

Government urged to set example for CSR projects

GOVERNMENT should lead by example to encourage companies to invest more on corporate social responsibility (CSR) programs.

This was the advise given by the League of Corporate Foundations (LCF) at the launch of its annual exposition entitled "Expo 2010: Synergizing for Change" at Makati City on Wednesday as CSR initiatives are expected to gain momentum this year.

"I think the government can play a big role in encouraging companies to do more to donate more. Like the slogan 'no corruption, no poverty,' if they will show the way that they mean business [and] that funds will not be squandered I think that will encourage different companies to give more," Edgardo Amistad, LCF Coconut Industrial Investment Fund chairman and United Coconut Planters Bank Foundation-Coconut Industrial Investment Fund president, said.

Last year, local CSR projects contributed between \$2 billion and \$3-billion worth of

investments in education, housing, relief operations, among others.

CSR investments are expected to increase this year with the private sector's optimism on the new administration moving forward and the effects of the financial crisis well behind everyone's backs.

Also, more and more small and medium enterprises are coming up with their own CSR programs as leverage against competition.

"There are benefits to the company in terms of image, increasing their market share. Remember the consumers now are also conscious of companies doing CSR," Amistad said.

Under present regulations, companies get tax breaks for CSR projects accredited by a government-private sector institution.

Amistad said that CSR projects do not translate to foregone revenues for the government as it means that taxpayers' would not have to spend for infrastructure projects.

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