

Facebook takes action against fake news in Kenya

With the recent spate of fake news reports circulating on social media in Kenya, Facebook has rolled out an educational tool to help people spot fake news on the platform.



© Olaf Speier via 123RF

When people click on the tool at the top of their News Feed, they will see more information and resource in the Facebook Help Center, including tips such as checking the web address, investigating the source and looking for other reports on the topic.

The tool will be available from for a few days – in Swahili and English – and be shown to the 7 million people who use Facebook on a monthly basis in Kenya. Additionally, together with WhatsApp, Facebook is placing educational notices in some of Kenya's national newspapers and radio stations with ten tips on how to spot false news.

This effort builds on Facebook's ongoing work to help the community make more informed decisions when they encounter false news and continuously improve the tools and tactics used to tackle this problem.

Facebook's efforts were detailed in a <u>comprehensive blog post</u> in April. The efforts include reducing financial incentives for bad actors, taking action <u>against fake accounts</u>, applying machine learning to help limit spam and reducing the posts people see that link to <u>low-quality web pages</u>.

Ebele Okobi, director of policy for Facebook Africa, said: "We take fighting fake news issues seriously, because people want to see accurate information on Facebook. We've developed a three-part strategy to stop the spread of misinformation: disrupting the economic incentives for the spammers who attempt to distribute false news, building new products, and helping people better identify false news and report it."