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THE ACCOUNTABILITY OF PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS WITH FOOD, BEVERAGE AND QUICK-SERVE RESTAURANT COMPANIES TO ADDRESS GLOBAL HUNGER AND THE DOUBLE BURDEN OF MALNUTRITION

Vivica I. Kraak, MS, RD,§ Boyd Swinburn, MB ChB, MD, FRACP,§ Mark Lawrence, PhD§ and Paul Harrison, PhD§

§Research Fellow, WHO Collaborating Centre for Obesity Prevention, and PhD Candidate, Deakin Population Health Strategic Research Centre, School of Health and Social Development, Deakin University, Australia; orts Professor and Director, WHO Collaborating Centre for Obesity Prevention, Deakin Population Health Strategic Research Centre, Deakin University, Australia; Associate Professor of Public Health Nutrition, WHO Collaborating Centre for Obesity Prevention, Deakin Population Health Strategic Research Centre, School of Exercise and Nutrition Sciences, Deakin University, Australia; Senior Lecturer of Marketing, Deakin Graduate School of Business, Deakin University, Australia.

Author statement: The authors declared not having any conflict of interest.

INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, transformative systems change has been a goal for diverse groups tackling the most urgent public health nutrition challenges affecting billions of people worldwide. Systems change is sought through new governance structures, innovative business models and participatory approaches that foster meaningful public and private sector stakeholder engagement and action (Institute of Medicine 2009; McLachlan and Garrett 2008; Morris et al. 2008; Traitler, Watzke and Saguy 2011; WHO 2004, 2008a).

Multisectoral collaborations, coalitions, strategic alliances and public-private partnerships (PPP)§ are mechanisms through which stakeholders are pursuing systems change to address a range of nutrition needs throughout the life course. This approach entails replacing the “one issue, one business, and one non-governmental organization (NGO) paradigm” with new models that encourage stakeholders to interact in different ways (Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition [GAIN] 2010). No single entity has sufficient funding, resources, influence, expertise or reach to tackle the complex nutrition challenges in communities, at national and regional levels, or worldwide (World Health Organization [WHO] 2008b). Three rationales support pursuing strategic alliances and partnerships: to address unmet needs, to focus on specific under-resourced priorities, and to create synergy that adds value to target nutrition and health goals (McLachlan and Garrett 2008; WHO 2008b; Working Group on Global Health Partnerships 2005).

Strategic alliances and PPP are used to address emergencies, natural disasters and build disaster resilience (National Research Council 2010; Thomas and Fritz 2006); to alleviate poverty and mitigate global hunger and food insecurity (Agree 2011; IBRD/The World Bank 2011; United Nations [UN] 2009; US Agency for International Development [USAID] 2011); to tackle undernutrition and micronutrient deficiencies (GAIN 2009, 2010; Yach et al. 2010b); and to promote healthy lifestyles to prevent and manage obesity and lifestyle-related, chronic noncommunicable diseases (NCD) (Hancock, Kingo and Raynaud 2011; Kraak and Story 2010; Sridhar, Morrison and Piot 2011; Yach et al. 2010b).

Effective collaboration is difficult, takes time and involves building trust. Partnerships may be fraught with controversy and ideological landmines. Partners may share different goals, values and understanding of problems that lead to disagreements and devaluing others’ preferred strategies to address challenges (Austin 2000; Fawcett et al. 2010). An incompatible and poorly executed partnership can damage public trust, credibility and all partners’ brand reputations. Despite these challenges, diverse groups are engaging in partnerships to improve people’s diet quality and nutrition-related behaviours and health outcomes in countries worldwide.

PURPOSE OF THIS PAPER

This paper examines the partnerships, alliances and interactions of 15 transnational food, beverage and fast food§ or quick-serve restaurant (FBQSR) companies with UN System organizations, government agencies and NGOs to address global nutrition challenges. These issues have generated intense controversy, especially in preparation for the United Nations (UN) Millennium Summit on Preventing NCD in September 2011 (Cohen 2011; Lincoln et al. 2011).

A range of contentious issues have been raised, including: power imbal-

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1 There are many definitions for a public-private interaction or public-private partnership (PPP). In this paper, a PPP is defined as collaboration between public and private sector actors within diverse arrangements that vary according to participants, legal status, governance, management, policy-setting, contributions and operational roles to achieve specific goals and outcomes (WHO 2011b).

2 Fast food represents food, beverages and meals designed for ready availability, use or consumption and sold at eating establishments for consumption on the premises or take-out. In this paper, quick-serve restaurant (QSR) companies is the term used because it is used by the restaurant industry sector to describe a specific category of chain restaurants where fast food is sold and consumed, as opposed to full-serve restaurants or catering businesses.
ances among partners, ineffective management of inherent conflicts of interest, failure to establish strong safeguards to protect public health goals from being co-opted by commercial interests, inappropriate co-sponsorship and co-branding arrangements involving unhealthy food and beverage products, and a lack of clear boundaries between public-interest NGOs (PINGO) and business-interest NGOs (BINGO) (Brownell and Warner 2009; Buse and Harmer 2007; Freedhoff and Hébert 2011; Gilmore, Savell and Collin 2010; Koplan and Brownell 2010; Kraak et al. 2011; Lincoln et al. 2011; Ludwig and Nestle 2008; Monteiro, Gomes and Cannon 2010; Oshaug 2009; Richter 2004).

These issues have been extensively documented for tobacco, pharmaceutical and infant formula companies (Brownell and Warner 2009; Richter 2004). However, there are limited evaluations of PPP involving UN organizations, government agencies, NGOs and global FBQSR companies to address a spectrum of nutrition-related issues including global hunger, food insecurity, and the double burden of malnutrition (DBM) — undernutrition, overweight and obesity, and lifestyle-related NCD. Global FBQSR companies want to be recognized as legitimate partners who bring unique skills, assets and resources to address global nutrition challenges, and have requested “clear guidelines that articulate the domains within which partnerships are appropriate, effective and to be encouraged” (Mensah, Yach and Khan 2011).

We describe the scope of global hunger, food insecurity and the DBM before examining the resources needed and available (through private sector initiatives, interactions and partnerships) to help governments, UN system organizations and NGOs address these global nutrition challenges. We discuss the role of the private sector and examine selected examples of partnerships involving transnational FBQSR companies. These examples are just a snapshot of existing partnerships as many of these stakeholders are engaged in an array of single-agency partnerships and complex multi-partner arrangements.

We recommend that prospective partners use a benefit–risk decision-making pathway tool (see Figure 1) and an accountability lens before engaging with transnational FBQSR companies to address global nutrition challenges. Accountability means that some stakeholders have the right to hold other stakeholders to a set of performance standards; to evaluate whether they have accomplished their responsibility in meeting these standards; and to impose penalties, restrictions or sanctions if they do not accomplish these standards (Grant and Keohane 2005). Two dimensions of accountability should be considered: answerability, involving organizations and FBQSR companies that seek to provide an account of their decisions and actions to relevant stakeholders; and enforceability, involving government regulation or industry self-regulatory mechanisms to ensure corporate compliance with international and national laws, established standards, and legally binding or voluntary codes of conduct (Newell 2008; Partnership Governance and Accountability Initiative [PGAI] 2011).

We describe a six-step benefit–risk decision-making pathway tool to guide partnership engagement decisions to assess opportunities, compatibilities, and benefits versus risks; develop objectives and outcomes; execute a formal agreement with input from legal counsel; and ensure monitoring, evaluation and accountability. We suggest that all partners adopt systematic and transparent accountability processes to balance private commercial interests with public health interests, manage conflicts of interest and biases, ensure that co-branded activities support healthy products and healthy eating environments, comply with ethical codes of conduct, undertake due diligence to assess partnership compatibility, and monitor and evaluate partnership outcomes.

GLOBAL HUNGER AND THE DOUBLE BURDEN OF MALNUTRITION

Global public health nutrition issues are situated on a continuum of concern. Chronic hunger and food insecurity affect an estimated 925 million people in low- and middle-income countries (LMIC) (FAO 2010). Inadequate food and poor-quality diets contribute to undernutrition and micronutrient deficiencies causing nearly 8 million child deaths under five years and leading to child and adult morbidity (Black et al. 2008; Micronutrient Initiative 2009; UNICEF 2009). At the other end of the nutrition spectrum, poor-quality diets and sedentary lifestyles cause overweight and obesity among an estimated 43 million school-aged children under five years (de Onis et al. 2010), 155 to 200 million schoolaged children (Wang and Lobstein 2006), and 1.5 billion adult men and women worldwide (Finucane et al. 2011). Lifestyle-related NCD represent two thirds of the 57 million global deaths, of which nearly 80% occur in LMIC (Beaglehole et al. 2011; WHO 2011a).

Further complicating matters are the intergenerational nature (Delisle 2008; James 2005) and global manifestation of the DBM — the coexistence of maternal and child undernutrition (i.e. wasting, stunting and underweight) and micronutrient deficiencies (i.e. iron, vitamin A, iodine and zinc) with child or adult overweight, obesity and NCD in households, communities, and among vulnerable populations within and between countries (FAO 2006; Prentice 2006; Uauy et al. 2008). The UN System Standing Committee on Nutrition (UNSCN) acknowledged the

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3 Accountability is a concept linked to institutional performance and is a driver of governance. Accountability influences why decisions are made and governance influences how decisions are made (PGAI 2011).
Key Messages

- Multisectoral collaborations, coalitions, strategic alliances and public-private partnerships (PPP) are mechanisms through which stakeholders are pursuing systems change to address a range of nutrition needs throughout the life course.

- PPP take place within a context of governments being publicly accountable for protecting and promoting the nutritional health of their citizens. Since the 1980s, governments have increasingly relied on market-driven solutions to address public health nutrition challenges. The UN System has reinforced this trend by emphasizing private sector engagement through partnerships.

- We examine the alliances, partnerships and interactions of 15 transnational food, beverage and quick-serve restaurant (FBQSR) companies with UN System organizations, governments and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to address global nutrition challenges. PPP with global FBQSR companies have raised several contentious issues, including: power imbalances among partners, ineffective management of inherent conflicts of interest, and failure to establish strong safeguards to protect public health goals from being co-opted by commercial interests.

- We examine the signatory status of 15 global FBQSR companies to the UN Global Compact. Seven companies (i.e. Cargill, Danone, General Mills, Nestlé, PepsiCo, The Coca-Cola Company and Unilever) are signatories; eight companies (i.e. Burger King, Heinz, Kellogg Company, Mars Inc., McDonald’s Corporation, The Hershey Company and Yum! Brands) are not signatories; and although Kraft Foods Mexico was a signatory, it was expelled in 2011 for not communicating progress.

- The UN Global Compact should be amended to contain clear principles that support nutrition, consumer health and wellness. Global FBQSR companies should be held accountable for the products they manufacture and market, as well as their collective policies and actions to prevent and mitigate undernutrition, obesity and the projected noncommunicable diseases (NCD) burden among populations worldwide.

- Prospective partners should use a benefit–risk decision-making pathway tool and an accountability lens before engaging with transnational FBQSR companies to address global nutrition challenges.

- All partners should adopt systematic and transparent accountability processes to balance private commercial interests with public health interests, manage conflicts of interest and biases, ensure that co-branded activities support healthy products and healthy eating environments, comply with ethical codes of conduct, assess partnership compatibility, and monitor and evaluate partnership outcomes.

Resources needed to address global public health nutrition challenges

An estimated US$ 20 billion dollars annually is required to tackle the global DBM, which includes US$ 10 to 12 billion to scale up 13 proven nutrition interventions in 36 priority countries to prevent and treat undernutrition (UNSCN 2010b) and at least US$ 9 billion to implement five priority actions to reduce the risks of obesity and NCD (Beaglehole et al. 2011). Coalitions, multisectoral alliances and PPP are a potential way to raise and administer funds to address global hunger and components of the global DBM (GAIN 2009; Sridhar, Morrison and Piot 2011). Transnational FBQSR companies (see Table 1) and certain corporate foundations participate in several global alliances, coalitions and partnerships to address global nutrition challenges (Kraak et al. 2011).

Governments, businesses and private foundations have pledged billions of dollars through global alliances to develop new food and agricultural policies (Agree 2011); to use PPP to mitigate global poverty, hunger and food insecurity targeted by the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) (IBRD/The World Bank 2011; UN 2009); and also to support complementary initiatives such as the US Government’s Feed the Future (USAID 2011; US Government 2011). Resources have been pledged through the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) to address micronutrient deficiencies (GAIN 2009). Both Feed the Future and GAIN
partner with several global FBQSR companies.

Transnational FBQSR companies have also pledged to promote healthy lifestyles to prevent obesity and NCD rates through the International Food & Beverage Alliance (2011); European Platform for Action on Diet, Physical Activity and Health (The Evaluation Partnership 2010); US Healthy Weight Commitment Foundation (2011); and five Public Health Responsibility Deal Networks in England (Department of Health 2011). Additionally, the UN Government Summit draft resolution on the Prevention and Control of NCD, which was discussed at the High-Level meeting in September 2011, encouraged multi-sectoral partnerships with private sector stakeholders to address NCD (UN General Assembly 2011).

**Role of the private sector in addressing global nutrition challenges**

The business sector has an important impact on health. It provides, manages, and spends substantial levels of global health funding (McCoy, Chand and Sridhar 2009). The private sector also develops and markets products and services, creates jobs, provides employee health benefits, and influences global health governance processes (Buse and Lee 2005; Hancock, Kingo and Raynaud 2011). When appropriately structured and executed, partnerships with businesses can potentially address specific cost and investment challenges; improve the efficiency and quality of service delivery through sophisticated distribution systems; and provide public sector stakeholders and NGOs with access to financial and in-kind resources, influential networks, communication expertise and technology transfer (Conway, Gupta and Prakash 2006; Hancock, Kingo and Raynaud 2011; Nikolic and Maikisch 2006).

Commercial investment decisions are predicated on building a business case today that will lead to an economic benefit and a competitive edge tomorrow (Webber and Mercure 2010). Businesses are focused on several concurrent challenges, which include responding to: (1) global trends of emerging markets; (2) the “global grid”—a highly integrated and connected global economy; (3) environmental, social, and consumer issues; (4) corporate and public governance issues; (5) the structure of the industry in which it competes; and (6) sustaining customer engagement (French, LaBerge and Magill 2011; McKinsey and Company 2010).

Global FBQSR companies are accountable to many different stakeholders: to their board of directors, investors and shareholders to make profitable return on investments; to governments by adhering to laws and regulations; and to their employees and customers who purchase their products. If companies do not pay attention to these audiences, they lose legitimacy. These companies are aware that stakeholder engagement with all of their relevant audiences is critical to build brand equity and remain a trusted, legitimate and profitable business (Bonini, Court and Marchi 2009).

**GLOBAL HEALTH GOVERNANCE, THE UN GLOBAL COMPACT AND CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY PROGRAMMES**

**Global health governance**

Global health governance is a term used to describe the current actors, actions and agendas used to make progress toward population health outcomes. It represents the collective actions adopted by governments, businesses and civil society to promote and protect population health. Governments, UN System organizations, NGOs, donors (i.e., private and corporate foundations and bilateral agencies) and businesses are all part of the global health governance system (Dodgson, Lee and Drager 2002).

Global health governance is relevant to addressing global hunger and the DBM because of the transnational nature of interactions among many stakeholders within and across borders in the globalized food system. Since the 1980s, governments have increasingly relied on market-driven solutions to address public health nutrition challenges. The UN System has reinforced this trend by emphasizing private sector engagement through partnerships (Richter 2004).

There has also been an emergence of social entrepreneurship and cause marketing to address global poverty (Scott et al. 2011), and a trend toward voluntary “civil regulation”—a type of global economic governance that relies on socially focused, voluntary codes of conduct or standards to govern international businesses, as opposed to stronger forms of government-supported legally-mandated standards for businesses (Vogel 2008). When business standards are not legalized, accountability operates primarily through reputation and peer pressure, rather than in more formal ways (Grant and Keohane 2005). Several of the global FBQSR companies listed in Table 1 are headquartered in the United States (US), and are accountable both to US and international government laws and regulations, such as Codex Alimentarius and the World Trade Organization.

**The UN Global Compact**

The UN Global Compact (2011) was launched in 1999 by former UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland to stimulate private sector actions to support UN goals and serve as an alternative to international regulatory systems (Business.un.org 2009). The UN Global Compact is the largest corporate citizenship initiative in the world that promotes ten voluntary principles of responsible corporate citizenship to support human rights, labour, the environment and anti-corruption (Fall and Zahran 2010) (Table 2). By 2007, more than 3000 companies...
from 100 countries, and over 700 civil society, international labour organizations and academic institutions were engaged in the Compact to encourage businesses to contribute to solving globalization challenges (UN Global Compact Office 2007).

Several UN System organizations have acknowledged the important role of the private sector, and specifically the food industry, to help achieve nutrition and food security goals (UN 2009; WHO 2004; WHO 2010a; 2010b). In 2010, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon emphasized the important role of the business community in achieving the MDG by 2015 (UN General Assembly 2010).

However, explicit principles to guide corporate activities that will promote optimal nutrition and health through sustainability planning are noticeably absent from the UN Global Compact. Due to the absence of clear principles, certain UN System bodies have developed specific private sector engagement guidelines. Between 2000 and 2010, WHO released guidelines for working with the private sector to achieve health outcomes that defined commercial enterprises and provided clarification for cash donations, contributions-in-kind, seconded personnel, product development, meeting sponsorship, hosting meetings, and using WHO’s name or emblem (WHO 2000; 2008b; 2010a; 2010b).

The UNSCN is a “food and nutrition policy harmonization forum that promotes cooperation among UN agencies and partner organizations in support of community, national, regional and international efforts to end malnutrition, in all of its forms, in this generation” (UNSCN 2011). In 2007, the UNSCN released a proposal for guiding private sector engagement and PPP interactions (UNSCN 2007).

A 10-year evaluation of the UN Global Compact Office criticized the initiative for lacking a clear focus, failing to develop clear criteria to admit participating companies, and inadequate monitoring of signatory companies’ successful implementation of the voluntary principles (Fall and Zahran 2010). An additional concern raised is that the UN Global Compact allows certain companies to “blue wash” — which means they can improve their reputation by associating with UN System organizations (Ollila 2003; Utting and Zammit 2006).

We examined the signatory status of 15 global FBQSR companies to the UN Global Compact (see Table 1). We found that seven companies (i.e. Cargill, Danone, General Mills, Nestlé, PepsiCo, The Coca-Cola Company and Unilever) are signatories; eight companies (i.e. Burger King, Heinz, Kellogg Company, Mars Inc., McDonald’s Corporation, The Hershey Company and Yum! Brands) are not signatories; and although Kraft Foods Mexico was a signatory in 2006, the company was expelled in 2011 for not communicating progress (UN Global Compact Office 2011).

No QSR company listed in Table 1 is a signatory to the UN Global Compact. This finding is especially surprising given the partnership between Yum! Brands and the World Food Programme (2009) to address global hunger; as well as the 2002 partnership between McDonald’s and UNICEF (UN News Centre 2002) that used cause-marketing and co-branding strategies to raise funds for World Children’s Day to coincide with the anniversary of the UN’s adoption of the Convention of the Rights to the Child in November 1989 (UNICEF 2009). This partnership generated intense controversy among public health, child protection and citizen groups who expressed that it would damage UNICEF’s credibility related to its child nutrition and health work (Butler 2002; Ruskin 2002). UNICEF also attracted controversy in 2008 when it partnered with Cadbury (acquired by Kraft Foods Global in 2009) to sell co-branded candy and chocolate in Canada to raise funds to support children’s education programmes in Africa (Trick or Treat by UNICEF Canada 2010).

Partners must critically evaluate whether and how UN System partnerships are formed, and to account for specific PPP contributions, contradictions, transaction costs and trade-offs (Utting and Zammit 2006). We suggest that the UN Global Compact be amended to contain clear principles that support nutrition, consumer health and wellness. Global FBQSR companies should be held accountable for the products they manufacture and market, as well as their collective policies and actions to prevent and mitigate undernutrition, obesity and the projected NCD burden among populations worldwide.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programmes

CSR programmes are used to address many issues for which society and other groups hold businesses accountable. CSR is an evolving concept defined in various ways since it emerged in the 1950s (Lee and Carroll 2011). Carroll (1999) identified four CSR dimensions (i.e. philanthropic, ethical, legal and economic) whereas Dahlsrud (2008) identified five CSR dimensions (i.e. contributing to environmental stewardship, integrating social concerns into business operations, contributing to economic development, interacting with all relevant stakeholders, and taking voluntary actions beyond legal obligations based on ethical values).

In 2010, the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) developed a consensus definition for “social responsibility” using a multi-stakeholder consultation process that involved representatives from 99 countries (ISO 2011). The seven core areas of “social responsibility” identified by ISO for businesses include human rights, labour practices, the environment, fair operating practices, consumer issues and community involvement and development (Bowens 2011; ISO 2011).

CSR programmes are a form of voluntary disclosure used by companies to communicate with relevant stake-
holders to describe how they invest in communities and how well they adhere to the UN Global Compact principles. CSR is also used to rescue or improve a company’s tainted reputation, gather information about new and emerging markets, and cultivate consumer brand loyalty through strategic philanthropy (Bonini, Court and Marchi 2009; Keys, Malnight and van der Graaf 2009; McKinsey and Company 2008; Porter and Kramer 2002).

**CSR programmes of global FBQSR companies**

The food system is multifaceted and has diverse sub-sectors. Global FBQSR companies face a complex set of requirements and societal expectations regarding animal welfare, the environment (i.e. energy, water use, and waste management); the quality, healthfulness and safety of its processed food and beverage products; and social conditions (Hartmann 2011).

Global FBQSR companies have traditionally addressed social responsibility and environmental sustainability identified in the UN Global Compact using the “triple bottom line” approach that includes people (social), planet (environmental), and profits or prosperity (economic) (Elkington 2004). However, nutrition, consumer health and wellness were excluded both from the “triple bottom line” and the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI 2011) — a network-based organization that developed the widely used G3 Sustainability Reporting framework. The GRI framework is a system for companies to mainstream and voluntarily disclose their performance and progress made toward specific financial, social, environmental and governance indicators (GRI 2011; Nikolaeva and Bicho 2010). The GRI system lacks specific indicators for companies to assess progress toward achieving nutrition, consumer health and wellness outcomes. Indeed, one CSR rating ranked six global FBQSR companies (i.e. General Mills, Heinz, Yum! Brands Inc., PepsiCo, The Coca-Cola Company and McDonald’s Corporation) on their “Best Corporate Citizens” list (CRO 2009) for actions supporting the environment, climate change, human rights, philanthropy, employee relations, financial management and governance (CRO 2009). Actions targeting nutrition, consumer health and wellness goals were not even among the criteria assessed for the performance of these companies.

Only recently have global FBQSR companies developed more extensive CSR efforts focused on addressing hunger, food insecurity, nutrition, consumer health and wellness. Table 1 provides a list of each company’s CSR programme theme (Table 1). Companies have also developed pledges, commitments and voluntary reporting structures to show that they are expanding healthier food, beverage and meal products; and engaging in responsible marketing practices to promote healthy products to children worldwide (IFBA 2011). Independent evaluations of these private sector efforts are needed (Kraak et al. 2011). More extensive progress should be pursued by global FBQSR companies to expand pledges to cover all relevant practices that promote nutrition goals and healthy lifestyles to prevent and mitigate hunger, undernutrition, obesity and the DBM burden (Koplan and Brownell 2010; Kraak and Story 2010; Porter and Kramer 2002).

The conduct and philanthropic activities of companies influence consumers’ brand loyalty, purchase intent and product purchases (Hartmann 2011). Consumers expect companies to behave ethically, and a negative CSR reputation can be more damaging for a company than a positive CSR profile (Hartmann 2011). Some public health professionals, citizens groups and legal practitioners are skeptical of and mistrust CSR programmes because they have been used to deflect public attention from business activities that contribute to obesity and NCD (Cuagnesan, Guthrie and Ward 2010; Herrick 2009; Lang and Rayner 2010). Certain companies’ CSR programmes can mislead the public into believing that more is being done to meet public goals than is actually feasible given these companies’ primary accountability to their shareholders to maximize profits (Reich 2008).

Previously secret tobacco company documents show that CSR and corporate philanthropy have been used as a public relations tool to enhance a company’s image through high-profile sponsorships (Brownell and Warner 2009; Tesler and Malone 2008); to reframe issues and shift attention away from the health risks of companies’ products and marketing activities (Brownell and Warner 2009; Friedman 2009); to alter public perceptions about companies to build credibility (McDaniel and Malone 2009); and to lobby against public health policies (Brownell and Warner 2009; Ludwig and Nestle 2008; Tesler and Malone 2008).

Global FBQSR companies could gain the trust of diverse constituencies by using CSR programmes in productive ways. Companies could show that they are making meaningful changes in food and beverage product reformulation; developing meaningful indicators and criteria for self-regulation; marketing ethically and consistently across national borders; and creating a long term strategy that addresses both business and public health nutrition goals that prevent and mitigate undernutrition, obesity and NCD.

There is also a need to develop accountability mechanisms that increase transparency and hold companies accountable for their marketing practices. The Access to Nutrition Index (ATNI) is a new initiative, jointly funded by GAIN, the Gates Foundation and Wellcome Trust (ATNI 2011) that could potentially serve this function. An Index is being developed to rate the performance of global food
and beverage companies in providing healthier products to address both undernutrition and obesity. The developers suggest that publicly sharing information about companies’ production and marketing practices may potentially develop processes that allow benchmarking of companies’ performance (ATNI 2011).

MAXIMIZING BENEFITS AND MINIMIZING RISKS OF PARTNERSHIPS

An in-depth discussion of partnership challenges is beyond the scope of this paper but explored elsewhere (Buse and Harmer 2007; Fawcett et al. 2010; Koplan and Brownell 2010; Kraak and Story 2010; Kraak et al. 2011; Nikolic and Maikisch 2006; Working Group on Global Health Partnerships 2005). All partners should adopt systematic and transparent accountability processes to navigate and manage six challenges: balance private commercial interests with public health interests, manage conflicts of interest and biases, ensure that co-branded activities support healthy products and healthy eating environments, comply with ethical codes of conduct, undertake due diligence to assess partnership compatibility, and monitor and evaluate partnership outcomes (Kraak et al. 2011).

A six-step, benefit–risk decision-making pathway tool is available that can help to promote synergy and accountability for specific outcomes (Kraak et al. 2011) (see Figure 1). The tool can guide partnership engagement decisions to assess opportunities, compatibilities, and benefits versus risks; develop objectives and outcomes; execute a formal agreement with input from legal counsel; and ensure monitoring, evaluation and accountability. Other partnership assessment tools are available (Lasker, Weiss and Miller 2001; PGAI 2011).

Each partner should establish processes and outcomes that should be independently evaluated to create support for the partnership and demonstrate accountability to external groups (Bailey 2010). Partnerships can be evaluated for infrastructure, leadership, function, synergy and governance processes. Partnerships should also be evaluated for adding value to achieve nutrition and health goals, objectives and outcomes; produce measurable changes within organizations, systems, and the community; reduce health and social inequities; and achieve sustainability outcomes to build and institutionalize capacities to address global nutrition challenges (Barr 2007; Butterfoss 2009; Kraak and Story 2010; Lasker, Weiss and Miller 2001; Shortell et al. 2002). This paper is intended to stimulate a dialogue within the global nutrition and public health community of practitioners regarding the need to develop clear guidelines for partnering with transnational FBQSR companies. We propose that all partners use an accountability lens and adopt systematic and transparent processes to manage conflicts of interest, develop good governance practices, and navigate partnership goals and outcomes. We offer a benefit–risk decision-making pathway to help partners maximize benefits and minimize risks when collaborating to address global hunger, food insecurity and the DBM. Doing so will help to achieve nutrition and health outcomes for populations worldwide.

Table 1. Profiles of global food, beverage and quick-serve restaurant (FBQSR) companies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company (source)</th>
<th>Headquarters (city, country)</th>
<th>Estimated annual revenue* in US$ (year)</th>
<th>Numbers of countries with commercial enterprises</th>
<th>Fortune 500** or Fortune Global 500*** company ranking (2011)</th>
<th>Mission statement or CSR program theme</th>
<th>Company relationship with UN System</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Burger King (2009)</td>
<td>Miami, Florida, US</td>
<td>2.5 billion (2009)</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>BK Positive Steps</td>
<td>Not a signatory to the UN Global Compact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company (source)</td>
<td>Headquarters (city, country)</td>
<td>Estimated annual revenue* in US$ (year)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Danone (2010)</td>
<td>Paris, France</td>
<td>21.5 billion (2010)</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>433***</td>
<td>Bringing Health Through Food to as Many People as Possible</td>
<td>Signatory to the UN Global Compact since 2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kellogg Company (2009)</td>
<td>Battle Creek, Michigan, US</td>
<td>13 billion (2009)</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>199**</td>
<td>Bringing Our Best to You</td>
<td>Not a signatory to the UN Global Compact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kraft Foods (2010)</td>
<td>Northfield, Illinois, US</td>
<td>48 billion (2010)</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>49** 167***</td>
<td>Creating a More Delicious World</td>
<td>†Kraft Foods Mexico has been a signatory to the UN Global Compact since 2006 but was expelled in 2011 for failure to communicate progress. Kraft Foods acquired Cadbury in 2009. ††In 2008, UNICEF and Cadbury Canada entered a three-year partnership to raise funds for children’s education in Africa. This partnership was opposed by public health advocates.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McDonald's Corporation (2010)</td>
<td>Oak Brook, Illinois, US</td>
<td>24 billion (2010)</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>111** 403***</td>
<td>The Values We Bring to the Table</td>
<td>Not a signatory to the UN Global Compact †McDonald’s announced a partnership with UNICEF in 2002 to raise money for World Children’s Day that coincided with the anniversary of the UN System adoption of the Convention of the Rights of the Child in November 1989. ††This partnership was opposed by public health advocates.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1. Profiles of global food, beverage and quick-serve restaurant (FBQSR) companies (cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company (source)</th>
<th>Headquarters (city, country)</th>
<th>Estimated annual revenue* in $US (year)</th>
<th>Numbers of countries with commercial enterprises</th>
<th>Fortune 500** or Fortune Global 500*** company ranking (2011)</th>
<th>Mission statement or CSR program theme</th>
<th>Company relationship with UN System</th>
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</thead>
</table>
  *** In 2009, Baby Milk Action filed a complaint with the U.N. Global Compact Office alleging that Nestle’s CSR reports were misleading and the company had violated the Compact principles. |
  Signatory to the UN Global Compact since 2008 |
  ‡‡‡‡ Partnership with the WFP to enhance humanitarian relief delivery (2009)  
  Signatory to the UN Global Compact since 2008 |
| The Hershey Company (2009)                | Hershey, Pennsylvania, US             | 5 billion (2009)                       | 50                                               | 402**                                                        | Bringing Sweet Moments of Hershey Happiness to the World Every Day | Not a signatory to the UN Global Compact  
  ‡‡‡‡ Partnership with the WFP to support Yum! Brands World Hunger Relief Campaign and to raise funds to support WFP’s school feeding program for children (2009) |
  ‡‡‡‡ Partnership with the WFP to support Yum! Brands World Hunger Relief Campaign and to raise funds to support WFP’s school feeding program for children (2009) |
  ‡‡‡‡ Partnership with the WFP to support Yum! Brands World Hunger Relief Campaign and to raise funds to support WFP’s school feeding program for children (2009) |

*Estimated annual revenue represents income that a company receives from its normal business activities from the sale of goods and services to customers. Revenue figures are derived from each company’s annual or corporate social responsibility report and/or website. **CNN Money. Fortune 500 2011. Our annual ranking of America’s largest corporations. May 23, 2011. (online)  
The Fortune 500 is an annual list compiled and published by Fortune magazine.
The Fortune Global 500 is a ranking of the top 500 corporations worldwide as measured by revenue. The list is compiled and published annually by Fortune magazine.

NOTE: Cargill Inc. is a private, family-owned business ranked as the largest privately held, multinational corporation headquartered in the United States. If it were a public company, it would be ranked among the top 10 companies in the Fortune 500 ranking. Mars, Inc. is a private, family-owned business that is ranked as the fifth largest privately held company in the United States.

Table 2. Ten voluntary principles of the UN Global Compact to support corporate citizenship and sustainability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue Area</th>
<th>Principles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Human Rights</td>
<td>1. Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Businesses should make sure that they are not complicit inhuman rights abuses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour</td>
<td>3. Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Businesses should support the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Businesses should support the effective abolition of child labour.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. Businesses should support the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>7. Businesses are asked to support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8. Businesses should undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-corruption</td>
<td>10. Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1. Benefit–risk decision-making pathway for organizations to assess public-private partnerships with transnational food, beverage and quick-serve restaurant companies to address the global double burden of malnutrition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ENGAGEMENT DECISIONS</th>
<th>DISENGAGEMENT DECISIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Opportunities</strong></td>
<td>Consider other forms of interaction (i.e., coordination or collaboration through networks, coalitions or consortia) or other partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the potential private-sector partner able to provide resources and opportunities to help meet the organization’s goals?</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. Compatibilities</strong></td>
<td>Disengage from the partnership development process and identify more appropriate partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the due diligence conducted for a private-sector partner show compatibility with the organization’s mission, values and goals?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. Benefits versus Risks</strong></td>
<td>Redesign the type of partnership or disengage from the partnership development process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do the benefits add value and outweigh the risks for a PPP based on the findings from the due diligence process?</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4. Objectives and Outcomes</strong></td>
<td>Consult with Legal Counsel to clarify objectives and outcomes or disengage from the partnership development process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can an appropriate type of PPP be defined with clear objectives and outcomes?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5. Formal Agreement</strong></td>
<td>Consult further with Legal Counsel to clarify and amend where necessary the terms of engagement with the proposed partner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the formal agreement clearly lay out the terms of engagement in a formal document (i.e., memorandum of understanding, legal contract) that specifies the PPP purpose, expectations, outcomes, deliverables, duration, process for resolving conflicts of interest and risks, sustainability plan, and communicating results to relevant stakeholders?</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6. Monitoring, Evaluation and Accountability</strong></td>
<td>Implement an exit strategy to disengage from the partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do monitoring and evaluation demonstrate that the PPP has adhered to codes of conduct, delivered benefits, constructively managed and mitigated risks, and achieved objectives and outcomes within the designated time frames?</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: For prospective partners to put this decision-making pathway into practice, steps 1-5 are non-negotiable and all need to be “yes” before proceeding with a potential public-private partnership (PPP). Step 6 is the ongoing and final decision-making required to ensure that the PPP will optimize benefits and minimize risks to all partners and target populations.


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