

# Nutrition-Related Corporate Social Responsibility Programs of Selected Corporations in the Philippines

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## RESEARCH ARTICLE

### Abstract

**Background:** Malnutrition being a multi-faceted problem, with causes cutting across a number of sectors (WFP, 2014) requires a combination of effort and programs to effectively be addressed. Many corporations have embarked on programs that can contribute to the reduction of malnutrition.

**Objectives:** This study aimed to describe and analyze the nutrition-related Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Programs of six corporations and their contribution to effort to the reduction of malnutrition.

**Methods:** This study used a pretested questionnaire in data collection by self-administered and interview-processes of representatives from six corporations. Data was analyzed by profiling and characterizing the CSR programs according to five parameters and the programs' contribution to nutrition-improvement.

**Results:** Corporations in the food and beverage industry implements the most number of nutrition related CSR programs and are mostly focused on nutrition-specific interventions. The corporations were found to implement programs that are appropriate and effective.

**Conclusion:** The CSR programs have the capacity to contribute on nutrition improvement by being able to address some of the immediate, underlying and basic causes of malnutrition.

**Keywords:** *Corporate Social Responsibility, malnutrition, nutrition specific intervention, nutrition sensitive interventions*

## Introduction

Malnutrition is one of the world's most serious but least-addressed development challenges [1]. It encompasses both overnutrition and undernutrition and has direct negative consequences in terms of disease and disability, brain development, educational attainment and income potential for individuals and communities [2]. Recent data from the World Health Organization shows that 1.9 billion adults are overweight or obese and 462 million are underweight. Conversely, 41 million children are overweight or obese while 52 million children under age of 5 are wasted [3]. In the Philippines, stunting, a form of undernutrition characterized by accompanying negative repercussions in an individual (including poor cognitive ability and poor economic productivity), is still a public health concern affecting 3 out of 10 children below 5 years old. On the other end of the spectrum of malnutrition, three out of ten Filipino adults are overweight or obese [4]. In the current setting of worldwide malnutrition, mitigating this concern does not

only lie on the aspect of concerned organizations and of the national government, but effort given by the private sector is currently being recognized.

A growing concept of businesses today is corporate social responsibility (CSR). The International Organization for Standardization Strategic Advisory Group on CSR describes CSR as "a balanced approach for organization to address economic, social and environmental issues in a way that aims to benefit people, community and society" [5]. The term "Corporate Social Responsibility" has been captioned under many names such as strategic philanthropy and corporate citizenship. One of the more straightforward definitions of CSR is: "the voluntary actions that business can take, over and above compliance with minimum legal requirements, to address both its own competitive interests and the interests of wider society" [6]. Despite its several definitions and names, it carries with it a certain perspective on the role of business in the society.

The role of business is to create value for its shareholders but in such a way that it also creates value for society, manifesting itself as a win-win proposition [7].

In the Philippines, various programs as part of their CSR have been launched by some large corporations. Although the most common and popular notion when it comes to nutrition and CSR deals mainly with food assistance such as feeding programs and supplementary feeding program and offering of products that are tagged as 'healthy and nutritious'; looking on the concept of nutrition-sensitive and nutrition-specific interventions can show that several corporations also had their efforts that can impact nutrition situation though they may not be able to directly recognize it. The following are some of the nutrition-related CSR programs implemented by notable large corporations in the country that can be categorized into nutrition specific and nutrition sensitive interventions. Nutrition-sensitive program includes: 1) food production, 2) water, sanitation and hygiene, and 3) medical services. Nutrition specific programs include: 1) feeding program, 2) food fortification, and 3) product reformulation, 4) food labelling, 5) healthy lifestyle programs, and 6) nutrition education. These programs have also counterpart existing government effort.

The study aimed to describe the CSR programs of selected large corporations including the motivating factors of companies; examine the link of the nature of the corporation to their nutrition-related CSR programs; and determine the contribution of the CSR programs to nutrition improvement.

## Methodology

### *Research design*

This is a descriptive study designed to gather information on the corporations' profile and the details of the existing CSR programs relating to nutrition that has been conducted in the Philippines.

### *Study participants*

The corporations, herein referred to as respondents were selected from the top 100 corporations in the Philippines as listed in the Securities and Exchange Commission [8]. Those belonging to the top 100 corporations were selected considering the expanse of their resources and their reputation as leaders and innovators in their respective businesses.

To determine the specific corporations that will be included in the study, criterion purposive sampling was used. To do this, five CSR program categories were established based on capacity to impact on nutrition improvement. The program categories include (1) nutrition information and education (2) health protection (3) food assistance (4) food production and (5) product improvement. Each program category is comprised of subcategories which are nutrition-related CSR programs. Corporations with CSR programs that fall under the established program categories were selected.

A total of nineteen corporations that were found to have programs that met the established categories were shortlisted. Letters were sent via email to the shortlisted Corporations to seek their consent and approval to participate in the study. Further coordination was made via phone call and visits to the head office of the corporations. However, due to non-response, privacy issues of CSR details, and considerable length of time to coordinate with the corporations, only six were included in the study. A limitation of this study is the small number of corporations included. This is due to the reluctance of the companies to disclose information.

The primary respondents of the corporations were Project officer for Corporation 1, Program officer for Corporation 2, Project assistant for Corporation 3, Program assistant for Corporation 4, Corporate Affairs Executive for Corporation 5 and Corporate Communication Manager for Corporation 6. These corporations are all based in Metro Manila, Philippines.

### *Development of instrument*

A questionnaire was developed which had three parts: Part 1 asked for company profile and CSR overview which included information on the industry and specific business type of selected corporations. The motivating factors or doing CSR of the selected companies were also asked. Part 2 was focused on the implemented Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programs that is related to or can impact on nutrition. Part 3 focused on the detailed information of the CSR programs such as name of the program, the target population, the program description, the time-frame for the implementation of the program and the indicators for the program's success. This part also looked into the basis for selecting their identified CSR programs. The questionnaire was developed to be self-administered.

### *Data Collection*

A questionnaire was sent via email to the respondents and answers were provided by filling up the applicable items on the questionnaire. The questionnaire was developed to be self-administered; however, two of the respondent corporations requested for face to face interview and discussion of their CSR programs instead of writing their answer on the questionnaire. Other supporting data not provided on the questionnaire that is needed for further detailing the profile and programs of the corporations were obtained from their respective website and other credible online references.

### *Data Analysis*

Profiling was done to describe the general nature of the corporations as well as of their CSR programs and specific-nutrition-related CSRs. Content analysis, on the other hand, involves classifying data such as by categorizing with the aim of highlighting features and findings. Particularly, a summative content analysis was used in the study which involves counting and comparisons usually of keyword or content followed by the interpretation of the underlying context [9]. This summative content analysis was used in categorizing the corporations as well as their respective programs into clusters to draw on existing patterns, and link between their nature, program motivators and CSR programs.

Content analysis was also done to highlight features and findings in the CSR programs of the corporations. This was done through characterizing the nutrition-related CSR programs based on five program assessment parameters. The parameters used to characterize the programs include (1) efficacy, (2) appropriateness, (3) effectiveness, (4) timeliness, and (5) continuity. These parameters were adapted from the Department of Health Hospital Nutrition and Dietetics Service Management Manual (2004). The parameters were selected to characterize the programs as the description of each can assess the details across certain unrelated and different programs.

Descriptive analysis was also done particularly by using mean and frequency to further describe the characterization of the programs based on assessment parameters.

## **Results and Discussion**

### *Profile of the Corporations*

A total of six corporations were included in the study (Table 1). The business and industry they cover range from

Food and Beverage, Retail, Property and Banks to Oil Refining and to Power and Energy. All of the corporations have a nationwide presence of their business operations, with market presence on Southeast Asia, some parts of the Middle East and the United States. Two of the corporations are global brands.

The CSR programs of these corporations ranges from education to disaster response, environment, enterprise and livelihood development and health and well-being. Two of the corporations handle their own CSR programs while four have created foundations that serves as the CSR arm of the mother corporations.

### *Motivating factors for companies to do CSR*

The motivating factors for doing CSR of the corporations are: 1) the corporations' vision and mission, 2) core values, and 3) response to national emergencies.

A company's vision describes the organization in its successful future state. A mission statement, on the other hand, explains the company's reason for existence by describing what it does and its overall intention. Core values describe the beliefs of the organization and direct its behaviour [10]. Given that two of the main motivators of the corporations are their mission and vision, and core values, it can be inferred that the CSRs are value-driven. A value-driven CSR is when it is presented as being part of the company's culture, or as an expression of its core values [11]. CSR programs that spring from the influence of internal motivators such as corporate values and mission and vision gives an ethical direction to the behaviour of a company [12]. Table 2 presents the mission, vision and core values of the respondent corporations. Among the six corporations, only Corporation 5 has stipulated nutrition as a direct category of their CSR scope. At first glance on the CSR program scope of the other five corporations, the aspect of nutrition can be embedded under their health and well-being programs; as nutrition programs are usually made part or closely linked to such programs. The commonly occurring core values of the corporations include integrity, team work, innovation, responsibility, customer focus and honesty (Table 2).

In this study, focus was more on the identified motivator which is the corporations' mission and vision which was used as basis of comparison and discussion for the CSR programs. Brønn mentioned that "if a company is to be believed that it truly is committed to developing principles that guide its behaviour in society, then these

**Table1.** Corporate and CSR profile of the corporations.

CORPORATIONS	CORPORATE PROFILE		CSR PROFILE	
	INDUSTRY/ BUSINESS TYPE	GEOGRAPHIC MARKET	SCOPE OF CSR PROGRAM CATEGORIES	WITH OWN CSR FOUNDATION ARM
Corporation 1	Power, banking, financial services, food, land, construction, shipbuilding and infrastructure	Nationwide locally, expansion in South East Asia	Education, enterprise development, environment, health and well-being.	Yes
Corporation 2	Fast food chain	Nationwide locally, South East Asia, Middle East and United States	Disaster response, education, leadership development, livelihood development, issues that are also of relevance to the company's core business.	Yes
Corporation 3	Retail, Property and Banks	Nationwide locally, some parts of South East Asia	Care for persons with special needs, disaster response, education, farmers' training, healthcare, shelter.	Yes
Corporation 4	Beverages, Food, Packaging, Properties, Oil Refining and Marketing, Power and Energy, Infrastructure, Other business (Insurance brokerage, bank of commerce, shipping and lighterage, retirement fund, stock transfer)	Nationwide locally, some parts of South East Asia	Disaster management, community development, education, environmental stewardship, livelihood development, health, volunteerism.	Yes
Corporation 5	Food and beverage	Global	Health and nutrition, environment, rural development	No
Corporation 6	Food, beverage, cleaning agents, personal care product	Global	Health and well-being, environment, livelihood	No

principles must be incorporated in the organization's mission, vision and values [13].” The importance of aligning the CSR effort of corporations to its mission and vision is also emphasized in his work as he stated that “the companies' commitment to corporate social responsibility as stipulated into their mission statement becomes the driver of all the aspects regarding its implementation. In this way, the decisions made by a company are not only for its best interest but are in consideration of the best interest of society as well”.

### Nutrition-Related CSR Programs

The nutrition-related CSR programs included in the study are feeding program, food fortification, product labelling, product reformulation, healthy lifestyle program, nutrition education, food production, medical services and water, sanitation and hygiene. These programs were grouped into nutrition specific and nutrition sensitive interventions (Table 3). Four corporations (Corporations 1, 2, 4 and 5) have CSR programs that fall under both nutrition specific and nutrition

**Table 2.** Core values, key focus and CSR program scope of the corporations.

CORPORATION	CORE VALUES	KEY FOCUS	CSR PROGRAM SCOPE
Corporation 1 (Corporate Foundation)	Integrity Team work Innovation Responsibility Excellence Honesty and integrity Frugality Teamwork Humility to listen and learn Respect for the individual Spirit of family and fun Customer focus	Empowered people Sustainable communities	Education Enterprise development Environment Health and well-being Disaster response
Corporation 2		Improved access to basic services for Filipinos Empowered people	Education Leadership development Livelihood development
Corporation 3	Building trust Valuing relationship Pioneering innovation Continuous learning and growth	Empowered people and sustainable environment. Create program that promotes a cycle of positive change	Care for person with special needs Disaster response Education Farmers training Health care Shelter
Corporation 4	Passion for success Team work Respect for our people Customer focus Innovativeness Integrity	Promote productive and self-reliant communities	Community development Disaster management Education Environmental stewardship Health Livelihood development Volunteerism
Corporation 5	Values are reflected in the way business is done, always acting legally and honestly with respect both for the corporation's people and those they do business with.	Enhanced quality of life and contribute to healthier world while ensuring long term success of company.	Environment Health and nutrition Rural development
Corporation 6	Integrity Commitment Positive impact Setting aspirations Working with others	Grow business while reducing environmental footprint and increasing positive social impact.	Environment Health and well-being Livelihood

**Table 3.** Nutrition-related CSR programs of the corporations.

CORPORATIONS	CSR PROGRAMS								
	Nutrition Sensitive			Nutrition Specific					
	FP	WASH	MS	FPP	FF	PR	FL	HLP	NE
Corporation 1		✓	✓	✓	✓				
Corporation 2	✓			✓					
Corporation 3			✓						
Corporation 4		✓	✓	✓					
Corporation 5	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Corporation 6				✓					

FP – food production; WASH – water, sanitation, and hygiene; MS – medical services; FPP – feeding program; FF – food fortification; PR – product reformulation; FL – food labelling; HLP – Healthy Lifestyle Program; NE – nutrition education



sensitive interventions, one corporation (Corporation 3) has program under nutrition sensitive intervention and one other corporation (Corporation 6) has CSR program under the nutrition specific intervention.

#### *Program Characterization*

The nine CSR programs of the corporations were characterized based on a set of parameters which include: efficacy, appropriateness, effectiveness, timeliness and continuity. A program is rated positive if it manifests the characteristic described by each parameter. Efficacy is when the program is able to accomplish the desired outcomes based on their objectives. Appropriateness on the other hand is when a program is relevant to the target population's needs. Effectiveness is when a program is provided in the correct manner in order to achieve the desired outcome for the target population. Timeliness is manifested by a program or intervention if it is provided at the most beneficial/ necessary time. Continuity is when a program or intervention is coordinated among the stakeholders and organization and is sustained over time [14].

Table 4 summarizes the rating given to the CSR programs of each corporation.

Table 5 shows the summary of the average rating per program and the combined ratings of these programs per corporation. An average rating of 5 means that a specific program exhibits all of the 5 parameters. Feeding program got the highest rating (4.75) based on the five assessment parameter used. This shows that in terms of efficacy, appropriateness, effectiveness, timeliness and continuity, the feeding program of the corporations were found to highly exhibit all the said criteria. This is followed by food production with 4.5 average rating. WASH and healthy lifestyle program ranked third with an average rating of 4. This is followed by medical services and product reformulation with an average rating of 3. Food fortification ranked fifth with an average rating of 2.5. Lastly, food labelling and nutrition education programs ranked 6th with an average rating of 2.0. It is to be noted however that the assessment of the programs were based on the general information provided by the corporations and rating for some of the programs cannot be justified using the available data therefore no rating (marked by \*) was given.

When ranked based on the combined average rating of their programs, Corporation 2 ranked first with a rating of 4.5. Corporation 2's CSR programs include food production and feeding program. Corporation 4 and Corporation 6

ranked second of which both got an average positive rating of 4.0. Corporation 1 ranked third with an average rating of 3.5. Corporation 5, ranked fourth with an average rating of 3.2 and Corporation 3 ranked fourth with an average rating of 3.0. The mean rating for all the six Corporations is 3.31. This means that on average, 3 out of 5 criteria are manifested by the Corporations' CSR programs.

Appropriateness, effectiveness and efficacy are the most exhibited characteristics of the programs (Table 6). A total of 16 out of the 17 programs assessed exhibit appropriateness, 15 out of 17 exhibit effectiveness and 13 out of 17 exhibit efficacy. This means that the CSR programs show high relevance to the need of the target population. They were also able to achieve their desired program objectives and this also shows that the programs were provided in the correct manner to achieve the desired outcomes for their target population.

#### *Link of the Nature of the Corporations and Nutrition-related CSR Programs*

The details of the CSR profile of the corporations were grouped into three clusters to further understand their nature (Figure 2) and to give a more comprehensive pattern of the nutrition-related CSRs discussed in the study. The main delineating component of each cluster is the presence of food and beverage component in their business nature. The CSR environment of the corporation ranges from a wide cluster of business industries; one common denominator however is that Corporations 1, 2, 4, 5 and 6 have food and beverage in their main businesses or as part of their business portfolio; and with only one corporation (Corporation 3) having no direct food and beverage component in their business. Also, two of the five corporations have their main business on the food and beverage industry. For this reason this has been used to determine the three clusters. Since food corporations are more closely linked to the concept of nutrition, this is another reason to draw an overview of the nutrition-related CSR of such corporations. The details of the nutrition-related CSR programs of the corporations can therefore be better looked into; specifically distinguishing among those which have food and beverage as their main business, those with food and beverage as component of their business portfolio and the corporation with no direct business in the food industry.

Cluster 1 includes the CSR programs of corporations whose main business is in food and beverage industry. Included in this cluster are Corporations 2 which is the leading fast-food chain owner in the country and

**Table 4.** *Summary of ratings of CSR programs per corporations*

CSR PROGRAMS PER CORPORATION	RATING				
	Efficacy	Appropriateness	Effectiveness	Timeliness	Continuity
Corporation 1					
WASH	+	+	+	*	+
Medical services	+	+	+	*	*
Feeding program	+	+	+	+	+
Food fortification	+	+	*	*	*
Corporation 2					
Food production	+	+	+	*	+
Feeding Program	+	+	+	+	+
Corporation 3					
Medical services	+	+	+	*	*
Corporation 4					
WASH	+	+	+	*	+
Medical services	+	+	+	*	*
Feeding program	+	+	+	+	+
Corporation 5					
Food Production	+	+	+	+	+
Food fortification	*	+	+	*	+
Product reformulation	*	+	*	+	+
Food labelling	*	*	+	*	+
Healthy lifestyle program	+	+	+	+	*
Nutrition education	*	+	+	*	*
Corporation 6					
Feeding program	+	+	+	+	*

A positive sign (+) indicates that a specific program exhibits the corresponding parameter, while an asterisk sign (\*) indicates that there is no supporting data to justify if the program manifest the said parameter.

**Table 5.** Summary of rating per corporation and per program.

CORPORATIONS	POSITIVE RATING PER PROGRAM									
	Nutrition Sensitive			Nutrition Specific						
	FP	WASH	MS	FPP	FF	PR	FL	HLP	NE	Average per corporation
Corporation 1		4	3	5	2					3.5
Corporation 2	4			5						4.5
Corporation 3			3							3.0
Corporation 4		4	3	5						4.0
Corporation 5	5				3	3	2	4	2	3.2
Corporation 6				4						4.0
Average per program	4.50	4.00	3.00	4.75	2.50	3.00	2.00	4.00	2.00	Mean: 3.31

**Table 6.** Frequency of programs that rated positive on each of the assessment parameter.

ASSESSMENT PARAMETER	FREQUENCY OF PROGRAM WITH POSITIVE RATING
Efficacy	13
Appropriateness	16
Effectiveness	15
Timeliness	7
Continuity	10

\*total of 17 individual CSR programs assessed

Business Nature	CLUSTER 1 Food and beverage as main business	CLUSTER 2 Food and beverage as component of business	CLUSTER 3 No direct food and beverage component
Corporations	Corporations 2 and 5	Corporations 1,4 and 6	Corporations 3
<b>Highlight of Mission/ Vision (CSR Foundation and Company)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved access to basic services</li> <li>Enhanced quality of life</li> <li>Contribute to healthier world while ensuring long term company success</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Empowered people and sustainable communities</li> <li>Productive and self-reliant communities</li> <li>Reducing environmental footprint and increasing positive social impact while growing business</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Empowered people and sustainable environment</li> <li>Creates program that promotes positive changes</li> </ul>
<b>Scope of CSR Program Categories</b>	Education, environment, leadership development, livelihood development, rural development, disaster response, health and nutrition	Education, environment, environmental stewardship, community development, livelihood development, enterprise development, disaster response, health and well-being	Care for persons with special needs, disaster response, education, farmers' training, healthcare, shelter
<b>Nutrition Related CSR Programs</b>	Health and well-being/ education: Feeding Program  Livelihood development: Food Production  Health and nutrition: Food fortification, product reformulation, food labelling, healthy lifestyle program, nutrition education	Health and well-being: Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), Medical Services, Feeding program   Disaster response: Food fortification	Healthcare: Medical services
<b>Type of Nutrition Related CSR Programs</b>	Nutrition specific Nutrition sensitive	Nutrition specific Nutrition sensitive	Nutrition sensitive

**Figure 1.** Three CSR clusters with nutrition-related program component



Corporation 5 which is a leading global health and nutrition brand. Cluster 2 includes those corporations which have food and beverage business as part of their portfolio but does not comprise their main business. Included in this cluster are Corporation 1 which has a food unit business, Corporation 4 which has a food manufacturing unit as well as beverage production and distillery business, and Corporation 6 which is a global brand that has a wide market distribution of packaged food as part of their product mix. Cluster 3 includes Corporation 3 which has no direct food and beverage component on its business ventures.

The clusters are also based on the assumption that since the respondent corporation answered that their mission and vision are one of the main motivators for their CSR initiatives, the CSR program scope that arise from each cluster is somewhat influenced by the corporation's mission and vision. The specific nutrition-related CSR programs of each cluster also therefore are influenced by the mission and vision of the corporations implementing it.

Looking on the three clusters of nutrition-related CSR programs, the following generalizations were made concerning the association of the corporations' nature and the nutrition-related CSR that they implement:

1. Corporations having their main business on the food and beverage industry have the most nutrition-related CSR programs listed on the study and also has the most number of nutrition-specific programs. The study shows that the two corporations under cluster 1 which have their business mainly on the food industry has implemented the most number of nutrition-related CSR in the study. The importance of aligning CSR initiatives with core business competencies and strategies to produce a more effective and fit approach is often given emphasis [7]. It therefore necessarily follows that food and beverage companies can center their CSR programs more on nutrition-related effort. Cluster 1 also has mostly nutrition-specific interventions as part of their CSR. Nutrition-specific interventions are those that targets nutrition improvement as its main goal.

2. Corporations with their business having a food and beverage components tend to implement nutrition-related CSR programs as part of their business strategy as reflected on the corporations' mission and vision. On top of their nutrition-related CSR effort, generation of profit or making their companies sustain economic growth by conducting CSRs are also noted on the mission and vision of the corporations. This can be directly seen on Cluster 1 or those

with food and beverage as part of their main business and in Cluster 2 or those with a component food and beverage area of their business portfolio. It can be therefore noted that introducing nutrition-related CSR particularly nutrition-specific interventions is also embedded as business strategy of those corporations with business on the food and beverage industry. This is in accordance to the Triple bottom line approach of addressing both the social concern (malnutrition) and economic aspect (business profitability and growth) to ensure sustainability of their business and CSR programs as well [15].

3. Corporation that does not have a food and beverage component under its business umbrella implemented nutrition-sensitive intervention. Corporation 3 with its business portfolio not covering any direct food and beverage business has implemented medical mission programs, a nutrition-sensitive intervention. Nutrition sensitive interventions are those programs that target the underlying causes of malnutrition.

Other generalization noted referring to the three CSR clusters include (1) Nutrition related CSR programs are not always regarded by the corporations as part of the health and nutrition or health and well-being programs even when it is a nutrition specific program. The food fortification program of Corporation 1 for instance which includes the development of nutrient-packed biscuits is part of their disaster response CSR program. This is for the reason that this product is intended to be distributed to disaster affected families in communities affected by disasters or calamities. (2) 'Sustainable communities', 'empowered people', 'improved access to basic services' 'self-reliant and productive communities', 'contribute to a healthier world' and 'positive social impact' is seen as the key focus of the CSR strategies of the respondent corporation as reflected on their mission and vision, and with it, health and nutrition are part of implemented CSR programs. Considering that mission and vision are main motivators of the corporations' CSR, it can be noted that they are aiming to impact on not only giving help to their stakeholders but also to 'empower and uplift their life condition'. They aim as well to make a more 'sustainable environment and community'. Along with such aims, nutrition aspects are being addressed as part of their goals, as based on the nutrition-related CSR programs implemented by these corporations.

#### *CSR Programs and its Contribution to Nutrition Improvement*

The programs included in the study have the capacity to impact on nutrition improvement by being able to address

some of the immediate, underlying and basic causes of malnutrition, as reflected on the attainment of their programs' goals and objectives. These goals and objectives are relevant in targeting malnutrition.

**Food Production Programs.** The goals of the food production programs included in the study are (1) to generate livelihood for the participants and (2) enhance the knowledge of the beneficiary on gardening so as to help the beneficiary obtain better access to a healthy food supply.

The food production program covered in the study includes a program that helps improve the welfare of the Filipino farmers through an inclusive business approach that linked smallholder farmers to institutional markets to increase their income. The implementing corporation partnered with government agencies, non-governmental organizations, microfinance institution, and academe to address the challenges and build farmers' capacities. This addresses the basic cause of malnutrition which is access to support network of beneficiary and livelihood. According to FAO Agricultural production and other food system activities can increase avenues for creating income selling of agricultural produce or labor [16]. This can contribute in both directly improving nutrition by food production and indirectly through an increase in income to buy nutritious food.

Another food production program is the establishment of school gardens done by one of the corporations in collaboration with the Bureau of Plant Industry of the Department of Agriculture. Under this program, an area of a school is allotted for production of nutrient rich fruit and vegetable. Produce from this was used to feed underweight school children. The implementing organization has also signed with an NGO to further expand its school garden training to teachers across the country. Data from the Department of Education, School Health and Nutrition Unit (2012-2013) shows that there are 2 million malnourished schoolchildren (14% of total number of elementary students), making the program an appropriate complimentary intervention towards further improving the nutritional status of the malnourished school children. The Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations also recommended to promote the establishment of school gardens as an integral part of school nutrition programmes [17].

**Water, Sanitation and Hygiene.** The goal of the WASH program of the corporation is providing access to potable water to communities without such facilities, and improving water, sanitation and hygiene practices. These goals target

the underlying cause of malnutrition which is poor water and sanitation.

The WASH programs of the corporations include water system installation on communities without access to potable water along with sanitation campaigns. One of the corporations also organized barangay water councils in their partner communities. These water councils monitor and manage the water system within the community. Along with these programs, the corporations have reported to have achieved their goals, making their programs relevant to nutrition improvement of their target community.

The promotion of WASH or water, sanitation and hygiene has been cited by several references and studies to be an important component of fighting undernutrition. According to the World Health Organization, it is estimated that 50% of malnutrition is associated with repeated diarrhoea or intestinal worm infections as a result of unsafe water, inadequate sanitation or insufficient hygiene [18]. WASH interventions is also an important component of programs that target stunting- a chronic form of undernutrition. Recent findings indicate a relationship between stunting and poor water, sanitation and hygiene. It has also been found that even well-nourished children are highly susceptible to stunting when WASH condition is poor (UNICEF-EAPRO, 2016).

**Medical Services.** The medical services programs of the corporations have objectives which included medical and ancillary services to indigent families as well communities in underserved areas. The programs also aim for the improvement on the access to health services. These program goals can attend to the underlying cause of malnutrition which is inadequate health services.

The programs include mostly medical mission with the provision of medicines and medical equipments to their beneficiaries. Also part of the medical services was setting up of community clinics which covers both common and specialized illness; and deployment of mobile clinics that provide diagnostic and laboratory services. These medical services of the corporations combined have a nationwide coverage.

Although the conduct of medical missions is widespread, concerns have been raised regarding the totality of its effectiveness. One is the "paucity of follow up data, poor relations with the local health care system and lack of sustainability can challenge the good intentions of missions" [19]. Also, medical missions are often unable to provide the full spectrum of care required for complex medical conditions [20].

The medical mission and community clinic CSR programs however seems to be addressing some of the previously mentioned concerns. For instance, most of the CSR medical mission programs were done in partnership with health authorities such as the Department of Health and Provincial Health Units which may help ensure that they can administer their intervention in the most effective way possible through proper collaboration. The CSR programs also included a mobile laboratory which can provide laboratory and other diagnostic test for more accurate handling of the medical condition of the beneficiaries. Along with the medical services itself, there are also some complementary training on health and sanitation for the families of the communities served as well as training of barangay health workers. These trainings help impart knowledge to the beneficiaries which can aid in the prevention and management of some of the preventable illnesses.

**Feeding Program.** The goal of the feeding programs implemented by the Corporations include promotion of education and envisions alleviating short term hunger by minimizing malnutrition, reducing vulnerability of children to malnutrition and improvement of nutritional status of the beneficiaries. These objective of improving the nutritional status of the beneficiary according to the respondent corporations has been achieved.

The programs of the corporations include the provision of caloric-rich breads during snack time to grade 1 students thrice weekly, for 45 weeks. Another corporation implemented daily serving of lunch for 120 days among undernourished Grades 1 to 3 students. This program also included the establishment of School Feeding Kitchen to further improve the services of the program. Another program involves a three-step model which includes (1) actual feeding program (2) provision of recipe booklet and teaching mothers how to prepare nutritious and affordable dishes and (3) supporting mothers to set up their own business via livelihood development modules.

There are several positive aspects of the implemented feeding programs that contribute to addressing malnutrition. For instance, one aspect of the CSR feeding programs included in the study which renders it more effective is that they were done not as a standalone intervention. They were done in conjunction with other programs such as nutrition education and backyard gardening. When activities like school gardening, nutrition education are linked to the school feeding programme, they

help address common nutrition and health problems, as well as enhance the overall programme impact [16]. Also, the areas covered by the feeding program are also dispersed around different locations in the country. The school feeding program however of Corporation 4 is notable due to the coverage of its feeding programs on areas that are pointed to have high prevalence of undernutrition (as per the 8th National Nutrition Survey); these areas includes the regions of ARMM, SOCCSKSARGEN and MIMAROPA. The programs were also conducted for a minimum of 120 days which is the minimum number of days to affect change in nutritional status in feeding programs. Complimentary activities were also done with the feeding program such as the deworming activity. School-age children have the most intense worm infections, the presence of which hinders the proper absorption and utilization of nutrients given to a child during school feeding [21]. Another positive aspect of the feeding program is manifested in one of the corporations three-step model. This model includes added activities that enhances the knowledge and capacity of mothers such as cooking demonstration on healthy meals preparation. It also includes trainings on improving the livelihood of the mothers of the beneficiaries. This is a notable addition as empowering mothers are also a way of further enhancing the impact of nutrition programs. Empirical evidence suggests that empowering women improves nutrition for mothers, their children, and other household members [22]. Increasing their source of livelihood is also a good feature of the program as some studies have found that women's discretionary income has greater impact on child nutrition and food security than men's [23]. And lastly, another positive aspect is the corporations alignment of their effort with Department of Education's (DepEd) School Based Feeding Program (SBFP). One of the corporations' school feeding program has been mainstreamed into DepEd's SBFP. Their school feeding kitchen, as well as their recipes from their own feeding programs has also been consolidated to DepEd's SBFP. This effort of partnering their own feeding programs with DepEd's SBFP would not only broaden the reach of their CSR feeding programs but will also enable a more sustainable program. According to an article published by the World Bank effectiveness and sustainability of feeding programs are assured when it is embedded in the education system [24].

**Food fortification.** The food fortification program's goals included in the study are to provide immediate relief to hunger and provide adequate nutrition to families affected by disasters and to fortify 22 billion products in 2016. Both programs, though differing in target attends to the

immediate cause of malnutrition which is poor nutrient and dietary intake.

Under the food fortification programs, one corporation developed a high energy biscuit which is packed with energy and essential nutrients. The biscuit contains 450kcal which is almost equivalent to one full meal, and contains proteins, vitamins B1 to B12, carbohydrates, added sugar, fat, vitamins A, C, and E, Iodine, iron, magnesium and calcium. This biscuit is intended to be a disaster relief solution for disaster affected families nationwide. For this reason it is made to be a ready to eat, ready to transport and easy to store and stack good. The implementing organization also mentioned that this specific biscuit can also be used to supplement school based feeding program.

The second CSR program under food fortification is a product fortification (micronutrient fortification) effort of Corporation 5. This is a voluntary food fortification effort. The corporation's products have been fortified with any of the following ingredients: Iron, Zinc, Vitamin A and C, and Iodine. These fortified products are distributed nationwide and targets a wide range of consumers. For this program to be more successful, they have partnered with the Food and Nutrition Research Institute- Department of Science of Technology (FNRI-DOST).

There are notable aspects of the food fortification programs included in the study which could contribute on addressing malnutrition. One of the corporations' product fortification was given a positive rating on the program characterization in this study as the micronutrients were placed on the right vehicle product- milk and seasoning. Both are widely availed by consumers of their products. Also the nutrients that they fortify their products with address the three most common forms of micronutrient malnutrition which are iron, vitamin A and iodine deficiencies. Of the three, iron deficiency is the most prevalent (WHO and FAO) and is also responsible for roughly half of the global prevalence of anaemia [25]. In the country particularly, deficiencies in vitamin A, iron, and iodine are also a target concern included in the Philippine Plan of Action for Nutrition for the year 2017-2022. Anemia is also considered a moderate public health significance for selected age group specifically among infants from 6 months to less than 1 year, pregnant women and male adults 60 year of age and above [4]. The iron-fortified milk of one of the corporations covers the bracket of pregnant women and male adults 60 years and above who are found to have a moderate level of anemia. Another notable aspect of the

food fortification program is in accordance with World Health Organization's (2006) recommendation that fortified food needs to be consumed in adequate amounts by a large proportion of the target individuals in a population. The food vehicles to be fortified should be preferably centrally processed which can be achieved by the support of the food industry. Corporation 5 being a food and beverage company, and considering the reach of their product helps ensure that their fortified goods can be consumed by a larger number of the population. Their products having a nationwide reach helped attain their objective of fortifying 22 billion products.

Healthy lifestyle program. The healthy lifestyle program included in the study has a goal of promoting the active lifestyle via physical activity and nutrition. Their objective renders the program able to address the underlying cause of malnutrition which is inadequate feeding practices and behaviour as well as sedentary lifestyle behaviour.

One of the healthy lifestyle program is school based program that promotes an active and healthy lifestyle among public elementary students. The program includes lectures on physical activity, and "sports-themed" dance steps during flag raising ceremony. It is done in partnership with the Department of Education. Another healthy lifestyle program promotes eating right and engaging in regular exercise. It is comprised of a 15 minute lecture on nutrition followed by a dance exercise, conducted during the school's flag raising ceremony. This program targets both elementary and high school students

The bulk target of these programs are school children and most of them were implemented in schools. According to FAO developing healthy dietary and lifestyle patterns starting on early age can positively impact on the nutrition and health throughout adult lives. The implementation of these activities on school setting has also its positive effect on nutrition promotion. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, schools (from pre-school to secondary) are ideal settings for promoting lifelong healthy eating habits and lifestyles (IIRR, 2016) [17].

Nutrition Education Programs. The goal of the nutrition education programs of the corporation is raising awareness of proper and healthy food choices, balanced meal, physical activity, food safety behaviour and reading of food labels.

The programs include teaching children in school the value of "healthy eating habits, balanced and nutritious meals,



physical activity, food safety and understanding food labels.”. Another program targets mothers and involves educating them on basic nutrition as well as preparing nutritious and affordable meals for their family. This is in line with the recommendation of FAO which states that nutrition education should also focus on strengthening education and training opportunities, especially for girls and women. Apart from the lecture, this also involves hands on food preparation and cooking sessions. The program also partners with the local government unit. The program was rated positive in the characterization due to the combination of hands-on cooking preparation coupled with nutrition lecture. As per the Food and Agriculture Organization nutrition education should always employ a wide range of hands-on teaching/learning methods [17].

Another nutrition education program promotes wellness advocacy to shoppers on the supermarket. This program is also given positive rating in the characterization. This is because of the approach of one on one counselling with the shoppers which was done by a Registered Nutritionist-Dietitians. Collaborating with professionals who are capable of discussing the topic of nutrition to the target beneficiaries helps ensure that the objective of the program of educating people regarding basic nutrition as well as product knowledge is attained.

Nutrition education has many notable importance and benefits. First, it empowers consumers about what to purchase and enable them to select healthy food and make good food choices for them and their family. It also enables women to improve their child's nutrition. In children, it can improve their educational achievement. Lastly, it also enables people to determine between false and useful nutrition information [17].

Product reformulation. The objective of the product reformulation effort of one of the Corporations was not indicated in the study. Although the implementing corporation did not disclose their objective for their product reformulation, the description of their program shows that it can address the immediate cause of malnutrition which is poor dietary intake.

The program includes reduction of saturated fat, trans-fat, added sugar, and sodium content in a way that still preserves the quality and taste of their product. Reducing these contents can help in nutrition improvement as high consumption of them are linked to the development of certain non-communicable diseases, as well as to the rise in the incidence of obesity.

The implementing corporation has a policy and clear target on the reduction of such ingredients. Their prescribed criteria for reformulating their products are based on reputable health authorities such as the World Health Organization. This program has also the capacity to reach the general population as the products of this Corporation that they have reformulated are distributed and available nationwide.

The World Health Organization and other official bodies, has identified the practice of product reformulation as a key tool that can be done by the food industry to help address public health nutrition priorities. This can also pave way to helping on the reduction of excessive dietary intake of sugar, salt and fats of the general population [26].

Food labelling. The food labelling effort included in the study has the capacity to effect on nutrition improvement by targeting the underlying cause of malnutrition which is inadequate feeding practices and behaviour. The corporation's food labelling program enables customer to choose products based on its nutrient composition in relation to their needs, and serves a guide to healthful food choices. The description obtained from the corporation's food labelling program was contrasted to some of the applicable guidelines on the Codex Guidelines on Nutrition Labelling (FAO, 1993).

The first principle is “Nutrient Declaration. Information supplied should be for the purpose of providing consumers with a suitable profile of nutrients contained in the food and considered to be of nutritional importance”. The corporations food labelling stated that they provide straightforward information on ingredients, nutritional benefits, health information and portion size on all their packaging. Also, they ensure that the information they provide are truthful, meaningful, transparent, and backed by science and is not misleading. They also strive for the accurateness of its labels.

The second principle “Nutrient declaration. The information should not lead consumers to believe that there is exact quantitative knowledge of what individuals should eat in order to maintain health, but rather to convey an understanding of the quantity of nutrients contained in the product.” The corporation described their nutrition labelling effort as enabling consumers to make informed choices about the nutritional content of a product at point of sale, promoting healthy portion consumption and informing consumers about the nutritional content of a product. This is

in accordance with Principle 2 of conveying an understanding of the nutrition content of a product.

The third principle 'Nutrition labelling- Nutrition labelling should not deliberately imply that a food which carries such labelling has necessarily any nutritional advantage over a food which is not so labelled.' The nutrition labels placed by the implementing corporation on their products also does not imply its nutritional advantage over other labelled food, this of which is in accordance with the third principle of Codex.

However, some studies are still looking on the effectiveness of nutrition labelling on influencing consumer to select healthful food [27,28,29]. This can therefore be a focus of future studies.

In summary, based on the discussion presented, the CSR programs were found to address the immediate, underlying and basic causes of malnutrition. The immediate causes addressed were poor nutrient and dietary intake. The underlying causes include poor water and sanitation, inadequate health services, insufficient supply or access to healthy food, inadequate feeding practices and behaviours and sedentary lifestyle behaviours. One program even addressed the basic cause of malnutrition which has also been linked to poverty which is access to support networks and livelihood.

## Conclusion

The study shows that the nutrition related CSR programs of the six companies are aligned with its mission and vision, and its CSR programs are primarily influenced by the nature of its business. Corporations in the food and beverage industry implements the most number of nutrition-related CSR programs that are mostly focused on nutrition-specific interventions. Analysis of the data obtained shows that the nutrition related CSR presented in the study have the capacity to contribute on nutrition improvement by being able to address some of the immediate, underlying and basic causes of malnutrition. This is further supplemented by the following findings: First, the programs were found to be characteristic of program appropriateness, effectiveness and efficacy and shows minimal gap in contrast to guidelines. They were also coordinated and collaborated with relevant institutions such as government agencies, NGOs and organizational authorities in the respective program fields which further add to the programs potential. Finally, given the resources attributed to the large nature of

the corporations, the programs reached large number of beneficiaries and areas nationwide; and were even able to cover areas where nutrition-intervention is needed. From these results, it is recommended to advocate for private companies for the integration of nutrition in existing corporate social programs.

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