

Campaign to encourage African languages on social media

Following the launch of the #AfricanLanguagesDay campaign for Africa Day, Twitter has now indexed Kiswahili, the largest native African language with over 100 million speakers overall, on the social network.



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Kiswahili is the first language of African origin that is now recognised on the microblog. While translations of Kiswahili are not 100%, it is indeed a good start, according to the organisers of the #AfricanLanguagesCampaign launched earlier this year, and which has generated interesting conversation and content on social media.

eNitiata, a Pan-African digital agency recently launched a social media campaign called #AfricanLanguagesDay to place focus on the issue of the many underrepresented African languages on social media.

The campaign, was inspired by the unfair treatment that many African native languages are facing on social media, with some of the biggest languages from the continent not included in language lists of the popular social networks and are mis-indexed.

#AfricanLanguagesDay is aimed at encouraging an estimated 300 million Africans on social media to "speak" in their indigenous languages more frequently on these platforms.

The campaign kicked off in February as a build-up to Africa Day taking place on 25 May 2018. The day will be targeted for shining the light on African native languages, driven by Africans on the continent and in the diaspora.

"#AfricanLanguagesDay was launched two months ago to achieve recognition of the continent's languages on social media and we are pleased that Twitter, as one of the key social networks that provide an effective platform for global impact, have taken the first step by indexing Kiswahili," says Bra Willy Seyama, founder of eNitiata.

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