

Facilitating Human Rights Change Via UN Human Rights Field Operations

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Cox Price Human Rights Award and Lecture
At the Ved Nanda Center of International &
Comparative Law at the Sturm College of Law
University of Denver
Wednesday, September 27, 2017



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- Grateful for recognition from Ved Nanda Center of International & Comparative Law
- Grateful for Ved's teaching and encouragement during my time at DU (83-87)



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UN Human Rights field work?



Early efforts in context of Peacekeeping Missions, for example Haití and Salvador (1992)

High Commissioner for Human Rights

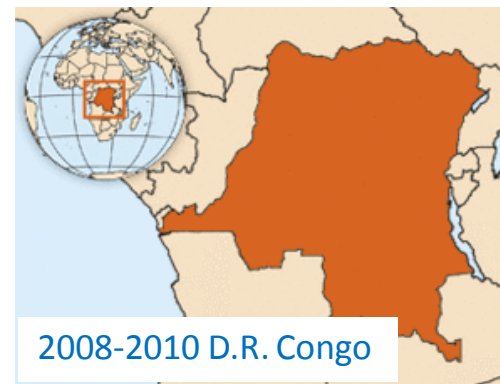


OHCHR created dec 10, 1993



OHCHR first field mission
Rwanda 1994

UN Human Rights field work



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Published two articles on UN Human Rights field work

HOWLAND, Todd., “Mirage, magic, or mixed bag? The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Field operation in Rwanda”. *Human Rights Quarterly*, Vol. 21, No. 1, 1999, pp. 1 – 55.

HOWLAND, Todd., “Human Rights Field Presences as Proactive Instrumentes of Peace And Social Change: Lessons from Angola”. *Human Rights Quarterly*, Vol. 26, No. 1, 2004, pp. 1 -28

...But learning is constant



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Tools of a UN Human Rights mission



Public Reports



Private Reports



Public pronouncements

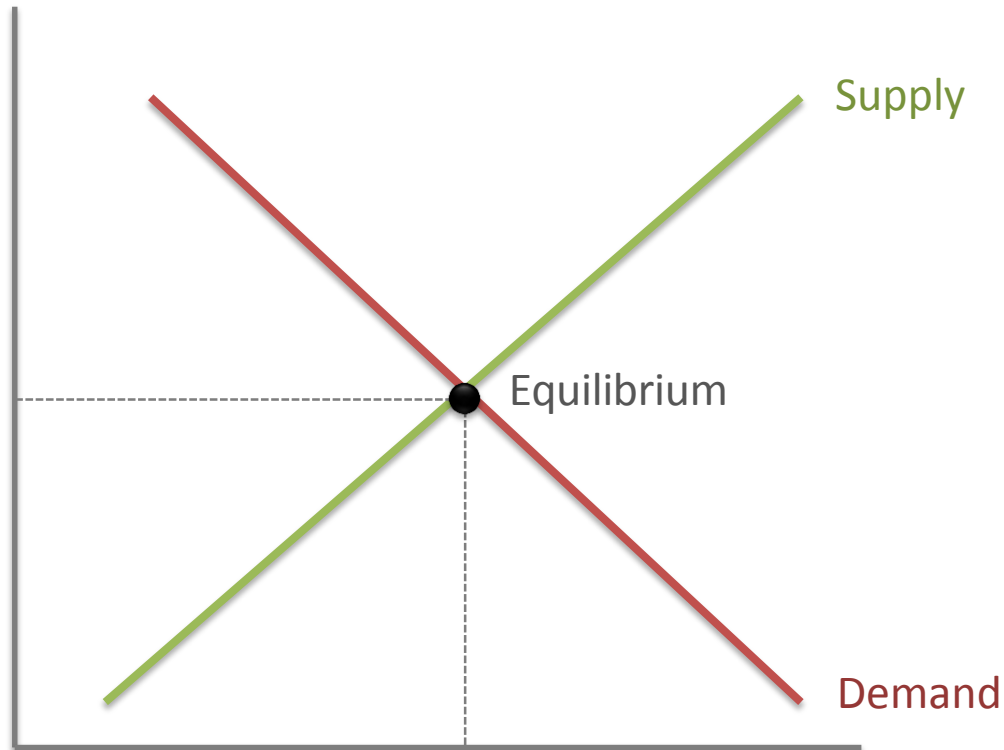


Daily advocacy, interaction and interventions



Empowerment via education and accompaniment

Supply and Demand



- **More supply:** Increased govt, rebel group or business respect for HR
- **More demand:** Increased understanding or what HR law is and how to use it to facilitate change

Reactive



- Threats and killings of activists
- Protests
- Problematic legal changes:
Amnesty law
- Externalities : *Impacts of cerromatoso*

Proactive



- **Prioritized community:** *Long term intervention to work with communities to define rights problems and overcome them*
- **Creating structural change:**
 - Peace
 - Economic and political inclusion
 - Access to market (koffie taap)
 - Access to voting rights

UN Human Rights field work can be:



So what makes a good UN Human Rights Field Officer?



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So what makes a good UN Human Rights Field Officer?



**Solid theoretical
understanding of HR
and IHL?**



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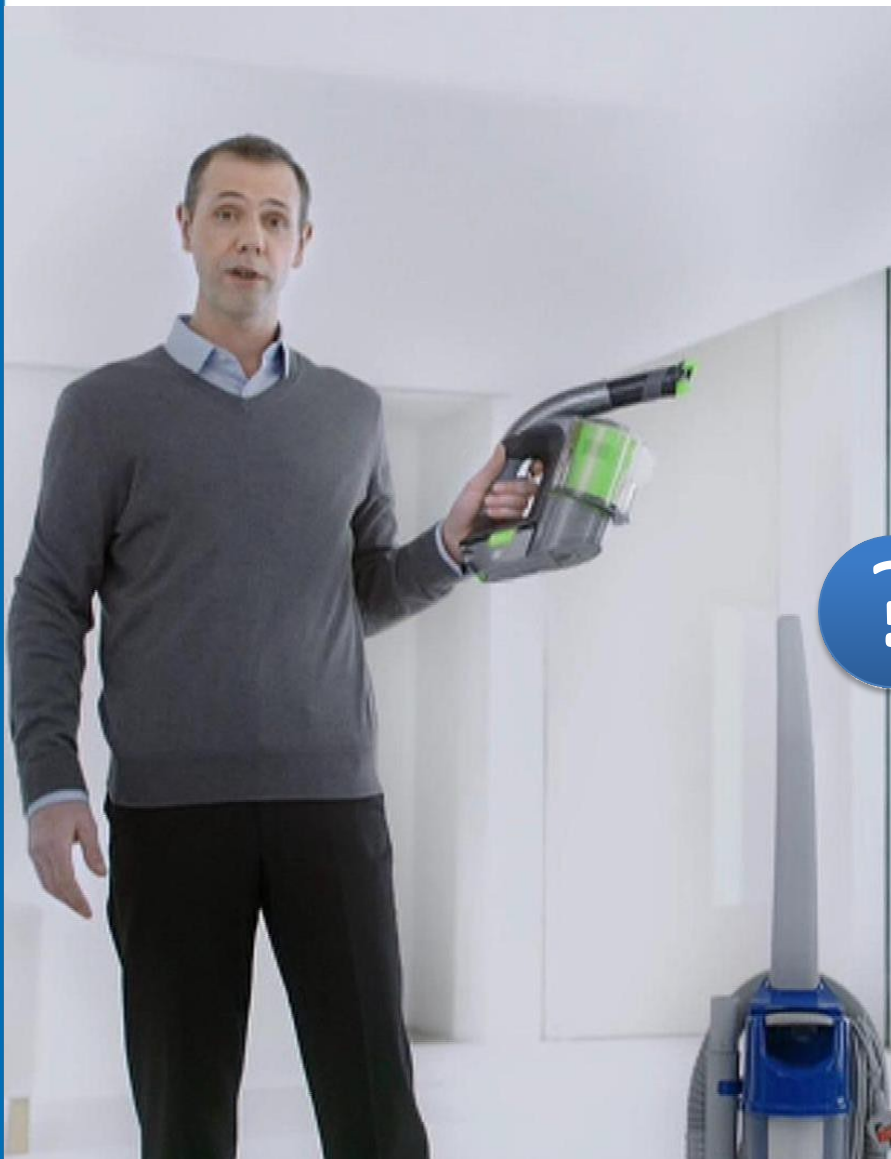
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So what makes a good UN Human Rights Field Officer?

? Selling skis



So what makes a good UN Human Rights Field Officer?

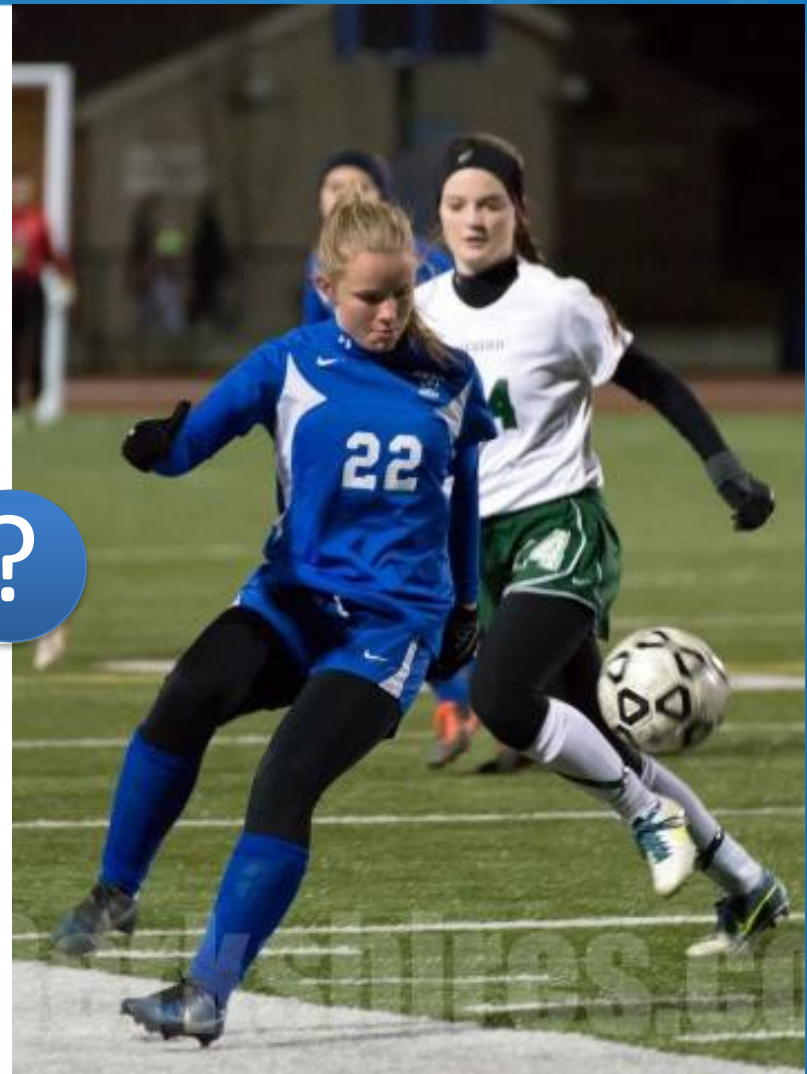


Selling vacuums?

So what makes a good UN Human Rights Field Officer?

Playing soccer

?



So what makes a good UN Human Rights Field Officer?



?

Cleaning carpet?



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So what makes a good UN Human Rights Field Officer?

Languages



So what makes a good UN Human Rights Field Officer?

Drinking beer



So what makes a good UN Human Rights Field Officer?



?

**Understanding of
the region?**

So what makes a good UN Human Rights Field Officer?

Yoga practitioner
Flexible



So what makes a good UN Human Rights Field Officer?



?

**Activism and
commintment?**



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So what makes a good UN Human Rights Field Officer?

Evangelical preacher



So what makes a good UN Human Rights Field Officer?



?

Budhist monk?

Patience and compassion



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So what makes a good UN Human Rights Field Officer?

Creativity



So what makes a good UN Human Rights Field Officer?

Listening



So what makes a good UN Human Rights Field Officer?

Strategist? *Multifaceted*



So what makes a good UN Human Rights Field Officer?



Patience and persistence?

So what makes a good UN Human Rights Field Officer?

Integrity

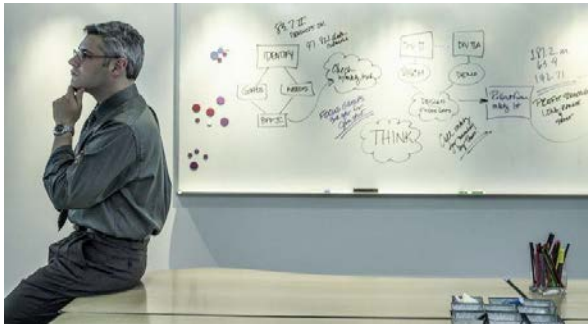
?



So what makes a good UN Human Rights Field Officer?



All of the above ?



UN Human Rights Field Work |

AGENT OF CHANGE



Is about people, not member states or governments



Is about facilitating individual change in ways of thinking and behaving



There is not quick or easy fix



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