Collective Responsibility, China

Description of the organization:

Based in Shanghai, Collective Responsibility is one of Asia’s most recognized authorities on sustainability, innovation and responsible leadership.

Founded with the fundamental belief that a sustainable world can only be achieved through awareness of issues, finding tangibility in business cases and development of cross-sector collaboration, Collective Responsibility acts as a knowledge base, catalyst and facilitator between stakeholders.

Through consulting, research, training and enabling cross platform discussions, we aim to:

- Create a knowledge base and catalyze discussion of issues related to the development of civil society, business sustainability and social development in Asia.
- Develop tangible interests, engagement and action on issues of sustainability (economic, environmental and societal).
- Build bridges between local and foreign resources to ensure knowledge transfer, program scalability and growth.
- Develop organisational capacity with the aim to help create stable and profitable enterprises.

Social issue: Affordable Healthcare in China

There are a numbers of factors driving the growth of health care in China that include: investment in healthcare infrastructure, increased cases of chronic diseases, an aging population, increased per capita income, changes in lifestyles, and increased health insurance coverage.

However, given China’s population size and distribution, income inequality, and the local district hukou (ID) system, the healthcare sector has major equity challenges to solve, including affordability. Currently, it is impossible for citizens to get free treatment under public insurance, and therefore a significant amount of healthcare costs in China are self-paid.

Research project description:

Major changes in the composition of national health care expenditures occurred between 1990 and 2011. In the early 1990s, government input was about 25%, while private contributions contributed around 40% and individual out-of-pocket contribution made up roughly 35%. After the mid-2000s, the government put increased emphasis on health care equality and the development of a social security system. This has been especially true in the three years between 2009 and 2011 with government input increasing to 30.4%, private insurance contributions increasing to 34.7% and individual out-of-pocket payments falling to 34.9%.

This research project aims to understand the challenges for more affordable healthcare more deeply in order to propose options and opportunities for the healthcare sector in China.

Key research questions:

- What are the current healthcare financing and insurance systems?
- How have the central government and local governments been dealing with the situation and what are their future plans for healthcare reform?
- How does affordability differ between rural and urban for healthcare?
- What are viable options for affordable healthcare for China?

The research will be part of a larger research platform that analyses the economic, social, and environment system impacts and consequences of rapid urbanization in China. The research will be communicated through online and offline channels, and will be used to support Collective Responsibility’s consulting projects.

Methodology:

- Online
  - Statistical analysis of available data
  - Review of current and past policy related to healthcare financial system
  - Analyse private healthcare finance options
- Offline
  - Interviews with locals and migrants
  - Interviews with employees of healthcare services and insurance providers
  - Interviews with local government officials

Project Mentor

Charlie Matthews is the Director of Business Development, Corporate Advisory at Collective Responsibility. Prior to this he was the project director of the sustainable consumption program at JUCCCE, consulting to the Chinese government, corporations, and the UN. Charlie has recently been appointed to the advisory committee for the new UNEP Sustainable Lifestyles Programme. Charlie received his BSc Economics and Management from the University of Bristol, and an MSc Environmental Technology from Imperial College London. He is the advisor for Collective Responsibility Projects.

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Student profile:
- Major in sociology, economics, civil affairs, environment, or other sustainability related fields.
- Fluency in spoken and written English.
- Outgoing, hardworking and passionate about helping others.
- Enjoy working in an international team with diverse skills.
- Strong computer skills (Word, Excel and Power point).
- Knowledge of a data analysis and modelling software (R, SPSS, Mat Lab) is an advantage.
- Proficiency in Mandarin is an advantage, but not a necessity.