

IPPR - Narrative Report

January - December 2020



Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR)

House of Democracy

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Projects and Publications

The IPPR published 39 publications during 2020. All are available as downloads at www.ippr.org.na

The following projects were completed in 2020:

Drought, Water Shortages and Climate Change (Donor: Hanns Seidel Foundation)
Conservation Agriculture (HSF)
Depleting Natural Capital (HSF)
Social Media and Elections Report (HSF)
Namibia Governance Report (HSF)
Public Procurement Tracker - 4 editions (HSF)
Quarterly Economic Review - 4 editions (HSF)
4 analysis briefs on COVID-19 (HSF)
Public Enterprise Index (HSF)
CSO Sustainability Index (FHI360)
Open Budget Survey (International Budget Partnership)
Business Climate Monitor (IJG)
Election Watch (Canadian High Commission)
Youth Speak panel discussion (EU/German Embassy)
Executive Opinion Survey (World Economic Forum)

The following projects were initiated and are still underway:

Namibia Fact Check (HSF and Deutsche Welle)
Beneficial ownership & Fisheries (HSF)
Guide to the Namibian Economy (B2 Gold)
Fiscal Transparency (US Embassy)
Foreign Policy Review (Australian High Commission)

Reputation and Outreach

Some highlights:

The IPPR is recognised globally as being in the top 50 think tanks in sub-Saharan Africa by the University of Pennsylvania (36th in the 2019 rankings released in early 2020 - see - https://repository.upenn.edu/think_tanks/). The IPPR is the only Namibian institution recognised in the Africa rankings. UPenn's global think tank index also ranked the IPPR as the 53rd best think tank in the world in terms of quality assurance and integrity policies/procedures.

The IPPR is widely seen as the key civil society organisation in Namibia working on issues related to corruption and good governance. The two examples below indicate that this work is recognised both locally and globally.

- On October 14, the Executive Director addressed a workshop on the effectiveness of the Anti-Corruption Commission (held at the Namibia Institute of Public Administration and Management) alongside keynote speaker - the Minister of Presidential Affairs Christine Hoebes.
- The Executive Director spoke alongside Johannes Stefansson, the whistleblower in the Fishrot corruption case, at the global Whistleblowing International Network (WIN) Annual General Meeting, which was held online on October 1.

During 2020, the IPPR's Fact Check project published 25 reports, 66 news items, two explainers and two podcasts on its website - www.namibiafactcheck.org.na. Many of the reports and news items dealt with countering disinformation on the COVID-19 pandemic. Fact Check was featured as an emerging fact-checking organisation by the Duke Reporters Lab at Duke University in the US. The project was also listed as a key resource on COVID-19 by the US-based Poynter Institute, which promotes quality reporting across the globe. The Journalism and Media Lab at the University of Witwatersrand listed Fact Check Namibia among the top eleven fact-checking organisations in Africa. Fact Check Namibia was also cited as an accurate source of information on COVID-19 by the Public Media Alliance.

Prior to the COVID-19 health emergency, the IPPR Executive Director represented the IPPR at the 2020 Africa Think Tank Summit in Cape Town, South Africa (February 24-28) and was one of the main speakers at a conference on political party funding organised by the Democracy Development Program in partnership with the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) in Durban, South Africa (March 12).

The Executive Director and several research associates met with the leadership of the official opposition led by McHenry Venaani MP on February 17 as part of an information sharing exercise.

On August 31, the Executive Director and research associate Martha Nangolo met online with Minister of Finance Nangolo Mbumba and his senior staff to brief them on the IPPR's budget work and a fruitful discussion was held on budget transparency and accountability.

The Executive Director participated in an online meeting organised by the Chatham House think tank in the UK to discuss future prospects for Namibia with outgoing British High Commissioner Kate Airey and other Namibia experts on October 13.

The IPPR Executive Director contributed to several training sessions involving Botswanan civil society on the implementation of the APRM in that country (via Zoom). The training was facilitated by the South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA). The IPPR Executive Director also co-facilitated two half-day training sessions for journalists on Corruption in the Mining Sector as organised by the Namibia Media Trust (NMT). The IPPR Executive Director was a panellist for the PDM's Alternative State of the Nation Address held at parliament on June 22.

IPPR Research Associate Martha Nangolo gave a presentation on the Effective Governance Pillar in the Harambee Prosperity Plan (HPP2) on September 21 for the Office of the President. She delivered a critique of the just finished HPP and spoke about what could be included in HPP2, due to be launched in 2021.

The IPPR organised a youth panel discussion called *YouthSpeak: The Future We Want* on September 24 which looked at the issues of Agriculture, Climate Change, ICT, Governance, Education and Business Development. The online panel discussion, held with the support of the European Union and the German Embassy, was attended by 80 young Namibians.

The IPPR remained an active member of the ACTION Coalition which finally succeeded in getting an Access to Information bill tabled in parliament in 2020.

The IPPR also played a key role in civil society coordination during the year. The IPPR serves on the Board of CIVIC +264 project which seeks to promote and share information among CSOs. CIVIC +264 was formally launched towards the end of 2020.

Staffing

The IPPR continued with its cost-effective and streamlined approach to staffing with the only contracted office staff being a full-time Executive Director (Graham Hopwood) and a part-time Administrator (Johanna Wolf). In terms of other staffing, 12 research associates worked on various projects during 2020.

The active research associates in 2020 were:

- Rakkel Andreas
- Nishi Felton
- Ndeshi Fikameni
- Frederico Links

- McElory Maltesky
- Martha Nangolo
- Dietrich Remmert
- Klaus Schade
- Nestor Shekunangela
- Robin Sherbourne
- Salmi Shigwedha
- Ndeapo Wolf

During the year research associate Martha Nangolo was awarded a prestigious Chevening scholarship to undertake a Master's degree in the UK.

Media coverage, social media and podcasts

The IPPR continued to receive widespread media coverage of its work with 204 media citations during the year and significant interaction on its social media pages. The citations featured in a wide range of Namibian media - both state and private - and usually entailed reports on IPPR publications, comments from IPPR research associates in news articles, or broadcast media interviews with researchers.

Although the IPPR did not have funding to monitor the November 25 2020 local and regional elections, IPPR research associates made themselves available to the local media as analysts for the elections. The IPPR assisted with the coordination of a special post-election analysis bulletin inserted in The Namibian on December 14 and contributed several articles.

The IPPR remained one of the most active and popular Namibian CSOs on social media. The IPPR's Facebook page had 6,890 followers at the end of 2020 - an increase of 558 on 2019 or 9 percent growth. IPPR's Twitter following is growing at a faster pace. At the end of 2020 the IPPR Twitter page had 13,907 followers - an increase of 3,372 on 2019 or 32 percent growth. The IPPR also has an Instagram page with 472 followers.

During 2020, the IPPR also launched a podcast channel on SoundCloud called Inside Politics - <https://soundcloud.com/ipprnam>

Four podcasts were launched - Election Case Judgement (55 listens), Tracking Disinformation (40), Procurement in a State of Emergency (96), and Countering the Disinfodemic (49).

In addition, the IPPR collaborated with the Namibia Media Trust (NMT) on several video podcasts - including one on budget transparency on May 8.

The Namibia Fact Check project co-hosted several #AskTheExperts broadcasts with NMT on COVID-19. These included a briefing with Dr. Eric Dziuban, country director of the Centres for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC), a discussion involving head of the Procurement Policy Unit Francois Brand on COVID-19-related procurement, and an interview with Ministry of Health Executive Director Ben Nangombe.

Namibia Fact Check also launched its own SoundCloud channel - called FactTalk - for occasional podcasts towards the end of the year.

COVID-19 and the IPPR

Since IPPR is not an essential service, the office was closed on March 27 when the lockdown (stage 1) began. During the harshest period of the lockdown, March 27 - May 5, IPPR researchers were able to complete most of their work from home - although public events and physical meetings were ruled out. As a result, like many other organisations, the IPPR switched to using various online formats to communicate and publicise activities.

Throughout 2020, various publications were launched and events held using Facebook Live, Zoom, and podcasts. We reopened the office on May 5 when Namibia entered stage 2 of the lockdown. Most meetings and events remained online until after September 17 when the State of Emergency came to an end. The IPPR then resumed holding public launch events and other in-person meetings as long as attendance was limited with social distancing and hygiene guidelines followed.

During 2020, the IPPR used its social media platforms to amplify key public health messages and information about the COVID-19 pandemic. The Namibia Fact Check project played an important role in countering harmful disinformation about the pandemic.

Funding

During 2020, the IPPR received almost N\$2.7m from 12 different donors for over 20 projects. The Hanns Seidel Foundation (HSF) contributed 40 percent of this total. Other donors were: the US Embassy, Deutsche Welle, B2 Gold, Australian High Commission, Canadian High Commission, International Budget Partnership, FHI360, the European Union, the German Embassy, the World Economic Forum and the African Declaration on Internet Rights and Freedoms Coalition.

Table 1 - Funds received in 2020:

Project	Donor	Funds received N\$
Institutional support	HSF	538 300
HSF Projects*	HSF	533 728
Fact Check	Deutsche Welle	257 362
CSO Sustainability*	FHI360	169 507
Open Budget*	IBP	52 330
Fiscal Transparency	US Embassy	701 731
Foreign policy	Australia HC	161 099
Guide to Namibian Economy 2021	B2 Gold	150 000
YouthSpeak*	EU/German Embassy	25 000
Executive Opinion Survey*	WEF	64 196
Digital rights	AFDEC	14 130
Total		2 667 383

*Completed projects

2020 IPPR Website Statistics - www.ippr.org.na

46,574 page views during the year

16,300 visitors

Visitors spent **35,457** minutes on the site

Most popular paper:

Landscaping Gender-Based Violence - **2,248** views

Most popular blog:

Electoral Justice in Namibia - **869** views

Top ten viewed publications:

1. Landscaping Gender-Based Violence - 2,248
2. Public Enterprise Index - 1,375
3. Countering the Disinfodemic - 509
4. Procurement in a State of Emergency - 428
5. Agriculture in Namibia - 406
6. QER (4th quarter 2019) - 372
7. COVID - Reforming the Economy - 320
8. Civil Society & Corruption - 286
9. QER (2nd quarter 2020) - 258
10. Conservation Agriculture - 250

Website audience:

Of the total site users during the year **55%** were from Namibia, **45%** from other countries:

1. Namibia - 55%
2. South Africa - 13%
3. USA - 10%
4. Germany - 3%
5. UK - 2%
6. China - 2%
7. India - 1%
8. France - 1%
9. Canada - 1%
10. Morocco - 1%

Report compiled by:
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IPPR Executive Director
January 2021