

# Needs analysis report in the Rwandan higher educational context

## D3.1 – Institutional Needs Analysis Report

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Prepared by University of Alicante

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## 1. Introduction

The primary aim of Work Package 3 (WP3) is to tackle the pressing issue of the scarcity of substantial, extensive, credible, and comparable data concerning disabilities within the higher education systems of partner nations and the wider regional context. Analysing this data will enable the customization and optimization of project initiatives to suit the specific needs of target groups and to actively engage with project stakeholders from the outset. WP3 activities will also foster the exchange of experiences and the sharing of best practices among European collaborators and participating countries.

In the framework of WP3, Task 3.1 has developed and put into operation the "Analysis Methodology & Data Collection" as part of the comprehensive research methodology. This methodology has informed a Needs Analysis exercise aimed at evaluating the accessibility landscape and discriminatory or inclusive practices within each partner institution concerning disabilities. The research plan will adhere to international standards for collecting comprehensive data on disabilities, using both quantitative and qualitative methods to gain a comprehensive understanding of the situation faced by students with disabilities.

Subsequently, Task 3.2 will assemble the analytical findings from this needs assessment research. This compilation will provide a thorough breakdown of insights derived from the needs assessment, categorized by partner country and higher education institution. It will contextualize the information and establish structural connections that can guide future project activities. This data analysis will specifically concentrate on two key areas: the requirements for assistive technology (AT) to facilitate swift and efficient equipment procurement (WP4), and the identification of gaps in skills and knowledge that will inform the selection of training topics (WP6).

To accomplish this, a combination of quantitative data collection methods (e.g., surveys) and qualitative methods (such as focus groups and open questions surveys) have been chosen to ensure a rigorous comparative analysis of the conditions experienced by students with disabilities. This approach aligns with international standards for managing data related to disabilities.

In the pursuit of addressing the critical gaps in disability-related data within partner countries' higher education systems, our research endeavours rely on a comprehensive set of instruments carefully designed to illuminate and understand the unique challenges and needs of students with disabilities. In terms of the quantitative research, it was suggested to have three online questionnaires for each target group:

- ▶ For students with disabilities
- ▶ For students without disabilities
- ▶ For academic and non-academic staff

On the other hand, regarding the qualitative research, it was agreed to have:

- ▶ Focus groups
- ▶ Open-ended questions in each of the above-mentioned questionnaires

These instruments, comprising both quantitative and qualitative methodologies, serve as the backbone of our data collection efforts. This approach empowers us to tailor project activities, bridge knowledge gaps, and facilitate more inclusive educational environments for all.

## 2. Methodology

### 2.1. Universities

#### 2.1.1. University of Rwanda

The University of Rwanda, a public institution spanning six campuses, is dedicated to providing education for its sizable student body of 26,894 students. This diverse student population includes individuals with various types of disabilities:

- ▼ Physical/motor disability: 30 students
- ▼ Health/organic disability: 10 students
- ▼ Hearing impairment: 12 students
- ▼ Visual disability: 25 students
- ▼ Intellectual or Developmental disability: 7 students
- ▼ Psychosocial or Mental health disability: 5 students
- ▼ Other disabilities: Specific learning disabilities (6 students), Attention Deficit/Hyperactive Disorder (4 students), and Emotional Behavioral Disorders (3 students).

Moreover, the institution has implemented a comprehensive approach to inclusivity, extending support to staff members with disabilities:

- ▼ Administrative staff with disabilities: 2 staff per type of disability (physical/motor, health/organic, hearing impairment, visual disability, intellectual or developmental, psychosocial or mental health).
- ▼ Academic staff with disabilities: 3 staff per type of disability (physical/motor, health/organic, hearing impairment, visual disability, intellectual or developmental, psychosocial or mental health).

The institution has been actively providing support services for students with disabilities since 2008 through a dedicated center offering assistive technologies, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, and hearing screening.

In terms of the normative framework, the University adheres to international and national laws and has specific legislation known as the University of Rwanda



Policy and Guidelines on Inclusive Learning and Teaching Services<sup>1</sup>. Furthermore, there is an official policy on Disability, Inclusion, and Accessibility readily accessible on the institution's website.

Valuable relationships have been cultivated with Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs) and the University of Rwanda's resource center, contributing significantly to efforts in the realm of inclusion and disability within the context of higher education. There is also a close relationship with local stakeholders, particularly NGOs specializing in disability-related initiatives. Internships and professional placements are an integral part of the academic office, facilitated by the Office of Career Guidance and Counseling. In terms of reasonable accommodation, braille transcription services are provided, screen reader software such as JAWS and NVDA are utilized, and a range of assistive technology tools like braille embossers, Victor Reader, and more are available.

However, several challenges persist, including the absence of clear policy guidelines on admission and support for students with special needs, inadequate physical facilities and services accessibility, low awareness levels about the needs and rights of individuals with special needs within the institution's community, and insufficient inclusive participation in various programs and activities. Furthermore, there is a recognition of the need for better inter-campus coordination of existing support services, more skilled staff to cater to the needs of students with special needs, and enhanced support for staff members with disabilities.

To address these issues, the institution intends to enact relevant laws related to individuals with disabilities and continue to work toward making the institution more inclusive and accessible.

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<sup>1</sup> Policy and Guidelines on Inclusive Learning and Teaching Services, July 2015: <https://ur.ac.rw/documents/policies/Policy%20Guidelines%20on%20Inclusive%20Learning%20&%20Teaching%20services.pdf>

### 2.1.2. Institut d'Enseignement Supérieur de Ruhengeri

INES-Ruhengeri, a private institution, stands committed to providing education to its 4,668 students for the 2022/23 academic year. The student body comprises 2,498 males and 2,170 females. Diversity within the university is evident in the presence of students with disabilities:

- ▶ Physical/motor disabilities: 17 students
- ▶ Hearing impairment: 2 students
- ▶ Visual disabilities: 3 students
- ▶ Other disabilities, including skin and multiple disabilities: 4 students

Despite this diversity among students, there are currently only 3 persons with physical or motor disability among the academic staff. However, among the administrative staff we did not find anyone with any type of disability. This suggests potential areas for enhancing diversity and inclusivity in the administrative staff members of INES-Ruhengeri, creating an environment that reflects the broader spectrum of the student community.

- ▶ At INES-Ruhengeri, efforts are underway to create an inclusive environment for students with disabilities. The institution provides support services through budgeted action plans facilitated by the Students' Union. Notable achievements include representation of students with disabilities in the Students' Union Committee, a dedicated communication platform, and the incorporation of disability-related activities in the Students' Union's action plan. New facilities and easy campus accessibility were improved for further support the disability inclusion.
- ▶ Regarding the normative framework, INES-Ruhengeri complies with national disability laws and is in the process of developing specific legislation for disability and education. Although elements of inclusivity are scattered across various documents, the institution is working on an official policy on Disability, Inclusion & Accessibility.
- ▶ While not currently affiliated with networks for inclusion and disability, INES-Ruhengeri is focused on enhancing student support. The institution does not have a close relationship with local stakeholders in terms of disability services.
- ▶ Reasonable accommodation includes accessible hostels and classrooms. Although the institution lacks in-house assistive technology, some students bring their own tools. Key challenges include the absence of an equipped center for students with disabilities and a shortage of

trained staff.

The university's future plans aim to establish a support center with assistive technology, develop a comprehensive policy on disability and inclusion, and consider budget allocation for disability-related initiatives. These measures are designed to fully integrate students with disabilities into the academic community.

### **2.1.3. East African University Rwanda**

East African University Rwanda is a private institution dedicated to providing education and opportunities to students. It is situated in Rwanda and is committed to fostering an inclusive environment. The university enrolls a total of 2,080 students in the academic year 2022/23. This substantial student body reflects the institution's significance in providing higher education. East African University Rwanda is a private organization. It operates independently and is self-funded, which can impact its policies and programs. The institution boasts a presence across two different campuses, possibly contributing to its accessibility and reach for students and staff.

The University enrolls students with various disabilities, including physical/motor disabilities (5 students) and psychosocial or mental health disabilities (3 students). However, there are currently no students or staff members with health/organic, hearing, visual, intellectual/developmental, or other disabilities. This presents opportunities for enhancing inclusivity and accommodating a broader range of disabilities among students and staff.

The institution affirmed the provision of Support Services for students with disabilities through the Students Welfare Office. Furthermore, the university has been actively involved in sensitizing both students and lecturers to foster positive relationships and create a healthy and conducive environment for students with disabilities. It was reported that between 2018 and 2023, the university has successfully graduated three students with disabilities.

The University has policies and regulations in place, beyond national laws, to address disability, including a Policy on Disability & Procedures. They also have specific legislation on disability and education, and their current university regulations include disability, diversity, and inclusion in their development

protocols and ordinances. Additionally, the institution has an official policy on Disability, Inclusion & Accessibility<sup>2</sup>.

The University is not currently part of any network that addresses disability-related issues within the context of higher education. They reported that they do not have a close relationship with local stakeholders, such as local government, NGOs, industry, or private sector schools, concerning specific services and accommodations for students with disabilities. Regarding internships or professional placements, academic internships are integrated within the academic office, undertaken by each student at the end of their program duration.

The institution stated that they do not have any assistive technology in place to facilitate students with disabilities. Their main challenges and problems related to Disability and Inclusive Education include a lack of skilled staff to cater to the needs of students with disabilities, a shortage of assistive technologies, an absence of a specific strategy to support these students, and insufficient budget allocation for inclusion programs. To enhance their inclusion efforts, the university has plans to establish a center at each of its campuses to better address issues related to inclusion.

In summary, the East African University Rwanda has undertaken efforts to support students with disabilities, including the provision of services, sensitization, and a policy framework. However, there are areas for improvement, such as the lack of assistive technologies and budget allocation. The plans to establish inclusion centers are a positive step toward furthering inclusion efforts.

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<sup>2</sup> Disability Policy and Procedure, September 2016: <http://eur.ac.rw/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/EAUR-DISABILITY-POLICY.pdf>

## 2.2. Participants

### 2.2.1. Students with disabilities

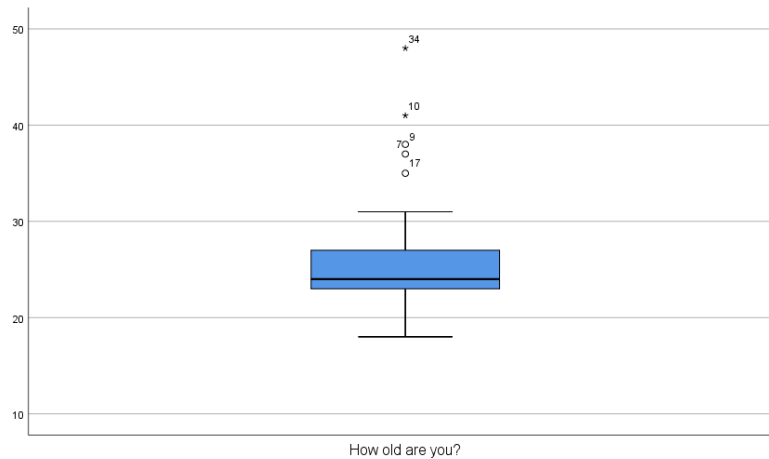
The sample is made up of 43 students, the aim of which is to identify the most common characteristics of this group of people with disabilities.

The average age of the group with disability is around 26 years old (25.79). In the distribution of the data in this variable, a certain dispersion of the data is observed (it does not follow a normal distribution), which reflects an asymmetry or values farther from the mean, the representation that can best position the central value of the age is the median (24) since it is the parameter that is located in distributions that do not follow a normal distribution, since this value is not so sensitive to extreme values. In the visualization of the box-and-whisker plot, the dispersion is observed in the greater concentration of values between the third quartile and the median (more width of the box), in addition to having outliers above the upper limit that represents those ages that exceed the median.

**How old are you?:** (centralization and dispersion parameters)

<b>Age</b>	<b>n: 42</b>
Average	25,79
Confidence Interval of 95%	[23,9-27,67]
Trimmed mean 5%	25,14
Median	24,00
Variance	36,660
Standard deviation	6,055
Minimum	18
Maximum	48
Range	30
Interquartile range	4
Asymmetry	1,971
Curtosis	4,175

Table 1: [statistics on the age of participants](#)



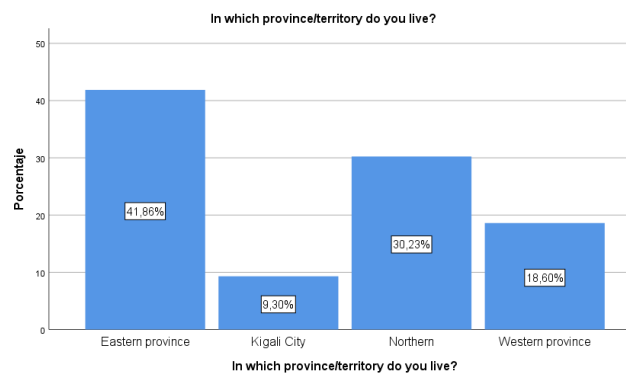
Graph 1: statistics on the age of participants

As for the province where the respondents live, it is distributed among the Eastern province with 41.9%, followed by the Northern province with 30.2%. The remaining 30% is divided between Western province, 18.6% and the capital Kigali City, 9.3%.

**In which province/territory do you live?:** Frequency (absolute - relative)

Province/territory	n: 43	%
Eastern province	18	41,9
Kigali City	4	9,3
Northern	13	30,2
Western province	8	18,6
Total	43	100,0

Table 2: statistics on the place of origin



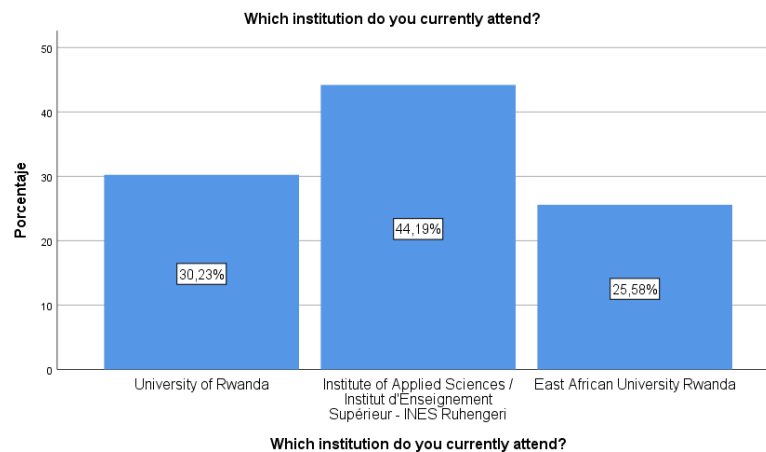
Graph 2: percentage on which place of origin

More than 44% claim to attend the Institute of Applied Sciences / Institut d'Enseignement Supérieur - INES Ruhengeri for their training (44.2%) followed by students attending the University of Rwanda, with 30.2%. The remaining 25.6% attend East African University Rwanda. All of them are studying Bachelor's Degree.

**Which institution do you currently attend?:** Frequency (absolute - relative)

Institution	n: 43	%
University of Rwanda	13	30,2
Institute of Applied Sciences / Institut d'Enseignement Supérieur - INES Ruhengeri	19	44,2
East African University Rwanda	11	25,6
Total	43	100,0

Table 3: statistics on university they attend



Graph 3: percentage on which institution they attend

As for the time they have been studying at the university 65.12% have not been at the university more than 2 years, 32.6% are in their first year and the other 32.6% between 1 and 2 years. Some 18.6% have been at the university between 2 and 3 years, and 13.9% have been at the university between 3 and 4 years. Only 2.3% have been in college more than 4 years. Regarding the type of studies

are being pursued currently, the 100% of the students claim to be in their bachelor's degree.

Almost all of them claim to be involved full time in their studies, 83.7% say so, compared to 16.3% who deny dedicating full time to their studies.

### What studies are you pursuing (e.g. bachelor's, master's, doctoral)?:

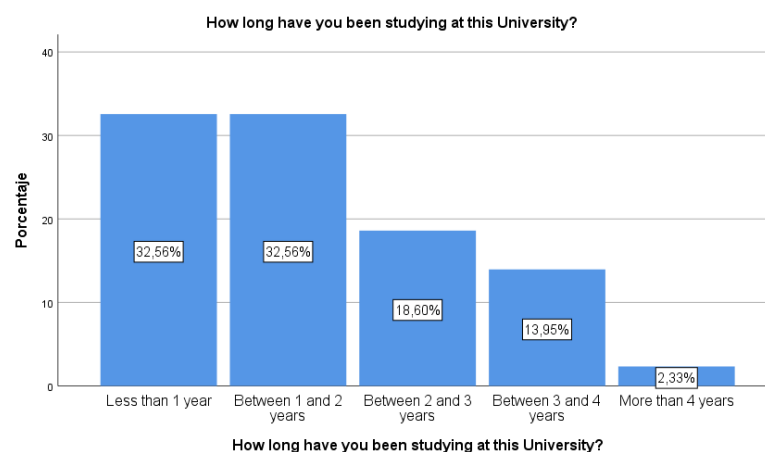
Frequency (absolute)

Bachelor's Degree 100%

### How long have you been studying at this University?: Frequency (absolute - relative)

How long have you been studying	n: 43	%
Less than 1 year	14	32,6
Between 1 and 2 years	14	32,6
Between 2 and 3 years	8	18,6
Between 3 and 4 years	6	14,0
More than 4 years	1	2,3
Total	43	100,0

Table 4: statistics on the time studying at the university



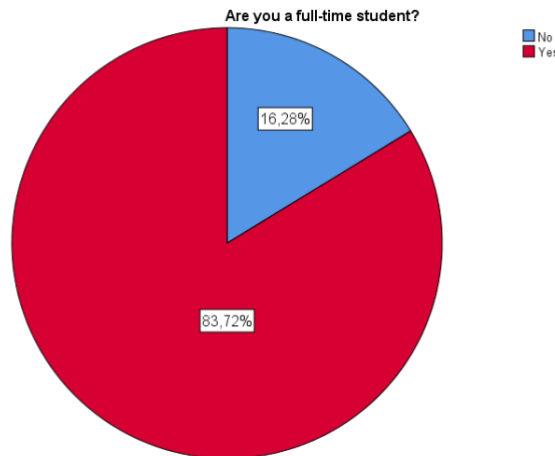
Graph 4: percentage on the time studying at the university



**Are you a full-time student?:** Frequency (absolute-relative)

Are you a full-time student?	n: 43	%
No	7	16,3
Yes	36	83,7
Total	43	100,0

Table 5: statistics on the time dedicated to studying



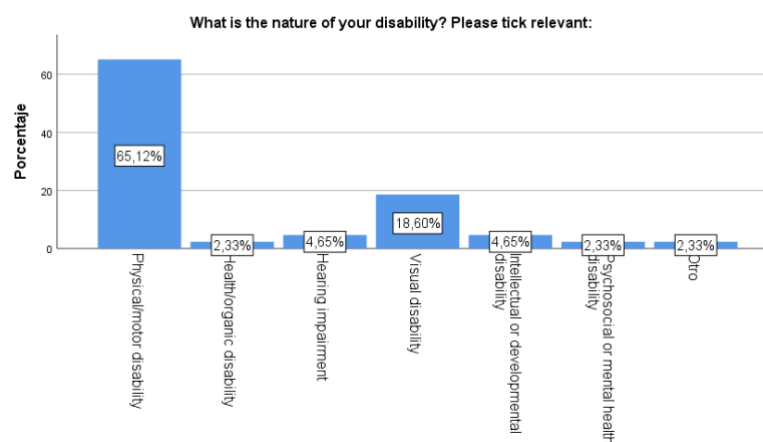
Graph 5: percentage on the time dedicated to studying

With regard to the question on the type of disability, 65.1% of the sample stated that they had Physical/motor disability, followed by Visual disability (18.6%), followed by Hearing impairment (4.7%), Intellectual or developmental disability (18.6%), and then Health/organic disability and Psychosocial or mental health disability (2.3%).

**What is the nature of your disability? Please tick relevant:** Frequency  
(absolute - relative)

Nature of your disability	n: 43	%
Physical/motor disability	28	65,1
Health/organic disability	1	2,3
Hearing impairment	2	4,7
Visual disability	8	18,6
Intellectual or developmental disability	2	4,7
Psychosocial or mental health disability	1	2,3
Other	1	2,3
Total	43	100,0

Table 6: statistics on the nature of the disability



Graph 6: percentage on the nature of the disability

### 2.2.2. Students without disabilities

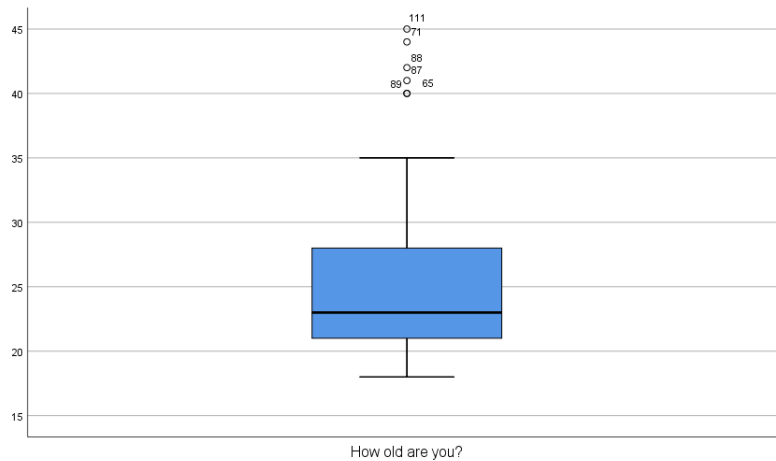
As for the sample, it is composed of 106 students from which the aim is to recognize the most common characteristics of this group without disabilities, as well as the support given by the universities to this group.

The average age of the group of students is practically 25 years old (24.99). In the distribution of the data in this variable, a certain dispersion of the data is observed (it does not follow a normal distribution), which reflects an asymmetry or values farther from the mean, the representation that can best position the central value of the age is the median (23) since it is the parameter that is located in distributions that do not follow a normal distribution, since this value is not so sensitive to extreme values. In the visualization of the box-and-whisker plot, it can be seen how the dispersion occurs in the greater concentration of values between the third quartile and the median (more width of the box) in addition to having outliers above the upper limit that represents those ages that exceed the median.

### How old are you?: (centralization and dispersion parameters)

Age	n: 105
Average	24,99
Confidence Interval of 95%	[23,9-26,1]
Trimmed mean 5%	24,39
Median	23,00
Variance	34,048
Standard deviation	5,835
Minimum	18
Maximum	45
Range	27
Interquartile range	7
Asymmetry	1,555
Curtosis	2,257

Table 7: [statistics on the age of participants](#)



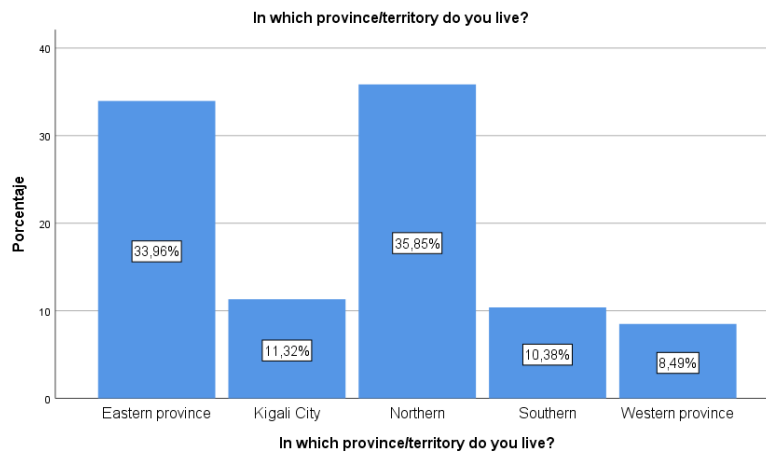
Graph 7: statistics on the age of participants

As for the province where the respondents live, it is distributed among Northern province with 35.8%, followed by Eastern province with 34.0%. The remaining 30% is divided between the capital Kigali City, 11.3%, Southern, 10.4% and Western province, 8.5%.

**In which province/territory do you live?:** Frequency (absolute - relative)

Province/territory	n: 106	%
Eastern province	36	34,0
Kigali City	12	11,3
Northern Province	38	35,8
Southern Province	11	10,4
Western province	9	8,5
Total	106	100,0

Table 8: statistics on the place of origin



Graph 8: percentage on which place of origin

As for the educational institution they attend, there is a more or less proportional distribution: 35.8% say they attend the University of Rwanda, 34.0% attend the Institute of Applied Sciences / Institut d'Enseignement Supérieur - INES Ruhengeri, and 30.2% attend the East African University Rwanda.

Of these, 83% are pursuing a Bachelor's Degree, followed by 16% with a Master's Degree.

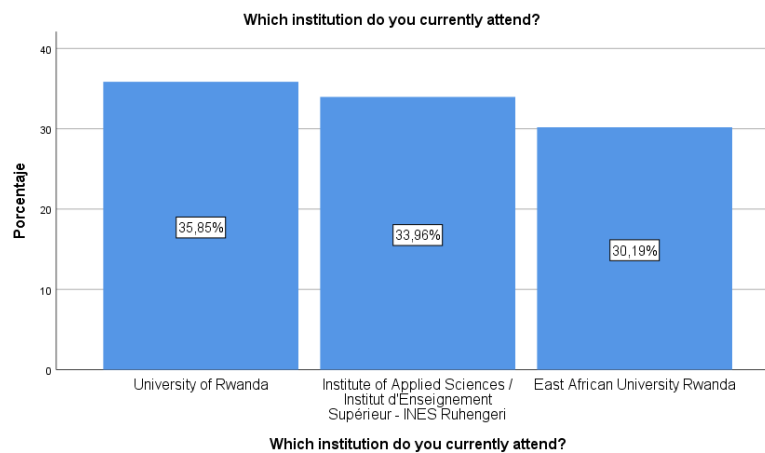
In terms of the time, they have been studying at the university, 53.8% have not been at the university more than 2 years, 27.4% are in their first year and the other 26.4% between 1 and 2 years. Some 17% have been at the university between 2 and 3 years, and 23.6% have been at the university between 3 and 4 years. Only 5.6% have been at the university more than 4 years.

Almost all said they were involved full time in their studies, 77.4% said so, compared to 22.6% who denied devoting full time to their studies.

### Which institution do you currently attend?: Frequency (absolute - relative)

Institution	n: 106	%
University of Rwanda	38	35,8
Institute of Applied Sciences / Institut d'Enseignement Supérieur - INES Ruhengeri	36	34,0
East African University Rwanda	32	30,2
Total	106	100,0

Table 9: statistics on university they attend



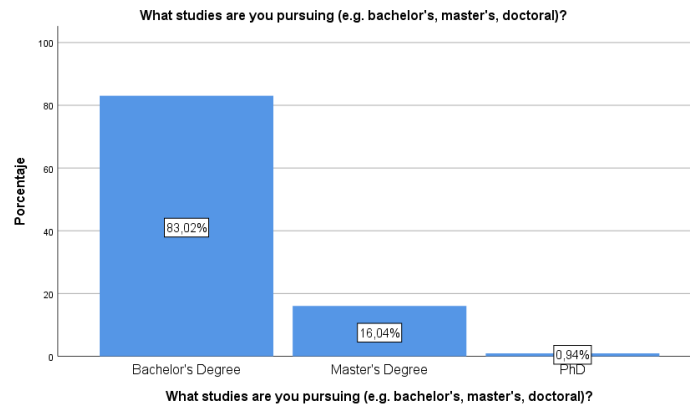
Graph 9: percentage on which institution they attend

### What studies are you pursuing (e.g. bachelor's, master's, doctoral)?:

Frequency (absolute - relative)

What studies are you pursuing	n: 106	%
Bachelor's Degree	88	83,0
Master's Degree	17	16,0
PhD	1	,9
Total	106	100,0

Table 10: statistics on the studies pursued

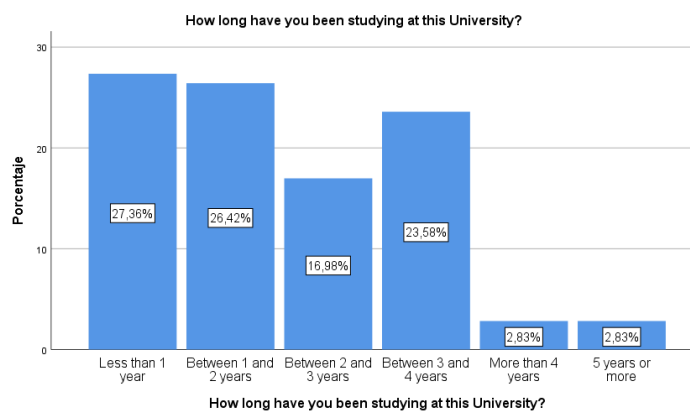


Graph 10: percentage on the studies pursued

**How long have you been studying at this University?:** Frequency (absolute - relative)

How long have you been studying	n: 106	%
Less than 1 year	29	27,4
Between 1 and 2 years	28	26,4
Between 2 and 3 years	18	17,0
Between 3 and 4 years	25	23,6
More than 4 years	3	2,8
5 years or more	3	2,8
<b>Total</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>100,0</b>

Table 11: statistics on the time studying

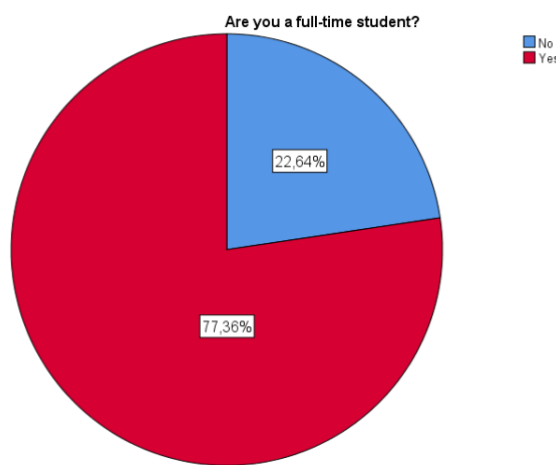


Graph 11: percentage on the time studying

**Are you a full-time student?:** Frequency (absolute - relative)

Are you a full-time student?	n: 106	%
No	24	22,6
Yes	82	77,4
Total	106	100,0

Table 12: [statistics on the time dedicated to studying](#)



Graph 12: [percentage on the time dedicated to studying](#)

**2.2.3. Academic and non-academic staff**

Of the sample of academic staff and non-academic staff (n: 144), 45.1% are linked to the University of Rwanda, followed by those working at the Institute of Applied Sciences / Institut d'Enseignement Supérieur - INES Ruhengeri and those from the East African University Rwanda (29.2% and 25.7% respectively).

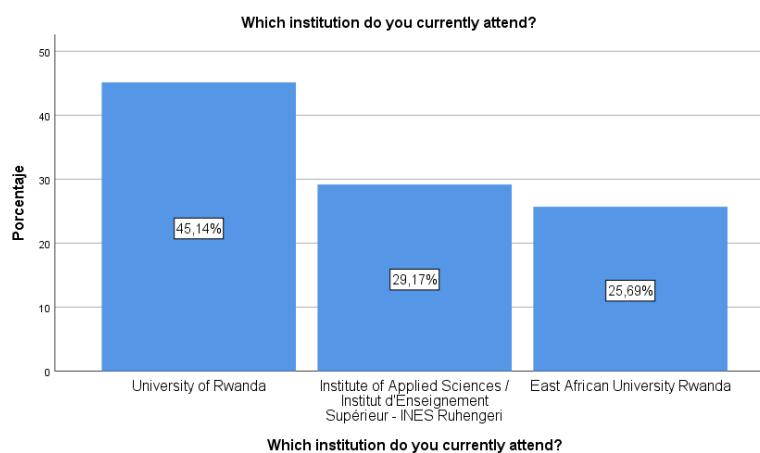
As for the functions they perform within the organization, more than 35% belong to the faculty, followed by 20.8% Staff (General Administrative Support). Interestingly, 31 subjects mentioned that they fit into another profile which is that of student (21.5%).



### Which institution do you currently attend?: Frequency (absolute - relative)

Institution	n: 144	%
University of Rwanda	65	45,1
Institute of Applied Sciences / Institut d'Enseignement Supérieur - INES Ruhengeri	42	29,2
East African University Rwanda	37	25,7
Total	144	100,0

Table 13: statistics on the university attended

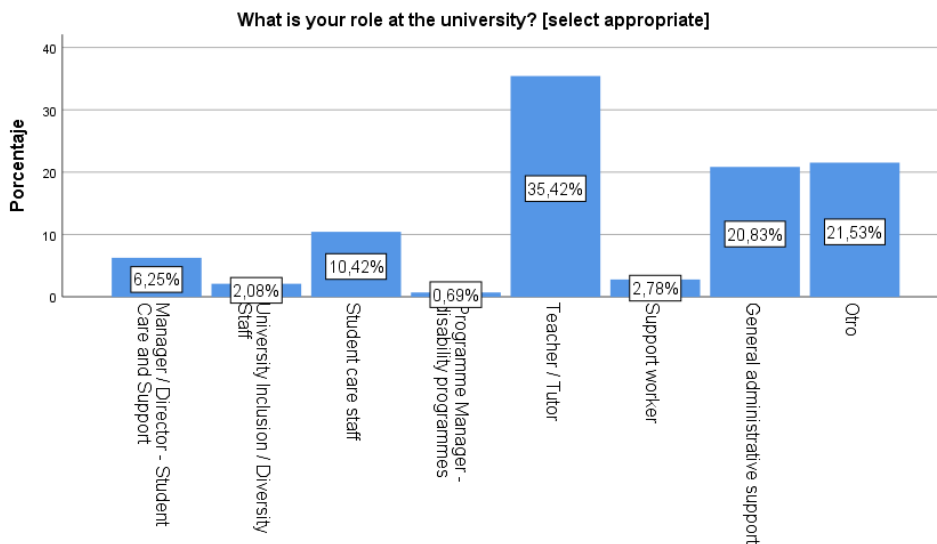


Graph 13: percentage on the university attended

### What is your role at the university?: Frequency (absolute - relative)

Institution	n: 144	%
Manager / Director - Student Care and Support	9	6,3
University Inclusion / Diversity Staff	3	2,1
Student care staff	15	10,4
Programme Manager - disability programmes	1	,7
Teacher / Tutor	51	35,4
Support worker	4	2,8
General administrative support	30	20,8
Other	31	21,5
Total	144	100,0

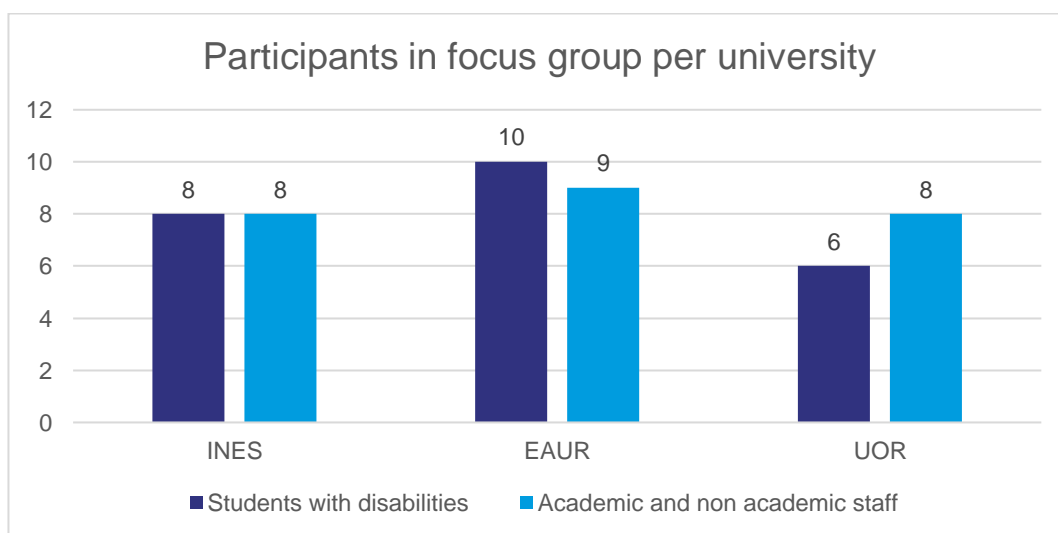
Table 14: statistics on the role at the university



Graph 14: percentage on the role at the university

### 2.2.4. Focus group participants

Several focus group with students with disabilities and academic and non-academic staff have taken place in each university. In total, 24 students with disabilities and 25 academic and non-academic staff participated. Participation varied slightly among the three universities as it can be seen in the following graph:



Graph 15: number of participants per university

## 2.3. Instruments

### 2.3.1. Focus group for students with disabilities and university staff

Six focus groups (two at each Rwandan partner university) were organized with students with disabilities to assess the level of satisfaction, expectations, and to identify problems and solutions; as well as staff involved in student support services or university decision making.

It was advisable to have two different groups to make the focus analysis as realistic as possible; in fact, qualitative research experts suggested that a homogeneous group yielded better results, as similar people produced more focused results. It was known that by having more homogeneous groups, participants felt more comfortable talking about their experiences, given that their group mates had had similar experiences. Because of this, homogeneous groups also generated detailed discussions about common problems and experiences. It is important to note that homogeneity in focus group research referred to participants' backgrounds or personal characteristics, not to their opinions and attitudes.

### 2.3.2. Quantitative questionnaire for students with disabilities

Students with disabilities were requested to complete a customized self-assessment questionnaire in an online format. This questionnaire was designed to furnish our partners with comprehensive, credible, and comparable data regarding disability within the framework of higher education systems in each country and the broader region. The tool encompassed 14 inquiries that addressed a diverse range of topics related to the accessibility of higher education for students with disabilities. These topics included, among others, access to their studies on an equal opportunity basis, the obstacles encountered by students with disabilities when initially entering university, and the ongoing barriers and challenges they face. The questionnaire also delved into university practices aimed at supporting students with disabilities in their studies, as well as the awareness and evaluation of the support and equipment provided by their respective universities. Students with disabilities were asked to provide their responses to a combination of open-ended and close-ended questions, including options such as Yes/No and Likert scale ratings.

### **2.3.3. Quantitative questionnaire for students without disabilities**

Students without disabilities completed a questionnaire tailor made in on-line form composed of two clearly differentiated sections: sociodemographic data and the dimensions of their relationships with students with disabilities. The first of these dimensions is perception, referring to how they view students with disabilities. The second of these dimensions is attitude, referring to their actions and behaviours towards students with disabilities. Both dimensions are composed of 5 Likert scale items with 5 degrees of satisfaction.

### **2.3.4. Quantitative questionnaire for academic and non-academic staff**

Academic and non-academic staff were asked to complete a custom-made self-report questionnaire in electronic format. This questionnaire consists of a block of sociodemographic questions. Subsequently of two closed-response items on the facilities offered to students with disabilities. The bulk of the items in this questionnaire are grouped into a block of Likert scale statements about their knowledge and use of resources to assist students with disabilities. Finally, an open-ended question is included about improvements the university could make to better serve the needs of students with disabilities.

## **2.4. Data analysis**

Every partner received timely notification about the process, and in accordance with the provided instructions, data gathering for quantitative research started in June 2023, concluding in October 2023. Quantitative research data underwent analysis utilizing SPSS 20.

Qualitative research, on the other hand, was initiated in July 2023 and brought to a close in October 2023. The examination of focus group data was performed using content analysis techniques. In alignment with the guidelines for interviews and focus group sessions established, partners submitted the encoded data for interviews and focus groups.

### 3. Results

#### 3.1. Results of the qualitative research

##### 3.1.1. Open-ended questions from the on-line questionnaires

In the online questionnaire for students with disabilities there are two open-ended questions. The first question asked about the type of support they have received from their university in the last three years, while the second question asked about the type of equipment they have received in the same period of time. Regarding the first question, 12 students out of 43 responded positively to having received some kind of support in the last three years from their university. Table 15 shows a summary of the responses and their frequencies. In particular, the most frequently mentioned type of support is support for reading, e.g. printouts of books in larger font sizes:

“Printed notes in large print size as I have low vision.” P32.

On the other hand, with a lower frequency, students with disabilities mention practical support and human support as other types of support received:

“my teachers help me to understand by giving me special attention in class and after class” P38.

“Collaboration by other” P24.

<b>What kind of support do you receive (or did you receive in the last three years)?</b>	
<b>Support</b>	<b>Frequencies</b>
<b>Reading support materials</b>	5
<b>Practical support</b>	2
<b>Human support</b>	2

Table 15: frequencies per word

Regarding the question about the support received, only 7 students answered positively that they had received some support. In table 16 we can find the

summary table with the frequencies. Among these answers, the most frequently mentioned type of equipment is the one related to help in reading. In turn, the equipment to help in the teaching-learning process also stands out. On the other hand, with a lower frequency, we find technological equipment:

“The kind of equipment has the university provided to me is large print (note) but same time.” P25.

“Surveying equipment” P5.

“Internet access” P16.

<b>What kind of equipment has the university provided you with (or provided you with in the last three years)?</b>	
<b>Equipment</b>	<b>Frequencies</b>
<b>Learning access equipment</b>	3
<b>Reading equipment</b>	3
<b>Technology equipment</b>	2

Table 16: frequencies per word

In the online questionnaire for academic and non-academic staff of universities, we found a final open-ended question on what the university could do to better meet the needs of students with disabilities. For this question, we found a total of 144 responses. We can see a summary of these responses and their frequencies in table 17. The improvements most frequently repeated by university staff are those referring to the equipment offered for students with disabilities (n=29): “Increase the level of equipment according to the students in the school with disabilities” P28.

In turn, with a very high frequency, staff refer to the identification of the needs of these students as something to improve in their institution (n=25):

“To seat with them and understand what they need in order to help them in their academic performance” P32.

A large majority of university academics refer to the improvement of infrastructures, classrooms, common spaces, accommodations, etc. as a very important area for improvement in order to better meet the needs of students with disabilities (n=24):

“The University should make sure if the buildings and facilities are accessible” P21.

The next most repeated improvement by staff is the creation of special rates for students with disabilities to allow easier access to studies (n=19):

“Technical staff to support students and provide fees” P103.

“Provide fees and equipped computer laboratory” P104.

On the other hand, another important factor for respondents is the importance of having specifically trained staff to address the needs of students with disabilities. These staff range from teachers to specific social workers (n=17):

“To recruit staff dedicated to responding to the needs of students with disabilities, allocate budget towards inclusion programs” P4.

Equally important for them are all the improvements related to the teaching-learning process in the classroom. They mention the creation of specific materials, such as technological resources and methodologies that help these students in their classes (n=17):

“The university should change teaching and learning method to help learners with disabilities to fit the lesson as others” P78.

The frequencies are somewhat lower for attitudinal improvements in universities. In particular, some staff members mention punishments for vexatious behaviour towards students with disabilities, moral support and rewards for students in class, etc. (n=7):

“To care students with disabilities and punish the one who violate them” P48.

On the other hand, some members of the institution mentioned the creation of a specific centre or office to address the needs of students with disabilities in each university (n=6). “Opening a permanent office for daily receive their requests and analyse their concerns” P17.

In the same way, they also mention the direct improvement of economic resources aimed at improving the situation of students with disabilities. They mention an increase in budgets as well as the application for grants and external calls for proposals that can provide funding (n=6): “The East African University Rwanda should apply for support in order to help students with disabilities” P81.

Correct assessment and identification of students with disabilities is also mentioned as a way to improve their situation on campus (n=4):

“Identify and assess all students with disability then decide the appropriate support to be given to them” P77.

Finally, with a somewhat lower frequency, we found references to the creation of specific programmes to cater for these students (n=2).

“Have a comprehensive program to support people with disabilities.” P15.

<b>What could the university do to better meet the needs of students with disabilities?</b>	
<b>Improvements</b>	<b>Frequencies</b>
<b>Equipment</b>	29
<b>Needs identification</b>	25
<b>Facilities</b>	24
<b>Special fees</b>	19
<b>Staff</b>	17

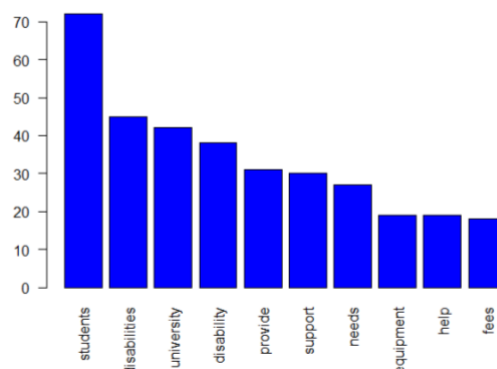


Teaching and learning	17
Attitudinal	7
Specific centre	6
Economic aspects	6
Students' assessment and identification	4
Creation of specific programs	2

Table 17: frequencies per word

### More repeated words in a graphic and in a word cloud

#### Most frequently used words



### 3.1.2. Focus groups with students with disabilities

We present the results of the three focus groups carried out in the three participating universities where 23 students with disabilities have been involved to convey their point of view.

We started from some predefined categories to be able to operationalize the information, as is known these categories were:

- Accessibility (to campus, university services or to learning process)
- Needs
- Participations of the students in adaptations
- Proposals to make the university more inclusive
- Maybe others

Taking into account this distribution, it can be seen that all three universities face common challenges related to accessibility, awareness, and student participation, but the specifics of these challenges vary.

### **About Accessibility**

INES students refer to a lack of accessible infrastructure, signage, and library facilities. Insufficient facilities like toilets and parking spaces.

And UoR students talk about specific challenges faced by them, such as incompatible software, lack of sign language interpretation, and accessibility issues.

Meanwhile EAUR problems are related to light exposure, speech difficulties, low volume lectures, and lack of accessibility in buildings, toilets, pathways, sports, culture, cafeteria, and library.

### **About Perceived Needs**

INES students allude to a lack of support, equipment and awareness among staff and students. They also talk about financial challenges and lack of insurance coverage. That is, absence of structured processes to identify the needs of students.

Listening to UoR students there is talk of some lack of support for speech difficulties, problems for blind students and unmet needs for students with physical disabilities, mental health problems and low vision.

In the case of EAUR, they have referred to needs related to assistive technologies, speech difficulties, hearing disabilities, mental difficulties and physical disabilities. Lack of awareness and low collaboration in adaptation processes.

## **About Student Participation in Curricular Adaptations**

The stories from INES show that students consider that there is limited collaboration between students with disabilities and the university in identifying adaptations. Therefore, they believe that there is a lack of a dedicated staff member to address the challenges of disability.

UoR opinion members allude to inadequate participation and representation of students with disabilities in adaptation processes. Also talk about challenges in accessing resources for adaptation.

In EAUR, low collaboration and participation in the adaptation process is observed. They talk about the challenges faced by students with different disabilities in this regard.

## **Proposals for a More Inclusive University**

In the case of INES, the proposals have to do with the adoption of policies, thus they speak of: provision of adequate facilities, awareness, training of staff and students, and responsibility of university employees in creating an inclusive environment.

UoR students allude to improved accessibility, provision of assistive technologies, training of staff and students, and active involvement of students with disabilities in adaptation processes.

EAUR also believes that adequate implementation of adaptations, policy implementation, awareness-raising, better identification of students with disabilities and accessibility improvements must be achieved.

This is a summary showing the predetermined categories in each of the campuses, but we can delve into a meta-analysis where taking the data together we have findings distributed in tasks for the universities.

### **1. Types of Support and Equipment Received/Used:**

Limited Support: Participants reported minimal support from the universities, lacking assistive technologies, accessible materials, and adapted classrooms.

Challenges in Previous Stages: It is crucial to mention that some participants received support in previous educational stages, which was not continued in the university.

## **2. Unmet Needs (Academic and Non-Academic):**

**Accessibility Barriers:** Challenges accessing library facilities, classrooms, and restrooms due to lack of ramps and other assistive infrastructure.

**Insufficient Materials:** Lack of Braille materials, compatible software, and hearing aids, hindering academic progress.

**Social Inclusion:** Students expressed the need for awareness campaigns to foster acceptance and understanding among their peers and staff

## **3. Way to Establish Adaptations:**

**Lack of Collaboration:** Limited collaboration between students with disabilities and university staff to identify and establish necessary adaptations.

**Inadequate Representation:** The existing representation channels, like student unions, lack the power or support to address disability-specific concerns effectively.

## **4. Making Universities More Inclusive:**

**Physical Accessibility:** Urgent need for improved infrastructure, including accessible pathways, restrooms, and classrooms.

**Awareness and Training:** Comprehensive awareness programs for both students and staff to ensure understanding and empathy toward students with disabilities.

**Policy Implementation:** Strict implementation of inclusive policies and continuous monitoring of their effectiveness.

## **5. Recommendations and proposals of all the students are related with:**

- **Infrastructure Improvement:**
  - Renovate existing buildings to include ramps, elevators, and accessible restrooms.
  - Ensure classrooms are acoustically optimized for students with hearing impairments.
  - Create designated parking spaces for students with disabilities.
- **Academic Support:**
  - Develop a Resource Centre with assistive technologies, Braille materials, and accessible software.

- Provide training for lecturers to teach in sign language and utilize inclusive teaching methods.
  - Ensure all learning materials are available in various accessible formats.
- Awareness and Sensitization:
    - Conduct regular awareness campaigns for students, staff, and the wider university community.
    - Organize workshops and seminars focusing on disability inclusivity.
    - Encourage student-led initiatives promoting inclusivity and understanding among peers.
  - Representation and Support:
    - Strengthen the role of student representatives for disability issues within student unions.
    - Establish a dedicated support staff member responsible for coordinating disability-related services.
    - Encourage open dialogues between students with disabilities and university administration.

Furthermore, seeing all the needs mentioned, we can show them in a table where we have included the characteristics that these needs allude to and how prepared higher education as a whole is to assume them.

<b>Most Repeated Needs</b>	<b>Characteristics of an Inclusive University</b>	<b>Is University ready?</b>
1. <b>Physical Accessibility</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ramps, elevators, and accessible facilities</li> <li>- Adequate parking spaces</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Limited, need significant improvements in infrastructure</li> </ul>
2. <b>Academic Support &amp; Materials</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Resource centre with assistive technologies</li> <li>- Accessible learning materials</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Insufficient resources, lack of inclusive educational tech</li> </ul>
3. <b>Social Inclusion Awareness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Awareness campaigns</li> <li>- Workshops promoting inclusivity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Some initiatives, but more widespread efforts needed</li> </ul>

Most Repeated Needs	Characteristics of an Inclusive University	Is University ready?
4. <b>Teacher Training</b>	- Lecturer training in sign language and inclusive teaching methods	- Limited, faculty training programs require significant boost
5. <b>Representation &amp; Support</b>	- Strengthened role of student representatives for disability issues	- Limited support structure, need for dedicated staff

This table is based on data like the one shown below and which comes from quotations from participants:

#### **Physical Accessibility:**

*"I face a challenge of accessibility of the buildings, accessibility of toilets and pathways."*

*"In old buildings, classrooms which have students with disabilities should use ground rooms to facilitate movement."*

#### **Academic Support & Materials:**

*"We need materials in braille and accessible learning materials."*

*"No assistive technology provided to students who have speech difficulties."*

#### **Social Inclusion Awareness:**

*"We need more awareness-raising actions for inclusion in order for people around us to accept us as human beings with different needs."*

*"With love from other people, we will feel okay and be motivated by doing good for the future."*

#### **Teacher Training:**

*"Lecturers should undergo training in sign language."*

*"University staff should get training in assisting students with disability."*

## Representation & Support:

*“We need someone as a staff to deal with our challenges in order to make a good improvement in identifying and establishing the adaptations that students with disabilities need.”*

*“The student with a disability who represents others in the Student Union should get guidance and support to help his/her fellows.”*

Still, we have to say that from the transcripts and reports provided by the three participating universities, several differences can be observed in their approaches and challenges regarding the inclusion of students with disabilities. Overall, while each university faces unique challenges in supporting students with disabilities, there are common themes that we want to highlight such:

- All three universities face challenges related to awareness and understanding of students with disabilities' needs.
- There is a common need for physical accessibility improvements, including accessible buildings and facilities.
- Students at all universities require academic support, including assistive technologies and accessible learning materials.
- Teacher training and awareness programs are lacking across the board, impacting the learning experience of students with disabilities.

### 3.1.3. Focus groups with universities staff

To analyse the needs and degree of university inclusion perceived by the staff, 25 participants from the three campuses collaborated. Participants who are divided between academic and administrative staff and who tell us that are several key issues and differences in the way to inclusion. Here's an analysis of the needs and challenges observed across the universities:

#### Points in common:

- **Lack of Specialized Processes:** All universities lack specific academic requirements or processes tailored for students with disabilities. These students are expected to follow the same procedures as non-disabled students, without additional support.
- **Barriers and Challenges:** Physical accessibility remains a significant barrier across all universities, including inaccessible buildings,

classrooms, and lack of assistive technologies. Inadequate study materials, limited access to information, and a lack of awareness about various types of disabilities further contribute to the challenges faced by students with disabilities.

- Limited Participation in Activities: students with disabilities have limited opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities, sports, and leisure activities due to the lack of accessible facilities.
- Need for Training: There is a consensus on the need for training and awareness among staff and students to better understand how to interact with and support individuals with disabilities.

### **Differences about the main challenges perceived by staff:**

INES University shows that:

- About Support: INES lacks specific support mechanisms for students with disabilities. Students are expected to adapt on their own, with minimal assistance from the institution.
- Parental Responsibility: Students with disabilities often rely on their parents or guardians for necessary materials and support, indicating a lack of institutional aid.
- Limited Outreach: INES does not engage in active outreach to attract students with disabilities. There are no special initiatives to encourage their enrolment.

UoR indicates that:

- About Self-Declaration Form: the university provides a self-declaration form during the induction process, allowing students to disclose their disabilities. However, the effectiveness of this process in ensuring adequate support remains unclear.
- About to get more inclusivity: The university has made some efforts in terms of policy (e.g., priority accommodation), but there is still a long way to go in terms of implementing inclusive practices effectively.
- Regarding adaptations: The adaptation and accommodation processes are inconsistent, with some students feeling left out from decision-making regarding the support they require.



EAUR reveals:

- About technological Support: the institution faces challenges related to technology accessibility, particularly concerning the Moodle e-learning platform and other digital resources.
- Regarding Professional Staff: EAUR lacks professional staff trained to support students with disabilities. This indicates a deficiency in the available resources to cater to diverse needs.
- In Policy Implementation affaires: Although there are proposals for improvement, the effective implementation of inclusive policies and practices remains a concern.

It is remembered that the analysis wants to connect the material extracted from the groups with the categories proposed, namely, the categories (based on the experience of the partners) proposed were:

- How staff perceive the student with disability process on campus;
- Transition from secondary school;
- Access to campus;
- Day to day life of a student with disability at university and what kind of barriers maybe they perceive;
- Access to information of the students with disability;
- Level of participation in establishing adaptations or adjustments;
- Proposals to make the university more inclusive;
- Normative/regulations about disability in that university;
- Attitude of decision-making teams about disability;
- Visibility of disability;
- Among other categories.

And it can be seen that universities share similar issues related to policy gaps, lack of awareness, inadequate support mechanisms, and physical barriers. The recommendations from the focus groups align with the identified categories, emphasizing the urgent need for policy development, awareness campaigns, staff training, and infrastructure enhancements to create inclusive environments.

Altogether the contents most closely linked to these categories are:

### **1. How we see that students with disabilities face academic requirements:**

Students with disabilities lack specialized academic processes and often adapt on their own without institutional support. There is a lack of structured assistance

for academic requirements and students rely on their own initiatives or help from their parents.

## 2. Barriers faced by students with disabilities:

Common barriers include the physical inaccessibility of buildings, classrooms, and campuses. Students face challenges related to inadequate study materials, limited access to information, and lack of assistive technologies. Limited participation in extracurricular activities and sports further isolates students with disabilities.

## 3. Identify and Establish Adaptations or Supports:

There is a lack of clear processes to identify and accommodate the needs of students with disabilities. Although self-declaration forms exist, their effectiveness and subsequent adaptation processes are inconsistent. Limited staff support and participation in decision-making processes are notable problems.

## 4. Proposals to make the University more inclusive:

Recommendations include the development of disability and inclusion policies, awareness campaigns, staff and student training, and infrastructure improvements. Suggestions also cover the need for specialized staff, assistive technologies, and active outreach activities to engage and support students with disabilities.

We can summarize the main findings in a table, which would look like:

Relevant Information	Related Categories
Lack of specialized academic processes for students with disabilities.	How students deal with academic requirements
Students adapt on their own without institutional support.	
Limited academic requirements or processes for students with disabilities.	
Students rely on their own initiatives or parental help.	
Physical inaccessibility of buildings, classrooms, and compounds.	Barriers faced by students with disabilities

Relevant Information	Related Categories
Inadequate study materials, limited access to information, and lack of assistive technologies.	
Limited participation in extracurricular activities and sports.	
Lack of clear processes for identifying and adapting to the needs of students with disabilities.	Identifying and establishing adaptations or supports
Inconsistent self-declaration forms and subsequent adaptation processes.	
Limited staff support and involvement in decision-making processes.	
Need for policy development for disability and inclusion.	Making the University more inclusive
Importance of awareness campaigns and training programs.	
Urgent need for infrastructure improvements and specialized staff.	

It should be noted that it is possible that some ideas express common themes and may relate to multiple categories. We can verify some information in primary sources, highlighting only a few quotations:

**1. Lack of Specialized Academic Processes/Support:**

“Here at (...), there is no academic requirements regarding to them, they do the same process like other students without disabilities.”

**2. Self-Reliance of Students:**

“...there is no help or special process for students with disability at (...), it means they try to adapt themselves to all conditions at the campus without any help from the institution...”

**3. Inadequate Study Materials and Assistive Technologies:**

“There is no digital support for visual impairment and it is a problem for people with disabilities to come to study at (...).”

#### **4. Participation in Activities:**

“They do not participate in different activities done at university like attending different games because they do not have special places and facilities for their participation.”

#### **5. Staff Support:**

“Lack of proper approach during interaction with students with disabilities...Lack of accommodation for those students from far...”

#### **6. Need for Policy Development and Awareness Campaigns:**

“I recommend that we should adopt a policy for disability and inclusion because we do not have this policy where all issues regarding disability matters should be and being consulted...”

#### **7. Urgent Need for Infrastructure Improvements:**

“If possible, the institution could give to the staff some trainings about disability and inclusion...(University...) should rebuild or change old buildings by adding smooth ways like a lift and accessible toilet for people with disabilities.”

The findings underscore the pressing need for comprehensive policies, awareness initiatives, and staff training programs in Rwandan higher education institutions. Improving physical accessibility, providing adequate study materials, and ensuring consistent adaptation processes are vital for fostering a truly inclusive learning environment. By implementing these recommendations, Rwandan universities can create an atmosphere where all students, regardless of their abilities, have equal access to education and opportunities.

### **3.2. Results of the quantitative research**

#### **3.2.1. Questionnaires for students with disabilities**

The following is an extensive report presenting the outcomes obtained through the analysis of data obtained from the survey tailored exclusively for students with disabilities (SwD).

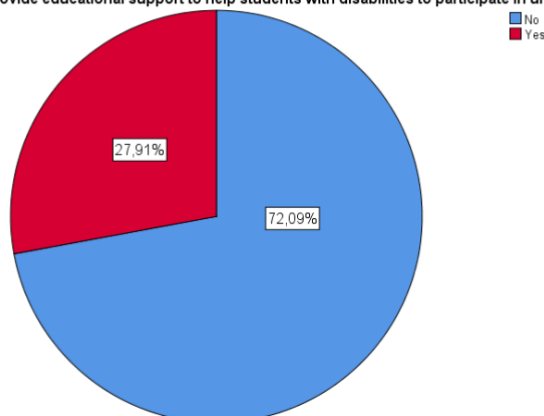
The sociodemographic items have been analysed above in the "participants" section. Therefore, we start the analysis from the items related to the support received by students with disabilities in their respective universities.

**Has the university provided you with any educational support to help you in your studies?:** Frequency (absolute - relative)

support to help you in your studies	n: 43	%
No	31	72,1
Yes	12	27,9
Total	43	100,0

Table 18: [Statistics on the support provided](#)

Has the university provided you with any educational support to help you in your studies?/Does the university provide educational support to help students with disabilities to participate in university life?:



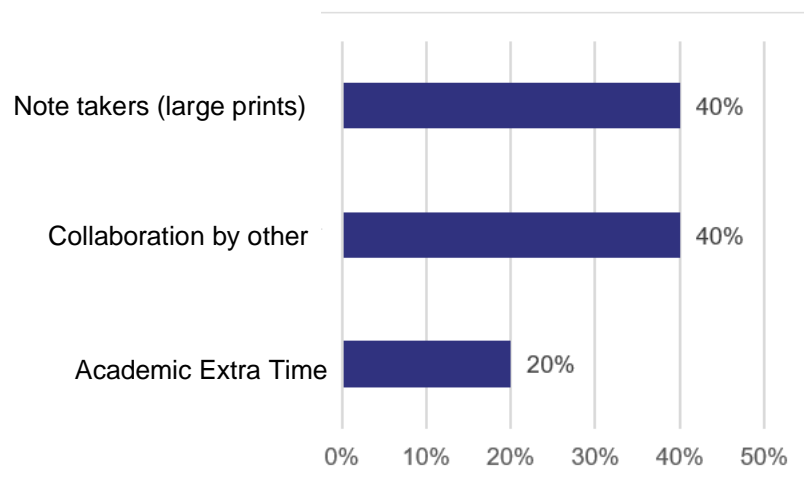
Graph 16: [Percentage on the support provided](#)

As to whether the university has provided you with any educational support to help you in your studies, 72.1% deny support from the university institution compared to 27.9% who do.

**If yes, what kind of support do you receive (or did you receive in the last three years)?**: Frequency (absolute - relative)

What kind of support	n: 10	%
Academic Extra time	2	20%
Collaboration by other	4	40%
Lecture support	1	10%
Note takers (large prints)	3	30%

Table 19: [Statistics on the support received](#)



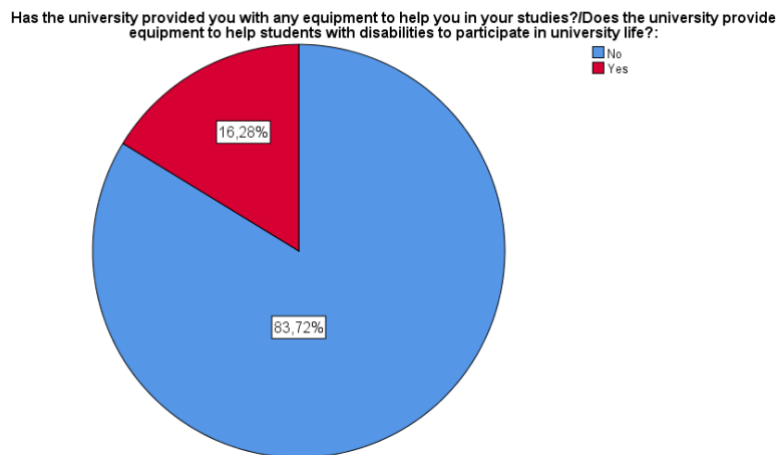
Graph 17: [Percentage on the support received](#)

Of those who state that they perceive some type of educational support or help from the university, they mainly specify collaboration or practical support for students with disabilities, help in accessing facilities, etc. (40%). They also show support through adapted reading material, printouts of reading material in adapted font size (40%) and specific attention with extended hours to help the understanding of students with disability.

**Has the university provided you with any equipment to help you in your studies?:** Frequency (absolute - relative)

Has the university provided you with any equipment to help you in your studies?	n: 43	%
No	36	83,7
Yes	7	16,3
Total	43	100,0

Table 20: Statistics on the equipment provided



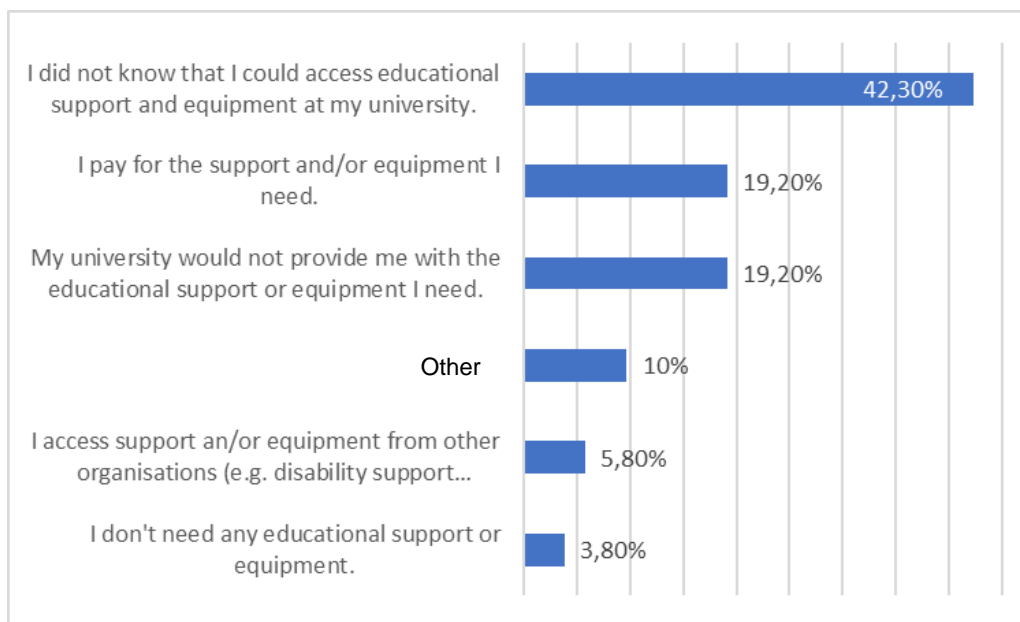
Graph 18: Percentage on the equipment provided

Regarding the provision of equipment, tools to help students with functional diversity in their studies, again the majority deny having received any type of equipment for this purpose, 83.7% deny it compared to 16.3% who claim to have received some type of equipment, among which the following stand out: Internet access in the library, useful or adapted material for studying, adapted notes, topography equipment, text answers in large print, adapted training.

**If you haven't accessed any educational support or equipment from your university, why not? Tick all that apply: Frequency (absolute - relative)**

<b>If you haven't accessed any educational support or equipment from your university, why not</b>	<b>n: 52</b>	<b>%</b>
I don't need any educational support or equipment	2	3,8%
I did not know that I could access educational support and equipment at my university	22	42,3%
My university would not provide me with the educational support or equipment I need	10	19,2%
I access support and/or equipment from other organisations (e.g. disability support organisations)	3	5,8%
I pay for the support and/or equipment I need	10	19,2%
Other	5	9,6%

Table 21: [Statistics on the reason they did not access any support or equipment](#)



Graph 19: [Reasons for not accessing support or equipment at the university](#)

Regarding whether they have not had access to any educational support or equipment from their university, the main reason they indicate is because they did not know they could access educational support and equipment at their university with 42.3% responses, followed with equal frequency by that the



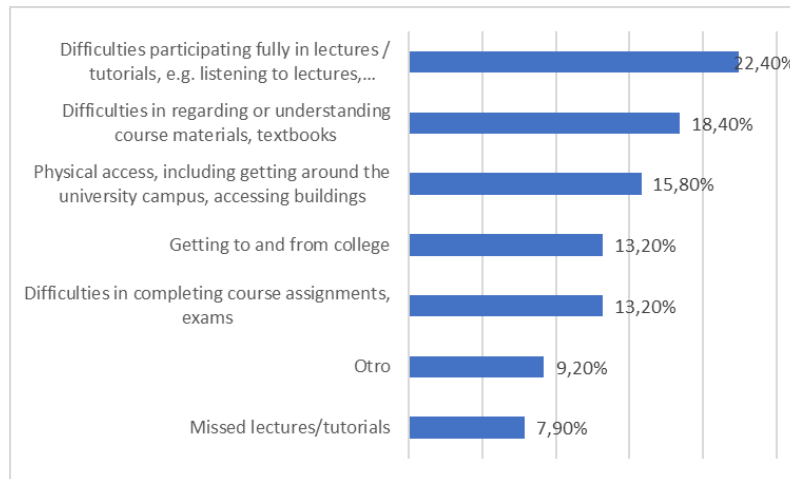
university would not provide them with the necessary educational support or equipment, followed by that they have to pay for the support and/or equipment they require, with 19.2% respectively.

Among the other considerations, they directly mention that the university did not provide them with any educational support or equipment that could help them to perform well in their classes or directly to the teaching staff, where they state that there is no interest in teaching students with disabilities together with the technological barrier.

**What are/were the main barriers to attending university and successfully completing your studies?:** Frequency (absolute - relative)

<b>What are/were the main barriers to attending university and successfully completing your studies?</b>	<b>n: 76</b>	<b>%</b>
Difficulties participating fully in lectures / tutorials, e.g. listening to lectures, participating in discussions	17	22,4%
Missed lectures/tutorials	6	7,9%
Difficulties in regarding or understanding course materials, textbooks	14	18,4%
Difficulties in completing course assignments, exams	10	13,2%
Getting to and from college	10	13,2%
Physical access, including getting around the university campus, accessing buildings	12	15,8%
Other	7	9,2%

Table 22: [Statistics on the main barriers](#)



Graph 20: [Main barriers to university attendance](#)

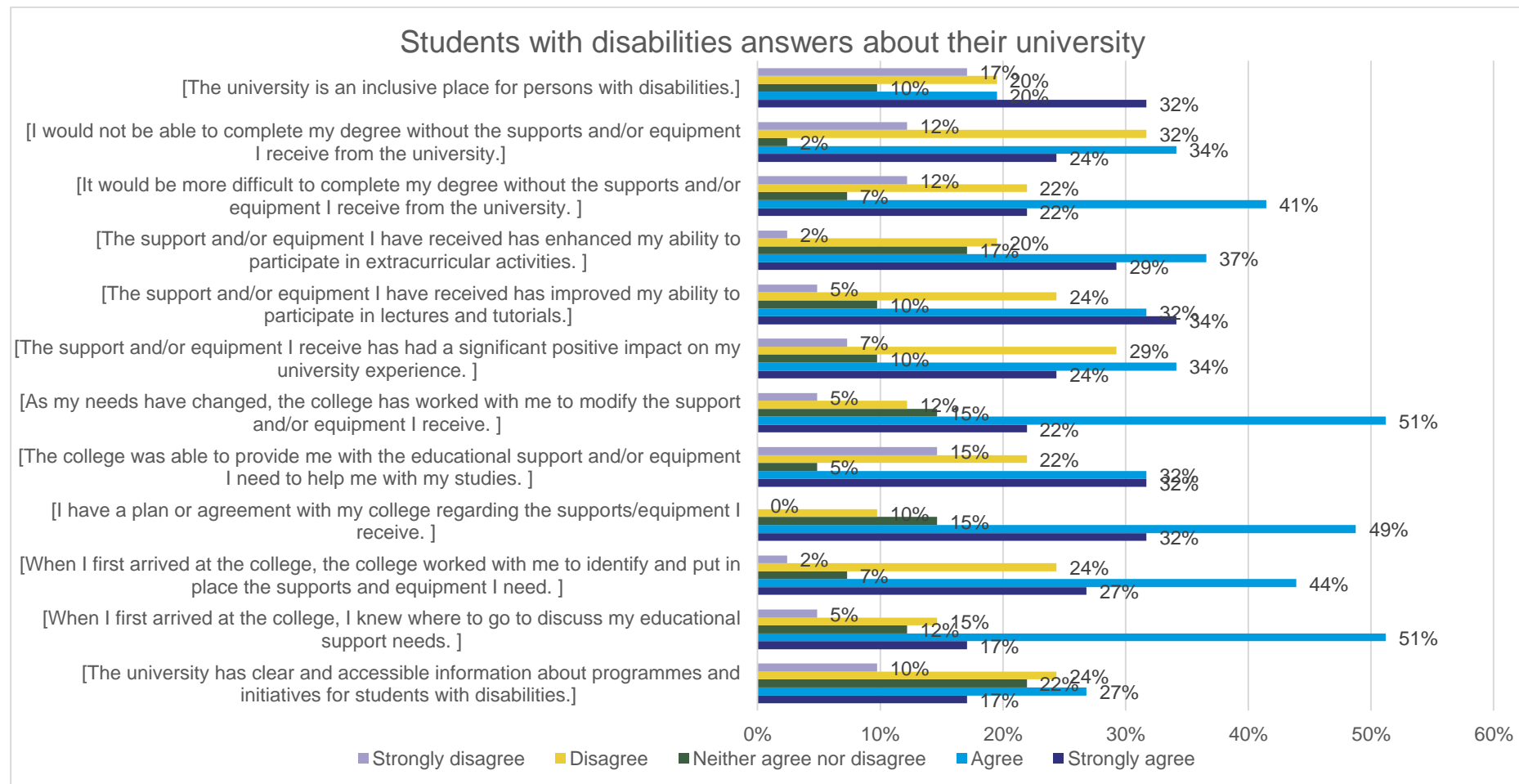
And among the main barriers encountered when attending university to successfully complete their studies, they prioritize difficulties in fully participating in lectures/tutorials, such as listening to lectures, participating in discussions, with 22.4%, followed by difficulties in understanding or comprehending course materials, textbooks, with 18.4%. Physical access, including getting around the university campus, or accessing buildings, 15.8% considered barriers or impediments to university access. Or difficulties in completing coursework, exams or getting to and from school/university, barriers recognized by 13.2% respectively.

Among the other barriers mentioned are cases where access to supplies at home limits full and quality attendance at university. Difficulty in seeing and following the class when sitting in the back. The very impediment of not having enough materials to support and complete their studies. Physical access barriers, such as climbing on the table during a lab experiment. Or finally, problems in the restaurant and lodging.

The final section of the survey, directed toward Students with Disabilities (SwD), featured a set of 12 Likert-scale inquiries. These inquiries were specifically crafted to furnish us with a comprehensive evaluation of the requirements of students with disabilities. A noteworthy observation can be drawn from the responses provided by students with disabilities to these queries.

Among these items we can clearly highlight that more than half of the students claim to have received different support based on variations in their needs. Also, more than half of the students report knowing where they should go to discuss their needs. A large number of students also report having a plan with their university that includes the support they need and also that the institution worked with them in their first years of study to provide them with the necessary support. However, we found more scattered percentages in items that directly refer to the university. For example, we did not find clear majorities when we asked if they consider the university to be an inclusive place for people with disabilities. Nor do we find majorities when asked if the institution has clear information about plans and programs to help students with disabilities.

Graphic 21: Likert scale items about their university



### 3.2.2. Questionnaires for students without disabilities

The following is an extensive report presenting the outcomes obtained through the analysis of data obtained from the survey tailored exclusively for students without disabilities.

The sociodemographic items have been analysed above in the "participants" section. Therefore, we start the analysis from the items related to the perceptions students without disabilities could have in each university.

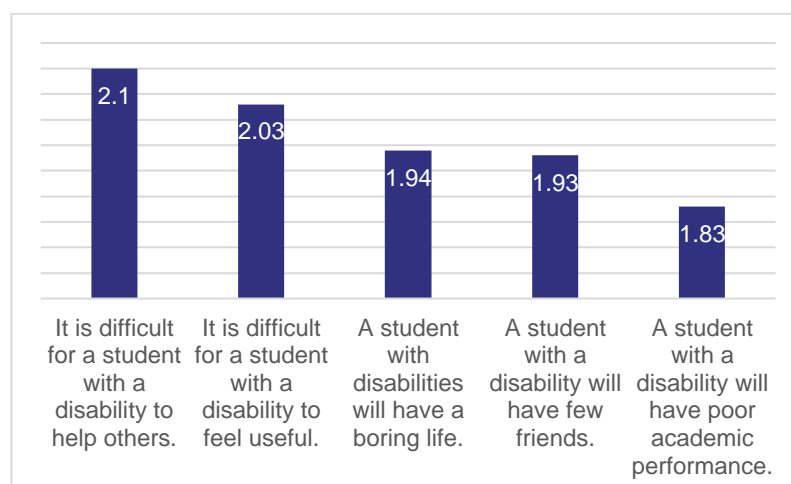
#### A. Perception dimension

##### P1-P5: Mean score and standard deviation

**DESCRIPTIVE ITEMS Dimension Perception with the following statements. Please answer on a scale 1 to 5 where 1 is "strongly disagree" and 5 is "strongly agree"**

n (106)	Average	SD	Median	Min	Max	P25	P75
A student with a disability will have few friends.	1,93	1,14	2	1	5	1	2
A student with disabilities will have a boring life.	1,94	1,08	2	1	5	1	2
A student with a disability will have poor academic performance.	1,83	0,88	2	1	4	1	2
It is difficult for a student with a disability to help others.	2,10	1,03	2	1	5	1	3
It is difficult for a student with a disability to feel useful.	2,03	1,06	2	1	5	1	2

Table 23: [Statistics on the perception dimension](#)



Graphic 22: [statistics on the perception dimension](#)

For the items that indicate the level of agreement with the statements on items related to perception, descriptive measures of centralization or central tendency such as the mean and median and of dispersion such as the standard deviation, or position measures such as the 25th and 75th percentiles, are used. Different parameters are used, on the one hand to describe average ratings and their respective standard deviation to better understand and compare between items, and secondly, coefficients such as the median and the 25th and 75th percentiles are used because each of the items is distributed in a way that does not follow a normal distribution, therefore the median is associated as a measure of central tendency and the 25th and 75th percentiles as a measure of dispersion.

In the case of describing these items, it is observed that the highest degree of agreement or interest of the respondent is in the statement about the difficulty for a student with difficulty to help others (□: 2.1), followed by the statement about the difficulty for a student with disability to feel useful (□: 2.0).

**P1P-P5P: Frequency per item (absolute - relative)**

Items

<b>A student with a disability will have few friends.</b>	n (106)	%
Strongly disagree	49	46,2
2	35	33,0
3	5	4,7
4	14	13,2
Strongly agree	3	2,8
<b>A student with disabilities will have a boring life.</b>	n (106)	%
Strongly disagree	44	41,5
2	41	38,7
3	7	6,6
4	11	10,4
Strongly agree	3	2,8
<b>A student with a disability will have poor academic performance.</b>	n (106)	%
Strongly disagree	45	42,5
2	40	37,7

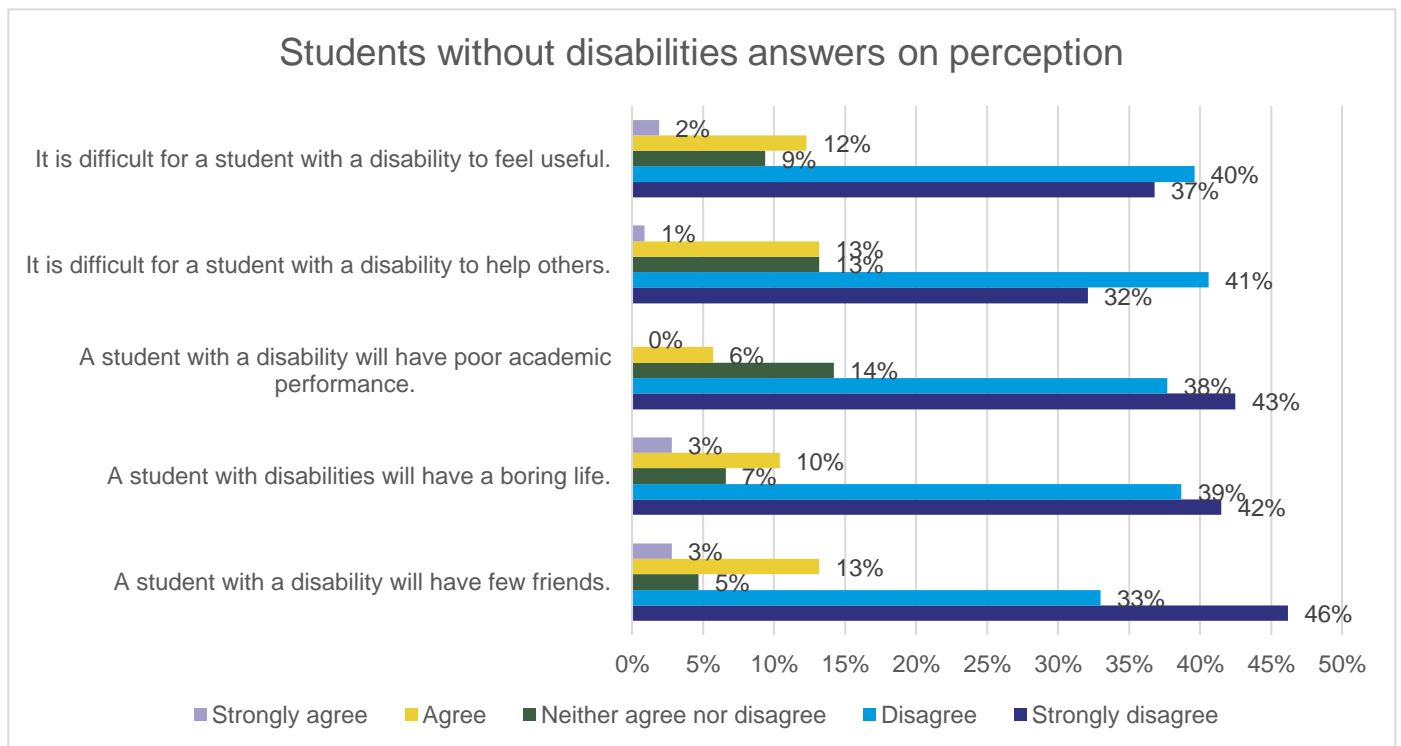
3	15	14,2
4	6	5,7
<b>It is difficult for a student with a disability to help others.</b>		n (106) %
Strongly disagree	34	32,1
2	43	40,6
3	14	13,2
4	14	13,2
Strongly agree	1	,9
<b>It is difficult for a student with a disability to feel useful.</b>		n (106) %
Strongly disagree	39	36,8
2	42	39,6
3	10	9,4
4	13	12,3
Strongly agree	2	1,9

Table 24: [Frequencies on perception dimension](#)

The final section of the survey, directed toward students without disabilities featured a set of 10 Likert-scale inquiries divided in two dimensions: perception and attitude. These inquiries were specifically crafted to furnish us with a comprehensive evaluation of the requirements of students without disabilities. A noteworthy observation can be drawn from the responses provided by students without disabilities to these queries.

Among these items we can clearly highlight that a large majority of students with no disabilities are against that a student with a disability will have few friends. At the same time, a large majority deny that students with disabilities will have a boring life, as well as that it will be difficult for them to feel useful. In general, we observe that the tendency among students without disabilities is to have a positive perception of certain aspects of the lives of students with disabilities.

Graphic 23: Perception dimension responses



## B. Attitude Dimension

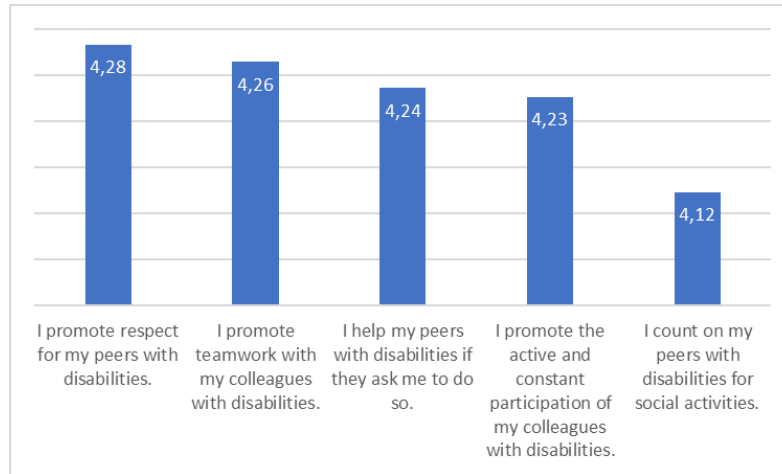
### P1A-P5A: Mean score and standard deviation

**DESCRIPTIVE ITEMS Dimension Attitude with the following statements. Please answer on a scale 1 to 5 where 1 is "strongly disagree" and 5 is "strongly agree"**

n (106)	Average	SD	median	Min	Max	P25	P75
I promote the active and constant participation of my colleagues with disabilities.	4,23	1,02	4	1	5	4	5
I promote teamwork with my colleagues with disabilities.	4,26	1,00	5	1	5	4	5
I promote respect for my peers with disabilities.	4,28	1,00	5	1	5	4	5
I count on my peers with disabilities for social activities.	4,12	1,07	4	1	5	4	5
I help my peers with disabilities if they ask me to do so.	4,24	0,98	4	1	5	4	5

Table 25: statistics on the attitude dimension





Graphic 24: [statistics on the attitude dimension](#)

The distribution, as in the previous block of items, does not follow a normal distribution (this is a typical case in the measurement of items with scales of 1 to 5 or 1 to 7). In this case for the Attitude dimension the ratings are high in their degree of agreement for all the items, namely the items: I promote respect for my peers with disabilities. (□: 4.28), and I promote teamwork with my colleagues with disabilities. (□: 4.26), those with the highest scores or best ratings.

**P1-P5: Frequency per item (absolute - relative)**

Items

<b>I promote the active and constant participation of my colleagues with disabilities.</b>	n (106)	%
Strongly disagree	5	4,7
2	3	2,8
3	6	5,7
4	41	38,7
Strongly agree	51	48,1
<b>I promote teamwork with my colleagues with disabilities.</b>	n (106)	%
Strongly disagree	5	4,7
2	2	1,9
3	6	5,7
4	40	37,7
Strongly agree	53	50,0
<b>I promote respect for my peers with disabilities.</b>	n (106)	%
Strongly disagree	4	3,8
2	3	2,8
3	9	8,5
4	33	31,1
Strongly agree	57	53,8
<b>I count on my peers with disabilities for social activities.</b>	n (106)	%
Strongly disagree	5	4,7
2	5	4,7
3	9	8,5
4	40	37,7
Strongly agree	47	44,3
<b>I help my peers with disabilities if they ask me to do so.</b>	n (106)	%
Strongly disagree	4	3,8
2	4	3,8
3	5	4,7

4	43	40,6
Strongly agree	50	47,2

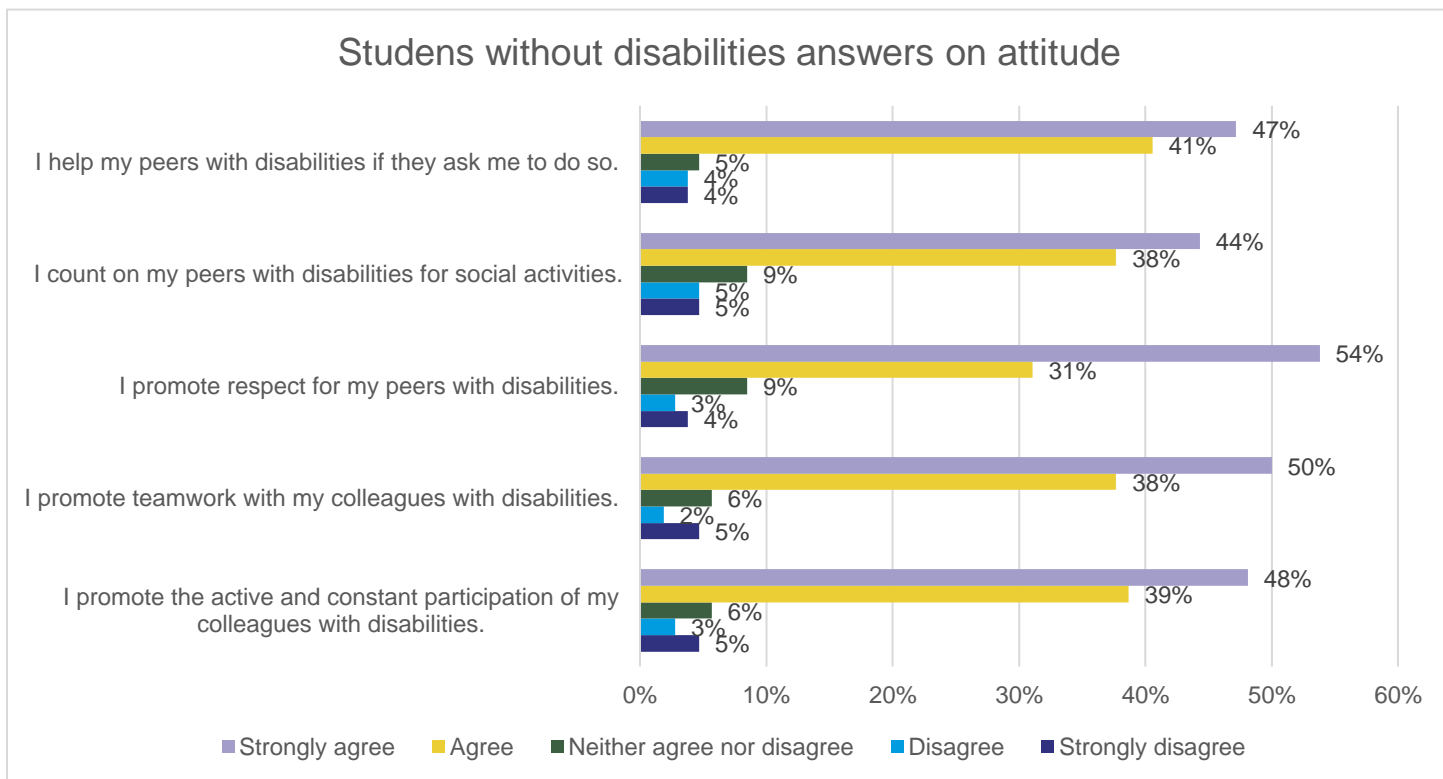
 Table 26: [frequencies on the attitude dimension](#)

The final section of the survey, directed toward Students without Disabilities featured a set of 10 Likert-scale inquiries divided in two dimensions: perception and attitude. These inquiries were specifically crafted to furnish us with a comprehensive evaluation of the requirements of students without disabilities. A noteworthy observation can be drawn from the responses provided by students without disabilities to these queries.

From the graph we can clearly see that the vast majority of students without disabilities have a positive attitude towards students with disabilities. Specifically, they refer to helping their peers with disabilities if the latter ask them to do so. In turn, they claim to count on them for social activities and promote respect for them among all their peers. They also report working in groups with their peers with disabilities and facilitate their participation in class.

We found small minorities of negative responses to these statements. However, it is observed that the general trend of attitudes towards peers with disabilities is very positive.

Graphic 25: attitude dimension responses



### 3.2.3. Questionnaires for academic and non-academic staff

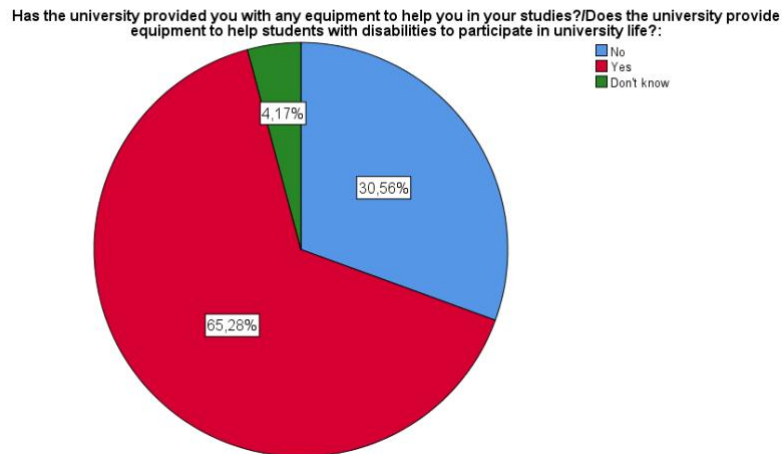
The following is an extensive report presenting the outcomes obtained through the analysis of data obtained from the survey tailored exclusively for academic and non-academic staff.

The sociodemographic items have been analysed above in the "participants" section. Therefore, we start the analysis from the items related to the equipment provide by the university towards students with disability.

**Does the university provide equipment to help students with disabilities to participate in university life?: Frequency (absolute - relative)**

Does the university provided you with any equipment to help students?	n: 144	%
No	44	30,6
Yes	94	65,3
Don't know	6	4,2
Total	144	100,0

Table 27: [statistic on the equipment provided](#)



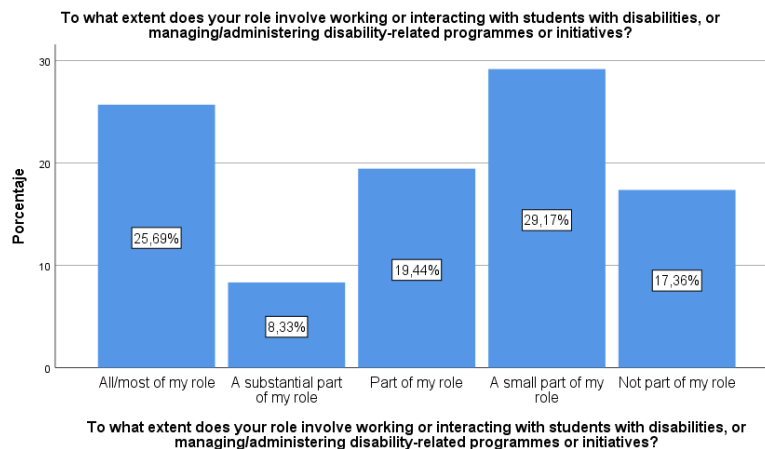
Graphic 26: [percentage on the equipment provided](#)

As to whether the university provides equipment to assist students with disabilities to complete their studies, 65.3% of academic and non-academic staff affirm such provision of equipment. When students with disabilities are asked the same question 83.7% deny that they are provided with tools or equipment to facilitate their studies.

**To what extent does your role involve working or interacting with students with disabilities, or managing/administering disability-related programmes or initiatives?: Frequency (absolute - relative)**

<b>Role involve working or interacting with students with disabilities</b>	<b>n: 144</b>	<b>%</b>
All/most of my role	37	25,7
A substantial part of my role	12	8,3
Part of my role	28	19,4
A small part of my role	42	29,2
Not part of my role	25	17,4
<b>Total</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>100,0</b>

Table 28: [statistic on the involvement](#)



Graphic 27: [percentage on the involvement](#)

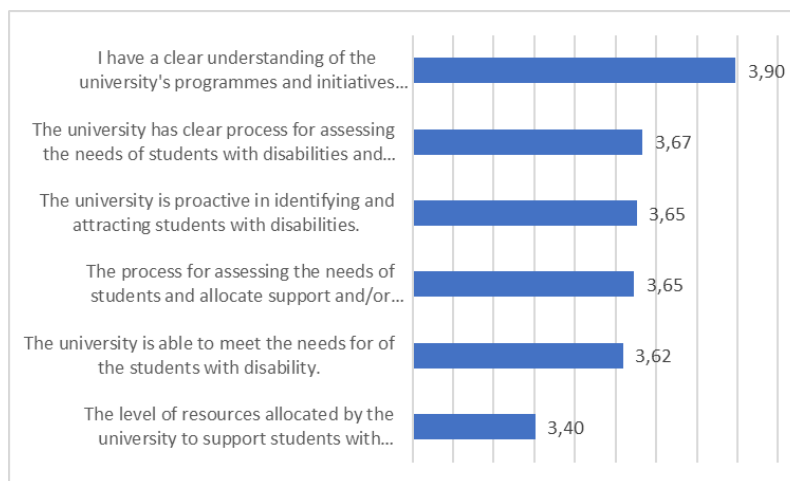
Regarding the extent to which faculty, staff and university personnel are involved in facilitating disability-related programs or initiatives and productive interactions, 29.2% state that these actions and implications occupy a small part of their time, compared to 25.7% who state that these tasks occupy all or most of their time. 17.4% state that it does not fall within their functions.

**P1Staff-P6Staff: Mean score and standard deviation**

**DESCRIPTIVE ITEMS Please answer on a scale 1 to 5 where 1 is "strongly disagree" and 5 is "strongly agree"**

n (144)	Average	SD	Median	Min	Max	P25	P75
I have a clear understanding of the university's programmes and initiatives aimed at attracting and retaining students with disabilities.	3,90	1,06	4	1	5	4	5
The university is proactive in identifying and attracting students with disabilities.	3,65	1,15	4	1	5	3	4
The university has clear process for assessing the needs of students with disabilities and allocating support and/or equipment.	3,67	1,12	4	1	5	3	4
The process for assessing the needs of students and allocate support and/or equipment works well.	3,65	1,14	4	1	5	3	4
The level of resources allocated by the university to support students with disabilities is adequate.	3,40	1,14	4	1	5	3	4
The university is able to meet the needs for of the students with disability.	3,62	1,20	4	1	5	3	4

Table 29: [statistic on the Likert scale items](#)



Graphic 28: [statistic on the Likert scale items](#)

For the items that indicate the level of agreement with the statements on items related to support and positive measures for the group of students with disabilities, descriptive measures of centralization or central tendency such as the mean and median and of dispersion such as the standard deviation, or position measures such as the 25th and 75th percentiles, are used. Different parameters are used, on the one hand to describe average ratings and their respective standard deviation to better understand and compare between items, and secondly, coefficients such as the median and the 25th and 75th percentiles are used because each of the items is distributed in a way that does not follow a normal distribution, therefore the median is associated as a measure of central tendency and the 25th and 75th percentiles as a measure of dispersion.

In the case of describing these items, it can be seen that the respondent's highest level of agreement or interest is in the statement about whether they understand the university's programs and initiatives aimed at attracting and retaining students with disabilities (□: 3.9), followed by the statement about whether the university has a clear process for assessing the needs of students with disabilities and assigning support and/or equipment (□: 3.7).

**P1Staff-P6Staff: Frequency per item (absolute - relative)**

Items

<b>I have a clear understanding of the university's programmes and initiatives aimed at attracting and retaining students with disabilities.</b>		
	n (144)	%
Strongly disagree	7	4,9
2	10	6,9
3	17	11,8
4	67	46,5
Strongly agree	43	29,9
<b>The university is proactive in identifying and attracting students with disabilities.</b>		
	n (144)	%
Strongly disagree	11	7,6
2	12	8,3
3	26	18,1
4	62	43,1



Strongly agree	33	22,9
<b>The university has clear process for assessing the needs of students with disabilities and allocating support and/or equipment.</b>	<b>n (144)</b>	<b>%</b>
Strongly disagree	11	7,6
2	11	7,6
3	22	15,3
4	71	49,3
Strongly agree	29	20,1
<b>The process for assessing the needs of students and allocate support and/or equipment works well.</b>	<b>n (144)</b>	<b>%</b>
Strongly disagree	9	6,3
2	17	11,8
3	23	16,0
4	62	43,1
Strongly agree	33	22,9
<b>The level of resources allocated by the university to support students with disabilities is adequate.</b>	<b>n (144)</b>	<b>%</b>
Strongly disagree	10	6,9
2	24	16,7
3	29	20,1
4	60	41,7
Strongly agree	21	14,6
<b>The university is able to meet the needs for of the students with disability.</b>	<b>n (144)</b>	<b>%</b>
Strongly disagree	10	6,9
2	21	14,6
3	18	12,5
4	60	41,7
Strongly agree	35	24,3

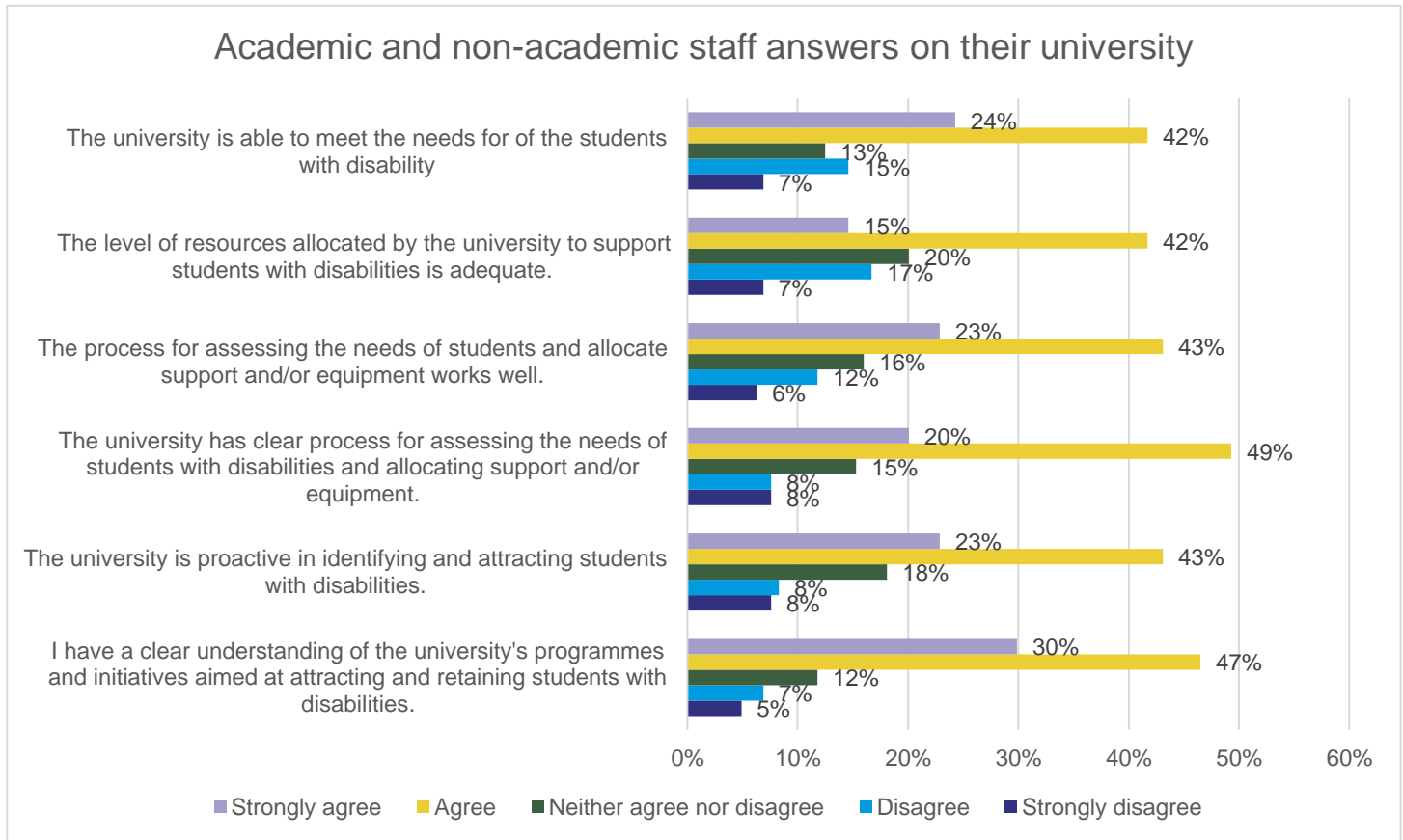
Table 30: [frequency on the Likert scale items](#)

The final section of the survey, directed toward Students without Disabilities featured a set of 6 Likert-scale inquiries. These inquiries were specifically crafted to furnish us with a comprehensive evaluation of the opinions and vision of academic and non-academic staff of each university.

It is clear from the graph that a large majority believe that their university is able to meet the needs of students with disabilities. At the same time, a high percentage considers that the resources provided by the university to serve students with disabilities are adequate. Regarding the process of detecting and assessing the needs of students with disabilities, once again, the staff considers that their respective university carries it out adequately. Finally, a high percentage, close to half of the respondents consider that they have a good knowledge of existing plans and programs to attract and encourage students with disabilities.

Overall, academic and non-academic staff at each university have a positive perception of the different services offered by their university to serve their students with disabilities. However, it is worth noting that all of these positive responses where the highest percentages are found have been marked at level 4 of agreement. This indicates that the staff still perceives a small margin of improvement for all these issues at their university.

Graphic 29: percentages on the Likert scale items



## 4. Discussion

The purpose of this report was to delineate and comprehend the requirements of students with disabilities, as well as the academic and non-academic staff members who are involved with these students. Drawing from the quantitative and qualitative data collected during the needs analysis research, this chapter is focused on discussing, from a student-centric perspective, the following outcomes:

(a) Students

(b) University

These two dimensions of student and university life are ultimately intertwined, culminating in a set of recommendations and actions that universities must consider when formulating and devising their forthcoming policies and support services.

### 4.1. Students

The majority of students with disabilities (SwD) reported that their respective Universities did not provide support to enable them to pursue their studies under conditions of equitable opportunity. Students with disabilities who did receive any kind of support, most frequently cited factors such as note takers or collaboration by others such as the main kind of support received. However, it was observed that the provision of assistive technologies, including devices like Braille printers and screen readers, is an area that Universities should give more specialized attention to in the future.

Understanding why a significant portion of Students with disabilities did not receive educational support from their Universities, despite their need for such assistance, is crucial. In many instances, external organizations, distinct from universities, such as various disability support organizations, addressed the educational support requirements of students with disabilities. Nonetheless, it is essential to highlight that there were cases where Students with disabilities did not receive educational support due to issues that Universities should and can address.

Among the other barriers mentioned are cases where access to supplies at home limits full and quality attendance at university. Difficulty in seeing and following the class when sitting in the back. The very impediment of not having enough materials to support and complete their studies. Physical access barriers, such as climbing on the table during a lab experiment. Or finally, problems in the restaurant and lodging. A considerable number of students with disabilities were unaware that additional support was available during their studies. Furthermore, many students with disabilities did not receive educational support because their universities lacked the resources or the means to accommodate the educational needs of students with disabilities.

A substantial proportion of students with disabilities (SwD) hold the belief that their university affords them opportunities to assess and provide input on the plan or agreement they have established with the university. However, it appears that there is a scarcity of such plans and agreements, as indicated by feedback from academic and non-academic staff. Perhaps, students may not fully grasp the purpose and utility of these plans or agreements, which essentially function as official and established documents designed to ensure the clarity of roles, functions, and responsibilities.

Additionally, delivering personalized support to each student is paramount in fostering trust, security, and connections with peers and faculty members. This approach aids in addressing individual needs, determining suitable support, effecting adjustments, providing feedback, and conducting assessments. Group support also plays a pivotal role in fostering a sense of belonging and preventing students from feeling isolated within the university environment. It promotes their status as equal members within the university system. This holistic approach, encompassing the development of both individual and group-based soft skills, not only enhances socio-emotional growth but also equips students for their future careers.

Regrettably, the topic of transitioning into the workforce does not appear to be a primary concern for students as they map out their future, particularly when achieving independent living is of utmost significance to them. Furthermore, universities have not implemented any corresponding policies. This is an aspect

that needs careful consideration, both from the standpoint of university policies and in the context of providing support and education to students with disabilities during their transition phase.

## 4.2. University

Universities should take steps to establish more effective communication strategies aimed at raising awareness among Students with disabilities (SwD) regarding the educational support available during their studies and enhance the educational support offerings for Students with disabilities to align better with their specific needs.

Even though we can identify several shortcomings in the provision of support and equipment to students with disabilities, the absence of such support and equipment would adversely affect Students with disabilities and potentially make the completion of their studies considerably more challenging. In fact, for a significant portion of students with disabilities, their ability to finish their studies is closely linked to the provision of necessary support and equipment. This underscores the critical importance of delivering the required support and equipment for Students with disabilities.

It is imperative to prioritize the creation of more inclusive university environments for students with disabilities. A considerable number of students with disabilities appeared to have mixed feelings about characterizing their universities as inclusive places for students with disabilities. However, it is worth noting that a substantial portion of students with disabilities did indeed view their universities as inclusive environments.

In contrast to students with disabilities, academic and non-academic staff members expressed a more favourable perspective regarding whether their university provides educational support to facilitate the participation of students with disabilities in university life.

In terms of the implementation of policies, a portion of Students with Disabilities indicated that their university had collaborated with them to clarify and implement the necessary support for students with disabilities. However, an equal number

of students with disabilities expressed dissatisfaction with this aspect of university support. The presence and regular updating of policies, developed in consultation with students with disabilities, are crucial in guiding the institution's efforts to promote equal opportunities. Furthermore, it appears that academic and non-academic staff members hold differing perspectives regarding the effectiveness of policies and initiatives aimed at student with disability. While some believe these policies work well, an equivalent proportion feels that substantial improvements are needed.

Policies should be translated into specialized services and programs designed for this specific demographic, as well as incorporated into regulations and institutional guidelines. In cases where such programs and services have not been established, it becomes imperative to systematize and highlight all the institutional efforts that may ultimately result in actionable plans. Inclusion of authorities and decision-makers at this level is of utmost importance, as their insights can contribute to the generation of institutional needs and facilitate the creation of strategic partnerships to address accessibility challenges across all dimensions.

On the other hand, an area that evidently requires enhancement pertains to the support and equipment available to Students with Disabilities (SwD). Universities should pay special attention to the establishment of clear plans and agreements regarding the necessary support and equipment for students with disabilities, the actual provision of this support and equipment, and the adaptability of such support to the changing needs of students with disabilities.

Support committees involving both educators and specialized professionals accompanying the students themselves are essential. These committees should aim to assess needs, reach consensus on decisions, provide assistance for both student and teacher in adapting their courses, and seek support from other programs and services as necessary.

It is imperative to develop institutional strategies for information dissemination, ensuring that students can readily access information about programs and

services, initiatives for students with disabilities, and seek timely clarification for their queries and doubts.

A recurring point raised by students with disabilities in their responses is their lack of awareness about the various programs, initiatives, plans, and, in general, the types of support their university could offer. Students with disabilities often grapple with this lack of awareness from the moment they enter the university. When the vast majority of students with disabilities initially enrolled at the university, they had little knowledge of where to turn to discuss their educational support needs. The dissemination of information about the support provided by universities for students with disabilities is an area that demands improvement. Lack of awareness is not exclusive to students with disabilities; many members of academic and non-academic staff were similarly unaware or somewhat confused about their understanding of the university's programs and initiatives intended to attract and retain students with disabilities.

Regarding the support and barriers received and found by students with disabilities, efforts in fostering positive attitudes, operating across various levels, namely informative, awareness-building, and technical, play a crucial role in eradicating discrimination against Students with Disabilities (SwDs). These endeavours are also essential for nurturing the growth of inclusive university communities.

In the realm of barriers, it was institutional barriers that emerged as the most frequently cited hindrance, closely trailed by architectural and social-attitudinal barriers. While engaged in their studies, students with disabilities are often able to cope with and address any personal barriers they may have carried with them from their pre-university life.

Incorporating equipment and technical aids as integral components of the support system for university students with disabilities is imperative. Expecting students to obtain and finance these resources independently places them in a discriminatory and disadvantageous position.



Disability support technologies stand as indispensable tools for enhancing the learning experiences of students with disabilities. Within this context, becoming familiar with these technologies, procuring them, mastering their usage, and even considering their application in research projects within the university all significantly contribute to addressing the needs of this demographic. Digital literacy represents a commitment to students with disabilities, facilitating a smoother transition to university life when they require increased and improved resources for acquiring professional technical knowledge.

Regarding "Administration/Organization," there is generally a favourable outlook. However, opportunities for improvement still exist, such as refining communication channels between students and the administration.

### **4.3. Recommendations**

In the context of evaluating services, students with disabilities consistently emphasize the indispensability of these services and support. They acknowledge that these resources have not only facilitated their entry into the university but also enabled them to successfully complete their studies. They further highlight that, without these crucial aids, they would have encountered significant obstacles or had to completely reinvent their study methods, as their disability-specific needs vary. Typically, in the absence of accessibility support, students rely on family assistance, a pattern frequently observed during their school years before transitioning to university studies.

Furthermore, there is a collective call for greater investment in mental health services and the expansion of specialized personnel as potential areas for improvement. Additionally, some students underscore the significance of cultivating empathy among teachers to foster better interactions and support for students with disabilities.

A considerable number of Students with Disabilities (SwD) expressed a belief that the support and equipment they received had not exerted a significantly positive influence on their overall university experience or their engagement in university life. This observation suggests that there is room for improvement in

aligning the support and equipment provided with the specific needs of students with disabilities.

Several key points should guide the future actions of universities towards student-centred support:

- ▶ University staff must follow a clear and well-defined process for assessing the needs of students with disabilities and allocating support and equipment.
- ▶ Universities should proactively identify and attract students with disabilities.
- ▶ There is a need to design a plan to attract students with a variety of disabilities including the disability type missing out the university learnings. The university should set services and programs that consider individual needs within university.
- ▶ The process for assessing student needs and allocating support and equipment must be formally structured.
- ▶ Universities need to furnish comprehensive information regarding disability support initiatives. All universities should ensure the adequacy of resources allocated to support students with disabilities.
- ▶ The formation of peer support teams can bolster students with disabilities participation in university life.
- ▶ Establishing a formal communication system, whether through support centres or in collaboration with associations, is essential to promote communication between students and staff.
- ▶ The overarching goal of all universities should be to promote the participation of students with disabilities actively and continuously in all aspects of university life.
- ▶ Group workshops on curriculum vitae (CV) and interview preparation, as well as individual and group exercises on interview performance, should be offered.

The primary objective of every university should be to encourage continuous and active engagement of Students with Disabilities (SwDs) in all aspects of university life.

## ANNEXES

### ANNEX 1: Quantitative research - Questionnaires

#### Questionnaires for students with disabilities

1. How old are you?
2. In which province/territory do you live?
3. Which institution do you currently attend?
  - NAME OF 3 INSTITUTIONS IN RWANDA
4. What studies are you pursuing (e.g. bachelor's, master's, doctoral)?
  - Bachelor's Degree
  - Master's Degree
  - PhD
5. How long have you been studying at this University?
  - Less than 1 year
  - Between 1 and 2 years
  - Between 2 and 3 years
  - Between 3 and 4 years
  - More than 4 years
  - 5 years or more
6. Are you a full-time student?
  - Yes
  - No
7. What is the nature of your disability? Please tick relevant:
  - Physical/motor disability
  - Health/organic disability
  - Hearing impairment
  - Visual disability
  - Intellectual or developmental disability
  - Psychosocial or mental health disability
  - Other

Support received by your **institution**

	Yes	No
<p>Has the university provided you with any educational support to help you in your studies?</p> <p>[Educational support may include academic note takers, readers, practical assistants and sign interpreters].</p>		
<p>If yes, what kind of support do you receive (or did you receive in the last three years)?</p>		
	Yes	No
<p>Has the university provided you with any equipment to help you in your studies?</p> <p>[Equipment may include training and access to assistive technology, textbooks and educational materials in alternative formats].</p>		
<p>If yes, what kind of equipment has the university provided you with (or provided you with in the last three years)?</p>		
<p>If you haven't accessed any educational support or equipment from your university, why not? Tick all that apply</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I don't need any educational support or equipment</li> <li>• I did not know that I could access educational support and equipment at my university.</li> <li>• My university would not provide me with the educational support or equipment I need.</li> <li>• I access support and/or equipment from other organisations (e.g. disability support organisations)</li> <li>• I pay for the support and/or equipment I need</li> <li>• Other .....</li> </ul>		

What are/were the main barriers to attending university and successfully completing your studies (select up to three)? (select up to three)

- Difficulties in participating fully in lectures / tutorials, e.g. listening to lectures, participating in discussions
- Missed lectures/tutorials
- Difficulties in reading or understanding course materials, textbooks
- Difficulties in completing course assignments, exams
- Getting to and from college
- Physical access, including getting around the university campus, accessing buildings
- Other .....

**About your university**

	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
The university has clear and accessible information about programmes and initiatives for students with disabilities.					
When I first arrived at the college, I knew where to go to discuss my educational support needs.					
When I first arrived at the college, the college worked with me to identify and put in place the supports and equipment I need.					
I have a plan or agreement with my college regarding the supports/equipment I receive.					
The college was able to provide me with the educational support and/or equipment I need to help me with my studies					

As my needs have changed, the college has worked with me to modify the support and/or equipment I receive.					
The support and/or equipment I receive has had a significant positive impact on my university experience.					
The support and/or equipment I have received has improved my ability to participate in lectures and tutorials.					
The support and/or equipment I have received has enhanced my ability to participate in extracurricular activities.					
It would be more difficult to complete my degree without the supports and/or equipment I receive from the university					
I would not be able to complete my degree without the supports and/or equipment I receive from the university.					
The university is an inclusive place for persons with disabilities.					

### Questionnaires for students without disabilities

1. How old are you?

2. In which province/territory do you live?

3. Which institution do you currently attend?

- NAME OF 3 INSTITUTIONS IN RWANDA

4. What studies are you pursuing (e.g. bachelor's, master's, doctoral)?

- Bachelor's Degree
- Master's Degree
- PhD

5. How long have you been studying at this University?

- Less than 1 year
- Between 1 and 2 years
- Between 2 and 3 years
- Between 3 and 4 years
- More than 4 years
- 5 years or more

6. Are you a full-time student?

- Yes
- No

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
<b>Perception</b>					
A student with a disability will have few friends					
A student with a disability will have a boring life					

A student with a disability will have poor academic performance					
It is difficult for a student with a disability to help others.					
It is difficult for a student with a disability to feel useful.					
<b>Attitude</b>					
I promote the active and constant participation of my colleagues with disabilities.					
I promote teamwork with my colleagues with disabilities.					
I promote respect for my peers with disabilities.					
I count on my peers with disabilities for social activities.					
I help my peers with disabilities if they ask me to do so.					



### Questionnaires for academic and non-academic staff

1. At which university do you currently work?

- INSERT INSTITUTIONS' NAME

2. What is your role at the university? [select appropriate]

- Manager / Director - Student Care and Support
- University Inclusion / Diversity Staff
- Student care staff
- Programme Manager - general student programmes
- Programme Manager - disability programmes
- Teacher / Tutor
- Support worker
- General administrative support
- Other (specify)

3. Does the university provide educational support to help students with disabilities to participate in university life? [Yes/ No/ Don't know]

4. Do I have any disability? [Yes/No/ I prefer not to say]

5. If you ticked yes in the previous question, what is the nature of your disability?

- Physical/motor disability
- Health/organic disability
- Hearing impairment
- Visual disability
- Intellectual or developmental disability
- Psychosocial or mental health disability
- Other

4. Does the university provide equipment to help students with disabilities to participate in university life? Yes / No / Don't know]

To what extent does your role involve working or interacting with students with disabilities, or managing/administering disability-related programmes or initiatives?	<b>All/ most of my role</b>	<b>A substantial part of my role</b>	<b>Part of my role</b>	<b>A small part of my role</b>	<b>Not part of my role</b>
---	---	--	------------------------------------	--	--

	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
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<p>I have a clear understanding of the university's programmes and initiatives aimed at attracting and retaining students with disabilities.</p>					
<p>The university is proactive in identifying and attracting students with disabilities.</p>					
<p>The university has a clear process for assessing the needs of students with disabilities and allocating support and/or equipment.</p>					
<p>The process for assessing the needs of students and allocate support and/or equipment works well.</p>					
<p>The level of resources allocated by the university to support students with disabilities is adequate</p>					
<p>The university is able to meet the needs for of the students with disability</p>					
<p>What could the university do to better meet the needs of students with disabilities?</p>					

## **ANNEX 2: Qualitative research tools**

### **Focus groups questions**

#### **Items/Questions for students with disabilities**

- Can you describe what types of support and/or equipment you have received/used to help you in your studies? Are they the same as those you used in previous stages?
- What are unmet needs in your university life (academic and non-academic)?
- How do you work with the university to identify and establish the adaptations or supports you need? Is this process working well or could it be improved?
- How do you think a university can be more inclusive to all types of disabilities?

#### **Items/Questions for university staff**

- Can you describe the process that a student with disabilities follows to deal with academic requirements?
- What barriers do you find at university?
- How do you work with the students to identify and establish the adaptations or supports they need? Is this process working well or could it be improved?
- How do you think a university can be more inclusive?

## Focus groups guide

### About structure of the group:

- The ideal number of a focus group is between 5 and 10. It is recommended between 6 and 10 for students and between 5 and 8 for staff.
- A focus group needs a moderator/facilitator and a note taker. The moderator is essential, if the note taker is not there, it will be the moderator himself who is in charge of writing down the comments.
- It is recommended to record audio during all the sessions, so this will be after reported.

### About the sequence of the session:

- It is crucial to present the project, the composition group and the main goal.
- After warmly thanking the participation, we proceed to the general questions.
- Everyone must know the duration of the session and that time slot will be scrupulously adhered to. 90 minutes (1H30 minutes) per session is recommended.
- The note taker can use a template with known dimensions in which certain issues are typified (this template will be provided in annex 6).
- After the default time (90 minutes), the moderator will close the session thanking them again for the collaboration.

### Other recommendations:

- Fluid approach to asking questions
- Every opinion matters
- To respect everybody's pace
- The facilitator's goal is to generate a maximum number of different ideas and opinions from as many different people as possible in the time available
- We would like everyone to actively participate
- Information provided in the focus group must be kept confidential
- Stay with the group and please don't have side conversations
- Turn off cell phones if possible
- Enjoy the exchange

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