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DEMOCRACY, HUMAN RIGHTS, AND GOVERNANCE

ALGORITHMS IMPACT ON MEDIA AND HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

A new activity under USAID's Broad Agency Announcement Addendum "Advancing Integrity in Media."

An algorithm is a process or a set of rules designed to be followed in calculations or other problem-solving operations. Digital and social media platforms use algorithms to control newsfeeds, rank websites in search engines, and otherwise automate content moderation. Algorithms are increasingly contributing to the spread and amplification of malicious information, as well as the removal of legitimate and credible information.

FRIEND OR FOE?

Friend or Foe? Algorithms Impact on Media and Human Rights Defenders is an activity developed under USAID's Broad Agency Announcement "Advancing Integrity in Media" that is being piloted in Kenya. This activity seeks to examine why the social networks are privileging disinformation over fact-based information. It is looking under the hood of social media platforms – examining the design of algorithms and how they are moderated – to find the answers. That research is then forming

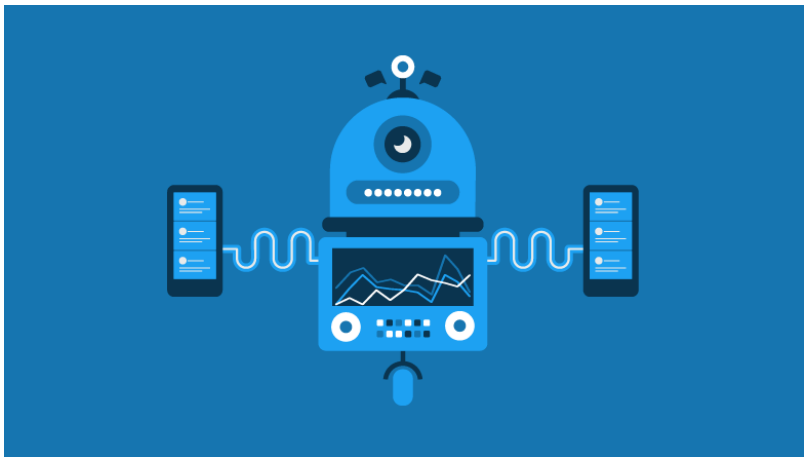
the basis of a dialogue by local civil society groups with social media platforms on increasing the accountability for algorithmic decision-making.

IMPLEMENTATION

The project's main objective is **to counter disinformation efforts and support independent journalism through improving the signals that drive algorithmic decision-making in online platforms and that moderate or censor content.** It is developing tools to identify disinformation; counter it and amplify quality information on social media platforms; and building a coalition of tech-savvy democracy and human rights activists to provide local context, highlight problems, and advocate for social media platforms at the national level to address the role of algorithmic decision-making.

Friend or Foe? is focusing on multi-stakeholder collaboration by bringing together local civil society and media partners with social media and technology companies for a transformative engagement.

FRIEND OR FOE? is being piloted in Kenya in 2018-2019. It is being implemented by a consortium of organizations led by **Article 19,** and including **Meedan Labs, National Democratic Institute,** and **Graphika**.



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