

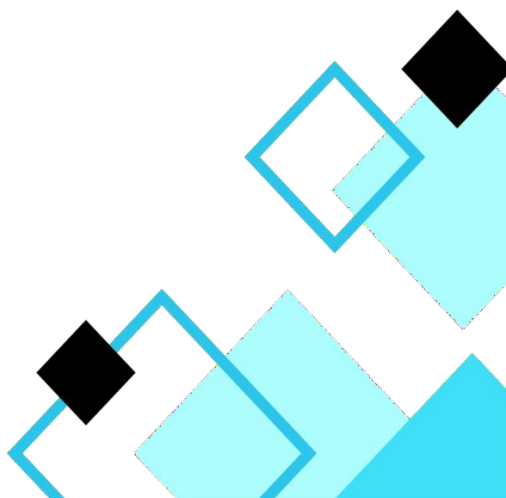
Project number: 101082506

Project acronym: NIAGARA

Project title: Navigating the digital landscape: universities partnering for change



Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.



NAVIGATING THE DIGITAL LANDSCAPE: UNIVERSITIES PARTNERING FOR CHANGE (NIAGARA)

Deliverable D4.2: Library Disability Inclusion Policy Validation Workshop Report

Tanzania and Zambia

22nd December 2023

ABOUT THE PROJECT	4
DELIVERABLE INFORMATION	5
ABBREVIATIONS	6
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	7
1.0. INTRODUCTION	8
2.0 OBJECTIVE OF THE WORKSHOPS	8
3.0 EXPECTED OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES OF THE WORKSHOPS	8
4.0 METHODOLOGY	8
5.0 DRAFT POLICY PRESENTATION	9
6.0 FINDINGS.....	9
6.1 Existence of inclusive library services.....	9
6.2 Regulations/Guidelines for Serving Users with disabilities	9
6.2 Library Building for Service Provision for Users with Disabilities	10
6.3 Service Provision for users with Disabilities.....	10
6.4 Terminology.....	10
6.5 Comments	10
7.0 CONCLUSION	10
8.0 WAY FORWARD	11
9.0 PICTURES FROM THE VALIDATON WORKSHOP HELD IN ZAMBIA.....	11

ABOUT THE PROJECT

The objectives of the NIAGARA project directly addresses digital transformation, inclusion, and diversity, and will impact participation in social, economic, democratic life and civic engagement through a focus on digital competence. The connection between digital competence and participation in democratic life and civic engagement is well-established, particularly regarding issues such as misinformation, disinformation, and fake news that affect all areas of life. Indirectly and in the long term, the grant will contribute to addressing issues related to the environment and climate change by supporting education and learning at the tertiary level, as well as research. In particular, the NIAGARA project aims to enhance digital resources within university libraries across Tanzania and Zambia, ensuring equal access to library services for all students and staff. In addition, we will examine the essential digital skills required by both librarians and students to deliver efficient library services. To support their development, we will provide short courses tailored to enhance these digital capabilities. The NIAGARA project aligns with international, EU, national, and institutional priorities, making it a vital initiative for academic progress.

Project Title	Navigating the digital landscape: universities partnering for change
Project Acronym	NIAGARA
Funding Agency	Co-funded by European Union
Funding Scheme	Erasmus+ Grant
Project Number	101082506
Project Partners	1. Høgskolen I Innlandet (INN), Norway 2. Oslomet–Storby universitetet (OSLOMET), Norway 3. University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM), Tanzania 4. Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA), Tanzania 5. University of Zambia (UNZA), Zambia 6. The University of Barotseland Limited (UBL), Zambia 7. Uniwersytet Jagielloński (UJ), Poland
Start Date	1 January 2023
End Date	31 December 2025
Duration	36 Months
Project Manager	Elin Opheim
Project Coordinators	Jamie Johnston (OsloMet), Kelefa Mwantimwa (UDSM), Wylustan P. Mtenga (SUA), Christine W. Kanyengo (UNZA), Greg Kwalombota Mubita (UBL), Sabina Cisek (UJ)

DELIVERABLE INFORMATION

Deliverable Number	D4.2
Deliverable Title	Workshop Validation Report
Deliverable Type	R — Document, report
Deliverable description	Library Disability Inclusion Policy Validation Workshop Report. One per country; Tanzania and Zambia. The document is in English.
Work Package (WP) Number	WP4
WP Coordinator	UNZA
Project Coordinators	Jamie Johnston (OsloMet), Kelefa Mwantimwa (UDSM), Wylustan P. Mtega (SUA), Christine W. Kanyengo (UNZA), Greg Kwalombota Mubita (UBL), Sabina Cisek (UJ)
Nature of Data	Document/Report
Delivery Date	2023-12-31

ABBREVIATIONS

LDIP	Library Disability Inclusion Policy
LIAZ	Library and Information Association of Zambia
NIAGARA	Navigating the Digital Landscape: Universities Partnering for Change
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisations
PWDs	Persons with Disabilities
SNAL	Sokoine National Agricultural Library
SUA	Sokoine University of Agriculture
UBL	University of Barotseland
USDM	University of Dar es Salaam
UNZA	University of Zambia

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The library disability inclusion policy validation workshop is an output of the Navigating the digital landscape: universities partnering for change (NIAGARA) project. One workshop per country was held in both Tanzania and Zambia to validate the draft policy on library service to persons with disability.

In Zambia, the Validation workshop for the disability policy was held on the 28th of July 2023, at the Avani Minor Hotel in Livingstone during the 50th Library and Information Association (LIAZ) Annual General Conference. The purpose of the workshop was to give key stakeholders (the Library services for Disabled person's constituents) an opportunity to review and validate the draft Library Disability Inclusion Policy. The choice of the conference delegates was strategic because every sector of library and information provision was represented.

In Tanzania, the Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA) through the Sokoine National Agricultural Library (SNAL) and the University of Dar es Salaam (USDAM) Library through the NIAGARA Project held a library disability validation webinar workshop on 21st December 2023. The webinar workshop involved 10 library directors and 20 library practitioners in higher learning institutions in Tanzania. The webinar workshop aimed to collect inputs from key library operators in higher education in the country to validate a draft policy developed under the NIAGARA Project.

The draft policy validation process involved detailed presentations on the situation analysis starting from the global level to the country level to ensure the participants appreciation of the subject/topic. Thereafter, the main components of the policy were presented beginning with an explanation of its development, a presentation of its scope, policy objectives, policy measures and implementation.

The validation workshops in both Tanzania and Zambia affirmed the need for a library disability inclusion policy at all the four institutions.

1.0. INTRODUCTION

The NIAGARA project involves four African universities the Sokoine University of Agriculture and University of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania; the University of Zambia and the University of Barotseland in Zambia, two Universities from Norway (Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences and the Oslomet University and the Jagiellonian University Krakow in Poland.

The process of drafting the **Library Disability Inclusion Policy** entailed the University of Dar es Salaam and Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA) - Tanzania, the University of Zambia (UNZA), and University of Barotseland (UBL) – Zambia hosting a webinar and a face-to-face workshop respectively to enable stakeholders validate the draft policy. Before hosting the webinar and physical workshops, the four institutions conducted a review of similar policies from collaborators, research institutions and universities both in Tanzania, Zambia and abroad. During this process, the draft policy was drafted and subjected to discussions and reviews among stakeholders in respective institutions. The validation workshops were then held in both Tanzania and Zambia.

2.0 OBJECTIVE OF THE WORKSHOPS

The policy validation webinar in Tanzania and face-to-face physical workshop in Zambia provided an opportunity for the stakeholders to discuss the main components of the draft policy. Specifically, it aimed at:

- a) Creating an understanding of the proposed policy among stakeholders;
- b) Collecting input to improve the draft policy;
- c) Matching the relevancy of the policy to other policies in the two countries;
- d) Review and make detailed comments on the draft;
- e) Make additions and removal of the recommendations in the draft policy; and
- f) Validate the policy.

3.0 EXPECTED OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES OF THE WORKSHOPS

The expected outputs and outcomes of the workshops were:

- a) Common understanding of the Library Disability Inclusion Policy.
- b) A collection of input made for improving the draft.
- c) Recommendations for additions and removals in the draft policy
- d) Validated draft policy.
- e) Consensus on the way forward.

4.0 METHODOLOGY

The Sokoine University of Agriculture through the Sokoine National Agricultural Library and the University of Dar es Salaam Library through the NIAGARA Project held a library disability validation webinar workshop on 21st December 2023. The webinar workshop involved 10 library directors and 20 library practitioners in higher learning institutions in Tanzania. The webinar workshop aimed to collect inputs from key library operators in higher education in the country to validate a draft policy developed under the NIAGARA Project.

In Zambia, the Validation workshop for the disability policy was held on 28 July 2023, at the Avani Minor Hotel in Livingstone during the 50th Library and Information Association (LIAZ) Annual General Conference. The theme of the conference “**translating records, library work, and**

research information into policy and action” resonated well with the purpose of the presentation. The purpose of the workshop was to give key stakeholders (the Library services for Disabled person’s constituents) an opportunity to review and validate the draft Library Disability Policy. The LIAZ conference convened librarians from all parts of the country with over 200 participants from various types of libraries such as, academic libraries, record centers and archives from government agencies, colleges, NGO’s, International Organisations participating in the workshop. Therefore the conference provided a great opportunity and platform for policy validation.

The webinar and physical workshops were both interactive as the presenters ensured that knowledge about the **Draft Library Disability Inclusion Policy** was not only disseminated but accurately discussed, perceived and understood by the participants. And in order to ensure this, the presenters engaged participants in discussions and kept the workshop open for feedback, queries and suggestions.

5.0 DRAFT POLICY PRESENTATION

The workshops began by finding out from the participants;

- a) How many libraries had regulations/guidelines on how to serve patrons with disabilities?
- b) How many libraries/institutions had services to persons with disabilities?
- c) What kind of services did they provide?
- d) Those that indicated that they did, what kind of services did they provide and what facilities were available in their libraries/ institutions?
- e) Whether the library buildings were suitable for students with a disability? Could it be modified?
- f) Did their library buildings have any provision to serve students with disabilities?
- g) What are their comments on the library disability policy draft?
- h) How many institutions or libraries had a disability policy?

6.0 FINDINGS

6.1 Existence of inclusive library services

In response to the questions, out of all the participants that attended the conference, the majority of the participants did not provide services for persons with disabilities; and yet it was necessary that libraries provide services that are all inclusive and provide opportunities for persons with disabilities to access academic information for the studies and research in an inclusive manner.

6.2 Regulations/Guidelines for Serving Users with disabilities

The majority of the participants mentioned having no policy, regulation or guideline which guides them in the provision of services to people with disabilities. Few of the participants mentioned they had no specific policy but policies for their libraries had provisions guiding them on serving students and users with disabilities. They mentioned that their library policies had provisions on library infrastructure for users with disabilities and equal use of library resources and services. Library users with disabilities are accommodated through specific infrastructure for them such as reading spaces. However, they are given specific treatment as per their type of disabilities. Moreover, it was found that all institutions had policies for people with disabilities at the university library; what was not available as indicated is specifically to do with library services. It was mentioned that the overall university wide policies guided them on how to serve users with

disabilities. However, it was acknowledged that these were very general and therefore the need for the libraries to have library inclusion policies that will be more specific to the libraries.

6.2 Library Building for Service Provision for Users with Disabilities

Findings indicate that most libraries were old as they were built several years ago, and their designs did not consider the requirements for people with disabilities. However, some libraries had some modifications to suit a few categories of disabilities. Some libraries used the ground floor to serve all users including those with disabilities. This was easy as most issue/reference desks were on the ground floors. Few other libraries had elevators, and very few others had facilities for blind and deaf people. Findings indicate that few of the libraries had social services for users with disabilities. For example, only a few libraries had toilets for people with disabilities. However, most libraries had provisions to include such services in their designs.

6.3 Service Provision for users with Disabilities

Findings indicate that few of the libraries in the two countries had services relevant to users with disabilities. This was mostly attributed to the lack of infrastructure for library services provision to users with disabilities. It was found that only a few university libraries in the country had a unit dealing with students with disabilities and the services provided in such units were mostly not related to library services.

6.4 Terminology

At face value, the participants indicated that their attention was drawn to the word "disability" which is used in the LDIP. However, it was also acknowledged the word disability was also commonly used in national and international policy documents, and it was in conformity with other international charters such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. It was therefore recognised that the terminology used to refer to persons with disabilities may change over time as society's understanding of disability evolves. Therefore, while the terminology may change, the need for appropriate responses to persons with disabilities remains essential and must be enshrined in legislation and policy.

6.5 Comments

The draft policy was shared with participants for review five days before the workshops. Participants were requested to read it and assess its completeness in terms of covering all services offered by libraries and its relevancy to the constitution, other disability policies in the two countries, as well as in relation to the core roles of the universities and libraries. Participants acknowledge and commend the NIAGARA project for initiating the policy development on users of libraries with disabilities. They mentioned that the policy draft was comprehensive as it included all important and relevant subject areas as they relate to library services provision. The only comment given was that the policy should be part of the library policy.

7.0 CONCLUSION

The draft policy was well received by the conference delegates, most of who indicated that they had no such policy in place in their institutions and emphasized the need for the policy. The online workshop in Tanzania concluded that each library should customise the draft and seek approval from relevant organs in their institutions before setting tools for implementing it. Adoption of the **Library Disability Inclusion Policy** among libraries outside the NIAGARA project was motivated

so as to have an inclusive library services in Tanzania. In Zambia, the interaction with stakeholders has confirmed that there is a huge gap in the provision of library and information services for the persons with disabilities in our society. Formulation of such a policy will offer significant opportunities to reverse the widening service imbalance. There was an urgent need for skills improvement among library and information professionals in order to adequately provide services for PWDs users; for the profession to live to its value of inclusiveness.

8.0 WAY FORWARD

It was agreed that the Library Disability Inclusion Policy was important. How the policy could be adopted should depend on the setup of the institutions into which the libraries are located. So, directors of libraries should decide on the best way to have it as a separate policy or when impossible make it a section of a library policy or institutional disability policy.

9.0 PICTURES FROM THE VALIDATON WORKSHOP HELD IN ZAMBIA



