



Member Networking: Food Insecurity

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Key Insights & Takeaways

1. Persistent and Emerging CSR Challenges in Food Insecurity

Organizations are balancing urgent community need with rising expectations for scalable employee engagement, stronger impact measurement, and nonprofit-centered program design. Across the discussion, food insecurity was framed as a flexible issue area that can connect to health and well-being, sustainability, pro bono service, workforce development, and community resilience.

Key challenges include:

Scaling Engagement Across Distributed Workforces

- Remote and hybrid work continue to create challenges for food insecurity programming, particularly when many traditional activities are place-based, such as food bank shifts, pantry support, community gardens, or meal packing.
- *CSC Example:* One member leverages the platform, [Lemontree](#), to provide employees with remote volunteering that specifically addresses hunger.

Nonprofit Capacity and Measurement Burden

- While there is a need for stronger data and outcomes, teams must balance those expectations with the realities of nonprofit staffing, systems, and reporting burden. This is especially important as food insecurity programs move from simple activity tracking toward more nuanced impact measurement.

Supporting Both Communities and Employees Experiencing Need

- Organizations can support nonprofit partners and community members while also recognizing that some employees may also be experiencing food insecurity or related financial strain.
- This creates a need for thoughtful program design that avoids assumptions about their lived experiences and considers how employee assistance resources or discreet support channels may intersect with external CSR strategies.



2. Innovative Engagement Models and Tools

Members highlighted several promising approaches for engaging employees in food insecurity work while keeping programs adaptable across geographies, employee roles, and business priorities.

National Partnership Models with Local Activation

- Partnerships with nonprofit networks that have broad reach are effective, enabling companies to scale efforts while tailoring volunteer opportunities, giving campaigns, and local activations to specific communities.
- *CSC Example:* One member has a long-term partnership with Feeding America, allowing employee activation across multiple markets and growth based in an evolution of their priorities

Employee Voice in Grantmaking

- Centering employee input for community grants can deepen employee understanding of local nonprofit needs, increase transparency in grantmaking, and create a sense of shared ownership over community investment decisions.
- *CSC Example:* One member enables employees to review and vote on grant applications related to food insecurity, helping them get through a recent batch of over 10,000 applications

Skills-Based and Adjacent Support Models

- Programs do not need to solely focus on food distribution. Adjacent support can address issues related to financial wellness, health and elder care. This broader view allows companies to activate employee skills while still contributing to food security outcomes.
- *CSC Example:* One member's pro bono program allows employees to provide advisory support on critical items such as pension and other benefits for seniors.
- *CSC Example:* Another member leverages this issue as a professional development opportunity for employees, exploring the future of sustainability in their view to nurture innovation.



3. Evolving Measurement Approaches

Measurement was one of the most significant discussion themes. Members described a shared tension between the need for clear, compelling metrics and the difficulty of capturing the true outcomes of food insecurity interventions.

From Pounds to Meals, Servings, and More Useful Output Metrics

- Members discussed the growing use of “meals enabled” or serving-based calculations as more understandable metrics, particularly for employee engagement and leadership reporting.

Moving from Outputs to Outcomes

- Members discussed the importance of asking deeper questions, such as whether people are less food insecure, better connected to resources, or experiencing improved stability because of an initiative.

Practical and Transparent Measurement Tools

- Ideas included representative sampling, reasonable impact estimates, transparent assumptions, and shared toolkits that help organizations move beyond outputs while acknowledging data limitations.
- There was also interest in developing a community of practice around food insecurity measurement so companies, nonprofits, and measurement partners can learn together.

5. Case-Making Strategies for Leadership Engagement

Leaders are continuing to make the case for food insecurity programs to executives, business units, employees, and community partners.

Show Employee Engagement Value

- Food insecurity programs often resonate with employees because they are tangible, accessible, and connected to a universal need.



- It is more effective when organizations can show not only community impact related to hunger but also employee connection, team-building, professional development, and alignment with company culture.

7. Emerging Opportunities for CSR Leaders

Several opportunities emerged for members managing large food insecurity portfolios:

- **Building a flexible engagement portfolio** that includes in-person, virtual, skills-based, campaign-based, and grantmaking opportunities.
- **Framing food insecurity as both immediate relief and systems support**, connecting direct service to longer-term investments in infrastructure, access, and resilience.
- **Supporting nonprofit capacity** including funding, operational support, and measurement tools that do not overburden partners.
- **Developing clearer measurement pathways**, moving from pounds and meals toward servings, households reached, resource connections, and ultimately outcomes.
- **Creating space for employee learning and reflection**, especially for volunteer activities that may otherwise feel transactional.
- **Exploring peer collaboration**, including shared toolkits or a community of practice around food insecurity measurement and nonprofit support.