

EMPOWERING GHANAIAN YOUTH AGAINST DISINFORMATION PROJECT

The growing spread of mis- and disinformation across digital and traditional media platforms continues to pose a significant threat to Ghana's democratic stability and social cohesion. The rapid expansion of social media has made it easier for false narratives to circulate widely, often shaping public opinion, deepening divisions, and undermining trust in institutions. Young people, who are the most active users of these platforms, are particularly vulnerable to the effects of disinformation but also represent a critical force in countering it.

In response to this challenge, Penplusbytes is implementing the *Empowering Ghanaian Youth Against Disinformation* project, supported with German Federal Foreign Office's funds by ifa (Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen), zivik Funding Programme to strengthen democratic resilience by equipping young people with the skills, tools, and platforms needed to identify, counter, and prevent the spread of false information. The project adopts a holistic approach that combines digital innovation, media and information literacy (MIL), youth leadership, and community engagement to address disinformation at both the national and grassroots levels.

At the centre of this initiative is the development of an AI-powered digital tool designed to serve as both a pre-bunking resource and a repository of verified disinformation cases. The platform will provide accessible and credible information on governance processes while enabling users to verify suspicious content.

The project will also build the capacity of young people through targeted training programmes on digital verification, responsible content creation, cybersecurity, and media literacy. These trained youth will act as multipliers within their communities, leading local initiatives supported through a microgrant scheme to promote information integrity and peacebuilding. In addition, the project will facilitate community dialogues and partnerships with community-based organisations (CBOs) and media institutions to strengthen collaboration and expand the reach of anti-disinformation efforts.

Objectives

1. Improved youth understanding of disinformation and its impacts on democracy and social cohesion through digital, Media and Information Literacy (MIL).
2. Strengthened collaboration between young people, community-based organisations (CBOs), and media organizations.
3. Empowered youth as leaders in peacebuilding, influencing policy and combatting disinformation.
4. Strengthened disinformation detection and response systems through technology-driven solutions.