

Shared Value from M-Health for China Mobile

By David Grayson & Mattia Anesa, 2012

This case examines the emerging Mobile-Health (M-Health) initiatives of the world's largest mobile telecommunications company: China Mobile, by tracing the evolution of an M-Health initiative in China's poorest province, Guizhou, by the China Mobile provincial operating company. This initiative has involved the establishment of a pioneering public-private partnership with the Guizhou Health Bureau to improve the administration of China's New Rural Co-operative Health Care Initiative in Guizhou. The Partnership is one of China Mobile's top CSR programmes. In line with China Mobile's philosophy that its CSR commitment should be embedded in the business and so achieve 'shared value' for society and for the business, the Guizhou model is seen as important for the company's licence to operate and helping to provide market foresight of what is likely to be a significant commercial opportunity in China in the coming years. This case is rich in issues which affect China's future: the urban-rural divide; the vast income inequalities; the ticking demographic time-bomb and the most dramatic ageing of any population anywhere in human history; State-owned enterprises and their expected role in helping to implement state priorities; the subtleties and nuances of doing business in China and of how business is conducted - often misunderstood by outsiders; relations between Beijing and the provinces; and the myriad ways that technologies are transforming and will transform health and elder-care.