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The Human Rights Response to the Global Impact of the COVID-19 Virus on Socio-economic Rights in South Africa

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ABSTRACT The domestication of international human rights law, especially the constitutional status given to Socio-economic rights in the Constitution 1996, seeks to eliminate decades of historical legacy of inequalities where issues of poverty, health, social security continue to be a challenge to the ordinary citizenry. However, the impact of human rights, which are highly regarded as a progressive tool in infusing the 'rights lens' in addressing the various challenges faced by the general populace has been left 'swinging in the pendulum' particularly in South Africa due to the advent of the novel COVID-19. This has deepened the social and structural inequalities that have a detrimental effect on the healthcare system and social security, particularly for women and children. Using desk review, the argument is linked to principles of accountability and is limited to the importance of human rights as a central response to the pandemic.