

INFO-CHECKED MINI ELECTION ANALYSIS CENTER (EAC) FOR THE BY-ELECTIONS IN KAIAF AND BANTANJANG REPORT

Talking Points

1. Peaceful and Well Organized Elections

The by-elections in Kaiaf and Bantanjang were conducted peacefully, with voters demonstrating responsibility, calmness and confidence in the electoral process.

2. Limited Spread of Disinformation and Misinformation

Monitoring by the EAC revealed only two (2) cases of information disorder aimed at misleading the general public and undermine the electoral process.

3. Effective access to credible information

The availability of timely and reliable information from relevant stakeholders supported verification efforts and contributed to a clear and stable information environment.

4. Responsible use of Social Media

Social media platforms were largely used in a constructive and responsible manner, with election-related content remaining mostly factual and verifiable.

Context

On 10th January, 2026, Info-Checked activated an Elections Analysis Center (EAC) to monitor the information environment surrounding the by-elections in Kaiaf and Bantanjang wards respectively.

Unlike previous large-scale election analysis initiatives, the EAC is entirely designed, implemented, and managed by Info-Checked, reflecting the organization's growing institutional capacity in election-related information monitoring and fact-checking. The by-elections provided an important opportunity to assess how local-level electoral contests are influenced by information disorder, particularly in a digital environment that continues to evolve rapidly. The Elections Analysis Center was therefore established to observe, document, and respond to emerging narratives throughout the electoral period.



Elections Analysis Center (EAC)

Following the conduct of the by-elections, Info-Checked presents its preliminary observations from the Elections Analysis Center based at the organization's office. The Elections Analysis Center served as a dedicated hub for real-time monitoring, verification, and documentation of election-related content. Fact-checkers tracked information circulating online and within communities, identified potentially misleading claims, and subjected them to verification using open-source intelligence tools and trusted sources.

Fighting Misinformation and Disinformation

In response to the by-elections in Kaiaf and Bantajang wards, Info-Checked deployed a targeted monitoring and verification strategy grounded in its continued work on countering misinformation and disinformation.

The methodology

The team actively observed online platforms during the elections, assessed the credibility of circulating information, and corrected false or misleading narratives.

Key Findings

- Two (2) Misleading or Exaggerated claims Related to the electoral process were spotted and countered
- Political Parties and loyalists did not significantly influence the spread or framing of information within the monitored information space.
- Information shared online was largely accurate and not artificially manipulated, with limited patterns of disinformation through social media
- Social media platforms largely supported constructive engagement and information sharing, without accelerating the spread of unverified or false content.
- Due to the overall accuracy of information circulating, there was limited need for corrective fact-checking, as most election-related content was already clear and verifiable.



Recommendations

- **Strengthen Local-level Information Monitoring:** While the by-elections were peaceful and the information environment was largely accurate, continuous local-level monitoring and engagement are essential to identify emerging disinformation and misinformation in future electoral processes. Strengthening more community-based monitoring teams could enhance real-time fact-checking and provide immediate corrective actions.
- **Invest and strengthen Fact Checking Initiatives:** There is a need to further invest in building the institutional capacity of fact checking organizations. As the digital landscape evolves, equipping fact checkers with advanced tools and methodologies for identifying and combating disinformation and misinformation will help maintain the integrity of the election process in the future.
- **Expand Public Awareness Campaigns on Media Literacy:** Given that disinformation and misinformation were minimal during this by-election, it is crucial to build on this success by enhancing media literacy programs across the country. These initiatives should focus on educating voters, particularly in rural areas, about recognizing false narratives and understanding the importance and methods of verifying election-related information before sharing it ahead of the December Presidential Elections.
- **Continue Enhancing Stakeholder Collaboration:** There is a need to expand collaboration between political parties, Independent Electoral Commission, fact-checking organizations, and the media to further ensure that accurate information is circulated widely and improve the accuracy and accessibility of electoral data.
- **Proactive Engagement of IEC on Social Media:** The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) should enhance its presence and proactivity on social media platforms, especially during critical election periods such as voting and vote counting. The IEC can use its social media handles to share real-time, accurate updates, address public concerns, and correct any misinformation swiftly. A well-coordinated, official online presence can help ensure that the public receives verified information directly from authoritative sources.

Conclusion

The by-elections in Kaiaf and Bantanjang wards respectively demonstrated that elections can take place within a healthy, calm and credible information environment. The absence of information disorder shows the positive role of transparent communication, community awareness, and responsible use of digital platforms. Info-Checked commends voters, stakeholders and community members for their contribution to a peaceful electoral process supported by accurate and trustworthy information. Info-Checked remains committed to promoting information integrity and will continue to deploy monitoring mechanisms that support peaceful, transparent, and credible elections across the Gambia.

