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## D3.5 – Inclusive Services Course Evaluation Report

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## About the project

The objectives of the NIAGARA project directly address digital transformation, inclusion, and diversity, and will impact participation in 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. 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 have examined the essential digital skills required by both librarians and students to deliver efficient library services. To support their development, we have provided 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.

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## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Inclusive Services Course Evaluation Report reviews a range of capacity-building and curriculum development activities carried out under the NIAGARA Project in Zambia and Tanzania. The evaluation focuses on three main interventions: (i) a one-day in-person Inclusive Library Services course for librarians and students; (ii) an online User-Oriented Design course offered through the University of Dar es Salaam MOOC platform; and (iii) the addition of inclusive library services content into Library and Information Science (LIS) programmes at selected higher education institutions (HEIs) in Zambia and Tanzania and finally Educational Materials on Inclusive Services available on the NIAGARA project website.

The evaluation shows that the in-person Inclusive Library Services course effectively improved participants' practical understanding of disability, accessibility, universal design, assistive technologies, and inclusive communication. Participants showed greater awareness of the barriers faced by users with disabilities and created specific action plans to enhance inclusivity within their libraries. The interactive and practice-based teaching method was particularly effective in promoting positive attitude shifts and professional dedication to inclusive service.

The online User-Oriented Design course completes the in-person training by offering scalable, flexible learning opportunities centred on user-focused design principles. The course improved participants' skills in designing information services that meet diverse user needs, including those of individuals with disabilities, and reinforced inclusive digital practices in library services.

The integration of curriculum in Zambia and Tanzania marks an important move toward making inclusive library services education more permanent. At the University of Zambia, inclusive services content was added to the Information Literacy course of the Master of Library and Information Science Programme. At the University of Dar es Salaam, the inclusive service was included in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year Information Services to Users with Special Needs course of the Bachelor's degree programme. At Sokoine University of Agriculture, inclusive services modules will be included in the Information Literacy course for the Master of Information and Knowledge Management programme and implemented in 2026 which is similar to the position of the university of Barotseland. These integrations promote sustainability and long-term impact by embedding inclusion and accessibility in formal LIS education.

These inclusive courses are being anchored by library disability policies that were developed through the NIAGARA project. T4.2 and D4.3 *Develop library policies that will ensure the aspirations of people living with disabilities are fulfilled speaks to the synergies that has being created across the lifecycle of the project and its impact on delivery of library services.*

In summary, the evaluation finds that the combined approach of training, online learning, and curriculum integration effectively enhances librarian skills, encourages inclusive practices, and helps develop fair, accessible, and user-focused library and information services in the libraries of the higher educational institutions in both Tanzania and Zambia.

## 2. INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

### 2.1. Higher Education, Digital Transformation, and Inclusion

Higher education institutions worldwide are undergoing significant changes, propelled by digitalization, a more diverse student population, and evolving expectations surrounding equity, accessibility, and social responsibility. Today, universities are evaluated not just on their academic results but also on their ability to create inclusive learning spaces that empower all students, irrespective of their disabilities, socioeconomic status, or where they live and to fully participate in

academic life. In this dynamic landscape, academic libraries serve as essential gateways to information, research, and digital knowledge infrastructures (Haleem et al., 2022; Saenen et al., 2024; Vlachopoulos & Makri, 2024).

In Southern and Eastern Africa, a notable transformation is happening, influenced by a variety of factors such as the swift expansion of higher education, resource limitations, and inadequate digital infrastructure. While student enrolments have seen a remarkable increase over the past twenty years, the support systems at institutions—particularly library and information services—have found it challenging to adapt to the growing diversity of learners, including individuals with disabilities and those with special educational needs (Barfi et al., 2023). As a result, gaps in access to information and digital resources remain, which undermines broader national and regional efforts toward inclusive education.

The digital transformation in higher education offers a blend of great opportunities and potential challenges. On one hand, we have access to digital libraries, open educational resources (OER), institutional repositories, and online learning platforms that can dramatically enhance knowledge accessibility. On the other hand, if we neglect to prioritize accessibility and inclusive design, we might inadvertently reinforce or worsen exclusion, especially for users with visual, hearing, cognitive, or mobility impairments (Rothberg, 2019). This is the critical juncture of innovation and inclusion where the NIAGARA project operates.

## 1.2. Libraries, Disability, and Rights-Based Approaches

Internationally, access to information is recognized as a basic human right. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) clearly states that people with disabilities have the right to access information, education, and knowledge on an equal basis with others (UNCRPD, 2006). Additional frameworks, like the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, especially Sustainable Development Goal 4 on quality education that is inclusive and fair, further reinforce the duty of higher education institutions to eliminate barriers to participation and learning. At the African regional level, documents such as the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and the African Disability Protocol stress dignity, equality, and non-discrimination. They provide a foundation for inclusive services in public institutions, including universities (Africa Union, 1981). Many countries in Southern and Eastern Africa have turned these commitments into national disability policies, higher education laws, and ICT strategies. However, the application of these policies in academic libraries is often inconsistent and varies greatly (Waisath et al., 2024).

Traditionally, many university libraries in the region have operated with service models that focus on physical collections and uniform user experiences, paying little attention to different needs. Inclusive services, such as alternative format materials, assistive technologies, accessible digital platforms, and specialized user support, have often been limited, dependent on donations, or reliant on individual staff efforts rather than established institutional policies. This has led to fragmented services and reduced sustainability (Barfi et al., 2023). A rights-based approach to library services requires a major change in perspective. It shifts from seeing disability as a personal limitation to recognizing exclusion because of environmental, technological, and institutional barriers. This approach aligns closely with modern ideas in librarianship and information science, which view libraries as social infrastructure with a responsibility to promote equity, participation, and social justice (Winkelstein. et al., 2024).

## 1.3. The NIAGARA Project: Navigating the Digital Landscape

Against this backdrop, NIAGARA, Navigating the Digital Landscape: Universities Partnering for Change project, is a timely intervention. Funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union, NIAGARA brings together universities and partner institutions from Europe and Africa to improve institutional capacity in digital transformation, inclusive services, and knowledge sharing. The project recognizes

that digitalization and inclusion must go hand in hand. Rather than treating accessibility as an extra, NIAGARA incorporates inclusive design, disability awareness, and rights-based service delivery into broader digital strategies for HEIs to successfully achieve their goals of inclusion. In this regard, academic libraries play a key role in this vision because they facilitate digital access and support teaching, learning, and research.

NIAGARA's partnership model reflects the Erasmus+ focus on collaboration, mutual learning, and building lasting capacity. By encouraging dialogue between European and African institutions, the project allows for the exchange of good practices in accessible digital services, staff training, and policy development while being sensitive to local contexts and limitations. This approach aligns with evidence that shows sustainable inclusion in higher education requires comprehensive, institution-wide change rather than separate efforts (Brito, 2024). Within NIAGARA, inclusive academic libraries are seen as important agents of change. By providing librarians with the knowledge, skills, and tools to create and deliver accessible services; both physical and digital, the project directly contributes to institutional transformation and the achievement of inclusive education goals at national and regional levels.

#### 1.4. The Inclusive Services Course and Its Evaluation

One of the main capacity-building efforts under NIAGARA is the Inclusive Services Courses. It aims to improve librarians' skills in accessibility, disability inclusion, and digital service delivery. The courses tackle important gaps found in earlier studies. These include a lack of formal training on disability issues, insufficient understanding of assistive technologies, and low awareness of international accessibility standards like the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) and the Marrakesh Treaty provisions on accessible formats.

The report has several purposes. First, to systematically assess how well the NIAGARA project has designed, delivered, and institutionalised inclusive library services capacity-building. Second, it helps support learning and improvement during and after implementation. Three, it assesses the overall achievements, impact, and sustainability of the NIAGARA Inclusive Services interventions.

The evaluation also highlights the realities of academic libraries in Southern and Eastern Africa. Consistent with findings from IFLA and AAU studies, the report points out ongoing challenges such as limited funding for assistive technologies, competing priorities within institutions, and a lack of organizational support for inclusive initiatives. At the same time, it notes new opportunities linked to digital transformation, open science, and increased awareness of inclusion as a significant issue in quality and governance. By placing the evaluation of the courses within a rights-based and digitally informed framework, the report adds to wider discussions on inclusive higher education in Africa. It shows how specific, context-based training; supported by international cooperation programmes like Erasmus+ can drive change at both individual and institutional levels.

#### 1.5. Positioning NIAGARA within Regional and Global Agendas

The NIAGARA project is situated at the intersection of digital transformation, inclusive education, and international cooperation. By emphasizing academic libraries as key players in fostering inclusion, it reflects a shared belief that equitable access to information is vital for knowledge societies. The Inclusive Services Course Evaluation Report, therefore, is not merely a project deliverable; it represents a significant contribution to the ongoing regional and global efforts to transform higher education institutions into inclusive, accessible, and socially responsive. As universities in Tanzania and Zambia work their way through the intricate digital landscape, NIAGARA provides a collaborative and evidence-based approach to fostering inclusion within their cultures and systems. The insights gained from this evaluation lays the groundwork for scaling effective practices, shaping policy development, and enhancing partnerships to ensure that every learner can thrive in the digital era.

## 2.1. Purpose of the Evaluation

The evaluation was done to:

- i. Measure how effective the inclusive services courses are.
- ii. Assess learning gains among the librarians who took part.
- iii. Document the experiences of participants and the realities of their institutions.
- iv. Generate recommendations based on evidence.

## 2.2. Evaluation Design

The evaluation took a mixed-methods descriptive approach, blending qualitative insights with document analysis to gauge the relevance, effectiveness, and outcomes of the Inclusive Services interventions. This methodology was in line with the goals of the NIAGARA Project, focusing on both immediate learning results and the longer-term impact on institutions through curriculum integration.

## 2.2. Analysis

Simple descriptive statistics were utilised as well as narrative voices of the participants.

## 2.3. Scope of the Evaluation

The Inclusive Services Course Evaluation Report is a key deliverable for NIAGARA and includes four interrelated activities:

1. **Face-to-face Inclusive Services training** for librarians,
2. **An online User-Oriented Design course**, accessed via the University of Dar es Salaam MOOC platform (<https://moocs.udsm.ac.tz/course/view.php?id=25>),
3. **Integration of Inclusive Services content** into Library and Information Science (LIS) curricula in both Zambia and Tanzania, and
4. **Educational Services Materials** (<https://niagaragrants.com/educational-materials/#educational-materials-on-inclusive-library-services>).

# 4. KEY FINDINGS

## 4.1. Face-to-face Inclusive Services training for librarians

The one-day Inclusive Library Services course was created to give librarians practical skills for helping users with disabilities and special needs when they come to the library. It took place in July and August of 2025. The course mixes foundational concepts with hands-on activities, covering disability models, universal design, accessible formats, assistive technologies, inclusive communication, and policy development. The course will continuously be revised so that it remains contextually and timely relevant. (See Appendix 1). Participants took part in case studies, role plays, accessibility audits, and group discussions. This helped them apply inclusive service principles to their own library settings. A major benefit of the course was its focus on low-cost, practical solutions, making inclusion possible even in resource-limited situations. The creation of individual action plans also helped turn learning into action.

### 4.1.1. Participants

**Table 1: Participants**

Institution	Number of Participants
University of Zambia	14
University of Barotseland	10
Sokoine University of Agriculture	12
University of Dar es Salaam	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>

### 4.1.2. Comparative Analysis

Thirty eights of the participants currently identified disability terminologies, while 65% reported that they were not confident in their knowledge and skills in assisting users with disabilities and 72% indicated that they had never used assistive technologies. In the post survey, 89% correctly explained terminologies, 84% reported high confidence in their future service delivery in libraries and 78% could identify at least three assistive technologies.

**Table 2: Participants Knowledge Pre-Test and Post-Test**

Indicator	Pre-Test	Post-Test
Knowledge of disability models	41%	87%
Confidence in service provision	35%	82%
Awareness of assistive technologies	28%	79%

### 4.1.3. Qualitative Findings: Participant Voices

#### 4.1.3.1. University of Zambia

"Before I took this training, I was reluctant to help students with disabilities because I was scared of doing something wrong. Now, I'm feeling much more assured and educated."

#### 4.1.3.2. University of Barotseland

"This course really helped me see that there are affordable solutions out there. You don't always need pricey technology to promote inclusion".

#### 4.1.3.3. Sokoine University of Technology

"That session on communication really opened our eyes. It made us reconsider our attitudes towards persons with disabilities along with our skills."

#### 4.1.3.4. University of Dar es Salaam

"We now see inclusion as a policy issue, not just an individual librarian's effort."

The face-to-face course effectively improved practical skills, raised awareness, and developed a professional attitude towards inclusion.

## 4.2. Online User-Oriented Design Course

The online User-Oriented Design course (**Appendix 6**) provided another way to learn about designing information services from the viewpoint of different users. Offered on an open and flexible MOOC platform of the University of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania (<https://moocs.udsm.ac.tz/course/view.php?id=25>), the course allows for self-paced learning and expanded access to inclusive design ideas beyond traditional training.

The "User-oriented design" course is designed for librarians and LIS students to enhance their understanding and skills about user-centred design. Over approximately 10 hours, participants can explore and learn about principles of user-centred design in the context of libraries' activities.

The course has 33 participants registered, comprising 26 participants and 7 Teachers. The course has a pre-test and post-test survey. The course and all teaching materials about the course are licensed under [CC BY-SA 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/).

The course improves participants’ understanding of user needs, usability, accessibility, and inclusive digital service design. It complements the Inclusive Library Services course by reinforcing user-focused thinking and digital inclusivity, which is increasingly important in hybrid and digital library settings.



Figure 1: User Oriented Design Course

The online course expanded the reach and reinforced the focus on user-centred and inclusive digital service design. Table 3 gives participants views on the online course.

**Table 3: Participants Voices on the Online Course**

**What skills, knowledge and insights have you developed after taking this course?**

*“Skills in ensuring accessibility of information in various access point on web in a conducive web.*

*A somewhat better understanding of how user-oriented design is viewed from the library perspective, what is considered important for the librarian to consider”.*

**What are your thoughts on the structure of the course?**

*“I appreciated going from broad context to more specific library relevance, but as this is a long course, I lost overview underway and didn't find the titles that helpful in orienting back to where I last left off. The titles are a bit too similar/general.*

*It allows one to learn on the applicability of user accessibility on the web”.*

**How to you perceive the reading and learning material?**

*“As a body of new knowledge daily.*

*It's a lot of text, and the embedded videos are too long and without any direct relevance to feel necessary. Id like a combination of shorter texts with videos containing actual concrete examples of the solutions or inclusive content in use”.*

**What do you think of the assignments?**

*“I didn't notice the assignments while going through the course using the left-hand menu.*

*They are good”*

### 4.3. Integration Courses within LIS Curricula

Additionally, inclusion modules were added to library and information curricula at different levels (**Appendix 2, 3 & 4**), either in the Bachelor of Library and Information Science or the Master of Library and Information Science. The inclusion of some of these modules in the LIS curricula will make an impact on students and lecturers' knowledge and attitudes towards disability inclusion services in libraries and also directly impact library services as the students would graduate and get in the labour market with knowledge of the importance of inclusion in library and information services. Some of the Modules that were added include:

- I. Introduction to Inclusive and Equitable Information Services
- II. Information Access for Persons with Disabilities
- III. Universal Design for Learning and Accessible Information Resources
- IV. Inclusive Digital Literacy and Assistive Technologies

#### 4.3.1. Zambia

At the University of Zambia, the content on inclusive library services was added to the Master of Library and Information Science programme. This was done specifically within the course LIS 5331 Information. The integration included topics such as library accessibility, services for users with special needs, and inclusive ICT tools. This represented a clear move toward including these services in formal postgraduate education. The University of Barotseland is to implement the inclusive module in the 2026 academic year.

#### 4.3.2. Tanzania

At the University of Dar es Salaam, the following modules, 1. Library accessibility, 2. Services for users with special needs and 3. Inclusive ICT tools were integrated into the LS 212 Information Services to Users with Special Needs Course at the adoption rate of 20%. This is a second level course of the Bachelor's degree. On the other hand, Sokoine University of Agriculture in Tanzania, inclusive services modules will be added to the Information Literacy course in the next review of the Master of Information and Knowledge Management programme. These modules cover inclusive and fair information services, access to information for people with disabilities, universal design for learning, and assistive technologies.

Integrating inclusive services at the appropriate levels into the curriculum has institutionalized this education, ensuring its impact will last well beyond the project.

### 4.4. Educational materials on inclusive library services

The educational materials on inclusive library services were organised into five clear modules namely:

- a. Module 1: Disability Awareness
- b. Module 2: Disability Law and Policies in Libraries
- c. Module 3: Creating an Accessible and Inclusive Library
- d. Module 4: Assistive Technology in Libraries
- e. Module 5: User Centred Design in Libraries

These modules provide a solid foundation for inclusive, accessible, and user-centred library practices (<https://niagaragrant.com/educational-materials/#educational-materials-on-inclusive-library-services>). Module 1 covered Disability Awareness. It introduced participants to key concepts, disability models, and attitudes. This module aims to build empathy and challenge misconceptions that often hinder inclusive service delivery. Module 2 focused on Disability Law and Policies in Libraries. It helps participants understand international and national legal frameworks, professional standards, and institutional responsibilities. This knowledge allows them to place inclusive library services in a rights-based and policy-driven context.

Modules 3 and 4 concentrates on applying principles within library settings. Module 3 deals with creating accessible and inclusive libraries by highlighting universal design, physical accessibility, inclusive collections, signage, and service points. Participants were encouraged to critically evaluate their library spaces and services using practical checklists and examples. Module 4 on Assistive Technology in Libraries supports this by introducing various assistive tools and accessible formats. It showcases both high-tech and low-cost solutions suitable for libraries with limited resources. Together, these modules improves participants' ability to carry out practical interventions that enhance access for users with disabilities and special needs.

Module 5 on User-Centered Design in Libraries aimed to integrate inclusive thinking into service planning and delivery. It put users at the heart of the design process. This module stressed the importance of understanding diverse user needs, involving users in service design, and continuously assessing services to ensure they are responsive and inclusive. The recommended readings across all modules reinforced theoretical ideas, provided best practices from around the world, and encouraged deeper learning beyond the training sessions. Overall, the educational materials were practical and effective in providing librarians and students with the knowledge and skills needed to create, deliver, and maintain inclusive library and information services.

The educational content across the five modules really strengthens participants' understanding of disability and legal frameworks. It improves their skills in assessing and enhancing both physical and digital accessibility, increased their awareness of assistive technologies, and reinforces the importance of user-centred design principles in planning and delivering inclusive library services.

## 5. SYNERGIES ACROSS NIAGARA LIFECYCLE

The collaboration between institutions in Zambia and Tanzania has strengthened regional knowledge exchange and aligned work on inclusive library and information services with international best practices. The inclusive courses are rooted in library disability policies created under the NIAGARA Project, especially Deliverables T4.2 and D4.3, which focus on ensuring that the rights and aspirations of people with disabilities are met. The evaluation findings show a strong connection between policy development and capacity-building activities. The courses turn policy commitments into practical skills, attitudes, and service delivery abilities. This connection makes it possible for the inclusive service principles introduced in training are not seen just as separate programmes but as real expressions of institutional policy and strategic goals.

From an evaluation standpoint, this connection between policy and practice is a major strength of the project's design and execution. Participants could place course content, such as disability awareness, universal design, assistive technologies, and user-centred service planning within the context of new or revised library disability policies. This connection reinforces institutional accountability, clarifies staff roles in providing inclusive services, and increases the chances that inclusive practices would be regularly adopted instead of relying on individual efforts.

Importantly, connecting inclusive courses with disability policy development shows consistency throughout the NIAGARA Project lifecycle, from developing policies to developing skills and implementing services. The evaluation confirms that this combined approach has enhanced the sustainability and effectiveness of the interventions by embedding inclusion within governance structures, professional practices, and curriculum frameworks. As a result, libraries are better prepared to offer reliable, rights-based, and user-focused services that significantly improve access to information for people with disabilities and users with special needs.

## 6. CONCLUSION

The Inclusive Services Course has proven to be an impactful and cost-effective way to enhance skills, resulting in clear improvements in librarians' knowledge, professional abilities, and attitudes towards serving users with disabilities and individuals with special needs at the four universities involved. Evidence from pre-test and post-test assessments showed significant advancements in understanding disability models, inclusive service principles, accessible resources, and effective communication strategies. Feedback from participants also indicated a positive shift in their professional perspectives, with librarians feeling more confident, empathetic, and committed to providing equitable access to information. Moreover, the course promoted peer learning and reflection across institutions, allowing participants to tailor inclusive practices to their specific institutional contexts and resource limitations.

However, it's clear that while we can see some individual capacity improvements, the real challenge lies in ensuring that these gains are sustainable over the long haul. This largely depends on the commitment of institutions to provide ongoing support. For universities to effectively translate personal learning into broader systemic change, they must integrate inclusive services into their strategic plans, quality assurance frameworks and library policies, all the while ensuring they have the necessary financial and human resources. D 4.3 – Disability Policy Development was a key deliverable within the NIAGARA project and Disability Policies have been developed at the four institutions. Strong leadership, collaboration across different departments, and continuous professional development are vital to keep the energy up and avoid depending on just a few individual champions. Without this kind of structural commitment, the benefits gained from short-term training could easily become fragmented and inconsistent. Therefore, it's essential to recognize that sustained institutional support is not just an add-on to individual learning; it's a fundamental building block for creating inclusive, resilient, and rights-based academic library services.

## 7. RECOMMENDATIONS

### 7.1. Institutionalise Inclusive Library Services Training

Higher education institutions and library authorities should prioritize the formal integration of inclusive library services training into their programmes. By making it a necessary part of LIS curricula and staff development initiatives, we can ensure that every librarian is well-versed in accessibility, universal design, and providing services that are responsive to the needs of people with disabilities. This approach will help create a more inclusive environment in libraries for everyone.

### 7.2. Expand Blended and Online Learning Approaches

The online User-Oriented Design course showed the benefits of flexible and scalable learning models. Institutions should expand blended learning methods by mixing in-person training with online courses and open educational resources. This strategy will widen access, support ongoing professional development, and help librarians in remote or under-resourced areas get training on inclusive services. Libraries are encouraged to put them on their learning management systems.

### 7.3. Strengthen Practical and Context-Specific Learning

Future versions of the Inclusive Library Services course should focus more on applied learning. This includes accessibility audits, service redesign exercises, and hands-on use of assistive technologies. Encouraging participants to put their action plans into practice at their institutions will help turn knowledge into action.

#### 7.4. Support Curriculum Harmonization and Regional Collaboration

Collaboration between LIS schools in Zambia and Tanzania should improve to align inclusive services content, share teaching materials, and develop regional guidelines for inclusive library education. This teamwork will ensure consistent skills, cut down on repeated efforts, and enhance knowledge sharing between the two countries.

#### 7.5. Invest in Budget-Friendly Assistive Technologies and Accessible Resources

Libraries and institutions should prioritize putting money into affordable assistive technologies and accessible information formats. This includes things like screen readers, magnification tools, audio resources, and digital platforms that are easy for everyone to use. The emphasis should be on low-cost and open-source solutions that can work well in resource-limited environments.

#### 7.6. Create and Implement Inclusive Library Policies

Library management should focus on developing, reviewing, and enforcing inclusive service policies that clearly state their commitment to accessibility, equity, and non-discrimination. These policies should align with national disability laws and international frameworks, such as the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Sustainable Development Goals.

#### 7.7. Strengthen Monitoring and Evaluation of Inclusive Services

Institutions should implement straightforward yet systematic monitoring and evaluation processes to keep track of how well inclusive services are being delivered. This could include tools for user feedback, accessibility checklists, service usage data categorized by user needs, and regular self-assessments. The evidence gathered through monitoring and evaluation will support ongoing improvements and accountability.

#### 7.8. Involve Users with Disabilities in Service Design

Libraries should actively engage users with disabilities and their representative organizations in the design, implementation, and evaluation of services. By using participatory methods, we can ensure that inclusive services are driven by the users themselves, making them relevant to their actual needs rather than just assumptions.

#### 7.9. Sustain Capacity Building After the Project Lifecycle

To achieve long-term success, institutions should incorporate inclusive services training into their ongoing professional development programmes and allocate specific resources for staff training and curriculum assessment. By integrating these activities into their institutional plans and budgets, they can lessen their dependence on external project funding.

#### 7.10. Advocate for Support at National and Sector Levels

Library associations, academic institutions, and project partners should work to gain national recognition for inclusive library services as a professional standard. This includes engaging with policymakers, accreditation bodies, and professional councils to ensure that inclusion and accessibility are embedded within national library and information science education and service frameworks.

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## 9. APPENDICES

### 9.1. Appendix 1: Inclusive library Services Course

#### Course Title

Inclusive Library Services: Practical Skills for Supporting Users with Disabilities and Special Needs

#### Target Group

- Academic, public, school, and special librarians
- Library assistants and information officers
- Library managers and supervisors

#### Course Duration

1 Day (8 Hours)

#### Course Rationale

Libraries are gateways to information and knowledge for all members of society. Librarians must be equipped with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required to provide **equitable, accessible, and inclusive services** to persons with disabilities and users with special needs. This course builds librarians' capacity to design, deliver, and evaluate inclusive library services in line with human rights, universal design principles, and professional ethics.

#### Overall Course Goal

To equip librarians with practical competencies to design and deliver inclusive, accessible, and user-centred library services for people with disabilities and special needs.

#### Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, participants will be able to:

1. Explain key concepts related to disability, inclusion, and accessibility in library contexts
2. Identify different categories of disabilities and their information needs
3. Apply inclusive service principles in library spaces, collections, and services
4. Use appropriate communication strategies when assisting users with disabilities
5. Identify and utilize assistive technologies and accessible information formats
6. Develop an action plan to improve inclusive services in their libraries

#### Course Structure and Programme

##### Session 1: Introduction to Inclusive Library Services

Time: 08:30 – 09:30

##### Topics Covered:

- Understanding inclusion, equity, and accessibility
- Disability models (medical, social, and human rights-based approaches)
- The role of libraries in promoting social inclusion
- Overview of international and national frameworks (e.g. UNCRPD, SDGs, national disability policies)

##### Learning Activities:

- Icebreaker and expectations mapping
- Short presentation and group discussion

##### Key Takeaway:

Inclusion is a professional responsibility, not an optional service.

##### Session 2: Understanding Disabilities and Special Needs

**Time:** 09:30 – 10:45

**Topics Covered:**

- Types of disabilities:
  - Visual impairments
  - Hearing impairments
  - Physical and mobility impairments
  - Intellectual and learning disabilities
  - Psychosocial and mental health conditions
- Temporary vs permanent disabilities
- Hidden disabilities
- Barriers faced by users in library environments

**Learning Activities:**

- Case studies from real library settings
- Group identification of barriers

**Key Takeaway:**

Different disabilities require different service approaches.

**Tea Break:** 10:45 – 11:00

**Session 3: Inclusive Library Spaces and Physical Accessibility**

**Time:** 11:00 – 12:15

**Topics Covered:**

- Universal Design principles in libraries
- Physical access: entrances, shelving, signage, furniture
- Wayfinding and navigation
- Safety and emergency considerations
- Inclusive service points and seating arrangements

**Learning Activities:**

- Accessibility checklist exercise
- Group discussion on participants' libraries

**Key Takeaway:**

An inclusive space benefits all users, not only persons with disabilities.

**Session 4: Inclusive Collections, Formats, and Assistive Technologies**

**Time:** 12:15 – 13:15

**Topics Covered:**

- Accessible information formats:
  - Braille, large print, audio books
  - Easy-to-read materials
  - Digital accessibility (screen-reader friendly content)
- Introduction to assistive technologies:
  - Screen readers
  - Magnifiers
  - Text-to-speech and speech-to-text tools
- Open-access and inclusive digital resources

**Learning Activities:**

- Demonstration of accessible formats and tools
- Group brainstorming on low-cost solutions

**Key Takeaway:**

Inclusion is possible even with limited resources.

**Lunch Break:** 13:15 – 14:00

**Session 5: Communication and Customer Care for Inclusive Services**

**Time:** 14:00 – 15:15

**Topics Covered:**

- Disability-sensitive language and etiquette
- Communicating with:
  - Users with visual impairments
  - Users with hearing impairments
  - Users with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities
- Confidentiality, dignity, and respect
- Handling difficult situations professionally

**Learning Activities:**

- Role plays and scenarios
- Reflection on attitudes and biases

**Key Takeaway:**

Respectful communication is the foundation of inclusive service.

**Session 6: Inclusive Policies, Programs, and Outreach**

**Time:** 15:15 – 16:15

**Topics Covered:**

- Developing inclusive library policies
- Inclusive programming (story time, user training, exhibitions)
- Partnerships with disability organizations and schools
- Community outreach and advocacy
- Monitoring and evaluating inclusive services

**Learning Activities:**

- Group work: Designing an inclusive library activity
- Peer feedback

**Key Takeaway:**

Inclusion must be embedded in policy and practice.

**Session 7: Action Planning and Course Wrap-Up**

**Time:** 16:15 – 17:00

**Topics Covered:**

- Identifying priority actions for participants' libraries
- Developing short-term and long-term inclusion plans
- Course reflection and evaluation

**Learning Activities:**

- Individual action plan development
- Plenary discussion

**Key Takeaway:**

Every librarian can be an inclusion champion.

**Teaching Methods**

- Interactive lectures
- Group discussions
- Case studies
- Role plays
- Practical exercises

**Assessment (Non-Examination Based)**

- Participation in activities
- Group work outputs
- Individual action plan

**Certification**

Participants who complete the course receive a **Certificate of Participation in Inclusive Library Services**.

## 9.2. Appendix 2: USDM Integration of Inclusive Library Services in LIS Curriculum

### NIAGARA's Course Content Integration into BLIS Course

<b>Course Code</b>	<b>Course Name</b>	<b>Module integrated</b>	<b>NIAGARA Course Name</b>	<b>Content</b>	<b>Year of study</b>	<b>% of adoption</b>
LS 212	Information Services to Users with Special Needs	1	Inclusive Library Services	1. Library accessibility 2. Services for users with special needs 3. Inclusive ICT tools	2	20%

### 9.3. Appendix 3: SUA Integration of Inclusive Library Services in LIS Curriculum



UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA  
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY  
SOKOINE UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURE  
COLLEGE OF NATURAL AND APPLIED SCIENCES  
DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATICS AND INFORMATION  
TECHNOLOGY  
PO BOX 3038, Morogoro - Tanzania



Email: [diit@sua.ac.tz](mailto:diit@sua.ac.tz);

website: <https://www.sua.ac.tz>

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Please refer to:

Our Ref: SUA/CoNAS/DIIT/NIAGARA/01

02 that January, 2026

The Project Coordinator

NIAGARA Project

Dear Sir/Madam,

**RE: INTEGRATION OF INCLUSIVE SERVICES MODULES INTO INFORMATION LITERACY COURSE OF MASTER OF INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT (MIKM)**

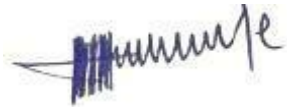
I am pleased to report that, as part of the implementation of the NIAGARA Project, the Information Literacy course was successfully enhanced through the integration of Inclusive Services modules. This curriculum integration was undertaken collaboratively between Professor Wulystan P. Mtega (SUA) and Dr Christine Kanyengo (UNZA), whose technical expertise and contribution were instrumental in ensuring that the modules were aligned with the objectives of the NIAGARA Project and international best practices in inclusive information and library services. The course will be incorporated in the forthcoming curriculum review for MIKM.

The following Inclusive Services modules are proposed to be integrated into the Information Literacy course:

- i. Introduction to Inclusive and Equitable Information Services
- ii. Information Access for Persons with Disabilities
- iii. Universal Design for Learning and Accessible Information Resources
- iv. Inclusive Digital Literacy and Assistive Technologies

The integration of these modules aims at strengthening learners' competencies in designing, delivering, and evaluating information services that are inclusive, user centred, and responsive to the needs of diverse communities.

Yours sincerely,



Dr. Michael Pendo John Mahenge

**Head, Department of Informatics and Information  
Technology** Email: [mahenge@sua.ac.tz](mailto:mahenge@sua.ac.tz)

Phone: 0778 700 044

## 9.4. Appendix 4: UNZA Integration of Inclusive Library Services in LIS Curriculum



**THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA**

**SCHOOL OF EDUCATION**

DEPARTMENT OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE

Telephone: 0211-290320  
Telegrams: UNZA LUSAKA  
Telex: UNZALU ZA 44370

P.O. Box 32379  
Lusaka, Zambia  
Fax: +260-1-290320

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29<sup>th</sup> December 2025

The Project Coordinator  
NIAGARA Project

Dear Sir/Madam,

**RE: INTEGRATION OF INCLUSIVE SERVICES MODULES INTO INFORMATION LITERACY COURSE OF MASTER OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE (MLIS)**

I am pleased to report that, as part of the implementation of the **NIAGARA Project**, the Information Literacy course was successfully enhanced through the integration of **Inclusive Services modules**. The course is LIS 5331 of the MLIS Programme.

This curriculum integration was undertaken collaboratively with **Professor Wulystan Mtega**, whose technical expertise and contribution were instrumental in ensuring that the modules were aligned with the objectives of the NIAGARA Project and international best practices in inclusive information and library services.

The following Inclusive Services modules were integrated into the Information Literacy course:

- Introduction to Inclusive and Equitable Information Services
- Information Access for Persons with Disabilities
- Universal Design for Learning and Accessible Information Resources
- Inclusive Digital Literacy and Assistive Technologies

The integration of these modules was aimed at strengthening learners' competencies in designing, delivering, and evaluating information services that are inclusive, user-centred, and responsive to the needs of diverse communities.

Yours sincerely,



**Abel M'kulama**

**Head of Department**

**Email:** [abel.mkulama@unza.zm](mailto:abel.mkulama@unza.zm)

**Phone:** 0973345005

## 9.5. Appendix 5: User-oriented design course

<https://moocs.udsm.ac.tz/course/view.php?id=25>

# User-oriented design

Course Settings Participants Grades Reports More ▾

▼ **General** [Collapse all](#)

Welcome to this course introducing user-oriented design. This course is on a basic level and no previous knowledge on the topic is required. We expect you to have basic computer skills. The "User-oriented design" course is designed for librarians and LIS students to enhance their understanding and skills about user-centered design. Over approximately 10 hours, participants will explore and learn about principles of user-centered design in the context of libraries' activities.

After you have worked through this course you should have acquired the following competencies:

**Knowledge**

- Identify and explain user-oriented design principles, methods, and techniques.
- Recognize and evaluate relevant and usable digital solutions that are inclusive of all users.
- Describe unintended consequences of the digital revolution, such as unequal geographic spread, [accessibility](#) challenges, [usability](#) issues, and unequal benefits from digital solutions.

**Skills**

- Develop strategies to incorporate inclusive design processes
- Use appropriate tools to make more inclusive designs
- Implements the rules of [accessibility](#) in practice

**General competence**

- Show the ability to participate in a group-based project
- Can analyse and agree on a project topic/task as a group and execute the work according to the syllabus
- Can recruit representative end-users that suit the task at hand and perform a test among this group.

**Teaching materials**

A diverse range of educational resources is available, comprising articles, case studies, good practices, guides, texts, websites, etc. These resources have been carefully curated to support comprehensive learning and are easily accessible through the course platform.

**Learning process**

The course is delivered online using a MOOC platform that supports both synchronous and asynchronous learning, providing participants with flexibility in their learning pace and style. Alternatively, the course can be conducted in a blended format, which combines face-to-face sessions in a computer lab with digital learning components accessible through a Learning Management System (LMS).

**Assessment**

This course is designed to support the learning journey of participants interested in embedded librarianship through their own active engagement, self-development, and self-improvement. We provide study materials, various activities, and opportunities for participants to reflect on their learning. Any assessment will be formative, centered on providing constructive [feedback](#).

**Course developers**

the NIAGARA team

MOOCs Home Dashboard My courses 🔔 🗨️ CW ▾ Edit mode

☰


Gerd Berget (Oslo Metropolitan University, Norway) for an inspiring talk to NIAGARA members in Oslo 2024 titled "Universal design from a Norwegian perspective".


**Copyright**

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**Credits**

This course was developed as part of the [NIAGARA project](#), which is co-funded by the European Union.

 **Co-funded by the European Union**



## Approval

We, Institutional coordinators from partner institutions, approve the content of D3.5 Inclusive services course evaluation report:

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# D3.5 Inclusive services Course Evaluation Report Jan2026v3\_28.01.2026


Final Audit Report


2026-01-30


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By:	Elin Opheim (elin.opheim@inn.no)
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