

Annual Report AGDS

For the Annual General Meeting on November 2, 2024

Ladies and Gentlemen,

"A language takes you into the corridor for life. Two languages open every door along the way." With these words by Frank Smith, I warmly welcome all of you today to the Goethe Institute Auditorium in Windhoek for the AGDS Annual General Meeting.

It is unfortunate that the number of German as a Minority Language (DaM) students continues to decline. However, last year we witnessed how many doors opened for Namibian students through the German language, giving them future prospects. This is why supporting the German language and AGDS is so worthwhile.



I would like to build upon my 2023 annual report and give you an insight, with images from the past year, into how the AGDS executive has implemented or is implementing the strategic points from the November 2022 meeting.

Key Objectives of the Strategy:

- Strengthening cooperation among member schools
- Providing support in the DaM field through training
- Addressing the shortage of teachers in the DaM field
- Revising the scholarship program
- Reviewing current support measures and projects
- Creating a support concept for kindergartens
- Fostering networking

We have especially noted the vital role of schools in preserving the German community and culture in rural areas. These schools are not just about education, teachers, and students; they are also meeting places for the entire German community, regularly hosting cultural events (e.g., bazaars, Oktoberfest, soccer matches, hiking days), as well as church and farming communities.

Without these schools, there would be no shared meeting point. Our special thanks go to the German Embassy and Dr. Hutter, who enabled visits to school associations in Omaruru,

Grootfontein, Swakopmund, and Otjiwarongo this year. We are very grateful for your interest, Dr. Hutter, and look forward to continued close cooperation.



SAVE THE DATES - Deutsch für den Schulstart

Online Fortbildung für Kindergarten, Vorschule & Unterstufe bis zur 3. Klasse

Jeweils 14:00 Uhr bis 18:00 Uhr mit 30 Minuten Pause

1. Sitzung: Di., 18.02.2025
2. Sitzung: Do., 20.02.2025
3. Sitzung: Di., 25.02.2025
4. Sitzung: Do., 27.02.2025
5. Sitzung: Di., 04.03.2025
6. Sitzung: Do., 06.03.2025

Interessenten bitte bis zum 30. September 2024 unter admin@agdsnamibia.com anmelden.

Deutsch für den Schulstart



Strengthening collaboration is of great importance to AGDS, and we want to continue to promote and support educators. In February 2025, we are planning an online training session titled "German for School Entry" with Heidelberg University. Thirty-four participants from our member schools and the kindergarten network across Namibia have registered.

AGDS holds an annual Dieter Esslinger Pedagogical Conference, which serves for exchanging experiences and professional development. This conference is well-attended by AGDS member schools, the kindergarten network, and PASCH schools, and is a highlight in the AGDS calendar. Special thanks to Mopane Trust for their generous donation, which has helped fund this conference for four years. The conference, featuring a diverse and engaging program, is organized by the Pedagogical Advisory Board, which also ensures its smooth execution. Our heartfelt thanks to all of you for your voluntary work! Thanks also to the Goethe Institute for its financial support, which contributed to the event's success.

The "Project Lily," which pursued the same goals on a different level, also deserves mention. This commendable initiative to honor teachers was held for the last time this year in its current form due to changes in the program. Special thanks to the Board of Trustees, and especially to Mr. Tillmann Friedrich, who received the Platinum Lily this year for his nearly 40 years of voluntary dedication to the German language and culture in Namibia and for founding Project Lily. Our heartfelt congratulations, Mr. Friedrich!

Revision of the Scholarship Program

The revision of the scholarship program is in progress. Currently, AGDS is not awarding new scholarships and is only supporting existing scholarship holders. In January 2024, three scholarship holders took positions at AGDS schools, and two more are expected to start in January 2025. We will provide further details about the scholarships in the financial report.

The shortage of German teachers in primary education remains an issue, as DaM has not been offered in teacher training at UNAM in recent years due to lack of participation. We are very grateful to Dr. Gerda Wittmann for her efforts over the past year, which have now made it possible for German to be included in primary teacher training from 2025 onwards.

Unfortunately, we did not receive financial support from the embassy for our scholarship program in 2024. AGDS has previously supported DaF (German as a Foreign Language) students who will complete their studies in December 2025. AGDS will fully fund this program for 2024 and 2025 and has decided not to grant further scholarships to DaF students.



Our excellent cooperation with the Goethe Institute deserves special mention, as the institute primarily focuses on the DaF field, while AGDS is dedicated to the DaM component. This trusted collaboration is invaluable to both the Goethe Institute and AGDS. The Goethe Institute also provides AGDS with office space, including a conference room and free Wi-Fi. We sincerely thank them for this generous support and look forward to continued cooperation after the move.

Review of Current Support Measures and Projects

As part of the strategy, AGDS decided to cancel the annual financial aid. This year, DaM and DaF teachers from secondary and primary schools met at the Dieter Esslinger Pedagogical Conference in Otjiwarongo. This meeting serves to discuss the structure, value, and content of AGDS projects and to set dates for the 2024/2025 period.

The strategy survey revealed that AGDS projects are outdated. We rely on teachers to analyze current AGDS projects and suggest new proposals that we are happy to support.

Support Concept for Kindergartens

The strategy emphasizes that German as a native language should be promoted starting in kindergarten. The kindergarten network allows all German-speaking kindergartens in Namibia to connect. The kindergartens can exchange ideas, support each other, and participate in training funded by AGDS.



Networking

In today's world, networking is more important than ever. We are proud that our website, www.agdsnamibia.com, has been regularly used for a year now, along with our Facebook page, managed by the AGDS office. The website connects all member associations with schools and kindergartens, as well as our partners and training events. Please use this platform for your schools as well!



The AGDS executive continued its school visits in 2024 to AGDS member schools, including Deutsche Höhere Privatschule, Delta Schule Windhoek, Delta Secondary School Windhoek, Otjiwarongo Secondary School, and Private School Otjiwarongo. These visits provide an opportunity to introduce ourselves to new school leadership. These personal visits are extremely valuable, as each school has unique needs, concerns, and strategies. We thank all boards for their trust, open conversations, and hospitality.

Conclusion and Thanks

We sincerely thank all donors for their generosity. Special thanks to Mr. Helge Friedrich for his regular donations.

We also want to acknowledge individuals who supported us last year with contributions of N\$500 or more, though every contribution is appreciated.

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| ▶ Hartmut Rechholtz | ▶ Monika Cording | ▶ Konrad Friedrich |
| ▶ Rolf Adrian | ▶ Ebbe Fischer | ▶ Annetrud Robke |
| ▶ Renate Hilbert | ▶ Jürgen Sievers | ▶ A. Diener |
| ▶ Familie G. Heger | ▶ G.H. von Hase | ▶ Erika Benz |
| ▶ Diethelm Metzger | ▶ Hans Gerd Roschlau | ▶ Barabara Rogl |
| ▶ Siggie Wilckens | ▶ H.E. Geiger | ▶ Todo Garbade |
| ▶ Frida Geiger | ▶ K.P. & U. Clausen | ▶ Rainer Jagau |
| ▶ Georg Sievers | ▶ Walter Hailwax | ▶ P. Schmitt |
| ▶ H.G. Engelhard | ▶ Birgit Schunemann | ▶ George Friedrich |
| ▶ Erni und Heidi Kopp | ▶ Familie von Gossler | |

A heartfelt thanks goes to our partners, the German Embassy Namibia, the Goethe Institute, and UNAM, for their years of help and support. We greatly appreciate this.

The board held three regular meetings in the reporting year, prepared by the elected board (executive) in collaboration with the AGDS office, led by Ms. Karin Rothkegel. I thank all board members for the excellent collaboration and the trust they have placed in me over the past twelve months. Special thanks also to Ms. Karin Rothkegel for her quick and dedicated commitment.

A highlight of this AGM: Mr. Hanjo Böhme stepped down from the AGDS executive last year. We would like to express our sincere gratitude for his years of service to AGDS and his dedication to the German language and culture in Namibia.

Thank you for your attention.

Sonja Pack
Chair of
AGDS

