

SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE VIA ZOOM FROM  
GENEVA, SWITZERLAND  
(CLOSED SESSION)

# 1st WHO infodemiology conference

How infodemics affect the world  
& how they can be managed

30 JUNE & 1, 7, 9, 14, 16 JULY 2020



World Health  
Organization

infodemic  
MANAGEMENT

## Acknowledgments

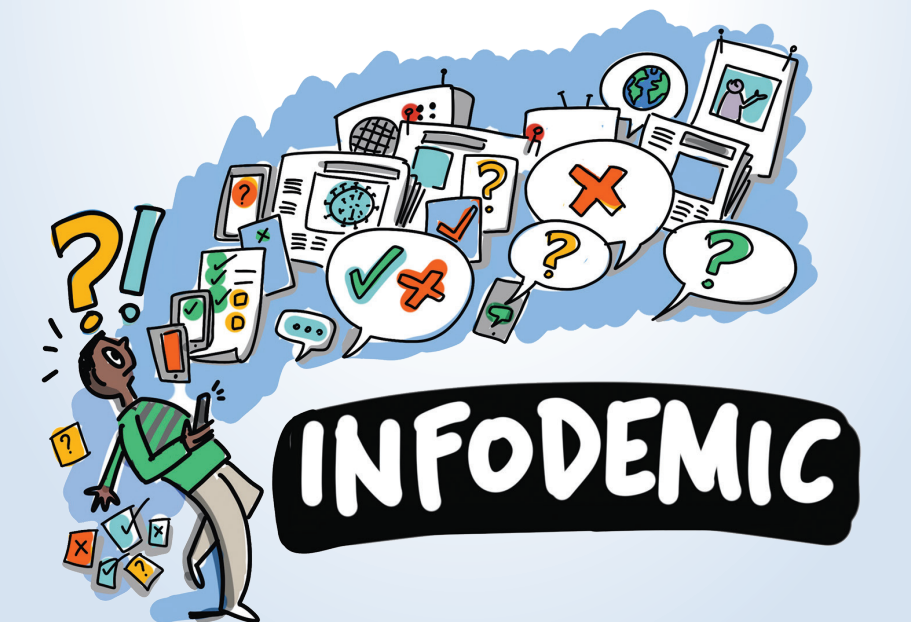
WHO appreciates contributions from all three levels of WHO, external partners and from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Global Immunization Division's Demand for Immunization Team in the preparation of the conference. The organizing team wishes to especially acknowledge the support and participation by Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention, and European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control.

## Acknowledgments

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# Scope & purpose

## Background

In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the phenomenon of an 'infodemic' has escalated to a level that requires a coordinated response. An infodemic is an overabundance of information – some accurate and some not – occurring during an epidemic. In a similar manner to an epidemic it spreads between humans through digital and physical information systems. It makes it hard for people to find trustworthy sources and reliable guidance when they need it. During epidemics and crises, it becomes even more important to disseminate accurate information quickly, identify and lower barriers for individuals to take steps to protect themselves, their families and communities against the infection. Even when people have access to high-quality information, there are still barriers they must overcome to take the recommended action. Like pathogens in epidemics, misinformation spreads further and faster and adds complexity to health emergency response.

## Aim

An infodemic cannot be eliminated but it can be managed. To respond effectively to infodemics, WHO calls for adaptation, development, validation and evaluation of new evidence-based measures and practices to prevent, detect and respond to mis- and disinformation. Additionally, these measures will help propagate, disseminate and amplify evidence-informed guidance for individuals and populations to take protective measures, and in the long-term sustain best practices for infodemic preparedness and response. In the context of this meeting, 'infodemiology' is defined as the science behind managing infodemics. The overall aim of this consultation is to take stock of relevant research and effective practices and define public health research needs in order to advance this field. The working language of the meeting will be English. Public webinars will be interpreted into Spanish and French.

## Objectives

- Understand the multidisciplinary nature of infodemic management
- Identify current examples and tools to understand, measure and control infodemics
- Build a public health research agenda to direct focus and investment in this emerging scientific field
- Establish a community of practice and research

## Participants

- Experts from the fields of Epidemiology & Public Health; Applied Math & Data Science; Digital Health and Technology Applications; Social & Behavioral Science; Media Studies & Journalism; Marketing, UX & Design; Risk Communication and Community Engagement; Ethics & Governance and other relevant scientific disciplines and practices
- UN agencies
- Public health authorities



## Format

### 1) Pre-conference: 29 June 2020

#### OBJECTIVES

- Understand the multidisciplinary nature of the infodemic and its management
- Learn from experts on potential interventions to manage infodemics
- Get feedback from participants on discussion papers, working documents and infodemiology glossary

#### FORMAT

- Open to the public with 7 inspiring talks how the infodemic affects the world currently and reflections how it can be managed. Planned talks:
  - *Paradigm shifts in epidemiology and making multidisciplinary connections*
  - *Battling a Pandemic in a Fact-resistant World: Epidemiology, Public Health, and the COVID-19 Infodemic*
  - *A New Digital Reality: How Fake News and Misinformation are Derailing the Largest Vaccination Effort in History - A Case Study of Polio Programme*
  - *'Gotong Royong': Blunting the impact of multiple infodemics via a whole-of-society approach*
  - *Conspiracies, Rumors and Falsehoods: The truth about why the infodemic is so dangerous*
  - *When fact-checking, media and misinformation collide in Africa*
  - *Viral (p)articles: A network mapping approach to infodemiology*
- ZOOM limit for the public session is 5000 participants
- Anyone can join in and listen, and submit questions on *Slido*
- Participants will be invited to provide feedback to the draft discussion papers, working documents, and infodemiology glossary

## 2) Scientific conference: 30 June & 1 - 16 July 2020

### OBJECTIVES

- Define the scientific discipline of infodemiology
- Support the transdisciplinary discussions and identifying commonalities and connections between them
- Identify current examples and tools to understand, measure and control infodemics
- Build a public health research agenda to direct focus and investment in this emerging scientific field
- Establish a community of practice and research

### FORMAT

- The scientific conference is closed to the public.
- **Day 1 (30 June):**
  - Opening by WHO Director-General
  - 4 scientific keynote discipline talks. Planned talks:
    - > Epidemiology, Public Health and infodemic
    - > Psychology, marketing and behavioural insight and infodemic
    - > Data science, applied maths and physics and infodemic
    - > Society, ethics, governance and infodemic
  - Roundtable discussion: Epidemiology and its linkages to the new scientific discipline of infodemiology
- **Day 2, 3, 4 & 5 (1, 7, 9, 14 July):**
  - Working sessions on 4 working topics:
    - > **Topic 1:** How can the digital-physical information environment be measured and monitored? Using data triangulation, real-time surveillance and monitoring and metrics development
    - > **Topic 2:** How does information originate and spread? Information environment, how low-quality information develops into harmful narratives, and how misinformation propagates

> **Topic 3: How does information affect and impact individuals and populations?** Understanding the risk factors, impact on population & societies behaviour and action, building and maintaining trust, and resilience to misinformation

> **Topic 4: What interventions work to protect and mitigate?** Improving intervention design and building the evidence-based response toolkit

– Each team rotates through the themes over a 2-week period

• **Day 6 (16 July):**

– Reporting back from experts to review the outcomes from working groups

### 3) Public summary: 21 July 2020

#### OBJECTIVES

- Inform participants and the viewing public on conclusions of the scientific conference and next steps
- Link participants and the viewing public with possible follow up opportunities after the conference
- Get feedback from participants on outcomes of the conference and next steps

#### FORMAT

- Public interactive webinar with summary, conclusions of the scientific conference and next steps
- Anyone can join in and listen, and submit questions on *Slido*

#### CONTACT

**Tim Nguyen**  
[nguyent@who.int](mailto:nguyent@who.int)

**Tina Purnat**  
[purnatt@who.int](mailto:purnatt@who.int)



## Day 1

## Closed session plenary

**Tuesday, 30 June 2020, 12:00 – 17:40 Geneva time**

- 12:00 – 12:10** **Welcome**  
*Sylvie Briand*, World Health Organization
- 12:10 – 12:20** **Opening of the 1st WHO Infodemiology Conference**  
*Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus*, Director-General, World Health Organization
- 12:20 – 12:30** **Housekeeping and ways of working**  
*Tim Nguyen*, World Health Organization
- 12:30 – 12:40** **Start of working session**  
Introduction by conference co-chairs  
*Neville Calleja*, Ministry for Health, Malta  
*Viroj Tangcharoensathien*, Ministry of Health, Thailand
- 12:40 – 13:40** **Discussion: Epidemiology & linkages to the new scientific discipline of infodemiology**  
*Rosamund Lewis*, World Health Organization  
*Dimitri Prybylski*, US Centers for Disease Prevention and Control, USA  
*Akhona Tshangela*, Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention  
*Lei Zhou*, Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention, China  
*Laura Espinosa*, European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control
- 13:40 – 13:50** **Away From Keyboard (AFK) break**
- 13:50 – 14:10** **Researching the COVID-19 Infodemic in the Digital Era**  
*Saad Omer*, Yale University, USA
- 14:10 – 14:30** **Social Media & Collective Behavior: A Media Science Perspective**  
*Anja Bechmann*, Aarhus University, Denmark
- 14:30 – 14:50** **The New Science of Infodemics Across Social Media Platforms**  
*Neil Johnson*, George Washington University, USA
- 14:50 – 15:10** **Cultures of misinformation: media, motivations, responses**  
*Herman Wasserman*, University of Cape Town, South Africa
- 15:10 – 15:40** **Discussion with the keynote speakers**  
Moderator: *Tim Nguyen*, World Health Organization  
(Questions from *Slido*)
- 15:40 – 15:50** **Team formation & move to break out rooms in ZOOM**
- Teams (red, blue, yellow, green) – academics, non-state actor observers
  - Observers (UN, partners)
  - Keynote speakers
  - Topic masters
- 15:50 – 16:40** **Break-out discussion**  
Discussion in teams expanded with keynote speakers & observers  
Break-out group moderators:
- *Elisabeth Wilhelm*, US Centers for Disease Prevention and Control, USA
  - *Tina Purnat*, World Health Organization
  - *Margaux Mathis*, World Health Organization
  - *Stefano Burzo*, World Health Organization
- 16:40 – 17:10** **Report back to plenary**  
Moderator: *Tim Nguyen*, World Health Organization  
Break-out group rapporteurs:  
• *Marcelo D'Agostino*, PAHO / WHO Regional Office for the Americas  
(continued on next page)

## Day 1, continued

**Tuesday, 30 June 2020, 12:00 – 17:00 Geneva time**

(continued) • **Atsu Ishizumi**, US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, USA  
 • **Aybuke Koyuncu**, US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, USA  
 • **Tom Trewinnard**, World Health Organization  
 (Discussion via *Slido*)

17:25 – 17:40 **Comments by conference co-chairs**  
*Neville Calleja*, Ministry for Health, Malta  
*Viroj Tangcharoensathien*, Ministry of Health, Thailand

**Housekeeping, introduction to support team, ways of working, and schedule for next weeks**  
*Elisabeth Wilhelm*, US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, USA

17:40 **Adjourn**

## Days 2,3,4 & 5

**Closed working sessions**

**1, 7, 9, 14 July 2020**

**See table below for team sprint timings**

- Participants work in assigned teams.
- Rotating discussion of each team through four set topics.
- Discussion tasks for each team per topic:
  1. **Review discussion and outputs** that previous teams have recorded on this topic.
  2. **Discuss the leading questions** selected by the Topic Master for the team and record the brainstorm
  3. **Discussion:**
    - Discuss a broad-stroke SWOT analysis of research field to address the working group topic
    - Identify the most urgent 3-5 research questions that need answers now
    - What are barriers and enablers for answering these research questions?

### TOPIC 1

**How can the digital-physical information environment be measured and monitored?**

*Using data triangulation, real-time surveillance & monitoring and metrics development*

#### Topic masters:

- **Neil Johnson**  
George Washington University, USA
- **Anatoliy Gruz**  
Ryerson University, Canada

#### Support to topic masters:

- **Marcelo D'Agostino**  
Pan American Health Organization /  
WHO Regional Office for the Americas
- **Dylan Johnson Restrepo**  
Volunteer

## TOPIC 2

### How does information originate and spread?

*Information environment, how low-quality information develops into harmful narratives and how misinformation propagates*

#### Topic masters:

- **Anis Azlan**  
Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Malaysia
- **Masato Kajimoto**  
University of Hong Kong, China

#### Support to topic masters:

- **Atsu Ishizumi**  
US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, USA
- **Saad Uakkas**  
Volunteer

## TOPIC 3

### How does information affect and impact individuals and populations?

*Understanding the risk factors, impact on population, societies' behaviour & action, building & maintaining trust and resilience to misinformation*

#### Topic masters:

- **Julienne Anoko**  
World Health Organization
- **Judit Bayer**  
Budapest Business School, Hungary

#### Support to topic masters:

- **Margaux Mathis**  
World Health Organization
- **Vicky Houssiere**  
World Health Organization

## TOPIC 4

### What interventions work to protect and mitigate?

*Improving intervention design and building the evidence-based response toolkit*

#### Topic masters:

- **Emily Vraga**  
University of Minnesota
- **Sara Rubinelli**  
University of Lucerne

#### Support to topic masters:

- **Aybuke Koyuncu**  
US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, USA
- **Jamie Guth**  
World Health Organization

**Days 2,3,4 & 5, continued****Closed working sessions****1, 7, 9, 14 July 2020****See table below for team sprint timings****Team color coordination**

- Coach – **Red team**: *Tom Trewinnard*, World Health Organization
- Coach – **Blue team**: *Daniel Hougendobler*, World Health Organization
- Coach – **Green team**: *Brian Yau*, World Health Organization
- Coach – **Yellow team**: *Neetu Abad*, US Centers for Disease Prevention and Control

**Glossary curation**

- *Stefano Burzo*, World Health Organization
- *Patricia Ndumbi Ngamal*, World Health Organization

**Team rotation schedule through discussion topics****(Expected 90-120 min)****All times are Geneva time**

TOPIC	Day 2 1 July 2020	Day 3 7 July 2020	Day 4 9 July 2020	Day 5 14 July 2020
Infodemiology glossary Epidemiology-infodemiology linkages	All four teams feed back any further comments to the topic masters & assistants			
<b>Topic 1:</b> How can the digital information environment be measured and monitored?	<b>Blue team</b> 01:00 – 03:00	<b>Red team</b> 13:00 – 15:00	<b>Green team</b> 15:00 – 17:00	<b>Yellow team</b> 17:00 – 19:00
<b>Topic 2:</b> How does information originate and spread?	<b>Yellow team</b> 02:00 – 04:00	<b>Blue team</b> 09:00 – 11:00	<b>Red team</b> 13:00 – 15:00	<b>Green team</b> 13:00 – 15:00
<b>Topic 3:</b> How does information affect and impact individuals and populations?	<b>Green team</b> 15:00 – 17:00	<b>Yellow team</b> 17:00 – 19:00	<b>Blue team</b> 09:00 – 11:00	<b>Red team</b> 09:00 – 11:00
<b>Topic 4:</b> What interventions work to protect and mitigate?	<b>Red team</b> 13:00 – 15:00	<b>Green team</b> 15:00 – 17:00	<b>Yellow team</b> 17:00 – 19:00	<b>Blue team</b> 14:00 – 16:00

## Day 6

## Closed session plenary

Thursday, 16 July 2020, 12:00 – 15:45 Geneva time

- 12:00 – 12:10 **Welcome** by conference co-chairs  
*Neville Calleja*, Ministry for Health, Malta  
*Viroj Tangcharoensathien*, Ministry of Health, Thailand
- 12:10 – 12:30 **Report back from Topic 1**  
*Neil Johnson*, George Washington University, USA  
*Anatoliy Gruzd*, Ryerson University, Canada  
 (Discussion via *Slido*)
- 12:30 – 12:50 **Report back from Topic 2**  
*Anis Azlan*, Universiti Kebangsaan, Malaysia  
*Masato Kajimoto*, University of Hong Kong, China  
 (Discussion via *Slido*)
- 12:50 – 13:10 **Report back from Topic 3**  
*Julienne Ngoundoung Anoko*, World Health Organization  
*Judit Bayer*, Budapest Business School, Hungary  
 (Discussion via *Slido*)
- 13:10 – 13:30 **Report back from Topic 4**  
*Emily Vraga*, University of Minnesota  
*Sara Rubinelli*, University of Lucerne  
 (Discussion via *Slido*)
- 13:30 – 13:40 **AFK break**
- 13:40 – 14:00 **Report back on infodemiology glossary**  
*Stefano Burzo*, World Health Organization  
*Patricia Ndumbi Ngamala*, World Health Organization  
 (Discussion via *Slido*)
- 14:00 – 14:20 **Reflections from coaches**  
*Tom Trewinnard*, World Health Organization  
*Daniel Hougendobler*, World Health Organization  
*Brian Yau*, World Health Organization  
*Neetu Abad*, US Centers for Disease Prevention and Control, USA  
 (Discussion via *Slido*)
- 14:20 – 14:50 **Discussion**  
 Questions & discussion via *Slido*
- 14:50 – 15:10 **Reflections & next steps**  
*Tim Nguyen*, World Health Organization
- 15:10 – 15:30 **Remarks by chairs**  
*Neville Calleja*, Ministry for Health, Malta  
*Viroj Tangcharoensathien*, Ministry of Health, Thailand
- 15:30 – 15:45 **Closing remarks**  
*Sylvie Briand*, World Health Organization
- 15:45 **Adjournment of closed working session**

## Day 7

## Public webinar

Tuesday, 21 July 2020, 15:00 – 16:30 Geneva time

15:00 – 16:30 **Host & speakers TBC**

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# Biographies

## Co-chairs:

- *Neville Calleja*  
Ministry for Health, Malta
- *Viroj Tangcharoensathien*  
Ministry of Health, Thailand

## Keynote speakers:

- *Anja Bechmann*  
Aarhus University, Denmark
- *Neil Johnson*  
George Washington University, USA
- *Saad Omer*  
Yale University, USA
- *Herman Wasserman*  
University of Cape Town, South Africa

## Topic masters:

- *Julienne Anoko*  
World Health Organization
- *Anis Azlan*  
Universiti Kebangsaan, Malaysia
- *Judit Bayer*  
Budapest Business School, Hungary
- *Anatoliy Gruz*  
Ryerson University, Canada
- *Masato Kajimoto*  
University of Hong Kong, China
- *Sara Rubinelli*  
University of Lucerne
- *Emily Vraga*  
University of Minnesota

## WHO:

- *Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus*  
Director-General, World Health Organization
- *Sylvie Briand*  
World Health Organization
- *Stefano Burzo*  
World Health Organization
- *Rosamund Lewis*  
World Health Organization
- *Margaux Mathis*  
World Health Organization
- *Tim Nguyen*  
World Health Organization
- *Tina Purnat*  
World Health Organization

## CDC:

- *Dimitri Prybylski*  
US Centers for Disease Prevention and Control
- *Elisabeth Wilhelm*  
US Centers for Disease Prevention and Control
- *Lei Zhou*  
Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention, China

# CONFERENCE CO-CHAIRS

## Neville Calleja

*Ministry for Health, Malta*



Dr Neville Calleja qualified as a medical doctor in 1999 and proceeded to study Medical Statistics and Public Health after his medical training. He qualified as a specialist in public health medicine in 2006 and was awarded Membership of the Faculty of Public Health in the UK in 2011.

In 2013, Neville completed his PhD studies on the statistical correction of misclassification of disease status between self-reported and examined health surveys. He has been employed at the Directorate for Health Information and Statistics within the Ministry responsible for Health since 2001, taking on its helm in 2007, and also served as Acting Chief Medical Officer during 2014. DHIR is responsible for the collation of national health statistics on behalf of the National Statistics Office.

Since 2007, the Directorate took on a research role, conducting a series of epidemiological surveys on a national scale, including two Health Interview Surveys, a survey on Elderly Needs Assessment, and a Sexual Health survey – the main data sources for health inequality analyses in Malta. Dr Calleja has 18 years of experience lecturing medical statistics, epidemiology and public health to all health care professionals, together with ethical and scientific review of projects at local and international level.

He has been part of the Senior Advisory and the Transitioning Strategy groups of the Malta COVID-19 Response team since the beginning of the epidemic here in Malta early in March.



## Viroj Tangcharoensathien

*Ministry of Health, Thailand*

Viroj Tangcharoensathien, MD. PhD, is the Senior Adviser to International Health Policy Program (IHPP), Ministry of Public Health.

Trained in medicine at Mahidol University, he served for almost 10 years in small rural hospitals in north-eastern Thailand. He received the Thai Medical Association's Best Rural Doctor Award in 1986. He completed a PhD on community health financing at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, supported by Rockefeller Foundation Scholarship, where his thesis won the Woodruff Medal in 1991 for the most outstanding PhD thesis of that year in the School.

In 2001 he co-found International Health Policy Programme (IHPP), Ministry of Public Health, Thailand as first Deputy Director, then Director, then Senior Advisor and now Secretary General.

He received the Edwin Chadwick Medal in 2011 for his contributions to improve health systems in the interests of the poor; and the Sam Adjei Distinguished Public Service Award in 2018 by the Alliance for Health Policy and Systems Research and Health Systems Global for his engagement in health systems development and research. He received WHO Director-General's Health Leaders 2019 Award in recognition of his outstanding leadership in Global Health. He published 243 articles in international peer review journals since 1989.

# KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



## Anja Bechmann

*Aarhus University, Denmark*

Anja Bechmann is a professor of media science and the director of DATALAB – Center for Digital Social Research, Aarhus University, Denmark. She is also director of the EU Center of Excellence for Research in Social Media and Information Disorders, and a former member of the EU Commission HLEG on Disinformation. She was a thinker in residence at the Royal Flemish Academy of Belgium for Science and the Arts in 2019. Her research focuses on social media and collective behavior, and her work has been published in journals such as *New Media & Society*, *Digital Journalism*, *The Information Society*, and *Big Data & Society*.

## Neil Johnson

*George Washington University,  
USA*



Neil Johnson is a professor of physics at GW and heads up a new initiative in Complexity and Data Science which combines cross-disciplinary fundamental research with data science to attack complex real-world problems. His research interests lie in the broad area of Complex Systems and 'many-body' out-of-equilibrium systems of collections of objects, including humans and machines.

Neil is a Fellow of the American Physical Society (APS) and is the recipient of the 2018 Burton Award from the APS. He received his BA/MA from St. John's College, Cambridge, University of Cambridge and his PhD as a Kennedy Scholar from Harvard University. He was a Research Fellow at the University of Cambridge, and later a Professor of Physics at the University of Oxford until 2007, having joined the faculty in 1992. Following a period as Professor of Physics at the University of Miami, he was appointed Professor of Physics at George Washington University in 2018. He presented the Royal Institution Lectures 'Arrows of Time' on BBC TV in 1999. He has more than 300 published research papers across a variety of research topics. His published books include Financial Market Complexity published by Oxford University Press and Simply Complexity: A Clear Guide to Complexity Theory published by Oneworld Publications. Neil co-founded and co-directed CABDyN (Complex Agent-Based Dynamical Systems) which is Oxford University's interdisciplinary research center in Complexity Science, and an Oxford University interdisciplinary research center in financial complexity (OCCF).

## Saad Omer

*Yale University, USA*



Saad B. Omer is the inaugural Director of the Yale Institute for Global Health, and a Professor of Medicine and Epidemiology at Yale University, Schools of Medicine and Public Health. He has conducted studies in the United States, Guatemala, Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and South Africa. Dr Omer's research portfolio includes clinical trials to estimate efficacy and safety of maternal and/or infant influenza, pertussis, polio, measles and pneumococcal vaccines and trials to evaluate drug regimens to reduce mother-to-child transmission of HIV. He has published over 290 papers in peer reviewed journals and has mentored over 100 junior faculty, clinical, and research post-doctoral fellows and PhD and other graduate students.

## Herman Wasserman

*University of Cape Town,  
South Africa*



Herman Wasserman is Professor of Media Studies and Director of the Centre for Film and Media Studies at the University of Cape Town, South Africa. He has published widely on media, democracy and misinformation in Africa. He is Editor-in-Chief of the journal *African Journalism Studies* and a Fellow of the International Communication Association.

# TOPIC MASTERS

## Julienne Anoko

WHO



Julienne N. Anoko, is a social-anthropologist (PhD) from the Sorbonne University in France. She completed her academic preparation in the area of epidemiology & public health, and gender & health performing masters' degrees in the University Rey Juan Carlos in Spain. For greater than 20 years, she has been demonstrating and putting in practice how the use of sociocultural evidence from research/ action research can contribute in efficient programming and accountability of development and humanitarian' interventions. Thus, she has been supporting several Governments, UN agencies and NGOs in Europe, Latin America and Caribs and Africa.

Between 1997 and 2019, she collaborated as researcher for the Institut de Recherche pour le Développement, responded outbreaks (Ebola, Marburg, H1N1, Zika, Plague) with UNICEF, WHO, UNMEER in coordinating the implementation of interventions fitting with sociocultural contexts.

Dr Anoko is recipient of both the 'Research and Innovation 2015 Award' from the French Red Cross Humanitarian Fund and the 'MARSH AWARD FOR ANTHROPOLOGY IN THE WORLD, 2017' from the UK Royal Institute of Anthropology.

Since February 2019, Dr Anoko is the Social Sciences/Risk Communication & Community Engagement Focal Point of the WHO Regional Office for Africa into the Emergency Preparedness and Response Programme (EPR).

Dr. Anoko is senior advisor of networks such as ALERRT, SoNar Global, IDS, RIF&PIC, RAEE, etc. She has published books and papers, and contributed in developing several guidelines for United Nations agencies.

## Anis Azlan

*Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia,  
Malaysia*



Arina Anis Azlan is an academic at the Centre for Research in Media and Communication, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia. Her research interests are in health communication, information management and communicative behaviour among publics. Her current research projects include investigating factors influencing disease prevention behaviours.

## Judit Bayer

*Budapest Business School,  
Hungary*



Judit Bayer is associate professor of media law and international law at the Budapest Business School, Hungary, and a Schumann Fellow at the University of Münster. Her research background is in human rights, freedom of expression, media freedom and pluralism, and privacy. She has a PhD in constitutional law (internet regulation) and habilitation in constitutional law (data protection).

Bayer has authored several books and articles in the field of media law, more narrowly in the field of disinformation, liability of internet service providers, freedom of expression on the internet, public service broadcasting, and human rights. She has authored numerous articles and has presented papers in international conferences. She has been member and director in various research projects, among others on media pluralism within the European Union in 2016, and on disinformation and propaganda and its impact on human rights and democracies in 2018.

## Anatoliy Gruzd

*Ryerson University, Canada*



Anatoliy Gruzd, PhD is a Canada Research Chair in Social Media Data Stewardship, Associate Professor at the Ted Rogers School of Management at Ryerson University, and Director of Research at the Social Media Lab. Anatoliy is also a Member of the Royal Society of Canada's College of New Scholars, Artists and Scientists; a co-editor of a multidisciplinary journal on Big Data and Society; and a founding co-chair of the International Conference on Social Media and Society.

His research initiatives explore how social media platforms are changing the ways in which people and organizations communicate, collaborate and disseminate information and how these changes impact the norms and structures of modern society.

## Masato Kajimoto

*University of Hong Kong, China*



Masato Kajimoto, Ph.D., is an associate professor at the Journalism & Media Studies Centre at the University of Hong Kong. He specialized in misinformation ecosystem research in Asia and news literacy education.

In 2019 he founded a student-driven fact-checking initiative called Annie Lab (<http://annielab.org>) that simulates a working newsroom with an aim to synthesize journalism training and news literacy curricula.

Masato is also the chief producer of the online course on Coursera titled *Making Sense of the News: News Literacy Lessons for Digital Citizens* and the YouTube series *Strapline: News Literacy for the Rest of Us* (<http://strapline.org>).

He served as the leading researcher and co-editor for the paper 'Information Disorder in Asia and the Pacific: Overview of Misinformation Ecosystem in Australia, India, Indonesia, Japan, the Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, and Vietnam'.

His recent publication includes an entry on News Literacy in the Oxford Research Encyclopaedia of Communication. Before beginning a career in teaching and research, he worked as an online reporter and web producer for CNN International.

## Sara Rubinelli

*University of Lucerne, Italy*



Sara Rubinelli holds a degree in Classics and Philosophy from the Catholic University of Milan (I) and a PhD from the University of Leeds (UK) in the areas of argumentation theory, persuasion and rhetoric. She is Professor in Health Sciences with a focus in health communication at the Department of Health Sciences and Medicine of the University of Lucerne (CH). Since September 2009 she leads there the Person-Centered Healthcare Group at Swiss Paraplegic Research (CH). She is President of the European Association for Communication in Healthcare (EACH). Main areas of interest include: health communication with a main focus on disinformation and risk communication, social marketing and health campaigns, health behavior, biases and heuristics.

## Emily Vraga

*University of Minnesota, USA*



Emily K. Vraga is an associate professor at the Hubbard School of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of Minnesota, where she holds the Don and Carole Larson Professorship in Health Communication. Her research examines methods to correct health misinformation on social media, to limit biased processing of news messages, and to encourage attention to more diverse content online. She has published over 60 peer-reviewed journal articles and has worked with social media companies and public health organizations on best practices to address health misinformation on social media.

WHO



# Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus

## *WHO Director-General*

Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus was elected as WHO Director-General for a five-year term by WHO Member States at the Seventieth World Health Assembly in May 2017.

He is the first WHO Director-General to have been elected from multiple candidates by the World Health Assembly, and is the first person from the WHO African Region to serve as WHO's chief technical and administrative officer.

Immediately after taking office on 1 July 2017 Dr Tedros outlined five key priorities for the Organization: universal health coverage; health emergencies; women's, children's and adolescents' health; health impacts of climate and environmental change; and a transformed WHO.

Prior to his election as WHO Director-General, Dr Tedros served as Ethiopia's Minister of Foreign Affairs from 2012–2016. In this role he led efforts to negotiate the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, in which 193 countries committed to the financing necessary to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

Dr Tedros served as Ethiopia's Minister of Health from 2005–2012, where he led a comprehensive reform of the country's health system. All roads lead to universal health coverage for Dr Tedros, and he has demonstrated what it takes to expand access to health care with limited resources.

## Sylvie Briand

WHO



Dr Sylvie Briand (MD, MPH, PhD) is the director of the Global Infectious Hazard Preparedness (GIH), WHO Emergency Preparedness (WPE) at the World Health Organization (WHO/WHE), HQ Geneva.

The Department of Global Infectious Hazard Preparedness (GIH) advances global efforts to prevent and control existing and emerging infectious diseases by increasing access to evidence-based interventions; fostering impactful innovation; and leveraging technical, operational and strategic partnerships. The scope of GIH includes COVID-19 but also other dangerous pathogens such as pandemic influenza, plague, Nipah virus, smallpox and other pox viruses and arboviruses (Zika, and Chikungunya).

Since 2001, Dr Briand has been actively involved in the detection, preparedness and response to global threats, leading the scientific and strategic component of the WHO response (avian and pandemic influenza, Ebola, Zika, Plague, yellow fever, cholera, MERS).

Before joining WHO, Dr Briand worked as public health project director for different global health agencies in various geographic regions.

## Stefano Burzo

WHO



Stefano Burzo is a consultant supporting the WHO Infodemic Management Response pillar at the World Health Organization (WHO/WHE), HQ Geneva. He is completing his PhD in political science and international relations at the University of British Columbia.

He has training and experience in methodologies of social science research, both quantitative (e.g. large-n data analyses) and qualitative (e.g. interviews, survey design). He is using mixed methods in his dissertation. His research focuses on international cooperation on investment developing low-income countries and international cooperation, especially in the context of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and Bilateral Investment Treaties (BITs).

## Rosamund Lewis

WHO



Dr Rosamund Lewis is leading on the health sciences stream of the Infodemic Management group in the WHO COVID-19 response. Her day job in the Emergencies Programme is to head the WHO Smallpox Secretariat, leading on orthopoxviruses and biosecurity for the agency. A public health physician with an early career in family and emergency medicine, Rosamund has served WHO, the Government of Canada and other agencies at global, national and municipal levels in emergency preparedness, surveillance and response, immunization, and a range of disease control programmes. Other roles focussed on field epidemiology in emergency settings (MSF/ Epicentre) and new vaccines and health systems (GAVI / CIDA). Along with a Bachelor of Science and medical degree from McGill University, Rosamund holds a Master of Science in Epidemiology and Biostatistics, a Master of Management, and fellowships in Family Medicine and Public Health and Preventive Medicine and has published extensively in her areas of work.

## Margaux Mathis

WHO



Ms Margaux Mathis is a Technical Officer in the Global Infectious Hazard Preparedness (GIH) department within the WHO' Health Emergencies programme (WHE).

She has been involved in many outbreak and pandemic responses since 2014, including Ebola in West Africa in 2014-2015, MERS in the Republic of Korea in 2015, Plague in Madagascar in 2017 and the COVID-19 pandemic. She has worked on many cross-cutting issues such as transfer of knowledge and use of new technologies for better preparedness and response to epidemics.

She is currently part of the Secretariat of the Strategic and Technical Advisory Group for Infectious Hazards (STAG-IH), which provides independent advice and analysis to WHO Health Emergencies Programme on the infectious hazards that may pose a potential threat to global health security.

Prior to joining WHO, Ms Mathis worked in the health and social sector at local level and at the international level in the United States.

She holds a master degree in political and social sciences, with a specialization in public health policies.

## Tim Nguyen

WHO



Mr Tim Nguyen is the Head of Unit for High Impact Events in the Global Infectious Hazard Preparedness Department of the WHO Health Emergencies Programme (WHE). His team manages (i) the WHO Information Network for Epidemics (EPI-WIN), a platform to unite the work on managing disease infodemics during emergencies, and (ii) the strategic global governance of pharmaceutical interventions including pandemic influenza and smallpox vaccine as well as influenza antivirals. In the COVID-19 pandemic response, he co-manages the 'Managing Infodemic' pillar.

He joined WHO in 2006 initially working as a Technical Officer in the Yellow Fever Programme which managed an initiative funded by the GAVI Alliance to provide 40 million doses of vaccine to most at risk populations in low resource settings. In 2008, he joined WHO's Global Influenza Programme and took part in the global response work to the first influenza pandemic of the 21st century. In 2011, he was the founding member of WHO's Global Hepatitis Programme and project manager for the development of the first WHO treatment guideline for HCV.

From 2014-2017, he was the Unit leader for Knowledge Management, Evidence and Research for Policy-Making at the WHO Regional Office for Europe based in Copenhagen, Denmark. There, he established the scientific journal Public Health Panorama and was responsible for the development of the WHO/Europe resolution and action plan for evidence-informed policy-making. Before joining WHO, he worked as management consultant in the pharmaceutical industry.

## Tina Purnat

WHO



Tina Purnat is a Technical Officer for Digital Health Technologies in the newly established Department of Digital Health and Innovation at WHO. She works on (i) developing frameworks for assessment and evaluation of AI and other digital health technologies, (ii) standards and tools for health information exchange, and (iii) related aspects of health data governance supporting health information exchange and use of data in health. As part of the WHO response to the COVID-19 epidemic, she currently also supports the WHO infodemic management response pillar.

Tina has worked at the intersection of health research, analysis and policy-making with an emphasis on health information analysis and health information systems. She left basic science research in 2007 to join the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, where she led data collection, capacity building, and reporting of data on notifiable infectious diseases in the EU. She later worked at WHO and University of Munich as an analyst and clinical data manager in clinical trials and implementation research studies in LMICs. Between 2015-2019, she was Unit Leader for Health Informatics and Information Systems, and 2016-2018 acting Unit Leader and Programme Manager for Health Information, Monitoring and Analysis at WHO Regional Office for Europe. There, she led the European Health Information Gateway; capacity building courses Autumn Schools/ Advanced Courses in health information and evidence-informed policymaking; and integration and strengthening of health information systems. She was managing editor of the European Health Report 2018, which outlined the vision for improved use of evidence, research and health information to inform policy-making in the WHO European Region.

CDC

## Dimitri Prybylski

*US Centers for Disease Control  
and Prevention, USA*



Dimitri Prybylski is an epidemiologist and Team Lead of the Demand for Immunization team in the Integrated Systems Branch of the Global Immunization Division at the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta. Recently he has served as the Africa Regional Advisor on CDC's COVID-19 International Task Force and has also been deployed as the Epidemiology team lead on the Ebola epidemic response in Sierra Leone. Dimitri also was the Team Lead for CDC's HIV Key Populations Surveillance Team and has over three decades of applied public health experience in over 30 countries. His main technical areas of focus are in surveillance and biobehavioral epidemiological research with a strong interest in multidisciplinary areas such as data triangulation, integrated analysis and the emerging field of Infodemiology. Dimitri holds a Ph.D. in Epidemiology from the University of Maryland School of Medicine, an MPH in International Health and Epidemiology from the Johns Hopkins School of Hygiene and Public Health and a B.S. from the University of Michigan in Biology and Anthropology.



## Elisabeth Wilhelm

*US Centers for Disease Control  
and Prevention, USA*

Elisabeth Wilhelm is a Health Communications Specialist working in the US CDC Global Immunization Division on a team of behavioral scientists to diagnose and address vaccine demand and acceptance issues, especially supporting the needs of low and middle-income countries (LMICs). She is focused on crisis communication following vaccine related events, evidence-based behavior change communication strategy development and infodemic management, especially related to misinformation about immunization in the digital environment. Elisabeth has been involved in health research and evaluation efforts in ten countries and regularly designs and conducts trainings on communication and vaccine demand topics. Elisabeth holds an MA in Communications from Johns Hopkins University.

## Lei Zhou

*Chinese Center for Disease  
Control and Prevention, China*



Lei Zhou, M.D., Senior Researcher, is the Chief of Branch for Emerging Infectious Disease at the Public Health Emergency Center in Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention. After receiving her Bachelor and Master's degrees from School of Public Health, Peking University in 2002 and 2005, specializing in epidemiology, she joined China CDC and worked for over 15 years in public health emergency response in China. During COVID-19 pandemic, she served as both Deputy Lead of international cooperation task force and Lead of epidemiological data analysis and situation awareness team. Her research interests are prevention and control of emerging infectious diseases, and pandemic influenza preparedness and response. She has published over 40 peer review articles in international journals, including the *NEJM*, *JID*, *CID*, *EID* and *OFID*.

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World Health Organization  
20 Avenue Appia  
CH 1211, Geneva 27  
Switzerland

[epi-win@who.int](mailto:epi-win@who.int)

[www.who.int/epi-win](http://www.who.int/epi-win)