

Workshop Report NIAGARA-Project 07.03.2023 – 17.03.2023



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Executive summary

Navigating the digital landscape: universities partnering for change (NIAGARA) started January 2nd 2023. A two week workshop in Lusaka and Dar es Salaam was planned as a part of work package 6, Blended mobility.

During the two weeks of the workshop, administrative and management issues were presented to give all participants a good understanding of how the project is organized, and also the content of the Grant Agreement. Each project coordinator presented the work packages (WP) they are the lead beneficiary of; the tasks, deliverables and milestones. The whole group also discussed needs and challenges for each WP.

Discussions at the workshop showed that the three target groups - students, faculty and librarians - were considered to have or meet some of the same barriers across partner institutions. The equipment in computer labs is not sufficient with regard to the number of students, and faculty has to use private equipment (partners in Zambia and Tanzania). Faculty and students lack competency to search library resources and they often do not attend when invited for training. As a result, students and faculty do not adequately select the best sources for their work. There are not enough librarians to meet the need for digital training, and it is also recognized that some librarians do not have the necessary skills. The libraries are in general not able to support students with special needs. This information gained from the discussion will supplement data collection activities related to the conducting of a survey of digital literacy and data management skills WP2 (T2.3).

Embedded librarianship was determined to be an enabler for strengthening and developing digital competency among the target groups, and it was reported that they are generally positive about learning about relevant resources and improving their skills. The target groups use digital devices in everyday life, and the uses of these technologies can be a door opener to strengthen digital competency. This theme will be further explored throughout the project, such as at the seminar in Oslo (WP6/T6.2), and incorporated into interactive learning materials for in-service librarians (WP3/T3.4).

Introduction

The Erasmus+ project *Navigating the digital landscape: universities partnering for change (NIAGARA)* started January 2nd 2023. A kick-off meeting and workshop was planned as a part of WP6 Blended mobility, and took place in Lusaka, Zambia and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania from March 7th to March 17th. At the official opening Ms Njira Mtonga-Bweupe from the delegation of the European Union in Zambia participated, and in addition there were greetings from partner institutions.

The participants from University of Zambia, University of Dar es Salaam and Sokoine University of Agriculture hosted the two weeks with excellent facilities and great hospitality, this gave a stimulating environment for plenary sessions, group discussions and social activities.

During the two weeks of the workshop, administrative and management issues were presented to give all participants a good understanding of how the project is organized, and also the content of the Grant Agreement. Participants had collected data in two preliminary surveys on library services and Library and Information Science (LIS) curricula to form a basis for discussions.

Administration and Communication

Project leader Elin Opheim (INN) presented the partnership agreement covering the financial, legal provisions, monitoring and implementation aspects related to the project (T1.1 - 1.5). Elin also led discussions on intergroup communication. During these discussions, communication platforms between partners and meeting schedules, routines for administration and follow up of project activities, and the establishment of the Joint Project Management Committee (JPMC).

Mahmood Khosrowjerdi (INN) presented Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory in his interactive session titled *Cross-cultural collaboration and teamwork. How to make a fabulous team and project experience?* Following the presentation, project partners worked in small groups to discuss how culture influences and shapes their social interactions. They also reflected on how the different cultural influences may pose challenges to working in a highly diverse, international group. Each group presented their discussion findings to the whole group for further discussion. The general consensus from the discussions was that clear and open communication based on trust and respect between project partners is of vital importance for ensuring understanding and good relations. Lastly, preferred channels and modes of communication for the group were determined as well as general routines for communicating and responding.

Visits to Libraries

Project partners in Tanzania and Zambia organized visits to both partner libraries as well as other local libraries (WP6/T6.1). Local public libraries were also included as they serve as internet access points and study spaces for students who do not live in the immediate vicinity of the universities. The library visits enabled project partners to gain important insights into the work being done at partner libraries and the institutional contexts in which they are operating. The following libraries were visited:

Zambia

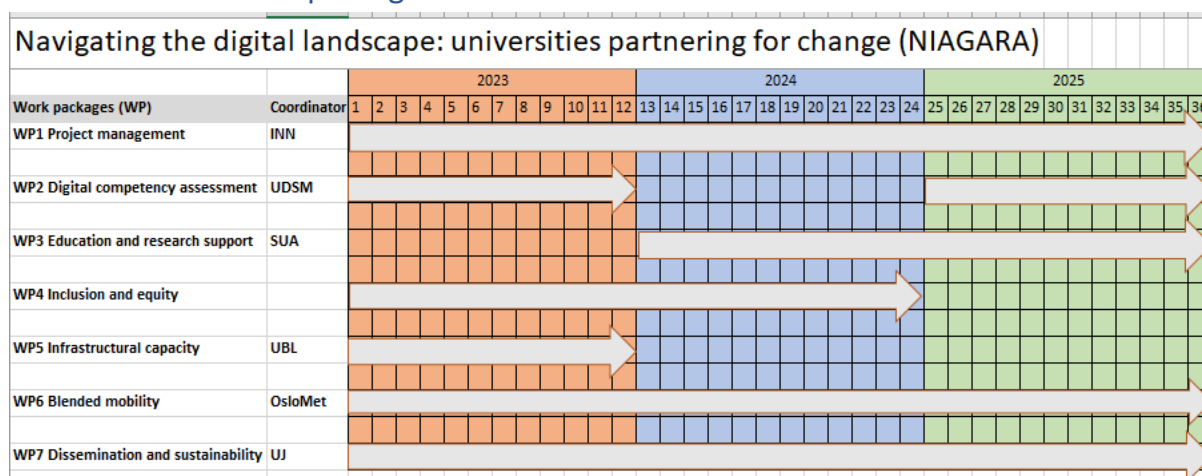
- Lusaka Public Library
- University of Zambia (UNZA) Main Library
- UNZA Medical library
- UNZA Veterinary Library

Tanzania

- University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM) Main Library
- UDSM Dr. Wilbert K. Chagula Library
- Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences Library, Dar es Salaam
- Sokoine National Agricultural Library
- Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA), Solomon Mahlangu Library
- Morogoro Public Library

The library visits, along with the preliminary results from two surveys, informed discussions concerning the cost and acquisition of library and information systems and other hardware (WP5), establishment of learning laboratories and institutional repositories (WP5), policy development (WP5, WP4), development of assistive technologies (WP4), and channels of dissemination (WP7).

Presentation of work packages



During the workshop each project coordinator presented the work packages (WP) they are the lead beneficiary of; the tasks, deliverables and milestones. The whole group also discussed needs and challenges for each WP:

- Accreditation of courses
- Deliverables from WP2 year 1 must be according to, or before schedule, to be able to start WP3
- Data management and policies for data management identified as an important gap
- Digital literacy and competency cannot be discussed without addressing digital infrastructure. Infrastructural capacity must include students with special needs
- Interesting topics for online seminars identified
- Channel diversification for promoting the project: frequent and regular publishing

Project Promotion

Project Communication

During the workshop content was collected for webpage and social media (T7.2, T7.3), e.g., information, photos, and so on. The NIAGARA-project has established social media presence on FaceBook, Twitter and LinkedIn (T7.3). The project webpage was discussed and will be published immediately following the workshop (T7.2).

- webpage <https://niagaragrants.com/>
- Facebook profile <https://www.facebook.com/niagaragrants>
- Twitter profile <https://twitter.com/NIAGARAGRANT>
- LinkedIn profile <https://www.linkedin.com/company/niagaragrants/>

Project Dissemination

Professional and scholarly conferences and journals for dissemination of the project activities were discussed (T7.1). These include the following:

Completed or Submitted:

Opheim, E. (in press) Hvilken digital kompetanse trenger bibliotekarer? *Bok og bibliotek* [Norwegian Library Science Journal].

Johnston, J.; Khosrowjerdi, M.; Bøyum, I.; Opheim, E.; Cisek, S.; Deja, M.; Kanyengo, W. W.; Kwalombota Mubita, G.; Makondo, F. N.S; Malekani, A.; Monde, M. W.; Pius Mtega, W.; Mwabungulu, E.; Mwantimwa, K.; Ng`angu, N.; Rak, D.; Tarimo, R.; Wema, E.; Wójcik, M. (2023, January 25-27). *Navigating the digital landscape: Universities partnering for change (NIAGARA)* [Conference presentation] BOBCATSSS 2023 Conference, Oslo Metropolitan University (OsloMet), Norway.

Khosrowjerdi, M.; Johnston, J.; Bøyum, I.; Opheim, E.; Cisek, S.; Deja, M.; Kanyengo, C. W.; Kwalombota Mubita, G.; Makondo, F.; Malekani, A.; Monde, M.; Pius Mtega, W.; Mwabungulu, E.; Mwantimwa, K.; Ng`angu, N.; Rak, D.; Tarimo, R.; Wema, E.; Wójcik, M. (2023, January 25-27). *NIAGARA: Navigating the digital landscape: Universities partnering for change (2023-2026)* [Poster] BOBCATSSS 2023 Conference, Oslo Metropolitan University (OsloMet), Norway.

Upcoming:

European Conference on Information Literacy (ECIL), 9-12 October, 2023, Krakow, Poland (Accepted)

European Association for Health Information and Libraries (EAHIL), 12-16 June, 2023, Trondheim, Norway (Accepted)

17th Congress of The Association for Health Information and Libraries in Africa (AHILA) Botswana, 16-20 October 2023, Gaborone, Botswana

5th Consortium of Tanzania University and Research Libraries (COTUL) Scientific Conference, 6-10 November 2023, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

Social Activities

Opportunities for network building and informal information exchange were central to the workshop (WP6/T6.1). Daily routines and more organized activities facilitated this process. On a daily basis, project partners took turns presenting something from their own cultures to the other partners at

the start of the day and the lunch break served as a central social point in the day. Other activities included group dinners, visits to local markets, a visit to a wildlife preserve (Zambia), a visit to the National Museum and a day trip to Zanzibar (Tanzania). The social activities were organized by project partners in the respective countries.

The Roadmap Forward

Prior to the workshop, a content planning group consisting of members from partner institutions conducted two surveys. The first survey collected data on Library and Information Science (LIS) curricula with relevance to digital competencies and the second survey collected data from partner libraries on the provision of digital services. This provided a platform for discussions and exchange of knowledge, and served as a basis for formulating a roadmap for the project work going forward. The following sections are summaries of the work done during the workshop and the use of the data in the respective work packages.

LIS Programs and Courses Related to Digital Literacy: Creation of Analytical Framework

A broad overview of the data collected on library science and other programs that educate academic librarians was presented by Jamie Johnston (OsloMet / content group leader) and Mahmood Khosrowjerdi (INN / content group member) in their interactive session *LIS Programs and Courses Related to Digital Literacy: Creation of Analytical Framework*. In addition to providing the overview, the central aim of the presentation was to discuss and finalize with the project partners the analysis of the collected data. The [Digital Competence Framework for Citizens \(DigComp\)](#) framework was proposed as a possible analytical tool for assessing digital literacy support in the selected programs. This framework was deemed to be particularly relevant as it identifies the key components of digital competence in 5 areas, which can serve as a coding scheme for analyzing the nature and degree of digital support offered in the selected programs' core coursework. Furthermore, the DigComp framework was implemented by the Joint Research Centre on behalf of the European Commission and is a tool used to support the EU's Digital Education Action Plan 2021-2027; thus it can provide a common vocabulary and conceptual basis for sharing the results of the analysis and help to ensure that the work done within the NIAGARA project aligns with the broader goals related to the EU's education plan. During the NIAGARA workshop, the use of the framework was discussed, developed and agreed upon by all project partners. The framework was developed to include an additional category *0. Basic skills and concepts* for basic computer skills and definition of basic terms, such as information, access and data. This was deemed as necessary for programs that receive students who have no previous experience using computers or other ICT. The additional category is seen as a foundational category for the original categories 1-5 included in the framework. The following is the expanded version of the framework that will be used to access the curricula of the selected programs:

0. Basic skills and concepts

0.0 Basic ICT skills

0.1 Familiarity with conceptions of data, information, and knowledge

0.2 Knowledge on search strategies

0.3 Familiarity with general and academic search engines, online information systems and databases

0.4 Knowledge about search engines algorithms

0.5 Basic knowledge about safety, risks and threats

0.6 Knowledge on problem solving techniques and critical thinking skills

1. Information and data literacy

2. Communication and collaboration

3. Digital content creation

4. Safety

5. Problem solving

The partners concluded that the remaining data will be collected and the data files will be merged in the two weeks following the workshop. INN/OsloMet will oversee the merging of the files and delivery of the data to project partners. WP2 will oversee the data analysis process with involvement from each of the partner institutions. The analysis of the survey findings will contribute to the fulfillment of WP2's review of LIS curricula (T2.2). The findings of the assessment will be reported in WP2's report (D2.1). The report will be a central source for WP3's identification of the existing gaps in digital literacy amongst LIS students (T3.1) and will be the basis for WP3's development of digital literacy and data management curricula for in-service librarians (T3.2) as well as the development of curricula for LIS-students (T3.3). The report will also serve to inform WP4's determination of infrastructural needs in the Tanzanian and Zambian partner institutions related to serving students with disabilities (T4.1). The survey findings and related assessments done in WP2 - 4 will be used to determine the topics and activities to be carried out in WP6's Seminar in Oslo (T6.2), librarian exchange (T6.3), online seminar series (T6.4) and, ultimately, concluding seminar (T6.5). Relevant findings and activities will be communicated by WP7 (T7.2, T7.3). WP5 will work in coordination with the other work packages to purchase and install computer hardware to develop infrastructural capacity in Tanzania and Zambia.

Digital Services in Partner Libraries: Survey Results

A broad overview of the results from the digital services in partner libraries survey was presented by Jamie Johnston (OsloMet / content group leader) in her interactive session titled *Digital Services in Academic Libraries: Preliminary Survey Results and Creation of Road Map for Future Research Activities*. Following the presentation, preliminary analysis of the findings was carried out in small groups related to the various subject areas of the survey. Each group had multiple contributors from the various partner institutions.

Feedback was obtained from each of the groups on the survey findings to-date, and the completion and closing of the survey was discussed by the project partners. The remaining data will be collected and the data files will be merged in the two weeks following the workshop. INN/OsloMet will oversee the merging of the files and delivery of the data to project partners. WP2 will oversee the data analysis process with involvement from each of the partner institutions. As with the previous survey, the DigComp framework will be used to assess the ways in which library services and/or courses support the digital literacy skills of students and faculty at the respective institutions. This will ensure that a common vocabulary and conceptual basis is used throughout the project.

The findings will serve as the basis for WP3s determination of digital literacy and data management gaps (T3.1) and the subsequent development of digital literacy and data management curricula for in-service librarians (T3.2). Survey findings related to provision of library services to students with disabilities will serve to inform WP4 needs assessment (T4.1). The survey findings and related

assessments done in WP3 and WP4 will be used to determine the topics and activities to be carried out in WP6's Seminar in Oslo (T6.2), librarian exchange (T6.3), online seminar series (T6.4) and, ultimately, concluding seminar (T6.5). Relevant findings and activities will be communicated by WP7 (T7.2, T7.3). WP5 will work in coordination with the other work packages to purchase and install computer hardware to develop infrastructural capacity in Tanzania and Zambia.

Digital Competency in Partner Institutions: Key Insights

Broadly, the data from the two surveys served to provide project partners with a broad oversight and general understanding of the teaching, services and general activities at the partner institutions related to digital literacy. The knowledge and understanding gained from the surveys is perceived by project partners to be of central importance in enabling them to effectively utilize the partnership to expand information services and improve librarians' digital competencies across all institutions.

Specifically, discussions at the workshop showed that the three target groups - students, faculty and librarians - were considered to have or meet some of the same barriers across partner institutions. The equipment in computer labs is not sufficient with regard to the number of students, and faculty has to use private equipment (partners in Zambia and Tanzania). Faculty and students lack competency to search library resources and they often do not attend when invited for training. As a result, students and faculty do not adequately select the best sources for their work. There are not enough librarians to meet the need for digital training, and it is also recognized that some librarians do not have the necessary skills. The libraries are in general not able to support students with special needs. This information gained from the discussion will supplement data collection activities related to the conducting of a survey of digital literacy and data management skills WP2 (T2.3).

Embedded librarianship was determined to be an enabler for strengthening and developing digital competency among the target groups, and it was reported that they are generally positive about learning about relevant resources and improving their skills. The target groups use digital devices in everyday life, and the uses of these technologies can be a door opener to strengthen digital competency. This theme will be further explored throughout the project, such as at the seminar in Oslo (WP6/T6.2), and incorporated into interactive learning materials for in-service librarians (WP3/T3.4).

Early on in the workshop discussions, it was determined that improving knowledge and use of open data sets was needed across the partner institutions. Mahmood Khosrowjerdi held an information session titled *How to search for open data sets* and library personnel from the University of Dar es Salaam were invited to attend. This was determined as a topic for inclusion into the courses and other educational materials as well as the seminar in Oslo (WP3, WP6/T6.2).

Conclusion

The two-week workshop covered different aspects of our project, and gave all participants an understanding of the project as a whole, and the work packages. As a team, we have established a supportive and inclusive culture, encouraging openness, sharing, engagement, curiosity and knowledge as important values.

All partners considered the workshop a success, and we look forward to our next steps in the NIAGARA-project.

Annexes

1. Workshop program

Workshop Week 1 March 7th - 10th Nomads court lodge		
Day/Time	Agenda	Responsibility
Tuesday 9 - 13	Introduction of participants Visit main public library	
13 - 14	Lunch	
15 - 17	<p>Official opening:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vice-chancellor or deputy vice-chancellor UNZA - Library director Dr Charles Banda - EU representative Njira Mtonga - Greetings from partner universities <p>Cross-cultural collaboration and teamwork. How to make a fabulous team and project experience? <i>Interactive session</i></p>	UNZA/INN
Wednesday 9 - 13	<p>NIAGARA Roadmap Workshop</p> <p>Presentation of programs offered across the partner countries with consideration given to program descriptions and intended learning outcomes</p> <p>Group Work: Analysis of Course Offerings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze the individual courses in relation to DigComp dimensions • Determine which DigComp dimensions are most and least supported by the study programs • Discuss and map how the findings can be addressed in the NIAGARA project 	OsloMet/UDSM
13 - 14	Lunch	
14 - 17	Visit UNZA main library - not possible Organizing the Niagara-project, goals and deliverables / Grant agreement	UNZA INN
Thursday 9 - 13	Morning session Continuation of workshop	UDSM
13 - 14	Lunch	
14 -	Visit UNZA Medical library Afternoon session WP4 Inclusion and equity: plans / needs / challenges	UNZA UNZA
Friday 9 - 13	Morning session WP 7 Dissemination and sustainability: plans / needs / challenges	UJ
13 - 14	Lunch	

14 - 17	Visit UNZA main library WP2 Digital competence assessment: plans / needs / challenges Closing workshop week 1	UNZA UDSM
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Workshop Week 2 March 13th - 17th		
Day/Time	Agenda	Responsibility
Monday 9 - 13	Morning session Opening at the University of Dar es salaam <i>EU representative Mr. Santos Kihwele, invited.</i> Present the results of the library surveys with consideration given to library types, buildings, opening hours, visits and staff, library collection, and access	UDSM/ INN OsloMet
13 - 14	Lunch	
14:00 - 17:00	NIAGARA Roadmap Workshop Group Work: Analysis of Library Survey <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze work practices in the following areas: Reference and Information Services, Research Support, Programs and Events, and Communication and Marketing Use DigComp dimensions to broadly relate areas that libraries are working digitally to associated digital competencies Compare dimensions in which libraries are working digitally with dimensions supported in courses Discuss and map how the findings can be addressed in the NIAGARA project 	OsloMet / All
Tuesday 9 - 13	Morning session Information on Funding and Tender portal, Grant Agreement articles. Meeting with project officer Paivi Hernesniemi at 11:00 Continuation of Library survey	
13 - 14	Lunch	
14 -	WP3 Education and research support: plans / needs / challenges Walk to see the Great provider and the older library	SUA
Wednesday	Visit libraries, academic and public. Sightseeing	
Thursday 9 - 13	Morning session Mahmood Khosrowjerdi: How to search for open data sets	

	WP5 Infrastructural capacity: plans / needs / challenges WP6 Blended mobility: plans / needs / challenges Planning ahead	UBL OsloMet
13 - 14	Lunch	
14 - 17	Afternoon session	
Friday Early	Travel to Morogoro Sokoine University of Agriculture Visit the SUA library Visit to the public library Closing of the workshop. Return to Dar es Salaam in the afternoon	

2. Participants

First name:	Last name:	Institution:	Role:	Comments:
Christine Wamunyima	Kanyengo	University of Zambia	JPMC	
Mercy Wamunyima	Monde	University of Zambia		
Francina N. S.	Makondo	University of Zambia		
Wulystan Pius	Mtega	Sokoine University of Agriculture	JPMC	
Andrew Watson	Malekani	Sokoine University of Agriculture		
Ronald Benard	Tarimo	Sokoine University of Agriculture		
Kelefa	Mwantimwa	University of Dar es Salaam	JPMC	
Elias	Mwabungulu	University of Dar es Salaam		
Evans	Wema	University of Dar es Salaam		
Greg Mubita	Kwalombota	University of Barotseland	JPMC	
Namoonga	Chiinda	University of Barotseland		Only week 1
Kaywala	Mulonda	University of Barotseland		
Mahmood	Khosrowjerdi	Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences		
Elin	Opheim	Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences	Project manager	
Jamie	Johnston	Oslo Metropolitan University	JPMC	
Sabina	Cisek	Jagiellonian University, Krakow	JPMC	
Dorota	Rak	Jagiellonian University, Krakow		