

**ISSN: 1684-260X**

A publication of the Dullah Omar Institute for Constitutional Law, Governance and Human Rights (formerly Community Law Centre), University of the Western Cape.

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## ESR REVIEW ONLINE

<https://dullahomarinate.org.za/socio-economic-rights/esr-review>

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## PRODUCTION

*The ESR Review is produced by the Socio-Economic Rights Project of the Dullah Omar Institute for Constitutional Law, Governance and Human Rights, with the financial assistance of AmplifyChange and the CS Mott Foundation.*

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# Editorial

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Welcome to the ESR Review special edition on advancing sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR) in Africa. SRHR encompasses a wide range of issues related to the well-being and autonomy of individuals in matters concerning sexuality, reproduction, and family planning. These issues are of paramount importance in Africa, which faces complex and multifaceted challenges in the realm of SRHR that are shaped by a social, cultural, economic, and political factors. Despite some progress in various countries in areas such as adolescent sexual and reproductive health, access to family-planning services, and reduction in maternal mortality, the realisation of comprehensive SRHR remains elusive for many Africans.

This edition of ESR Review features contributions that look into the SRHR challenges of various groups in Africa and important strategies to advance SRHR.

The first feature article examines laws on access to abortion in Kenya to determine whether their language or construction constrains the realisation of SRHR. The second article demonstrates that in the rapidly evolving landscape of health care, including digital interventions, there are opportunities to overcome long-standing barriers and improve access

to sexual health services, including by enabling young people to take control of their sexual and reproductive health. The third article explores opportunities within regional integration initiatives in Africa to advance the enjoyment of SRHR, while the fourth delves into the plight of female refugees in accessing SRHR, with a special focus on barriers to accessing care and support by victims of sexual violence.

This edition includes a policy review that assesses South Africa's guidelines on self-managed abortion against the World Health Organization guidelines and examines the extent to which the South African guidelines restrict access to self-managed abortion.

To advance SRHR in Africa, government policies must reflect a commitment to upholding SRHR. Advocating for the inclusion of SRHR in the national health agenda is essential for ensuring adequate funding and resources. Policy makers must engage with civil society, healthcare providers, and communities to create responsive, inclusive and sustainable frameworks that address the unique SRHR needs of diverse populations. We hope you find this issue useful in taking forward research, conversation and advocacy for advancing access to sexual and reproductive health services in Africa.

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*Aisosa Jennifer Omoruyi*  
**Guest Editor**