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News Item

West Africa moves in unison to promote vaccination and curb falsehoods | Poynter

By Seth Smalley
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> In West Africa, fact-checkers are cooperating to expand their influence on local, national and international levels to curb misinformation about vaccines. Organizations are banding together, forming alliances with intergovernmental groups and creating cross-continent task forces to elevate health knowledge across Africa.
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> "I think the most important thing is to highlight how fact-checkers leverage collaboration to maximize impact at the governmental level and the national level with the sole aim of tackling the infodemic," said Rabiu Alhassan, managing editor of Ghana Fact, a fact-checking project of FactSpace West Africa.
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> Despite the increase in information on vaccines in West Africa, many are still concerned about their potential risks. The hesitance is fueled by misinformation spread through word-of-mouth, social media and even television and radio. According to aggregate Google data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and other sources, only 16.3% of Ghana — or 5.3 million Ghanans — have been fully vaccinated. However, as with many nations, vaccine scarcity in Ghana is primarily what's driving its relatively low vaccination rate.
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