



Supplementary Voter Registration

Report

8 April to 21 May 2026



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Executive Summary

In preparation for the 2026 Presidential Election, the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) of The Gambia conducted a Supplementary Voter Registration (SVR) from 8 April to 21 May 2026, as mandated by the Elections Act, 2025,¹ which requires the IEC to conduct both general and supplementary voter registration. This exercise was built on the general voter registration conducted in June 2021, which had registered a total of 962,157 voters.

Gambia Participates (GP) deployed a nationwide election observation mission to independently assess the Supplementary Voter Registration (SVR). The mission deployed 53 trained Long-Term Observers (LTOs) across all 53 electoral constituencies in the country. Through a rotational observation methodology, the mission observed 247 of the country's 729 registration centers, representing approximately 34 percent of all centers nationwide. Observation findings were collected using standardized checklists and critical incident reports and transmitted through the Apollo data management system.

Overall, the mission found that the Supplementary Voter Registration exercise was peaceful, orderly, and generally well administered. Registration officials were present in nearly all observed centers, registration materials and biometric equipment were largely available, and registration activities commenced on time in most locations. Accredited observers were granted access to almost all registration centers, while the security environment remained calm and conducive during the voter registration. The conduct of registration officials was generally assessed as professional, impartial, and consistent with established procedures.

The mission nevertheless observed operational and procedural shortcomings that merit attention before the 2026 Presidential Election. Temporary interruptions caused by electricity outages, generator failures, and equipment malfunctions reduced operational efficiency in some centers. Physical accessibility for persons with disabilities remained uneven despite generally positive efforts to provide priority access for vulnerable groups. Voter education activities were inconsistent across observed locations and outreach to marginalized communities appeared insufficient.

There is also huge concern on the prolong delay in finalizing the master voter register and publishing the total number of registered voters (disaggregated by gender, age, region, and constituency).

While compliance with voter identification procedures was generally strong, observers documented isolated cases involving the misuse of attestation procedures, suspected fraudulent supporting documentation, attempted registration of underage persons, and other procedural irregularities. In addition, we observed suspected misuse of birth certificates to register voters. We also observed the abuse of power by government officials in seizing the Alkalo Stamp (used to

¹ Elections Act, 2025 s 15

officiate attestation documents for voter registration) in Nyangen village, in the northern part of Central River Region (CRR), thus restricting the right of eligible Gambians in the said village to be registered.

The IEC's identification of approximately 14,334 potential duplicate registrations underscores the importance of continued vigilance to protect the integrity of the voters' register. These incidents are high risks and if it were not detected it would undermine the overall credibility of the voter register, thus compromising the credibility of the elections.

Based on its observations, GP concludes that the Supplementary Voter Registration exercise was conducted largely in accordance with the legal framework governing elections in The Gambia and broadly consistent with the principles of transparency, inclusiveness, and electoral integrity contained in regional and international democratic standards, though serious and minor critical incidents that has the potential of compromising the voter register were observed. Addressing the recommendations outlined in this report will further strengthen public confidence in the voters roll and contribute to the credibility of the forthcoming Presidential Election.

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

1.1.1. Context of the 2026 elections

The Gambia's 2026 Presidential Election will take place within a complex political and governance environment as the country continues its democratic transition following the end of 22 years of authoritarian rule in 2016. The election will be conducted under the 1997 Constitution after constitutional reform efforts in 2020 and 2024 failed to pass through Parliament, leaving unresolved debates regarding presidential term limits, absolute majority electoral system, the separation of powers, governance reforms, and accountability mechanisms. The country will also continue to utilize its distinctive marble voting system alongside electoral reforms introduced in 2025, making the 2026 election an important test of the effectiveness of these legal reforms and the overall credibility of the electoral process.

The election is unfolding amid heightened political competition, growing public demand for accountability, and continued scrutiny of democratic institutions. Recent developments, including public debates over governance and corruption, prolonged urban electricity outages, civic activism, and protests concerning public accountability, have contributed to an increasingly engaged political environment. These dynamics are occurring alongside persistent socioeconomic challenges, including youth unemployment and regional development disparities, with young voters expected to constitute a significant segment of the electorate. Against a broader regional context marked by democratic uncertainty and political transitions across West Africa, the 2026

Presidential Election in The Gambia is expected to attract considerable national and international attention.

1.1.2. Importance of voter registration

A credible and inclusive voter registration process is fundamental to democratic elections. It enables eligible citizens to exercise their right to vote, promotes equal political participation, and contributes to the accuracy and integrity of the voters' register. A reliable voter register supports effective election administration, reduces the risk of disputes, and enhances public confidence in electoral outcomes. Recognizing the importance of an accurate and inclusive register, the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) conducted a nationwide Supplementary Voter Registration exercise from 8 April to 21 May 2026 to provide eligible Gambians, particularly newly eligible voters, with an opportunity to be included on the voters' roll ahead of the 2026 election.

1.2. Observation Objectives

In line with its commitment to promoting democratic accountability and electoral integrity, Gambia Participates (GP) deployed 53 Long-Term Observers, one in each electoral constituency, to systematically monitor the Supplementary Voter Registration process. As The Gambia's leading domestic election observation organization, GP has conducted extensive observation missions during the 2021 Presidential Election, the 2022 National Assembly Elections, and the 2023 Local Government Elections. The organization has also participated in international election observation missions in Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Ghana, and the United States, strengthening its capacity to assess electoral processes against both national legal requirements and international democratic standards.

The purpose of this observation is to provide an independent, objective, and evidence-based assessment of the Supplementary Voter Registration process. Specifically, the observation seeks to evaluate compliance with the legal and regulatory framework governing voter registration, assess the transparency, inclusiveness, accessibility, and accuracy of the process, identify strengths and good practices, and highlight areas requiring improvement. The observation also examines voter education and public information efforts, the preparedness and performance of electoral officials, and any issues that may affect public confidence in the voter registration process and the broader electoral environment.

2. Legal and Administrative Framework

Franchise in The Gambia is guaranteed under Section 39 of the 1997 Constitution of The Gambia, which provides that every Gambian citizen aged 18 years or above and of sound mind is entitled to register and vote in public elections.

The conduct of elections and voter registration is primarily governed by the Elections Act, 2025. Under Section 13 of the Elections Act, a Gambian citizen, who is 18 years “*or will attain on the*

date of the holding of the next election, the age of eighteen years”² and the person is a resident or was born in that electoral constituency; is eligible to be registered on the voter register if they produce one of the following documents:

- (a) a birth certificate;
- (b) a Gambian passport;
- (c) a National Identity Card, or
- (d) an attestation from an Alkalo or Seyfo certifying that he or she is a Gambian”.³

2.1. General and Supplementary Voter Registration

The IEC administers two forms of voter registration, a General Voter Registration (GVR), through which a new register is established, and Supplementary Voter Registration (SVR), through which new eligible voters are added to the existing voter register.

General voter registration is quite distinct from supplementary voter registration. During general voter registration, all existing voters’ card expires, and eligible Gambians are required to register and acquire a new voters’ card. In contrast, supplementary voter registration, as the name implies, is an additional voter registration targeting new eligible voters (especially youths that have come of age), and those who could not register during the general voter registration. The supplementary voter registration also provides an opportunity for those who lost their voters’ cards to get them replaced or to replace voters’ cards whose details have faded. During SVR, there also exists a window of opportunity for voters to apply for a voting location transfer.

The Elections Act does not prescribe a fixed recurring period for either voter registration exercise; instead, it empowers the IEC to make the necessary arrangements for the continuous registration of voters nationwide.⁴ The timing and operational arrangements are therefore determined and announced by the IEC in accordance with section 15(2) of the Elections Act, 2025 and its applicable registration guidelines. In practice, the IEC conducts general voter registration every 10 years while SVRs are done every 5 years.

The 2026 Supplementary Voter Registration followed the most recent general voter registration conducted from 29 May to 11 July 2021. The 2021 voter registration exercise established the master voter register that remained in use for the subsequent electoral cycle (2021-2025), while the 2026 supplementary voter registration exercise provided an opportunity to register new eligible voters who had not previously registered and others who lost their voters’ card. The 2026 exercise was conducted from 8 April to 21 May 2026, in accordance with the registration arrangements announced by the IEC.⁵

² Elections Act, 2025 s 13(b)

³ Elections Act, s 13(2)

⁴ Constitution of the Republic of The Gambia 1997, s. 39; Elections Act 2025, ss. 14–16.

⁵ Independent Electoral Commission, *Supplementary Voter Registration Guidelines 2026* (IEC 2026); Independent Electoral Commission, *2026 Supplementary Voter Registration Notice* (IEC 2026).

Following supplementary registration, the Elections Act provides for the preparation and publication of a provisional voters' list, followed by a period for claims and objections and adjudication by the Revising Courts before the register is finalized. This process provides a statutory mechanism for correcting the register and challenging ineligible or improperly included voters.⁶

Table 1: IEC Provisional Number: 2026 Supplementary Voter Registration

Total Registered	Male Registered	Female Registered	Transfers Requested
212,095	96,581(46%)	115,514 (54%)	8,169

Table 2: Provisional Voter Population

2021-2025 Voter Population	IEC Provisional SVR Number	Provisional Voter Population (Without deletion or addition from the Revising Court)
962,157	212,095	1,174,252

2.2. Revising Court

As per the Elections Act, 2025, after voter registration, the IEC should prepare a separate list of voters from the main voter register for each constituency. The list of voters should contain the name, address, occupation and the serial number of every voter registered and published in the administrative area where the constituency is located for at least 10 days.⁷ The IEC did made available the provisional list of registered voters to political parties but it has not publish this information online.

In its Press Release dated 31st August 2026, the IEC announced that it has published the name of objector and the persons objected to in its regional IEC offices. It also announced that Chief Justice established the revising court which will operate for a period of sixty days and cases could be heard in the following courts:⁸

Table 3: Revising Courts for the 2026 SVR

Region	Courts
Kanifing	Kanifing and Bundung Magistrate Courts
Brikama	Brikama Magistrate Court
Mansakonko	Mansakonko Magistrate Court
Kerewan	Kerewan and Farafenni Magistrate Courts
Janjanbureh	Janjangbureh, Kuntaur and Kaur Magistrate Courts
Basse	Basse Magistrate Court.

⁶ Elections Act 2025, s 22–27.

⁷ Elections Act, 2025 s22

⁸ IEC Press Release: Revising Court Hearings (dated 31st August 2026)

The is in line with section 27 of the Elections Act, 2025, except that Banjul is not allocated a revising court and it is not made clear on the press release where objections for the case of Banjul would be heard.

2.3. Election Observation

2.3.1. National Framework

Public election in The Gambia is administered by the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC), as provided under Sections 42 and 43 of the 1997 Constitution. The IEC accredits both international and domestic observers to observe electoral processes. The framework for election observation is derived from regulations, guidelines, and directives issued by the IEC. Observation is recognized as an important component of electoral transparency and accountability, enabling independent assessment of the conduct of elections and strengthening public confidence in electoral outcomes.

The IEC has established detailed procedures governing accreditation and observation. International observers may include international organizations, diplomatic missions, foreign governments, media, democracy and governance institutions, while domestic observers include civil society organizations and media entities. Prospective observer groups are required to formally express their intention to observe, complete accreditation procedures, and comply with IEC guidelines and codes of conduct. Accredited observers receive official accreditation letters and identification badges authorizing access to electoral activities.

Gambia Participates applied for an accreditation to observe the Supplementary Voter Registration (SVR) in March 2026 and was subsequently accredited by the IEC to observe the SVR across the country.

2.3.2. International and Regional Standards

The observer framework adopted by the IEC reflects internationally recognized principles of election observation, including impartiality, independence, objectivity, and non-interference. According to IEC guidelines, the primary objective of election observation is to assess the freeness and fairness of elections and contribute to the credibility of electoral outcomes in the eyes of both national and international stakeholders. Observers are expected to evaluate electoral processes against applicable laws and democratic standards while maintaining strict neutrality throughout their mission.

These principles are consistent with international and regional commitments to democratic governance, including the United Nations' Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation and Code of Conduct for International Election Observers; the African Union Guidelines for Electoral Observation and Monitoring Missions; and the ECOWAS Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance, particularly its provisions on election observation.⁹

⁹ United Nations, Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation and Code of Conduct for International Election Observers (27 October 2005), paras 3–4 and Code of Conduct; African Union, Guidelines for African Union

The accreditation of both domestic and international observers, together with their ability to observe key stages of the electoral process, supports transparency and accountability in line with these commitments.

3. Methodology

3.1. Observation Period

The Gambia Participates observation mission monitored the nationwide supplementary voter registration exercise conducted between 8 April and 21 May 2026. Observation activities were undertaken throughout the registration period to assess the implementation of voter registration procedures, the conduct of electoral officials, compliance with electoral regulations, and the overall accessibility and integrity of the registration process.

Prior to deployment, all observers received comprehensive training on election observation principles, ethical standards, data collection procedures, and reporting requirements, and the use of the Apollo data transmission system. This ensured a standardized approach to observation and reporting across all constituencies.

3.2. Observation Coverage

The mission deployed 53 trained Long-Term Observers (LTOs), with one observer assigned to each of The Gambia's 53 electoral constituencies. Observers were assigned between four and seven registration centers within their respective constituencies. To maximize coverage and capture variations in registration operations over time, observers rotated among assigned centers throughout the registration period.

The observation strategy was adapted to complement the deployment of the Independent Electoral Commission's (IEC) 19 mobile registration teams, which rotated between registration centers within and across constituencies. LTOs adjusted their schedules to observe different registration centers and, where possible, monitor the activities of IEC teams operating within their constituencies. Through this approach, the mission observed 247 of the 729 registration centers nationwide, representing approximately 34 percent of all centers.

3.3. Data Collection Method

Data was collected through direct observation using a standardized observation checklist designed to collect information on registration center operations, the general registration environment, the registration process, accessibility and inclusiveness measures, voter education activities, and the conduct of electoral stakeholders. Observers also assessed compliance with established procedures and documented any operational challenges encountered during the registration process. Where significant incidents were observed or reported, observers completed a Critical Incident

Electoral Observation and Monitoring Missions (2002), paras 1.1–1.2 and 6.2.3–6.2.6; ECOWAS, Supplementary Protocol A/SP1/12/01 on Democracy and Good Governance (21 December 2001), arts 12–14.

Form to capture detailed information on the nature of the incident, the parties involved, and its potential impact on the registration process.

Observers typically spent between two and seven days at each registration center, resulting in approximately 15 to 20 observation days across all centers observed within a constituency. At the conclusion of each observation period, observers completed the checklist and, where applicable, a critical incident form. Findings were encoded using a predefined assignment key and transmitted to the Apollo data management system, enabling timely aggregation, analysis, and verification of observation data at the national level.

3.4. Limitations

While the deployment of observers to all 53 constituencies provided broad geographic coverage, resource and logistical constraints limited direct observation to 247 of the 729 registration centers nationwide. Consequently, findings should be interpreted as reflecting observed trends and conditions at covered locations rather than a comprehensive assessment of every registration center.

In addition, the IEC rotational deployment model meant that observers were not continuously present at all assigned registration centers throughout the registration period, as multiple registration took place simultaneously in constituencies. Although this approach increased geographic coverage and enabled observation of IEC supervisory activities, some events or incidents occurring outside observation periods may not have been captured by the mission.

4. Findings and Analysis

4.1. Overall Assessment

Observers generally assessed the Supplementary Voter Registration exercise as peaceful, orderly, and professionally administered across most observed registration centers. Registration officials were present and operational in nearly all observed locations, essential registration equipment was largely available, and registration activities generally commenced within the prescribed timeframe. Observers were granted access to almost all registration centers, allowing for effective monitoring of the registration process.

While the overall conduct of the exercise was positive, observers identified several operational challenges. These included occasional technical interruptions, uneven accessibility for persons with disabilities, inconsistent voter education activities, and isolated procedural shortcomings relating to documentation requirements and observer access. Also, LTO's were able to report on **243** Centers out of the **247** planned due unforeseen circumstances (Accreditations delayed, sickness/emergency...).

We also observe that there is a prolong delay in finalizing the master voter register/voter roll. The IEC announced that the voter roll would be made available to election stakeholders by November

20. The late finalizing of the voter roll has raised legitimate concerns amongst political actors, election observers, and voters at large.

4.2. Administration of the Registration Process

4.2.1. Staffing and Preparedness

The deployment of registration officials was generally adequate throughout the observation period. IEC officials were present upon observers' arrival at **233 (95.9%)** of the **243** observed registration centers, while only **10 centers (4.1%)** reported either the absence of officials or observers arriving after opening. In addition, observers reported that registration centers were generally staffed by an average of four registration officials, indicating a relatively consistent deployment model across observed locations. Female representation among registration officials was present (average of 3 officials).

4.2.2. Availability of Materials and Equipment

Essential registration equipment and materials were available in most observed registration centers. Observers generally reported that biometric registration equipment functioned as intended, allowing registration activities to proceed without major operational disruptions. While registration proceeded without interruption in most observed centers, nearly one-fifth (**47 or 19.3%**) of observations reported temporary disruptions. The most common causes of interruptions were electricity outages, generator failures, and equipment malfunctions. Although most interruptions appeared to be resolved without causing prolonged suspension of registration activities, they affected the efficiency of service delivery and occasionally increased waiting times for registrants.

4.2.3. Timeliness and Continuity

Registration generally commenced on schedule. Among observed registration centers, **186 (76.5%)** began registration between **8:00 a.m. and 8:30 a.m.**, while **36 (14.8%)** commenced before 8:00 a.m. Only **21 centers (8.6%)** experienced delays beyond 8:30 a.m., and no observed center remained unopened by midday.

4.3. Transparency and Stakeholder Access

Transparency remained a notable strength of the registration exercise. Observers were permitted to observe in **239 (98.4%)** of the observed registration centers, demonstrating a high degree of openness by electoral officials.

Political party agents and domestic observers were present in many registration centers, contributing to oversight and public confidence in the process. Although isolated cases of observer access restrictions were reported, these represented a very small proportion of observers and did not appear to reflect a systematic limitation on observation activities.

4.4. Inclusiveness and Accessibility

4.4.1. Persons with Disabilities

Accessibility remained mixed across observed registration centers. While **211 (86.8%)** registration centers were in premises considered accessible to persons with disabilities, **32 centers (13.2%)** presented physical accessibility challenges.

Among centers where persons with disabilities presented for registration, observers reported that **137** centers provided priority access while only **9** did not. However, in **97** observations, no persons with disabilities were present, limiting assessment of implementation.

4.4.2. Elderly Persons

Priority treatment for elderly persons was generally well observed. Elderly registrants were given priority in **194** observed centers, while only **22** observations indicated that such priority was not provided. In **27** centers, no elderly persons were present during observation.

4.4.3. Pregnant Women and Nursing Mothers

Observers found that registration officials generally respected priority provisions for pregnant women and nursing mothers. Priority treatment was observed in **171** registration centers, while **12** centers did not provide such accommodation. No pregnant women or nursing mothers were present in **60 centers** observed.

4.4.4. Sick Persons and Other Marginalized Groups

Observers noted that sick persons were granted priority in **98** registration centers. However, assessment was limited because no sick persons were present during **141** observation periods.

4.5. Compliance with Registration Procedures

Compliance with voter identification requirements was generally strong. Observers reported that registration officials requested identification documents prior to registration in **238 (97.9%)** observed centers, demonstrating a high level of adherence to established procedures.

Only **seven** observed centers indicated that individuals were permitted to register without adequate documentation. In addition, observers reported that applicants lacking the required documentation were denied registration in **91** centers observed, suggesting that registration officials generally enforced documentary requirements stated in section 13 of the Elections Act, 2025. While these isolated deviations do not appear widespread, they underscore the need for continued emphasis on procedural compliance and consistent application of registration rules.

4.6. Voter Education and Public Awareness

Observer findings indicate that voter education activities were uneven across observed areas. Voter education activities were observed in **114 (46.9%)** locations, while **129 (53.1%)** observations reported no voter education activities during the observation period.

Where voter education occurred, observers reported varying levels of outreach to marginalized groups. Only **59** observations confirmed that IEC voter education specifically targeted marginalized populations, while **60** indicated that it did not and **45** were uncertain. These findings suggest that although voter education efforts were undertaken, their coverage and inclusiveness could be strengthened through more systematic and targeted outreach.

4.7. Security Environment

The security environment remained peaceful throughout most of the registration period. Observers assessed the registration environment as calm and orderly in **226 (93.0%)** observed registration centers.

Security personnel were present in a number of registration centers and generally conducted themselves professionally. Observers did not identify evidence that police, military, or ECOWAS personnel systematically interfered with registration activities or intimidated prospective registrants. The overall security presence appeared proportionate to operational requirements.

4.8. Critical Incidents

The observation mission recorded a limited number of critical incidents during the registration exercise. Reported incidents primarily related to procedural irregularities, integrity of voter eligibility verification, administration of supporting documentation, isolated observer access restrictions, threats or intimidation, and operational challenges such as equipment failures.

Table 4.: Summary of critical incidents

Category	Reported Cases *
Observer access restrictions	16
Threats or intimidation	14
Procedural violations	7
Equipment/technical failures	47 interruptions observed
Physical violence	Limited isolated reports

*Some observations may contain multiple incident types and should not be interpreted as mutually exclusive.

Table 5.: Significant Findings and Integrity Concerns

Observation	Evidence	Applicable Standard	Potential Impact	Recommendation
Misuse of Attestation	Direct observation by GP observers in Kiang West documented instances where the attestation process appeared to be used in circumstances that may not have met the intended legal requirements.	Attestation procedures should only be used as provided by law and should include adequate safeguards to prevent abuse while ensuring eligible citizens are not disenfranchised.	Misapplication of attestation procedures may compromise the accuracy of the voters' register and undermine public confidence in the registration process.	The IEC should strengthen oversight of attestation procedures through clearer operational guidance, enhanced training for registration officials, and systematic verification of attestation records. The National Assembly should consider removing attestation as a required document under section 13(2) of the Elections Act, 2025. The use of such documentation is outdated and always subject to fraudulent acquisition.
Fraudulent Birth Certificates	GP observers documented cases involving suspected fraudulent birth certificates in Bakau and Fajikunda. The birth certificates acquired through suspected fraudulent activities are older version of The Gambia birth certificate, issued to certain people in March 2026 with identical serial numbers for the purpose of voter registration. The older birth certificates phased out in 2023 after the introduction of the new birth certificate	Only eligible citizens who satisfy the legal identification requirements should be registered. Election authorities should apply verification procedures consistently to protect the integrity of the voters' register.	The use of fraudulent civil documentation creates a risk of ineligible registration and may reduce public confidence in the integrity of the voter register.	The IEC should continue collaborating with the relevant civil registration authorities and law enforcement agencies to verify suspect documentation and strengthen document authentication procedures. The IEC should be specific as to which version of the birth certificate is acceptable and from which period the old birth certificates could be used. The issuance of fraudulent birth certificates is against Chapter VII: Forgery, Coining, Counterfeiting and Similar Offences of the Criminal Offences Act, 2025

Table 5. Continuation

Observation	Evidence	Applicable Standard	Potential Impact	Recommendation
Seizure of the Nyagen Alkalo Stamp and Subsequent Removal of the Alkalo	Reported incident documented by GP observers, joint public statement by GP and EWC, the media, the Ministry of Information's Press Release and government statement regarding the seizure and removal of the village Alkalo during the registration period.	Electoral processes should be administered in a manner that is free from undue political interference and should maintain public confidence in the impartiality of state institutions.	Perceptions of politically motivated administrative actions during voter registration may erode trust in the neutrality of the electoral environment, regardless of whether they directly affect registration operations.	Relevant state authorities should ensure that administrative actions taken during electoral periods are transparent, legally justified, and communicated clearly to avoid undermining public confidence.

Arrest and Subsequent Release of Individuals Allegedly Involved in Issuing Fraudulent Birth Certificates	Public reports indicated that individuals suspected of facilitating the issuance of fraudulent birth certificates were arrested and later released following intervention by a senior public official. GP did not independently verify all aspects of these reports.	Allegations of electoral fraud should be investigated impartially, independently, and in accordance with due process and the rule of law.	Perceived political interference in criminal investigations relating to electoral offences may undermine confidence in accountability mechanisms and the equal application of the law.	Competent investigative and prosecutorial authorities should ensure that all alleged electoral offences are investigated transparently, independently, and free from improper influence.
Approximately 24,000 Potential Duplicate Registrations Identified by the IEC	The IEC publicly announced that approximately 24,000, ¹⁰ later revised to 14,334 people registered more than once had been detected through its biometric verification system. ¹¹	Electoral authorities should maintain accurate and reliable voter registers through effective mechanisms for detecting and removing duplicate registrations while protecting the rights of eligible voters.	The identification of duplicate records demonstrates that existing verification mechanisms are functioning; however, the scale of duplicate records highlights the importance of continued data validation before certification of the final register.	The IEC should publicly explain the methodology used to identify duplicate registrations, complete the verification process in a transparent manner, and communicate the final outcome before publication of the certified voters' register.
Registration of Minors	GP observers directly observed an incident in Latrikunda Sabiji involving the attempted or actual registration of an individual believed to be below the legal voting age.	Universal suffrage requires that only citizens meeting the legal age and eligibility requirements be included on the voters' register. Registration officials should consistently verify applicants' eligibility before registration.	Registration of underage persons, even if isolated, may undermine the credibility and legal integrity of the voters' register if not promptly addressed.	The IEC should reinforce age-verification procedures, provide refresher training to registration officials, and review any registrations where credible evidence of underage registration exists.

Overall, critical incidents were isolated rather than systemic and did not appear to compromise the overall integrity of the registration exercise. Nevertheless, each reported incident should be reviewed by the electoral authorities to identify lessons for future voter registration exercises.

4.9. Observer Assessment

Observer assessments indicate a generally positive perception of the registration exercise. The registration environment received the highest ratings, with **186 of 243 observers (76.5%)**

¹⁰ "IEC: 24,000 PEOPLE REGISTERED WITH MULTIPLE VOTER'S CARDS" – Standard Newspaper: https://standard.gm/iec-24000-people-registered-with-multiple-voters-cards/?utm_source=chatgpt.com [published June 5, 2026]

¹¹ "IEC deletes names of over 14,000 voters for multiple registrations in 2026" – The Point: https://thepoint.gm/africa/gambia/headlines/iec-deletes-names-of-over-14000-voters-for-multiple-registrations-in-2026?utm_source=chatgpt.com [published July 3, 2026]

assessing it as either **Very Good** or **Good**. Similarly, the conduct of IEC registration officials received favorable assessments, with **195 observers (80.2%)** rating their performance as **Very Good** or **Good**.

Observers' assessment of voter understanding of registration procedures was comparatively lower. While **149 observers (61.3%)** rated voter understanding as **Very Good** or **Good**, a substantial proportion considered it only fair or poor, reinforcing the need for more comprehensive voter education. Overall, **203 observers (83.5%)** concluded that the registration exercise was either fully or mostly in line with African Union and ECOWAS standards for democratic elections, reflecting broad confidence in the integrity and administration of the exercise.

5. Conclusion

The Supplementary Voter Registration exercise constituted an important phase of the electoral cycle and provided eligible Gambians with an opportunity to be included on the national voters' register ahead of the 2026 Presidential Election. Based on observations from all 53 constituencies, the exercise was generally administered in a professional, transparent, and peaceful manner. The high level of cooperation extended to accredited observers, the professionalism demonstrated by most registration officials, and the generally orderly security environment contributed positively to the overall credibility of the process.

The observation mission also identified several areas requiring further improvement. Operational interruptions arising from equipment failures and electricity challenges affected service delivery in a number of registration centers, while inconsistent voter education and uneven accessibility limited the inclusiveness of the exercise in some locations. More importantly, isolated integrity concerns including suspected misuse of attestation procedures, fraudulent supporting documentation, attempted registration of underage persons, and the identification of potential duplicate registrations demonstrate the need for continued vigilance and robust verification mechanisms to safeguard the accuracy of the voters' register.

Although these issues did not appear to be widespread or systematic, they reinforce the importance of transparent electoral administration, effective enforcement of legal safeguards, and continued cooperation among the IEC, government institutions, political parties, civil society organizations, and citizens. Timely implementation of the recommendations contained in this report will strengthen public confidence in the electoral process and contribute to the conduct of credible, inclusive, and peaceful elections in 2026.

6. Recommendations

To the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC)

1. Strengthen quality assurance and oversight of voter registration by enhancing supervision of registration teams and ensuring the consistent application of registration procedures across all registration centers.
2. Review and strengthen the implementation of attestation procedures by issuing clearer operational guidance, conducting refresher training for registration officials, and introducing additional verification measures where appropriate.
3. Continue strengthening document verification procedures through closer collaboration with the Civil Registration and law enforcement authorities to detect and prevent the use of fraudulent and outdated supporting documents.
4. Complete the verification of suspected duplicate registrations and publicly communicate the methodology, outcomes, and corrective measures undertaken before certification of the final voters' register.
5. Enhance age and eligibility verification procedures to prevent the registration of underage or otherwise ineligible applicants.
6. Improve contingency planning by ensuring the timely availability of backup power supplies, replacement equipment, and rapid-response technical support for registration teams.
7. Expand voter education programs before future registration exercises, with targeted outreach to women, youth, persons with disabilities, first-time voters, and other marginalized communities.
8. Continue facilitating timely accreditation and unrestricted access for domestic and international observers throughout the electoral cycle.
9. Publish consistent figures on the final voter population, disaggregated by gender, age, polling station, and collated at constituency and administrative level. These data should be published on the IEC's website as soon as the final voter list is finalized following the sessions of the Revising Court.
10. Conduct voter registration at least eleven months before election day to allow sufficient time for objections at the revising court and to publish the master voter register at least 3-4 months before election day.

To the Government of The Gambia

1. Ensure that all allegations relating to electoral fraud or offences are investigated promptly, independently, and in accordance with due process, free from actual or perceived political interference.
2. Strengthen the integrity and security of civil registration and identity management systems to reduce opportunities for fraudulent documentation.
3. Increase financial and logistical support to the IEC to improve the reliability of electoral infrastructure, including electricity supply, transport, communications, and biometric registration equipment.
4. Improve the accessibility of public facilities used for voter registration and polling to ensure equal participation by persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups.
5. Continue safeguarding the independence of the IEC and ensure that all public institutions remain politically neutral throughout the electoral process.
6. Consider legislative reform of the Elections Act, 2025 by removing attestation as a document requirement, the law to be specific as to when General and Supplementary Voter registration should take place, and from what period the old birth certificates could be used as a supporting document.

To Political Parties

1. Encourage party agents to monitor voter registration responsibly and to report concerns through established legal and administrative mechanisms.
2. Refrain from actions or rhetoric that could intimidate voters, registration officials, observers, or other electoral stakeholders.
3. Promote respect for electoral laws and discourage supporters from attempting to register using fraudulent documentation or through other unlawful means.
4. Cooperate with the IEC and civil society organizations in promoting peaceful participation and accurate public information throughout the electoral cycle.

To Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)

1. Continue conducting independent, impartial, and evidence-based observation throughout the remaining stages of the electoral process.
2. Expand civic and voter education initiatives, particularly among women, youth, first-time voters, persons with disabilities, and rural communities.

3. Strengthen public awareness campaigns on voter eligibility requirements, acceptable registration documentation, and the importance of protecting the integrity of the voters' register.
4. Continue monitoring and documenting electoral integrity concerns and engage constructively with the IEC and relevant state institutions to support continuous electoral reform.
5. Promote dialogue among electoral stakeholders to strengthen public confidence, encourage peaceful participation, and support democratic accountability throughout the electoral cycle.



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