



## CHINA



### 2014 Statistics

- » Life expectancy: 75.2 years
- » Population: 1.4 billion
- » GDP per capita: US\$9,800 (2013 est.)
- » Mobile penetration: 93.1% (est.)

Sources: CIA World Factbook (<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook>); Mobile penetration data provided by Informa UK Limited and based on market intelligence.

**We are pleased to be working with Qualcomm Wireless Reach and other stakeholders to expand the impact of HERhealth educational content by leveraging mobile broadband tools. We believe that creating anytime, anywhere access for women will allow them to better manage and improve their health.**

— Jeremy Prepscius, Vice President, Asia-Pacific, BSR

## Mobilizing HERhealth

The Mobilizing HERhealth program uses a mobile application for 3G enabled smartphones and educational health content to empower women factory workers in China to better manage and improve their health. This project is based on BSR's HERhealth initiative, which provides women working in global supply chains with comprehensive training in a range of wellness topics including reproductive health and nutrition.

HERhealth workplace-based trainings strive to improve awareness and behavior related to general and reproductive health, challenge harmful taboos, promote preventative care, and increase access to critical health products and services. In the HERhealth model, women in each factory are selected to serve as peer health educators. They are trained and then share what they've learned with other women at work, at home and in their communities. Mobilizing HERhealth aims to demonstrate how mobile broadband technology can improve women workers' access to health care information and services, leading to reduced health risks and enhanced well-being.

### Challenge

- » Women comprise more than 44 percent of the overall workforce in the manufacturing sector and make up a greater percent in light manufacturing such as the garment and textiles industries.<sup>1</sup>
- » According to the All-China Federation of Trade Unions, the population of female workers from 1988 to the present day has increased by almost 63 percent, and many of these female workers are found in light manufacturing.
- » The majority of these women in the light manufacturing sector are 18- to 25-year-old migrants who moved from rural areas to cities for jobs and were found to be suffering from poor hygiene, inadequate pre- and post-natal care, sexual violence and exposure to infections and illness, including sexually transmitted and other preventable diseases.<sup>2</sup>
- » Women workers in developing regions of the world are often reluctant to ask questions in public settings about reproductive health, contraceptives and family planning.
- » Many factory managers question the value of investing in reproductive health programs, partially due to their assumptions that young, culturally conservative women workers are not prone to sexual activity before marriage and partially because turnover is high.
- » Women's health trainings in some factories include information on reproductive health, but are not offered regularly, do not involve all workers and are quickly sidelined when production pressures take precedence.

### Proposed Solution

- » A user-friendly, HTML 5-based application has been developed for 3G-enabled mobile devices to provide peer health educators participating in BSR's HERhealth program, and the women they interact with access to reproductive health training and other interactive health-related content.

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- » Research has shown that the potential return on investment for existing HERhealth programs is as high as US \$4 for every \$1 invested in the project, and participating factories have seen health-related absenteeism reduced by up to 50 percent.<sup>3</sup> With the new Mobilizing HERhealth component, partners aim to use the mobile platform to expand these returns.
- » Reshaped to take advantage of the mobile platform, the content is based on curriculum and educational materials developed for the HERhealth program.
- » The mobile application includes supporting functionality for the HERproject coordinator or peer health educators, such as a training calendar, push notifications and online quizzes. It features a social networking functionality for peer health educators and workers to easily share their ideas and experiences. Factory coordinators and management can also use the App to schedule other activities in the factory or conduct short surveys.
- » The first phase of the program evaluated the mobile application in three factories, reaching approximately 150 women aged 18-25.
- » This project aligns with China's 12th Five Year Plan, which prioritizes developing affordable, accessible health care for the entire population.

### Project Stakeholders

- » Business for Social Responsibility (BSR) developed the HERhealth program, including the training model, curriculum and educational materials, and is leading the Mobilizing HERhealth project's implementation in China.
- » Flextronics has piloted the mobile application with workers in one of their factories and will be one of several companies involved in the expansion of the application to other locations.
- » International SOS developed a tool to assess the capacity of factory clinics to meet worker health needs and understand opportunities for technology to enhance delivery of health information and services.
- » Qualcomm Wireless Reach is the primary program funder and provides project management support and wireless expertise.
- » Thunder Software Technology Co., Ltd. (ThunderSoft) will be developing the Mobilizing HERhealth mobile application to be initially deployed in two project factories.
- » Workplace Options has provided an online health assessment tool to understand the current status of workers' health and areas of potential health risk.



**FLEXTRONICS**



**ThunderSoft**



<sup>1</sup> "INCLUSIVE GROWTH AND GENDER INEQUALITY IN ASIA'S LABOR MARKETS," YANA VAN DER MEULEN AND JOSEPH E. ZVEGLICH, JR., ADB ECONOMICS WORKING PAPER SERIES, No. 321, ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK, DECEMBER 2012

<sup>2</sup> BSR REPORT, WOMEN'S GENERAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH IN GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAINS. 2006. [HTTP://WWW.BSR.ORG/EN/OUR-INSIGHTS/REPORT-VIEW/WOMENS-GENERAL-AND-REPRODUCTIVE-HEALTH-IN-GLOBAL-SUPPLY-CHAINS](http://www.bsr.org/en/our-insights/report-view/womens-general-and-reproductive-health-in-global-supply-chains)

<sup>3</sup> HERPROJECT RESEARCH: [HTTP://WWW.BSR.ORG/EN/OUR-INSIGHTS/BSR-INSIGHT-ARTICLE/THE-4-1-ROI-FOR-WOMENS-HEALTH-INITIATIVES](http://www.bsr.org/en/our-insights/bsr-insight-article/the-4-1-roi-for-womens-health-initiatives)

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