Evaluation of the project "Strengthening Respect for Human Rights in Bolivia"

Evaluation Report

24/10/2024
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An external Consultant has prepared this report. The views expressed herein are those of the Consultant and therefore do not necessarily reflect the official opinion of OHCHR.

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Table of Acronyms

Acronym	Full Term
CSO	Civil Society Organization(s)
DdP	Defensoría del Pueblo (Ombudsperson's Office)
EU	European Union
LGBTQI+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Plus
MAS	Movimiento al Socialismo
NDICI	Instrument for Partnership, Development and International Cooperation – Global Europe
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NHRI	National Human Rights Institution
NPM	National Mechanism for the Prevention of Torture
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
OTRAF	Organización de Trabajadores y Trabajadoras por la Recuperación de sus Fuentes Laborales (Trans women's organization from Bolivia)
REDAMPIC	Red Departamental de Mujeres Campesinas Indígenas Originarias de La Paz (Departmental Network of Indigenous Peasant Women of La Paz)
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal(s)
SISP	Sistema Integral de Servicio al Pueblo (Comprehensive System of Service to the People platform)
TOR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group

Executive Summary

Aldo Magoga was engaged by the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to evaluate the project "Strengthening Respect for Human Rights in Bolivia." The evaluation, conducted between September and October 2024, assessed the project's performance from October 2022 to April 2024, addressing its relevance, coherence, effectiveness, impact, efficiency, and sustainability. It also reviewed how the project integrated gender equality, disability inclusion, and Leave No One Behind (LNOB) principles.

The evaluation applied a mixed-methods approach, combining document reviews, 29 interviews (16 women, 13 men) with key stakeholders, and three surveys involving 14 respondents (9 women, 5 men). Participants included OHCHR staff, representatives of the *Defensoría del Pueblo* (the Bolivian Ombudsperson Office), civil society organizations (CSOs), international donors, and beneficiaries such as journalists and human rights defenders.

The project aimed to strengthen the rule of law and accountability mechanisms while empowering CSOs and protecting civic space. Key outcomes included developing early warning systems, supporting legislative advocacy, and enhancing the capacity of human rights defenders. The evaluation identified achievements, such as improved institutional capacities and increased engagement with international mechanisms, alongside challenges like legislative paralysis and limited operational scope following the closure of the OHCHR Technical Mission.

The evaluation adhered to UNEG Norms and OECD/DAC criteria, generating lessons learned and actionable recommendations to enhance future human rights interventions in Bolivia.

Relevance

The evaluation found the project highly relevant in addressing Bolivia's critical human rights challenges, aligning closely with OHCHR's mandate and priorities, and adapting effectively to Bolivia's volatile political landscape. It successfully targeted issues such as political polarization, weak rule of law, and the protection of vulnerable groups, including women, Indigenous peoples, and LGBTQI+ communities. The project demonstrated strategic adaptability, shifting focus to local partnerships after the government's termination of the OHCHR Technical Mission in 2022, ensuring continuity through collaborations with the *Defensoría del Pueblo* and CSOs.

Despite its clear relevance, the project faced challenges in maintaining visibility and securing systemic changes due to operational constraints and political sensitivities. Legislative advocacy efforts were hampered by Bolivia's legislative paralysis, limiting the adoption of comprehensive human rights reforms. However, the project's alignment with OHCHR's global mandate, its emphasis on SDGs such as gender equality (SDG 5), reduced inequalities (SDG 10), and strong institutions (SDG 16), and its integration of inclusivity principles underscore its significant contribution to advancing human rights in Bolivia.

Coherence

The evaluation found the project to be well-aligned with national and regional human rights priorities, particularly through its close collaboration with the *Defensoría del Pueblo* and efforts to address issues such as gender-based violence and Indigenous rights. The project's goals were consistent with OHCHR's mandate and the EU's Multiannual Indicative Program for Bolivia, fostering alignment with broader development and human rights frameworks. This coherence was strengthened by targeted support for national institutions and proactive engagement with civil society organizations to promote human rights advocacy.

However, the project faced challenges in maintaining strong coordination with the EU amid shifting operational dynamics following the closure of the OHCHR Technical Mission. Limited communication and the abrupt departure of the project coordinator created gaps in strategic engagement with the EU, which was perceived more as a donor than a strategic partner. Despite these difficulties, the project adapted by leveraging local partnerships and implementing risk mitigation measures, ensuring it remained responsive to Bolivia's evolving political and operational context.

Efficiency

The evaluation found that the project demonstrated moderate efficiency, effectively adapting to the closure of the OHCHR Technical Mission by reallocating its budget and resources to maintain critical activities. Investments in local partnerships, particularly with the *Defensoría del Pueblo*, allowed the project to sustain key initiatives such as early warning systems and capacity-building workshops. The project also managed to implement remote monitoring and deliver technical assistance, ensuring continuity in human rights monitoring and advocacy despite operational constraints.

However, significant inefficiencies were noted, including unspent budget allocations (16% of the total), particularly in contractual services, which limited the full implementation of capacity-building and protection measures for civil society organizations. The abrupt departure of the project coordinator and communication gaps further hindered organizational efficiency, delaying activity implementation and reducing strategic coordination. These factors impacted the project's ability to achieve broader outcomes, emphasizing the need for improved planning, resource allocation, and contingency strategies in future interventions.

Effectiveness

The evaluation revealed mixed effectiveness, with notable progress in capacity building and early warning systems but limited achievements in securing comprehensive reparations, legal reforms, and protective measures for vulnerable groups.

Outcome 1: Strengthening Rule of Law and Accountability Mechanisms

The project achieved moderate effectiveness in strengthening the rule of law and accountability mechanisms. Significant progress was made in establishing early warning systems, with the *Defensoría del Pueblo* adopting tools to monitor and respond to human rights violations. This contributed to enhanced institutional capacities for risk assessment and early interventions during periods of unrest. However, progress toward justice and accountability

for human rights violations was limited. While some victims received compensation, comprehensive reparations, and institutional accountability measures remained largely unfulfilled. Of the 58 criminal cases linked to the 2019-2020 events, only four resulted in sentencing, reflecting significant gaps in judicial follow-through.

The project's efforts to address discriminatory legal provisions and strengthen state laws achieved mixed results. While the issuance of a "Plurinational Policy on Comprehensive Reparations" marked a step forward, the implementation of comprehensive reparations legislation faced delays, limiting systemic reforms. Political challenges, including legislative paralysis, impeded broader legal changes. Despite these constraints, the project's support for national institutions, particularly the *Defensoría del Pueblo*, laid critical groundwork for improved accountability mechanisms and human rights advocacy, although broader systemic impacts remain unrealized.

Outcome 2: Empowering Civil Society Organizations and Protecting Civic Space

The project demonstrated notable effectiveness in empowering CSOs through capacity-building initiatives and network strengthening. Workshops provided practical tools for human rights monitoring, advocacy, and engagement with international mechanisms, enhancing the ability of CSOs to document violations and report them to global bodies. The project successfully supported Indigenous women leaders (*brigadistas*), bolstering grassroots efforts to address gender-based violence and environmental protection. However, sustainability challenges, such as lack of post-project funding, limited the long-term impact of these efforts.

In terms of protecting civic space, the project faced significant challenges. While it facilitated discussions on protective mechanisms for journalists and human rights defenders, these initiatives were not fully operationalized. Journalists and defenders continued to face threats without formalized protections, and efforts to establish a national mechanism for their safety were hindered by polarization and delays. Despite some improvements in perceived safety for CSOs, particularly in gender and LGBTQI+ issues, the lack of concrete protective measures highlighted gaps in the project's impact on ensuring secure conditions for human rights advocacy.

Orientation to impact

The project demonstrated moderate potential for long-term impact by laying foundational elements for sustainable human rights advocacy and institutional capacity in Bolivia. Notable contributions include strengthening the *Defensoría del Pueblo*, which retained its "A" status as a National Human Rights Institution (NHRI) and increased its ability to monitor and address violations. Similarly, the empowerment of CSOs through training and international engagement has enhanced their capacity to advocate effectively for human rights at both national and global levels. The early warning systems established during the project hold significant promise for mitigating future crises by improving risk identification and response mechanisms.

However, the closure of the OHCHR Technical Mission and the absence of robust protective measures for human rights defenders and journalists have constrained the project's ability to achieve systemic and transformative change. Limited progress on legislative reforms, such as

the pending comprehensive reparations bill, underscores the challenges in translating project outputs into broader policy impacts. The continuity of the project's achievements will depend on continued support from international donors, the independence of key institutions like the Defensoría del Pueblo, and Bolivia's political stability to ensure the groundwork established by the project leads to meaningful and lasting improvements.

Sustainability

The project implemented several sustainability measures to enhance the longevity of its outcomes, focusing on capacity building, local ownership, and engagement with international human rights mechanisms. By strengthening national institutions like the *Defensoría del Pueblo* and the National Mechanism for the Prevention of Torture, the project aimed to create a durable human rights infrastructure. Additionally, training CSOs to engage with global advocacy platforms provided a pathway for sustained international accountability and pressure. Financial sustainability was partially addressed by leveraging multiple donors, such as Canada, to continue funding key initiatives, including technical assistance and platform development.

However, significant challenges threaten the sustainability of these achievements. The closure of the OHCHR Technical Mission reduced direct oversight and advocacy capacity, while the reliance on national institutions, particularly the *Defensoría del Pueblo*, raised concerns about their vulnerability to political influence. Furthermore, the lack of funding for grassroots initiatives, such as those supporting Indigenous *brigadistas*, hindered the continuity of community-level impact. The project's sustainability ultimately depends on the resilience of local actors, continued international support, and Bolivia's commitment to upholding human rights amidst political and economic instability.

Human rights, gender equality, disability inclusion, and LNOB

The project effectively integrated human rights, gender equality, disability inclusion, and the LNOB principle across its activities, focusing on empowering vulnerable groups and addressing systemic barriers. Targeted efforts included capacity-building workshops for women, Indigenous peoples, and LGBTQI+ communities, alongside technical assistance to CSOs advocating for marginalized populations. Specific initiatives, such as training Indigenous women *brigadistas* and supporting advocacy for gender-based violence prevention, demonstrated the project's commitment to inclusivity. These actions strengthened the ability of marginalized groups to participate in human rights mechanisms and advocate for their rights on national and international levels.

Despite these efforts, challenges persisted in fully operationalizing protective mechanisms and achieving systemic inclusion. Legislative advocacy to address discriminatory legal provisions encountered significant political hurdles, limiting broader policy reforms. Additionally, while progress was made in raising awareness and building capacity, the sustainability of these initiatives remains uncertain, particularly at the grassroots level. The project's inclusive approach highlights its alignment with the LNOB principle, but its long-term impact will rely on sustained institutional support and the continuation of funding and advocacy efforts for marginalized communities.

Lessons learned

The evaluation highlighted several lessons learned, emphasizing the importance of adaptability, strategic partnerships, and sustainability in promoting human rights in complex political environments. One key lesson was the value of fostering strong local partnerships, as demonstrated by the collaboration with the *Defensoría del Pueblo*. Strengthening national institutions and civil society organizations proved critical in maintaining human rights advocacy amid political restrictions and the closure of the OHCHR Technical Mission.

Another lesson underscored the need for robust contingency planning and risk mitigation in volatile contexts. The abrupt closure of the Technical Mission highlighted gaps in the project's ability to respond to sudden political shifts, underscoring the importance of proactive strategies to safeguard achievements. Additionally, the evaluation revealed the necessity of balancing capacity-building efforts with practical measures to ensure immediate protection for vulnerable groups, such as journalists and human rights defenders. Future initiatives should integrate more comprehensive mechanisms to secure these groups' safety while continuing to empower them through advocacy and training.

Good practices

The evaluation identified several good practices that contributed to the project's successes and can inform future interventions in similar contexts. One notable practice was the strategic collaboration with the *Defensoría del Pueblo*, which enhanced the institution's ability to monitor human rights violations and advocate for systemic reforms. This partnership not only strengthened local ownership of human rights initiatives but also ensured continuity in advocacy efforts despite the closure of the OHCHR Technical Mission.

Another good practice was the tailored capacity-building approach for marginalized groups, such as the training of Indigenous women *brigadistas* and workshops for civil society organizations. These initiatives equipped participants with practical skills for human rights monitoring, reporting, and advocacy, fostering greater inclusivity and participation. Additionally, the project's emphasis on integrating international human rights mechanisms into local advocacy strategies proved highly effective. By supporting the submission of shadow reports and engagement with UN treaty bodies, the project elevated local issues to a global stage, creating additional pressure for accountability and reform. These practices demonstrate the importance of adaptability, inclusivity, and leveraging international mechanisms to amplify local human rights efforts.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1 (OHCHR Regional Office, EU Delegation in Bolivia, EU Headquarters in Brussels, OHCHR HQ): Strengthen the EU's role as a strategic partner in future OHCHR projects, ensuring full integration into decision-making processes, advocacy efforts, and strategic planning while enhancing regular coordination between OHCHR and the EU.

Recommendation 2 (OHCHR Regional Office in Chile, and OHCHR HQ): Reinforce formal and informal channels for engagement between the OHCHR and the Bolivian

government, using human rights mechanisms such as treaty bodies, the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), and Special Procedures (SPs) as the foundation for dialogue and driving systemic human rights reforms.

Recommendation 3 (OHCHR Regional Office, OHCHR HQ, international partners): Integrate OHCHR's existing risk management tools—such as the risk register, risk treatment and response plans, and the OHCHR business contingency plan—into future projects design to ensure continued operations in the face of political instability or government restrictions.

Recommendation 4 (OHCHR Regional Office, and international partners): Continue providing support efforts to ensure the *Defensoría del Pueblo* remains an independent and effective institution capable of impartially carrying out its human rights monitoring mandate.

Recommendation 5 (OHCHR Regional Office): Increase the involvement of the OHCHR Regional Office in Chile to both support localized advocacy efforts and strengthen coordination with Bolivian CSOs for continuous human rights monitoring and advocacy.

Recommendation 6 (OHCHR Regional Office, international donors, including the EU): Create a comprehensive strategy that includes financial sustainability and clear exit strategies, ensuring that CSOs and national institutions, such as the *Defensoría del Pueblo*, can independently sustain the progress made after the project's completion.

Recommendation 7 (OHCHR Regional Office): Strengthen Bolivia's early warning systems by ensuring continuous monitoring, evaluation, and response capacity with both local and regional actors involved.

Recommendation 8 (OHCHR Regional Office, OHCHR HQ): Strengthen efforts to integrate gender equality and disability inclusion into all future OHCHR projects and initiatives in Bolivia, ensuring these aspects are fully mainstreamed and result in tangible outcomes.

Recommendation 9 (OHCHR Regional Office, OHCHR HQ): Reallocate resources in future projects to ensure a balanced distribution between personnel costs, contractual services, and direct programmatic activities, with a focus on strengthening institutional capacity, providing direct support, and fostering positive collaboration with local authorities and civil society.

1. Introduction

1.1 Project Background

OHCHR's presence in Bolivia

OHCHR's presence in Bolivia has been marked by a dynamic adaptation to changing political conditions, shifting from a country office to a technical mission, and from April 1st, 2024, under the Regional Office of OHCHR in Chile. The organization has demonstrated resilience and adaptability, maintaining its commitment to human rights in Bolivia despite operational challenges and the evolving political landscape.

In February 2007, OHCHR signed an agreement with the Bolivian government for the establishment of a country office. In December 2016, the government informed that this agreement would be renewed for the last time until 31 December 2017. Starting in 2018, the human rights situation in Bolivia was monitored by the regional office in South America, based in Santiago, Chile, with the support of a National Human Rights Adviser embedded in the Resident Coordinator's Office. The focus during this period was limited, with support provided through short-term technical missions and collaborations with local partners.

Following the contentious general elections in 2019 and the subsequent political crisis, OHCHR established a Technical Mission in Bolivia. This was a significant diplomatic achievement, as it allowed OHCHR to have an in-country presence to monitor the human rights situation closely, provide technical support, and engage with local stakeholders.

The mission focused on documenting human rights violations, providing early warning, and supporting local institutions, such as the Ombudsperson's Office (*Defensoría del Pueblo* -DdP). It played a crucial role in addressing the immediate aftermath of the political crisis and the social unrest that followed[1].

In December 2022, the Bolivian government decided not to renew the Technical Mission's mandate, which resulted in the closure of OHCHR's in-country presence, despite previous assurances of a negotiated three-year extension. Various political factors and internal challenges within the government influenced this decision.

The mission's closure significantly constrained OHCHR's operational capacity and visibility in Bolivia, limiting its ability to engage directly with local stakeholders and advocate publicly on sensitive human rights issues[2].

After the closure of the Technical Mission, in 2023, OHCHR was negotiating with the Bolivian government to re-establish a more structured presence in the country. While some authorities gave reasons for optimism, an agreement did not come to fruition.

[1] OHCHR. 2024. Project Interim Report - 19/10/2022 to 18/10/2023
[2] Ibidem

OHCHR adapted its approach by maintaining a smaller-scale presence in Bolivia and operating through and with local partners. This included continued engagement with civil society, supporting the *Defensoría del Pueblo* (Ombudsperson office), and addressing emerging human rights issues.

Despite the limitations, OHCHR has continued to conduct risk analyses, support civil society organizations, and provide technical assistance on issues such as women's rights, indigenous peoples, and journalists. It also collaborates with the *Defensoría del Pueblo* and other UN agencies to maintain its influence and protect human rights in Bolivia.

Country context

A fragile political environment, significant human rights challenges, and socio-economic vulnerabilities characterize Bolivia's country context. The ongoing internal divisions, economic difficulties, and governance issues have created a complex landscape for human rights work, requiring a flexible and responsive approach from national and international actors to address the country's evolving needs and priorities.

Bolivia's political scene is deeply polarized, primarily between factions supporting the ruling party, Movimiento al Socialismo (MAS), and the opposition. MAS has significant internal divisions, particularly between current President Luis Arce's supporters and former President Evo Morales. This division has led to legislative paralysis and increased risks of social unrest.[3]

The disputed general elections in 2019 resulted in widespread protests, allegations of electoral fraud, and the resignation of Evo Morales. This led to a temporary government and the eventual election of Luis Arce in 2020. Still, the aftermath of the crisis has continued to influence the political climate, contributing to instability and ongoing tensions.[4]

The post-electoral crisis led to numerous human rights violations, including allegations of excessive use of force, arbitrary detentions, and political persecution. These issues remain a concern, with ongoing debates over the independence of the judiciary and accountability for past abuse.[5]

Indigenous peoples, women, journalists, and human rights defenders face significant challenges in Bolivia. Indigenous communities, in particular, continue to struggle with land rights issues and discrimination. Women and LGBTQI+ individuals also experience high levels of gender-based violence and discrimination.[6]

Bolivia's economy is under pressure due to declining natural gas exports, high government spending, and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. These factors have heightened the risk

[3] Ibidem
[4] OHCHR's staff interviews
[5] OHCHR. 2024. Project Interim Report - 19/10/2022 to 18/10/2023
[6] Interviews with beneficiaries

of a currency and balance of payments crisis. Economic instability has exacerbated social tensions and increased the vulnerability of already marginalized communities.[7]

The economic situation and political polarization have strained the country's social fabric. Poverty and inequality persist, particularly affecting indigenous and rural populations who have limited access to essential services and economic opportunities.[8]

The judiciary in Bolivia has been criticized for a lack of independence and susceptibility to political interference. This has undermined public confidence in the rule of law and hindered efforts to address human rights abuses effectively.[9]

The Bolivian government has faced challenges in governance, marked by frequent changes in leadership and internal conflicts. This has affected the stability and effectiveness of public institutions, complicating the implementation of reforms and policies aimed at improving human rights and social cohesion.[10]

Issues such as deforestation, land rights, and environmental degradation have become more prominent, particularly affecting indigenous communities. The government's policies, such as the Gold Purchase Law, have often prioritized economic stability over environmental protection, leading to conflicts with Indigenous groups.[11]

There is a critical need for strengthening human rights institutions, such as the Ombudsperson's Office, to improve accountability and support for vulnerable groups. Enhancing the capacity of civil society organizations to engage in human rights advocacy is also a priority.[12]

The EU Project in Bolivia

The European Union (EU) awarded OHCHR in Bolivia an 18-month project to strengthen respect for human rights in response to the complex socio-political and human rights challenges following the 2019 post-electoral crisis, with a budget of 1,000,000 USD and a duration of 18 months, from October 19, 2022, to April 2024. Formalized under the NDICI[13] CRISIS FPI/2022/434-203 contract, the project aimed to support the rule of law, enhance the capacities of civil society organizations, and protect civic space. Building on previous positive experiences, this initiative continued the EU's commitment to promoting human rights and stability in Bolivia.

[7] OHCHR. 2024. Project Interim Report - 19/10/2022 to 18/10/2023
[8] Ibidem
[9] Ibidem
[10] Interviews with OHCHR staff
[11] OHCHR. 2024. Project Interim Report - 19/10/2022 to 18/10/2023
[12] Interviews with be3neficiaries
[13] Instrument for Partnership, Development and International Cooperation – Global Europe (NDICI), specifically its Rapid Response Pillar. This instrument enables the EU to swiftly address urgent situations like Bolivia's political instability and human rights challenges.

Despite the Bolivian government's unexpected decision not to renew the OHCHR Technical Mission in December 2022, the project was adapted with the signing of an amendment in May 2023 to maintain its effectiveness through technical assistance, early warning analysis, and capacity building for national institutions and civil society actors. It addresses human rights concerns across the country, focusing on critical areas such as La Paz, Santa Cruz, Cochabamba, Potosí, and Chuquisaca, as well as targeted communities like Antequera (Oruro) and Bella Vista (Beni).

The project aims to achieve two primary outcomes:

- **Outcome 1:** Strengthen the rule of law and accountability mechanisms by supporting early warning systems, documenting human rights violations, and providing technical assistance to improve state policies and institutional capacities.
- **Outcome 2:** Empower human rights and civil society organizations and protect civic space by providing technical support, building networks, and monitoring threats to human rights defenders and journalists.

1.2 EVALUATION BACKGROUND

In line with the funding agreement with the EU Delegation, OHCHR was tasked with independently evaluating the project per its policy. As a result, the OHCHR evaluation unit incorporated this evaluation into the Office's 2024 Evaluation Plan.

The evaluation focused on assessing the relevance and effectiveness of the project since its inception in October 2022. It examined the significant results achieved, particularly in the context of the challenges faced, such as the Bolivian government's non-renewal of the OHCHR Technical Mission. The evaluation also analyzed the strategies that contributed to or hindered the achievement of these results. Both summative (evaluating past performance) and formative (informing future initiatives) approaches have been used, increasing OHCHR's accountability and contributing to its organizational learning.

As outlined in the Terms of Reference (ToR), the general objectives of the evaluation are:

1. The evaluation aims to assess the planning and achievement of the project's results, including integrating gender and human rights. This involves pinpointing both successful strategies and areas needing improvement.
2. The evaluation will document and identify lessons learned and good practices, illustrating what strategies worked well or failed in achieving the project's goals.
3. The evaluation will produce clear and actionable recommendations that suggest concrete actions and responsibilities for OHCHR to enhance future human rights interventions in Bolivia or similar contexts.

The evaluation covered the regions and period of the project's implementation, focusing on OHCHR's activities in Bolivia, specifically in La Paz, Santa Cruz, Cochabamba, Potosí,

Chuquisaca, and the communities of Antequera (Oruro) and Bella Vista (Beni). It assessed the project's performance from its start on October 19, 2022, until its official conclusion on April 18, 2024. The evaluation considered the geographical scope, time-bound achievements, and challenges faced during this period.

An independent consultant collected the evaluation data between September and October 2024. This process involved a comprehensive review of documents and a mix of online and in-person individual and group interviews (total 29 participants), and survey (14 respondents)[14]. Participants included representatives from national and local civil society organizations (CSOs), NGOs, project beneficiaries, the *Defensoría del Pueblo*, the EU, and Canada cooperation officials in Bolivia. Additional consultations with the EU delegation in Bolivia, Bolivian human rights experts, and senior management and program staff from OHCHR Headquarters in Geneva and the regional office were held. Additionally, three surveys were conducted: one targeting OHCHR representatives, institutions, and organizations involved in project implementation and two others aimed at staff and beneficiaries, including journalists, human rights defenders, and representatives from non-governmental and Indigenous organizations.

The evaluation followed the UNEG Norms and Standards[15] for Evaluation in the UN System, the UNEG Handbook for Conducting Evaluations of Normative Work[16], and the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation[17].

The evaluation followed the OECD/DAC criteria outlined in the Terms of Reference. It assessed the project's relevance in addressing the correct issues and aligning with the needs of Bolivian stakeholders and broader human rights frameworks. It also looked for any unaddressed human rights priorities and suggested potential modifications. Efficiency was evaluated based on the effective use of human, financial, and intellectual resources, ensuring the project's structures were appropriate for the Bolivian context. Effectiveness focused on measuring the project's success in achieving its objectives and identifying factors influencing OHCHR's performance. The impact orientation criterion examined the project's long-term effects on human rights in Bolivia, assessing its potential to create lasting change. Sustainability evaluated the project's ability to foster national ownership and strengthen the institutional capacity of local human rights actors to continue the work beyond the project's timeframe.

Finally, the evaluation reviewed the project's commitment to inclusivity, specifically its efforts to promote human rights, gender equality, and disability inclusion. It analyzed how effectively these principles were integrated into the project's design and implementation. It focused on the impact on vulnerable groups such as women, children, persons with disabilities, indigenous communities, and LGBTQI+ individuals and its support for creating a safer environment for human rights defenders.

[14] More details are available in 1.3 Evaluation Methodology and Figure 1. Stakeholders who participated in the evaluation.
[15] http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/1914
[16] http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/1484
[17] Evaluation Knowledge Management Platform UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation 2020.pdf (sharepoint.com)

Due to political unrest and protests during the field mission, the evaluation faced challenges in organizing interviews with key stakeholders, particularly government officials. To mitigate this, the team expanded survey distribution, held additional meetings with project consultants, and invited other relevant actors, as detailed in the annexed "List of Interviewed Persons."

Non-response or limited participation could result in data gaps. This was addressed by using multiple communication channels, flexible participation options, and emphasizing confidentiality. Access and security concerns in certain regions risked the underrepresentation of marginalized groups, so remote data collection methods and local partners were used.

Recall bias and subjectivity in responses were mitigated through a mix of question types and triangulation with project documents. Cultural and language barriers did not occur. Time constraints were managed by prioritizing key questions and building in contingency time. Lastly, political sensitivities were navigated by engaging government stakeholders early and assuring confidentiality.

1.3 Evaluation Methodology

The evaluation utilized a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques to comprehensively analyze the project's relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence, impact, and sustainability.

The methodology included a comprehensive document review, structured and semi-structured individual and group interviews, and surveys. A field mission was conducted in Bolivia from September 23 to 26, with in-person coverage in La Paz and remote coverage in key regions where the project was implemented.

Data Collection Methods:

- Document Review: Key project materials, such as proposals, reports, and relevant policy documents, were analyzed to provide insights into the project's achievements and challenges.
- Interviews: A total of 29 in-depth interviews were conducted with key stakeholders, including OHCHR staff, representatives from the *Defensoría del Pueblo*, civil society organizations (CSOs), journalists, and international partners, such as the EU Delegation (refer to Figure 1).
- Surveys: OHCHR staff invited people who participated in the project, in its implementation (institutional representatives), or as beneficiaries (institution officials or human rights defenders, journalists, or representatives of Indigenous organizations) to participate in the three evaluation surveys. A total of 14 respondents participated (refer to Figure 1). These surveys captured stakeholders' perceptions regarding the project's relevance, effectiveness, and sustainability.

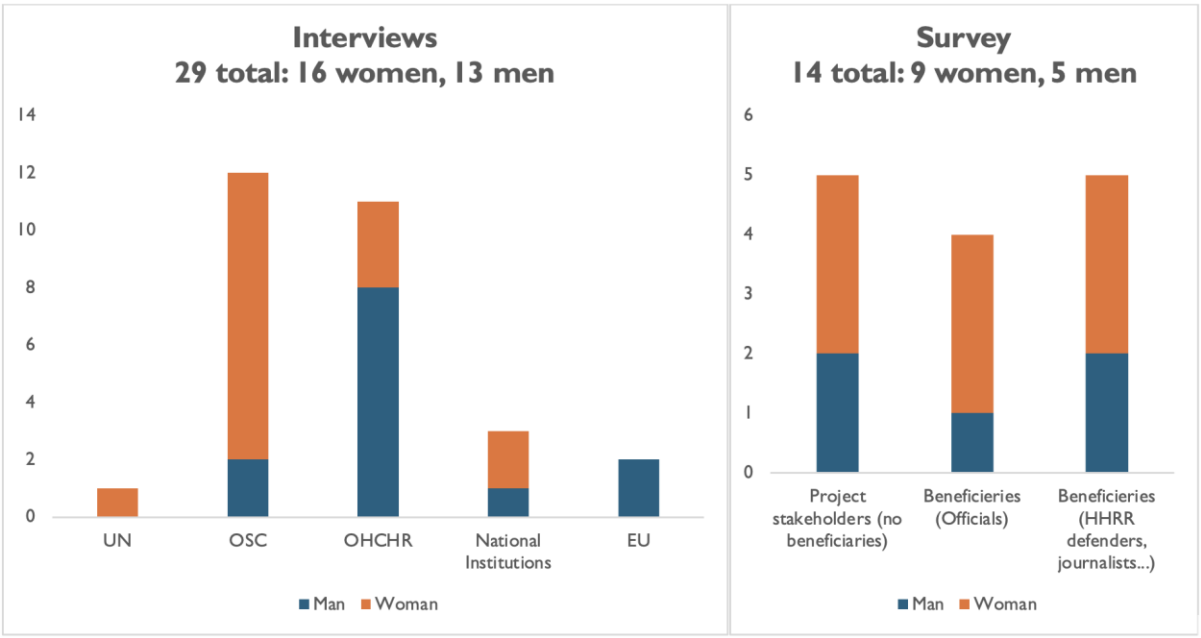


Figure 1. Stakeholders who participated in the evaluation.

The evaluation incorporated human rights, gender equality, and disability inclusion throughout the data collection. Specific questions were designed to capture information on the project's impact on vulnerable groups, such as women, persons with disabilities, indigenous communities, and LGBTQI+ individuals.

2. MAIN FINDINGS PRESENTED ACCORDING TO THE EVALUATION CRITERIA

The findings below align with the criteria and questions outlined in the evaluation Terms of Reference, using the indicators established for each evaluation question in the Inception Report.

2.1 RELEVANCE

EQ1. How relevant has the project been to Bolivia's human rights situation, the needs of stakeholders, OHCHR's mandate, the Management Plan, and the SDGs? How effectively has the project adapted to Bolivia's changing political context, particularly considering governmental restrictions on OHCHR's mission?

Overview: Very high. The Project has demonstrated significant relevance to Bolivia's human rights landscape. It effectively addressed the country's pressing human rights challenges, adapted to the evolving political context, and aligned with OHCHR's mandate and Management Plan. Although it encountered considerable obstacles, such as operational constraints and limited visibility, the Project's strategic adaptations and focus on local partnerships enabled it to remain vital in promoting human rights in Bolivia. The alignment with critical global priorities, including the implicit support for several SDGs, further

underscores the Project's relevance and contribution to broader human rights and development objectives.

The Project has been highly relevant to Bolivia's human rights situation, aligning closely with OHCHR's mandate, Management Plan, and, although not explicitly stated, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It effectively addressed stakeholders' diverse and evolving needs while navigating a volatile and challenging political landscape, especially following the Bolivian government's decision to terminate the OHCHR Technical Mission in December 2022[18].

Addressing Bolivia's Human Rights Challenges

Since the 2019 elections, Bolivia's political and social landscape has been marked by unrest, polarization, and weakened institutional frameworks. In this context, the project was crucial in addressing core human rights issues and supporting the rule of law. The project tackled these challenges in three critical areas: political polarization, weak rule of law, and protecting vulnerable groups.

The Project sought to reduce the heightened social and political tensions by promoting dialogue among various stakeholders, including state institutions, civil society organizations, and marginalized communities. It aimed to foster a more inclusive and participatory environment by encouraging the peaceful resolution of conflicts and enhancing communication between opposing groups. This effort was particularly crucial in a context where distrust in public institutions and political actors was pervasive, and civic space was increasingly restricted.[19]

The Project recognized the severe limitations within Bolivia's justice system, characterized by a lack of independence and efficiency, which undermined public confidence in legal institutions. To improve the system's ability to deliver justice, ensure the independence of judicial processes, and hold perpetrators of human rights violations accountable, the Project focused on strengthening accountability mechanisms and advocating for legal and institutional reforms. It provided trainings to key institutions such as the judiciary, the Attorney General's Office, and the police.

The Project also prioritized the protection of groups disproportionately affected by human rights violations, including women, indigenous peoples, and the LGBTQI+ community. Recognizing that these groups often face systemic discrimination and are particularly vulnerable to violence and abuse, the Project focused on enhancing their access to justice and advocating for their rights. To address immediate human rights concerns and contribute to longer-term efforts to combat discrimination and promote equality, the Project supported civil society organizations that work directly with these communities, helping them build human rights monitoring and advocacy capacity.[20]

Adapting to Bolivia's Changing Political Landscape and Governmental Restrictions

[18] Source: Interviews with OHCHR HA, regional and national staff

[19] Annex AI Project document and EU Bolivia IR1 Narrative December 2023 REV2 tc

[20] Source: interview with beneficiaries

The Project also demonstrated remarkable adaptability in response to Bolivia's changing political context, particularly after the unexpected termination of the OHCHR Technical Mission in 2022. This decision significantly altered the operational environment, limiting the Project's ability to engage directly with the government and reducing its visibility in the public sphere.

To navigate these challenges, the Project shifted its strategy to work more closely with local partners[21]. To continue promoting human rights, albeit through a less visible and more discreet presence, OHCHR intensified its collaboration with the *Defensoría del Pueblo*, civil society organizations, and other non-state actors. The focus on strengthening the capacity and independence of the *Defensoría del Pueblo*, especially following the election of a reform-minded Ombudsman in 2022, was a strategic move. It leveraged the NHRI as a critical institution for advancing human rights in a context where direct engagement with the government was restricted.[22]

Additionally, to maintain the Project's operational effectiveness and ensure its partners' safety in a politically sensitive environment, it adopted a low-profile approach in its public communications. This involved limiting logos and refraining from public statements that could exacerbate tensions with the government or attract unwanted scrutiny.[23]

Alignment with OHCHR's Mandate, Management Plan, and the SDGs

The Project was well-aligned with OHCHR's mandate to protect and promote human rights globally. It engaged in various activities that supported this mandate, from monitoring human rights violations and providing technical assistance to empowering civil society organizations. The Project was closely aligned with OHCHR's 2022-2023 Management Plan, particularly in strengthening the rule of law, protecting civic space, and combating discrimination. It supported the justice system by building the capacity of the *Defensoría del Pueblo* and advocating for legal reforms, directly contributing to the Management Plan's goal of ensuring accountability for human rights violations. In response to a shrinking civic space, the Project empowered civil society organizations by strengthening networks and supporting their capacity to monitor and report violations against marginalized groups, aligning with OHCHR's focus on defending civil society actors.[24]

Additionally, the Project addressed discrimination by promoting the rights of women and indigenous peoples, which reflects the Management Plan's pillar on equality and non-discrimination. Its efforts to integrate human rights into sustainable development and establish early warning mechanisms resonate with the Plan's emphasis on proactive prevention and protection in complex political contexts. Overall, the Project effectively embodies the strategic priorities of OHCHR's Management Plan, demonstrating its relevance and responsiveness to Bolivia's human rights challenges.[25]

[21] Amendment EU OHCHR_BOL Annex I DoA_rev 28.04.23
[22] Interviews with OHCHR HQ and regional offices
[23] Ibidem
[24] Interviews with OHCHR HQ and regional offices
[25] Ibidem

The Project supported several of SDGs. The emphasis on gender equality and combating violence against women aligns with SDG 5 (Gender Equality). Efforts to support indigenous peoples and other marginalized groups align with SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities). At the same time, the focus on strengthening legal and institutional frameworks corresponds to SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions).[26] This alignment highlights the Project's broader relevance beyond the immediate human rights context in Bolivia, positioning it as a contribution to global efforts to promote sustainable development and uphold human rights.

Challenges and Opportunities in Maintaining Relevance

Despite its clear relevance, the Project faced significant challenges maintaining its effectiveness and visibility. The termination of the Technical Mission restricted the Project's operational scope and hindered its ability to advocate for human rights in Bolivia publicly. The political sensitivities surrounding OHCHR's presence in the country meant that the Project had to carefully navigate its relationship with the government, often relying more heavily on local partners and discreet engagement.[27]

However, these challenges also revealed opportunities. By deepening its partnerships with the *Defensoría del Pueblo* and civil society organizations, the Project strengthened local ownership of human rights initiatives. This approach ensured the continuity of its activities and enhanced the sustainability of its outcomes. Moreover, by maintaining a low profile, the Project contributed to a depoliticized approach to human rights in Bolivia, fostering a more constructive dialogue among stakeholders.[28]

The project budget prioritized technical assistance and capacity building through OHCHR staff and consultants, leveraging their expertise and networks to deliver key initiatives. While this approach was crucial for the project's success, the allocation of resources for direct support, such as equipment, technology, and other services aimed at strengthening institutional capacity, was notably limited.

2.2 COHERENCE

EQ 2. How does the project align with national/regional priorities, and how has engagement with the EU adapted to the changing operational context?

Overview: High. The Project was well-aligned with national and regional human rights priorities, focusing on strengthening key institutions like the *Defensoría del Pueblo* and addressing critical issues such as gender-based violence and indigenous rights. While the initial partnership with the EU was strong, the changing political context required both the Project and the EU to adapt their strategies, resulting in a more discreet and localized approach. Despite the challenges, the Project successfully implemented risk mitigation measures, such

[26] OHCHR. 2024. Project Interim Report - 19/10/2022 to 18/10/2023
[27] Interviews with OHCHR HQ and regional offices
[28] Ibidem

as reducing its public profile and leveraging local partnerships, to maintain its relevance and effectiveness.

The Project has demonstrated a strong alignment with national and regional human rights priorities while navigating a complex relationship with the EU amid a changing operational landscape. Despite significant political and operational challenges, the strategic alignment was achieved through targeted support to the Bolivian National Human Rights System and proactive engagement with various stakeholders.

Alignment with National/Regional Priorities and OHCHR's Role

The Project's alignment with Bolivia's national human rights priorities is evident through its close collaboration with key national institutions, particularly the *Defensoría del Pueblo*. This collaboration was crucial in strengthening the institution's capacity to protect and promote human rights, aligning with Bolivia's human rights commitments. For example, the Project supported the development of the Ombudsperson's capacity to monitor and report on human rights violations more effectively, which was essential during times of heightened political tensions and civic unrest.[29]

Another example of alignment is the Project's focus on combating gender-based violence and supporting the rights of indigenous communities. In response to high levels of violence against women, the Project collaborated with local organizations to advocate for stronger legal protections and support services for survivors of gender-based violence. This effort included workshops and training for law enforcement and judicial officials to handle better cases involving women and girls, aligning with Bolivia's national priorities to reduce gender-based violence and enhance gender equality.[30] Additionally, the Project's work with indigenous organizations, such as supporting legal assistance and advocacy for land rights, addressed specific vulnerabilities faced by these communities, further aligning with national efforts to promote indigenous rights.[31]

The Project also engaged various stakeholders, including civil society organizations, human rights defenders, and international partners. For instance, during political unrest, the Project facilitated dialogue between government officials and civil society groups to reduce tensions and promote peaceful conflict resolution. This inclusive approach ensured that the Project addressed the concerns of a broad spectrum of Bolivian society, aligning with regional human rights priorities and contributing to a more comprehensive and coordinated response to human rights challenges.[32]

Adapting EU Engagement to a Changing Operational Context

The Project's relationship with the EU, a crucial funder, initially demonstrated strong alignment and shared priorities, as highlighted by the EU's significant financial support and the integration of the Project's goals into the EU's Multiannual Indicative Program for Bolivia 2021-

[29] OHCHR. 2024. Project Interim Report - 19/10/2022 to 18/10/2023
[30] Interviews with beneficiaries
[31] OHCHR. 2024. Project Interim Report - 19/10/2022 to 18/10/2023
[32] Interviews with OHCHR HQ and regional offices

2027. However, the operational context shifted dramatically after the Bolivian government ended the OHCHR Technical Mission in December 2022. This decision required the Project and the EU to adapt their engagement strategy significantly.[33]

Uncertainty surrounding the potential reopening of the OHCHR Technical Mission in Bolivia, exacerbated by positive signals from Bolivia's mission in Geneva, which characterized the first half of 2023, further complicated the situation. This uncertainty made it difficult for OHCHR to maintain a clear and transparent line of communication with the EU, as the future of the OHCHR in Bolivia and its operational scope remained unclear. During this period, despite several meetings[34], OHCHR was unable to provide the EU with clear information about the future of its presence in Bolivia due to contradictory reports regarding the possibility of opening a new technical mission. After the approval of the amendment, the coordination modalities for the project with the EU remained undefined, further complicated by the reassignment of the project coordinator to another location. These issues created additional friction, which further strained the relationship with the EU.

Additionally, the EU's role in the project was not sufficiently acknowledged or leveraged as a strategic partner. Despite their significant contributions, the EU was perceived to be treated more as a donor rather than an integral partner in the project's strategic direction. This perception was compounded by other issues, such as a reduced capacity for high-level strategic coordination within the Project team, particularly after the departure of the Project Coordinator in August 2023. This departure, neither discussed nor planned with the EU, led to a temporary gap in leadership and hindered the Project's ability to maintain cohesive and effective engagement with its stakeholders[35].

Consequently, the combination of these factors strained the relationship between OHCHR and the EU, impacting the effectiveness of their collaboration in promoting human rights in Bolivia.[36]

Despite these challenges, the Project managed to maintain effective collaboration with the EU by keeping communication channels open and adapting its strategies to align with the changing political context.[37]

Implementation of Risk Mitigation Measures

Due to the volatile political climate, the project faced several risks, including potential backlash against its human rights activities and the impact of the closure of the OHCHR Technical Mission. To mitigate these risks, the Project developed a comprehensive risk assessment framework that identified potential threats and outlined mitigation strategies.

One example of successful risk mitigation was the Project's response to political interference attempts. When faced with efforts to influence its activities, the Project maintained a neutral and impartial stance, reinforcing its commitment to OHCHR's principles. To further safeguard

[33] OHCHR. 2024. Project Interim Report - 19/10/2022 to 18/10/2023

[34] Bilateral meetings were held on 31 January, 7 and 14 February, 1 and 14 March, 25 April, 3 May, 6 June, 28 June, 11 August, and 5 October 2023, in addition to letters, e-mails, phone calls and messages.

[35] Interviews with OHCHR HQ and regional offices

[36] Interviews with OHCHR HQ and regional offices

[37] Ibidem

its operations, the Project strengthened its partnerships with local organizations and reduced its visibility, which helped protect its staff and beneficiaries from potential backlash.[38]
Another example is the Project's remote monitoring and engagement techniques during heightened political tension. By leveraging digital tools and local networks, the Project continued monitoring the human rights situation and supporting at-risk communities despite direct engagement restrictions. This adaptability mitigated operational risks and ensured that the Project could continue to address human rights violations effectively.[39]

2.3 EFFICIENCY

EQ 3. How did the project manage budget reallocation due to the mission's closure, and how effectively were resources used to maintain project outcomes?

Overview: Moderate. The project successfully adapted to the closure of the Technical Mission by reallocating its budget to strengthen partnerships with local institutions, such as the *Defensoría del Pueblo*, which ensured continuity in key human rights activities. However, inefficiencies in the use of contractual services, with a significant portion of the budget left unspent, limited its capacity to fully support civil society organizations and deliver long-term institutional capacity-building. Furthermore, organizational and communication challenges—particularly after the departure of the Project Coordinator—negatively affected the project's efficiency in its final phase, hindering its ability to achieve sustained and broader outcomes.

The Project demonstrated significant adaptability in reallocating its budget and refocusing its strategy following the closure of the OHCHR Technical Mission in Bolivia. This unexpected closure in December 2022 required a comprehensive revision of the operational and financial plans, leading to an amendment to the Action agreed upon with the EU in May 2023. This amendment was crucial to align the Project with the new operational reality, which likely included a reduction in EU funding and a re-prioritization of resources to continue essential activities under the altered circumstances.[40] According to the survey, overall, the project was perceived as efficient, though areas for improvement were noted, particularly in logistics and coordination.

Positive Shift Towards Strengthening Human Rights Institutions and Budgetary Adaptations

In May 2023, the project experienced a strategic shift towards strengthening local partnerships, particularly with the *Defensoría del Pueblo*, as part of a broader adaptation to the changing operational environment. By investing in local capacity, the Project aimed to ensure the sustainability of its outcomes and to reinforce local ownership of human rights initiatives.[41]

[38] OHCHR. 2024. Project Interim Report - 19/10/2022 to 18/10/2023
[39] Interviews with OHCHR HQ and regional offices
[40] Interviews with OHCHR HQ and regional offices
[41] OHCHR. 2024. Project Interim Report - 19/10/2022 to 18/10/2023

This shift included financial support for joint activities, capacity-building workshops, and shared resources, with USD 95,000 specifically allocated to support national institutions independently monitoring and advocating for human rights. By focusing on building local capacity, the project aimed to ensure the sustainability of its outcomes and reinforce local ownership of human rights initiatives, even as the international field presence diminished. The overall allocation of funds to staff and personnel costs (including consultancies) remained predominant, with 62% of total direct costs foreseen for these areas[42], since the long-term institutional strengthening relied on technical assistance for capacity-building through consultancies and staff.

Simultaneously, the May 2023 amendment introduced key budgetary adaptations to maintain the project's operations with a reduced OHCHR team. Resources were reallocated to prioritize remote monitoring techniques and reduce on-site activities, allowing the project to continue its mission of monitoring human rights violations despite political constraints and reduced visibility. To support these changes, USD 30,000 was earmarked to implement the project with a minor team, covering essential costs such as staff travel, and workshops (at least 25 workshops costing 62,500 USD, for outputs 1.2 and 2.1, included in the budget category "contractual services" provided in the Budget for the Action)contractual services: designed to promote dialogue and build the capacity of rights-holders and duty-bearers. These budgetary adjustments were a pragmatic response to the evolving political situation, ensuring that critical project objectives could still be met.

While the strategic shift and budgetary reallocations helped the project navigate the challenges posed by the political environment, a significant portion of the budget remained unspent, particularly in contractual services with only 9% of the budget for Outcome 1 and 8% for Outcome 2 dedicated to contractual services, and 64% unspent in outcome 1 and 92% unspent in outcome. This raised concerns about whether enough resources were directed toward long-term institutional capacity-building and the development of sustainable infrastructure for crucial institutions such as the *Defensoría del Pueblo and the National Mechanism for the Prevention of Torture*.

The project's risk assessment did consider potential risks, such as national authorities and key stakeholders questioning the Mission's impartiality, political actors attempting to interfere with OHCHR's work, and uncertainties about the extension of the OHCHR Technical Mission, which could lead to staff turnover, short-term contracts, and difficulties in implementing planned activities. However, this strategy did not effectively consider the abrupt closure of the Mission, which was foreseen as a context for staff turnover but not explicitly considered as a standalone risk with its own mitigation measures. As a mitigation measure, it proposed continuous dialogue at OHCHR Headquarters in Geneva and locally in La Paz to ensure a robust and sustained presence of OHCHR in the country. These events highlight the need for more specific and proactive risk management, including preparing for sudden political shifts and key personnel changes, as well as strengthening contingency plans to ensure operational continuity and leadership stability in volatile environments.

[42] According to the final financial report, staff and personnel costs amounted to USD 288,135 for Outcome 1 and 271,935 for Outcome 2, against a total amount of direct costs of USD 907,103.

Moderate Efficiency in the Use of Resources and Donor Funds

Despite challenges in budget allocation, OHCHR demonstrated efficient use of resources by leveraging funds from multiple donors and projects, including the EU, Canada, and other partners, to ensure the continuity of human rights activities in Bolivia, but a moderate efficiency in the implementation of the project.

Through strategic partnerships, such as the Canadian-funded "Support to Human Rights in Bolivia and Peru" and the "Global Drive" initiative for supporting journalists, OHCHR was able to distribute project funds effectively across initiatives. This approach allowed the team to continue operations after the EU-funded project ended. For example, the Canadian project currently absorbed costs related to supporting national institutions, including designing and implementing *the Sistema Integral de Servicio al Pueblo* (SISP, Comprehensive System of Service to the People platform, as indicated in 3.6 Sustainability). It should also be mentioned that, due to delays in the consultancies for the design of the information system of the ombudsperson's office, it has not been implemented after the study and analysis of the software.

At the same time, a more nuanced analysis shows inefficiencies in budget implementation with a direct impact on project effectiveness.

The project had a total available budget of 970,600 USD, out of which 812,473.22 USD was spent, leaving a surplus of 158,126.78 USD (16% of the total budget unspent). While maintaining a budget surplus could be seen as sound financial management in some contexts, in this case, it reflects inefficiencies, particularly in the areas of contractual services. These inefficiencies have a direct impact on the effectiveness of the project, especially in supporting civil society organizations, which were a core focus of Component 2.

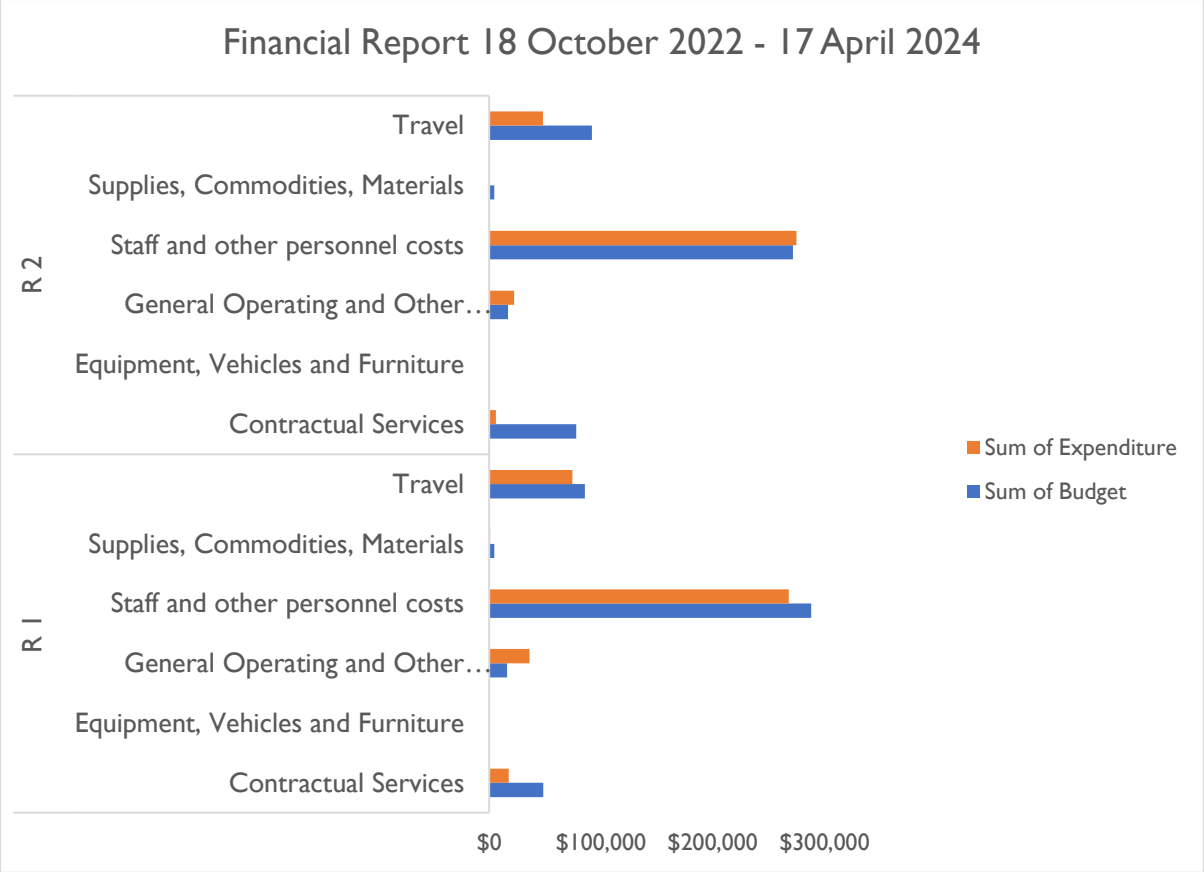


Figure 2. Financial report 2022-2024 (source: Final Report)

Component 1 was allocated 443,228 USD, with 397,305.74 USD spent, leaving 45,922.26 USD unspent. The project achieved significant outcomes, such as the reaccreditation of the Ombudsperson's Office with "A" status.

Component 2 was allocated 463,875 USD, but only 351,965.15 USD was spent, leaving a significant surplus of 111,909.85 USD. This shortfall in spending directly impacted the effectiveness of the project in reaching and supporting civil society organizations. Without full deployment of resources, the intended capacity-building and protection activities for these groups were underdelivered, reducing their ability to monitor, report, and advocate for human rights effectively.

Challenges in Organizational Structure and Communication

The closure of the Technical Mission necessitated managing the Project with a reduced OHCHR presence in Bolivia. After the departure of the project coordinator, the project was managed by a smaller team, supported by OHCHR Headquarters in Geneva. The uncertainty surrounding OHCHR's institutional presence in Bolivia delayed the decision to place the project under the coordination of the regional office in Chile, which prevented the decision-making process from being streamlined and improving the efficiency of project management. Communication gaps between various stakeholders, including local actors and implementing partners, were fundamental inefficiencies, postponed the implementation of activities, and hindered the optimal use of resources. These issues and communication gaps regarding

project activities and outcomes indicated weaknesses in the organizational structure and highlighted the need for improved communication and reporting mechanisms.[43]

High-Quality OHCHR Staff and Challenges in the Final Phase

The OHCHR personnel involved in the project were highly skilled and played a crucial role in engaging with the Bolivian government, civil society, and other stakeholders. The staff's professionalism contributed to effective capacity building and the empowerment of local actors. However, the departure of the Project Coordinator in August 2023, which was not formally communicated or coordinated with the EU[44], created a leadership weakness that hindered strategic guidance and continuity of the project and led to a diminished ability to maintain high-quality oversight, impacting the overall efficiency (and effectiveness) in the final phase. The reduced presence of OHCHR staff in this phase led to coordination difficulties and diminished support for stakeholders, affecting the smooth transition and sustainability of some project activities. Despite these challenges, local staff, with support from OHCHR headquarters in Geneva, continued to implement the project to the best of their ability. However, this situation prevented maintaining a high level of coordination with national institutions and civil society organizations, which did experience a reduction in support and felt less supported.

2.4 EFFECTIVENESS

Effectiveness, like all evaluation criteria, was assessed by triangulating documentary sources that include data, interviews, and surveys. For effectiveness in particular, the indicators in the Logical Framework (LF) played a crucial role in measuring progress. However, the examination of these indicators has revealed areas for improvement. Specifically, some indicators lacked specificity or clear measurement parameters, limiting their ability to fully capture the project's effect.

The indicators of the LF[45] for Outcome 1 show some strengths, particularly in their intent to measure progress in securing justice and accountability for human rights violations. However, the formulation of these indicators could be improved to enhance clarity and measurability. For example, the indicator regarding 50% of victims obtaining justice and redress lacks specific metrics that define "justice" or "redress," making it difficult to assess progress comprehensively. A better approach would be to reformulate these indicators to focus on concrete deliverables, such as the number of victims receiving compensation, or the percentage of cases resolved. Similarly, the indicator related to public institutions implementing accountability measures could be made more actionable by specifying which institutions are expected to enact changes and what these changes entail. The outputs, such as the establishment of an early warning system and the adoption of normative legal documents, align well with the desired outcome. However, they lack follow-up indicators that assess the effectiveness and impact of these measures once implemented. Overall, while the

[43] Interviews with OHCHR HQ and regional offices

[44] The departure was communicated orally at a meeting on 11 August but was not agreed upon or formally communicated to the EU.

[45] OHCHR. 2024.10.07 Draft EU Final Report.

outputs contribute to achieving the outcome, more detailed and targeted indicators are needed to measure the sustainability of these changes.

The indicators of the LF for Outcome 2, which focus on empowering civil society and creating a safer space for human rights defenders and journalists, could also benefit from further refinement. While the goal of approving a law based on the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders is clear and measurable, the indicator regarding 20% of civil society feeling safer to participate in civic space is subjective and lacks an objective way to measure "feeling safer." A more effective indicator would focus on the number of reported threats or incidents of violence against civil society actors, providing concrete data on safety improvements. The outputs, which include capacity-building workshops and technical assistance for civil society organizations, contribute to the outcome by enhancing advocacy and monitoring capabilities. However, there is a need for more specific indicators that measure the long-term impact of these workshops, such as the number of advocacy initiatives successfully launched or the level of participation in international human rights mechanisms. While the outputs lead toward achieving the outcome, the indicators would be more effective if they provided clearer measurements of safety and protection improvements, rather than focusing solely on capacity-building.

Table 1. Level of progress by outcome and output

Implementation status of the Output/Indicator/Results	Summary of Result	Status
Outcome 1: To strengthen the rule of law and accountability mechanisms to monitor, investigate, and provide redress to victims of human rights violations.	By March 2024, 50% of victims of serious human rights violations should have obtained justice and redress, and public institutions responsible for violations will have accountability measures.	**Ongoing:** 45-65% of victims have received some compensation, but full reparations remain unfulfilled. Limited progress on accountability for public institutions; only 4 out of 58 criminal cases related to 2019-2020 events reached sentencing.
Output 1.1: Early warning measures are supported, violence is prevented, and human rights are protected.	A system for identifying and mapping serious human rights violations was established.	**Completed:** Early Warning System framework in place. Tools for early warning improved at the Ombudsperson's Office.
Output 1.2: State laws and policies increasingly address, prevent, and reduce human rights violations in Bolivia.	Two policy documents should be adopted by March 2024.	**Partially completed:** The "Plurinational Policy on Comprehensive Reparations" was issued, but its implementation is outstanding in the absence of the Bill on

		full reparations, which is still pending in the Legislative Assembly. Legislation on the review of reparations cases for 1964-1982 victims was published outside of the reporting period (July 2024).
Outcome 2: To strengthen human rights and civil society organizations and protect civic space.	By March 2024, 1 law based on the Declaration on Human Rights Defenders should be approved, and 20% of civil society should feel safer to participate in civic space.	**Ongoing:** No law has been approved due to legislative paralysis. Civil society perception of safety to participate improved by 22.3%, particularly in gender and sexual diversity issues.
Output 2.1: The capacities of human rights and civil society organizations are strengthened.	Technical assistance and capacity-building workshops provided to civil society, journalists, and human rights defenders.	**Completed:** Workshops on human rights mechanisms conducted; partnerships strengthened, including those with women's organizations, LGBTQI+ groups, and journalists.

Source: Elaborated from the final project report 2024

Similar considerations apply to the information in the indicator update of the LF[46]. In agreement with the data in the final report, for both outcomes, while the updates provide important information on the steps taken and activities completed, they often stop short of demonstrating actual effects or impacts at the outcome level. Indicators could be refined to more effectively measure whether these activities are translating into the intended long-term results, rather than focusing on the completion of intermediate steps or outputs.

The updates provided for Outcome 1 generally describe activities and outputs rather than tangible effects or impacts on the target outcomes[47]. For instance, the update mentions that comprehensive reparations remain largely unfulfilled, with some compensation provided to a portion of victims, but the target of 50% of victims receiving justice and redress is not fully reached. Similarly, the update on public institutions implementing accountability measures describes ongoing disciplinary processes but notes that progress is limited, with only 4 of 58

[46] OHCHR. 2024.10.07 Draft EU Final Report.

[47] OHCHR is primarily responsible for delivering project outputs, while outcomes depend on the actions of target groups such as the Defensoría del Pueblo, civil society organizations, journalists, and indigenous organizations. Although OHCHR can influence and support outcomes, their achievement relies on these external actors. It is still essential to track and measure both outputs, which OHCHR controls, and outcomes, which reflect the broader impact of the project, even if they are influenced by external factors.

criminal cases reaching sentencing. While these updates provide useful context on the activities and steps taken, they largely describe the delivery of compensation or initiation of accountability processes rather than measuring whether the intended outcome—justice and accountability—has been achieved for a significant portion of victims. The indicators, as updated, focus more on the completion of tasks (e.g., compensation payments, investigation openings) rather than the effectiveness of those tasks in delivering justice.

The updates for Outcome 2 provide a mix of quantitative data on activities and more qualitative assessments of progress toward the outcome. For example, the indicator CSOs' perception of safety shows a 22.3% improvement in some areas, but with significant variation depending on the context (e.g., 57.1% improvement in gender/sexual diversity issues vs. 0% improvement in freedom of expression). Similarly, the update on the proposed law for protecting human rights defenders acknowledges that legislative paralysis has prevented its approval, showing that the target outcome (a protective law) remains unfulfilled. These updates do reflect some progress in capacity-building and empowerment activities, such as workshops for journalists and reports to UN mechanisms. However, much of the information still describes the activities and outputs—like training sessions and proposal submissions—without fully capturing whether the outcome (a safer, more empowered civil society) has been achieved.

EQ 4 Outcome 1: How effectively has the project established early warning systems, identified discriminatory legal provisions, and strengthened institutional capacities to prevent human rights violations?

Overview: Moderate effectiveness. The project made meaningful progress in establishing early warning systems and significantly strengthened the capacity of the *Defensoría del Pueblo*. These efforts were instrumental in laying the foundation for more effective human rights monitoring and response mechanisms. However, the project's impact on addressing discriminatory legal provisions was limited, with concrete legislative changes proving difficult to achieve in Bolivia's complex political environment. The closure of the OHCHR Technical Mission in 2022 further hindered broader institutional strengthening efforts, as it reduced on-the-ground monitoring capacity and limited the project's ability to provide timely interventions.

The Project under Outcome 1 aimed to establish early warning systems, identify discriminatory legal provisions, and strengthen the institutional capacities necessary to prevent human rights violations in Bolivia. While there were notable achievements in these areas, the effectiveness of these efforts was affected by several challenges, particularly the closure of the OHCHR Technical Mission, which limited the Project's capacity for on-the-ground monitoring and direct engagement.

According to the LF indicators[48] (Table 1), the effectiveness of Outcome 1 is partially realized. The project aimed to have 50% of victims of serious human rights violations obtain justice and

[48] OHCHR. 2024.10.07 Draft EU Final Report.

redress by March 2024. However, progress has been limited. Approximately 30-60% of victims received some compensation, but comprehensive reparations, which include restitution, rehabilitation, and guarantees of non-repetition, remain largely unfulfilled. While compensation was distributed to some victims of the 2019-2020 conflict events (particularly for the Senkata and Sacaba massacres), not all affected individuals have been reached, and significant gaps remain in the coordination and implementation of comprehensive reparation policies. The pending "Comprehensive Reparations Law"[49] which was presented before the Legislative Assembly in May 2024, further delayed full implementation.

Accountability measures for public institutions responsible for human rights violations have also progressed slowly. Although the Bolivian Police Command has initiated disciplinary actions against several officers, criminal justice proceedings related to the 2019 conflict events have been sluggish. Of the 58 opened criminal cases, only 4 have resulted in sentencing. While the trial of former President Jeanine Áñez for the Senkata massacre started outside the reporting period, other significant cases, such as Sacaba, are still in the procedural stage. The delays in judicial proceedings, combined with inconsistencies in data reporting, hinder the full realization of accountability measures.

Regarding outputs, the project has been highly effective in achieving the target under Output 1.1: "Early warning measures are supported, violence is prevented, and human rights are protected". The goal was to establish a system to identify and map serious human rights violations by the second semester of the project. This target was fully met, with the implementation of a comprehensive Early Warning System that enhanced the ability of institutions like the Ombudsperson's Office to monitor and respond to potential human rights violations. The system has contributed to better risk assessment and early responses to social unrest and conflict, thereby fulfilling this indicator.

While the Output 1.2: "State laws and policies increasingly address, prevent, and reduce human rights violations in Bolivia" has seen partial success. The project aimed to have two normative documents providing a legal framework for reparations and non-repetition adopted by March 2024. While one key document, the "Plurinational Policy on Comprehensive Reparations," was issued in 2023, it has been criticized for its limited scope and participation. A second bill, which would further establish comprehensive reparations, was presented to the Legislative Assembly but had not been passed as of the reporting period. Thus, only one of the two required documents has been developed, and its implementation remains incomplete.

Establishment of Early Warning Systems

The project made significant progress in establishing early warning systems to monitor and respond to human rights violations in Bolivia, despite operational challenges following the closure of the OHCHR Technical Mission in December 2022. While the absence of a physical presence in Bolivia limited some aspects of on-the-ground monitoring, the project was able

[49] The bill was socialized with victims, starting August 2023

to integrate an effective early warning system framework into the UN Country Team's (UNCT) coordination structures.

A major achievement was the enhancement of the UNCT's ability to analyze emerging human rights issues by developing and refining internal tools for identifying potential violations. These tools were created with the support of specialized consultants and were designed to enable the UN, the *Defensoría del Pueblo*, and other stakeholders to monitor the human rights situation more effectively. The early warning system was operationalized to detect hotspots of violence and tensions, as was the case during periods of political unrest, allowing timely interventions and information sharing with relevant partners. For example, the system proved useful during the civil unrest in Santa Cruz, where OHCHR conducted a field mission to identify patterns of human rights violations, which were later shared with authorities, civil society, and international bodies.

The project also implemented regular risk analyses, which provided insights into potential human rights crises. These analyses were disseminated to key stakeholders, including the UN, civil society organizations, and international human rights bodies, ensuring that emerging threats could be addressed with coordinated and informed responses. One notable example of this is the collaboration with the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), where OHCHR provided detailed briefings on human rights situations and emblematic cases. These briefings contributed to an early warning system that improved international oversight and response mechanisms.

Despite these achievements, the closure of the Technical Mission in 2022 significantly hampered the project's capacity for direct monitoring and data collection, limiting its ability to translate risk analyses into actionable preventive measures. Although robust analytical tools and early warning frameworks were developed, the lack of a physical presence in Bolivia reduced the ability to conduct on-the-ground assessments, a critical component for operationalizing the early warning systems effectively. This reduction in capacity likely affected the system's ability to trigger immediate preventive actions based on the identified risks.

Discriminatory Legal Provisions

The project made important strides in identifying and advocating against discriminatory legal provisions in Bolivia, though achieving concrete legislative changes proved to be a significant challenge. The focus of the project was on identifying laws and policies that disproportionately affected vulnerable groups, including women, migrants, indigenous peoples, and persons deprived of liberty. Through comprehensive reviews of existing legislation and proposed bills, the project successfully highlighted legal frameworks that required revision to comply with international human rights standards. A total of eight key legal provisions were analyzed, particularly those related to gender-based violence, indigenous rights, and the rights of persons in detention. For example, the project identified the need to revise laws such as the Modification to Law 348 on gender-based violence, highlighting gaps in alignment with international standards.

To support advocacy for legal reforms, the project organized a series of technical assistance workshops aimed at strengthening the understanding of human rights standards among

legislators, judicial officials, and other key stakeholders. These workshops played a critical role in empowering local authorities to challenge and reform discriminatory legal provisions. Training sessions covered topics such as the application of international human rights law to national legislation, with a specific focus on enhancing the capacity of local actors to advocate for the implementation of non-discriminatory laws. For instance, OHCHR collaborated with the *Defensoría del Pueblo* and CSOs to draft a bill on free, prior, and informed consent, which was shared with indigenous communities for input, involving vulnerable groups in legislative discussions.

Despite these concerted efforts, the project faced significant challenges in achieving tangible legislative changes. The political environment in Bolivia, marked by legislative paralysis and deep political divisions, created substantial barriers to enacting reforms. For instance, while CSOs supported by the project lobbied for the passage of a law based on the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, this legislation had not been approved by September 2024. Similarly, other proposed legal changes aimed at strengthening protections for women, migrants, and indigenous peoples encountered delays or resistance.

Strengthening Institutional Capacities

The project effectively enhanced the capacities of key national institutions, particularly the *Defensoría del Pueblo*, although, its broader institutional strengthening goals were not fully met, highlighting the challenges of achieving long-term institutional change in a complex political environment. Following the closure of the OHCHR Technical Mission, the project focused heavily on supporting the *Defensoría del Pueblo* through financial assistance, joint activities, and targeted capacity-building workshops. These initiatives included joint visits to detention centers with the National Mechanism to Prevent Torture, the development of monitoring methodologies, and the provision of resources to strengthen the office's ability to respond to human rights violations. The project's support was instrumental in helping the *Defensoría del Pueblo* maintain its "A" status as a NHRI, reflecting its compliance with international human rights standards and the effectiveness of the project's targeted support.

This targeted support was crucial in maintaining the *Defensoría del Pueblo*'s independence and capacity to monitor human rights, particularly in a political context where the independence of state institutions was under increasing pressure. For example, the office used the monitoring methodologies developed with the project's assistance to conduct more systematic and rigorous assessments of detention centers and police conduct during protests. These enhanced capabilities allowed the office to advocate more effectively for human rights reforms and helped it retain a critical role in safeguarding human rights, despite the challenging political climate.

However, not all institutional strengthening goals were fully met, notably the no implementation of the computerization of the *Defensoría del Pueblo*. OHCHR did not plan and oversight the consultancies with sufficient lead time, and due to several factors beyond its control, further delays occurred. Specifically, new UN-wide requirements mandated training courses for non-staff personnel, including consultants, which significantly delayed the consultants identified to work on the digital system. Additionally, the Defensoría itself contributed to delays, both during the review of the ToR and the approval of the final

deliverables. These delays, compounded by the sequencing of key tasks, created a cascade effect that hindered the timely completion of the system. Aware of these challenges and the risk of unspent funds, OHCHR informally proposed a no-cost extension to the EU in April 2024 to finalize the system, but this proposal did not align with the EU's priorities at that time. While the modernization of the Defensoría's operations was a critical goal, these combined factors ultimately prevented its realization within the project's timeline. This setback hindered the Defensoría's ability to modernize its operations, limiting its overall efficiency in responding to human rights violations.

Beyond the Ombudsperson's Office, the project's broader institutional capacity-building efforts faced additional challenges. While the project successfully raised awareness and improved understanding of human rights issues through workshops for legislators, judicial officials, and other stakeholders, its reach remained limited. The number of personnel trained was relatively small compared to the national needs, which reduced the potential for the knowledge gained to translate into sustained institutional changes. This limited scope meant that the project's impact at the institutional level was not as widespread or transformative as initially hoped.

Moreover, there was a lack of documented follow-up on the project's efforts to strengthen other critical institutions, such as the judiciary and the Attorney General's Office. Although the workshops addressed important issues, including gender-based violence and the rights of vulnerable groups like indigenous peoples and LGBTQIA+ communities, the project struggled to effect broader procedural improvements within these institutions. Institutional attitudes and procedural gaps, particularly within the judiciary and the Public Ministry, remained largely unaddressed, limiting the workshops' impact on fostering long-term, systemic changes.

Additionally, the absence of structured mechanisms to ensure that the knowledge and practices from these workshops were integrated into national procedures further weakened the potential for sustainable improvements. Without more extensive engagement and capacity-building efforts targeting a broader range of personnel across these institutions, and without a commitment to address deeper institutional attitudes and procedural barriers, the project's goals for institutionalizing human rights protection and prevention remain only partially realized.

EQ 5. Outcome 2: How effective was civil society empowerment and protection of human rights defenders, journalists, and indigenous people organizations?

Overview: Mixed effectiveness. The project demonstrated significant progress in empowering civil society, particularly through capacity-building initiatives, network strengthening, and support for vulnerable groups like indigenous women *brigadistas*. These efforts led to notable improvements in the advocacy capabilities of CSOs and their ability to engage with international human rights mechanisms. However, the project fell short in establishing concrete protective measures for human rights defenders and journalists. Despite efforts to design national protection mechanisms, these initiatives were not fully implemented by the end of the project

Outcome 2 of the OHCHR Project aimed to strengthen CSOs and protect Bolivia's human rights defenders, journalists, and indigenous groups. The Project achieved some notable successes in capacity building and network strengthening, which contributed to empowering these groups. However, the impact of these efforts was limited by the Project's changing operational context, the closure of the Technical Mission, and a lack of concrete protective measures for those at risk.

The Outcome 2 indicators aim to evaluate improvements in the safety and empowerment of human rights defenders and civil society. According to the LF indicators[50], the perception of safety among civil society organizations to exercise their rights has increased by 22.3%, surpassing the target of 20%. This improvement is particularly notable in areas related to gender and sexual diversity, where over 57% of respondents reported feeling safer. However, progress in other areas, such as freedom of expression, remains limited, indicating that while there has been an overall positive trend, challenges persist in specific sectors.

As for the Output 2 indicators, the level of development of a non-state mechanism to prevent human rights violations and protect journalists has not yet reached the expected functionality, as discussions and workshops are ongoing, but no formal mechanism, as recommended by GIEI-Bolivia, has been implemented. Although the formal mechanism has not been implemented, progress has been made through capacity-building workshops and training sessions that have provided journalists with tools for self-protection. In contrast, the number of reports submitted by civil society actors to relevant UN mechanisms has an appropriate update, as it mentions that reports have been submitted to the Committee Against Torture and the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, showing clear progress in this area.

Capacity Building and Network Strengthening

The project made substantial contributions to building the capacity of CSOs by providing technical assistance, training, and resources aimed at enhancing their advocacy and monitoring capabilities. Through a series of targeted workshops, the project focused on empowering CSOs with practical skills to document human rights violations, report these abuses to international bodies, and hold authorities accountable. These workshops provided training on human rights monitoring methodologies and the use of international mechanisms, such as the UN Human Rights Council, to report threats and advocate for the protection of rights.

A key aspect of the project was its focus on digital security and data protection. Given the increasing cyber threats and surveillance risks faced by activists and journalists, the project organized workshops to teach CSOs how to safeguard sensitive information. This was particularly important in the Bolivian context, where digital surveillance had become a growing concern for human rights defenders. These workshops helped organizations develop better strategies for protecting their data and maintaining secure communication channels, ensuring that their documentation of human rights abuses could continue without undue risk.

One of the most effective initiatives of the project was its collaboration with UN Women to support indigenous women who worked as community *brigadistas* (community leaders). These

[50] OHCHR. 2024. Project Interim Report - 19/10/2022 to 18/10/2023

women received comprehensive training on human rights, gender-based violence, and environmental protection, empowering them to act as defenders within their communities. This training enabled *brigadistas* to advocate more effectively for the rights of indigenous peoples, particularly in addressing gender-based violence—a pervasive issue in many rural areas. However, a critical challenge emerged regarding the sustainability of this initiative. After the project's conclusion, the *brigadistas* were forced to discontinue their work due to a lack of funding for transportation and necessary materials, raising concerns about the long-term viability of the capacity-building efforts.

The project also played a pivotal role in facilitating consultations and strengthening alliances among various CSOs, including those representing indigenous peoples, women's rights groups, and LGBTQI+ communities. By fostering these networks, the project aimed to create a more coordinated and collaborative approach to monitoring human rights violations and advocating for change. For example, the project supported the formation of a coalition of indigenous organizations that worked together to address land rights and environmental degradation issues. This coalition successfully raised these concerns at both the national and international levels, as their participation in the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, where they had the opportunity to present their concerns directly to international stakeholders. This platform provided indigenous groups with greater visibility and the ability to engage with global audiences about the challenges they face in Bolivia.

Challenges in Protection and Impact

Despite the positive developments achieved through the project, significant challenges remained in protecting human rights defenders, journalists, and indigenous organizations. One of the key objectives was to create protective mechanisms for these vulnerable groups, but by the end of the reporting period, many of these measures had not been fully operationalized. The project facilitated discussions on establishing a non-state mechanism to protect journalists, as recommended by the Interdisciplinary Group of Independent Experts (GIEI-Bolivia). The work focused on convening dialogue and finding common ground among various groups of journalists and media workers, but progress was hindered by divisions and polarization within these groups, reflecting broader political and societal trends in Bolivia. As a result, the gap meant that journalists, particularly those covering sensitive political issues, continued to operate without formalized protections, leaving them exposed to harassment and violence.

Similarly, while the project supported the creation of a monitoring network aimed at tracking threats against human rights defenders, this network lacked formal recognition and legal backing, which severely limited its effectiveness. Without legal structures to enforce protection or provide institutional support, many human rights defenders continued to face significant risks, operating in a hostile environment without sufficient safeguards. This was a notable shortcoming in the project's overall impact, as ensuring the safety of defenders is crucial to promoting sustained human rights advocacy.

The closure of the OHCHR Technical Mission significantly reduced the project's capacity to monitor human rights violations directly and respond promptly to emerging threats. As OHCHR's physical presence diminished, it had to increasingly rely on local partners to carry

out monitoring and advocacy activities. This reliance on local actors, while necessary, affected the timeliness and effectiveness of interventions. This hindered OHCHR's ability to advocate effectively for the protection of journalists and other vulnerable groups. Additionally, the closure of the mission led to a reduced public profile for OHCHR, diminishing its visibility and weakening its ability to influence public discourse on sensitive human rights issues. The lack of an international presence also reduced the deterrent effect that OHCHR's presence in Bolivia previously provided, further exacerbating the risks faced by defenders and journalists. Following the closure of the Technical Mission, the project relied more heavily on the *Defensoría del Pueblo* for human rights monitoring and advocacy. While this strategy helped maintain some capacity for responding to human rights violations, it also raised concerns about the institution's independence and effectiveness. Several stakeholders expressed doubts about the *Defensoría del Pueblo*'s ability to protect human rights defenders, particularly in cases involving state actors. There were perceptions that the *Defensoría*, although bolstered by the project, was still vulnerable to government influence, which undermined its role as an impartial protector of human rights. This dependence on a national institution with perceived limitations highlighted a critical vulnerability in the project's strategy. The effectiveness of its protective measures was directly tied to the capacity and independence of the *Defensoría*, which was not always seen as fully capable of addressing the needs of defenders operating under pressure from state actors.

Mixed Perceptions of Effectiveness

The effectiveness of the project in achieving its objectives of protection and empowerment elicited mixed perceptions among stakeholders, reflecting both positive effects and significant gaps.

On the positive side, many stakeholders, particularly from indigenous and women's organizations, expressed strong appreciation for the project's capacity-building initiatives. These participants reported that the training provided by the project significantly improved their ability to document and report human rights abuses and to advocate for their rights more effectively. For example, several participants noted that the project's workshops empowered them to engage with international human rights mechanisms, such as submitting shadow reports to UN treaty bodies. Many believed that without the project's support, they would not have been able to participate in such international advocacy, demonstrating the project's success in enhancing the advocacy skills and confidence of local actors.

However, despite these gains in capacity building, there was limited evidence that these efforts translated into improved protection outcomes for human rights defenders and journalists. Reports of threats, harassment, and violence against these groups persisted throughout the duration of the project. The absence of concrete, operational protective mechanisms left many defenders and journalists vulnerable to continued attacks. For instance, journalists covering politically sensitive issues remained exposed to significant risks without adequate legal or institutional protection. The lack of a formalized non-state mechanism to protect journalists, despite discussions and proposals facilitated by the project, further illustrates the limitations of the project's impact in ensuring the safety of these groups.

2.5 ORIENTATION TO IMPACT

EQ 6. To what extent has the project contributed to long-term human rights improvements?

Overview: Moderate. The project significantly contributed to Bolivia's human rights landscape by strengthening the *Defensoría del Pueblo*, empowering civil society organizations, and developing early warning systems, all of which hold potential for long-term impact. These initiatives have enhanced the capacity of key institutions and grassroots movements to advocate for human rights and respond to violations. However, the lack of concrete legislative reforms and the closure of the OHCHR Technical Mission limited the OHCHR's ability to achieve systemic change. While the groundwork for long-term improvements has been established, the project's ultimate impact will depend on ongoing support, political stability, and further institutional reforms.

Given the mix of achievements and challenges, the long-term impact of the OHCHR Project in Bolivia is complex to evaluate. While the Project made significant strides in areas such as strengthening the Ombudsperson's Office, empowering CSOs, and establishing early warning mechanisms, the lasting effects of these efforts are influenced by several contextual factors. These include the closure of the OHCHR Technical Mission, the volatile political environment, and the continued vulnerability of national institutions to political pressures.

Positive Contributions and Potential for Long-Term Impact

The project's support for the *Defensoría del Pueblo* extended beyond mere capacity-building; it laid the groundwork for a more resilient institution that could continue to serve as a pillar of Bolivia's human rights infrastructure. The strategic focus on training Ombudsperson staff in international human rights standards was crucial, but the real potential for long-term impact lies in the office's ability to independently monitor and report on violations in a politically turbulent environment. The *Defensoría*'s enhanced capabilities, if sustained, could serve as a cornerstone for continued accountability and human rights oversight in Bolivia, especially if it retains its international standing and independence from political pressures.

The empowerment of CSOs has potential long-term implications for human rights advocacy in Bolivia. The skills and knowledge imparted to these organizations have already enabled them to engage more effectively with global human rights platforms, and this could lead to sustained pressure on the government to address human rights issues. This empowerment is particularly critical in a context where domestic avenues for justice and advocacy can be constrained by political dynamics. By equipping CSOs to operate on both national and international levels, the project has bolstered the overall resilience of Bolivia's civil society.

The community *brigadistas* initiative, while facing challenges post-project, represents a grassroots movement that could have lasting effects on rural communities. The training provided to these indigenous women has already fostered greater awareness and mobilization around key issues like gender-based violence and environmental protection. The potential long-term impact of this initiative will depend on whether the networks formed during the

project can secure ongoing support. If these grassroots leaders can continue their advocacy, even in limited capacities, they could act as catalysts for broader social change in isolated areas Additionally, the early warning systems developed through the project hold promise as a preventative tool for future human rights crises. Although the systems are still being integrated into national frameworks, their design allows for scalability and adaptation, making them an asset for both local and international actors. If fully institutionalized, these systems could help stakeholders respond to crises before they escalate, reducing the occurrence of human rights violations. The groundwork laid by the project in developing these tools offers a strong foundation for Bolivia's future human rights efforts, especially in terms of anticipating and mitigating potential conflicts or abuses.

Challenges and Uncertainties

The closure of the OHCHR Technical Mission had a profound impact on the project's ability to achieve long-term improvements in human rights protection. Without a robust OHCHR presence on the ground, the project's capacity to respond promptly to emerging human rights crises and support vulnerable groups was significantly undermined. The lack of direct oversight made it particularly difficult to implement protective measures for human rights defenders facing immediate threats. This absence left a gap in the project's ability to monitor and intervene in critical situations, reducing its effectiveness in protecting those most at risk.

Since April 2024, Bolivia has been incorporated into the purview of the OHCHR Regional Office in Santiago, Chile, which has conducted two missions aimed at identifying and designing interventions to continue OHCHR's mandate in the country. These missions are critical, particularly considering Bolivia's ongoing political polarization and the upcoming electoral period in 2025. While this external coordination offers opportunities to maintain engagement and oversight, regional oversight faces inherent limitations. The deeply entrenched local political dynamics and the need for immediate, on-the-ground support make it difficult for a regional office to provide the level of sustained engagement that the former technical mission once did. This poses a significant challenge for addressing human rights violations in real time and for continuing the momentum built by the project.

Another challenge to the project's long-term impact is its heavy reliance on national institutions, particularly the *Defensoría del Pueblo*, to sustain its gains and implement key activities, since its effectiveness and independence remain vulnerable to political pressures. Any regression in the Ombudsperson's capacity or independence could undermine the progress made, making it difficult to ensure lasting improvements in Bolivia's human rights infrastructure.

Furthermore, while the project made significant contributions to capacity building and institutional strengthening, there is limited evidence to suggest that these efforts have resulted in concrete reductions in human rights violations or substantial legal and policy reforms. For instance, the project identified discriminatory legal provisions and advocated for reforms, but no significant legislative changes were achieved by the end of the reporting period. This lack of a clear causal link between the project's activities and tangible outcomes in terms of legal reforms or human rights protection raises questions about its long-term impact.

2.6 SUSTAINABILITY

EQ 8. What sustainability measures have been taken, and how likely will these outcomes be sustained?

Overview: Mixed. The Project implemented several sustainability measures to ensure the longevity of its achievements, including capacity building, engagement with international mechanisms, securing multiple donors, and promoting dialogue and collaboration. However, some challenges threaten the sustainability of these outcomes. The sustainability of the Project will depend on the ability of national institutions to maintain their independence, the continued support of international donors, and the Bolivian government's genuine commitment to human rights.

The Project implemented several measures to enhance the sustainability of its outcomes, focusing on capacity building, promoting local ownership, and fostering engagement with international mechanisms. These measures aimed to ensure that the human rights advancements made during the project would continue to have an impact after its conclusion. However, significant challenges—such as the closure of the Technical Mission, political instability, and uncertain funding—present obstacles to the long-term sustainability of these achievements.

Sustainability Measures

1. Capacity Building of National Actors:

A cornerstone of the Project's sustainability strategy was systematically strengthening national institutions and CSOs. The Project provided extensive technical assistance and training workshops designed to enhance these actors' capacity to promote and protect human rights independently. These capacity-building initiatives aimed to enable the *Defensoría del Pueblo* to operate effectively without continuous external support.

The Project also focused on the National Mechanism for the Prevention of Torture (NPM), which plays a critical role in monitoring detention conditions and preventing torture and ill-treatment. By providing training and resources to the NPM, the Project sought to strengthen its operational capacity and ensure that it could continue to function as an effective oversight body in the long term. The support for these institutions aimed to create a sustainable human rights infrastructure that could withstand political changes and continue to safeguard rights beyond the Project's duration.

2. Engagement with International Mechanisms:

The Project worked to integrate Bolivian civil society organizations into the broader international human rights framework. By training CSOs to submit shadow reports to UN treaty bodies and use international human rights mechanisms, the Project sought to increase their ability to advocate for human rights on a global stage. This engagement aimed to embed human rights protection within a broader international context, thereby increasing accountability and reducing reliance on potentially fragile national institutions. For instance,

indigenous organizations were supported in submitting reports to the UN Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples, highlighting violations related to land dispossession and environmental degradation. Such activities not only raised the profile of these issues internationally but also equipped local actors with the tools to seek redress and accountability beyond national borders.

3. Financial Sustainability through Multiple Donors:

OHCHR acknowledged the importance of securing long-term financial support to sustain its activities. However, after the non-renewal of the Technical Mission, OHCHR did not engage in targeted fundraising efforts due to uncertainty about its future presence in Bolivia. While the European Union, Switzerland, Sweden, Canada, Italy, Germany, and the UN Peacebuilding Fund had been previous partners or donors, no new contributions were sought after 2023. This diverse funding base was intended to mitigate the risks associated with dependence on a single donor and to ensure continuity of support for OHCHR's work in Bolivia. Currently, OHCHR's operations are funded solely by Canada for the 2023-2026 period. After the conclusion of the EU-funded Project, some activities and associated costs, such as the development and implementation of the *Sistema Integral de Servicio al Pueblo* (SISP) platform, were taken over by a Canadian-funded project. This strategic use of resources from different donors helped to maintain momentum and continuity in human rights initiatives, even in the face of changing funding landscapes.

4. Promoting Dialogue and Collaboration:

The Project emphasized fostering dialogue and collaboration among various stakeholders, including government authorities, CSOs, human rights defenders, journalists, and international partners. The Project aimed to build trust and consensus around human rights issues by creating spaces for joint analysis, discussion, and problem-solving. For instance, the Project facilitated regular dialogues between the *Defensoría del Pueblo* and CSOs to discuss strategies for protecting human rights defenders and addressing systemic issues such as gender-based violence and discrimination against indigenous peoples. This collaborative approach strengthened relationships among stakeholders and promoted a shared commitment to human rights protection, which is crucial for sustaining the Project's outcomes.

Challenges to Sustainability

1. Closure of the Technical Mission:

The termination of the OHCHR Technical Mission in December 2022 had a profound impact on the sustainability of the Project's achievements. The closure significantly reduced OHCHR's on-the-ground presence and capacity to provide direct support to national partners, monitor human rights, and engage in public advocacy. This withdrawal created a gap in the human rights protection landscape, potentially undermining the Project's ability to maintain progress in strengthening institutions like the *Defensoría del Pueblo*. The reduced visibility and influence of OHCHR in Bolivia make sustaining the momentum generated during the Project more difficult.

2. Dependence on the Ombudsperson's Office:

While the Project successfully enhanced the capacity of the *Defensoría del Pueblo*, it also became increasingly dependent on this institution to sustain its human rights monitoring and

advocacy efforts. However, stakeholders expressed concerns about the Ombudsperson's ability to operate independently and protect human rights defenders, especially given its perceived susceptibility to political influence. This dependence poses a risk to the sustainability of the Project's outcomes, as any compromise in the Ombudsperson's capacity or independence could negate the gains made during the Project. For example, the Office's ability to act decisively during political crises or in cases involving powerful state actors remains uncertain, which could limit its effectiveness in the long term.[51]

3. Political and Social Instability:

Bolivia's political and social context remains volatile, characterized by deep polarization, weak rule of law, and limited government commitment to human rights. This environment poses a significant threat to the sustainability of the Project's achievements, as it can quickly undermine the progress made in building institutional capacity and empowering civil society. For instance, the political backlash against human rights defenders and the criminalization of protests have made it increasingly difficult for civil society to operate freely. In such a context, the gains made in strengthening CSOs and fostering a culture of human rights advocacy could be reversed, especially without robust international support.

4. Funding Uncertainty:

Although OHCHR secured support from multiple donors, funding challenges remain a concern. The EU's dissatisfaction with the Project's progress, particularly regarding handling the Technical Mission's closure, has raised questions about future funding. If key donors withdraw their support or reduce their contributions, it could jeopardize the sustainability of the Project's achievements. Continued financial uncertainty would make it difficult to maintain the capacity-building and advocacy initiatives launched during the Project, potentially eroding their impact.

5. A Genuine Commitment to Human Rights from the Bolivian Government:

Ultimately, the sustainability of the Project's outcomes depends on the Bolivian government's willingness to uphold human rights, strengthen the rule of law, and create a safe and enabling environment for civil society. The country's political polarization seems to undermine the possibility of a genuine commitment to these principles. Consequently, the advances made in institutional capacity and civil society empowerment are unlikely to be sustained without continued support and advocacy from both national and international actors to encourage the government to prioritize human rights.

EQ 9. To what extent have local stakeholders, particularly the *Defensoría del Pueblo* and civil society organizations, building the capacity to maintain and expand upon the project's achievements independently?

Overview: Limited. The OHCHR project in Bolivia successfully built the capacity of the *Defensoría del Pueblo* and civil society organizations to advocate for and protect human rights. However, the ability of these stakeholders to independently maintain and expand upon these achievements is constrained by several factors. The *Defensoría del Pueblo*, despite increased

[51] OHCHR. 2024. Project Interim Report - 19/10/2022 to 18/10/2023

capacity, faces challenges in maintaining its independence and operational effectiveness without external support. Meanwhile, civil society organizations, though empowered, struggle with financial sustainability and the lack of a supportive political environment. To secure the project's legacy, adopting a more strategic and consistent approach to engaging these stakeholders, ensuring transparent communication, and advocating for sustained financial support from the international community will be crucial.

The OHCHR project in Bolivia made concerted efforts to build the capacity of local stakeholders, specifically the *Defensoría del Pueblo* and CSOs, to enable them to sustain and expand upon the project's achievements independently. While these efforts have yielded some positive outcomes regarding enhanced capacity and empowerment, significant challenges remain that could hinder the long-term sustainability of these gains.

Defensoría del Pueblo and CSOs have made notable progress in building the capacity to sustain some of the project's achievements, but challenges remain. For instance, Indicator 1.1.2 shows that the *Defensoría* successfully improved its monitoring capacity, particularly in documenting human rights violations and engaging in joint visits to detention centers. Similarly, Indicator 2.1.1 indicates that CSOs were able to increase their involvement with international human rights bodies, with over 5 shadow reports submitted, surpassing the target of 2 reports. Additionally, Indicator 2.1.4 highlights the empowerment of women *brigadistas* in advocating for gender-based violence prevention in rural areas.
However, sustainability issues are evident in other areas. Indicator 1.1.4, which aimed to computerize the *Defensoría*, was not met due to delays and coordination inefficiencies, hampering the institution's modernization. Moreover, Indicator 2.2.2, which sought to expand capacity-building workshops to a broader range of stakeholders, showed limited reach, with fewer than the targeted number of personnel trained, especially in remote regions. These gaps point to a moderate ability for local stakeholders to independently maintain and expand upon the project's gains, underscoring the need for ongoing support to ensure full institutionalization of capacities developed.

Ombudsperson's Office: Increased Capacity with Questionable Independence

The *Defensoría del Pueblo* has benefited from substantial capacity-building support provided by the OHCHR project. This included financial assistance, joint monitoring visits to detention centers, capacity-building workshops for staff, and a strategic partnership that enabled the Defensoría del Pueblo to maintain its A-level accreditation as a National Human Rights Institution. These efforts have resulted in a more structured and capable institution better equipped to monitor human rights conditions and engage in advocacy efforts.
However, despite these advancements, the long-term sustainability of the *Defensoría del Pueblo*'s capacity is uncertain due to concerns about its independence and effectiveness. Several sources indicate that the institution may be susceptible to government influence, which could compromise its ability to defend human rights impartially and robustly. For example, the National Mechanism Against Torture, now integrated into the *Defensoría del Pueblo*, is not autonomous, and its budget is controlled by the *Defensoría del Pueblo*, limiting its

operational effectiveness. Moreover, interviewed beneficiaries highlighted the *Defensoría del Pueblo* 's perceived lack of legitimacy and capacity, stating that its actions are often limited to declarations rather than concrete measures. These issues indicate that, without continued external support and oversight, the *Defensoría del Pueblo* may struggle to sustain and build upon the capacity gains achieved during the project.

Civil Society Organizations: Enhanced Capacity with Sustainability Challenges

CSOs were another key focus of the project's capacity-building efforts. The project provided training workshops, strengthened networks, and facilitated access to resources, all empowering CSOs to take a more proactive role in human rights protection and advocacy. Many CSOs have reported enhanced abilities in human rights monitoring, documentation, and engagement with international mechanisms. For instance, training sessions on how to report to UN treaty bodies have enabled indigenous and women's organizations to raise awareness about human rights violations on an international stage, thereby increasing pressure on the Bolivian government to address these issues.

Despite these advancements, the sustainability of these efforts remains precarious. The abrupt end of the OHCHR Technical Mission and uncertainty regarding future funding, particularly from key donors like the European Union, pose a significant threat to the continued effectiveness of these organizations. While some CSOs, such as the community brigades of indigenous women, continue their work independently, they face significant financial constraints that limit their capacity to replicate the scale and impact of the project's initiatives. The lack of a clear, sustainable funding mechanism makes it challenging for these organizations to plan for the long term and maintain the momentum generated during the project.

2.7 Human Rights, Gender Equality, Disability Inclusion, and LNOB

EQ 10. 10. How effectively did the project integrate human rights, gender, and disability considerations and contribute to positive changes in the lives of vulnerable groups, including human rights defenders (including journalists, indigenous organizations, LGBTIQ+ groups, and women)?

Overview: Mixed. The OHCHR project in Bolivia made commendable efforts to integrate human rights, gender, and disability considerations into its activities, with a clear focus on protecting and empowering vulnerable groups such as human rights defenders, indigenous women, and LGBTIQ+ communities. However, the lack of detailed evidence on the project's outcomes and the focus on outputs rather than outcomes make it difficult to comprehensively assess the project's contributions to positive changes in the lives of vulnerable groups.

The OHCHR project in Bolivia demonstrated a solid commitment to integrating human rights, gender equality, and disability inclusion, aiming to make a tangible difference in the lives of vulnerable groups such as human rights defenders, journalists, indigenous organizations, LGBTIQ+ communities, and women. Despite its focus on these areas, the effectiveness of the

project varied, with some notable successes in capacity building and advocacy, as well as significant challenges in achieving long-term, sustainable change.

The project was designed to clearly focus on protecting and promoting the rights of vulnerable groups, recognizing their heightened exposure to human rights violations in Bolivia.

The project provided digital security training and advocacy support to journalists and human rights defenders who faced threats due to their work. For example, the project facilitated the establishment of a network of journalists to document and report human rights violations, which provided a platform for mutual support and collective advocacy. This helped enhance their resilience and visibility, though it did not eliminate the risks they faced.

The project collaborated with UN Women to support indigenous women *brigadistas*, providing them with gender-based violence and human rights advocacy training. This initiative empowered indigenous women to take on leadership roles within their communities, advocate for their rights, and support victims of violence. An example of this was their involvement in raising awareness about environmental rights and advocating against harmful extractive practices affecting their lands.

The project made deliberate efforts to include LGBTIQ+ organizations in its capacity-building activities. Training sessions on human rights monitoring and advocacy were adapted to address the specific vulnerabilities faced by this community, such as discrimination and violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity. This inclusion helped raise awareness about LGBTIQ+ rights and fostered a more inclusive approach to human rights protection. The project also supported the Trans Women's Organization from Bolivia (OTRAF) national congress, achieving a partial strengthening with the congress that allowed OTRAF to position itself better at the national level and create a biannual agenda.

The project consistently incorporated a gender perspective into its activities, recognizing the disproportionate impact of human rights violations on women and girls. To address GBV, the project worked closely with women's organizations, providing training on human rights standards and advocacy strategies. The project also supported the development of legal frameworks and policies to better protect women from violence. This effort was crucial in a country where rates of GBV are high, and the justice system often fails to protect victims adequately.

Workshops were conducted to train civil society actors and *Defensoría del Pueblo* members on integrating a gender perspective into their human rights monitoring and reporting. This aimed to ensure that cases of gender-based violence and discrimination were systematically documented and addressed.

While less prominent than other aspects, the project made efforts to include the rights of persons with disabilities, carrying out workshops to raise awareness among CSOs and government representatives about these rights. These sessions focused on promoting the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and ensuring that disability rights were included in broader human rights advocacy.

The project sought to include disability organizations in its network-building activities, promoting their participation in national human rights dialogues. However, the extent to which this engagement translated into concrete changes is unclear, as there is limited

information on the direct impact of these efforts since it was not possible to interview these organizations.

Although the project was committed to the principle of "Leaving No One Behind," there is limited specific information about including persons with disabilities. While some efforts were made to engage disability organizations, the impact of these efforts remains unclear, indicating that this area may not have been as effectively integrated into the project's activities as other aspects.

3. Lessons Learned

Several key lessons emerge from stakeholder feedback and the review of project implementation documentation. These insights offer valuable guidance for designing and executing the next phase of EU/OHCHR cooperation and for enhancing other OHCHR initiatives in Bolivia and the broader region.

3.1 Advocacy in Restrictive Political Contexts

Lesson: Not adapting advocacy approaches to a restrictive political environment limits the visibility and effectiveness of human rights interventions.

Explanation: In Bolivia, the project faced significant governmental restrictions, particularly after the termination of the OHCHR Technical Mission. By adopting a low-profile approach, such as reducing logos and public statements, the project maintained its operations at the expense of broader institutional engagement. This experience shows that advocacy efforts must balance discretion and visibility to maintain effectiveness without triggering governmental backlash.

Stakeholders: International organizations working in politically sensitive environments, human rights defenders, and advocacy groups can learn from this to adjust their strategies when visibility risks backlash.

Challenges: Navigating a context where public engagement was constrained and relying solely on grassroots-level engagement limited higher-level impact was challenging. A dual approach, combining discreet action with strategic high-level advocacy, could have avoided this.

Broader Goal: This lesson contributes to the goal of maintaining human rights advocacy in challenging political environments while fostering dialogue at various levels.

3.2 Capacity Building for Long-Term Sustainability

Lesson: Focusing heavily on short-term capacity-building without ensuring long-term institutional support reduces the sustainability of outcomes.

Explanation: The project successfully conducted capacity-building workshops for civil society organizations and the Defensoría del Pueblo, but the long-term sustainability of these efforts remains uncertain. Without continued funding and institutional support, the organizations may struggle to maintain their progress. This highlights the importance of ensuring capacity-building efforts are linked to long-term financing and systemic reforms.

Stakeholders: Integrating sustainability mechanisms such as ongoing training programs and funding streams for capacity building can benefit development agencies, local governments, and civil society organizations.

Challenges: In addition to planning for gradual transitions, it is crucial to build flexibility into project designs to handle unexpected events, such as the abrupt end of the OHCHR Technical Mission. Future projects should incorporate contingency plans to ensure that capacity-building initiatives can continue even in the face of sudden operational changes.

Broader Goal: This lesson aligns with fostering sustainable development in human rights work by ensuring that local actors are equipped and supported for the long term.

3.3 Strategic Partnerships with Local Institutions

Lesson: Relying too heavily on a single local institution without ensuring its independence undermines the effectiveness of human rights protection.

Explanation: The project depended heavily on the *Defensoría del Pueblo* after the closure of the OHCHR mission. However, concerns about the Ombudsperson's susceptibility to political influence raised doubts about its capacity to act impartially. This demonstrates that strategic partnerships must be carefully chosen and monitored to ensure they are independent and influential.

Stakeholders: International human rights organizations and local governments should prioritize developing partnerships with multiple actors, including non-state actors, to diversify their impact and mitigate risks of political influence.

Challenges: Relying on a politically vulnerable institution created barriers to impartial human rights work. Future efforts should involve capacity-building for a broader range of institutions and civil society actors to ensure balance and prevent overreliance on any single entity.

Broader Goal: This lesson supports strengthening democratic institutions and ensuring impartial human rights protection mechanisms crucial for long-term stability.

3.4 Adaptability to Changing Political Environments

Lesson: Flexibility and adapting a strategy to focus on civil society when state-level engagement is restricted help maintain relevance but limit broader institutional reform.

Explanation: Following governmental restrictions, the project shifted focus from state institutions to civil society actors, allowing it to continue addressing human rights concerns. However, this approach limited the ability to achieve broader systemic changes, particularly in legal and institutional reforms. The lesson here is that while adaptability is critical, maintaining some level of engagement with state institutions is necessary for comprehensive reforms.

Stakeholders: International organizations and local NGOs working in volatile political environments should note that maintaining a balanced approach between state and non-state actors ensures a more significant long-term impact.

Challenges: The challenge lies in maintaining relevance while navigating governmental restrictions. The project might have benefited from finding innovative ways to re-engage state institutions even while prioritizing civil society.

Broader Goal: This lesson promotes a balanced human rights framework in which civil society empowerment complements rather than replaces state-level engagement.

3.5 Early Warning Systems and Accountability Mechanisms

Lesson: Developing early warning systems without the ability to operationalize them entirely limits their effectiveness in preventing human rights violations.

Explanation: While the project made progress in developing early warning systems, the lack of on-the-ground monitoring after the OHCHR mission's closure limited their operational effectiveness. This lesson highlights the need for a fully integrated and functioning system to have a real preventive impact.

Stakeholders: National human rights institutions and international organizations can benefit from ensuring continuous monitoring and response mechanisms fully support early warning systems.

Challenges: The challenge was the inability to conduct direct monitoring after the closure of the OHCHR Technical Mission, which hampered the project's ability to act on early warnings. Future projects should ensure contingency plans to maintain operational capabilities.

Broader Goal: This lesson ties into the wider goal of human rights protection and violence prevention by ensuring early warning systems are fully operational and practical in real-world contexts.

3.6 Empowerment of Vulnerable Groups

Lesson: Providing initial empowerment and advocacy tools to vulnerable groups without ensuring sustained financial and material support limits their long-term effectiveness.

Explanation: The project empowered groups such as Indigenous women and LGBTQI+ organizations, but their activities diminished after the project ended due to a lack of ongoing support. This demonstrates the need for empowerment initiatives coupled with long-term resource planning.

Stakeholders: NGOs, international donors, and local advocacy groups should ensure that empowerment programs are accompanied by plans for continued support, either through funding or capacity-building initiatives.

Challenges: The main difficulty was ensuring continuity after the project concluded. Replication of this lesson in future interventions should involve establishing long-term support mechanisms and sustainable funding models.

Broader Goal: This lesson aligns with the wider goal of ensuring inclusivity and sustainability in human rights work by securing the long-term empowerment of marginalized groups.

3.7 RISK OF INSUFFICIENT DIRECT SUPPORT FOR INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING

Lesson: Limited consideration of direct support in the form of equipment, infrastructure, and services can undermine long-term institutional and programmatic impact, as well as the perception of the project by local authorities.

Explanation: The evaluation revealed that while the project effectively utilized OHCHR's technical expertise through staff and consultants, which represents its greatest added value, there was no allocation of resources for direct support such as equipment, infrastructure, and connectivity. This limited the project's ability to fully support institutions like the Defensoría del Pueblo, which face significant financial and infrastructure weaknesses. Providing more direct support not only enhances institutional capacity but also improves the perception of the project by government authorities, potentially facilitating stronger relationships and the continuity of collaboration with the government.

Stakeholders: Donors, project managers, and international organizations should ensure a more comprehensive budgeting approach that includes not only technical expertise but also direct investments in institutional infrastructure, which can foster improved relationships with authorities and support long-term collaboration and impact.

Challenges: While the technical expertise of OHCHR staff and consultants is critical, financial constraints on infrastructure and direct support can limit the impact of capacity-building efforts when local institutions face significant resource deficits and may reduce the perceived value of the project by local authorities.

Broader Goal: This lesson aligns with broader program objectives of efficiency and sustainability, emphasizing the importance of allocating resources for both technical assistance and direct support to maximize the long-term impact of institutional strengthening efforts, while also enhancing collaboration with the government.

4. GOOD PRACTICES

4.1 COLLABORATION WITH THE OMBUDSPERSON'S OFFICE

Good Practice: The project established a strong partnership with the Defensoría del Pueblo to enhance the institution's human rights monitoring and advocacy capacity, particularly in a politically restrictive environment.

Context and Replicability: This partnership model is replicable in other contexts where a national human rights institution (NHRI) can be a neutral actor promoting and protecting human rights, even when government engagement is limited.

Obstacles: A key obstacle is the risk of political influence on the NHRI, which can undermine its independence and effectiveness. Ensuring the NHRI maintains its autonomy is crucial for the long-term success of this practice.

Target Group: This practice benefits the Ombudsperson's Office and the broader population by strengthening its ability to monitor human rights violations.

Stakeholders with Authority: National human rights institutions, international organizations like OHCHR, and local governments can drive this practice forward, ensuring that NHRI capacity is developed and maintained.

Evidence of Impact: Strengthening the Ombudsperson's Office enabled it to maintain "A" status as a national human rights institution, reflecting its compliance with international human rights standards. This, in turn, helped advance UN goals of institutional accountability and protection of human rights.

4.2 Capacity-Building for Human Rights Defenders

Good Practice: The project implemented technical assistance workshops that provided human rights defenders, journalists, and CSOs with essential skills for documenting and reporting human rights violations, as well as using international human rights mechanisms.

Context and Replicability: This strategy is highly applicable in any context where local actors need to strengthen their capacity for advocacy and monitoring, particularly in environments with weak institutional support for human rights.

Obstacles: The effectiveness of capacity-building initiatives depends on the availability of continued financial support and a safe environment for human rights defenders to operate. In contexts where security for activists is limited, this practice may require additional protective measures.

Target Group: This practice benefited human rights defenders, CSOs, and journalists, enabling them to take a more proactive role in monitoring human rights abuses and engaging with international bodies.

Stakeholders with Authority: International organizations, NGOs, and local CSOs can lead capacity-building efforts, while donors can ensure the financial sustainability of these initiatives.

Evidence of Impact: Participants in the workshops reported increased confidence in their ability to advocate for human rights, document abuses, and use international mechanisms, contributing directly to the broader UN human rights and gender equality goals.

4.3 Empowering Indigenous Women as *Brigadistas*

Good Practice: The project supported indigenous women *brigadistas*, empowering them to take on leadership roles in their communities by providing training on human rights, gender-based violence, and environmental protection.

Context and Replicability: This practice is replicable in contexts where marginalized communities, particularly Indigenous women, face systemic discrimination and exclusion. It explains how local actors can be empowered to lead community advocacy efforts.

Obstacles: The main challenge is ensuring sustained financial and logistical support for these *brigadistas*, as their work often depends on external funding. Without long-term support, the impact of their empowerment may diminish.

Target Group: Indigenous women and their communities benefited directly from this practice, enabling them to advocate for their rights and promote gender equality.

Stakeholders with Authority: Local women's organizations, indigenous groups, and international bodies such as UN Women and OHCHR can advance this practice by providing training and securing funding for sustained advocacy efforts.

Evidence of Impact: Indigenous women *brigadistas* have raised awareness about human rights and gender-based violence in their communities, contributing to broader goals of gender equality and indigenous rights protection in line with UN priorities.

4.4 Remote Monitoring and Advocacy

Good Practice: After the closure of the OHCHR Technical Mission, the project utilized **remote monitoring** techniques and leveraged local partnerships to continue monitoring human rights violations.

Context and Replicability: This practice is highly applicable in contexts where physical presence is restricted due to political constraints or security concerns. Remote monitoring and solid local partnerships can ensure continued oversight and advocacy.

Obstacles: The absence of an in-country presence can limit the accuracy and timeliness of information gathering. Relying on local partners requires building strong trust and capacity among them to ensure effective monitoring.

Target Group: This practice benefited local CSOs, human rights defenders, and vulnerable groups whose rights continued to be monitored and protected despite the absence of international staff.

Stakeholders with Authority: International organizations, UN bodies, and local partners have the authority to continue this practice and ensure remote monitoring efforts are adequately supported.

Evidence of Impact: By maintaining a focus on monitoring and reporting human rights violations, even without an entire on-the-ground presence, the project helped sustain human rights advocacy efforts in Bolivia, aligning with UN goals of continuous human rights oversight.

5. Conclusions

5.1 Relevance

The project demonstrated strong strategic relevance, addressing Bolivia's pressing human rights challenges, particularly in a volatile political environment. It aligned well with OHCHR's mandate and the SDGs, ensuring a focus on strengthening the rule of law and protecting vulnerable groups such as indigenous communities and women. The adaptive approach to local partnerships enabled continued influence despite challenging operational conditions.

However, the Bolivian government's decision not to renew the OHCHR Technical Mission significantly constrained the project's visibility and ability to engage directly with government actors, limiting broader systemic changes.

5.2 Coherence

The project demonstrated strong coherence by aligning effectively with both national and regional human rights priorities, such as addressing gender-based violence and supporting indigenous rights. This alignment was evident through strategic collaborations with key national institutions, including the *Defensoría del Pueblo*, and engagement with a wide range of local stakeholders. The shifting political environment and the departure of key staff in 2023 complicated strategic coordination, underscoring the need for more robust communication and engagement with partners like the EU to ensure continued coherence and effective collaboration.

5.3 Efficiency

The project demonstrated a commendable level of adaptability by reallocating resources following the closure of the Technical Mission, effectively ensuring continuity in key human rights activities through strengthened partnerships with local institutions, particularly the *Defensoría del Pueblo*. However, organizational and communication challenges—notably following the departure of the Project Coordinator—impacted overall efficiency, reducing the project's ability to deliver sustained, broader outcomes.

5.4 Effectiveness

The project effectively empowered civil society organizations and the *Defensoría del Pueblo*, improving their capacity to monitor and advocate for human rights. This capacity-building was instrumental in fostering a more robust, more independent human rights framework in Bolivia, with a particular focus on marginalized groups. Nonetheless, the closure of the Technical Mission reduced the project's ability to support legal reforms and provide direct protection to human rights defenders, particularly journalists. The reliance on local actors highlighted the limitations of indirect influence.

5.5 Orientation to Impact

The project contributed to a long-term shift in Bolivia's human rights landscape, mainly through the empowerment of civil society and the strengthening of the *Defensoría del Pueblo*. These achievements laid the groundwork for sustained human rights advocacy and institutional resilience. However, the political environment remains a significant barrier to systemic change. The project had limited success in achieving legislative reforms or long-term policy changes, and its impact is vulnerable to shifts in political will and institutional capacity.

5.6 Sustainability

The project's sustainability efforts focused on strengthening national institutions and ensuring local ownership of human rights initiatives, mainly through partnerships with the *Defensoría del Pueblo*. This approach laid the foundation for long-term advocacy. However, the sustainability of these gains is at risk due to the political fragility of national institutions, particularly the *Defensoría del Pueblo*, which faces ongoing challenges in maintaining independence from political pressures.

5.7 INCLUSIVITY

The project successfully integrated human rights, gender, and disability considerations, focusing on empowering vulnerable groups, such as indigenous women, LGBTIQ+ communities, and human rights defenders. These efforts contributed to greater advocacy capacity within marginalized groups, enhancing their visibility locally and internationally. However, the focus on outputs rather than outcomes resulted in limited evidence of tangible, long-term improvements for some groups, mainly persons with disabilities.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 LEVERAGE AND ENHANCE OHCHR-EU STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

Recommendation: Strengthen the EU's role as a strategic partner in future OHCHR projects, ensuring full integration into decision-making processes, advocacy efforts, and strategic planning while enhancing regular coordination between OHCHR and the EU.
Explanation: While the EU has played a critical funding role, its involvement in strategic decisions and collaboration with OHCHR could be expanded to ensure more coordinated and impactful human rights initiatives in Bolivia and the region. Formalizing regular feedback sessions between the OHCHR Regional Representative for South America and the EU Delegation in Bolivia would further enhance communication, align progress, and identify future joint initiatives. This approach will foster a more robust and strategic partnership between OHCHR and the EU, allowing for better advocacy, resource allocation, and long-term sustainability of human rights interventions.
Responsible Body: OHCHR Regional Office, EU Delegation in Bolivia, EU Headquarters in Brussels, OHCHR HQ.
Actions:

- Establish formal mechanisms for EU-OHCHR collaboration in decision-making.
- Facilitate regular feedback sessions during OHCHR visits to Bolivia.
- Ensure regular strategic discussions between OHCHR and the EU on progress and future opportunities.
- Involve the EU in crucial advocacy campaigns and integrate them into strategic planning for future interventions.
- Explore new collaboration opportunities in Bolivia and the region.

Timeframe: Immediate and ongoing, starting with the next OHCHR visit.
Priority: High.

6.2 REINFORCE STRATEGIC ENGAGEMENT WITH THE BOLIVIAN GOVERNMENT

Recommendation: Reinforce formal and informal channels for engagement between the OHCHR and the Bolivian government, using human rights mechanisms such as treaty bodies, the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), and Special Procedures (SPs) as the foundation for dialogue and driving systemic human rights reforms.
Explanation: The closure of the OHCHR Technical Mission limited direct engagement with the government, hindering the potential for broader systemic reforms. Government-level interaction is essential for legislative and institutional changes. By re-establishing dialogue and using neutral spaces for discussions, OHCHR can continue advocating for necessary reforms.
Responsible Body: OHCHR Regional Office in Chile, and OHCHR HQ.

Actions:

- Facilitate diplomatic outreach and periodic meetings with government officials,
- Explore neutral spaces for dialogue with government actors,
- Leverage relationships in the regional office and other UN entities to maintain strategic conversations.

Timeframe: 12–18 months.
Priority: High.

6.3 Develop Contingency Plans for Future Political Instability

Recommendation: Integrate OHCHR's existing risk management tools—such as the risk register, risk treatment and response plans, and the OHCHR business contingency plan—into future projects design to ensure continued operations in the face of political instability or government restrictions.
Explanation: The closure of the OHCHR Technical Mission disrupted effective monitoring. Future projects should build on OHCHR's established risk management frameworks to ensure operational continuity and adaptability in challenging environments.
Responsible Body: OHCHR Regional Office, OHCHR HQ, international partners.
Actions:

- Integrate OHCHR's risk management tools into project designs to address political volatility,
- Include remote monitoring strategies and partnerships with neutral entities,
- Ensure resource reallocation plans are built into project designs to adapt to sudden political changes.

Timeframe: 6 months.
Priority: Medium.

6.4 Continue strengthening the Independence and Capacity of the *Defensoría del Pueblo*.

Recommendation: Continue providing support efforts to ensure the *Defensoría del Pueblo* remains an independent and effective institution capable of impartially carrying out its human rights monitoring mandate.
Explanation: Concerns regarding political influence over the Defensoría limit its effectiveness. Strengthening its independence is essential for impartial human rights monitoring and advocacy in Bolivia.
Responsible Body: OHCHR Regional Office, and international partners.
Actions:

- Advocate for legislative reforms to enhance the *Defensoría del Pueblo*'s independence,
- Provide ongoing technical assistance to improve its capacity,
- Develop mechanisms to monitor adherence to international human rights standards.

Timeframe: 18–24 months.
Priority: High.

6.5 Expand and Enhance the Role of the OHCHR Regional Office in Supporting Local Advocacy and Coordination with Bolivian Civil Society

Recommendation: Increase the involvement of the OHCHR Regional Office in Chile to both support localized advocacy efforts and strengthen coordination with Bolivian CSOs for continuous human rights monitoring and advocacy.
Explanation: With the regional office now supporting Bolivia, leveraging its expertise and establishing structured communication with local actors can significantly enhance advocacy efforts. A stronger partnership between the regional office and Bolivian CSOs will help ensure consistent collaboration, technical support, and the amplification of human rights issues in regional forums, particularly in the absence of an in-country mission.
Responsible Body: OHCHR Regional Office.
Actions:

- Organize capacity-building workshops for Bolivian CSOs in collaboration with the regional office.
- Establish a liaison team within the regional office to manage communication with Bolivian CSOs.
- Develop joint advocacy initiatives and campaigns to support human rights causes and amplify local voices.
- Organize regular virtual and in-person coordination meetings to maintain continuous communication and collaboration.

Timeframe: Ongoing for capacity-building; 6 months for establishing structured coordination.
Priority: Medium.

6.6 Develop Comprehensive Exit Strategies and Financial Sustainability Plans for Civil Society and National Institutions

Recommendation: Create a comprehensive strategy that includes financial sustainability and clear exit strategies, ensuring that civil society organizations (CSOs) and national institutions, such as the *Defensoría del Pueblo*, can independently sustain the progress made after the project's completion.
Explanation: The project successfully empowered civil society and national institutions, but their long-term sustainability is at risk without a structured exit strategy and ongoing financial support. Developing exit strategies that transfer leadership and ownership to local actors, including national institutions, will help ensure that they can independently continue advocacy and human rights monitoring.
Responsible Bodies Include the OHCHR Regional Office, international donors (including the EU).
Actions:

- Establish a multi-donor fund to ensure the financial sustainability of Bolivian CSOs and national institutions.
- Implement leadership development initiatives, mentorship programs, and institutional capacity-building for CSOs and national institutions, ensuring they can continue advocacy and human rights protection after OHCHR's exit.

- Develop a structured exit strategy that gradually transfers ownership and leadership to national institutions, such as the *Defensoría del Pueblo*, ensuring they have the necessary skills, resources, and operational independence.
- Provide capacity-building on resource mobilization, financial planning, and institutional development for civil society organizations and national institutions.
- Ensure that civil society and public institutions have the tools and knowledge to operate independently and sustain the progress achieved through OHCHR's interventions.

Timeframe: 12–18 months.
Priority: High.

6.7 Increase Investment in National Early Warning Systems

Recommendation: Strengthen Bolivia's early warning systems by ensuring continuous monitoring, evaluation, and response capacity with both local and regional actors involved.
Explanation: The early warning systems developed under the project were not fully operational after the mission closure due to a lack of resources and on-the-ground monitoring. Investing in these systems will ensure timely responses to human rights violations.
Responsible Body: OHCHR Regional Office.

- **Actions**:
- Provide technical support and resources to local human rights institutions to manage early warning systems,
- Integrate regional expertise from Chile,
- Establish rapid-response mechanisms linking local early warning data to international stakeholders.

Timeframe: 12 months.
Priority: Medium.

6.8 Promote Gender and Disability Inclusion Across All Future Projects

Recommendation: Strengthen efforts to integrate gender equality and disability inclusion into all future OHCHR projects and initiatives in Bolivia, ensuring these aspects are fully mainstreamed and result in tangible outcomes.
Explanation: Although the project made significant strides in gender equality, its impact on disability inclusion was limited. A comprehensive inclusion strategy is necessary to ensure no group is left behind.
Responsible Body: OHCHR Regional Office, OHCHR HQ.
Actions:

- Develop inclusion policies for all future projects,
- Provide targeted training on gender and disability inclusion to project staff and local partners,
- Ensure project activities actively involve women and persons with disabilities.

Timeframe: 6–12 months.
Priority: Medium.

6.9 ENHANCE RESOURCE ALLOCATION IN FUTURE PROJECTS

Recommendation: Reallocate resources in future projects to ensure a balanced distribution between personnel costs, contractual services, and direct programmatic activities, with a focus on strengthening institutional capacity, providing direct support, and fostering positive collaboration with local authorities and civil society.

Explanation: While the expertise of OHCHR staff and consultants is critical, the limited allocation for contractual services and direct support (such as infrastructure and equipment) reduced the project's ability to fully support capacity-building and institutional development. A more balanced budget in future projects will not only enhance institutional strengthening but also improve the perception of the project by local authorities, which can facilitate long-term collaboration and partnerships.

Responsible Body: OHCHR Regional Office, OHCHR HQ.

Actions:

- Considering conducting a review of budget practices to establish guidelines that prioritize spending on both staff and personal costs and contractual services for direct programmatic support, including equipment, infrastructure, support for independent field operations, for reinforcing subnational connectivity and networks, or other internal improvements.
- Implement regular monitoring and evaluation of resource allocation to ensure alignment with project goals and timely adjustments to enhance efficiency and strengthen institutional capacities.

Timeframe: For future projects.

Priority: Medium.

ANNEXES

Annex i. ToR

Annex ii. STAKEHOLDERS

Category	Name	Organization	Role/Involvement
OHCHR (United Nations Human Rights Office)			
	José Aranaz	OHCHR	Representative and Director at the Office of the OHCHR in Geneva.
	Jan Jarab	OHCHR	Regional Director for South America
	Humberto Henderson	OHCHR	Chief of the Americas Section, Geneva
	Antonio Menendez de Zubillaga	OHCHR	Head of OHCHR Technical Mission (until Dec 2022/Jan 2023)
	Paulo Piá de Andrade	OHCHR	Desk Officer for Bolivia (since Oct 2022)
	Yulia Babuzhina	OHCHR	Former Deputy Head of OHCHR Technical Mission, Project Coordinator (until Sep 2023)
	Jordi Quiles Sendra	OHCHR	IUNV in Bolivia (since Nov 2023)
	Ferran Lloveras	OHCHR	Partnership Section, DEXREL focal point for the EU
	Anna Hysbergue	OHCHR	DEXREL focal point for the EU
	Valeria Ieseanu	OHCHR	DEXREL focal point for the EU
	Gloria Moronta	OHCHR	Former UNV and P3 (until Nov 2023)
European Union (EU)			
	Ivan Nava	EU Delegation to Bolivia	Operation Manager
	Jordi Casanova	EU FPI (Brasilia, now Mexico City)	EU focal point for the project
Government Institutions			
	Elisabeth Morato	DdP	Deputy for Human Rights Analysis, Due Diligence and Mother Earth
	Jennifer Guachalla	DdP	Director General of Planning
	Juan Luis Ledezma Vargas	National Mechanism Against Torture	Head of Unit II - National Mechanism for the Prevention of Torture
Civil Society (Beneficiary Organizations)			

	Giovana Urquizu	Community Originaria Quechua Yotalilla, REDAMPIC, Mujeres Constructoras de Paz de Latinoamerica	Beneficiary
	Ximena Narda Argote Taracho	Bartolina Sisa, Trabajadores sociales comunitarios de Bolivia, Cochabamba	Beneficiary
	Melania Apaza Calilex	Brigadista Ouro	Beneficiary
	Torrico	Fundación Unir	Beneficiary
	Jhovanna Morales	Fundación Tierra	Beneficiary
	Emma Bolshia Bravo Cladera	ITEI	Beneficiary
	Andres Gautier	ITEI	Beneficiary
	Carla Achá Irigoyen	ITEI	Beneficiary
	Luisa Achá Irigoyen	ITEI	Beneficiary
	Poly Isijara	ITEI	Beneficiary
	Anna-Maija Kanerva	ITEI	Beneficiary
	Luna Humerez	OTRAF (Organización de Trabajadores y Trabajadoras por la Recuperación de sus Fuentes Laborales)	Beneficiary
Other UN Agencies			
	Ivana Fernandez	UN Women Bolivia	UNCT

Annex iii. DATA COLLECTION TOOLS

1) Semi-structured interviews

a) OHCHR Staff (National and International)

Evaluation Criteria	Interview Question for OHCHR Staff
Relevance	How does the project align with OHCHR's mandate and Bolivia's current human rights challenges? What aspects do you believe were most critical for the country?
Coherence	Can you describe how the project has adapted to Bolivia's evolving human rights landscape, particularly in relation to national priorities and EU engagement?
Efficiency	Following the Technical Mission's closure, how do you assess the use of resources and the organizational structure of the project? Are there specific areas that worked well or could be improved?
Effectiveness	How successful has the project been in establishing early warning mechanisms? Can you share examples of strengthened institutional capacities to address human rights violations?
Sustainability	What sustainability measures have been implemented by the project? What is your view on the likelihood of these outcomes continuing after the project ends?
Human Rights/Gender/Disability	Can you share examples of how the project has incorporated gender, disability, and human rights concerns, particularly with respect to vulnerable groups? What results have you seen from these efforts?

b) National Institutions

Evaluation Criteria	Interview Question for National Institutions
Relevance	How does the project align with your institution's priorities? Have you observed any changes in alignment as national priorities have shifted?
Coherence	How has the project's collaboration with your institution adapted to Bolivia's shifting human right's needs? Has the project responded effectively to changing legal frameworks or emerging priorities?
Effectiveness	How has your institution been involved in developing early warning systems through this project? Have you seen any tangible results regarding the revision of discriminatory legal provisions?

Sustainability	From your perspective, are the changes brought about by the project sustainable? Has your institution been involved in ensuring that the capacities built will last beyond the project's lifetime?

c) Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)

Evaluation Criteria	Interview Question for CSOs
Relevance	How does the project align with the needs of civil society and human rights defenders in Bolivia? What aspects of the project have been most beneficial to your organization and the communities you represent?
Effectiveness	Can you describe how the project has supported the empowerment of your organization and human rights defenders in Bolivia? Have you noticed any improvements in the protection of these groups?
Sustainability	From your organization's perspective, how sustainable are the outcomes achieved by this project? Do you feel that civil society has built sufficient capacity to continue the work independently?
Human Rights/Gender/Disability	Has the project helped integrate gender and disability considerations into your organization's activities? Have these efforts led to better outcomes for marginalized or vulnerable groups in your communities?

d) European Union and International Partners

Evaluation Criteria	Interview Question for EU and International Partners
Relevance	How does the project align with the EU's and other international partners' human rights priorities for Bolivia? What aspects have been most significant from your organization's perspective?
Coherence	How has your engagement with OHCHR and national partners evolved as Bolivia's human rights landscape has changed? Are there specific adjustments you would highlight in response to the changing context?
Effectiveness	How do you assess the effectiveness of the project's collaboration between OHCHR, national institutions, and international stakeholders like the EU? Have any joint initiatives resulted in measurable impact?

e) Beneficiaries (Human Rights Defenders, Journalists, Indigenous Community Representatives)

Evaluation Criteria	Interview Question for Beneficiaries
Effectiveness	From your experience, how has the project helped protect human rights defenders like yourself or your community? Can you share specific examples of how you or your organization has been empowered?
Sustainability	What measures have been implemented to ensure the long-term protection of human rights defenders and vulnerable groups? Do you feel that these measures will continue after the project's conclusion?

Human Rights/Gender/Disability	How has the project addressed issues related to gender and disability? Have there been any tangible improvements for women, Indigenous communities, or people with disabilities in your community as a result?

f) Judiciary and National Mechanism for Prevention of Torture

Evaluation Criteria	Interview Question for Judiciary and National Mechanism
Effectiveness	How has the project strengthened your institution's capacity to prevent human rights violations? Can you provide examples of successful interventions or systems that have been established through this project?
Sustainability	Do you believe that your institution has built enough capacity to independently sustain the outcomes achieved through this project? What ongoing support, if any, would be necessary?

2) Surveys (pdf)