

**IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RIGHT TO FOOD AND
POVERTY REDUCTION PAPERS IN PERSPECTIVE:
THE ETHIOPIAN AND THE SOUTH AFRICAN
EXAMPLES**

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Introduction

Hunger is the face of poverty. But it is also the face of government failure. The face of government unaccountability. When a child is hungry, he/she cannot have a future. A hungry child cannot be productive and be but a burden on family and society. When a child is hungry he/she develops diseases. His/her constitution is impaired and bears the mark of hunger for the rest of his/her life.

However, “33% of Africa’s youngest children suffer from the effects of permanent, severe, chronic undernourishment in the form of stunted physical growth ... 70% of the world’s stunted children live in Asia. Around the world, one child under the age of ten dies every seven seconds directly or indirectly from hunger.”¹

“Hunger dulls the intellect and thwarts productivity, keeping entire societies from realizing their potential. For poor families in developing countries, hunger related illness adds to household costs and increases the burden of healthy household members often already struggling for subsistence. When this hardship is multiplied by millions of families worldwide, it creates a devastating ripple effect that imperils global development.”²

However, the 2002 Food and Agriculture Organization report on the State of Food insecurity shows that 846 million people around the world do not get enough to eat- 792 million people in developing countries and the rest in industrialized countries and countries in transition.³

The irony of all this is that lack of food translated into famine has always been the major worry of mankind.

People travel miles a day in search for food or sustainable source of food: such as nomads. Other fought nations to secure a reliable source of food. Nations create relationships, friendly or unfriendly, to ensure the continuous flow of their source of life: such as is the case between Egypt and Ethiopian over the Nile.

It was also one of the United Nations' commitment prompting it to create the Food and Agriculture Organization with a mandate to “raise levels of nutrition and standard of living, to improve agricultural productivity, and to better the condition of rural population.”⁴

¹ <http://www.fao.org/FOCUS/E/SOFI100/sofi001-e.htm>

² As above

³ Stephen Devereux, Theories of famine, Harvester/Wheatsheaf, 1993, p5

⁴ <http://www.fao.org/FOCUS/E/SOFI100/sofi001-e.htm>

Still, this ambitious declaration of commitment is not has proved not to be enough. “The number of hungry people in developing countries was declining by 8 million a year in the first of the 1990s. but if the number of hungry people in the world were to be reduced by half by 2015, the number must reach 20 million a year.”⁵ The number remains staggering in a world of “unprecedented plenty”.⁶ As has often been said and as will see later in this paper, “socio-economic rights” and the “right to food” among them have long been ignored. Even in the age odd euphoria for socio-economic rights, the right to food was not given a priority, the violation of the “right to food” has and remains to be disregarded by monitoring bodies.

The interest on food and its impact on and relationship with overall development only came in late 1990s with World Food Summit in Rome in 1996. it was only in this period that “food insecurity” was pinpointed as the root cause of underdevelopment related problems. The causes for “food insecurity” themselves were identified and lack of food as such was not among the first problems: discrimination, misconceived policies and many others were. Even then food security issues were linked with poverty reduction and development as whole, making thus food mainly a development issue and thus considering that dealing with one meant dealing with the other.

This led to the adoption of what we now call Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, ideas that first were initiated in late 1990s. the adoption of Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers came about as a result of the growing need for a concise, target-oriented and country-specific policy for development. They have as a key objective to “develop and implement more effective strategies to fight poverty”.⁸ Still, these PRSPs are a result of long studies on “effective strategies” that stretch along many years. The what why and when of PRSPs will be seen in detail in the following sections of this paper.

One of the major areas in which most of PRSPs focus upon is the reduction of food insecurity. The objective of this paper is to assess just how effective these papers have been in doing so and what is the future, immediate and long term, of these papers. Is it enough to address food security issues along with poverty reduction strategies when the effectiveness of the strategies themselves is still in doubt? The paper seeks to answer this question.

To this effect, the history of the right to food in the United Nations human rights system as well as the African human rights system is outlined in greater detail.

⁵ <http://www.fao.org/FOCUS/E/SOFI100/sofi001-e.htm>

⁶ As above

⁸ <http://www.inf.org/external/np/prsp/2001/042001.htm>

The right to food as it stands now and the current understanding of “right to food” is then set out. In order to show the relationship between food, poverty and poverty reduction strategy papers, the reasons and events preceding the creation of PRSPs will be summarized. The next step is to analyze whether PRSP properly integrates the “current understanding” of food, food insecurity and right to food (why/why not?). In particular two examples of approaches to the right to food will be examined: the Ethiopian and the South African examples in order to provide a comparison of two different approaches towards the implementation of the right to food: the PRSP approach as is the case in the Ethiopian example and the monitoring, justiciability and human right approach as in South Africa.

Chapter One

History of the right to food in the United Nations

United Nations Charter (1945):

When in 1945 the leaders of the world met to establish an inter-state supra national body the United Nations, the prevention of future world wars was not their only concern. The new body they created was also made responsible for the "promotion of better standards of life in a larger freedom".⁷ The means proposed to this end by these same leaders was "to employ international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples"⁸. This same principles were reaffirmed in Article 1 of the Charter, that lists the purposes of the United Nations. "Reference to higher standards of living" as well as " solving problems of an economic social cultural and humanitarian character" is often made.⁹ Article 55 in particular provides that the United Nations shall promote "conditions of economic and social progress and development" among other things (higher standard of living, full employment).

The Charter, in the final analysis, leaves the practical aspect of the duty to promote higher standards of living to the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).¹⁰ In addition to the many functions, this Charter also gave ECOSOC the power to set up commissions in economic and social field with the view to facilitate its work and other commissions as may be required.¹¹

All things considered therefore, the Charter's reference the United Nation's involvement in human rights matters is minimal and as we will see latter, the United Nations' role has increased much more than the original norms established in Articles 55 and 56, and 1(3) of the Charter.¹²

However, it is important to note that the "promotion of higher standards of living" and "conditions necessary for economic and social progress" were linked with "creation of conditions of stability and well being which are necessary for peaceful and friendly relations among nations".¹³

⁷ Preamble, United Nations Charter

⁸ As above.

⁹ As above, note 1, articles 55, 13, 1

¹⁰ As above, note 1, article 62

¹¹ As above, note 1, article 8

¹²

¹³ As above, note 1. article 55

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) 1945

Parallel with the adoption of the United Nations Charter, the United Nations fulfilled another promise, which they pledged two years earlier, by establishing the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). FAO is an intergovernmental organization with 183 member countries and one member organization the European Union¹⁴ and is now one of the largest specialized agencies in the United Nations system.¹⁵ The constitutional mandate of the FAO is to “raise levels of nutrition and standards of living, to improve agricultural production, and to better the condition of rural populations”.¹⁶ . But a “specific priority of the organization is encouraging sustainable agriculture and food development, a long-term strategy for food production and food security while conserving and managing natural resources”.¹⁷

Hence, at least for the first forty-four members of the FAO, alleviation of poverty and hunger by promoting agricultural development, improved nutrition, and the pursuit of food security was important. An event which should not come as a surprise since 1945 was also to mark the beginning of a “Cold War” with an ideology which put peasants and workers first.

Right to food in the UDHR, ICESCR and CRC

A major outcome of the references to human rights in the Charter, was the elaboration of the “content of standards and of the machinery for implementing protection of human rights”¹⁸ in subsequent human rights documents. The first of these was the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR).

For the first time in any international human rights instrument, the Universal Declaration mentioned “food” as an element of the “right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being” of a person.¹⁹ Although now recognized as “customary international law”, this document was then only a declaration and as such had no binding effect on the member states. Still, the UDHR was the first instrument to list the contents of an adequate standard of living, which later provided more basis for the elaboration of same.²⁰

¹⁴ <http://www.fao.org/UNFAO/e/wmain-e.htm>

¹⁵

¹⁶ As above, note 8

¹⁷ I. Brownlie, *Basic texts in human rights*, ed (2002), p 18

¹⁸ As above, p 28

¹⁹ Article 25 (1), Universal Declaration of Human Rights

²⁰ Proclamation of Teheran (1968), para 2

It was not, however, until 1966 when an International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights was adopted and opened for signature. This document itself only came into force in 1976 and Article 11 provides as follows:

1. The States parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for himself and for his family, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions. The States parties will take appropriate steps to ensure the realization of this right, recognizing to this effect the essential importance of international co-operation based on free consent.
2. The states parties to the present Covenant, recognizing the fundamental right of everyone to be free from hunger, shall take, individually and through international co-operation, the measures, including specific programmes, which are needed:
 - a. To improve methods of production, conservation and distribution of food by making full use of technical and scientific knowledge, by disseminating knowledge of the principles of nutrition and by developing or reforming agrarian systems in such a way as to achieve the most efficient development and utilization of natural resources;
 - b. Taking into account the problems of both food-importing and food-exporting countries, to ensure an equitable distribution of world food supplies in relation to need.

The ICESCR defines the economic, social and cultural rights which it aims to protect and the permissible limitations on the enjoyment of those rights. Moreover, it authorizes the United Nations Economic and Social Council to monitor the implementation of its provisions.²¹ Still, the meaning and content of “adequate food” was not made all the more clearer.

Another basic human right document, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted in 1989 and put into force in 1990, also mentions the right to food. In effect, Article 27 provides that:

- (1) State parties recognize the right of every child to a standard of living adequate, for the child’s physical mental, spiritual, moral and social development.

²¹ E. Lawson, *Encyclopedia on human rights*, (1996) p 838

- (2) The parents or others responsible for the child have the primary responsibility to secure, within their ability and financial capabilities, the conditions necessary for the child's development.
- (3) State parties, in accordance, with national condition and within their means, shall take appropriate measure to implement this right and shall in case of need provide material assistance and support programmes, particularly with regard to nutrition, clothing, and housing.
- (4) State parties shall take all appropriate measures to secure the recovery of maintenance for the child from the parents or other persons having financial responsibility for the child both within the state party and from abroad. In particular, where the person having responsibility for the child lives in a state different from that of the child, state parties shall promote the accession to international agreements or the conclusion of such agreements, as well as the making of other agreements.

FAO activities

The irony is that all of these basic human right documents failed to define "adequate food" and states' obligation towards it despite the many ongoing activities of the FAO. In 1962 the FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission was established to set international food standards.²² These standards were meant to establish norms and regulations guiding state parties in their endeavors to guarantee the right to food.

More than 15 years before the coming into force of the CRC, the UN World Food conference in Rome, 1974, recommended the adoption of an International Undertaking on World Food Security.²³ The objective again was to help countries assess the level of food security in their countries as a first step towards food security for all.

A decade before the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child again, the first World Food Day was observed by more than 150 countries.²⁴ It was not however until 1999 that the most "authorative definition on the right to food" was provided.

General comment 12 of the Committee on economic, social and cultural rights and its impact in monitoring the right to food.

²²

²³

Article 62 of the Charter of the United Nations provides that the Economic and Social Council may make recommendations for the purpose of promoting respect for, and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all. Article 22 of the ICESCR provides that the Economic and Social Council may contribute by issuing General Comments likely to contribute to the effective progressive implementation of the Covenant. "General Comments" are guides written by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights to help States Parties to understand their obligations under the Covenant more clearly.

The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Committee) is the main treaty body that monitors the right to food. With the adoption in May 1999 of its General Comment 12 on the right to food, not only did it provide the most authoritative definition of the right to "adequate food" but it also gave itself a 'solid basis for its monitoring of national implementation of that right'.²⁵ (The relevance and content of General Comment 12 of the Committee will be seen in detail later in this paper.)

Moreover, the Committee on the Rights of the Child, in its examination of state reports frequently addresses the situation of food and nutrition for children.²⁶ It is also concerned with the pre-natal and post-natal health of mothers, and underlines the significance of breast feeding as a major requirement in avoiding malnutrition and disease in children.²⁷

Universal Declaration on the Eradication of Hunger and Malnutrition

In 1974, when the first World Food Conference was held in Rome, a Universal Declaration on the Eradication on the Hunger and Malnutrition was adopted. The Declaration held:

The conference solemnly proclaims:

- 1- Every man, woman and child has the inalienable right to be free from hunger and malnutrition in order to develop fully and maintain their physical and mental faculties. Society today already possesses sufficient resources, organizational ability and technology and hence the competence to achieve this objective. Accordingly, the eradication of hunger is a common objective of

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²⁵ A. Eide, 'Updated study on the right to food', E/CN.4/Sub.2/1999/12, para 72

²⁶ As above, para 80

²⁷ CRC/C/15/Add.99, 'Report of Belize'

all the countries of the international community, especially of the developed countries and others in a position to help.

The Declaration goes on to say that it is a fundamental responsibility of Governments “to work together for higher food production and a more equitable and efficient distribution of food between countries and within countries”.²⁸ Moreover, priority should be given to attacking “chronic malnutrition and deficiency diseases among the vulnerable and lower income groups”.²⁹ In effect, “as it is the common responsibility of the entire international community to ensure the availability at all times of adequate world supplies of basic food-stuffs by way of appropriate reserves, including emergency reserves, all countries should cooperate in the establishment of an effective system of world food security ...”.³⁰

1996 World Food Summit:

Despite all these commitments at the international level however, the situation of food security in the world kept on deteriorating. Almost five decades after the creation of the FAO there were 800 million people around the world who did not have enough to eat and who had no means of finding food.

Thus in 1996, a World Summit on food was convened in Rome, again by the FAO. This World conference is important in that it adopted another Declaration where the emphasis was put on "clarifying the content of the right to adequate food and the fundamental right of everyone to be free from hunger, as states in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and other relevant international and regional instruments, and to give particular attention to implementation and full and progressive realization of this rights as a means of achieving food security for all."³¹

It was held that to this end, governments, in partnership with all actors of civil society, will, as appropriate:

- a) Make every effort to implement the provisions of Article 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (the Covenant) and relevant provision of other international and regional instruments;
- b) Urge States that are not yet Parties to the Covenant to adhere to the Covenant at the earliest possible time;

²⁸ Para 2, Declaration on the Eradication of Hunger and Malnutrition

²⁹ As above

³⁰ As above, note 22, para 12

³¹ Declaration at World Food Summit 1996, Commitment Seven, Objective 7.4

- c) Invite the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights to give particular attention to the Plan of Action in the framework of its activities and to continue to monitor the implementation of the specific measures provided for in Article 11 of the Covenant.
- d) Invite relevant treaty bodies and appropriate specialized agencies of the UN to consider how they might contribute, within the framework of the coordinated follow-up of the UN system to the major international UN conferences and summits, including the World Conference on Human Rights, Vienna 1993, within the scope of their mandates, to the further implementation of this right.
- e) Invite the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, in consultation with relevant treaty bodies and in collaboration with relevant specialized agencies and programmes of the UN system and appropriate intergovernmental mechanisms to better define the rights related to food in Article 11 of the Covenant and to propose ways to implement and realize these rights as a means of achieving the commitments and objectives of the World Food Summit, taking into account the possibility of formulating voluntary guidelines for food security for all.³²

However, the World Food Summit itself was proven to be unsuccessful when in 2001, yet one more conference, World Food Summit + 5, was held. The weaknesses and failures of the 1996 World Food Summit were highlighted at this conference and the new commitments were made.³³

List of other relevant instruments:³⁴

- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination in enjoyment of all economic, social and cultural rights.
- The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights: Article 6 – which deals with the right to life, yet is important for the right to food, given the link with the right to life.
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, which prohibits discrimination against women in the enjoyment of these rights.

³² As above

³³ <http://www.fao.org/worldfoodsummit/english/newsroom/focus/focus6.htm>

³⁴ As provided in, Jean Ziegler: 'The right to food: what parliamentarians can do in the fight against hunger' May 2001

- International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families, which is not yet in force, but recognizes equal treatment for nationals and migrant workers and their families with regard to the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights.
- Several International Labor Organization (ILO) conventions, which indirectly protect the right to adequate food, in that they provide a system for minimum wages, social security and welfare, the banning of forced labor, the rights of indigenous peoples and the minimum age at which children can enter employment.

Alongside international treaty law, developed chiefly within the framework of the United Nations, there is also regional treaty law, including for example:

- The 1988 Additional Protocol to the American Convention on Human Rights in the Area of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (the “San Salvador Protocol”), which has been ratified by 11 States. Article 12 of the Protocol stipulates that “Everyone has the right to adequate nutrition which guarantees the possibility of enjoying the highest level of physical, emotional and intellectual development”.
- The European Social Charter, as revised in 1996. In article 4(1), the Charter recognizes “the right of workers to a remuneration such as will give them and their families a decent standard of living”.
- The African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights which recognizes rights including work and special assistance to vulnerable groups. (The African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights as well as the whole African Human Rights system as they relate to the right to food will be discussed in greater detail in the following section.)

B. The Right to Food in the African Human Rights System:

The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights

Though, in a formulation that went much further than was implied in the principles of universality, indivisibility and interdependence of human and peoples Rights,³⁵ the African Charter on the Human and Peoples Rights (African Charter) declared in its Preamble that: “the satisfaction of economic, social and cultural rights is a guarantee for the enjoyment of civil and political rights”³⁶, it did not do much justice to the right to food.

³⁵ M. Evans and R. Murray, *The African charter on human and peoples rights*, (2002) pp. 188

³⁶ Preamble, African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights

The African Charter contains no express guarantees of the rights to social security, food, an adequate standard of living or housing or prohibition of forced labor.³⁷ Thus, even adopted as late as 1989, when at the United Nations level so many advancements were made with regards to the right to food, the African Charter did not contain a single provision on the right to food.

Yet, Leopold Sedar Senghor, then President of Senegal and a driving force behind the adoption of the African Charter, had specifically reminded the drafters to “keep constantly in mind our values of civilization and the real needs of Africa”.³⁸ Perhaps the drafters did not feel that the food did not figure among the “real needs of Africa”.

It still did not stop some scholars from interpreting other articles of the African Charter as relating to the right to food.

The Special Rapporteur on the Right to food to the United Nations Human Rights Commission, for example, holds that Article 15 which relates to the right to work and Article 18(4) which provides for “special protection measures to the aged and disabled” are relevant to the right to food.³⁹ Similarly, the current president of the South African Constitutional Court, Arthur Chaskalson, “described the right to human dignity ‘as a foundational value ..’ and ‘ a value implicit in almost all the rights enumerated in the Universal Declaration’, arguing that human rights cannot be protected, and there cannot be dignity in life without food, housing, work and livelihood;⁴⁰ the conclusion being that Article 5 of the African Charter can be construed to include the right to food as well.

The African Charter on the Rights of the Child however, provides under Article 11 (a) that parents have responsibility to provide children with adequate food and that the State shall help them in this endeavor.⁴¹

The African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights:

In effect, this was also the interpretation given by the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights (African Commission) in the SERAC/CERAC V Nigeria case, a “landmark case in the history of implementation of socio-economic rights within the African human rights system”.⁴²The African Commission held in this case

³⁷ As above, note 28, p 192

³⁸ As above, note 28, p 187

³⁹ As above, note 27, page 14

⁴⁰ As above, note 28, p 184

⁴¹ Article 11, African Charter on the Rights of the Child

⁴²

that “the right to food was an inherent and integral part of human dignity” among other things.⁴³

This instance was however, the first time in the history of the African human rights system that the right to food was specifically mentioned. Firstly, none of the communications brought to the African Commission related to the violation of the right to food, since food was not a right explicitly mentioned in the African Charter and Article 55 of same, provides that the communications brought before the commission must relate to a right recognized in the Charter.⁴⁴ Secondly, the African Commission has not adopted any resolution on food, or the right to food.

Conclusion:

To sum up, the right to adequate food is a human right recognized in the framework of both universal and regional international treaty law. Sometimes, it is encompassed by the more generic right to an adequate standard of living. Expressed more indirectly, it becomes the right “to be free from hunger”, a right that should be enjoyed at all times.⁴⁵

The African Human Rights Systems, yet again provides a fragile protection of the right to food with no specific mention of food as a human right in any of the binding treaties.

But even at the international level the place accorded to the right to food has not achieved a significant success. Conferences and other activities at the United Nations level seem to add up and yet as mentioned at the outset of this paper, 860 million people still suffer from lack of sufficient food and lie in poverty.

In order to fully understand just what exactly “success” as it relates to the right to food implies and the consequent obligations of states, let us see the content, definitions and obligations imposed upon states by the right to food.

⁴³ As above

⁴⁴ Article 55, African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights

⁴⁵ C. V. Duran, “Contenu et portee du droit a l' alimentation dans le droit international”, in Terre des homes France, *Halte a la mondialisation dela pauvrete*, (1998) pp 148-149, as cited in above note 27

Chapter Two

The right to food: meaning and implications

Adequate food as defined by General Comment 12

Elements

The concept adequate food comprises two elements: food security and right to food. Food security has to do with ability to ensure that there is enough food, on time and for everyone. It means that food must be physically available.⁴⁶ Perhaps the definition used by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food indicates this link with food security more clearly: "The right to food is the right to have regular, permanent and unobstructed access, either directly or by means of financial purchases, to quantitatively and qualitatively adequate and sufficient food corresponding to the cultural traditions of the people to which the consumer belongs, and which ensures a physical and mental, individual and collective, fulfilling and dignified life free from anxiety."⁴⁷

The right to food goes beyond the concept of food security in that it introduces an additional and important element of accountability, as the state is obligated to ensure freedom from hunger for all of its people at all times.⁴⁸ Hence as is the case all most human rights there are three different levels of obligations imposed upon the state with regards to the right to food: the obligations to respect protect and fulfill. Essentially however, the right to food embodies the practical idea that all people should have a decent standard of living, especially enough to eat.⁴⁹

General Comment 12 gives the following definition:

"The right to adequate food is realized when every man, woman and child, alone or in community with others, (has) physical and economic access at all times to adequate food or means for its procurement. The right to adequate food shall therefore not be interpreted in a narrow or restrictive sense which equates it with a minimum package of calories, proteins and other specific nutrients. The right to adequate food will have to be realized progressively. However, States have a core obligation to take the necessary action to mitigate and alleviate hunger ... even in times of natural or other disasters."⁵⁰

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⁴⁷ J. Ziegler, 'The right to food', first report to the commission on human rights p.1

⁴⁸ As above, note 27 p 26

⁴⁹ As above

⁵⁰ HRI/GEN/1/Rev.4, p.58, para. 6

A number of components of the concept of the right to food itself hence enumerated by the Comment⁵¹:

- The concept of adequacy serves to underline a number of factors which must be taken into account in determining whether particular foods or diets that are accessible can be considered the most appropriate under given circumstances ...
- The notion of sustainability is intrinsically linked to the notion of adequate food or food security, implying food being accessible for both present and future generations. The precise meaning of 'adequacy' is to a large extent determined by prevailing social, economic, cultural, climatic, ecological and other conditions, while 'sustainability' incorporates the notion of long-term availability and accessibility⁵²
- Dietary needs implies that the diet as a whole contains a mix of nutrients for physical and mental growth, development and maintenance, and physical activity that are in compliance with human physiological needs at all stages throughout the life cycle and according to gender and occupation⁵³
- Cultural or consumer acceptability implies the need also to take into account ... perceived non-nutrient-based values attached to food and food consumption and informed consumer concerns regarding the nature of accessible food supplies⁵⁴
- Economic accessibility implies that personal or household financial costs associated with the acquisition of food for an adequate diet should be at a level such that the attainment and satisfaction of other basic needs are not threatened or compromised. Economic accessibility applies to any acquisition pattern or entitlement through which people procure their food and is a measure of the extent to which it is satisfactory for the enjoyment of the right to food⁵⁵

State Obligations

An important General Comment of the Committee with regards to state obligations when it comes to economic, social and cultural rights is General Comment 3.⁵⁶ According to the Committee, the principal obligation of State parties reflected in

⁵¹ As above, p 59, para 11

⁵² As above, para 7

⁵³ As above. p. 59, para 9

⁵⁴ As above, p 59 para 11

⁵⁵ As above, para 13

⁵⁶

Article 2(1) of the ICESCR requires them to take steps "with a view to achieving progressively the full realization of the rights recognized" in the ICESCR. The concept of progressive realization constitutes a recognition of the fact that full realization of all economic, social and cultural rights will generally not be able to be achieved in a short time.⁵⁷ On the other hand, the ICESCR establishes a clear obligation on states in respect of the full realization of the rights in question, and thus imposes an obligation to move as expeditiously and effectively as possible towards that goal.⁵⁸ This means that a poor country is not expected immediately to ensure the same level of economic, social and cultural benefits that a rich country can afford. However, even the poorest country is bound to ensure the highest level their resources will permit and at the very least, a basic minimum level of economic, social and cultural rights.

General Comment 12, however, outlines the three levels of legal obligations of the right to food – the obligations to respect, protect and fulfill as follows: "The right to adequate food, like any other human right, imposes three types or levels of obligations on States parties: the obligations to respect, to protect and to fulfil. In turn, the obligation to fulfil incorporates both an obligation to facilitate and an obligation to provide. The obligation to respect existing access to adequate food requires States parties not to take any measures that result in preventing such access. The obligation to protect requires measures by the State to ensure that enterprises or individuals do not deprive individuals of their access to adequate food. The obligation to fulfil (facilitate) means the State must pro-actively engage in activities intended to strengthen people's access to and utilization of resources and means to ensure their livelihood, including food security. Finally, whenever an individual or group is unable, for reasons beyond their control, to enjoy the right to adequate food by the means at their disposal, States have the obligation to fulfil (provide) that right directly. This obligation also applies for persons who are victims of natural or other disasters."⁵⁹

In effect, the obligation to respect means that the government should not arbitrarily take away people's right to food, or make it difficult for them to gain access food.⁶⁰ The obligation to protect means that the government must pass laws to prevent powerful people or organizations from violating the right to food.⁶¹ The government must also establish bodies to investigate and provide effective remedies if this right is

⁵⁷ E/CN.4/2002/59, p 12, para 24

⁵⁸ As above

⁵⁹ As above, note 42, para 15

⁶⁰

violated. The obligation to fulfill means that the government must take positive actions to identify vulnerable groups and to implement policies to ensure access to adequate food through *facilitating* their ability to feed themselves.⁶² This could mean improving employment prospects, by introducing an agrarian reform programme for landless groups, or promoting alternative employment opportunities

Towards New Components of the Right to Food

Another new and very important development occurring at the international level has been a new breath through in the legal protection of the right to water.⁶³ This new General Comment No. 15 by the Committee is an important achievement since it makes water part of the right to food.⁶⁴ The Commission on Human Rights also provided for the duty “to pay attention to the issue of drinking water, taking into account the interdependence of this issue and the right to food”.⁶⁵

General Comment 15 highlights that water is essential for life and requires that: “priority should be given to water resources required to prevent starvation and disease”⁶⁶. Conscious of the fact that “In the near future, availability of water than land will be the main constraint to agricultural production in many areas”⁶⁷, the Committee has recognized that access to water for the irrigation of food crops must form a key part of the right to food, particularly for subsistence farming and vulnerable groups.⁶⁸ :

The right to water has however, always been under legal protection, and General Comment No. 15 itself makes reference to three sources of international law: the relevant international human rights instruments, the relevant provisions in international humanitarian law and those in international water courses law.⁶⁹

All things considered, the right to food is now, not only linked to the right to water, but the right to water figures as a component of the right to food. The right to water in turn brings about obligations to respect, protect, and fulfill the right to water.⁷⁰

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⁶³ J Ziegler, 'The Right to Food' , E:/CN.4/2003/54, p. 13

⁶⁴ As above

⁶⁵ Commission on Human Rights Resolution 2002/25, para 9

⁶⁶ General Comment No.15, E/C.12/2002/11, para 6

⁶⁷ I. Serageldin, 'Comment résoudre la crise de l'eau', *Notre Planete*, Vol. 8 No. 3, 1996, p.4

⁶⁸ As above, note 58, para 42

⁶⁹ As above, note 58, para 43

⁷⁰ As above, note 58, para 40

Summary:

If we were to summarize the elements of the right to food internationally recognized so far, therefore, it would result in the following:

The right to food = adequate food =

- Accountability+
- Adequacy in broad terms (= appropriate under given circumstances + sustainability x social, economic, cultural climatic, ecological and other conditions)+
- Dietary needs (= mix of nutrients for physical and natal growth + at all stages + according to gender and occupation x cultural /consumer acceptability) +
- Accessibility (= finance + acquisition pattern) +
- Right to water.

Moreover, in broad terms, Chapter one and Chapter two of this paper highlight the importance of reaffirmation of existing legal obligations in particular as they are provided by General Comment 12 of the Committee as well as the international obligation of states. The role of international monitoring mechanisms for the future of the implementation of the right to food is not to be discounted either.

The following Chapter is meant among other things as a glimpse through the reasons justifying as well as the nature of Poverty Reduction Strategy papers. The question asked therefore is how are PRSPs meant to contribute to the advancements so far with regard to the right to food? Moreover, the Chapter will try and see if PRSP is the best way to approach the right to food in comparison with other mechanisms. To this end, therefore, the Ethiopian example was chosen as an illustration of the PRSP approach to the right to food and the South African example for alternative approaches to the right to food.

Chapter Three

Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers As national Mechanisms For Food Security: The Ethiopian Example

Poverty reduction strategy papers: history and nature:

Poverty reduction strategy paper is an approach adopted in 1999 by the Breton Woods institutions to help poor countries and their development partners strengthen the impact of their common efforts on poverty reduction.⁷¹ 1999 is also the golden years for the concept of the right to food and the food security: there was now an authoritative definition of food security and the right to food and the World Food summit was still a recent past.

At the same time, now a growing link was made between broad-based development strategies and food security. Less than five years ago, the World food summit set a target to reduce the number of undernourished people in the world by half no later than 2015.⁷² The prevailing vision of food security in terms of actions that need to be taken by the international community and national governments was that the best way to achieve food security was to implement a broad-based policy for sustainable growth and poverty reduction.⁷³ Economic was then made a necessary condition for food security since it contributed to increased food production and a strengthened external trade position, which allows countries to import food if necessary. However, growth was not the only condition, it was also essential to strengthen people's access to food by tackling poverty.⁷⁴

Poverty reduction strategy papers were thus first and foremost a response to this need. They were a response to this "growing need for an enhanced framework for poverty reduction that reflect the broad emerging consensus on how to make actions at the country level and the support of development partners."⁷⁵ In simple very generalized terms poverty reduction strategy papers are policy guidelines that

⁷¹ "World bank and IMF launch conference on poverty reduction strategies", M2 PRESSWIRE, 14/01/02

⁷² The World Food Summit Plan of Action.

⁷³ Poul Nielson, "Promoting food security and poverty reduction through broad based economic growth", at a conference organized by International Food Policy research institute, Bonn, Germany, 5/09/01.

⁷⁴ As above

⁷⁵ Poul Nielson, "Promoting food security and poverty reduction through broad based economic growth", at a conference organized by International Food Policy research institute, Bonn, Germany, 5/09/01.

developing countries come up with concerning the need and weak areas of the country and the solutions needed. They are also a “requirement for countries in order to receive concessional assistance from the world bank (through the international development Association (IDA) and the IMF through the Poverty reduction and growth facility (PRGF). In addition they are the basis for the provision of debt relief under the enhanced HIPC.”⁷⁶

PRSPs must indicate strategies, inter alia:

- “country driven, with thee broad participation of civil society, elected institutions, key donors.
- Developed from an understanding of the nature and determinants off poverty and the links between public actions and poverty outcomes, recognizing that sustained poverty reduction will not be possible without rapid economic growth.
- Oriented to achieving outcome-related goals for poverty reduction.”⁷⁷

The process for coming up with PRSPs is generally effected in three different parts. At the government level, the authorities concerned collect data, provide an analysis and come up with a draft. Civil society then receives, analyses and comments upon this draft then submits it for final review to the government. The government, finally, makes the necessary changes and in turn submits tit to the Bretton woods institutions for approval; if the document is approved then it is endorsed and used as a guideline for a specified time line (in most cases three years) after which the country comes up with another PRSPs if needs be.

Hence potentially PRSPs will have the following elements.⁷⁸

- obstacles to poverty reduction.
- Objectives and targets
- Strategy/action plan
- Monitoring and evaluation systems

⁷⁶<http://www.worldbank.poverty/strategies/quanda.html>

⁷⁷ As above

⁷⁸ <http://www.imf.org/external/np/pdr/prsp/poverty1.htm>

- External assistance and the external environment and the
- Participatory process.

All things considered thus PRSPs can be regarded as a sort of a contract between the World Bank/IMF and the country submitting it.

The Ethiopian Example:

Background:

Ethiopia was one of the first countries to endorse the PRSP approach. Within a year, the country had a complete draft PRSP document and in another year, the consultation process was over the document was submitted for approval to the World Bank and in November 12 2002 the Bretton Woods institutions approved the poverty reduction strategy plan albeit with some “reservations”.¹⁷ With a history of repeated famines and an economy which totally depends upon agriculture, Ethiopia has never fully set up and implemented a concrete poverty reduction policy before. In effect feudalism based totally on agriculture continued to exist up to 1974 and the Socialist regime that ruled between 1974 and 1991, was toppled down before it could implement its 1987 agricultural development plan which itself came too late.¹⁸ With the war between Ethiopia and Eritrea raging in 1999 and serious food shortages already threatening the country in addition to decreasing amount of financial aid made PRSP a welcomed and long awaited measure as well as an act of desperation.

Ethiopia: Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Program (SDPRP)¹⁹

The document itself entitled Ethiopia sustainable development and poverty reduction program (SDPRP) is a 170 pages long paper that follows the guidelines prepared by the World Bank²⁰ very closely.

In effect it provides the poverty profile of the country, what is referred as diagnostics in the World Bank’s vocabulary, for the years between 1990 and 2001. the poverty profile shows the trends in consumption poverty, in per capita Rea consumption expenditure and the level of poverty as well as the distribution of national poverty. The analysis provided is that the rural areas of the country where 80% of the

¹⁷ “World bank IMF approve Ethiopian poverty reduction plan”, Agence France Presse, 12/11/02

¹⁸ B. Zewde, Modern History of Ethiopia, 1996, p57-86.

¹⁹ See annex to this paper

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population lives harbors the bulk of the poor Ethiopia. ²¹ the fact that food insecurity is a major contributor to poverty in the country and the poor human development reflected by indicators such low literacy level, large family sizes and young heads of households as well as the depth of and severity of poverty in female headed households which account for 49% of the whole and poor access to infrastructure were among the challenges identified by the poverty profile analysis. ²²

An analysis of the linkage between growth and poverty including an assessment of the determinant of growth is also provided by the SDPRP. In particular the social impact of policies and equitable growth within the framework of the millennium development goals of the UN assessed. In addition to private sector and export development, vulnerability and response capacity as well as cross cutting issues such as environment, gender policy and Hiv/AIDs, national capacity building strategy listed by the SDPRP includes democratization process and the concept of “building capacity to build capacity”. ²³ Most importantly, however, figure the key development policies and strategies of the country. These are rural and agricultural development policies and strategies, food security, pastoral development, road, water resource development, education and health. All of these elements are dealt with in whole separate chapters each and the specific measures needed for each is laid out. What is of interest for the purpose of the present study is however the part dealing with food security which will be dealt followingly.

Food security in the SDPRP

It is important to note that food security and agricultural development issues are dealt with separately in the SDPRP. In effect, the country has come up with two separate policy papers entitled Agriculture-Led Development Initiative (ADLI) and Food Security Strategy (FSS) respectively. ADLI still runs as a separate policy paper while FSS in its revised form has now become a part and parcel of the

SDPRP.

²¹ SDPRP, p 18.

²² SDPRP, p 19.

²³ SDPRP, p 48-49.

An overview of the FSS reveals that the major goals are to increase domestic agricultural production, ensure access to food as well as provide credit service.²⁴ It also involves nutrition and health intervention, emergency preparedness capabilities, institutional networking and capacity building and of course food security assistance or food aid.²⁵

Low agricultural production and thus lack of food is the major problem of the country and thus the focus on increase of supply of food is not surprising. Growth in supply is aimed to be achieved with the provision of financial aid to small scale farmers and an increased use of mechanized farming and fertilizers and other technology.²⁶ The government moreover aims to improve access to food through better networked roads and other infrastructure as well by improving the purchasing capacity of the small scale farmer with the creation of work, education, and short term credit loans.²⁷ Nutrition is also of major concern to the food security strategy and thus broad based education, greater health facilities as well as improved buying lower figure among the major strategies.²⁸ Still, all these goals and strategies are interlinked and an improvement in one sector has a positive effect on all the others.

All things considered, therefore, the SDPRP tries to address all the major elements of food security listed in the definition of adequate food: access and nutritional content.

The implementation of the food security strategy, however, highly depends upon factors that are not always dependent upon the government.²⁹ The paper provides that to make these policies a reality, a substantial amount of financial aid, participation of civil society as well as an intensive awareness creation programs both to governmental and non-governmental bodies is required. Moreover, the comprehensive institutional capacity building and network the government hopes to achieve requires not only considerable time but also a massive political will. In the meantime what will happen to the right to food as a right? What about legal measures to protect, fulfill and promote the right to food?

Indeed, the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia's Constitution is one of the few constitutions in the world to make food a constitutional right. Article 90(1) of same reads:

²⁴ SDPRP, p 66-69

²⁵ As above

²⁶ As above

²⁷ AS above, p 67

1. To the extent of the country's resources permit, policies shall aim to provide all Ethiopians access to public health and education, clean water, housing food and social security.

However, the SDPRP does not make reference to any legal measure that can turn this provision from a constitutional to protected and justiciable right for the individual Ethiopian. There are nevertheless, a number of things that could be done to make this a reality. Hence the following section which will draw lessons from a different approach to the right to food namely the South African experience.

The South African Experience

South Africa, along with India and Columbia is on of the few countries that has recognized economic, social and cultural rights as justiciable. In effect South Africa has moved further by incorporating wide-ranging economic and social rights in their new 1996 Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Although South Africa is not party to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (which is has signed, but not ratified), the drafting of the South African Constitution relied on the Covenant, as there were few national sources to turn to for precedents in relation to economic, social and cultural rights⁶³. There are three elements to South Africa's national implementation policies of socio-economic rights⁷⁹:

- The South African Constitution contains a strong commitment to economic, social and cultural rights. A full range of these rights are integrated into the Bill of Rights, along with civil and political rights. This includes a specific right to have access to sufficient food and water.
- The right to have access to food and water is, like other economic, social and cultural rights contained in the Bill of Rights, recognised as justiciable under South African law. This means that, as with civil and political rights, cases can be taken to court and a court can enforce economic and social rights. Therefore the judicial system becomes one mechanism for ensuring the implementation of ESC rights.
- The South African Human Rights Commission is required to report annually to Parliament on the realisation of economic and social rights. This acts as one

²⁸ As above

²⁹ SDPRP, p 69

⁷⁹ Liebenberg, S (DRAFT) 'The Justiciability of Socio-Economic Rights: The South African Experience' presented at the Workshop on the Justiciability of Economic, Social and Optional Protocol to the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, OHCHR, Palais Wilson, 5-6 February 2001

mechanism for monitoring the implementation of these rights and provides a domestic reporting system.

The South African constitution provides as follows concerning the right to food:

Section 27:

Everyone has the right to have access to –

(b) sufficient food and water;

Section 28

(1) Every child has the right –

(c) to basic nutrition, shelter, basic health care services and social services;

Section 35

(2) Everyone who is detained, including every sentenced prisoner, has the right –

(e) to conditions of detention that are consistent with human dignity, including at least exercise and the provision, at state expense, of adequate accommodation, nutrition, reading material and medical treatment.

Several other provisions in the Bill of Rights are closely linked and indirectly relevant to the right to food⁸⁰:

- The right to have access to sufficient water (Section 27 (1)(b)).
- The right to have access to social security, including, if they are unable to support themselves and their dependants, appropriate social assistance (Section 27(1)(c)).
- Section 25 regulates ownership, tenure and access to land which is the basic means of production of food. Section 25 states that no one may be deprived of property except in terms of law of general

⁸⁰ For a comprehensive overview of the debate, see Liebenberg, S (DRAFT) 'The Justiciability of Socio-Economic Rights: The South African Experience' presented at the Workshop on the Justiciability of Economic, Social and Optional Protocol to the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, OHCHR, Palais Wilson, 5-6 February 2001.

application, and no law may permit arbitrary deprivation of property, Section 25(5) states that The state must take reasonable legislative and other measures, within its available resources, to foster conditions which enable people to gain access to land on an equitable basis.

- Sections 10 and 11 (rights to human dignity and life) are indirectly relevant because a substantive interpretation of these rights would extend to protect the same interests as rights to food.
- Section 9, which enshrines the right to equality and the prohibition of unfair discrimination is particularly relevant to rights concerning food (as it is to all other socio-economic rights). It protects the right of equal access to food, particularly for disadvantaged and vulnerable groups.
- Section 7(2) of the Constitution requires the state to respect, protect and fulfil the realisation of all rights in the Bill of Rights, including socio-economic rights.

The right of access to food, as well as the rights of access to water, health care, social security and housing is limited by a provision of 'progressive realization' under the South African Constitution, which is very similar to the provision in the international Covenant:

"The State must take reasonable legislative and other measures, **within its available resources**, to achieve the **progressive realization** of these rights." (Sections 26(2) and 27(2)). However, the obligations with respect to children and detainees are not subject to the qualifications of progressive realization and resource constraints. This is because both children and detainees are considered unable to provide food for themselves.

The justiciability of the right to food under South African law

All the economic, social and cultural rights contained in the South African constitution, including the right to have access to sufficient food and water, may be enforced in the courts. Section 38 states that a range of individuals and groups can:

“approach a competent court, alleging that a right in the Bill of Rights has been infringed or threatened, and the court may grant appropriate relief, including a declaration of rights.”

This means that judicial system can become one mechanism for ensuring the implementation of ESC rights. In South Africa, both the inclusion of the economic, social and cultural rights, as well as the question of justiciability were vigorously debated because of various objections, but eventually the rights were included as justiciable rightsⁱ. Jurisprudence on these rights is also beginning to evolve and there have been a number of cases which illustrate the ways in which courts can protect these rights. One particular case has set extremely important precedents – the *Grootboom* case (Government of RSA v. Irene Grootboom and others, CCT 11/00). This case was about the right to housing, but the judgement of the Constitutional Court is relevant to other economic, social and cultural rights, such as the right to food.

Summary of the Grootboom case

The case reached the Court after appeal by the South African government against a judgement of the Cape High Court which ordered it to provide a group of homeless children and their parents with shelter (tents, portable latrines and a regular supply of water). This group lived in intolerable conditions in an informal settlement which flooded each time it rained. As conditions were so terrible, the group moved to another piece of land, but they were eventually evicted from this land and their shacks were burnt. Now completely homeless as their previous home had been occupied by others, they squatted in a sportsfield and launched an application to the Cape High Court under the right to housing and children's rights contained in the Bill of Rights. The application on the basis of the right to housing failed, because the court was satisfied that the State had taken “**reasonable**” measures towards “progressive realisation” of this right within its “available resources”. However, as the children's right to shelter, however, is not so qualified, and the court held that the children, with their parents, as this would be in the best interests of the children, were entitled to be provided with shelter by the State.ⁱⁱ

According to Liebenberg (DRAFT), the Constitutional Court indicated through this case, their willingness to enforce the negative obligation to *respect* the right to housing because they expressed the view that the eviction was carried out in a way

that breached this obligation. In terms of the positive obligation to *fulfil*, the case illustrated that even rights which are subject to the qualification of 'progressive realisation' and 'availability' of resources, may be considered as justiciable because the Constitutional Court utilised the criteria of '**reasonableness**' in reviewing government action or inaction on advancing on the progressive realisation of these rights. The Court also concluded that a government programme that provides no relief for people 'in desperate need' will not be judged as reasonable.

Liebenberg argues that this shows that "while the legislature and executive have a wide discretion to formulate laws and policies that impact on socio-economic rights, the courts under the South African constitution retain the ultimate discretion to review the reasonableness of these measures. In this way a relationship of accountability, transparency and responsiveness is fostered between the judiciary, legislative and executive."ⁱⁱⁱ

The monitoring mechanism of the South African Human Rights Commission

A monitoring mechanism is also considered fundamental by the South African Constitution to monitor and ensure that 'progressive realisation' does occur over time. Under the 1996 South African Constitution, the South African Human Rights Commission must:

"require relevant organs of state to provide the Commission with information on the measures they have taken towards the realisation of the rights in the Bill of Rights concerning housing, health care, food, water, social security, education and the environment." Section (184(3).)

There are also several other related constitutional provisions - Section 184(1)(c) instructs the Commission to "*monitor and assess the observance of human rights in the Republic*"; Section 181(5) which requires that the Commission present an annual report to Parliament on its own activities and functions; and section 184(2)(a) which mandates the Commission to "*...investigate and report on the observance of human rights*".

This means that Constitution itself institutes a domestic monitoring mechanism for the implementation of the economic and social rights protected in the Constitution. The South African Human Rights Commission, which is an independent body, must

produce an annual report on progress in the implementation of these rights, and report its conclusions to Parliament. This effectively gives the Commission the opportunity to monitor the implementation of these rights and to keep human rights issues on the national agenda. It also allows Parliamentarians to be kept informed of all actions of the state with respect to these rights, including the right to food.

This domestic reporting system is very similar to the international reporting system, through which the implementation of the international human rights instruments are monitored at the international level. For example, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights provides an international monitoring mechanism for the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. All state parties to the Covenant are required to report regularly to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights on implementation of the Covenant.

In the South African domestic model, the Human Rights Commission has the power to request all relevant departments of state for information on each of the specific rights, including the right to food. This entails requesting information on the fulfilment of different rights from the various government departments and ministries e.g. the department responsible for Agriculture, for Health etc. In the case of South Africa, the Commission also has the power to issue subpoenas to these government departments if they fail to provide adequate information. The Commission then summarises the responses of state agencies, analyses these and makes recommendations for better implementation of specific rights, such as the right to food. The Commission reports therefore provide useful information to monitor the progressive implementation of these rights in South Africa.

Lessons learned⁸¹

At the national level:

1. Justiciability – Development of framework and/or national legislation on the right to food and the enforcement of effective judicial (administrative) remedies.
2. Monitoring mechanism - Design a monitoring mechanism that reports to Parliament.

⁸¹ This is summarised from Huyssteen E. (DRAFT) “‘This is freedom, this is the new South Africa’ : Constructions of democratic values in South African human rights litigation’ Paper presented to the ASA Conference 2001 RIGHTS, CLAIMS AND ENTITLEMENTS Sussex University

At the international level:

1. Justiciability – Ratification of the International Conventions and support of the Draft Optional Protocol to the ICESCR as an international remedy.
2. Monitoring mechanism - Ensure that states report as required to the UN Committees which monitor implementation of the international instruments.

At the national level, the development of national legislation is vital if the right to food is to be respected, protected and fulfilled. Even if Constitutional provisions exist, these should be developed into specific legislation covering the various areas that are relevant to the right to food, as we discussed in Chapter 5. The justiciability of the right to food must also be established, so that governments can be held accountable if they violate their obligations. A monitoring mechanism can also provide a useful additional element of accountability by ensuring that government departments are working progressively towards the implementation of these rights. This will also keep Parliament well informed if the monitoring body is mandated to report directly to Parliament.

At the international level, Parliamentarians have an important role in the ratification process for these international instruments. To further support the justiciability of economic, social and cultural rights in the international system, Parliamentarians could promote government acceptance of the Optional Protocols, especially the Draft Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights which will allow a complaint mechanism at the international level. Once a state ratifies one of the UN human rights treaties, it also has to prepare and send reports to the Committees that monitor the progress that it has made to realize these rights. Parliamentarians could ensure that their governments submit these reports as required and promote respect of this monitoring mechanism to ensure that these reports are of the highest quality. Parliamentarians should also ensure that these

make specific reference to the right to food.

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