Management response

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

Recommendation 1: 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.

Management position on recommendation: Partially accepted
(Accepted/Partially Accepted/Not accepted)

Management comment: OHCHR recognizes the European Union as a strategic partner and agrees that efforts should be made to strengthen this relationship in Bolivia following the experience with the current project. While the possibility of a new EU-funded project in Bolivia may not be immediate, reinforcing ties with the EU remains important both in terms of continued support and advocacy for human rights in the country as well as future fundraising opportunities. OHCHR ROSA has already taken steps in this direction, organizing meetings with the EU delegation during the Regional Representative's first official visit to Bolivia in May 2024. OHCHR is committed to building upon these initial engagements towards a robust collaboration with the EU in Bolivia. To note that the deployment of a new EU Ambassador to Bolivia in the second half of 2024 presents a valuable opportunity to strengthen the partnership.

The recommendation is partially accepted because while OHCHR can ensure *consultation* with the EU regarding advocacy efforts, it cannot guarantee *full integration into decision-making processes and strategic planning*. In many projects, the EU is part of the steering committee, but these committees have a limited role in decision-making processes.

Key Action	Responsibility	Deadline
1. Organize meetings between the ROSA Regional Representative and the EU delegation in Bolivia during official visits to the country, to maintain open communication, align priorities, and identify opportunities for collaboration.	ROSA	Ongoing

Recommendation 2: 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.

Management position on recommendation: Accepted

Management comment: Significant progress has already been made in this direction, with the ROSA Regional Representative and Deputy Regional Representative holding meetings with high-level government officials, including the Vice-President, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Minister of Justice, during their official visits to Bolivia. In addition, working-level collaboration has been strengthened through increased technical cooperation with government institutions. These engagements at both the political and technical levels, along with open dialogue maintained with the Permanent Mission in Geneva, provide a strong foundation for continued collaboration and advocacy. OHCHR also continues to actively engage with human rights mechanisms, using their outcomes as a foundation for dialogue and advocacy (as was recently done with CERD's latest concluding observations and will be done with the upcoming UPR outcomes).

Key Action	Responsibility	Deadline
1. Utilize the results of Bolivia's 4th cycle Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in January 2025 as an entry point for enhanced collaboration and targeted technical assistance to support the implementation of accepted recommendations.	ROSA, in coordination with relevant sections in HQ	Q3/4 2025

Recommendation 3: 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.

Management position on recommendation: Accepted

Management comment: The risk of non-renewal of the technical mission after 2022 was identified in the project documentation, and a proposed mitigation strategy to "*Design alternative plans in case of non-extension of the presence of the OHCHR Technical Mission beyond the end of 2022*" was included. However, the sudden and surprising nature of the non-renewal decision (considering previous assurances received) presented significant challenges in operationalizing this strategy. In light of this experience, OHCHR acknowledges the need to further strengthen its risk management practices by more thoroughly integrating existing tools into the design and planning phases of future projects, placing greater emphasis on developing adaptable contingency plans.

Key Action	Responsibility	Deadline
1. Engage with donors during the project design phase to ensure they are fully informed of the identified risks and the corresponding contingency plans, fostering transparency and building a shared	ROSA OHCHR HQ	Ongoing

understanding of the measures in place to ensure operational continuity.		

Recommendation 4: 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.		
Management position on recommendation: Accepted		
Management comment: Significant efforts are already underway to provide ongoing support to the institution, both through regular collaboration with ROSA as well as the Canada-funded project in Bolivia (2023-2026), which inherited two dedicated consultancies aimed at strengthening the Defensoría's capacity that were unfinished when the EU project concluded. OHCHR remains committed to maintaining and enhancing this support, recognizing the critical role of the Defensoría in promoting and protecting human rights in Bolivia.		
Key Action	**Responsibility**	**Deadline**
1. Continue providing capacity-building and public support to the Defensoría del Pueblo, focusing on areas such as human rights monitoring and engagement with international human rights mechanisms.	ROSA, in coordination with relevant HQ sections	Ongoing

Recommendation 5: 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.		
Management position on recommendation: Accepted		
Management comment: ROSA's in-country liaison team in Bolivia has been actively engaging with CSOs through joint initiatives, capacity-building workshops, and regular consultations. These efforts have been further strengthened since ROSA assumed responsibility for Bolivia, with clearer lines of communication and more structured engagement. ROSA leadership and working-level staff regularly meet with CSOs during missions to Bolivia, ensuring continuous dialogue and collaboration. OHCHR is committed to deepening these partnerships and exploring new avenues for joint advocacy and monitoring efforts.		
Key Actions	**Responsibility**	**Deadline**

1. Continue facilitating regular communication, information sharing, and coordination of joint initiatives with civil society organizations.	ROSA	Ongoing

Recommendation 6: 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.

Management position on recommendation: Partially accepted

Management comment: The focus on supporting the Ombudsperson's Office in this project was a mutually agreed strategy with the EU, given the changing operational context following the end of the OHCHR technical mission. While this approach has proven prescient given the Ombudsperson's Office's increasingly vital role in the current country context, it is important to note that the same level of centrality in terms of financial support may not replicate in future donor-funded projects (as the institution is also aware).

OHCHR remains committed to supporting the strengthening of the Ombudsperson's Office within its financial capabilities, as evidenced by the continued initiatives under the current Canada-funded project (2023-2026). Moreover, OHCHR will continue to seek new fundraising opportunities and will keep the Ombudsperson's Office in mind in these efforts, while also advocating for the institution's financial sustainability, in line with recommendations from various human rights mechanisms. However, the high level of financial support for the Ombudsperson's Office's institutional strengthening process enjoyed during the current project is not guaranteed, and the sustainability of the progress made will also depend on the institution's ability to secure alternative sources of funding and support.

Key Actions	Responsibility	Deadline
1. Continue providing technical assistance and capacity-building support to the Ombudsperson's Office, within the financial capabilities of OHCHR, focusing on strategic areas that can enhance the institution's long-term sustainability and effectiveness.	ROSA	Ongoing
2. Include the Ombudsperson's Office as a priority partner in future fundraising efforts for human rights initiatives in Bolivia, highlighting the institution's critical role and the importance of ensuring the sustainability of its institutional strengthening process.	ROSA	Ongoing

Recommendation 7: Strengthen Bolivia's early warning systems by ensuring continuous monitoring, evaluation, and response capacity with both local and regional actors involved.		
Management position on recommendation : Accepted		
Management comment: ROSA is actively engaged in this effort through increased support from its Emergency Response Team (ERT), which participates in meetings of the UNCT's Strategic Analysis Unit and conducts dedicated missions to the country. These missions focus on capacity-building for in-country colleagues and other partners, enhancing their ability to effectively monitor and respond to emerging human rights concerns. OHCHR remains committed to further strengthening these efforts and exploring new avenues for collaboration with local and regional actors to bolster early warning and response mechanisms in Bolivia.		
Key Action	**Responsibility**	**Deadline**
1. Continue providing support through ROSA's Emergency Response Team, ensuring their regular participation in meetings of the UNCT's Strategic Analysis Unit and conducting targeted missions to Bolivia for capacity-building and technical assistance to both other UN entities (e.g. UN-Women's Early Warning System), the Ombudsperson's Office, and civil society.	ROSA	Ongoing

Recommendation 8: 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.		
Management position on recommendation: Accepted		
Management comment: ROSA's liaison team in Bolivia has already intensified efforts in this direction, particularly within the UNCT, by co-leading the disability task force to implement the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy (UNDIS). Furthermore, OHCHR will continue integrating a gender perspective in its initiatives and planning. OHCHR recognizes the need to further mainstream these aspects into its programmatic work and is committed to ensuring that future projects actively involve and benefit women and persons with disabilities.		
Key Action	**Responsibility**	**Deadline**
1. Integrate gender equality and disability inclusion as cross-cutting priorities in the design, implementation,	ROSA with support from	Ongoing

and evaluation of future projects in Bolivia, in coordination with the UNCT.	relevant HQ sections	

Recommendation 9: 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.
Management position on recommendation: Not accepted
Management comment: OHCHR's added value primarily lies in its expertise, knowledge, and networks, which are essential for effectively promoting and protecting human rights. A standard OHCHR project typically allocates over 75% of its resources to staff costs, including consultancies. In the case of this project, personnel costs accounted for 62% of the total direct costs, which is well within the expected range. Moreover, the increased focus on supporting a specific institution through dedicated consultancies was a unique response to the challenges faced following the end of OHCHR's technical mission in Bolivia and does not represent the standard approach for OHCHR projects worldwide. It is also important to emphasize that contractual services are only ancillary to OHCHR's core activities and value proposition.

Key Action	Responsibility	Deadline
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Date: 08.08.2025		Date: 7/08/25
Clearance Kim L. Taylor, Chief PSMS		Approval
O.G. Chair		S.E.T. Chair
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