



## Africa Check: Vignette August 2017

In this vignette we focus on our fact-checking work in South Africa and efforts to reach a wider and diverse audience through digital channels.

### Fact-checking

The Africa Check team published a total of 109 English reports in the first six months of the year, 27% up on the same period last year. Of these 50 (60%) reports focused on South Africa. We covered a [wide range of other topics](#) from the economy, education to development and health exposing misleading claims.

#### **Health continues to be a major focus of our work.**

We promote transparency and accountability, and getting officials or organisations to retract unproven or false claims is what we seek to achieve.

Recently, Rama margarine - a Unilever brand - tweeted that: “1 out of 5 South African children do not eat breakfast in the morning.” We found this claim to be unproven.

While the information was based on a 2012 survey, it was not representative of children of all ages in South Africa, but only those between the ages of 10 and 14. It may well be that 20% of all children in the country do not eat breakfast, but there is no current research backing up this claim.



**Does 1 in 5 South African kids miss breakfast, as an ad said?**

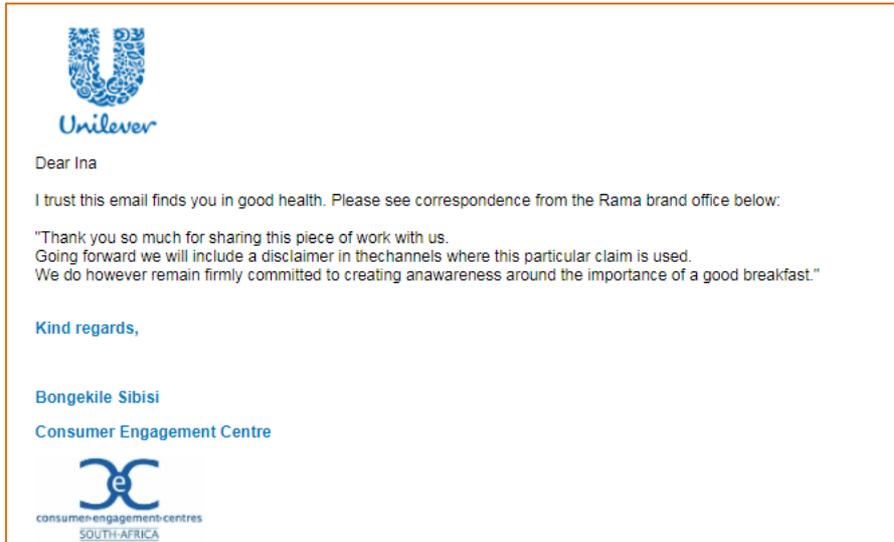
Emphasising the importance of a healthy breakfast, a margarine brand claimed that one in five South African children doesn't eat one.

07:50 | 27th July 2017 (GMT)

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Our Health reporter Ina Skosana received acknowledgment from Unilever to say they would include a disclaimer in the channels where this particular claim is used, which we regard as an important move towards transparency and accountability.



## Growing our Reach

Despite experiencing major attempts to hack our system our audience numbers continue on an upward trajectory. In the first three months of the year, our website audience rose to an average of **120,487 per month** up from last year's average of **100,000 per month**. The website attacks reduced our monthly averages between April and June to 100,700 unique users, which bounced back in July.

Our Twitter following climbed to 30,000 and we started trialling use of different languages – Zulu and Afrikaans – to reach a wider audience. On Facebook, we ran “like” campaigns that saw the number of followers double from 20,500 to 41,000.





We hope that this vignette gives you some insight on some of the activities and impact from Africa Check

**Nancy Chimhandamba**  
**14 August 2017**