

Call for Contributions

ESR
REVIEW

**Economic & Social Rights
Review in Africa**

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ENSURING RIGHTS MAKE REAL CHANGE

SPECIAL ISSUE

PREVENTING NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASES IN AFRICA: PROMOTING HEALTHY DIETS THROUGH LAW AND POLICY

The Socio-Economic Rights Project (SERP) at the Dullah Omar Institute (DOI), University of the Western Cape, invites submissions for a special 2026 issue of the Economic and Social Rights Review (ESR Review) focusing on legal approaches to preventing diet-related non-communicable diseases (NCDs).

NCDs including cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, cancers and chronic respiratory conditions, are among the leading causes of death globally. Low- and middle-income countries carry the greatest share of this burden, which continues to grow across Africa. Many of these diseases are linked to modifiable risk factors, including unhealthy diets, physical inactivity, tobacco use and harmful alcohol consumption.

The rising prevalence of diet-related NCDs highlights the urgent need for a more equitable food system and broader systemic reform. Legal and policy interventions are increasingly recognised as important tools for shaping healthier food environments and addressing the structural drivers of diet-related NCDs. However, research on the role of law in responding to these challenges in Africa remains limited.

Accordingly, documenting the social, commercial and political determinants of health will raise awareness that diet-related NCDs are shaped by factors beyond the health system, while also helping to assess where progress has been made and identify further

opportunities to strengthen legal, policy and regulatory measures aimed at creating healthier food environments.

Diet-related NCDs therefore sit at the intersection of health, food systems and socio-economic rights. They are shaped by the conditions under which people access, purchase and consume food, including the affordability of nutritious options, the availability of ultra-processed products, the design of public institutions and the influence of commercial actors on food choices and policy priorities.

An African legal conversation on NCD prevention must therefore consider how existing human rights, consumer protection, public health, education, trade, fiscal and local government frameworks can be used to create enabling food environments. It must also account for inequality, since communities with fewer resources often face greater exposure to unhealthy food environments and more limited access to preventive health measures.

In this context, we invite contributions to the ESR Review that advance scholarly and policy dialogue on how legal, regulatory and governance frameworks can contribute to NCD prevention and healthier food systems in Africa. This ESR Review issue also aims to enhance understanding of the state's obligations concerning the rights to food, nutrition and health, while contributing to broader debates on food justice in South Africa and Africa more generally.

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KEY THEMES

Submissions may address (but are not limited to) the following seven themes:

1. Human Rights-Based Approaches to Diet-Related NCD Prevention

- The right to health and the right to food in addressing NCD risk factors.
- State obligations to regulate food environments and protect public health.
- Human rights perspectives on diet-related diseases and food systems governance.
- Protecting vulnerable populations, including children and low-income communities.

2. Food Labelling and Consumer Information Laws

- Mandatory front-of-package nutrition labelling and warning labels.
- The role of labelling standards in promoting informed consumer choices.
- Accessibility of nutrition information for vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities.
- Regional and national regulatory frameworks governing food labelling.

3. Fiscal and Regulatory Measures to Reduce Unhealthy Food Consumption

- Sugar-sweetened beverage taxes and other fiscal policies.
- Regulation of ultra-processed foods and unhealthy ingredients.
- Evaluating the effectiveness of taxation and pricing policies in reducing unhealthy diets.
- Legal challenges and implementation barriers.

4. Regulation of Marketing and Advertising of Unhealthy Foods

- Restrictions on marketing unhealthy foods and beverages to children.

- The role of consumer protection law in regulating food advertising.
- Public interest litigation and strategic advocacy to challenge harmful food marketing practices.
- Corporate accountability within the food and beverage industry.

5. Public Institutions, Food Environments and Preventive Health Policy

- Public food procurement policies in schools, hospitals and public institutions.
- Legal frameworks governing nutrition in school environments.
- Integrating NCD prevention into broader public health and social policy.
- Cross-sector governance approaches linking food systems, urban development and health policy.

6. Poverty, Food Insecurity and Nutrition Equity

- The relationship between food insecurity, poverty, nutrition and exposure to diet-related NCD risk.
- Access to affordable, nutritious and culturally appropriate food as part of prevention.
- Rural, peri-urban, informal and low-income food environments.

7. Governance, Implementation and Accountability

- Institutional coordination across health, education, finance, agriculture, trade and local government.
- Monitoring and enforcement of food, nutrition and NCD prevention laws and policies.
- Transparency, public participation and accountability in prevention-oriented policymaking.

TYPES OF CONTRIBUTIONS

The ESR Review publishes accessible, policy-oriented and advocacy-driven pieces rather than purely doctrinal or technical legal analyses.

We invite:

- Feature Articles - 3,000 words
- Case Reviews - 3,000 words
- Current Policy Debates and Developments - 3,000 words
- Book Reviews / Report Reviews - 2000 words
- Event Reports - 1,500 words

REFERENCING STYLE

- No footnotes.
- Use abbreviated Harvard style referencing (e.g., Author 2022: 15).
- Keep references to a minimum.
- Where possible, contributions can use hyperlinks instead of references.
- Include a short list of key references at the end of the article.

ABOUT THE ESR REVIEW

The ESR Review is produced by the Socio-Economic Rights Project of the Dullah Omar Institute for Constitutional Law, Governance and Human Rights at the University of the Western Cape. Previous editions of the ESR Review are available at: <https://dullahomarinstitute.org.za/socio-economic-rights/esr-review>

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Contributions should:

- Reflect contemporary debates or spark new conversations on access to justice.
- Advance discussion on socio-economic rights at national, regional or international levels.
- Serve an advocacy or reform-oriented function.
- Avoid purely descriptive exposition of legal principles.
- Be written in clear, accessible language that avoids unnecessary legal jargon.
- Consider that the Review is read by legal practitioners, policymakers, civil society actors and grassroots organisations.
- Not duplicate previously published ESR Review content unless clearly advancing the debate.

To facilitate the anonymous review process, authors should provide:

- Full name
- Institutional affiliation
- Current position
- Brief biographical note (50–70 words)
- Any relevant acknowledgements
- If the article has been published elsewhere, please provide full publication details and confirm that permission for republication has been obtained.

Previous Issues ESR Review are available online at [ESR Review](#) or [Journals.co.za](#).

We look forward to your insightful contributions and to advancing the conversation on law, human rights and non-communicable diseases in Africa.

IMPORTANT DATES

- Abstract submission (250 words): 15 August 2026
- Full article submission: 30 September 2026

SUBMISSION PROCESS

Please send abstracts and full article:

- MS Word format
- Email subject line: ESR Review : Right to Food and NCDs Special Issue
- Email to: serp@uwc.ac.za ; fakanbi@uwc.ac.za;
CC: gmirugi-mukundi@uwc.ac.za