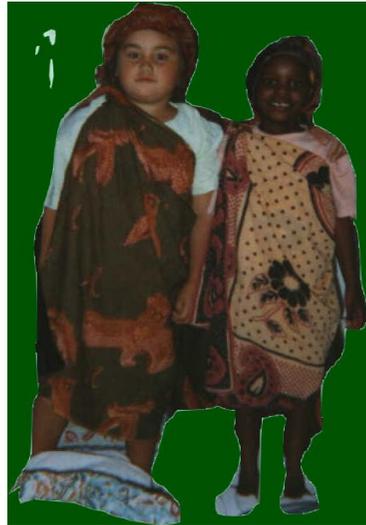


MAISHA

Selbsthilfegruppe afrikanischer Frauen
in Deutschland e.V.



Who we are

We are a registered non-profit NGO of African women in Germany. Our aims are to assist African women who live in Germany. We are a self help group and we assist each other in crises, in dealing with German authorities and the society in general, in childcare issues, job issues, daily problems, health and psychological issues.

The concept is to empower each other to become a proud and active part of German society but at the same time maintaining our culture and back-ground. We encourage women to become active in their communities.

We started our work in 1994 and in 1996 we became a registered organisation. Our aims have stayed the same over the years.

Publicity

We want to supply a public platform for African women in Europe and their needs. We supply the media with information about the situation in Africa that we get from home and the situation of African women here. This picture is often given from the point of view of white journalists with all their ignorance and prejudice and we want to set it right, so we come across as we really are. On the other side we want to give back a clear picture of the situation in Europe to our relatives back in Africa to prevent them from dreaming false dreams of easy money.

Mutual Support

We help one another in everyday problems like dealing with German authorities, family, education, jobs, integration, languages (German as well as Kiswahili and other African

languages). We have founded a self help saving project for African women. They contribute 100 EUR a month for emergencies like when someone at home is sick or someone died here. Our wish for the future is to invest the money in small scale businesses for women so that they can generate income because many of them are unemployed. Side effect is that the women don't stay at home in isolation and depression but they have something to do and win self confidence.

Culture

Youth work with Afro Germans (girls groups with discussions, singing, seminars, workshops, information about heritage, journey to Africa for finding 'roots' – many children here grew up from single mothers, whether they are Afro Germans or second generation Africans they are missing the connection with their cultural and spiritual background) We have formed an elders council to assist in preserving our traditional cultures and passing it on to the youth, we want to find our balance by openly addressing positive as well as negative aspects of our culture. We want to bridge gaps between different religions and denominations and acknowledging religion as an integral part of African culture.

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Anti-Racism

Fight against racism, anti-racism workshops for police and institutions, defence-strategies, political education, workshops in self-assertiveness – strengthening each other to be able to give encouragement to our children, (many Africans in Germany face racial discrimination both explicit and hidden at Work, school or in their neighbourhoods).

Health Care

Aids is a topic not only in Africa but a burden that also we in Europe have to bear when people in our families fall ill. We try to work in prevention as well as in accompanying sick people and giving them hope and maybe love so that they feel they are not alone by visiting them in hospitals and hospices. We also take care of Africans who have become psychologically sick because German health personnel are not qualified to deal with such phenomenon.

Prisons

We visit prisons to see Africans who ended up there for several reasons either because they came here illegally or they were cheated into transporting drugs or they overstayed or young girls who end up in prostitution after they were lured to Europe under false pretences, trying to find accommodation for ex-prostitutes who are willing to get out.

We also try to counsel people with legal problems for example by giving them information about changes in German law (e.g. the recent reduction of minimum duration of a marriage to qualify as a reason to stay in the country to 2 years) and contacting lawyers.

Cooperation Partners

We work together with Christian as well as Islamic churches, with other NGOs in Germany, Europe and our countries of origin. In Africa we work together with grassroots leaders to share our common goals and experiences. In Germany as a relatively small minority we try to build a common political platform with other Immigrant and women organisations. We think especially that European cooperation is necessary because of the different approach that other countries have on certain issues, because of common European politics from the top (whether good or bad) and because we can learn from one another and strengthen each other.

