



INTERNAL AUDIT DIVISION

REPORT 2015/084

Audit of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean

Overall results relating to the efficient and effective management of operations were initially assessed as partially satisfactory. Implementation of four important recommendations remains in progress.

FINAL OVERALL RATING: PARTIALLY SATISFACTORY

27 August 2015

Assignment No. AA2014/250/03

CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
I. BACKGROUND	1
II. OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE	2
III. AUDIT RESULTS	2-8
A. Coordinated management mechanisms	3-4
B. Performance management indicators and mechanisms	5
C. Regulatory framework	5-8
IV. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	8
ANNEX I Status of audit recommendations	
APPENDIX I Management response	

AUDIT REPORT

Audit of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean

I. BACKGROUND

1. The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) conducted an audit of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (ROLAC).
2. In accordance with its mandate, OIOS provides assurance and advice on the adequacy and effectiveness of the United Nations internal control system, the primary objectives of which are to ensure: (a) efficient and effective operations; (b) accurate financial and operational reporting; (c) safeguarding of assets; and (d) compliance with mandates, regulations and rules.
3. ROLAC was established in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1996 as part of UN-Habitat's initiative to decentralize and improve its overall presence and operational capability in the Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) region. As at September 2014, ROLAC had a representation in seven countries in the region (Brazil, Haiti, Colombia, Mexico, Ecuador, Cuba and El Salvador) and was considering establishing a presence in Panama.
4. ROLAC operations were focused on three of the seven thematic areas outlined in the UN-Habitat strategic framework for the period 2014-2015. The three focus areas, which accounted for \$6.5 million or 59 per cent of the overall ROLAC expenditure in 2014, were: (i) urban legislation, land and governance; (ii) urban planning and design; and (iii) urban economy. The rest of the portfolio included developmental components around the themes of urban safety, resilience and equity, housing, as well as the residual projects related to the Haiti earthquake.
5. During the period from January 2012 to September 2014, ROLAC managed a project portfolio of \$49 million. Project expenditure during the same period amounted to \$35.4 million, of which a total of \$12.7 million was spent in Brazil (\$8.1 million) and Colombia (\$4.6 million). As at 30 September 2014, most of the projects in Brazil and Colombia were expected to end in the first half of 2015. Potential projects in the pipeline, at different stages of negotiation, were at an estimated \$63 million but none of these had materialized as of March 2015.
6. In 2014, ROLAC operations were financed by: (a) UN-Habitat, which provided core resources for four posts at the professional level and \$35,000 for non-post items; (b) the Municipality of Rio de Janeiro, which provided office facilities and a further \$450,000 for local staff costs and other office expenses; and (c) UN-Habitat Headquarters generated projects, which contributed \$800,000. All other resources came by way of technical cooperation funds generated by projects initiated at the regional and project office levels.
7. ROLAC was headed by a Regional Director at the D-1 level. As at 30 September 2014, the Office had a work force of 211 personnel comprising eight professional level staff, five general service level staff, two national officers and 194 project-funded consultants hired on short-term contracts. Five of the professional level staff were funded by core funds and the other three were funded by and dedicated to the Haiti project portfolio.
8. Comments provided by UN-Habitat are incorporated in italics.

II. OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE

9. The audit was conducted to assess the adequacy and effectiveness of UN-Habitat governance, risk management and control processes in providing reasonable assurance regarding **the efficient and effective management of ROLAC operations**.

10. The audit was included in the 2014 OIOS internal audit work plan for UN-Habitat due to risk that potential weaknesses in management of ROLAC operations could adversely affect the achievement of its mandated objectives.

11. The key controls tested for the audit were: (a) coordinated management mechanisms; (b) performance monitoring indicators and mechanisms; and (c) regulatory framework. For the purpose of this audit, OIOS defined these key controls as follows:

(a) **Coordinated management mechanisms** - controls that provide reasonable assurance that appropriate mechanisms are in place to facilitate coordination between UN-Habitat headquarters and ROLAC and promote collaboration in programme delivery.

(b) **Performance monitoring indicators and mechanisms** - controls that provide reasonable assurance that performance metrics at ROLAC are: (i) established and appropriate to enable measurement of the efficiency and effectiveness of the operations; and (ii) used to manage operations appropriately.

(c) **Regulatory framework** - controls that provide reasonable assurance that policies and procedures: (i) exist to guide the substantive and administrative mandates of ROLAC; (ii) are implemented consistently; and (iii) ensure the reliability and integrity of financial and operational information.

12. The key controls were assessed for the control objectives shown in Table 1.

13. OIOS conducted the audit from October 2014 to March 2015. The audit covered the period from 1 January 2012 to 30 September 2014. The audit was conducted at UN-Habitat headquarters in Nairobi, ROLAC in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil and in the Colombian project offices located in Bogota, Medellin and Santa Marta.

14. The audit team conducted an activity-level risk assessment to identify and assess specific risk exposures, and to confirm the relevance of the selected key controls in mitigating associated risks. Through interviews, analytical reviews and tests of controls, OIOS assessed the existence and adequacy of internal controls and conducted necessary tests to determine their effectiveness.

III. AUDIT RESULTS

15. The UN-Habitat governance, risk management and control processes examined were initially assessed as **partially satisfactory**¹ in providing reasonable assurance regarding the **efficient and effective management of ROLAC operations**. OIOS made five recommendations to address issues

¹ A rating of “**partially satisfactory**” means that important (but not critical or pervasive) deficiencies exist in governance, risk management or control processes, such that reasonable assurance may be at risk regarding the achievement of control and/or business objectives under review.

identified in the audit. Coordinated management mechanisms were assessed as partially satisfactory. UN-Habitat had taken measures to improve coordination between its headquarters in Nairobi, and ROLAC. However, there was a need to enhance its practices for knowledge management to promote collaboration among UN-Habitat’s organizational units, including regional offices.

16. Performance monitoring indicators and mechanisms were assessed as satisfactory. Performance measures were appropriately defined and reporting on programme and project performance was taking place in a timely manner. Regulatory framework was assessed as partially satisfactory because UN-Habitat needed to: (a) provide guidelines to assist staff in negotiating contribution agreements; (b) expedite the recovery of funds advanced to implementing partners to ensure timely financial closure of projects; and (c) ensure compliance with the administrative instructions relating to official travel and the hiring of consultants and individual contractors.

17. The initial overall rating was based on the assessment of key controls presented in Table 1 below. The final overall rating is **partially satisfactory** as implementation of four important recommendations remains in progress.

Table 1: Assessment of key controls

Business objective	Key controls	Control objectives			
		Efficient and effective operations	Accurate financial and operational reporting	Safeguarding of assets	Compliance with mandates, regulations and rules
Efficient and effective management of ROLAC operations	(a) Coordinated management mechanisms	Partially satisfactory	Partially satisfactory	Partially satisfactory	Partially satisfactory
	(b) Performance monitoring indicators and mechanisms	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
	(c) Regulatory framework	Partially satisfactory	Partially satisfactory	Partially satisfactory	Partially satisfactory
FINAL OVERALL RATING: PARTIALLY SATISFACTORY					

A. Coordinated management mechanisms

Measures were being taken to enhance coordination between UN-Habitat headquarters and ROLAC

18. The Programme Coordination Division at UN-Habitat headquarters in Nairobi was responsible for supporting the organizational units in the formulation and design of projects. The need for a collaborative and coordinated approach between branches and regional offices was emphasized in the UN-Habitat Project Based Management Policy (2012) and the Programme and Project Cycle Management Manual (June 2003).

19. ROLAC was not always involved during the planning and inception stages of global projects that were initiated by UN-Habitat headquarters. For example, it not actively involved in the inception stage of some components of a pilot project titled “Achieving Sustainable Urban Development (ASUD)” sponsored and implemented by UN-Habitat headquarters in five different countries, including Colombia. The lack of effective regional involvement contributed to challenges in project execution that could

potentially have been identified and mitigated if ROLAC had been actively engaged at the project inception stage. Same was the case with the “Participative and Inclusive Land Re-adjustment Medellin” project where the local counterparts involved in project implementation lacked the capacity to successfully implement the project. ROLAC, in agreement with UN-Habitat headquarters, subsequently took measures such as hiring consultants to implement the project.

20. UN-Habitat stated that mechanisms have been developed to ensure that regional offices and branches at headquarters discuss projects at the formulation and design stage. These include: (a) a feature in the project template which requires all projects to indicate the branch/region they are collaborating with; (b) a requirement that each project must specify both a theme and location of the project, and the relevant branch and regional office attend the Project Advisory Group meetings where project design is discussed; and (c) the use of in-house agreements, which are now being mainstreamed to guide the collaboration between various units during project implementation. In view of the explanations provided by UN-Habitat on the measures taken to strengthen coordination between its headquarters branches and regional offices, OIOS did not make a recommendation.

There was need to enhance knowledge management to strengthen internal collaboration and coordination

21. Knowledge management provides a mechanism through which information, lessons learned and best practices can be shared, and cross-cutting issues addressed across different organizational units. The UN-Habitat Knowledge Strategy (May 2010) outlined a set of guidelines aimed at enhancing UN-Habitat Knowledge Management practices. These included the need for a coordinated knowledge management system to enhance internal communication and collaboration between headquarters and out posted offices, and the effective use of tools and infrastructure to support knowledge management practices.

22. UN-Habitat had put in place good knowledge management tools, such as the Project Accrual and Accountability System (PAAS), shared network drives and intranet to facilitate gathering and sharing of knowledge and best practices. Additionally, each project document incorporated lessons learned from other projects. UN-Habitat had also initiated a regional best practices and local leadership programme aimed at developing and sharing best practices across and within UN-Habitat projects and regions.

23. However, there were shortcomings in the way the knowledge management tools were used. Information entered in the knowledge databases (e.g. PAAS) was not always accurate and up to date; reports of monitoring visits were not always documented in a timely manner; and communication amongst various units was often reactive rather than proactive. These limitations impaired the effective sharing of useful information, lessons learned and best practices across the organization.

(1) UN-Habitat should enhance its knowledge management practices to promote collaboration among its organizational units, including regional offices.

UN-Habitat accepted recommendation 1 and stated that a significant rethink of such practices is indeed required and has already been identified by UN-Habitat. UN-Habitat will shortly begin a review of knowledge management, and will use this and other evaluations to support this process. Recommendation 1 remains open pending receipt of evidence showing that UN-Habitat has completed the ongoing enhancements aimed at improving and strengthening knowledge management practices.

B. Performance management indicators and mechanisms

Performance measures were defined for each project

24. The UN-Habitat Programme and Project Cycle Management Manual provides guidelines on the organization's processes for formulating and managing programmes and projects. The Manual requires that each programme or project should specify the expected accomplishments, performance indicators for measuring the accomplishments, and the specific outputs to be delivered. The Manual also prescribes the use of the logical framework approach as a means of aligning the projects' goals, purpose, outputs, activities, performance indicators, and in facilitating monitoring of performance and achievement of planned accomplishments.

25. OIOS reviewed documentation for a sample of nine out of the 22 active projects in Brazil and Colombia during the period from January 2012 to September 2014 to determine whether the required metrics to assess performance and facilitate reporting had been developed. Expenditure for these nine projects amounted to \$10.2 million and represented 87 per cent of the total expenditure (\$11.9 million) during the period under review.

26. OIOS noted that all projects reviewed made substantive reference to current focus areas and were accompanied by logical frameworks which defined measurable results in terms of project outputs, together with related indicators, baselines and targets. OIOS therefore concluded that the controls to ensure that performance measures were clearly defined for each project were satisfactory.

Reporting on programme and project performance was performed in a timely manner

27. The individual contribution agreements signed between UN-Habitat and the various donors specified the reporting arrangements, including timelines within which ROLAC was required to report on project progress and the use of financial resources entrusted to it. OIOS reviewed documentation for a sample of nine projects valued at \$10.2 million, which were ongoing at the time of this audit, and noted that financial and substantive reports were generally prepared and submitted in accordance with requirements defined in the respective contribution agreements. OIOS therefore concluded that ROLAC complied with the performance reporting requirements during the period under review.

C. Regulatory framework

UN-Habitat needed to provide guidelines to enable staff to negotiate contribution agreements

28. In 2013, UN-Habitat developed a draft resource mobilization strategy providing a number of guiding principles and established a centralized Donor Relations and Resource Mobilization Unit. The strategy allowed for a decentralized fundraising model, where staff members were responsible to mobilize resources, and identified a minimum threshold of \$300,000 for individual projects to be initiated by UN-Habitat.

29. In ROLAC, resource mobilization was performed by the Regional Director, Human Settlements Officers, Programme Managers and Chief Technical Advisors. However, UN-Habitat had not developed any toolkits to guide staff to effectively negotiate contribution agreements with potential donors, especially in cases involving multiple counterparts. Also, there were no guidelines on the minimum value of contribution agreements to be entered into with individual counterparts. For instance, in 2014, UN-Habitat had 11 projects in Colombia which involved the processing of 1,035 transactions with an average

value of \$3,000 per transaction. In the absence of guidelines, UN-Habitat processed low dollar value contribution agreements which imposed a significant administrative burden.

30. In May 2015, ROLAC trained all project managers in the Latin America and the Caribbean region on practices for negotiating contribution agreements to minimize administrative workload. However, there was need for UN-Habitat to provide clear guidelines to assist staff in negotiating contribution agreements that are cost-effective.

(2) UN-Habitat should provide appropriate guidelines to assist staff in negotiating more cost-effective contribution agreements and reducing the administrative burden.

UN-Habitat accepted recommendation 2 and stated that it has already issued a memo to provide guidance on negotiating contribution agreements, on the occasion of new alignment of financial procedures with Umoja. Based on the previous guidelines, ROLAC will develop specific guidelines for adapting its business model to specificities of technical cooperation environment in middle income countries. Recommendation 2 remains open pending receipt of evidence that guidelines for negotiating cost-effective contribution agreements have been provided to staff.

There was need to ensure timely accounting and recovery of project funds held by implementing partners

31. The UN-Habitat Standard Operating Procedures for Agreements of Cooperation (2012) set out the requirements for administering agreements with implementing partners, including: procedures for disbursing funds to partners; guidelines for accounting for project assets; and standards for monitoring the use of funds by implementing entities. These standards were also reiterated in the specific and individual agreements entered into by UN-Habitat with implementing partners.

32. During the period from January 2012 to September 2014, ROLAC signed 39 Agreements of Cooperation (AoCs) with implementing partners for the execution of various projects in the region. These AoCs had an accumulated value of \$4.4 million of which \$3.9 million had been disbursed by 30 September 2014. OIOS selected and tested a total of seven AoCs valued at \$1.3 million representing 30 per cent of the active AoCs during the period.

33. The AoCs were approved in accordance with established procedures, and funds were disbursed in accordance with the provisions of the respective AoCs. Audited financial statements and other deliverables were being received and approved prior to making disbursements. However, the implementing partners had not accounted for and/or returned to UN-Habitat unutilized funds worth \$39,766 that were still in their possession. ROLAC explained that the Office was in various stages of following up to ensure the proper accounting and recovery of these funds.

34. Failure to account for and return project funds exposed ROLAC to the risk of having to return the amounts to donors and also prevented UN-Habitat from ensuring the timely financial closure of these projects.

(3) UN-Habitat ROLAC should expedite the recovery of funds advanced to partners and ensure timely closure of the projects.

UN-Habitat accepted recommendation 3 and stated that ROLAC will present a report on status of recovery of funds advanced including regular monitoring of advances given to implementing partners in line with UN-Habitat policy and guidelines. Recommendation 3 remains open pending confirmation that ROLAC has satisfactorily resolved the advances not yet accounted for by the

implementing partners.

ROLAC needed to ensure compliance with the administrative instruction on consultants and individual contractors

35. Administrative Instruction ST/AI/2013/4 on Individual Contractors and Consultants provides guidelines for recruitment and administration of contracts of consultants and individual contractors. The guidelines specify the roles and conditions under which they can be engaged; restrict the service period to a maximum of 24 months in a 36-month period; and prohibit the engaging of consultants to discharge representative, certifying, approving authority and/or supervisory responsibilities, or to perform the functions of regular and continuing staff members.

36. ROLAC did not always comply with the provisions of ST/AI/2013/4. There were instances where ROLAC:

- Engaged consultants to perform functions that would ordinarily be performed by regular United Nations staff, such as managing, coordinating and supervising other staff, assuming representative roles, performing routine administrative/clerical duties, or acting in positions that required them to make decisions affecting the status and entitlements of other staff (i.e., screening of job applicants and making recommendations for recruitment of staff); and
- Recruited consultants on short-term contracts that were repeatedly renewed for prolonged periods of time (for instance three to four years). There were seven instances where ROLAC alternated the recruitment and renewal of consultants' contracts through the use of both UN-Habitat and other United Nations agencies' contracts. Consultants were recruited on one United Nations agency's consulting contract only to be re-hired again on UN-Habitat contract at later periods. By alternating consultants on UN-Habitat and United Nations agency contracts, ROLAC circumvented the administrative instruction that prohibits the engagement of consultants for more than 24 months in a 36-month period.

(4) UN-Habitat should ensure compliance with the administrative instruction relating to the engagement and administration of consultants and individual contractors.

UN-Habitat accepted recommendation 4 and stated that Human Resources Liaison Officer and ROLAC will present executive guidelines on the aligning of administrative procedures with operational requirements, i.e., adapting to business model and specificities of technical cooperation environment in middle income countries. Recommendation 4 remains open pending receipt of evidence showing the measures put in place to ensure compliance with the administrative instruction on consultants and individual contractors.

There was need to ensure compliance with the administrative instruction on official travel

37. Administrative Instruction ST/AI/2013/3 on official travel requires all travel arrangements (including advance booking and purchase of tickets) for individuals travelling on United Nations business to be finalized 16 calendar days in advance of commencement of travel. Written justification is required in instances where exceptions are made. The administrative instruction also required staff to submit travel claims within two weeks of completing the travel, and recovery of travel advances if claims are not submitted in time.

38. ROLAC did not always comply with these requirements. In 15 out of 23 travel requests reviewed, ROLAC did not finalize travel 16 days before the date of departure and justifications were seldom provided.

39. ROLAC explained that most meetings were confirmed at the last minute, which prevented the office from complying with the prescribed 16-day rule. OIOS noted that most of the senior officials' travel was included in the office's quarterly travel plans which were prepared in advance, and as such ROLAC could have anticipated and made arrangements to prepare for each travel within the prescribed time period.

40. Travel advances paid to staff were not recovered in instances where travel claims had not been submitted. In 11 out of 23 cases reviewed, travel claims were submitted well beyond the set limit of two weeks, in some cases up to 75 days after the completion of travel but no recoveries of the advances were initiated.

(5) UN-Habitat ROLAC should ensure that travel arrangements are finalized within the 16-day period and staff members submit travel claims within two weeks after completion of travel, as stipulated in ST/AI/2013/3 on official travel.

UN-Habitat accepted recommendation 5 and stated that memos were sent to all UN-Habitat and ROLAC staff reminding the procedures to follow and the need for timely submission of travel claims. Based on the action taken by UN-Habitat, recommendation 5 has been closed.

IV. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

41. OIOS wishes to express its appreciation to the Management and staff of UN-Habitat for the assistance and cooperation extended to the auditors during this assignment.

(Signed) David Kanja
Assistant Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services

STATUS OF AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

Audit of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean

Recom. no.	Recommendation	Critical ² / Important ³	C/ O ⁴	Actions needed to close recommendation	Implementation date ⁵
1	UN-Habitat should enhance its knowledge management practices to promote collaboration among its organizational units, including regional offices.	Important	O	Receipt of evidence showing that UN-Habitat has completed the ongoing enhancements aimed at improving and strengthening knowledge management practices.	31 March 2016
2	UN-Habitat should provide appropriate guidelines to assist staff in negotiating more cost-effective contribution agreements and reducing the administrative burden.	Important	O	Receipt of evidence that guidelines for negotiating cost-effective contribution agreements have been provided to staff.	31 March 2016
3	UN-Habitat ROLAC should expedite the recovery of funds advanced to partners and ensure timely closure of the projects.	Important	O	Confirmation that ROLAC has satisfactorily resolved the advances not yet accounted for by the implementing partners.	31 December 2015
4	UN-Habitat should ensure compliance with the administrative instruction relating to the engagement and administration of consultants and individual contractors.	Important	O	Receipt of evidence showing the measures put in place to ensure compliance with the administrative instruction on consultants and individual contractors.	31 March 2016
5	UN-Habitat ROLAC should ensure that travel arrangements are finalized within the 16-day period and staff members submit travel claims within two weeks after completion of travel, as stipulated in ST/AI/2013/3 on official travel.	Important	C	Action completed.	Implemented

² Critical recommendations address significant and/or pervasive deficiencies or weaknesses in governance, risk management or internal control processes, such that reasonable assurance cannot be provided regarding the achievement of control and/or business objectives under review.

³ Important recommendations address important deficiencies or weaknesses in governance, risk management or internal control processes, such that reasonable assurance may be at risk regarding the achievement of control and/or business objectives under review.

⁴ C = closed, O = open

⁵ Date provided by UN-Habitat in response to recommendations.

APPENDIX I

Management Response

MEMORANDUM

To: Mr. Gurpur Kumar,
Deputy Director,
Internal Audit Division, OIOS

Reference: UNH-OED-M-
150818-01

From: 
Dr. Joan Clos,
Under-Secretary-General and
Executive Director

Date: 18 August 2015

Subject: **Response and implementation plan on a audit of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (Assignment No AA2014/250/03)**

After review, please find attached the response to the above-mentioned report including an action plan which includes necessary steps to address the identified issues.

Thank you.

- cc. Mr Alioune Badiane, Director, Programme Division, UN-Habitat
Mr Elkin Velasquez, Director, Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, UN-Habitat
Ms, Jane Nyakairu, Officer in Charge, Office of Management, UN-Habitat
Ms Liliana Contreras, Senior Programme Management Officer, UN-Habitat
Mr Mohamed Robleh, Audit Focal Point, UN-Habitat
Ms Carolina Chiappara, Programme Management Officer, ROLAC, UN-Habitat
Ms Cynthia Avena-Castillo, Professional Practices Section, Internal Audit Division, OIOS

Management Response

Audit of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / Important ²	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation date	Client comments
1	UN-Habitat should enhance its knowledge management practices to promote collaboration among its organizational units, including regional offices.	Important	Yes	Coordinator Research and Capacity Development Branch	March 2016	A significant rethink of such practices is indeed required and has already been identified by UN-Habitat. UN-Habitat will shortly begin a review of knowledge management, and will use this and other evaluations to support this process.
2	UN-Habitat should provide appropriate guidelines to assist staff in negotiating more cost-effective contribution agreements and reducing the administrative burden.	Important	Yes	OED and Regional Director LAC	OED part already implemented. ROLAC part: March 2016	OED has already issued a specific Memo on July 10/2015 to provide guidance on negotiating contribution agreements, on the occasion of new alignment of financial procedures with UMOJA. This Memo includes new provisions for: a) Negotiate programme support costs that are in line with UN policy; b) Ensure donors are aware of the GA resolution 67/226 which requests all funds and programmes to implement full cost recovery. c) Inform donors that, following Umoja implementation, funds are required up front prior to commencement of each phase of project implementation; d) Where projects are funded by multiple contribution agreements involving several donors, negotiators should request the donors to consider a standard financial report at the level of the sponsored programme. Based on the previous guidelines, ROLAC will develop specific guidelines for adapting its business model to specificities of technical

¹ Critical recommendations address significant and/or pervasive deficiencies or weaknesses in governance, risk management or internal control processes, such that reasonable assurance cannot be provided regarding the achievement of control and/or business objectives under review.

² Important recommendations address important deficiencies or weaknesses in governance, risk management or internal control processes, such that reasonable assurance may be at risk regarding the achievement of control and/or business objectives under review.

Management Response

Audit of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / Important ²	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation date	Client comments
						cooperation environment in Middle Income Countries.
3	UN-Habitat ROLAC should expedite the recovery of funds advanced to partners and ensure timely closure of the projects.	Important	Yes	PMO ROLAC	December 2015	ROLAC PMO will present report on status of recovery of funds advanced including regular monitoring to the advances given to implementing partners in line with UN-Habitat policy and guidelines.
4	UN-Habitat should ensure compliance with the administrative instruction relating to the engagement and administration of consultants and individual contractors.	Important	Yes	Human Resources Liaison Officer and PMO ROLAC	March 2016	Human Resources Liaison Officer and ROLAC PMO will present executive guidelines on the aligning of administrative procedures with operational requirements, i.e., adapting to business model and specificities of technical cooperation environment in Middle Income Countries.
5	UN-Habitat ROLAC should ensure that travel arrangements are finalized within the 16-day period and staff members submit travel claims within two weeks after completion of travel, as stipulated in ST/AI/2013/3 on official travel.	Important	Yes	OED and Regional Director ROLAC	Already implemented	OED and RD have sent out memos respectively to all UN-Habitat and ROLAC reminding orientations and procedures to follow and the need for timely submission of travel claims.