



# A SCOPING REPORT ON

## DISINFORMATION TRENDS IN GHANA'S 2024 ELECTIONS: PRE, DURING AND POST-ELECTIONS

---

A REPORT BY  
PENPLUSBYTES, 2024

# OUTLINE

## TABLE OF CONTENT

1.0 Executive Summary.....	2
2.0 Background and Introduction .....	2
2.1 Issues that Shaped the Elections .....	3
3.0 Objectives .....	3
4.0 Pre-Election Disinformation Trends .....	4
4.1 Electoral Disinformation .....	4
4.2 Political Propaganda and Smear Campaigns ....	4
4.3 Fabricated Endorsements .....	5
5.0 Election Day Disinformation Trends .....	5
6.0 Post-Election Disinformation Trends .....	7
6.1 Electoral Misrepresentation and False Political Narratives .....	7
6.2 Misleading Context or Recycled Content .....	8
7.0 Recommendations .....	8
8.0 Conclusion .....	9
References .....	10

# 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report examines disinformation trends before, during and after Ghana's 2024 presidential and parliamentary elections. It highlights false narratives, doctored media, and misleading claims that had the potential to undermine the public's trust in the electoral process, institutions of state and manipulate electorates' voting decisions, public perceptions, and election outcomes. The report also offers recommendations to proactively prepare for Ghana's next elections in 2028, including advocating for political parties to sign codes of conduct, strengthening fact-checking efforts, enhancing public education on disinformation, and pushing for stronger legal frameworks to hold disinformation actors accountable.

# 2.0 BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

The year 2024 was an important one for many Ghanaians. Once again, Ghana has demonstrated its commitment to promoting the ideals of democracy. On December 7, 2024, 11,191,422 Ghanaians excluding nine outstanding constituencies, voted to elect a president and 276 members of parliament.

What was anticipated to be a fierce contest between the governing New Patriotic Party's (NPP) Presidential Candidate and Vice President of Ghana, Dr. Mahamudu Bawumia, and former President John Dramani Mahama, who is seeking a comeback on the ticket of the National Democratic Congress (NDC), became a walk in the park for the opposition NDC.

Per the results declared by the Electoral Commission (EC) from 267 constituencies, Mr. Mahama garnered 6,328,395 votes, representing 56.55% of the valid votes cast to beat Vice President Dr. Mahamudu Bawumia, who polled 4,657,304 votes representing 41.61% of valid votes cast.

Other 10 presidential candidates hoping to break the traditional two-party dominance also failed in their attempt.

Per the rules of the game as established by the EC, to be declared the winner of the presidential race, a candidate must secure at least 50%-plus-1 of the valid votes cast in the first round. Following the outcome of the elections, the Chairperson of the Electoral Commission, Mrs. Jean Mensah, on December 10th declared John Dramani Mahama as President-Elect of the Republic of Ghana.



Though there were a few cases of violence in some constituencies, the elections have been generally fair and peaceful as described by domestic and international observers.

## 2.1 Issues that Shaped the Elections

Ahead of the 2024 general elections, certain issues gained prominence in the media and other public spaces. These issues ranged from illegal mining (galamsey), economic challenges including the depreciation of the Ghana Cedi, growing levels of unemployment, corruption, the Free SHS policy, and other educational reforms.

One other issue which became a great source of concern to stakeholders going into the election was disinformation/misinformation. Key institutions such as the Ghana Police Service and Ghana's Cybersecurity Authority issued warnings about the imminent danger posed by disinformation, highlighting that the spread of falsehoods could disrupt peace, security, and citizen participation in the voting process - which are core tenets of democracy.

Disinformation and propaganda became widespread, with false claims and manipulated content rapidly spreading across social media. This disinformation targeted political figures, electoral processes, and voter perceptions, often with the intent to influence electoral outcomes.

This report by [Penplusbytes](#) explores major disinformation trends surrounding Ghana's 2024 elections and offers recommendations to address these issues in future elections. One of Penplusbytes' flagship projects, the [African Elections Project \(AEP\)](#), directly aligns with the objectives of this report. Established in 2008, the AEP aims to empower journalists, citizen journalists, and media organizations by providing them with the tools and knowledge needed to deliver timely and accurate election-related information. The project also focuses on monitoring critical aspects of governance across Africa, enhancing transparency and accountability in electoral processes.

## 3.0 OBJECTIVES

The overarching objective of this report is to identify disinformation trends surrounding Ghana's 2024 elections to efficiently plan toward counter-disinformation initiatives in Ghana's next elections. Specific objectives of the report include:

- Identifying disinformation trends preceding Ghana's 2024 election

- Identifying disinformation trends following Ghana's 2024 elections;
- Developing recommendations based on the trends identified to inform initiatives for Ghana's next national elections.

These insights were gathered through analysing content from fact-checking websites, particularly Dubawa, Fact-Check Ghana, and the Ghana Fact-Checking Coalition. This was complimented with analysis of election-related issues flagged by Penplusbytes' Disinformation Detection Platform.

## 4.0 PRE-ELECTION DISINFORMATION TRENDS

### 4.1 Electoral Disinformation

Prior to the elections, certain claims had the potential to undermine the public's trust and confidence in the electoral process and political parties.

- [False Video of Money Sharing](#). An old, unrelated video falsely attributed to the Volta Region went viral online. This video remains accessible [here](#).
- The National Organizer of the New Patriotic Party, [Nana B's Narrative on Different Days for Various Presidential Candidates](#). This claim was widely circulated and later debunked. More details [here](#).

[Viral video of Kennedy Agyapong Criticizing the New Patriotic Party \(NPP\) for Vote Buying](#). A doctored video misrepresented Kennedy Agyapong's statements to portray the NPP negatively. This is the [original video](#) and the manipulated version can be viewed [here](#).

### 4.2 Political Propaganda and Smear Campaigns

- **Claim that President-elect H.E. John Mahama is the "father of all corruption"**: [Dubawa](#) uncovered a coordinated network of accounts that drove hashtags like #IncompetentMahama; #FailedMahama; #ITouchForBawumia; and #BawumiaForPresident. These accounts spread false content targeting President-elect, John Dramani Mahama. For instance, Kwaku Brown on X (@kwakubrownies), [falsely claimed](#) that Martin Amidu accused the President-elect of being "the father of all corruption" and [alleged](#) that he sold his Dubai hotels to a former Minister of Lands and Natural Resources. Both claims were debunked by the Ghana Fact-checking Coalition (GFC) as seen [here](#) and [here](#).

- **[Video of Mahama Saying National Democratic Congress \(NDC\) Will Cancel Free SHS:](#)** This was a doctored video (currently deleted) of the President-elect's engagement in Kumasi during his campaign before the elections. [The statement](#) he originally made, translated into English from Akan, was, "Those saying we [NDC] will cancel it, it's a political gimmick... It is not true, today or tomorrow, Free SHS has come to stay."
- **Claims that Johnson Asiedu Nketia Promised to Cancel Free SHS:** [Dubawa's investigations](#) into this allegation revealed that the video was manipulated to misrepresent the Chairman of the NDC, Johnson Asiedu Nketia's statements concerning the free SHS policy and the double-track system.
- **Claims that John Dumelo Sent SMS Calling Maa Lydia a Husband Killer:** The Ghana Fact-Checking Coalition [debunked](#) allegations by X users, @NanaKwame\_off, @GrefDuah, and @AmoakoKwam, who claimed that before the elections, the NDC Parliamentary candidate for Ayawaso West Wuogon, John Dumelo, sent messages to constituents calling his opponent, Madam Lydia Eyrum Alhassan, a husband killer.

### 4.3 Fabricated Endorsements

These endorsements were fabricated to falsely associate prominent figures with presidential candidates, with the intention to sway public opinion.

- **Claims that Donald Trump Endorsed President-elect H.E. John Mahama:** Multiple social media users shared content suggesting that US President-elect, Donald Trump, had endorsed the NDC's presidential candidate for the 2024 election, now President-elect, John Dramani Mahama, prior to the elections. [This claim](#), in addition to [this](#), were also [debunked](#) by the Ghana Fact-Checking Coalition.
- **Claims that Nelson Mandela Made a Statement About Mahama:** A TikTok user shared a [video](#) captioned, "Wait and see what Nelson Mandela said about Mahama." The Ghana Fact-Checking Coalition [found this to be false](#), particularly since Mandela died in December 2013, and could not have made any statements about Mahama 11 years after his death.

## 5.0 ELECTION DAY DISINFORMATION TRENDS

On day of the elections, Penplusbytes deployed the Disinformation Detection Platform to flag disinformation on social media in real time. The analysis revealed key disinformation trends, including coordinated disinformation campaigns, AI-generated deepfakes, fake picture quotes (fliers), and the exploitation of issues shaping the elections.

- **Coordinated Accounts on X Driving Disinformation:** A key trend observed was the use of coordinated networks of accounts on X to amplify false narratives. Leading accounts such as Kwaku Brown (@kwakubrownies), Gen.Buhari (@Gen\_Buhari\_), Mr. Irish (@Irish3), Fiifi Saage (@\_Fiifi\_Sage), and Kevin Taylor (@KevinEkowTaylor) often followed similar posting patterns using hashtags such as #FailedMahama and #IncompetentMahama #Bawuliar and were retweeted by a number of accounts.
- **AI-Generated Deepfakes:** A concerning development in disinformation tactics during the elections was the use of AI deepfakes. These videos and audios, often difficult to ascertain their authenticity, were used to depict political candidates making controversial statements. One AI-generated [video](#) that went viral on X showed the presidential candidate of the opposition NDC plotting with Electoral Commission officials to rig the election in the Ashanti region. While the video gained significant traction before being debunked, its initial circulation created widespread confusion and polarization among voters on X. The platform's ability to pick it up and verification by the Ghana Fact-Checking Coalition confirmed the video was AI-generated, with subtle inconsistencies in lip-syncing and unnatural audio modulation.
- **Fake Picture Quotes (Fliers):** The proliferation of fake picture fliers misled voters about candidates' policies, endorsements, and actions. These images were often altered using photo-editing software to include fabricated slogans and logos of reputable news organizations. One viral [flier](#) with the logo of TV3 (one of the leading news brands in Ghana) showed the Director of Communication for NPP's presidential campaign team, Dennis Miracles Aboagye, as saying, "Our collation system crashed; that is why we haven't released our data yet." This was verified to be false, as the man had not granted any interview to TV3. Similar cases are seen [here](#) and [here](#).
- **Leveraging Issues Shaping the Elections:** Disinformation actors capitalized on critical issues shaping the elections, such as unemployment, infrastructure deficits, and allegations of corruption. By injecting false narratives into these discussions, they sought to influence voter perceptions and decisions. Issues were framed around the economy, LGBTQ, and corruption among others.

## 6.0 POST-ELECTION DISINFORMATION TRENDS

### 6.1 Electoral Misrepresentation and False Political Narratives

Claims like the following had the potential to mislead Ghanaian voters, misrepresent election results, presidential choices, political actors, and suggest false external influence on the electoral process.

- Claims of the NPP's Victory with 51.12% Lead Ahead of the Electoral Commission's (EC) Results:** The [Ghana Fact-Checking Coalition debunked](#) premature claims that the NPP was winning the 2024 elections with a 51.12% lead. A TikTok account, known as "NPP Projects," shared a fact card falsely declaring the New Patriotic Party (NPP) winners of the 2024 elections before the EC's official announcement of the results.
- Claim that Tamale Central Polled 90,000 Votes for Mahama:** An imposter X account named "Hon Haruna Iddrisu" [claimed that the NDC polled 90,000 votes](#) for President-elect John Mahama. Dubawa [debunked](#) this claim and clarified that the account that posted the claim differs from the official account of the Member of Parliament for Tamale South, whose name is Haruna Iddrisu.
- Claims that Nana Kwame Bediako Voted for the NPP:** An X user, @EddieTheKin, claimed that Independent Candidate Nana Kwame Bediako voted for the NPP ([archived here](#)). FactCheck Ghana analysed this video and [concluded that it was false](#), since it did not reveal who the presidential candidate voted for.
- Claim of Only Rejected Ballots at Pantang Hospital Polling Station:** An [Instagram reel](#) shared the false claim that there were only "rejected ballots" at the Pantang Hospital polling station. [Dubawa debunked this claim](#), explaining that the location in question had no polling station, making the claim invalid and false.
- Claim of Russian Interference in Ghana's Election: Claim:** A [post on Facebook](#) suggested the likelihood of Russia's interference in Ghana's elections. This post was made in a pro-NPP Facebook group called "NPP Official's Ashley Anston." The Ghana Fact-Checking Coalition [debunked this claim](#).
- Claims that President Akufo-Addo's Statue Has Been Torn Down:** The Ghana Fact-Checking Coalition [debunked claims](#) (now archived), which circulated on Facebook that President Akufo-Addo's statue at Effia-Nkwanta had been toppled over. There is a noticeable dent in the statue, however, it remained standing at the time of putting this report together. The Facebook user shared a picture of the President's statue in one location, and another pulled-down statue in a different location, and claimed that the one that had been torn down was the President's.



- **NPP Facebook Page Trolling the Party After Defeat in the Elections:** A Facebook page, known as “NPP Projects Bureau”, trolled the NPP after their loss in the 2024 elections. [Dubawa found that the page was fake](#), and although it had the branding of the NPP, and was purported to be a pro-NPP page, it was an impersonation of an authentic NPP-affiliated page that has the same name.

## 6.2 Misleading Context or Recycled Content

These claims involve old or unrelated content presented as recent or relevant to post-election outcomes, potentially misleading the populace.

- **Claim of Kennedy Agyapong of the NPP Switching Sides to Join the NDC:** The Ghana Fact-checking Coalition (GFC) [debunked the claim](#) that Kennedy Agyapong had switched sides from the NPP to the NDC and was celebrating with them after the 2024 election results. This was being circulated in a widely shared social media post. GFC explained that it was an old photo from 2016, whose purpose was to promote peaceful elections in that electoral year.
- **Claim of Mike Oquaye Jr. Conceding Defeat:** A recycled [old video](#) was misrepresented as a 2024 event. This was unrelated to the 2024 elections; however, a TikTok user shared it claiming that Mike Oquaye Jr. had conceded defeat. [FactCheck Ghana debunked this as well.](#)
- **Viral Video of Akufo-Addo Reacting to Election Result:** This is [another old and unrelated video](#), showing President Akufo-Addo allegedly reacting to the 2024 elections. This was [debunked by FactCheck Ghana](#) as false, citing the video as an old one from 2019, taken during a football match between Tottenham Hotspur and Ajax in the UEFA Champions League.

## 7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are based on the trends identified and aim to serve as a guide for disinformation-related initiatives in preparation for Ghana's next electoral period.

- Ghanaian Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) should collaborate and advocate for political parties to sign disinformation-free codes of conduct.
- Fact-checking collaborations between media and civil society should be expanded to include state actors and offline identifiable groups.
- The National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE), media houses, and CSOs should educate the public on the prevalence of disinformation, and how to identify false news, doctored videos, and images, particularly during electoral periods.

- The Electoral Commission should be responsive and collaborate more effectively with factcheckers and also conduct extensive public education on the voting process to prevent electorates from believing disinformation related to the electoral process.
- Stronger legal frameworks should be implemented to penalize disinformation actors.

## 8.0 CONCLUSION

The disinformation trends before and after Ghana's 2024 presidential and parliamentary elections underscore the urgent need to safeguard the integrity of the country's electoral process. Combatting malign propaganda, doctored media, and false narratives around elections requires a collective effort. Educating citizens on how to identify and verify online content is crucial in reducing the impact of disinformation. Legal measures need to be implemented to hold those responsible for disinformation campaigns accountable. Additionally, deploying advanced AI tools can help detect deepfakes and other synthetic media in real-time. These combined efforts will enhance the integrity of information and protect democratic processes.

## REFERENCES

Aboko, P. (2024, December 18). False, claim that Tamale Central polled 90,000 votes for Mahama false. Retrieved from Dubawa: <https://ghana.dubawa.org/false-claim-that-tamale-central-polled-90000-votes-for-mahama-false/>

Adonu, E. V. (2024, October 15). False! Video of money sharing old; not from Volta Region. Retrieved from Fact-Check Ghana: <https://www.fact-checkghana.com/false-video-of-money-sharing-old-not-from-volta-region/>

Adu, D. K. (2024, December 7). Viral video of Kennedy Agyapong criticising NPP for vote-buying, not related to Dec. 7 elections. Retrieved from Dubawa: <https://ghana.dubawa.org/viral-video-of-kennedy-agyapong-criticising-npp-for-vote-buying-not-related-to-dec-7-elections/>

Amedeku, T. D. (2024, December 13). Video of Mike Oquaye Jr. conceding defeat old, unrelated to 2024 elections. Retrieved from Fact-check Ghana: <https://www.fact-checkghana.com/video-of-mike-oquaye-jr-conceding-defeat-old-unrelated-to-2024-elections/>

Asante, K. K. (2024, December 9). Viral video of Akufo Addo reacting to election result, old and unrelated. Retrieved from Fact-check Ghana: <https://www.fact-checkghana.com/viral-video-of-akufo-addo-reacting-to-election-result-old-and-unrelated/>

Baki, O. A., & Sarpong, O. O. (2024, December 17). Did Johnson Asiedu Nketia promise to cancel free SHS if NDC is elected? Retrieved from Dubawa: <https://ghana.dubawa.org/did-johnson-asiedu-nketia-promise-to-cancel-free-shs-if-ndc-is-elected/>

Bekoe, K. N., & Attakora-Yeboah, M. (2024, December 4). Nana B's narrative on different voting days for various presidential candidates, false. Retrieved from Dubawa: <https://ghana.dubawa.org/nana-bs-narrative-on-different-voting-days-for-various-presidential-candidates-false/>

Ghana Fact-checking Coalition (2024, December 9). Claim there were only rejected ballots at Pantang Hospital polling station, false. Retrieved from Dubawa: <https://ghana.dubawa.org/claim-there-were-only-rejected-ballots-at-pantang-hospital-polling-station-false/>

Ghana Fact-checking Coalition (2024, December 8). False! President Akufo-Addo's statue has not been torn down. Retrieved from Dubawa: <https://ghana.dubawa.org/false-president-akufo-addos-statue-has-not-been-torn-down/>

Ghana Fact-checking Coalition (2024, December 9). No evidence Nana Kwame Bediako voted for NPP. Retrieved from Fact-check Ghana: <https://www.fact-checkghana.com/no-evidence-nana-kwame-bediako-voted-for-npp/>

Ghana Fact-checking Coalition (2024, December 8). No evidence of Russian interference in Ghana's election. Retrieved from Dubawa: <https://ghana.dubawa.org/no-evidence-of-russian-interference-in-ghanas-election/>

Ghana Fact-checking Coalition (2024, December 7). Social media card claiming NPP victory with 51.12% lead ahead of EC results is false. Retrieved from Dubawa: <https://ghana.dubawa.org/social-media-card-claiming-npp-victory-with-51-12-lead-ahead-of-ec-results-is-false/>

Ghana Fact-checking Coalition (2024, December 14). Viral NPP Facebook page trolling party after election defeat is fake. Retrieved from Dubawa: <https://ghana.dubawa.org/viral-npp-facebook-page-trolling-party-after-election-defeat-is-fake/>

Ghana Fact-checking Coalition (2024, December 9). Viral photo of Kennedy Agyapong in NDC paraphernalia old. Retrieved from Fact-Check Ghana: <https://www.fact-checkghana.com/viral-photo-of-kennedy-agyapong-in-ndc-paraphernalia-old/>

Ghana Fact-checking Coalition (December, 7 2024). Did Nelson Mandela make statement about Mahama? Retrieved from Dubawa: <https://ghana.dubawa.org/did-nelson-mandela-make-statement-about-mahama/>



Ghana Fact-checking Coalition-c. (2024, December 7). False! Donald Trump has NOT endorsed Mahama. Retrieved from Dubawa: <https://ghana.dubawa.org/false-donald-trump-has-not-endorsed-mahama/>

Ghana Fact-checking Coalition-c. (2024, December 7). John Dumelo didn't send SMS calling Maa Lydia a 'Husband Killer'. Retrieved from Dubawa: <https://ghana.dubawa.org/john-dumelo-didnt-send-sms-calling-maa-lydia-a-husband-killer/>

Ghana Fact-checking Coalition-c. (2024, December 9). Video of Mahama saying NDC will cancel Free SHS, doctored. Retrieved from Fact-check Ghana: <https://www.fact-checkghana.com/video-of-mahama-saying-ndc-will-cancel-free-shs-doctored/>

Jonathan, S. (2024, December 8). Inside the Hashtag Cold Wars: How Coordinated Networks on X Are Driving Disinformation in Ghana's 2024 Elections. Retrieved from Dubawa: <https://ghana.dubawa.org/inside-the-hashtag-cold-wars-how-coordinated-networks-on-x-are-driving-disinformation-in-ghanas-2024-elections/>

# We welcome your engagement!

Whether you're interested in our programs, exploring partnership opportunities, or looking to stay informed about our impact, connect with us through any of the channels below.

## Contact Us :



Phone Number

**Landline:** +233 (0) 302 922620/1, +233 (0) 302 798995  
**Mobile/WhatsApp:** +233 (0) 24 1995737



Email Address

**General Inquiries:** [info@penplusbytes.org](mailto:info@penplusbytes.org)  
**Mailing List Subscription:** [members@penplusbytes.org](mailto:members@penplusbytes.org)



Office Address

**20 Oshie Road, Osu Ako-Adjei, Accra, Ghana**  
**Digital Address:** GL-016-4879, Osu Ako Adjei, Accra



Website

[www.penplusbytes.org](http://www.penplusbytes.org)

Promoting good governance in Africa using new digital technologies.



[info@penplusbytes.org](mailto:info@penplusbytes.org)



[penplusbytes](https://www.facebook.com/penplusbytes)



[@penplusbytes](https://www.instagram.com/penplusbytes)



[@penplusbytes](https://twitter.com/penplusbytes)



[penplusbytes.org](http://www.penplusbytes.org)