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TITLE: Determinants for realisation of the right to food among adolescents in Sterkspruit, Eastern Cape province, South Africa

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ABSTRACT (299 words)

Globally, the youth population aged between 10 and 24 years is the fastest growing and faces health and nutritional challenges affecting their growth and development, livelihoods and future careers. The government needs to take necessary action towards the full realisation of the right to health, water, education, and adequate standards of living, amongst others.

A cross-sectional descriptive study was conducted, using a mixed method approach. The aim of the study was to gain insight into perceptions about underlying factors, possibly impacting the realisation of the Right to Food (RtF), furthermore exploring possible solutions and opportunities to facilitate the progressive realisation of the RtF for adolescents in this area. In-depth interviews were held with eight (8) key informants who were actively involved in the community. Fifty (50) adolescents aged 10 to 19 years completed a self-administered questionnaire and participated in Focus Group Discussions, stratified for gender and age. Through content analysis of qualitative data, transcripts were coded and emerging themes were grouped, using the ATLAS.ti 7 text analysis programme. Sixteen (16) percent of the adolescents sometimes had access to only one food source at home and have experienced hunger at times. The most pressing issues identified by participants, which compromises the realisation of adolescents' right to food and health, was hunger caused by a combination of a monotonous diet, lack of agrarian resources, unemployment, and mismanagement of Child Support Grants. Although government was regarded as the main duty-bearer responsible for the realisation of the RtF, it was perceived to be

inefficient in taking sustainable measures to enhance food security in this resource-poor area. Very few participants identified adolescents' own responsibility as rights-holders.

The implementation of a human rights-based approach is needed for both the duty-bearers and rights-holders to facilitate adolescents' physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food.

BIOGRAPHY (87 WORDS)

Carla Boshoff has completed her Masters of Nutrition at the age of 28 years, in 2016, through the University of Stellenbosch, after being part of the NOMA track which was an international collaboration between Stellenbosch University, Oslo University in Norway and Makerere University in Uganda. The Masters' track focused on Nutrition, Human rights and Governance. She is employed in her capacity as a registered dietitian at the Department of Health in the Eastern Cape, South Africa, working in the rural areas of the Eastern Cape since 2011.

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