



Policy, Governance and Legal Environment for LIS work in Uganda:

**National laws. Global standards. The future of information
work.**

A talk

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What LIS work is about

- ▶ Information work involves creating, collecting, organizing, storing, preserving, retrieving, sharing, and disposing of information. It includes professionals such as: Librarians, Records Managers, Archivists, Information Officers, and Knowledge Managers
- ▶ Its goal is to ensure information is Accurate, Secure, Accessible, Reliable, and Available whenever needed.
- ▶ How does this play out in the digital age with automation of government processes?

Why it matters

- ▶ Mandate
- ▶ Governance
- ▶ Rights of Users
- ▶ Professional and ethical conduct
- ▶ Resources
- ▶ Service delivery

In Uganda, the policy and legal framework has evolved from managing paper records and print collections to digital information

Key Laws

- ▶ **The Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, 1995 (As amended)**

Article 41 gives citizens a right of access to information held by the state or its agencies-limits this right to privacy and national security

- ▶ **Access to Information Act, 2005**

This was enacted to operationalize the right in Art. 41. Its purpose is to promote efficiency, effectiveness, transparency and accountability in government.

Other Laws

- ▶ **National Records and Archives Act, 2001 (as amended)**

This is the main law for records and archives management. It is intended to enable rationalized management of public records and archives

- ▶ **Data Protection and Privacy Act, 2019:**

This regulates the collection, processing, holding, use, and disclosure of personal data.

Other Laws

- ▶ **Copyright and Neighboring Rights Act, 2006 (as amended):**

Protects intellectual property rights of authors/creators of original works. Ensures that creators are recognized for their works, while allowing public access to information under specific legal conditions.

Other Law

► **Computer Misuse Act, 2011**

It criminalizes unauthorized access, data modification, and data interception. It dictates how digital data is handled, shared, secured, and preserved within information management systems.

► **Electronic Transactions Act, 2011:**

Provides the legal framework for conducting transactions electronically. It legally recognizes electronic records and transactions. Eg online application, fees payment, e-academic documents, online registration and certificates – car log book etc

Legal Deposit Laws

► **National Library Act, 2003**

Established the NLU.

Requires publishers to give three free copies of regular books, one copy of films or videos, and ten copies of government prints to the National Library

► **Deposit Library and Documentation Centre Act, 1969**

Requires publishers to submit copies of public prints and documents to a designated national center at (Uganda Management Institute).

Other Laws

- ▶ **The Makerere University (Deposit Library) Act**

Legally required every publisher in Uganda to deposit free copies of all published books, newspapers, and maps at Makerere University Library

National Policies

- ▶ **National Communication Policy (latest 2026)**

Provides a framework to guide communication across MDA&LGs.

Driver of the National Development Plan IV (2025–2030).

- ▶ **National ICT Policy**

Provides a strategic framework to digitize public services, promote e-governance, and build a knowledge-based economy.

National Policies

► **National Information Security Policy**

The policy outlines the mandatory minimum security controls that all public and private sector organizations that use, own and/or operate protected computers, handle official communications and personal data must apply to reduce their vulnerability to cyber threats.

National Policies

► Rationalization of Agencies and Public Expenditure (RAPEX).

A public sector reform policy aimed at abolishing redundant government bodies to cut costs.

National Library was mainstreamed into the Min. of Education and Sports.

The National Records Agency into the Ministry of Public Service.

What is the implication of this?

National Policies

- ▶ **Vision 2040**

Economic transformation from a low income society to an upper middle income country.

- ▶ **NDP IV 2025/26-2029/30**

Aimed at accelerating the socio-economic transformation of the country.

Institutional Policies

- ▶ Library policies
- ▶ Records Management Policies
- ▶ Records Retention Schedules
- ▶ Information security policies
- ▶ AI policies
- ▶ Research Data policies
- ▶ Digital Preservation Policy

Governance Actors

- ▶ Min. of Public Service - statutory
 - ▶ Min. of Education and Sports – statutory
 - ▶ Min. of Local Government -statutory
 - ▶ NITA-U/Min ICT and National Guidance – regulator/enabler
- Digital infrastructure, standards, security

Governance Actors

- ▶ Uganda Library and Information Association (ULIA)
Professional voice, ethics, CPD, advocacy
- ▶ Consortium of Uganda University Libraries (CUUL)
Academic library collaboration & e-resource

Global standards

- ▶ **The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)**

Provides access to global databases like WIPO Lex, and training local information professionals on copyright, patents, and their management

- ▶ **International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) Guidelines**

Provides global benchmarks for best practices especially in governance and ethical frameworks.

Global Standards

- ▶ ISO 15489 – Records Management
- ▶ ISO 27001 – Information Security Management
- ▶ ISO 30301 – Management Systems for Records
- ▶ International Council on Archives (ICA) Principles
- ▶ International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) Guidelines

Regional frameworks

- ▶ The African Library and Information Association and Institutions (AfLIA)
- ▶ Marrakesh Treaty, 2013
- ▶ Cape Town declaration, 2015
- ▶ AU Agenda 2063
- ▶ Digital Transformation Strategy for Africa 2020-2030

Areas of Alignment

- ▶ Access/Right of Information
- ▶ Copyright exceptions
- ▶ Professional Ethics- ULIA and IFLA Code of Ethics highly align (access, privacy, intellectual freedom, integrity)
- ▶ Legal Deposit & Bibliographic Control- Legal Deposits Acts and IFLA Universal Bibliographic Control principles align
- ▶ Records Mgt guidelines: NRAA, 2001 with the ISO 18489 Records Management guidelines. Some provisions are considered in the Act
- ▶ Security: The National Information Security Policy adopts the ISO 27001 PDCA continuous improvement model to structure all security governance processes.

The gaps and tensions

- ▶ No single National Library and Information Policy-fragmentation
- ▶ Implementation vs. existence of law
- ▶ Copyright in the digital environment-
- ▶ Privacy vs. Access
- ▶ Equitable Access
- ▶ Standards compliance in practice
- ▶ Skills gap.

Bridging the gaps

- ▶ Global standards provide best practices, and national laws make them legally enforceable.
- ▶ Compliance with the provisions of global standards as required by the Associations and Treaties which Uganda subscribes to.

Bridging National and Global Gaps

- ▶ How then do we (as LIS Professionals) bridge the gap?

The Future

The emerging issues affecting LIS work

- ▶ Digital Transformation
- ▶ AI
- ▶ Ethical and Legal Issues
- ▶ Skills transformation

LIS Practitioners/Professionals

- ▶ Know the legal and regulatory frameworks
- ▶ Ability to interpret the laws for serve the patrons with confidence
- ▶ Use global standards to push for better national policy and institutional practice.
- ▶ Continuous professional development-Join professional Associations.
- ▶ Position yourself to keep pace with the emerging trends
- ▶ It is personal

Professional Associations

- ▶ Advocacy. And influence policy.
- ▶ Advocate for an integrated National Information/Library Policy that references global frameworks (IFLA, ISO)
- ▶ Push to strengthen library exceptions in any future copyright reviews, particularly for digital preservation, remote access and text/data mining
- ▶ CPD
- ▶ Ethical standards

Universities and other Institutions

- ▶ Revise curriculum. Shift from cataloguing classification, collection management to digital collection management, information governance, cyber security, AI (emerging technologies and skills)
- ▶ Collaboration – among govt agencies, libraries, archives, universities, private sector and international organisations. To share knowledge, techs and best practices

Policy makers

- ▶ All round gap Analysis: Involve all stakeholders in the ecosystem (government, education institutions, professionals/practitioners, consumers of education) in policy formulation
- ▶ Recognize Libraries and institutional repositories as core STI infrastructure
- ▶ Information management should be integrated into national governance, anti-corruption and e-government strategies- to strengthen the visibility and effective information management as an enabler of transparency

Institutions

- ▶ Develop institutional Policies
- ▶ Adopt international standards such as ISO 15489 and ISO 27001 in policies
- ▶ Build capacity of information workers continuously.
- ▶ Allocate sufficient resources for digitization projects, record preservation, ICT infrastructure and staff development.
- ▶ Restructure to have Information Management Officers as Heads of units (Commissioners).
- ▶ Institutional will

Final thought

- ▶ The quality of Uganda's LIS work will depend on how intentionally the LIS profession engages with the legal and governance environment in which its operating.

About LDC

- ▶ Library
- ▶ Academics