

## BIO DATA

### **LAURENTIUS SEBASTIANUS DAVIDS**

Senior Education Officer

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Laurentius Sebastianus Davids is a teacher by profession, who after more than fifteen years of instruction at various schools in Namibia, became an education officer in September 1995. Currently he is a Senior Education Officer for African Languages, supervising seven language officials in the sub-division of the National Institute for Educational Development in the Ministry of Education, Namibia. Mr. Davids obtained his Masters of Education degree from the University of Namibia in 2000. Born in 1956 in southern Namibia, he studied at the Southern Cape Training College for his teaching diploma. However, his studies were cut short after the 16 June 1976 student uprising in South Africa. He joined the liberation struggle against South African occupation in April 1977 and resigned from his teaching post in September 1977 to become a political activist. A founding member of a private school for alternative education opposed to Bantu Education (a system which enforced separation of races in all educational institutions), he was arrested within three months of the school being established. A political detainee without trial, Mr. Davids was banned from teaching upon his conditional release. After being subjected to strict controls, including a personal curfew, he was eventually allowed to rejoin the teaching profession, but his employment was subject to stringent conditions. In his present capacity, Mr. David's main area of responsibility is the Khoe and San languages, namely Khoekhoegowab and Ju|'hoansi. He is the author of various titles in Khoekhoegowab, ranging from primary to secondary level texts. Mr. Davids is a "language activist" who is passionate about mother tongue instruction, as well as the provision of the mother tongue as a subject throughout the formal education system. Furthermore, he is a human rights educator and co-author of teacher guides and reference materials for cross-curricular aspects in the formal education system.