

Inside Facebook's African Sweatshop | Time

By Billy Perrigo

February 16, 2022

In a drab office building near a slum on the outskirts of Nairobi, Kenya, nearly 200 young men and women from countries across Africa sit at desks glued to computer monitors, where they must watch videos of murders, rapes, suicides, and child sexual abuse.

These young Africans work for Sama, which calls itself an “ethical AI” outsourcing company and is headquartered in California.

Sama says its mission is to provide people in places like Nairobi with “dignified digital work.” Its executives can often be heard saying that the best way to help poor countries is to “give work, not aid.” The company claims to have helped lift more than 50,000 people in the developing world out of poverty.

This benevolent public image has won Sama data-labeling contracts with some of the largest companies in the world, including Google, Microsoft and Walmart. What the company doesn't make public on its website is its relationship with its client Facebook.

Here in Nairobi, Sama employees who speak at least 11 African languages between them toil day and night, working as outsourced Facebook content moderators: the emergency first responders of social media. They perform the brutal task of viewing and removing illegal or banned content from Facebook before it is seen by the average user.

[...]

Source: [Inside Facebook's African Sweatshop | Time](#)