

CDD NEWSLETTER

FOR THE WEEK ENDING JANUARY 25, 2021

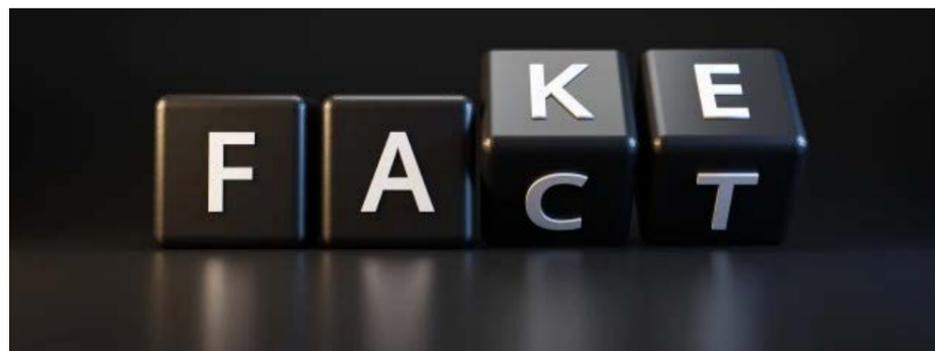
CAN THE RIGHT INFORMATION CONVINC YOU TO TAKE THE COVID-19 VACCINE?

Last week, we conducted a fact-check on a claim that Remdesivir, an investigational antiviral drug previously used for the treatment of Coronavirus (COVID-19) is a vaccine with distribution targeted at only African nations.

Most of the social media posts either suggested that Africans are going to be 'used as guinea pigs' to test the vaccine or there is a sinister motive behind its marketing that the drug is to be distributed only in Africa.

Also, reactions to the posts showed many misrepresented Remdesivir to be a vaccine.

In fact-checking the claim, we reviewed other similar claims and the reader's reaction to them. Our findings show that a large number of social media users, who have information at their fingers tips using smartphones, are ignorant about vaccines, how they work and their benefits. This is evident in the number of vaccine disinformation and misinformation spread across the ecosystem between December 2020 and January 2021



Our Vaccines Misinformation Tracker has received 29 entries of COVID-19 related disinformation, posing a concern for Nigeria and the move to end the pandemic.

The Centre for Democracy and Development is therefore calling on stakeholders to show more commitment to the enlightenment of the public on COVID-19 vaccines before they arrive. More research is also required to unravel the true sources of COVID-19 vaccine misinformation that has taken over the online space.

While the second wave of pandemic ranges on, Nigeria is caught up in a sharp rise in misinformation with scammers flooding the online space with all sort of fraud activities. On Wednesday, January 20, 2021, fact-checkers at the CDD spotted a WhatsApp broadcast claiming that the Federal Government is disbursing N10,500 as a weekly grant to Nigerians. The broadcast titled "covid19 second wave support fund program" claimed that applying for the grant only takes a few minutes.

The message read: "Don't miss this Federal Government N10,500 weekly grant. It takes a

few seconds to apply. Don't miss this great opportunity”.

Also attached to the broadcast is a link that can be used by interested applicants. A click on the link shows that the grants are allegedly sponsored by the Private Sector Coalition Against COVID-19 (CA-COVID). It also showed ratings from “previous successful applicants” referred to as testifiers.

Investigations carried out by the CDD revealed that the claim is false. Checks by CDD show that the link provided was created by fraudsters to scam their victims.

The link which provided a three-step registration process for interested applicants also provided an analysis of the number of those who have applied for the grant so far. Investigations carried out using technology-based tools showed the picture is old and was taken during the disbursement of COVID-19 lockdown relief funds to residents of Kwali Area Council, Federal Capital Territory in April 2020.

A rating and comment section for earlier applicants who were referred to as testifiers showcased how it works – a method CDD has discovered fraudsters use to lure unsuspecting Nigerians.

Read the full fact check report here

On Saturday, January 16, 2021, the pictures below went viral and alongside videos of under-aged voters allegedly participating in the 2021 Kano State Local Government Elections.



The photos and videos, shared mostly on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#), showed children thumb printing multiple ballot papers while electoral officers sign the ballots and placed them inside a ballot box.

The [videos](#) generated a lot of engagements and received condemnation from Nigerians on social media.

An investigation carried out by CDD on the pictures and videos established that children were allowed to vote in the 2021 Kano State Local Government Election.

The videos obtained and examined by CDD using fact-checking tools confirmed the authenticity of the clips of underaged voters and multiple thumb printing of ballot papers by both children and adults.

In this photo, some children were captured in the queue to vote in Kabo local government of Kano State. Also, the videos originated from Shahuci ward in the Kano Municipal Council of the state.

CDD can confirm that the incidence of the children voting and one person voting multiple times happened in the presence of the officials of the Kano State Independent Electoral Commission (KANSIEC) as they were seen assisting the children and the multiple voters.

However, CDD can also confirm that not all the photos shared are those originally taken from the 2021 LG elections in Kano State. We discovered that some of the photos (as shown below) are old photos from the 2018 elections in the state.

A technology-based analysis showed that one of the four images shared by a Twitter user, [@Ayemojubar](#) (image below) is from the 2018 Kano LG election and not the recent 2021 Kano LG poll. Read the full fact check report [here](#)

CDD is urging Nigerians to always verify the authenticity of stories before sharing them.

You can forward suspicious messages for verification via +2349062910568 or contact us on twitter @CDDWestAfrica

#StopFakeNews #StopDisinformation

Center for Democracy and Development West Africa| CDD West Africa



The Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD) was established in the United Kingdom in 1997 as an independent, not-for-profit, research training, advocacy and capacity building organisation

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