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THE HUMAN RIGHT TO FOOD THROUGH THE LENS OF FOOD JUSTICE

O DIREITO HUMANO À ALIMENTAÇÃO ATRAVÉS DA ÓTICA DA JUSTIÇA ALIMENTAR

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Abstract:
Being fundamental social and economic rights, the right to food also accompanies the most basic elements of human decency and the fundamental rights to live, be healthy, and develop in a sustainable manner. Article 11 of the 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights makes it a statute of the States Parties to ensure the availability of food that is adequate, safe, and healthy, and to take legal and institutional measures to eliminate hunger. Oman is asserted, in the Basic Law, not to recognize this right, but this can be understood by the provisions of Article 17 of Royal Decree No. (6/2021) which is a recognition of the commitment of the State to its citizens to the assured standard of living. Increased national efforts of Oman Vision 2040 arguably observe this right by focusing on food self-sufficiency and sustainable social well-being. This paper attempts to provide the legal foundation of the right to food in Omani Law and examine its compliance to the international standards. It considers a number of laws such as the Consumer Protection Law (Royal Decree No. 66/2014), the Competition Protection and Anti-Monopoly Law (Royal Decree No. 67/2014) and the Public Health Law, the Environmental Protection and Pollution Control Law, as well as the Laws on Agriculture and food Security. The research analyzes the way Omani law sustains development, intertwining food security with human rights. The conclusions drawn from the research suggest the precisely defined the right to food ought to be balanced with the goals of development through the additional focus of intergenerational food equity. The research

Resumo:
Sendo direitos sociais e econômicos fundamentais, o direito à alimentação também acompanha os elementos mais básicos da dignidade humana e os direitos fundamentais de viver, ser saudável e se desenvolver de maneira sustentável. O artigo 11 do Pacto Internacional sobre Direitos Econômicos, Sociais e Culturais de 1966 torna obrigatório que os Estados Partes garantam a disponibilidade de alimentos adequados, seguros e saudáveis e tomem medidas legais e institucionais para eliminar a fome. Omã afirma, na Lei Básica, não reconhecer esse direito, mas isso pode ser compreendido pelas disposições do artigo 17 do Decreto Real nº (6/2021), que é um reconhecimento do compromisso do Estado com seus cidadãos em relação ao padrão de vida garantido. Os esforços nacionais intensificados da Visão de Omã para 2040 observam, sem dúvida, esse direito, concentrando-se na autossuficiência alimentar e no bem-estar social sustentável. Este artigo procura fornecer a base jurídica do direito à alimentação na legislação de Omã e examinar sua conformidade com as normas internacionais. Ele considera uma série de leis, como a Lei de Proteção ao Consumidor (Decreto Real nº 66/2014), a Lei de Proteção à Concorrência e Antimonopólio (Decreto Real nº 67/2014) e a Lei de Saúde Pública, a Lei de Proteção Ambiental e Controle da Poluição, bem como as Leis sobre Agricultura e Segurança Alimentar. A pesquisa analisa a forma como a legislação de Omã sustenta o desenvolvimento, entrelaçando a segurança alimentar com os direitos humanos. As conclusões tiradas da pesquisa sugerem que o

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suggests the need to incorporate contemporary devices such as AI and renewable energy to enhance the advanced food production systems.

Keywords: Right to Food, Food Security, Omani Law, Oman Vision 2040, Human Rights, Consumer Protection, Sustainable Development, Legislative Reform.

direito à alimentação, definido com precisão, deve ser equilibrado com os objetivos de desenvolvimento, através de um foco adicional na equidade alimentar intergeracional. A pesquisa sugere a necessidade de incorporar dispositivos contemporâneos, como IA e energia renovável, para melhorar os sistemas avançados de produção alimentar.

Palavras-chave: *Direito à Alimentação. Segurança Alimentar. Legislação de Omã. Visão de Omã para 2040. Direitos Humanos. Proteção ao Consumidor. Desenvolvimento Sustentável. Reforma Legislativa.*

1 INTRODUCTION

Numerous other rights include social, economic, cultural, and health, but they also include the right to food, which is multifaceted. Such rights are protected by international law as they are integrally linked to health and social wellbeing. People should be provided food, however, a person must also be ensured to have timely and permanent economic and physical accessibility to healthy food that is sufficient, right and enables a life of dignity. Food as well as water must also be accessible, safe, and sustainable. [1] The World Food Summit of '96 has stated that a person can to right to food and water that is sufficient, safe and nutritious to sustain a healthy, active life, as well." [2]

Considering the political, social, economic and climatic issues hindering people`s access to food, food security has become a focal point for authorities in charge. About 2.3 billion people across the globe suffer food insecurity, based on official records. Food Insecurity in 2024 These statistics suggest that the global prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity has been slowly declining over the preceding 3 years, standing at 28.0% in 2024. On a global scale, food insecurity is more prevalent in the countryside than in the towns, and also has a greater impact on women than on men.[3]

In the context of this global shift, the need has emerged for an in-depth legal analysis of this right, starting from the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and

[1] Canfield, M. (2020). Claiming Food Sovereignty: Legal Mobilization in an Era of Global Governance. https://doi.org/10.1108/S1059-433720200000082006
[2] Harris, J., & Johnson, E. (2025). The right to adequate food in UN systems: Human rights mechanisms in practice. *World Nutrition*, *16*(1), 97-105. and
[3] The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2025: Addressing High Food Price Inflation for Food Security and Nutrition. Rome. https://doi.org/10.4060/cd6008ar

Cultural Rights of 1966 [(4)], which explicitly affirms in Article 11\1 the obligation of State Parties to recognize the right of every person to obtain adequate standards of living for both themselves and their families, including adequate food, clothing, housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions, along with a commitment to take the necessary measures to realize this right. The Covenant further emphasizes that States Parties, whether individually or through international co-operation, shall take the measures required to improve food production, conservation, and distribution, and to ensure the equitable distribution of global food supplies, taking into account domestic needs.[5]

Similarly, both the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)[6] various UN programs have contributed to the development of clear standards for adequate food. Based on these standards, food can be considered adequate if it is available, accessible, nutritious, safe, and sustainable. The FAO underscores the necessity of providing a “sustainable food system,” one that “delivers food security and nutrition for all in a way that does not compromise the economic, social, and environmental bases for generating food security and nutrition for future generations.”[7]

While Omani law does not deviate from International Humanitarian Law regarding the Right to Adequate Food, the Basic Statute of the State does not directly deal with this right, but does touch upon this right indirectly through other provisions that stipulate that life and dignity are fundamental human rights that are to be enjoyed by everyone and, thus, the state has to guarantee, respect, and protect them. For example, Article 18 of the Basic Statute of the State clearly states that "life and dignity are the right of every human being, and the state is bound to uphold and protect them by law," which suggests that the Omani state has an obligation to ensure the existence of a minimum level of sustenance and other essential conditions, such that food insecurity is eradicated. The Omani state also has numerous other legislation and policies that help to achieve this right, including the Consumer Protection Law, the Competition Protection and Anti-

[4] The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of 1966 https://www.ohchr.org/ar/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/international-covenant-economic-social-and-cultural-rights

[5] International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of 1966, Article 11/2

[6] https://www.fao.org/home/ar

[7] Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Food Systems. https://www.fao.org/food-systems/ar/

Monopoly Law, the Public Health Law, the Environmental Protection and Pollution Control Law, and national food security, water security and security in agriculture.[8]

Such a commitment is often found alongside Oman Vision 2040 goals, [9] which classified food security as one of the chief elements of economic and social development. The Sustainable Environment Pillar stresses the creation of protective and economically beneficial ecosystems that are effective, balanced, and resilient to sustain the environment and natural resources. the document stresses that food and water security can be obtained with the right combination of renewable resources and technologies, along with the optimal utilization of the Sultanate's strategic position and biodiversity.[10] Due to its importance in fostering social cohesion, enhancing the economy's ability to deal with global economic shocks, and decreasing reliance on foreign imports.

It is significant to mention that Oman is currently placing a great deal of focus on attaining a level of self-sufficiency in some foodstuffs, reinforcing important value chains, enhancing the production of crops and fish, and adopting innovations in the fields of smart agriculture, artificial intelligence, and renewable energy.

1.1 Study importance

This study focuses on the legal principles of the right to food from an international standards perspective and the attention that right has received in Omani laws. The study also analyzes the adequacy of national legislations and the Sultanate of Oman's international commitments, particularly the obstacles that impede the achievement of sustainable food security. The study also contributes to the realization of Oman Vision 2040, by proposing the establishment of legal and institutional frameworks that ensure the right to food and strengthen food and nutrition justice.

1.2 Problem statement

The world is currently facing many serious challenges with regards to food security including climate change, water scarcity, soil degradation, increased global

[8] Al'Abri, K. M., Ambusaidi, A. K., & Alhadi, B. R. (2022). Promoting Global Citizenship Education (GCED) in the Sultanate of Oman: An Analysis of National Policies. Sustainability, 14(12), 7140.
[9] Oman Vision 2040 https://www.oman2040.om/
[10] Oman Vision 2040 - Sustainable Environment Pillar: https://www.oman2040.om/pillar/4

hunger, food supply chain disruptions, and dependence on foreign importation of key food staples. These challenges more often than not emphasize the need to enhance existing legislation and institutional arrangements to address food equity and ensure that all citizens and residents have access to healthy and adequate food that is safe and sustainable.

1.3 Research questions

- How much does the current legislation from the Sultanate of Oman comply with what Oman is obliged internationally on the right to food and on sustainable food security?
- How do the laws on consumer protection, competition, anti-monopoly, and public health and the environment in Oman strengthen the right of people to access adequate and safe food?
- How effective are the national strategies on food, water, and agriculture in ensuring that the Sultanate of Oman secures food sustainably?

1.4 Methodology:

Taking into consideration the nature of the discipline in which the comparison of national and international law will be analyzed, the relevant national policies and strategies will be examined, and the Omani legislative system will be compared with the most advanced international practices in food security. The study undertook, in addition to the introduction and conclusion, three filed sections. The first section presented the conceptual framework of the right to food, the second section dealt with the international endeavour on the right to food, and the third and final section focused on the constitutional and legislative framework of the right to food in the Sultanate of Oman.

2 THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF FOOD JUSTICE AND THE RIGHT TO FOOD

The United Nations has defined the right to food [11] as "the right to have regular, permanent, and unrestricted 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 fear." [12] This definition underscores three fundamental elements, namely availability, accessibility, and adequacy, standards derived from the General Comments of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, particularly General Comment No. 12 (1999) as we mentioned previously, the right to food is indivisible and intrinsically connected to other human rights, including the right to life, the right to health, and the right to an adequate standard of living.

The term food justing is relatively recent and explains important shifts in the fields of global food production and distribution and consumption. It activism contends that access to food is a requisite for a basic human right and a else entails the capacity of all persons to access nutrititiously adequate food in a supplemtary safe manner, which is free of charactertistics of discrimination and deprivation. [13] It is broader than the term food security in that it is more concerned with the equitable distribution of the food resources. It advocates for the equitable consideration of the diverse challenges of the food system for hunger and the nutrition crisis, the diverse food system for climate change, and the entire food system in transforming and maintaining equity all the way from farm to fork. .[14]

The principles that define food justice are three in number. The first is food accessibility justice. From a socio-economic or geographic standpoint, barriers that inhibit people from accessing safe and adequate food must be eliminated. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights issued General Comment No. 12 that

[11] United Nations (Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food) https://www.ohchr.org/ar/special-procedures/sr-food/about-right-food-and-human-

[12] Ziegler, J. (2002). *Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food.* United Nations General Assembly, 57th Session. UN Doc A/57/356.

[13] Adusei, F. Y. (2025). Promoting Equity: Embracing Food Justice in the Transformation of the Food Systems for BIPOC Communities. *The Journal of Extension*, *63*(1), 8.

[14] Ibid

acknowledges the fundamental aspects of the right for people to obtain food of adequate quality. Justice in the production of food is also about the defense of local farmers and the marginalized. It is justice that provides people access to the necessary... and just income, the equitable and just control of food, and as a result of that, sustainable food production is justice. Within this context, this dimension deals with the production of food. It should be sustainable for social equity and the protection of the natural resources for food supply. The third is justice in the policies of the State. This means that it is the policies that require the regulation of food quality and safety, food sustainability, control of monopolies, and regulation to enhance the competitiveness of markets, and the adequate food to be legally and sustainably provided to the people.[15] The United Nations defines food security as "a situation that exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food which meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life."[16]

Building on this definition, four core dimensions of food security can be identified:[17] These four dimensions incorporate food availability, economic and physical access to food, food utilization, and the stability of food supplies over time**.** Thus, availability dimension is concerned with a food's potential and actual physical presence. This concerns such as market, production, food stock, and food source. This also concern transport systems and scavengeable food. Nevertheless, availability and access are closely intertwined. Access, however, is something different than than actual or potential availability of the food. It rests on the ability of families and individuals to acquire sufficient nutrition through rightful means financially and otherwise. Given the first two dimensions, the utilization dimension also raises a question: do households consume enough nutrients and energy, and on a sufficient level, to fulfill their dietary requirements?

When the last dimension, stability, is to be achieved, all of availability, access, and utilization, the first three dimensions, are met. Stability needs to consist of the whole

[15] United Nations, Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, twentieth session (1999) – General Comment No. 12: The right to adequate food (Article 11) (1999) https://docs.un.org/en/E/C.12/1999/5

[16] Globalization and Human Rights - Globalization and Health Equity. https://globalhealthequity.ca/archived-projects/globalization-and-human-rights/

[17] The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Food Programme (WFP), and the World Health Organization (WHO). (2025). The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2025: Addressing High Food Price Inflation for Food Security and Nutrition. Rome, p. 177

food system, therefore, households are guaranteed food security at all times and the food system is dependable. Whether this is the case is determined by the climate, economy, society, and politics.[18]

3 INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS AND THE RIGHT TO FOOD

The right to food constitutes one of the basic rights recognized under international human rights law. The legal framework governing this right has evolved through a series of international instruments and multilateral agreements that impose clear obligations on States to ensure adequate and sustainable food for all individuals without discrimination. The most significant instrument in codifying this right is the 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). Article 11 upholds two principal dimensions: the right to adequate food, encompassing its availability, accessibility, quality, and safety; cultural acceptability; and the sustainability of access; and the State obligation to eradicate hunger, which is treated as an immediate and non-derogable priority.[19] The international framework also emphasizes the increased production of food, the fair distribution of food, the sustainable use of the world's natural resources, the improvement of food supply security, and the placing of responsibilities on States.

Notably, in 1999, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights issued General Comment No. 12, which provided a more precise and authoritative interpretation of the right to food. It also explains the normative content of the right to food greater detail. It describes the extent of the duties of States to respect, protect and fulfill this right, changing this right from a legal/right to an actionable commitment to the advancement of the right to life and human dignity.

This framework is referred to as the **progressive realization of** the right to adequate food. It constitutes a central standard for assessing States' compliance with their international obligations, as it prohibits any retrogression below the minimum core obligations. Under the progressive realization guidelines, States are obligated to take

[18] Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, International Fund for Agricultural Development, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), World Food Programme, and World Health Organization. (2025). The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2025: Addressing High Food Price Inflation for Food Security and Nutrition. Rome 177-178

[19]Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. (1999). *General Comment No. 12: The right to adequate food (Art. 11 of the ICESCR).* United Nations. UN Doc. E/C.12/1999/5. https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/168598

progressive steps, within their available resources, to advance food security.[20] All State parties must refrain from any act that would constitute a direct violation of the right to food or deprive individuals of their access to adequate food, as the eradication of hunger is a fundamental, non-negotiable obligation.[21]

Numerous United Nations documents have acknowledged the right to proper nourishment and have attempted to create a more thorough and detailed analysis of the scope involved. Article 55 of the United Nations Charter states the following: "The United Nations shall, with a view to the establishment of conditions of stability and well-being which are essential to equitably adjustable and peaceful relations among all nations, promote:

- the attainment of socio-economic development, full and productive employment and the attainment of the right to development;
- the solution of the problems pertaining to the international economy, social relations, and health, education, and culture and, the cooperation and partnerships of various nations in these fields;
- the promotion and the realization of all, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, and the observance of which shall be without any discrimination of any kind, including race, sex, language and religion.

The focus of Article 56 reiterates that the members are mandated to act in unison and individually in collaboration with the Organization in fulfilling the objectives specified in Article 55. In the same vein, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights[22] (1948) affirms in Article 25(1) that: "Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food……". The Rome Declaration on World Food Security, embraced during the 1996 World Food Summit, strengthened this foundation in that it signaled an important change in understanding food security as a human right. According to this declaration, states are pledged to eradicate hunger, develop national food security strategies, support local

[20] Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. (1999). *General Comment No. 12: The right to adequate food (Art. 11 of the ICESCR).* United Nations. UN Doc. E/C.12/1999/5. https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/168598 acts 14-20.

[21] United Nations. (1966). *International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights.* United Nations Treaty Series, 993, 3. https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/international-covenant-economic-social-and-cultural-rights

[22] Universal Declaration of Human Rights https://www.ohchr.org/ar/universal-declaration-of-human-rights

production, and promote sustainable practices. These commitments were further operationalized through the World Food Summit Plan of Action.[23]

In 2004, the Member States of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) accepted the Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security (the Right to Food Guidelines).[24] These guidelines provide a comprehensive set of practical measures to assist States in implementing Article 11 of the ICESCR. They address issues such as good governance for food security, poverty reduction, consumer protection, natural resource management, the sustainability of food systems, and specific measures to respond to disasters and crises. Moreover, the Convention on the Rights of the Child[25] also affirms, in Article 24, the obligation of States to take all necessary measures to ensure that every child enjoys the highest attainable standard of health, including measures related to nutrition.[26] The Article reiterates the principle of progressive realization, underscoring the centrality of the right to food as a prerequisite for the child's development, growth, and well-being.

4 THE CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGISLATIVE BASIS OF THE RIGHT TO FOOD IN OMAN

The legal system of Oman plays a vital role concerning the right to food and food protection. The right to food is legally protected to some extent by the Basic Law of the State (Omani Constitution), and by several other general and specific legal codes concerning the quality of food, safety of food, and control of food and other trade. An in-depth analytical assessment of the legal system might reveal that the Omani legal system has done a great deal in enhancing the right to food, if not completely, on the some extent, within the context of international obligations and within the scope of Oman Vision 2040 objectives. It is not within the scope of Basic Law of the State that the right to food is

[23] Rome Declaration on Global Food Security and World Food Summit Plan of Action https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/93d758cd-13a2-492d-b147-0784cfd8ee93/content/w3613e.htm

[24] Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. (2004). Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security. Rome: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/9fa95d7a-8c49-402d-aa55-012716cc7d29/content

[25] Convention on the Rights of the Child https://www.ohchr.org/ar/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-rights-child

[26] ibid article 4\24

protected, however, this is so under Article 18 which provides that, “Life and the dignity of a man are a right of every human and the state is bound to protect them and to do so in compliance to the law.” This particular Article is one of the most relevant articles of the Constitution that protects the right to food. The Omani government has an obligation towards its citizens by this Article to guarantee that the citizens of this country will live a life that is socially, legally, and economically acceptable, and that they will not be subjected to starvation and will live in a condition that is socially, legally, and economically acceptable by international law.

Furthermore, this constitutional foundation is further reinforced by explicit references within the State’s social principles to assisting in cases of old age, illness, and disability, as stipulated in Article 15\4, which states that “The state shall guarantee social security services for citizens. It shall also guarantee aid for them in cases of emergency, illness, incapacity, and old age in the manner prescribed by the law.” Access to sufficient, safe, and nourishing food is implicitly included in the concept of a decent life, supporting the idea that people can't live in dignity and contribute to society without having their basic needs, food being the most important, met. Because of this relationship, the State has a legal obligation to adopt laws and initiatives that guarantee citizens' access to food, especially the vulnerable cohort.

Moreover, among the social principles, there is a state obligation to protect the environment which is also part of the Basic Law. This is in article 15\7 which says, “The state shall endeavor to protect the environment and its ecological balance in order to achieve integrated and sustainable development in all of its dimensions for present and future generations. Every citizen and resident of the state shall have the duty to maintain and safeguard it.” Certainly, this is a fundamental principle since a clean environment, unpolluted natural resources, and safeguarded ecosystems are essential for food security. Thus, the continuity of safe food production depends on the sustainable use of environmental resources. In this regard, Article 15 clearly and unconditionally constitutes the foundational constitutional provision in relation to the right to food.

Another manifestation is found in Article 14 wherein the principle underpinning the economic development is equity and sustainability. Oman’s economic principles are considered primary instruments in safeguarding the economic rights associated with the right to nutrition. It is our position that the State’s responsibility to ensure the provision of adequate and safe food for its people is enhanced with economic autonomy coupled

with social equity and balanced eco-sustainable resource utilization with a focus on investments in the productive sphere. Similarly, the State's ability to construct social protection systems and assist the marginalized is due to the balance of the protection of public wealth, respect for private ownership, and the application of taxation equity. Hence, the application of the stated economic principles would lead to the realization of the right to food, one of the fundamental, and more importantly, the rights that sustain a human's dignity and quality of life.

We have discovered another association between food rights and the Constitution's Article 15, which stems from Oman's duty to care for the health of its citizens and facilitate the prevention and control of disease and epidemics. The right to food, we suggest, goes hand in hand with the preservation of health, for the lack of food, or the consumption of food of an unsafe character, is a threat to health by the dissemination of disease and the poisoning of food. Thus, the State obligation to safeguard health, and, in this case, the range of services to be covered, is to assure the availability of adequate food and mitigate the risk of providing unsafe food, due to a lack of adequate health control of food. In this manner, the right to food is another expression of a person's right to health.

When considering the Basic Law of the Sultanate of Oman, many readers, while being careful, may sense an unusual seamlessness and uniqueness of the provisions on the interconnection of the constitutional substrata of the right to food, even though this right may not be directly mentioned. The approach of the Omani constitution connects socio-economic rights to the intrinsic worth of the human person. It further obliges the state to take appropriate actions, both legislative and administrative, designed to promote the well-being of its people. Consequently, the right to food has an inherent basis within this constitutional framework, which encompasses the values of health, the environment, equity, and human dignity. This broadens the spectrum of alternatives available to the legislators for the enactment of more comprehensive and elaborate legal instruments on this fundamental right.

As a matter of interest, national Oman legislation comprises an integrated legal system that broadens the scope of the protection of the right to food, whether via quality and safety of food, market regulation and prohibition of monopolies, or through detailed and comprehensive rules governing the circulation of food and food-related services. Though, there is no legal instrument that is specifically and explicitly titled the right to

food, the composite mosaic of the statutes performs that function. It establishes a comprehensive legal framework that is fundamental in the attainment of food security and food justice. These laws do become more emphasized in the context of the imperatives that the Sultanate faces, namely, water scarcity, climate change, and a food system that is predominately reliant on imported food for local consumption. This scenario, without a doubt, makes food safety and stability a priority national concern.

Consumer Protection Law comes from Royal Decree No. 66/ 2014. This law mandates the prohibition of the movement of dangerous or non-compliant goods. Suppliers are required to ensure food products. Suppliers are required to inform consumers of the information regarding the product which includes the ingredients, product's country of origin, production date, production expiration date, health related storage, and health restrictions regarding the storage of the food product. Consumers have the right to exchange disintegrated products with a product of the same type or to obtain a reimbursement. The law empowers the controls to take actions against the perpetrators of food fraud and actions that threaten the health of the consumers. Therefore, the law is aimed at protecting the food and the supply of food in a safe and healthy manner.

In addition, the other law that relates to the Royal Decree No 67/2014 is the Competition Protection and Monopoly Prevention Law. This law is also aimed at eliminating monopolistic practices which have a controlling influence over the prices that are charged for basic food products and the availability of those products in a market. Providing food to consumers is safe but food security extends to the consumers in that the food that is provided to them is at a reasonable and fair price.

We infer that law on the protection of competition and the anti-monopoly law clearly prohibits agreements that lead to price increases and seek to restrain the supply of goods and disturb the balance of the market, as these actions harm the food security of the nation. It is essential to note that the Omani leg is saying that food is “any substance of vegetable or animal origin, whether processed or unprocessed, that is consumed by humans, as well as beverages, chewing gum, and any other substance that is used in the manufacture, processing or preparation of food, or in the preparation of food.”

Food-related legislation in Oman is also instrumental in safeguarding the right to food. It articulates specific obligations relating to food safety, and the supervision of the food safety control system, the handling and periodic controlling of food establishments. These laws also set the minimum sanitary standards, the conditions under which food

should be stored and the methods of food transportation, and the circulation of food which is a danger to the health of the population is prohibited.

This legislation has something unique about it as well in that it also ensures that food products traded in the market cannot be infected with harmful substances. \Moreover, the Environmental Protection and Pollution Control Law also defends the right to food, as it protects the resources needed for food production, including water, soil, and fish. Pollution of the air, water, or soil environment also poses a threat to the quality and safety of food, and thus quality of life. This indicates that the protection of the environment is also protection of food. This is a major step in the provision of enduring food supplies, as it guarantees the ecological management of the legislation.

In addition to the above, various legislation assumes the existence of food security. For example, the legislation that deals with the management of agriculture, fisheries and water resources, the regulations governing the management of these resources, the protection of the assets of agriculture and fisheries, the encouragement of the domestic production of food and the promotion of practices of sustainable farming. This is the case with Oman, where the extraordinary geographical and climatic conditions of the country make the careful management of the water and agricultural resources of the country a determining factor as to whether food can be produced. \n\nIn summary, it may be argued that the Omani laws have instituted a comprehensive food security system, considering the numerous food-related legislation passed. These laws, in conjunction with the other laws, constitute a system aimed at the protection of the physical health of the consumers, the attainment of food equity, and the improvement of food sovereignty. Oman's food security system is a horizontal and a vertical system composed of a number of state institutions, laws, and public policies that guarantee adequate and safe food for all in the country, and at the same time, increases the country's ability to cope with international or regional food shortages.

In addition, this institutional system articulates the State’s acknowledgment of the importance of food security as a foundational element of the economic and social development and a necessary part of the Oman Vision 2040. The Omari government aims to achieve equilibrium between the encouragement of local production, the diversification of import supply, and the development of storage and other logistical facilities to maintain and enhance the quality of food and sustain the food supply.

5 CONCLUSION

This particular study examined the ‘right to food’ for the first time. Out of all economic and social rights, the right to food is the most basic, and is linked to the right to human dignity, the right to life, and the rights to health and sustainable development. The ‘right to food’ is a part of international law as presented in the various international treaties and declarations as well as the 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights which aims to form a primary set of rights and the corresponding obligations of the State to promote development in a comprehensive manner and to protect, and fulfill these rights. It also aims to provide every individual the right to food that is to be free from discrimination, and that is adequate, safe and nutritious.

The Basic Law of the State makes reference to the “right to food” in an indirect manner in such a way as to treat the right to food as an operationalizing principle of the Constitution by affirming a right to the dignity of life, health, sustainable development, and the protection of the environment and natural resources. Moreover, The Sultanate of Oman, to secure the citizenry's right to safe food, defend the clientele, and realize food equity, has established an Advanced rule of law well perfected in the domains of Consumer Protection, Public Health, Competition Law and Antimonopoly, and Environmental Protection.But unfortunately, Oman still has a number of obstacles undermining sustainable food security. Water scarcity, the effects of climate change, a relatively high dependency on food imports, coupled with an increasing in the country food demand are the obstacles. More supervision of food products’ quality from a legal, legislative, and a practical standpoint is required.

The study advances that Omani legislation should resolve the obstacles affecting the enforcement of the right to food, and more importantly, address its incorporation into the legal framework. Further, it needs to enhance legal accountability; embrace new policies in agriculture and water management; encourage investments in advanced technologies for food production; and build resilient international alliances for food security.

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All authors contributed equally to the development of this article.

Data availability

All datasets relevant to this study's findings are fully available within the article.

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