Methodology (PNG Social Media Tracker for Covid-19)

Facebook Analysis (1st May to 30th September 2021)

Objective of Tracker:

(1) To track developing themes of Covid-19 communication on social media
(2) To identify potential knowledge gaps/misinformation in posts or at least map specific potential areas of misinformation

Technical

A customised Python program was written to (1) identify HTML tags in source Facebook pages (2) scrape all posted content under relevant HTML tags on sampled Facebook pages. As a form of data triangulation, ParseHub was used to ensure scarping accuracy.

Sampling (18 active Facebook Pages across 125,298 posts)

Sampling was based on identifying the most reached Facebook pages in PNG. The Socialbakers 2020 report was used to filter an initial list. This was subsequently followed up with the broader Media Development Initiative (MDI) team for a list of most engaged Facebook pages.

The sampled Facebook pages are listed below.

News Media Facebook Pages	Non-News Media Facebook Pages
EMTV Online	Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary
Loop PNG	Air Niugini
NBC PNG	City Sivarai
FM 100	The PNG News Page
Post Courier	PNG Breaking News
Click TV PNG	The Sun of Papua New Guinea
Yumi FM	PNG Happenings Today
Yumi FM News	PNG News and Updates
Tribe 92 FM	Sharp Talk PNG

Analysis

Data gathered from the Facebook pages were automatically stored in a common independent .txt file. Data files are then run through a customised concordance software for an initial thematic analysis detailing the frequency of occurrence for each theme based on key words in context (KWIC).

Limitations

The following limitations of the analysis should be noted.

Only English posts were analysed.

Trends are highly volatile from week-to-week so findings will differ considerably based on time selected.

Small sample of popular Facebook groups analysed based on reach numbers and recommendations from MDI team: findings provide a snapshot from May to September 2021 and are not universal (generalisable).

Facebook comments were only analysed for posts with higher engagement rates (>100 comments) and as such not all follow-up discussions were tracked in this analysis.

Due to the differing length of analysis periods across the 4 trackers conducted, caution must be taken when comparing trends between trackers.