

## - Introduction to OUR German community's schools working group -

Yes, you read correctly: "OUR", because this association commonly known as the AGDS does not only belong to the Committee Members or any other association! The AGDS is an independent organisation owned by us all and it is incumbent on us - specifically the German community - to maintain this association with the ultimate goal of allowing our children to continue speaking German in the future.

- That the AGDS was founded as an umbrella organisation for all schools, which teach German as mother language, as far back as 1956? In line with its original goals, the AGDS has over the past 58 years consistently made every effort to maintain and promote the German language in Namibia.

- the beneficiary associations of 6 private schools and 4 Government schools are each represented by a delegate assigned to the AGDS' committee, where they join 6 further representatives of the independent members of the association, forming a committee which takes care of all activities and the annual projects?

Did you know that: -

- The following projects are conducted on an annual basis?

- A Teachers' convention attended by up to 120 Educators, who teach all types of subjects, also including specialized social pedagogues and teachers of German taught as second language
- A bursary program for school leavers, who wish to study and qualify with the aim of entering the teaching profession
- A students' exchange program between Germany and Namibia, which allows up to 25 students from both countries to take part.
- The Horst Kreft reading contest for primary pupils attending Grades 3, 4, 5 and 6 after they have won their schools' internal reading competitions.
- The Kurt Böhme debating contest for learners attending Grades 8 and 11, this again being the highlight, after the contestants have won their schools' internal event.

- The AGDS is also present as one of the curators for "Project Lily" and in fact acts as Trustee of all funds involved in that project? During a formal Gala event held in September of each year, deserving teachers are honoured in the categories White-, Bronze-, Silver- and Golden Lily, which awards are made in the form of a designed plaque and a financial reward.

- As regards educational matters the AGDS represents the interests of German-speaking Namibians in the Ministry of Education and maintains good relations with the German Embassy in Windhoek? Our close cooperation with further associations, which also represent the interests of the German speaking community - such as the German Cultural Association (Deutscher Kulturrat) and the Goethe Centre/NaDS - allows us to all share a comprehensive pool of information and avoids duplications.

- Quite apart from the bursary program, the AGDS financially supports all schools and hostels, which are attended by German speaking children, to the extent that our limited resources allow us to do that?

- During the various gatherings and committee meetings, regular discussions are held regarding the general challenges faced by- and concerns of the Namibian school community at large? This environment is largely shaped through- and by the shortage of qualified teachers, non-existent teaching aids, seriously impacting financial constraints and the unsatisfactory level of remuneration of the teaching profession, which leads to lack of motivation. A consistent deterioration in the number of German speaking Learners adds to these problems.

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