

Social Media Analysis of “Tu vois Les Retombées” Facebook Page



At time of reporting, this post on “Tu vois Les Retombées ?” FB page received 200 likes, 560 reactions (the majority of which were positive), and 1.5k shares.¹

- The Facebook group “Tu vois Les Retombées” (which translates roughly to “You Can Note the Consequences” in English) is run by admins who report their location as South Africa, yet the majority of posts are concerned with the Democratic Republic of Congo, the majority of followers are Congolese, and all monitored posts are in French. The group is following several other groups, the majority of which are interested in culture, sports, and politics in DRC. “Tu vois Les Retombées” is also following a FB group concerning football in Benin, suggesting that one of the admins may be Beninese or have relations/business in Benin.

- **Key Takeaway: The group’s origins are unclear. The administrators are apparently located in South Africa, but likes by the unknown group administrators suggests a relation to Benin. However, the intimate knowledge of DRC and of local French dialect indicates origins in DRC. The writing and analytical style of these posts resembles that of a ring of DRC teenagers who managed “fake news” pages.²**

- The highlighted status from June 10, 2020 alleges that President Vladimir Putin of Russia “contradicted [French President] Emmanuel Macron” and rejected using Africa as a testing-ground for vaccination testing, as well as WHO policy in Africa. The post continues to claim that “this has been a [WHO] conspiracy from the beginning.” The post also implies that Russian President Putin accepts COVID-Organics, an herbal remedy touted by Madagascar President Andry Rajoelina.

- **Key Takeaway: The post combines several popular disinformation narratives, including anti-WHO sentiment, accusations of European treatment of Africans as “guinea pigs”, as well as support for COVID-Organics. The post’s popularity suggests the group followers are receptive and/or supportive to these disinformation narratives.**

- The highlighted post appears to be the most popular in the Facebook group’s history, since it’s inception in March 2020. The group’s admins also made the status and image of President Putin the group’s profile picture on June 10, highlighting the narrative’s importance to the group. The post received 1.5k shares, which suggests that the post was viewed and amplified by 9.0% of the group’s 16.6k followers (who account for a not insignificant 0.75% of all Facebook users in DRC as of 2019)²

- This narrative nor attributions of these statements to President Putin did not appear widely in traditional or social media outside of this page. This suggests that this narrative may originate within these pages.

- Users commenting on this post were highly critical of French President Macron. Negative sentiment to France was higher than explicitly positive discussion of Russian President Putin. Users commenting on this post commonly used strong and violent language to denounce French President Macron and his alleged plans to test vaccinations in Africa. Facebook users commenting employed language like “massacre”, and “slaughter” to describe President Macron’s alleged plans. Users also promised to defend Africa and DRC from the French.

- **Key Takeaway: The malleability and interconnectedness of seemingly popular disinformation narratives suggests that a new disinformation narrative could be employed to channel the violent language geared against French President Macron in Facebook users’ response to this post, against aid workers and health workers in DRC.**

Fake News about President Macron's statements regarding COVID-19 vaccines incites angry sentiment from African Facebook Users



At time of reporting, this post on “Tu vois Les Retombées ?” FB page received 200 likes, 290 reactions (the majority of which were positive), and 672 shares.¹

URGENT
LES AFRICAINS DOIVENT SE REVOLTER MAINTENANT, TROP C'EST TROP 🇵🇸
Emmanuel Macron: déclare obligatoire le vaccin contre le Covid-19 aux visiteurs africains, le pays africain qui va refuser ne doit pas Voyager en Europe au cas contraire il y'aura massacre a l'aeroport. 🇵🇸
CE MESSAGE DOIT FAIRE LE TOUR D'AFRIQUE POUR DENONCER CE SYSTEM EUROPEËN

Translation:

“URGENT. AFRICANS MUST REVOLT NOW, ENOUGH IS ENOUGH.

Emmanuel Maccron. African visitors are obligated to be vaccinated for COVID-19, African countries who refuse may not travel to Europe otherwise there will be a massacre at the airport.

THIS MESSAGE MUST GO THROUGH ALL OF AFRICA TO DENONCE THIS EUROPEAN SYSTEM”

- There is minimal to no social media and traditional media coverage verifying this rumor, which confirms further that the Facebook group is actively trying to spread rumors and misinformation among users.
- User responses are predominantly negative towards President Macron, and Europe in general.
- Common responses include:
 - The belief that Europeans are jealous of Africans because of the high counts of COVID-19 deaths in Europe.
 - Disgust that President Macron would think that Africans would want to visit Europe in the first place
 - Macron's statements prove his racist agenda towards Africans

Key Takeaway: The more that this post gains traction through shares and comments, the higher the chance that damaging and negative sentiment will lessen trust in future WHO health campaigns, the EU, and COVID-19 vaccines.