BACKGROUND

- We developed a corporate health impact assessment (CHIA) framework which adapts existing HIA methods to use with transnational corporations (TNCs) across the full scope of their structures and practices.
- The CHIA contains three levels: A assesses the political, economic and regulatory context for the TNC’s activities; B the TNC’s structure, practices and products; and C the health and equity impacts.
- The CHIA also allows comparison of practices between countries; focussed specifically on health and equity impacts.
- Health and equity impacts includes workforce and working conditions, social conditions, the natural environment, economic conditions and health-related behaviours.

OBJECTIVES

- The objectives of this research were to trial the CHIA framework on a TNC operating in Australia.
- To assess the health impact of McDonald’s in Australia and their comparisons with other countries.
- To compare practices between countries; focussed specifically on health and equity impacts.
- To trial the CHIA framework on a TNC operating in Australia.

METHODOLOGY

- Data identifying the potential impacts of McDonald’s fast food corporation in Australia were sourced from document analysis, media analysis, semi-structured interviews, and a spatial and economic analysis of McDonald’s restaurants in Australia through Geographic Information System Technology.
- The data were mapped against the CHIA framework.

RESULTS

WORK AND WORKFORCE CONDITIONS

- Concerns have been raised over the negative impacts on housing prices adjacent to McDonald’s outlets and impacts on local cafes and other services due to the comparative size and scale of McDonald’s operations.
- McDonald’s new outlets, and impacts on local cafes and other services due to the comparative size and scale of McDonald’s operations.

SOCIAL CONDITIONS

- McDonald’s provides a sense of community life.
- Location near schools allows easy access to unhealthy food options thus contributing to childhood obesity and NCDs.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

- McDonald’s invests heavily in employment and training, is strongly committed to an inclusive workplace and occupational health and safety standards.
- However, location near schools allows easy access to unhealthy food options thus contributing to childhood obesity and NCDs.

ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

- McDonald’s reduces health impacts reported include physical and psychological effects from community actions to stop new outlets.

HEALTH RELATED BEHAVIOURS

- McDonald’s cheap and palatable yet ultra-processed food and sugary drinks contributes to increased levels of overweight, obesity and NCDs and is negatively correlated with socio-economic status.
- Bundled products, drive through outlets, and home delivery are designed to raise consumer consumption of unhealthy foods which contributes to NCDs.

DISTRIBUTION OF ACCESS TO MCDONALD’S AUSTRALIAN OUTLETS: IMPLICATIONS FOR HEALTH EQUITY

In December 2015 there were 929 McDonald’s restaurants in Australia, including both privately-owned and franchised restaurants.

CITIZENS’ JURY

We held a citizens’ jury (n=15) to deliberate on the findings of the CHIA, and their policy recommendations.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- A CHIA framework makes it possible to identify the health impacts flowing from the operation of a TNC; the political, economic and regulatory contexts for a TNC’s activities, its structure, practices and products; and understanding the health and equity impacts.
- International regulations are required to ensure TNCs pay taxes on profits in the country in which they earn their income.
- The results show strong regulatory frameworks are needed to help avoid, and/or to mediate negative health impacts, including NCDs.

REFERENCES


Fran Baum, Julia Anaf, Matt Fisher | Southgate Institute for Health, Society and Equity, Flinders University, Adelaide, South Australia