**The Pacific COVID-19 Infodemic**

*Infodemic*: the rapid spread of information about a topic—including content that is true, false, and unclear—that makes it hard to know what to believe.

**Challenges**
- Informal social media communities, chat groups, and individuals with large online followings fill public’s demand for news and updates.
- Pacific journalists are working hard, but lack of scientific knowledge, emergency laws that limit what they can cover, and economic constraints limit impact.
- Despite proactive efforts from governments, discourse is muddied by conspiracy theories and misconceptions.
- The scramble to address Covid–19 misinformation led to ad-hoc applications of legislation and policing to a very complex issue.

**Missing Pieces**
- Safeguards that protect users online, including anti-abuse systems and transparency tools.
- Media capacity, training, and access to provide quality reporting and correct falsehoods.
- Strategies, policies, and frameworks to govern online information ecosystems.

**Opportunities**
- Strengthen official credibility and visibility online. Within governments, stronger technical capacity and greater focus on online information-sharing will improve the credibility and accessibility of official information.
- Productive, multi-stakeholder approaches to misinformation. Add richer context into online discussions and instill greater digital and media literacy among Pacific communities. Civil society can play a leading role in fact-checking, media production, knowledge transfer, and education for local communities and vulnerable groups.
- Prepare for new and emerging threats to online information ecosystems. Strengthen local and regional capacity to identify and report problematic content online; improve coordination and dialogue across institutions and governments; and enhance engagement between social media companies and Pacific leaders.