



AGDS Annual Report 2023

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

In November 2022, I took over the chairmanship of the AGDS from Mr. Hanjo Böhme, and with it, I also assumed the substantial responsibility of implementing the strategic objectives outlined during the November 2022 strategy meeting, together with the AGDS executive team.

During this strategy meeting, the AGDS established several key strategic goals, with a focus on strengthening collaboration and exchange among member schools as the top priority. Members of the AGDS executive team met in person with the boards of AGDS member schools in June and July this year.

We used some of the strategy meeting's objectives as a guide for these meetings to better understand the needs of the school associations and member schools, enabling us to respond more specifically and offer targeted assistance.

The main strategic goals are as follows:

- ***Intensify Collaboration Among Member Schools***
 - ***Support German as a mother tongue through professional training***
 - ***Address teacher shortages in German as a mother tongue***
- ***Revise the Scholarship Program***
- ***Reevaluate Existing Support Measures and Projects***
- ***Develop Support Concepts for Kindergartens***
- ***Strengthen AGDS Networks Locally and Internationally***

We have particularly noticed the critical role that schools play in preserving German society, community, and culture in the region. Schools serve not only as educational institutions for teachers and children but as gathering places for the broader German community, hosting events like bazaars, Oktoberfest, soccer matches, and hiking days. Without these schools, there would be no central meeting point for the community.

Professional Training

Enhancing the professional training for our teachers and educators is a priority for the AGDS, and we will continue to support and promote development in this area.

In February 2023, we organized an online training session on "**German for School Beginners**" from Heidelberg University. A total of 22 participants from our member schools across Namibia attended this training. The AGDS financed the tablets now in use in schools. Feedback on this training was very positive, and we plan to fund more such trainings in the future.



The annual **Dieter-Esslinger Teacher Conference** took place in March this year in Otjiwarongo. Organized by the Educational Advisory Board, this training is open to all German as a Mother Tongue (DaM) and German as a Foreign Language (DaF) teachers at AGDS member and PASCH schools, as well as kindergartens. This conference is jointly funded by the AGDS and the Goethe Institute. The opportunity for connection and exchange over the weekend is highly valued. The Dieter-Esslinger Teacher Conference is a vital event in the school calendar. We extend our gratitude to all organizers and speakers for their dedicated work.

Scholarships

A review of the scholarship program has led the AGDS to offer scholarships only to students pursuing a primary teaching degree with a proficiency in teaching German and with German as a study subject. Unfortunately, we did not receive any applications this year. We extend our thanks to the German Embassy for their continued financial support of this program.

Financial Support and Projects

During the strategy meeting, it was decided to discontinue the annual financial aid and to analyze and redefine AGDS-supported school projects. For this purpose, AGDS invited primary and secondary school teachers to separate meetings in Windhoek and Swakopmund, led by DHPS (Ms. Conni Hecht) and PSS (Ms. Heike Holch-Nieburg). We thank our schools for their participation.

For the AGDS, it is essential that the structure, relevance, and content of AGDS projects are up-to-date, and the schools will propose suitable dates for implementation. The schools' proposals will be carried out in 2024.

The cultural festival took place in March at Delta School Windhoek under the theme "Games from Around the World."



Five game stations were set up: chess, mancala, marble games, word games and storytelling, as well as circus and card games. The origin of each game was explained, and a dodgeball tournament was also held. The event concluded with a circus performance in the auditorium and a friendly gathering. We extend our gratitude to the teachers and parents who helped organize the festival.

This year, the **Horst Kreft Reading Festival** under the motto "Reading Brings Joy" was hosted by DHPS. The stage was adorned with an array of children's books, a cozy reading chair, and a small table with a single seat... reading alone is an exciting adventure, but reading to an audience is a significant challenge. Our 12 participants from six schools performed wonderfully. We are proud of the students and send a huge thank-you to the DHPS organizers.



Unfortunately, the **speech and essay competitions** did not take place this year and will no longer be offered in 2024. A new project titled "Naturally German" will be launched for secondary school students.

In September 2022, the award ceremony for **Project Lily** took place under the patronage of the Board led by Mr. Tilmann Friedrich. This was a festive event held at Droombos Garden. This was the 17th Lily Award ceremony, funded by the Karibib Private School. The 2022 Lily Award winners were as follows: Gold: Ms. K. Hamman (PSS), Silver: Ms. M. Visser (DHPS), Bronze: Ms. T. Otto (DHPS), White Lily: Ms. B. Rentel (DSO). Congratulations!
In 2023, no Lily Awards were given, as the Board is revising the award criteria.



Kindergarten

Promoting early childhood education was an important topic at the strategy meeting. To support this, a partnership with the **Kindergarten Network** was established to ease the sensitive transition phase to primary school. This network connects all German-speaking kindergartens across Namibia, fostering exchange, mutual support, and participation in AGDS training under the

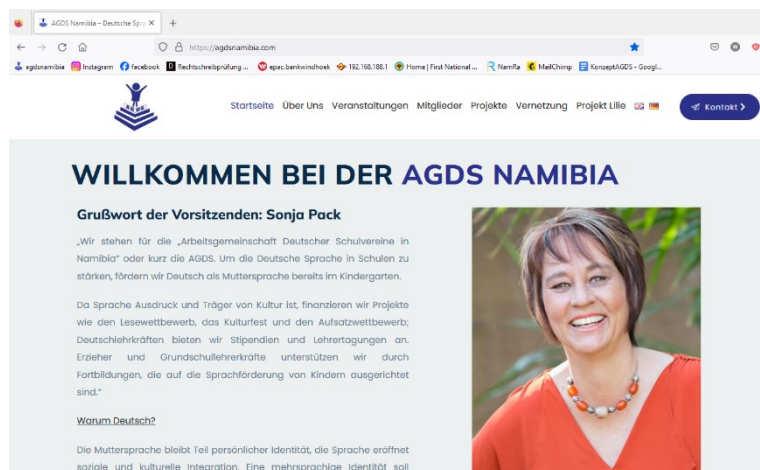
motto “Together – For Each Other.” AGDS is proud to fund the Kindergarten Network project, which includes a brochure featuring all German-speaking kindergartens, schools, and psychologists in Namibia. This brochure is distributed nationwide and can be found on the AGDS website.

Networking

In today’s world, networking has become essential. We are proud to have launched our new website on October 20, 2023:

<https://agdsnamibia.com/>

Our thanks go to Ms. Sonja Bartlewski, Ms. Carola Hornickel, and Ms. Karin Rothkegel, who contributed many photos and reports.



DKR (German Cultural Council)

The DKR, with whom AGDS had a long-standing collaboration, was dissolved in July 2022. The remaining funds were distributed among the final 16 DKR members, with AGDS receiving a donation of N\$ 500,000. AGDS will manage the DKR fund until former DKR members use it within the next five years for their respective projects.



Office

You may have noticed some changes in the office. Ms. Silke Bergemann and Ms. Monika Hoffmann have left, and we thank them both for their years of dedicated service. Ms. Karin Rothkegel has been leading the office since June, which has relocated to a smaller space at the Goethe Institute.

Annual General Meeting

This year, the AGDS Annual General Meeting will be held on November 25, 2023, at 11:00 am, in the DHPS auditorium. We thank DHPS for providing the venue.

This year, Mr. Hanjo Böhme, Mr. Sven von Blottnitz, and Ms. Britta Bajorat will step down from the executive committee and will not stand for re-election. We sincerely thank them for their many years of dedicated service.

Thank You

A huge thank you to the entire executive committee! The committee took on the task of implementing the strategy with immense time commitment, without compensation, and above all with passion for the AGDS, tackling each point diligently. Thanks to them, much has been accomplished this year. Thank you for this support. I am proud that, as a team, we can present the AGDS as it stands today.

The association is funded by members and donations. We kindly ask for your support in recruiting new members. Please share our website, follow us on Facebook and Instagram, and discover the many opportunities the AGDS offers for German in Namibia.

I would also like to extend my warm thanks to our partners, the German Embassy in Namibia, the Goethe Institute, and UNAM, for their invaluable support over the years. We truly appreciate it.

Sincerely,
Sonja Pack