

# CDD NEWSLETTER

FOR THE WEEK ENDING MARCH 7, 2021

## | WHY DO YOU NEED TO TAKE THE COVID-19 VACCINE?

On Tuesday, February 2, 2021, Nigeria received the first batch of the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccines through the COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access (COVAX) vaccine facility, the global sharing program designed to give countries equal access to vaccines and other tools.



After verification and certification by the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration (NAFDAC), President Muhammadu Buhari and Vice Yemi Osinbajo were among the early receivers of the vaccine. The President and his Vice assured Nigerians of the vaccine's safety and efficacy as photographs of the duo surfaced online.

However, many Nigerians have raised concerns about the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine and other vaccines generally. So, here are important facts you should know about.

## | WHO PRODUCED THE VACCINE

The brand of vaccine purchased by the Nigerian government was developed by British firm AstraZeneca, working in partnership with Oxford University. It is however manufactured under license by the Serum Institute in India. It is the second to be approved by the Independent Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA).

## | HOW SAFE IS THE VACCINE?

The Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccines have been revalidated by the NAFDAC as safe for use in Nigeria.

The agency in a press statement signed by its Director-General, Professor Mojisola Christianah Adeyeye said the active substance in the vaccine is manufactured and

controlled by Serum Institute of India Private Limited (SIPL).

Adeyeye said a GMP certificate and manufacturing license issued by the India National Regulatory Authority (NRA) has been presented and found to be authentic and valid.

“From the Phases 2/3 conducted, COVISHIELD was found safe and well-tolerated in adults above 18 years of age. The incidence of solicited, unsolicited AEs and SAEs was comparable in the study control. groups. No causally related SAE was caused by the study vaccine.” Adeyeye said.

However, an advisory by the UK Medicines & Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) Says “As with any vaccine, COVID19 Vaccine AstraZeneca may not protect everyone who is vaccinated from COVID-19. It is not yet known how long people who receive the vaccine will be protected. No data are currently available in individuals with a weakened immune system or who are taking chronic treatment that suppresses or prevents immune responses.”

So, you are advised to still adhere to the safety precautions until available data shows that is safe not to.

## WHY DO YOU NEED TO TAKE THE VACCINE?

Based on available scientific data and knowledge about vaccines for other diseases and early data from clinical trials, experts believe that getting a COVID-19 vaccine may help keep you safe from getting seriously ill even if you do get COVID-19.



In the past, vaccines have been known to protect humans against infectious diseases like Smallpox, Polio among others.

For instance, Smallpox which claimed approximately 300 million lives in the 20th century alone, has been fully eradicated thanks to the development and implementation of safe and effective vaccines.

## IT RELIEVES THE PRESSURE ON HEALTHCARE WORKERS

Being vaccinated means you are most unlikely to contract the infectious diseases you are vaccinated against. This lessens the pressure on health workers and in turn the system. In this instance, the health workers have ample time to dedicate their efforts to service while funds and equipment are channeled to helping patients. Taking a COVID-19 vaccine will help in the same way – freeing up resources by lowering case numbers and preventing further backlogs of other treatments.

## TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF FAKE NEWS

Research has shown that fake news spreads much faster and farther than facts. Over the last few decades, conspiracy theories and misinformation have eroded public trust in vaccines, leading to the re-emergence of nearly eradicated diseases in many countries. This may become the case with COVID-19 if people don't follow evidence-based guidance from the scientific and medical community.



When we follow the facts, we are not only protecting ourselves and our loved ones from infectious diseases but also setting an example that helps fight back against the diffusion of misinformation.

## FACT-CHECK

On March 2, 2021, a Facebook user Amanda Chisom shared a picture of cattle eating a heap of tomatoes by a roadside.

The post created the impression that it was from Northern Nigeria as a result of the ongoing food blockade from the north to the south in Nigeria. Several social media users have also shared the image to create the impression that the event happened in Nigeria, an aftermath of the food blockade by the Amalgamated Union of Foodstuff and Cattle Dealers of Nigeria (AUFCDN).

Shared on Twitter by Spartan – El Pluribus Unum! (@Osegun\_MG), the image was also posted by Reno Omokri, an aide to former President Goodluck Jonathan, and on Nairaland. The image showing cattle eating tomatoes heaped by the roadside is not from Nigeria but India. It was first shared online by the fake page Funny India on July 30, 2017.

On January 9, 2021, a Twitter page @Rukhsar428 shared the image alongside another image of a cow in a tweet, stating that his government's policies have become hostile to the nation's economy.



In January this year, the image was used by several Twitter users as part of a social media campaign in India calling for the ban on the importation of tomatoes into the country using the hashtag #StopImportTomatoAndOnion.

Read the full fact-check here

On March 5, 2021, multiple online platforms posted a video online with the claim "Nigerian youths block Abuja Airport road, at Dantata bridge, stops international flight passengers and brings the city to stand still."

The video was also shared via WhatsApp with the claim "Another episode of Lekki Toll Gate, repeating itself in Abuja. GOD, PLEASE HELP THIS COUNTRY!"



The video which was also posted on popular discussion forum Nairaland was accompanied with the claim "Some youths have taken laws into their own hands at the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja on Thursday night grounding all activities along the popular Dantata Bridge in Abuja. The popular Bridge was said to have been blocked by the irate youths who are protesting against bad governance under the administration of President Muhammadu Buhari."

Checks by fact-checkers at the CDD show that the video is five months old and was recorded on October 16, 2020, #EndSARS protest against Police brutality in Nigeria.

The protesters had blocked the Abuja Airport Road, which links the city centre to the Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport. The road is also a major gateway to Abuja from

neighbouring states of Kogi, Niger and Kaduna and the city's outskirts. The protest was reported by Premium Times, Independent Newspaper and the Tribune.

Further checks by the CDD showed that there was indeed a protest in Abuja on March 4, 2021, by some individuals calling for the resignation of President Muhammadu Buhari. Read the full fact-check [here](#)

## | CDD REPORTS FOR THE WEEK

Key findings in a new report by the CDD and Tactical Tech show that personal data is becoming increasingly important in Nigerian political campaigning. The report which examines how personal data has featured in Nigeria's political campaign history also sheds light on the wider digital and data-driven political influence industry in Nigeria.

It also looks at the digital tools and practices political agents employ during elections and what future trends and developments are likely to emerge.

[Read report here](#)

## | CDD IN THE MEDIA

### *CDD: Pampering bandits will make things worse*

The centre for democracy and development (CDD) has accused governments at various levels of pampering bandits, a measure it said will lead to more "heinous crimes".

The Centre also said the President Muhammadu Buhari administration has "failed woefully" in efforts to address Nigeria's security challenges.

[Read more](#)

### *How Buhari can end mass kidnapping of students – CDD*

In the wake of the release of the 317 abducted students of Government Girls Secondary School, Jangebe in Zamfara State, the CDD urged the Nigerian government to implement a holistic security approach to protect the rights of children.

This followed the release of the abducted female students of the Government Girls Secondary School Jengebe in Zamfara state. There has been similar mass kidnap of students in states such as Katsina, Niger, Borno, and Yobe State.

The Centre also called on the country's government to prevent repeated incidents.

[Read more](#)

**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**

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**Centre for Democracy & Development**

**Centre pour la démocratie et le développement**

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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