

Sikito

HAS A GOOD Day



United Nations
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Media & Information Literacy Storybook



Media & Information Literacy Storybook

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Today's world is shaped by the quality of information produced, accessed and consumed at individual and social levels. This determines the quality of our decisions and actions. Increasingly, current digital realities and their social media manifestations, have enabled more opportunities for expression. Increased access to the internet is promoting freedom, with consequences for peace and conflict. This publication is a contribution to responsible online communication. We hope you learn from the following pages and enjoy the process as much as we did.



... the future is here

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Sikito left work at about 6pm on Tuesday evening and took off to hang out with his friends at Sweet Chicken in the Bo area. Every day, he gets to the mechanic workshop by 7.30am and works up until 7pm but on this particular day, it rained and so they finished early.

His workplace was not far from the road and so he put on his raincoat and took a five minute walk till he could get a bus or tricycle that would take him down to Bo.

Luckily, he got a tricycle in less than five minutes. On the way, the driver was annoyed because he had been harassed by some policemen and began to complain about the government.

“What kind of government is this?

Corrupt people! See as the government workers sef are robbing us blind.

I don tire sef.”

Soon the other passengers had joined in the conversation.

“True o, useless government, nothing works, see how everything is hard, money is scarce and on top of that, they are useless to themselves.”

Another chimed in,

“Is it only the stealing, this is armed robbery of the highest order. People's businesses are crumbling simply because nothing works anymore – not even electricity, not the transportation sector, not even the roads...”





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At this point Sikito was tired of the sad and angry tone of the conversation,

“I am sorry o” he said quietly so they would not chew him up.

“I know the way the country is going is enough to make anyone angry but you don't have to abuse the government like this o, talk less of the people in government.”

“Wetin this one they talk?”

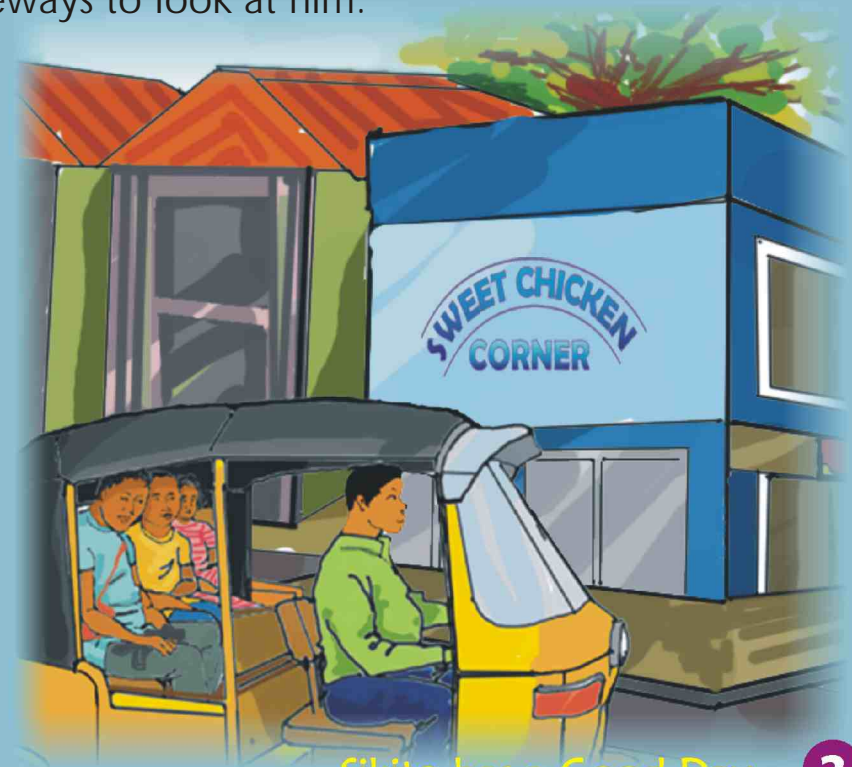
the driver responded in an angry undertone.

“Are you not living inside this country and seeing as everything is going? Or you know someone in government who is giving you money?” The driver turned sideways to look at him.

Sikito laughed and snorted. In the same moment another passenger asked,

“Abi o, ask him!”

“Yes, I live in this country and no, I don't have anybody in government o. I am a mechanic but I have learnt that abusing the government or the people in government does not help anybody. After all we have been abusing each government as they come in and as they go. Plus, they cannot even hear our vexing. Would it not be better for you to go where they can hear you – as a group to the government house or attend town hall meetings or something, anything, instead of wasting time like this?”





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“Government house – who has that one helped? All the people that have been going, what did they come back with? Even those people who say they are helping us talk to government, they are only after their pocket!”

“Yes ma, but even if that was true, we cannot stop trying. Even the abuse, has it helped us? No, instead we seem to be getting angrier and worse every day. Would it not be better for us to say how we feel without abusing anybody? Please think about it...I am stopping here”

The driver stopped at Sweet Chicken to allow Sikito get off the tricycle.

He got down and entered the eatery with a smile as he thought over the talk. The smile got bigger when he saw his friends.

“Hey guys” .

“Hey Sikito” ,

they chorused excitedly.





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Ali his best friend asked,

“Guy, how far? How was your day?”

“It was good...had a little excitement at the shop today when Peter nearly poured engine oil where transmission oil should be....He should thank his stars I stopped him just in time, oga's beating would have been terrible...”

The guys cracked up laughing...and Ali shouted...

“Peter..Peter...that guy needs to find a new profession.

The rate at which that guy breaks things instead of fixing them, he should consider working with a recycling company where he can get paid to break things...”

They burst into fresh laughter.

“Sikito”, Ali called, “Do you remember when Peter broke that rich woman's radio?”

“Yes I do...the punishment all of us chopped that day gave me nightmares for months. That is why I am always watching him like a hawk...Let's forget him.

What's new with you guys? Anyone else had an interesting day?”

“I did” Mariam echoed behind him.



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Sikito turned, "Hey Mariam, it's been a while.

I am glad to see you. I hope Ali has been behaving himself?"

"Yes, he has been. But you know my brother is mischievous so...

That reminds me, I saw an interesting video circulating today...I even forwarded it to all my contacts. You all should have seen it by now!"

"Not yet" all the guys echoed.....

"But can we order first before we watch the video...

feed the stomach before the eyes?" Kunle added.

"FFO – for food only"

"Okay" the guys got up and went to order their food. Back at the table, Mariam played the video on her phone...The video had only played for a few seconds when Sikito stopped it.

"Any other video?" he said.

"Yeah, I also got this one,"

Mariam replied as she chose another video to play.

Sikito stopped this video again shortly after it started playing.





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“Sikito, what now” ,

Mariam was beginning to get agitated. Why do you keep stopping the video? Are you trying to kill the buzz?”

“I am not; I am just trying to do the right thing.”

“By not allowing us watch the video? Guy...”

“Every time we receive a video about someone or an event, how come we never ask if the content of such video, picture or story is true? We just instantly forward it like our hands have sharing disease!”

Ali laughed...

“But that's the whole point now! They send something to you and you send it to others.”

“And at what cost?” Sikito asked.

“Have you ever considered that it could be you they are circulating all that news about? What if it is fake?

Do you know there are people simply out to spoil other people's names and even get them in trouble?”

“Hmm, Mr. Lecturer...you want to change profession from mechanic to teacher...continue...”

“ Mariam, Ali and Kunle chuckled.





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“But I am serious! Imagine that you are the one they are writing all these bad things about and sharing it all over the place to people that do not even know you.”

They all became quiet...

“You would not like it, you would be mad, upset and if the person is not emotionally strong, he or she can kill themselves. Why would you click and forward a story – when you were not there, nor do you know anyone who was... most of those stories have the sign 'forwarded' on it...have you ever asked, from where?”

“How do you mean from where?” Ali asked.

“I mean, who sent the original message, who even packaged the story? Do you know whether they were there or if they used editing to combine things?”

“Hmmm...”

“There is so much fake news out there, we all need to be careful so we don't add to the problem by becoming sharers of fake news.” Sikito concluded.

“How do you know all these things, sef?”

“These things!” Sikito said with a smile.

It has a name o – Media and information literacy!”





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“Huh” echoed.

“Media and Information Literacy (MIL). M-I-L. teaches everyone the skills that will help them to decide which information is true and false whether it is on television, radio, newspaper but especially social media.

That is where people are always sending information anyhow.

Half of the stories we see and share on WhatsApp and Facebook, we don't even know where it started from or who first wrote it, but we like to forward anyhow.

When you are MIL, you will stop all that nonsense.”

“When I am missing ke?

Oh boy...your English is disturbing us o!” Ali joked.

“I mean when you are Media and Information Literate,
You will not be sharing information anyhow again...”

“sharing what? When it is not food...”

Kunle joined in teasing Sikito.

“But guy, how you take know these things?”

Ali asked with a serious expression.

“I met a friend...” Sikito responded.

“You met a friend?” Mariam asked with raised eyebrows.

Sikito nodded and introduced new gist so everyone could forget the friend matter.





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Mr and Mrs Gabriel were eating dinner when they heard a familiar voice greeting a neighbour outside.

“Good evening ma”

“Good evening son. Hope you had a good day?”

“Yes I did ma.”

A smiling Sikito walked into the house.

“Good evening dad, Good evening mum.”

“Welcome back son.”

Sikito was the only son of his parents and the youngest of three siblings. The first was in the University studying Accounting. The second was learning hairdressing until their elder sister finished or their jobs gave them enough money to support their parents and she was seated right opposite their parents about to give them hot gist.

“Gist mama”

“Leave me alone. Don't spoil my story o”.

Abigail responded. She jumped into the gist with excitement.

“Daddy, Mummy, come and see drama at work today. That's how one of our customers came into the shop after we finished watching one video like that.





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So I washed the hair and the girls were talking about the video which was about two secondary schools being attacked in Jos... As we were talking, the customer asked us where we got the gist. I didn't even notice quickly but as we were talking, her hands were shaking. As I played the video for her, that is how she jumped up, grabbed her bag and left. She didn't even say anything. I just saw her outside making calls and she was there for almost 30minutes."

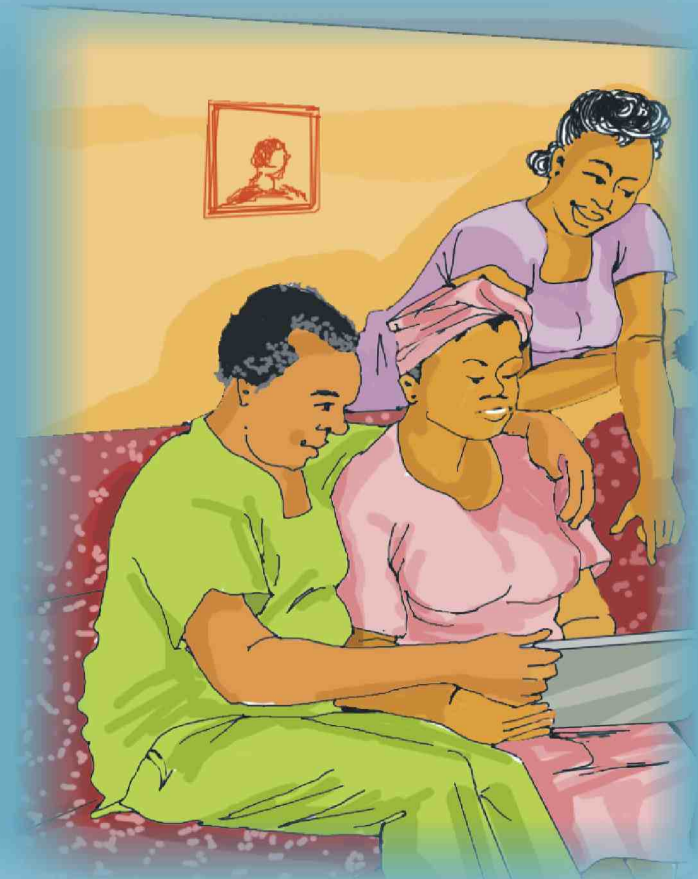
"What was in the video?" Sikito asked.

"The video showed two secondary schools in Jos being attacked by some bad people and that many children were hurt".

"Abigail..."

"I have not finished o! That's how the woman came back inside o...She looked more relaxed as we asked her what happened. That was when she said the schools mentioned in the video are her children's schools and that she was scared that her children were in trouble... She then told us it was fake, she had called many people she knew in the school and outside the school to check if it was true and who could help pick her children if it was.

You know what eh...I felt bad."





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“Why?” their dad asked.

“I thought of the way she had been behaving since she heard our gist.

What if she had a heart attack? Meanwhile, the story is false, simply fake news from someone trying to cause fear! Plus I had sent the video to all my contacts!” Abigail covered her face.

Sikito replied her, “that is why we should not just share information anyhow. People have their reasons for packaging stories and information. Some of them use it for bad things; others are just out for bad fun.

But once they send it and we help them to keep sharing it, then we are as bad as they are – even worse sef. Big sis, you and your girls were lucky!”

“Seriously over lucky...Although Madam scolded us... Said she doesn't know whether we are hairdressers or newscasters.”

“As long as you have learnt your lesson o! Imagine if it was you they were sharing bad and fake news about. Please be careful.” Sikito pleaded.





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"I will. But how come the mechanic is teaching everyone to be careful?
Because your friends called and kept going on and on about you talking plenty things."

"Leave my son, anything he wants to do, he can do..."

His parents were proud and had learnt something new from their son.

"Come Sikito...who taught you all these things?"

His mother asked with a smile.

"My new friend" and he went in to change,
leaving his family curious.

The next morning, on his way to the workshop, he met Obi,
his neighbour's son on the steps.

"Eh, Obi. How are you?"

The young man - who was close to his age was fiddling with
his phone on his way to school replied,

"I am good" and fist bumped Sikito.

"What are you doing? You need to watch your
steps so you don't fall."

"Nearly done, Sikito. Just need to answer some
buffoons on twitter".



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“Buff...what?” his friend was confused.

“Yes, those girls from the all-girls school think they are the finest.

I will deal with them. I need to let them know who they are – Nothing!”

Sikito snatched the phone from him even and even though Obi was trying to get it back, quickly scanned through Obi's typed response to the post he had read.

“Guy!!! You just finished abusing someone on twitter because of what?”
Sikito was alarmed.

“I don't like what they keep saying about their school being the best.” Obi responded

“So, tell the person that! Don't call them mad, foolish, twisted idiot. All those name calling can be called hate speech, you are sending hateful feelings to other people with your words!”

“So...” Obi shrugged like he did not care.





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“Apart from the fact that it is a crime in some countries, do you know the effect your words could have on the other person? What if the person decides to kill themselves or someone else who likes you sees your posts and tries to get rid of this person or these persons...”

“Really. That can't happen!”

“It's happened before, in the United Kingdom, Rwanda, Cote d'Ivoire, South Africa and other countries. If you think your school is the best – just say so. They are not your enemy!”

“They are not my friends either.”

“True.” Sikito interrupted Obi.

“But would you want anyone to say hateful words to you simply because they don't like what you are saying? And on social media for that matter where everyone can see? Think about it!”

By this time, Obi had gotten to his school gate which was quite close to Sikito's workplace.

He was quiet when he waved to Sikito.

“See you later.”

Sikito headed off to work, thinking of the conversations he had had since the day before. He smiled to himself, like yesterday, today is going to be a good day.





... the future is here