace education. It could be deployed across other sectors, because the challenge of information disorder or basically disinformation and misinformation, cuts across all sectors. Like you mentioned, education, it cut across other sectors. Yes, it can be adapted, then deployed.

**Okay. Do you have any suggestion on how to go about this?**

Okay first would be the mention I made with regards to increasing rapid response mechanisms and being more present online. Because when the majority of people, not just experts in these fields, get to know about Africa check, they get to be seen as a go to authority that can just quickly ask questions and then they get feedback. I will give you an example, something totally unrelated but can be learned from is the situation with banks. Banks having moving their service support from physical banks to online. If you have a financial issue, all you just need to do is go on Twitter, Tag that bank and mention the challenge or your reference number, then they will immediately take it up. So, you see rapid resolution. So, I feel that system or mechanism which ***is a*** ***form of crisis resolution anyway***. So, it can go a long way of mitigating the issue of false information, mis information and disinformation.

**Generally, what should Africa check do more?**

Beyond the online increased visibility, they could do more offline visibility in terms of campaign, using public health structures to do some sort of sensitization, awareness at the community level. Give it from national, subnational, scale it down into local government, state government and wards. So, if that can be done, people now get to understand that, ‘the fact that I'm illiterate does not mean that I cannot have access to get clarification with anything going on around the community.’ Because we discovered that, especially for the older population, misinformation and disinformation spreads very fast, because they do not have something handy that they can quickly assess. Something like a mechanism that helps them to fact check or helps them to debunk or prepunk whatever information that is out there. What they hear is what they think actually happened. So, if Africa check really work in that area, then it will really help in information management.

**What should they do less of?**

Can I think of anything they should do less of? Erm, Not being present.

**Okay. I love that. Thank you very much. Thank you. All right**.

**15th AUDIO**

**AUDIO TITLE: DOMINO’S PIZZA 4**

**Good afternoon sir, I have a few questions to ask you around fact checking to ask you. First, I will like you to introduce yourself sir.**

My name is Ado Saiduwara. I am the station manager of Freedom Radio, Kano

**What is the mandate of your organization?**

Freedom Radio is a private radio station. It is the first independent station in the North.

***You mean the 19 Northern states?***

We are reaching some 8 states and some parts of Niger Republic. We started in December, 2003. We are now about 20 years. We started from one organization and now we are having 4 stations. Three stations in Kano, one in Kaduna, one in Dutse and we are test transmitting our station in Abuja now.

**When and how did you come in contact with Africa Check?**

Actually, it was through one of our Director’s wife. She has a friend working with Africa Check and they talked about Freedom radio. And the woman found out that Freedom radio is a good partner, as far as Africa Check is concerned. So, she introduced her to us and we had virtual meetings with them. They told us what they do and we felt that we are interested in the fact checking issue, especially during covid-19. The partnership was during the Covid-19 pandemic, when people are sending in fake information about covid-19, it was then we started to partner with them. They gave us $500 token per month to facilitate production. In fact, at that time I could remember most staff were working from home. So, we had to give a desk officer, in person of Samira Suleiman Zakire, who was in charge of a health programme. When we get a direct information from Africa Check we had to give a segment in that programme for Africa Check’s contributions. So, that is what we have been doing from 2020 up to this time.

**How often do you share the content from Africa Check?**

Almost every week. Because the program is weekly. So, weekly we have updates from Africa Check.

Do you share mainly on your radio or do you share on your social media platforms, like maybe your Facebook page, twitter handle or Instagram posts?

We are streaming the program live as you know a lot of radio stations are streaming live. So, the program is always on our website and we are streaming it live. And we share some information that are so vital to our news department and other program that are related to health issues. So, when we have a very good information that we feel it is not only good for that particular program, we share it with other program producers and the news editors.

**Given the peculiarity of your own audience, do you translate this to French or mainly in English or Hausa?**

We use Hausa. We translate the information into Hausa. Because, most of our listeners are Hausa speakers.

**What are your criteria for sharing? What is the motive? Is it only for public health education or any other motive for sharing?**

It is only for public health programs and news, where necessary.

**Given the peculiarity of Kano state as a radio city and also as a politically active state. How often have you found contents of Africa Check useful during elections?**

During elections too we had some partnership with them. When they ask us that we are going to share information about elections, we were surprised because we thought that Africa check is only talking about health issues; then they said ‘No, we are also interested in democracy and good governance’. So, we shared information and exchange information during elections.

**Did you find them particularly useful in any particular instance you want to share?**

Of course, yes. There are some fake information that we have gotten during elections. There are some information that we are suppose to be from INEC directly but we get it from elsewhere. People are talking anyhow because of political sentiment. So, the information we get from Africa Check help us to find the correct information, so as to inform our listeners, so that they won’t be misinformed and they will not be taken by political sentiments.

**Is there any particular instance that you can recall that is worth sharing?**

You can only get that from Samira and Aisha Bello Mahmud. I told you Samira is no longer working with us now. You will get some specific instances from them.

**During the public health pandemic – Covid -19, did you find Africa Check contents useful in debunking fake news, misinformation and other forms of information disorder?**

Yes, we find it very useful. I told you that at that most of our staff were not coming to work, they were working from home. So, we developed a flagship program.

**What is the name of the flagship program?**

Rayiwa de Corona. That is ‘living with corona virus’ or ‘living during corona pandemic’. It was a one-hour program which we got report across Nigeria. We also have our own local news here in Kano and of course Presidential Task Force, we got our reports also from there. Then, Africa Check’s contributions helped us a lot, especially when people are promoting local solution and cures to Covid-19. So, that information we got from Africa check helped us to reprove most of this information.

**Going forward would you say your expectations have been or are being met, since you started partnering with Africa Check?**

Yes. Because we try to even tell them that we want to expand the partnership to our other states. Like Kaduna, Dutse, Abuja is coming up and our other stations in Kano. We told them that why can’t we extend the partnership cover the 5 Freedom Radio stations in Kano. But the Partnership is between Freedom radio Kano and Africa Check.

**Are there areas where your expectations are not been met?**

I can’t not say because we are not the one who initiated the partnership. The MOU we signed with them the expectations were less, but if it was our wish the we can have them speak officially on the issue of good governance, currency and \*\*\*\* we would want the partnership to cover these areas.

**What do you think they should do less of?**

We would like them to open up information to people in the rural area. This is where we have a lot of issues. More of the people that are not educated are living in rural areas. More of complicated health issues and the statistics are not there. So, we will like Africa Check to start collecting information from rural areas. We would like Africa Check to prepare adequate reports on health issues, so that we can draw the attention of government on those issues where we want them to come in.

**Is there anything you think they should do more of?**

I think this is what we want. The majority of radio listeners are living in rural areas and unfortunately the cost of logistics. if you begin to review the cost of radio station, you will see that it covers metropolitan environment …. And most radio listeners are living in rural areas. So, we like them to give us more \*\*\* as regards information coming from rural areas. That is where we have active people, \*\*\*\* this is where have low attendants are working. So, we will like Africa Check to give out a lot of information on how we are going to go about improving the health care delivery system in rural areas.

**Given what you have achieved with Africa Check, would you like to sustain your partnership with them?**

Of course, yes. We want to even inform them as I told you and then to improve the token they are giving us, so that we can also improve the quality of our programs and the spread.

**Thank you very much for your time**.

**16th AUDIO**

**AUDIO TITLE: DOMINO’S PIZZA 5**

**Good evening ma, please I will like you to introduce yourself to me and the name of your organization, your position and what you do there.**

Ok, I am a manager program working with Freedom Radio, Kano.

What is the mandate of Freedom Radio in Kano?

We have in Kano for 19 years now. By December we will be 20. We are the first private station and our reach is all over Kano and Katsina State. An we have sister stations in Kano and another station in Kaduna.

**When did you come in contact with Africa Check?**

Last 3 years, After Covid-19

**How did you come in contact with them?**

They came to our station and they introduced themselves. I was invited to be a part of the meeting by my station manager. And later on, \*\*\*\*\* the one who have been taking care of the progress since then. And they showed interest that they want to work more…\*\*\*

**Since then, have you been sharing their contents, have you been making use of their contents?**

Yes, I have been using their contents since then. They even gave us trainings and (*a name*) is the one who took the training in Lagos. I think it’s about 2-3 times they trained her on how to find fake news \*\*\*\* under social media and how to use Africa Check fact check and everything. From 2022, she left for another organization, so I am the one who took the program and continue with it and we have been using their contents since then.

**So, why have you decided to be using their contents?**

It is important because, for the first time, we started using it for our health program, because then there is fake news that people have been trusting the fact about it and people are thinking it is true. And Africa Check warns such type of news as fake. And it is important for people to know that it’s not everything you should start using herbs as medicines for cancer or for everything.

**Have you also been making use of Africa Check contents on Political matters?**

Yes, we have been using it of recent during 2023 election. We use it because there is a lot of fake news around the social media and people are posting it and there was causing conflict in the public and it was making people not to go out and vote during the election. We used it in our political program, because we trust Africa Check to find out to be correct or to be a lie. We took such into our political program.

**Can you remember any particular instance during these elections when you found Africa Check content very helpful and timely?**

It’s one content about Tinubu, where he said, he was very sick and can’t contest. We got the fact and it’s not it. We use it in one of our political programs. It is just after the primary election. There is one about Obi, I can’t remember exactly the content, but we used it.

***Please can you share the links to these two contents with me?***

Yes, I have them, I will, I have them.

**During Covid-19, did you find Africa Check content very helpful?**

Very helpful. During Covid-19, there is a lot of lies. That you can use smoke, salt and so many things to cure Covid-19. We debunked such kind of news. We have one program that we called “Life with Corona Virus” so, we used it that program, because we are living with corona virus.

**Are there remarkable instances during this period that Africa Check contents came in very handy and timely for you, for public health education?**

Yes, there is one about Coriander leaf. Such kind of content is very important. People ask a lot of questions, because they didn’t \*\*\* the news. So, there is contradictions, so that make the news to take long explaining it. We had to even invite one dietician and one medical practitioner to explain in our program, because it is a family program. We talked about how Coriander helped in curing so many diseases. And we didn’t talk it all, so there is \*\*\* about it. So, such kind of news is contradicting, but people like the news very much and they keep asking, ‘how can you know this not true or it is true’. There are a lot of reports, I can send you a lot of them. I even transcribe them to Hausa. I read it in Hausa programs, because we want a lot of audience ***to know about it.*** We even post in our social media platforms such kind of news.

**Since you have been in partnership with Africa Check, are your expectation being met?**

Yes, it has been met in so many occasions. But the problem is, for us, you know you can’t stop people from posting such kind of news. There is a lot of it everyday in the news. But you know, information is a very good thing. If you are informed, you will know such kind of stories are lies. So, anything, you have to find out if it is true or not. It is very rude, we are doing it and people are putting a lot of fake news and misinformation in platforms, and people are clicking and viewing, because everybody is sick and want cheap cure.

**What do you think Africa Check should do more as somebody that is making use of their contents?**

I think what they should do more is to give another awareness on how to find if a story is true or not. Because we can’t post any story to debunk it, we have to explain to people and give them awareness. When you (can) find stories that are fake by yourself, I think that is the most important things they will have to put more effort in making. But there is a lot of stories, more especially political stories. They really helped a lot during this election. I think they will do a lot, because we have a new government. So, there would be a lot of lies, maybe a lot of crises. Because those politicians who lost, they will say new things. So, I think they need to put more effort on such political stories and also the health one, because health is everything. They are doing their best, but they have to do more awareness especially on social media, radio and television. They can do a lot like simple adverts or things for people to see and be aware; just how to find if a story is true or not.

**What do you think they should do less of?**

There is a lot of quietness. Sometimes you need to do virtual meetings, maybe after each quarter to see ‘what we are doing and review.’

***Like training and retraining?***

Training is very good, especially for journalist. \*\*\*\*\* You know these health personnel is more than Facebook and YouTube and people need to be part of it. \*\*\*\*\*\*

**Would you like to continue your partnership with Africa Check?**

I even wanted to ask you when you sent the email, there was a phone number, I wanted to ask if they can use the number to check if one story is true or not. it is going to be a lot for you people, that is why I didn’t use that number on my program. You can give them a website or anything they can use Africa Check to find out if that story is true or not, maybe political and health.

Thank you very much ma.

**17th AUDIO**

**AUDIO TITLE: ILORIN – Tolulope Adeleru**

**Good Afternoon. Let me give you a brief overview. This is a qualitative assessment of the impact of Africa Check in Nigeria, and I have been given specific names as people who have had interactions or who are making use of contents from Africa Check as people, I should interact with in the course of the evaluation. So, it is basically a means of getting feedbacks from content users and exploring how to make things better for all within the democratic ecosystem and information management space in Nigeria.**

**Please I will like to know you, and your organization and your place in the organization.**

My name is Tolulope Adeleru Balogun, I’m head of programs for News Central. We are a Pan - African TV Station based in Lagos. I sit down on basically the in-house editorial works and then of course the external ones. But basically, programs – programming, how we create the contents we have, what goes on, scheduling of that content, airing of it, working directly with commercial or even outside partners in terms of content creation and sitting the contents on the platforms.

**Do you like to expatiate more on the mandate of your organization?**

So, basically the idea for News Central is to be able to tell Africa’s true stories. Stories that have moved beyond the narratives of poverty stricken, war torn, corruption issues. What we realize is that, yes, those are part of the story, but for too long, they have dominated and been like that is the only story of Africa. And like Chinmamanda said, “the dangers of a single story…” So, we’ve had our story told for far too long by the west. What we want to do is tell our stories. So, you see African analyst analysing Africa issues, analysing and breaking it into parts. But we are also sharing the truth that there a lot of growth, resilience, opportunities that is here on the continent and we also want to highlight that. We are not shying away from the negatives things that are happening, but that is not the only part of the story, so, that’s not our only focus.

**How did you come in contact with Africa Check?**

I used to work with David at Nigerian Info, we were actually colleagues there, so I knew of his news editing capabilities. I think we left around he same time, but not too that far apart. But he went I believe directly, to Africa Check, then I came here to News Central. What we also realise at News Central is, we can’t fact check everything. While we want to build the capacity of our reporters and on-air people to be able to fact check news that come out from us, but we also can’t fact check everything. So, within the very first year, we had already approached them, because he is the Nigerian editor. We had a constraint with the collaboration that bringing a fact checking show to TV, so that we increase people’s knowledge and awareness on how to fact check, how to even raise eyebrows when it comes to certain news that they have; everything is not as they seem. And then also, being able to debunk key stories from across continent, since Africa Check is in a number of African countries. So, we had approached David to facilitate conversations, because he had told me that he couldn’t take decisions from here in Nigeria, especially since we want to cover the continent. So, we approached him to facilitate. I think snag we had then was that… and everything sort of went down for a while. And about a year ago or a year and half ago, I think David sent an email asking how do we make it happen and make it work. And he explained again what the issues was in terms of making our partnership exclusive. And we were like fine, because at the end of the day, I think we are still one of the very few people that Africa Check has this kind of TV collaboration with. We are about the only people, a steady regular weekly segment. I know he mentioned the TV station in Kenya, but he said that was sort of as the news arises. But with us, it is steady regular weekly regular contents with issues and contents from Africa Check that goes out. So, that is how we started and that is where we are now.

**So, basically, we could say you started in 2021, two years ago?**

Eh, about.

**Since then, how often have you been sharing contents from Africa Check?**

I have to look back on to when we signed the MOU and when our very first episode went out. But, since we signed the MOU, and we agreed, we’ve had a weekly episode sent. I think there were only two or three times we hadn’t had. So, we should be more than two seasons into this now and be popping through season three or unto the end of season three. So, it’s been quite consistent. As you are talking now, I need to have my team check how many episodes we’ve done.

**Do you share Africa Check’s Content only on the radio station or also on your social media platforms?**

No, its on the TV Station. We share on Tv. It goes out for the first time on Friday, then it is repeated about two or three times in the subsequent week, unto the new episode goes out the coming Friday. And we also share the links on YouTube, then, Africa Check. One of the agreements is that Africa Check will also co-publicize it. So, there is also publicity point from their end as well, to get it as far as possible.

**Would you like to describe the audience you have in mind for the program, or is it for the general public?**

When we are thinking of audience, its general, because, in conversations we realise, whether you are young or old, as long as you are consuming anything on social media, you could fall victim to fake news. It wasn’t just about Mothers on WhatsApp and other these things they share on WhatsApp. There are young people social media who fall victims of fake news. So, the audience is very general. Because, we agree with them, we want as many people as possible to question our words spread on social media, to question things before they hit, reshare or send. So, the audience is very general. \*\*\*

**Do you have an idea of the estimate/number of your audience?**

No, not off the top of my head. From the TV station, it is almost 2 million on Startimes, and more than 500,000 on DSTV. We are hoping to hit a million before the end of the year. And we have double digit thousands on social media as well. I can’t give you those numbers right now.

**We’ve had 2015, 2019, 2023 elections, and I think your conversations with Mr Ajikobi started around this period, how was fact checking from your station during this last election we had**?

It was good. We wanted to do more, but because of time, we really weren’t able to. SO, with the governorship elections we had the fact checking team, I think about 2 or 3 times, as we did live broadcast from morning literally to evening. So, they came in with us, it was David, I know there was time we also had all well as well. The space they had set up, I think it was Abuja or Lagos, I’m not sure they had set up any situation room. So, we took some of the big stories that were trending, that needed to be talked about. Whether is election violence or elections results as well. And even if it will lead up to the elections, even though we cover Africa. The month before the elections, a lot of the focus for “The Proof” Powered by Africa Check – that’s what we called the show, focused on the Nigerian elections, focused being able to fact check.

**In your ranking, on a scale of 1-10, how would you describe the usefulness of Africa Check’s support during these elections- both the governorship and presidential?**

It was good. We could have done more I believe, but I think also, that we did not really solidify our full plans as well. But it was good. But as events would overtake so we had to shift gear to focus on something else.

**Are there remarkable instances you would like to flesh out, that saw the collaboration coming in handy to prevent any untidy event from fake news or information disorder?**

I might really not be able to say, but I know on social media we do get feedbacks from people, for some of the topics we choose, like some we debunked. It may happen and we may not be aware of it.

**Public health issue is another thing that Africa Check has been working on. How would you describe the partnership with you and Africa Check in debunking fake news around public health, mindful of the Covid-19 and Ebola that we’ve had recently?**

I think it’s been a good one, because we’ve taken things on natural home remedies. There was one we did on killer biscuits that they said was coming from South Africa to Nigeria. So, the topics are not dominated by just politics. Yes, it can be social health issues, it can be weather issues. I know we did that for South Africa recently as well. This last one was on president Ruto meeting with some journalist and stating some of the things he had made as claims that his government has done in the short time, that he has been the president. We’ve also taken on public health issues, the killer biscuits, something about Covid-19 as well. Sometime it can be a balance. We might get a big Nigerian story, in a week in story. But we’ve done three weeks of Nigeria. So, we really try to put a balance into it, but sometimes it is the big story.

**Still on the issue of public health, any remarkable instance that you can recall, that if not for the partnership with you and Africa check, may be something will have gone on, without being debunked**.

I’m looking at the YouTube channel to see some of the episodes we have from seven months ago. We’ve really being doing this for a long time now. I know there a lot of things around the elections, even one of the episodes we had recently kind of teared into mental health. There were rumours that Professor Yakubu that his son had ‘gone mad’. While we debunked that, we also used it as an opportunity to talk about why people should not share rumours about people’s mental health and that could lead to mental health issues. So, it’s a lot and some of it tends to be interwoven together. I know for us we’ve done whether Tinubu was the 16th actual President of Nigeria or not, we’ve done some fact checking on some of the claims about Obi as well. So, it is difficult for me to tell you what the impact are there. I don’t know. I think, between us and Africa Check, we may need to find a way to work on gauging the impact form the content that we share.

**Talking about expectation and impacts. There are two major issues/areas, public health issues and elections that Africa Check contents have been supportive of. We want to now see the impacts. Where do you think there should be improvements in terms of what Africa Check is doing with you?**

With us in particular, an improvement can come with giving not just interviewing the Africa Check researcher. But also, talking to… Like, I know they post people to us, like Africa Check will send a letter to somebody in order to get data or information, so I think sometimes, we should do the same Zoom interview. So, while Africa Check takes us through the process of fact checking that story and then gives us the credit, we should also be able to talk to and interview some of the people involved in the story. I think that would add context, like sort of hearing from the horse’s mouth, if I would say that.

***So, instead of just getting the final product from Africa Check, you think in the process of doing this, Africa Check should be more inclusive so to say.***

Should also facilitate interviews with one or two people that they themselves have also talked to.

***Any other thing about that, in terms of what they should do more?***

I think that’s about it, per se. One feedback I will give back is that, because this is TV, more of the people we talk to from Africa Check side, need a bit more TV awareness. Because, you have to deliver punchy, you have to deliver interesting, you have to keep the audience caught on. I just need a bit more of that from them. It’s almost like public speaking, it’s not a training you are giving, but public speaking. So, I need more of a public speaking presentation from them.

***If I get you, they need to prepare their speakers or representatives for the Tv, mindful of the fact that they are coming…***

In defence I will also say that we pick the stories, so, that’s not them. They send us options on weekly basis; we pick the options that works for us. Also, me being able to keep in mind some of the stories that we’ve covered during the week, what is also trending on social media and how that might fit into the story we pick, that’s one. Secondly, they do the script, but I have the final oversight of the script. Because it’s going on TV and it is our platform that’s being used. So, I make my amendments to make it more TV friendly. Because it’s our scripts that they use, I just need a bit more TV presentation from them.

**Since you have been working with Africa Check, what has changed? Has there been any significant improvement that you can point to, that if not for this collaboration, maybe we would not have been doing this?**

My team is interested and have been asking for trainings from Africa Check. There are episodes we put up, that it’s later on we find the episode has travelled elsewhere. Like reference in Tinubu being the 16th President. When he became president before he was sworn, then last week or two, we find that the episode has travelled as more conversation about whether he is the 16th president or not, has come out. And even internally people will watch the show when it comes to ask questions. So, the interest in fact checking has definitely been a good one for us as well. And so, I know my team is asking for fact checking training itself. Because nobody wants to be the news person on TV who gets \*\*\*

**In the light of the progress we can see Africa Check making in the areas of public health, will you suggest a similar thing for maybe peace or civic education, in the light of the weaponization of fake news during this last election?**

So, that still falls under Africa Check as a separate sole entity or how?

***Still expanding the collaboration, maybe with you for instance.***

We do that as well. As I said, our topic is not limited. If something is going on, we’ll bring Africa Check onto another show, to be able to talk about the issues. I think we did that with the Kenya situation. The courts where people were buried, so that really needed… because, it was just flowing. We really needed to get more grounded information about it. we report them onto one of the other shows. It been on, I thin, breakfast. So, we don’t limit it to the show in collaboration. The show was actually running before Africa Check collaboration. Africa Check’s collaboration has made it a lot better, because you guys are the expert, so, it’s just for us to translate that expertise to TV.

It is not necessarily all the episode that we debunk. Sometimes the episode is about identifying fake news. Like using your phone. We did a whole episode and series on how you can use google reverse search to check images. While we debunk, we try to alternate within different episodes on things that are educative, on civic education. There was one we did; I think about the tribunal. We wanted to do that one to educate Nigerians about \*\*\*\*

***There is a lot of fake news flying around now too about that and a lot of inaccuracies***

Yes. So, we don’t limit ourselves to just trending stories that need to be debunked. Even within situating it with the current context, and how we can also help with that, we also do that as well.

**Would you like to sustain your partnership with Africa Check?**

Yes, we would. We most definitely would like to sustain it. I know David has spoken about some kind of support from the foundation or something. In order to help and show how happy they are with us and as support for us some more. And we’ve been expecting that, we’ve been liking forward to that

***And it’s good to hear directly from you now.***

Yes, we are very happy no issues.

**Thank you very much for your time and do enjoy the rest of your day.**

**18th AUDIO**

**AUDIO TITLE: ILORIN 2**

**Good afternoon sir, today is June 14 2023. I am with Mr Joshua Moses of Sparkling FM, Calabar. Please, I will like you to tell me more about yourself and your station.**

My name is Joshua Moses, I am Journalist, both cross print and broadcast media. I also work as the General Manager of the Station with a background in News Editing and Audio Editing. The station is Sparkling and Super, and it is located in the city of Calabar. And we’ve operational now, for the past 5 years. May 12 was our 5th Anniversary. Our Mantra has been to service the people at their needs. Inform them the right way. Make sure that the standard of journalism and media ethics is our watchword and guiding light. So, that is also what informs some of the programs as a station that we subscribe to. The kind of journalism. As a station we are involved in solution journalism, obviously fact checking, we are also involved in climate change reporting and environmental issues; highlighting other humanitarian issues as they come up. So, our main focus is to create an impact in our immediate environment that is within our scope. And as a station within the last five years, we’ve been able to do that, even though there is still room for improvement. That is why every time we seek training, partnership, expert opinion, expert ideas and advice from partners, that will help us, because trends might be changing and we need to also keep up with those trends. To me, I basically shepherd the ship and set the tone for what happens within the organization.

**When and how did you come in contact with Africa Check?**

I think it was after I heard something about Dubawa Fact check training. So, I sent some of my news team to be a part of that training. so, that was how we eventually started our fact checking desk and made it part of our programming. But in searching further about Fact checking, Africa Check is a leading organization in that space. So, I discovered the brand/name, Africa Check. I then sent a mail, telling them we already had something like this but not form their platform and we would love to get better at it, and they obviously looked at our proposal and thought it ok to work with us.

**When was that sir? What year?**

That was in 2022

**Since then, have you been sharing their contents on your medium? Or what has been the shape of the partnership with them?**

We have a time slot dedicated to Africa Check and fact check every Friday. It is a 15 minutes radio program. You know Africa Check comes up with a lot of claims, that they fact check. So, we amplify those things, because some of them, people amongst our audience may have heard it. So, the idea is that we get their researchers from Africa Check to tell us these claims, how they went about these claims, and whether those claims are either true or false. We have that every Fridays, between 9:45 and 10 o clock. We also encourage our listeners to send us claims that a couple of times we have forwarded to Africa Check for them to verify those claims and send them back. But, most often than not, we have noticed that there is consciousness, even when they don’t send these claims to us, they are also quick to fact check us now as media, that’s our audience. There are many things you say, they say ‘Are you sure you have checked it. You know, you people are doing fact check, is this thing correct?’. We have that across topical programs. We also run sensitization jingles for Africa Check, and some of them are in local languages, Igbo, Hausa, Yoruba, since we started. We have run more than a thousand sport of those jingles and they are still on. Most of the sensitization campaigns or public service campaigns are for people to question the claims that they hear instead of swallowing it hook line and sinker.

**In doing this, do you also publicize those fact checked claims on your social media handles or is it strictly on your radio slots?**

Mostly we use on radio, but I know during the election time, we incorporated fact checking into the last general election. Some of the content that we used on radio, we also shared it on social media. But mostly share this content on radio.

**Why do you actually share; can you expatiate more on that? Why do you decide to share on the social media, beyond the radio?**

As I said, we mostly did that during the election. It was because at that point, there were many claim flying. Like ‘this person has been dropped from voting or this has happened’. We were also using our social media to drive. We were linking both what we were doing on radio and on social media. It was like a cross casting thing. So, as we use on radio, we also use in social media. We encourage to go and see the claims that are being debunked.

**Let’s talk more about the election, was there any time you found claims from Africa Check helpful during the 2019 or 2023 election, that you consider remarkable?**

The resources from Africa Check was very helpful during this election, especially on the election.

***Do you mean the gubernatorial or presidential or both?***

It was mostly on the presidential that we used the fact check. Because, the gubernatorial was split around, every state to their own. The claims were mostly during the presidential and because of the nature of this year’s election, a lot of interest was in it, we had to incorporate that fact segment into the presidential election mostly. We had some of the Africa Check staff over the phone to clarify some claims. We were interviewing them live, they share the claims with us. We get them on the phone to say ok, this claim, how did you verify it, how did you go about. What is the verdict? If it is false, we put it out there that it is false, so people should disregard those claims.

**Is there anyone you consider remarkable and worth sharing?**

I know there was one surrounding Peter Obi. I know that there was one they said Peter Obi did something. \*\*\*\*

**Maybe you can share it with me on WhatsApp later then, if you find it.**

Ok, if I find it. But my major challenge is this, the phone I was using that period, I’ve lost that phone. So, most of those claims, I will not be able to verify \*\*\*\*\*\*

**Coming to Public Health, was there any time you found claims from Africa Check, helpful, during the Ebola or Covid-19?**

We weren’t there, during the Ebola time, as I said we started last year. But Covid-19, I know we’ve been running sensitization, on people doing the right things, like vaccination and all those things. But generally, on public health, we’ve had to deal with claims of people taking Zobo. There was one that had Zobo, and some things that they said causes this or does not cause that. We’ve had experts come and check those claims. But we came up at a point when the Covid-19 was almost rounding up. It was just the vaccination phase, for people to get the double vaccine, double jab. Part of what we were doing was also to tell them that the vaccine is not what they think the vaccine is or was.

**Generally, what do you think they should do more?**

I think localizing it and having local journalist. Because one thing about fact check is that the claim you cut across. For instance, we give 15 minutes, I don’t think 15 minutes is enough. We are not even able to take live feedback from callers. Before the person will finish analysing for people to say ‘this your claim, I no understand am, I understand am’, time will have elapse. We also have a situation where, somebody made a claim another part of Nigeria, it may not resonate with people in this part of Nigeria.

***Is that what you mean by involving more local journalists or what do you mean by that, I want to get that?***

If there are more local fact checkers, doing this and being part of the network. We as a radio station will work better and more dynamically with them.

***So, there is need for them to broaden the inclusion of local journalists, who are resident in the state. Or community-based journalists, so to say.***

Exactly, because some of the health claims, might be local to certain localities. They might not be shares widely, but it is there within that community. So, when somebody says it, it is fact checked, and then we put it out there. Then anything that has a national spread, it is Ok, we can use the resources from…

***So, there should be a balance between what resonates locally and what is happening nationally or globally, by bringing on board more local or community-based journalist into the network.***

Yes sir.

***Ok, go ahead sir, any other thing you think they should do more?***

Generally, so far, I think they are doing great. I think so far, they are good, except maybe we adapt on their campaigns. Most of their campaigns, the ones we ran, you know this is an Efik speaking, mixture community and pidgin are here too. If you can adapt some of the campaigns to open languages like PSAs. We can take them on some of the Ejakas, some of the Nupe Languages basically. Just to make it adapt.

**What do you think they should do less of?**

I don’t think they should do less of anything, because what they are fighting is not deteriorating. \*\*\*\*\*\*. It’s just that we are short staffed as a local media, that is small. You cannot dedicate on specific person to fact check, ***when there are many other things to do***. If we have those resources, there will be somebody whose job only is fact checking. So, on every show, while claims are being made, he just does his fact checks. So, right now we just have presenters who maybe take a break from regular program and says let’s check this fact, let’s be sure that what we have is the right thing. And they may not be able to do it as fast as it ought to be.

***So, in actual facts you recommend more hands then.***

Yes, more hands will make the work go faster and better.

**In the light of the weaponization of misinformation during this last election and the success they’ve made in terms of public health education, will you recommend expanding their scope to cover matters of civic interest and maybe peace education?**

When you say civic interest, can you break it down for me?

***Like countering hate massages, takling weaponization of misinformation that can incite violence and division, which we saw during the 2023 election***

I understand that that is it. But I know that, an organization like Africa Check works with data and research. If there is an existing research, because, I can go through social media and think somebody’s voice is quite loud, but it is just something that happens during election season. And that could be all for that time. But really politician trying to \*\*\* sentiment. But I suggest that the foundation be laid. If that foundation is laid, or those foundations are laid, you can ascend, you can increase. Because for instance, it took the Lagos State Speaker saying what he said, for people to come and start saying are we talking about this again, we thought the election was over? Obviously, people’s head were not in that direction. But owing that somebody like the speaker is there, then it becomes a thing.

Then another thing I think they should look at is, fact checking from the receiver’s end is ok, but the person generating the misinformation, what are we doing about him or her. I think the team needs to start paying sensitization visit to some of these political leaders to let them understand the weight of their utterances.

***So, they should think of engaging the sources of misinformation, to let them know the implication?***

Exactly. For instance, when you have a couple of times, during the past administration, when the governor makes a claim. You know I might not have access to the governor, but the chief press secretary whom I have access to, is bound by certain interest to defend those claims. So, those kinds of people should also be included in that network. Like now, many governors will be appointing new chief press secretaries, who think that their job is to put out anything and everything. So, the Governor makes a \*\*\* in the spaces most of the time, it is the political actors that make up these issues. So, if they are not trained or they are people who don’t have these orientations at fact checking. \*\*\*\*They should receive basic training about fact checking and why it is an important part of their job.

**On last note, will you like to continue your partnership with them?**

Of course, we will. It’s been very helpful even in terms of programming. Having that kind of program, it’s been helpful.

**Thank you very much, I’m really grateful.**

I think you can assess our performance, or what do you think?

**It’s been impressive and my major take-away is the need to engage communication aides or political aides of public officer holders. Because, you discover that, they are actually the source or sponsors of some of this misinformation we see around. That is a big take a way for me, which will form a major plank of my recommendation in doing the final report.**

**So, thank you very much sir.**

**19th AUDIO**

**AUDIO TITLE: CHALLENGE ROAD**

**A brief introduction sir, and the mandate of your institution**

My name is Bello Isaac Brown, I’m the anchor of Fresh FM situation room, which is a daily current affairs program, where we dwell mostly on breaking news, developing stories and events that are happening, as the program may be going on. We want to weigh in on it and in real time. Occasionally we also have newsmakers, opinion moulders and government officials on our show in the situation room.

**When and how did you come in contact with Africa Check?**

Africa Check have been doing some couple of programming in some Lagos stations and I think there was a point when they got approval from Ford foundation, especially during the Covid period. And the approval requested that they spread their information dissemination beyond the shores of Lagos, Pan Nigeria. And Ibadan was one of the centres that was considered. And the general managers with one of the stations (Radio One) they were doing business with in Lagos, who happens to be my class mate in school; they had conversation. There were two things they were looking for, they were looking for a platform that is very popular, a program that is also very popular. At the end of the day, Fresh FM was tapped in Ibadan to serve as another avenue to disseminate their messages. That was where, Fresh FM and me, both of us came in. The station was tapped and my program seem to be in tandem, because, we were the only station that was heavily involved in the fight against Covid. In terms of the fact that, we dedicated an hour every day to the course. We called it Covid-19 situation room, where Covid related issues are frontal. We have experts from relevant fields - health, food, etc. It was a hit, during the Covid year. So, it was a showing for the kind of messages they wanted to push. And remember that time, their focus was health related. Debunking innuendos around the issue of Covid and what could be appropriate when it comes to its treatment. That was how that relationship started, my platform and Africa Check.

**Did it have any impact on your program?**

We are running Africa Check Titbits every Monday morning. I did observe that the traffic was always very massive during that period. Call it more of a two-edge sword, from what I saw. People naturally, when they have conviction over an issue and you are trying to tell them that it’s not true. Sometimes some will come, but you could see that conflicts in terms of response. Even when such programs are going on. Are things people have lived with over the years, when they are being told that these things doesn’t work or it’s not correct, and they are like “no, these Africa Check people have started again, since my forefathers, when I use it I feel so well, what the hell are talking about.” Again, as I said ‘two-edge sword’. There are areas where some of the things that were debunked that time, a lot of people have found them fascinating, and have come to terms with them, moving forward. So, it was a session that our listeners and viewers online were always excited to hear from Africa Check. It got to a point that it was becoming more of the Bible, for a lot of our listeners. Controversies over on any particular factor, they will say wait, “what has Africa Check said, have they confirmed, have they denied? If they have said it is true, that means, it must be true. And it usually helped, it also helped us, because it made us to be better informed, moving forward. Over some mistakes which we could have fallen into. That was how important it was to us.

**Were you with them during the elections?**

Yes. The relationship between us and Africa Check, while it lasted, week in week out, they keep sending us materials that have been fact checked, videos, audios and then we push them. Before the election, I think the contact they had with Ford, ran out, cos they have to pay for airtime. When that happened, they didn’t stop sending us materials, but it is now left for us. When they were paying, we created a desk for them. But, when they couldn’t do that anymore, but they were still sending us those materials, of course those materials we made available to the public and most importantly to our staff.

**Given that the money they paid ran out, during that time, did you make your social media platforms available to share such contents that were not because of fees usable on radio?**

The bottom line is that, the kind of relationship we had, when they’re sending those materials and they were paying for the airtime, we were running programs specifically and we created a desk for them. When they couldn’t pay for the airtime and were still sending the materials, what we were doing mostly, was to share those materials within ourselves and encourage anchors and on-air personalities to disseminate them. When it is more important to whatever conversation they will be having for their contents. That was what we were doing. Gone was a particular desk for Africa Check. If you want hear a story that have been debunked, go to this. That was what was happened.

**Are you favourably disposed to continuing with them?**

Absolutely, it was quite fascinating that time, apart from the fact that it was helping us. In this era of social media, 24/7 videos are flying, information disorder. If you look at what happened just last one week, the story of Abbas Tajudeen, the speaker, and the two women. Initially, there were push maps that they were members of House of Reps who came to second. But later, someb ody did the fact check and confirmed that those two were actually Abbas’ wives. So, these are areas you will always see Africa Check on the front burner, truing to help you make sense of controversial videos and audios that may be passing. Since that time to date, I am still getting more materials from them, week in week out, which we pass through our own system to help improve our presentations and programs.

**But, as an institution, it is a relationship you don’t mind reviving?**

Absolutely. It was symbiotic. We would love to. And again, it wasn’t just that time that the relationship only stopped at sending materials we disseminate. They were also organizing seminars, retreats, trainings, and we were always going to designated centres and we were also having online conferences. It was very important to the course of the job.

**Thank you very much**.

**20th AUDIO**

**AUDIO TITLE: FALELE ROAD 2**

Today is 17th June, I am with Professor Oyewole Tomori a renowned

**21st AUDIO**

**AUDIO TITLE: FALELE ROAD**

**Thank you, sir. Good afternoon, sir. Let's get to know you and the mandate or the focus of your station.**

My name is Oluwaseun Ola. Well, we are into information dissemination, particularly development communication, that’s our mandate.

**When did you get in contact with Africa Check?**

Well, I may not be able to get this date exactly, but I think it was last year.

***2022***?

Yeah. Last year. I think it was more like a memorandum of understanding to use Africa Check content, particularly the fact checking content on health-related issues for all of our program. So, I happen to be the anchor person for that program.

**So since then, have you been sharing that contents?**

Well, on radio, yes.

***Do you do that on your social media platforms?***

On my personal social media platform, yes. On the stations’, once in a while. Particularly during the last election, we actually use a number of the content from Africa check.

**Do you have any criteria for sharing** **when you do?**

The understanding we had was on health communication, so we ensure that we prioritize the ones that focus more on health communication and information dissemination or debunking some kind of misinformation in the media space. So, that's one of the major criteria we have. The other was during the election, we began to also delve into the political side and electoral issues.

**When you share do you have any criteria for sharing? I mean, do you have any audience in mind when you share their content?**

Because it's a general purpose. Not that we have specific audience, but we know that people who listen to us also the online community that we have, we have vast majority.

**Do you have an idea of the estimates?**

On different platforms? We have substantial. For instance, I could quickly look for Twitter. That's something I could easily get. For Twitter, for instance, splash FM has about 114,000 followers on Twitter alone. Instagram, same. Facebook, that will be more, I’m sure.

**How helpful were their contents in fact checking or debunking false claims during the elections?**

Yeah, they were very helpful. The space was saturated with a lot of disinformation and misinformation, so it helped to clarify some very popular posts that rarely were misinformation, so it really helped.

**If you want to compare between the gubernatorial and the presidential, when did you find their content more helpful?**

During the presidential. We had a lot of interest in the presidential election. I’d say more.

***Why?***

I don't know. I can't really put my hand on it. But I know that there was the campaign of division, tribal, religious division. So, it heightens tension. So quite a number of information were going out and flying around that we needed to also come out and verify and be clear that this is true, that this is not true.

**Given the experience during the COVID on public health and during the election, will you recommend expanding the scope of what you do to cover maybe issues of civic education or peace education?**

Right now, we only deal with public health information. I think that's limiting. I honestly feel that there are other areas where we can also deal with in terms of fact checking, issues that are beyond just health information. A lot of information flies around that are not true, that are not health related and that people should be properly informed about those things. So, it should be a welcome development if the areas could cover more than just health.

**Looking at the impact on your expectations, in terms of your expectations, on a scale of 1 - 10, how would you rate it so far? I mean your expectation from or of your partnership with Africa Check.**

It's been a great one. On a scale of 1 -10, I'll say eight (8).

***Okay, so what are the areas where you think they are falling short?***

Not falling short. I will say that we expand the horizon.

***You are talking about the rooms for improvement.***

Yeah. So, I'll say that we don't limit to just health, that we can add more than just health and also have things that are relatable to us more, our environment, Nigeria, things that we see almost every day. More than just general health issues or reports done in South Africa or done in Ghana, but maybe more of something done in Nigeria. In Ibadan if it is possible.

**Are you suggesting an increase in local content or community specific content?**

Yeah, more like things that people here can easily relate with, that will resonate with them.

**What do you think they should do more?**

I guess they could involve in training local journalists to give them wider coverage and partnership. So, if for instance they come to Oyo state and pick maybe few radio stations, train some journalists or student journalists who are in campuses. Train them in the art of fact checking and then create a community of fact checkers amongst these students. They can help see what is happening in their local environment which will inform the content that will be broadcast.

**What do you think they should do less of?**

We should do less of foreign fact checking materials. We should do less of those foreign, particularly some of those health posts that are probably not done in Nigeria. I know that Africa Check is Africa, but when we want to broadcast the content for us on radio, we should do more of something done in Nigeria.

***Targeted then to the local communities***

I spoke like that because I work with Radio. Radio is actually locally oriented. Its audience are primarily in his immediate environment. So, it'll be good if they get something in their own environment.

***And that's why you feel they should do more in generating those local content that will go into the actual programming.***

**Now, so far, will you want to continue you the partnership with them?**

Of course.

***Okay. And why, if I may ask?***

Because fact checking is very important for the development of our society. I know there's danger in misinformation, disinformation, and so I think a program like that or a content like that should not be off the radio. I believe that regularly let people know that there is danger in sharing materials that you have not verified or information that you are not very sure of. And I think we need to imbibe that culture. We don't have that culture yet. I still see a lot of people copy, paste and share, forward. So, you see forwarded many times everywhere. For instance, recently, someone shared a video of the border opened, and that was an old video. It wasn't a new video, and they tagged it “Tinubu Opens the Borders. So, we still have such things in our environment and we still have a lot of mischievous persons who still want to put things out there that are - ***even when they know it's not, it's not true, -*** maliciously put them out there. Another one. There was a video of exotic cars taken from somebody's compound. At some point you see the same video tagged CBN governor’s compound. Another one, the same video, Matawalle’s compound. So, whose compound?

The reason I'm talking about this is that, we need it because the attitude is still prevalent. The threat from information disorder is real and it still prevalent So we can't stop doing it.

Was there any remarkable instance during the election, where if not for the Africa Check contents maybe something would have gone wrong?

I may not be able to remember specifically, but I know that I actually had to use a lot of their stories because I had a long hour session on radio during that time. So, there were certain content that I was receiving from Africa Check website through Catherine that I needed to put out there. Maybe I may not remember specifically, but there were a number of them that we had to put out there immediately and say ‘this is not true, this is wrong, this is not a fact or this is the real thing. I remember that we actually used it as part of our broadcast during that election, election day and the day after.

**Maybe if you remember, you can just send it to me on WhatsApp. Thank you very much, sir.**

**22nd AUDIO**

**AUDIO TITLE: ILORIN 5 – TONYE BAKARE**

**Good morning, sir. How are you, Sir?**

**I'd like you to introduce yourself, sir, please. Your position in the organization and what you do generally.**

My name is Tony Bakari. I'm a Digital Investigation Journalist. That's the official term we use in AFP for fact checkers. Before, I joined AFP, I was the Head of Digital Newsroom for the Guidance Newspaper.

**Okay, the AFP, what does it mean in full?**

AFP means Agence France Presse. It is a French News agency.

**What is the mandate of AFP?**

AFP is a news agency. It's mostly B to B. what we do is …

**What does that mean, sir?**

B to B means Business to Business. The content that we create, pictures, videos, text are mostly distributed to other media houses, who subscribed to our services. Same thing also goes for our fact checking business, there are other clients that also subscribe to what we do. But we also have a website where readers can just go look at what we do. That is available to readers everywhere. And our fact checks are in about 26 languages, including English, French, Swedish.

***Is it inclusive of pidgin?***

No, English language. Because English is the official language of Nigeria, so we use English. I think, for Africa, the language that we use for Africa, mostly are French and English Language.

**So, please, when and how did you come in contact with Africa Check?**

I've been using Africa Check for about four or five years because, like I said, I was editor for the website at the Guardian newspaper, before we even had a partnership, I started using their content. Because at the point in the run up to general election in 2019, we felt the need to also create something that would educate our readers. There was an avalanche of fake news and we felt we needed something that would help our readers. We didn't have much experience when it comes to fact checking at that point, so all we did was to read a lot of what Africa Check had done in terms of election fact checking and health fact checking. So, we looked at their methodologies, and we built on what we read and \*\*\*\*

***That was for the Guardian newspaper*.**

Yeah, that was for the Guardian newspaper. Later on, we had the partnership with Africa Check where we asked if we can have the license to take their content with proper credits and distribute to our larger audience.

**Since you got into the partnership, what form did you take? Were you just sharing their content? Did you have a column for them in Guardian or how did it operate?**

We published their content on their website. We published Africa to check content. In some cases, they suggested …

***As a news item or on your Health column?***

Health Mostly. Because most of what we got from Africa Check were mostly about Health. Africa Check is big on Health. And I could remember a lot of their contents were handy, they were very useful during the Covid period, because, a lot of this disinformation was in circulation. And most of the things that, in fact, I remember one of the articles, one of the fact-check they did about a particular Nigerian doctor or is it Cameroon doctor, in the years who claimed that Chloroquine could actually cure Covid. So, we published that and it actually went viral on our Twitter handle.

**So, were you sharing their contents on your own personal social media handles or strictly on the official handles of the Guardian Newspaper?**

Both really. I'm sure I shared, especially during Covid-19. I shared because we have this family WhatsApp group and I remember a lot of people were sharing disinformation, like if you use hot water and salt, so, every time I got new information, new fact checks from Africa Check, I would distribute on WhatsApp and also share on my Twitter handle.

**Did you have a criteria for sharing those contents?**

In most cases, I follow what is trending in terms of misinformation. If for instance, people are saying, use chloroquine, and I know Africa Check has a fact check that disprove that claim, I'm going to share. Probably share as a reply to that person who shared the false one. So that everybody who is following the conversation, especially, because, WhatsApp was very important. You cannot quantify how far it has gone. So, I always made sure that I give preference to WhatsApp. Because a lot of old people do not even have Twitter or Facebook account, that's what they rely on. That's what I think.

**Now, did you find Africa Check contents helpful during the 2019 and 2023 elections?**

Yes, absolutely. Like I said, in 2020, they supplied a lot of content that disprove false claims about Covid-19 and probably save lives without us knowing. For 2019, we used the methodology they used. We relied on their own methodology, the processes that they put for election fact checking to create our own fact checks.

**Can you recall any remarkable instance where you found their contents timely and helpful in debunking any false claim during the election, whether in 2019 or 2023?**

Yeah, this 2023 election, I've already joined AFP. I remember they did something that I found very interesting. Trends in election disinformation in Nigeria. I'm sure it's still on their website. They catalogue different forms that disinformation would come in elections. And I read even as professional fact checker, I read and I found it interesting. And it sort of gave me an insight on what I could also do for my own work.

**Was this during the national elections? I mean, the presidential and parliamentary elections or the gubernatorial?**

They did before the presidential election.

**Okay, so you found that particularly useful?**

Yes, I found that particularly useful for all the elections?

The article was not about one specific election, it’s about all of the elections. Because, I think we had four elections into this, presidential, national assembly, governorship and state. The article was applicable to all of the elections. And that's what I found very interesting.

**Okay, now let's wind back a bit to the COVID-19 days. Did you find their comments particularly useful or timely in any instance during the COVID-19?**

Yes, most of the articles that we got during the COVID were actually timely, and very useful. Like I mentioned before, there was one about Hydroxychloroquine, \*\*\* that was very good, actually went viral and a lot of work.

**Now, let's try to separate disinformation, misinformation and mal information. On these three, which one did you find their contents most effective? You or were their contents helpful in addressing all the three?**

Actually, all of the three, especially disinformation. I found the articles useful for all of the three, but especially on disinformation.

**Will you say your expectations were met or have been met so far in the last five years?**

Yes, largely. Sometimes I wish they do more about politics. Even though they do. But mostly they are big on Health. So, I could understand because of the impact of health.

**Now, dwelling on that, we saw the weaponization of misinformation during the 2023 elections. Will you recommend a replication of the kind of energy and templates used for public health, for civic or peace education?**

Yes, definitely. Like I mentioned before, I wish Africa Check would also go big on politics of things. Really? Because whether we like it or not, politics affects everything, including health.

**Are there specific ways you can point to, to show that since your meeting or partnership with them, you've had clear court improvements in the performance of your duty?**

Yes. One, when I was in The Guardian, I remember that a few of our health stories were flagged.

***Flagged by who, NBC?***

By Africa check. On Facebook. And I will always give feedback to the writers that this is what has happened, this is the implication for the stories for our social media platform and during that period, what will always happen was that, the health reporter would go back, look at the mistakes already made in the story and try to correct. So it sort of improve their own research capacity as reporters. Like, you go for a conference and somebody mentions a particular figure for health and then instead of just writing what this had person said, they had to double check get fact of the figure before they published. So, it sort of improve their own research capacity and also helped us with making sure that for me because I have to be a better gatekeeper. Instead of making sure that all of the health content went on social media. What we did was to make sure that we put them at the back end, instead of publishing. We have to go through all them all over again, crosscheck the facts before we push them out. So, yes, it actually improved our own \*\*\*.

***Individually and corporately?***

Yes, individually and corporately. That's my job, that's my responsibility to make sure that audience gets the right information and also helps the organization make sure that it puts out right information to the readers.

**So besides going big on politics, what do you think Africa check should do more of?**

I can't think of anything right now because I think a lot of the things that they need to do, they're already doing. I think they do a lot of pre-bunking training and sensitization; they are doing a lot of that. So apart from that, I can't readily think of any other one.

**What do you think they should do less of?**

I wouldn't say they should do less of anything. As far as I'm concerned, if they can get more funding to do more of the stuff they are doing now, probably include more of politics, I think it's fine. Because, let me explain a little bit. There is economic angle to disinformation that a lot of us do not even get. Because, one person can sit in a room with N500 data, create a Facebook account.

***That's less than a dollar, you know?***

This person can buy data on his phone and create like five Facebook accounts and spread disinformation that would blow up. Now, for you to debunk each of these things, you need one fact checker, at least one. And you are going to pay that person. You are not paying that person 500 naira. You are paying that person good money. And then that person will spend time to research. Because the problem with fact checkers is that we have to make sure that we get right information. We spend more time doing research to debunk one false claim. We do more of pre-bunking. Make sure that people understand what needs to be done.

***You said Pre-bunking? Can you elaborate more on pre-bunking?***

Pre-bunking is, instead of waiting to tell people to say, this is false, you prepare them. Pre-bunking is, you quicken them that, if you see this sort of information, this is how you cross check. So that you know whether it is false or true. So that's pre-bunking. It's like training. Increasing capacity of people to understand what is false and what is true.

***That's an area where they should do more***

Yes. Because, again, trust me. How many fact check organizations do we have in Nigeria? We are very small. Professional fact checkers in Nigeria are not up to 2000. And we have a country of over 200 million people still growing. Seriously, we need a lot. And if you check, we are not even touching rural areas. If Africa can get more money to do a lot of these things in rural areas where disinformation can actually kill them, they should.

**So that means, for you, Pre-bunking should be for both the journalists and the citizenry.**

Yes. Everybody

**Maybe I should ask you this. Would you like to sustain your partnership with Africa Check?**

Definitely

**All right. Thank you very much. I'm really grateful.**

**23rd AUDIO**

**AUDIO TITLE: NEW RECORDING 28– SODIQ OJURONGBE**

**Thank you for your time, sir. I really appreciate your finding time to speak to me. I won't take more than 20 - 25 minutes. I know. We've been on this for a very long.**

**I would like you to introduce yourself, your organization and your schedule within the organization.**

My name is Sodiq Ojurongbe. I work at punch newspaper. I work at the Health Desk. We have a specialized desk known as Punch Health wise. We basically write stories, that has to do with health, environment, climate change and all of that. That's what I do presently.

**Please, how and when did you first to get to know about Africa Check?**

I got to know about Africa Check, that was mid-2020, during Covid-19. During that period, there were a lot of false information, fake news and all of that in the environment. So, I happen to know about it as one of the fact checking organization that do a lot in terms of health, trying to debunk some of these claims out there. So that's the first time I was knowing about them.

**When did you now get to work with them or to be trained by them**?

Yeah, in 2019, I was privileged to be part of selected journalists across Nigeria that was trained by the United Nations under, British Council, under a project handled by Premium Times. Then they were Premium Times Centre for Investigative Journalism. So, during that training, I had the opportunity of learning about fact checking, how it is being done and all of that. But Africa Check happens to be the first platform that gave me the opportunity to express, to be able to do some heart check reports. Because I remember there was an application, I think, towards the end of 2020. I applied for it, and I was selected as one of their *fillers*, based on the fact that I already have an idea about the whole thing. And that was the beginning. Now I am a fact checker and Africa Check gave us the platform to explore that particular part of Journalism.

**Since then, how often have you been sharing their contents?**

Very often. When I see their content, because even till now, during that time, they created a profile for every one of us.

***You mean you alumni of the program of African check?***

Yeah. I have a profile. So, time to time, I check their website and when I see some things on claims, I try to cross check on their website just to ascertain if it's true or not. And there are times that when we have online argument about things that, okay, this thing is true, this thing is not true. I use some of their reports as a reference point to some of those arguments.

**Do you share strictly for professional purposes or do you share also on your social media handles? Like maybe your Twitter, Instagram, Facebook or both?**

Reality is, no. I'm not really a social media person. But I do share their content very well on my WhatsApp.

**Do you have any reason why you share or do you have an audience in mind when you share or just for public knowledge?**

Yes. Just like I told you, I'm someone that has this kind of passion and love for fact checks. So, when I see people, there are a lot of platforms, especially on WhatsApp, that people just dish out information that are not true and all of that. So, there are times that you just have reasons to just come up, bring some of these check reports, to counter some of these claims, some of these misrepresentations that is out there. So basically, that's why I share sometimes. Just to let people know that this thing that you have set out, this is not how it is, this is not the correct thing. So, that's just basically why I do that.

***Okay, so, more or less for healthy and fact-based public discourse, if I can say that.***

Yes.

**During the last election, how useful were their contents for you as a journalist?**

Yeah, it was very useful because I remember during the last election I was actually on the field. And during those times, I am aware that Africa check in partnership with Dubawa - because I've worked with Dubawa also, in partnership with Fact Hub, and all of that; they set up a committee or something where they fact check some of those things. So, many of the times, we that are on the field, there are times that they would need to call us. I know some people in Dubawa and Fact Hub, that they will have to call me just to ascertain that ‘is this so thing happening’ or is it true’ and all of that. So, it was very helpful. There are times that when I just see a post or I just see a claim online, I just see people dishing out different information; I try to cross check with them just to ascertain that this thing that they are saying, is it true? And many of the time just discover that people just sit down somewhere to just cook something up.

**Now, during this last election, was there any remarkable instance that you can recall that you found them quite timely and helpful in debunking false claims? Whether gubernatorial or the presidential, the federal elections.**

I remember there was a particular thing where an old video. I can't recall the actual video. I know there was a video where it was being circulated, that people were rigging. How a particular set of people sat down somewhere and were thumbprinting the ballot paper. So, I remember that particular video, and it came out to be false analysis and all of that, and we discovered that that video was actually false. So, I remember that particular incident.

***Can you remember the state or whether it was the federal election?***

I think it was a federal election. It was a federal election. You know ‘Obedient’, they came up

With different \*\*\* after the whole election.

***Any other ones that you can recall?***

The second one I'm not sure it is Africa check that debunked it.

**Okay. Let's move on then. Now, we've had Ebola and we've had COVID-19. As someone who joined since 2019, how helpful were the contents from Africa check during Covid-19 for you, sir?**

Yeah, I started reading contents from Africa during Covid-19. And one of the things that attracted me to their content was based on fact that, a lot of health claims, a lot of things that they will tell you as regard the vaccine. And even after the Covid-19, the vaccine and everything. People can just come up today that 50 people died in a particular country because of vaccination. And a lot of reports were done by Africa Check just to make us know the true state of things. And I can say that it has been very helpful during that period.

**In terms of ranking, how will you rank the impact they've had or how helpful they've been for you in the course of your work, sir? Like 1 -10. With 10 being the highest.**

I can put them at eight (8), nine (9). They have been very helpful, even till now. There are times, that even if I needed stories and all of that. I can easily just go to some of their health content and just look how I can do more or less like an elaborate report about it. So, they’ve been very helpful, even till now.

**Now, can we now say your expectations have been met since you subscribed or since coming in contact with them?**

Yeah, I just feel like maybe because Africa Check they focus on almost all African countries. So, this actually at times affect how immediate they are with some kind of report. Because there are some fact checks that Dubawa as Nigerian fact checking organization, would have done, and Africa Check will just be coming up with it two or three days after. So, we also have this challenge when I was working with them. we have these challenges of patch, because many of these stories, many of these things, as it breaks, ***they are time bound***, the Dubawa, the Fact Hub, they take it immediately and try to get it out there. But Africa Check will still have to…, probably because they are not based in Nigeria.

**So, in this regard, what would you suggest, sir?**

I know they have Nigeria editors, but I feel there's a need to do more. Because, Nigeria is a very big country, and in terms of social media, there are a lot of people, a lot of subscribers. And Nigerians, they are the forefront of dishing out fake information. So, I feel they just need to have more people on ground to do that work. I feel they need more people. I'm not sure that because we were working directly with them in South Africa at that time. So, I'm not sure if they have up to ten (10) staff in Nigeria, apart from we that are \*\*\*. I'm not sure they have up to ten. So, they need to expand

***and have a strong presence in Nigeria.***

Exactly. So, that they too…, Because there are a lot of stories that are still flying around. I know they do a lot of the analysis and all of that.

**Are there other areas of improvements you think you would like to suggest for them, apart from this?**

No. Content-wise, they're great. And even their fact checking guidelines, the steps we follow in doing some of these things. I think it's also superb. Because I’ve worked with them. So, I can say that. So, you just need to work on presence in Nigeria. That’s what I feel.

As a professional, sir, can you point to specific areas that you have seen improvements in your own work since you came in contact with then, sir?

Yeah. Okay. If I want to look at it, I will say the probing part of me. And you know, as a journalist, especially as an investigative journalist, many of the times, you have to probe, you have to get the real fact. So, working with Africa Check make me understand that particular part. And I don't just accept anything. You can't just send any information to me and just expect me to accept it. Even if you as an expert or anything, you are telling me anything. I want to understand what you are trying to say. I want to be sure that this thing that you are telling me as a medical expert or anything, how true is that? So that part has been there with me from the moment I was working with them and even after I left Africa Check. So, it's always there that I'm always ready to probe whatever thing that you are bringing. That most of the time affect even when people send information to me. I don't just accept it. I want to understand ‘Is this thing true’.

And it also makes me understand that you don't just share everything because someone forwards something to you, you also forward it. Because someone sends a link to you, that means it's true. Because, someone you trust, is the person that is sharing that content means that that content is true. So, I'm able to understand and analyse how sharing of fake information, how it metamorphoses and all of that.

**Okay, so what do you think they should do less of?**

I can't say. Because there is a lot of work to be done.

**Okay. Thank you very much, sir. And congrats on the report you did on Esie. That was a great one. Of course, I've read it. God bless you. Bye.**

**Filled Instrument for Qualitative Assessment**

**Participant 1:**

**Participants/Interviewees’ Consent Form in End of Project Qualitative Evaluation in Nigeria**

* I Safiyah Bala Sambo voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.
* I understand that even if I agree to participate now, I can withdraw at any time or refuse to answer any question without any consequences of any kind.
* I understand that I can withdraw permission to use data from my interview within two weeks after the interview, in which case the material will be deleted.
* I have had the purpose and nature of the study explained to me in writing/verbally/ and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.
* I understand that participation involves interacting with the interviewer.
* I agree to my interview being audio-recorded.
* I understand that all information I provide for this study will be treated confidentially.
* I understand that in any report on the results of this research my identity will remain anonymous except otherwise preferred.
* I understand that disguised extracts from my interview may be quoted in the final report.
* I understand that if I inform the researcher that myself or someone else is at risk of harm, they may have to report this to the relevant authorities - they will discuss this with me first but may be required to report with or without my permission.
* I understand that I am entitled to access the information I have provided at any time while it is in storage.
* I understand that I am free to contact any of the people involved in the research to seek further clarification and information.

**A Qualitative Assessment of the Impact of Africa Check in Nigeria. Please be assured that all responses would be treated confidentially.**

**Section 1:**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **1.** | **Date of Interview** | | | | | |  |
| **2.** | **Interviewer’s Name** | | | | | |  |
| **3.** | **Interviewee’s Name** | | | | | | Safiyah Bala Sambo |
| **4.** | **Institution** | **Media** | **CSO** | **Public Health** | **Public Figure** | **Netizen** | Vision Media Services FM Station Sokoto. |
| **5.** | **Position/Rank** | | | | | | Marketing/Presentation Officer |
| **6.** | **Span of Partnership** | | | | | |  |
| **7.** | **In-Person /Virtual** | | | | | |  |
| **8.** | **Duration of Interview** | | | | | |  |

**Section 2:**

* 1. **Profile and mandate of the organization**

|  |
| --- |
| To Educates, Enlightening and Entertainments |

* 1. How did you first come in contact with Africa Check?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1. Television | |
|  | 1. Radio | |
|  | 1. Newspaper | |
|  | 1. Website | |
|  | 1. Twitter | |
|  | 1. Facebook | |
|  | 1. Instagram 2. Word of mouth | |
|  | 1. Others, Specify | International Press Centre |

* 1. When and why did you choose to subscribe to Africa Check?

|  |
| --- |
| Since 2018 and to enable me to have facts in my ongoing activities. |

**Section 3:**

1. **Sharing Africa Check Contents**

3.1. How often do you share Africa Check contents?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | 1. Yes, always share |
|  | 1. Yes, frequently share |
|  | 1. Yes, rarely share 2. No, I don’t share |

* 1. How do you share?

1. Television

* 2. Radio

3. Newspaper

4. Website

5. Twitter

6. Facebook

7. Instagram

* 8. Word of mouth

9. Others, Specify:

|  |
| --- |
| Watapp |

* 1. Why do you share the way you do?

|  |
| --- |
| It enables me to reach out to the audience that I want to share within and out there. |

* 1. Please describe the audience you share with. Both the rural and the urban settlers in either the adult or the young ones.
  2. Please give an estimate of the size of the audience you share our contents with? Over thousands.
  3. What are your criteria for sharing with such persons/audience?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Based on clear requests to verify information |
|  | Because they belong to my network |
|  | Because I consider it useful for them even if outside my network |
|  | Need to fact-check public health information |
|  | Need to fact-check electoral/political/development information |

* 1. **Fact Checking during elections in Nigeria.**
     1. Did you use Africa Check contents for verifying election-related claims? Yes
     2. Did you find Africa Check useful in fact-checking fake news, such as false statements by politicians, reports that are slanted or misleading but not true? Yes
     3. Please give instances. A national reporter Washington DC reported that President Obama shocked the country when he announced he would be running for a third term
     4. Did you find Africa Check useful in fact-checking disinformation that is, false information deliberately created to harm a person, ethnic, religious, and group/organization? Yes
     5. Please give instances. In 1999 the story of the Hausa people in shagamu Lagos where a false story goes to them on killing of the other tribal group that course a massive killing of the Hausa people in there, also resulted to killing of the other ethnics in some northern part of the country.
     6. Did you find Africa Check useful in fact-checking misinformation, that is, false information without intent to create harm? Yes
     7. Please give instances. In March 2020 where twitter users reported that Abba Kyari did not die of corona virus.
     8. Did you find Africa Check useful in fact-checking misinformation, that is, information shared to cause harm by publicizing information meant to be private with the intent of causing harm to a person, ethnic, religious, organization and country? Yes
     9. Please give instances. The issue of Naira note and cashless policy in this year 2023 where several posting was made to trigger the society to some extent nothing much has happen but few kayos and demonstrations was displayed in some part of the country.
     10. Have there been other contexts that Africa Check helped to separate information that is true from those that are false, and messages that are created, produced or distributed by ‘agents’ who intend to do harm from those that are not? No
     11. Please elaborate on other instances in which Africa-Check was useful for fact-checking apart from those described above.

|  |
| --- |
| In 2016, a story circulated that Pope Francis made an unprecedented and shocking endorsement of Donald Trump for president. |

* 1. **Fact Checking during public health emergencies like Ebola and COVID-19** 
     1. Did you use Africa Check contents for fact-checking claims about origin of public health emergencies like Ebola or/and COVID-19? Yes
     2. Did you find Africa Check useful in fact-checking fake news, such as false statements by politicians, reports that are slanted or misleading but not true about Ebola and/or COVID-19? Yes
     3. Please give instances. In 2022 where a state politician stated that Covid19 is not a natural disease it is technologically developed in the laboratory, it was a biological weapon that is resulted from 5G technology.
     4. Did you find Africa Check useful in fact-checking disinformation, that is, false information deliberately created to harm/ridicule a person, ethnic, religious, group/organization on Ebola and/or COVID-19? Yes
     5. Please give instances. During the time that Ebola was discovered some agents posted on the social media to consume salt for prevention, where many people caused their precious life and some their health as well.
     6. Have there been other contexts that Africa Check helped distinguish claims that are true from those that are false, and messages that are created, produced or distributed by ‘agents’ who intend to do harm from those that are not on public health? Yes
     7. Please give instances. In march 2020 where news were spread using media by some agents during Ebola and Covid 19 crises narrated that trump in his statement, advocating the use of chloroquine to deal with the pandemic.
     8. Please share instances of how Africa Check enabled you to fact-check in any of the contexts above regarding matters of public health.

1. **Measuring expectations and impact**

4.1. Which aspect of public health did you expect your subscription/partnershipwith/to Africa Check to improve?

|  |
| --- |
| Health Education and Communication |

* 1. Which aspect of development did you expect your subscription to Africa Check to improve? In social and political development.
  2. Which aspect of electoral misinformation, disinformation and malinformation did you expect your subscription/partnership to Africa Check to improve? Electoral processes.
  3. Since your subscription/partnership to/with Africa Check, how has it contributed to the achievement of your intended results?

|  |
| --- |
| It has indeed helps me a lot in terms of my field of practice which enables me to get a facts and appropriate news in my writing and postings. |

* 1. Since your subscription/partnership to/with Africa Check, how has it undermined the achievement of your intended results?

|  |
| --- |
| Satisfactory |

* 1. What has changed in your performance because of your partnership with Africa Check? Excellent
  2. Did your partnership with Africa Check produce any unexpected/unintended achievements? Yes
  3. Can you state the specific successes that can be attributed to your partnership with Africa Check? It makes me to be an achiever in my field of practice, more skillful and a determinant.
  4. Has there been greater awareness of Africa Check in Nigeria by working with you? Yes
  5. Why did you stop being a partner of Africa Check? Well, not been contacted for any articles development.

1. **Improving the impact of Africa Check on fact-checking health and development claims?** 
   1. What should Africa Check do more or increase to enhance its complimentary roles for fact-checking health and development claims?

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| Should improve its skillful level of educating and trainings of participants. |

* 1. Why and how do you think this should be done?

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| --- |
| By continuing advocating and educating the society on the fake news neither using gathering process, trainings nor cyber. |

* 1. In the light of the threat posed by fake news, misinformation, and disinformation before, during and since Nigeria’s 2023 elections, do you think Africa Check should replicate its attention on health matters to civic matters and peace education? Yes
  2. How do you think this should be done?

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| --- |
| By sensitizing and advocating on social media and face to face discussion to some gather groups in the society. |

* 1. Generally, what should Africa Check do less of or stop to enhance its complimentary roles for your institution in fact-checking health and development claims?

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| --- |
| The roles are unquestionable and no need for the stop or less in implying its policy in facts checking. |

* 1. Would you like to sustain your partnership with Africa Check? Yes

Thank you!