



MEDIA RELEASE:

IPPR Calls for Redress for Fishrot Scandal Victims

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- Namibia’s Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) has documented the severe human toll of the Fishrot scandal through interviews with Namibian fishing industry workers, who detail their struggles to find employment and provide for their families.
- The IPPR calls on Icelandic fishing company Samherji to apologize for its role in Fishrot to the Namibians impacted, and urges full redress to affected individuals and communities.
- The IPPR recommends the creation of an independent Namibian foundation that is empowered to provide lasting assistance to the victims of corruption.

WALVIS BAY, NAMIBIA March 7, 2024 – A group of Namibian workers have revealed the impact that the Fishrot corruption scandal has had on their lives, in a report released today by Namibia’s Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR), in partnership with the British High Commission.

In the report, thirteen Namibian fishing industry workers provide a human voice to the devastating impact of corruption by detailing their struggles to secure new employment, maintain basic living standards and participate meaningfully in societal activities.

Former deck hand Thomas Haimbala said that his life is “so bad” now because of a lack of money. “I want to buy [things], but there’s no money. I want to get married, but there’s no money”. He added: I’m concerned about the future, about tomorrow ... if it will be worse or if it will be better.”

Several former Namibian government officials are set to stand trial over the Fishrot scandal, accused of receiving payments from representatives of Icelandic fishing company Samherji in exchange for lucrative fishing quotas.

Local fishing company Namsof Fishing Enterprises lost out by either receiving no such quotas or heavily reduced quotas from 2014 onwards. As a result, at least 1,000 workers, including Haimbala, lost their jobs.

The Namibians impacted by the Fishrot scandal are yet to receive adequate redress for the losses they have suffered. As a result, the IPPR calls for:

1. Samherji to issue a formal acknowledgment and apology for its role in Fishrot, directly addressing affected individuals, communities, and Namibian society at large.
2. Samherji to make full redress to directly affected and impacted individuals and communities for the disruption and devastation inflicted on their lives as a result of Fishrot.

Voicing the experiences of corruption victims is a first and crucial step towards appropriate redress. The IPPR recommends the creation of an independent Namibian foundation made up of members of the Namibian government, civil society, relevant fishing trade bodies, and fishermen themselves. This body should be independent and be empowered with proper tools to provide transparent and lasting assistance to the victims of corruption. IPPR intends to build on this report by commissioning:

- further more extensive work to establish the full human rights impact of Fishrot
- a study which will detail the economic harm wreaked by Fishrot.

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Find the report [here](#).

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About the IPPR:

The Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) was founded in 2001 as a not-for-profit organisation with a mission to deliver, independent, analytical, critical yet constructive research on social, political, and economic issues that affect development Namibia. The IPPR was established in the belief that development is best promoted through free and critical debate informed by quality research. The IPPR is independent of government, political parties, business, trade unions and other interest groups.

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