



INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION

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ILO Concludes Project on Employment Promotion

BEIJING (ILO News) - The China chapter of The ILO/Japan Inter-Country Project on Strategic Approaches Towards Employment Promotion (ILO/PEP) will come to a conclusion this month. The project wrap-up meeting runs at Beijing Conference Centre from 29 to 30 March 2005.

The wrap-up meeting is to review the project experiences in the pilot cities, evaluate the project's implementation and discuss ways for the project sustainability.

Funded by the Japanese Government, the ILO/PEP project, in partnership with China's Ministry of Labour and Social Security (MOLSS), has been implemented in both rural and urban areas since 1997. The second phase, inaugurated in 2001, aims to create jobs for laid-off and unemployed workers through development of small businesses in urban areas by providing "Start Your Business" (SYB) training and Credit Guarantee Fund (CGF) plus small loans. Other follow-up technical support has been extended to pilot cities: Jilin, Zhangjiakou, Baotou, Changchun, Shijiazhuang and Tongliao.

The project intervention has brought out great achievements and impacts in China. By the end of 2004, there are totally 15,551 laid-off and unemployed workers attended the SYB Awareness Training, among them, 8,108 workers completed the SYB Business Plan Training in Jilin, Zhangjiakou and Baotou. The CGF was established in each pilot city to provide the small loan to the project beneficiaries to help them start-up and develop their own business.

The project also train SYB trainers from partnering organizations like the All China Women's Federation, the All China Youth Federation and the All China Federation of Trade Unions.

Based on the successful implementation of the project, the MOLSS wishes to expand the SYB training throughout the country. For this, with financial support by the British government, a new "Start and Improve Your Business" (SIYB) Project has been operational since the middle of 2004, covering 14 pilot cities and further extending its technical support to other cities. The government now claims one hundred seventy thousand persons participated in the SYB training in 2004.

The ILO/PEP wrap-up meeting allows participants to share project outcomes and experience of the past few years. It also provides an opportunity to solicit comments on the Proposal on the Project Sustainable Development.

Mr. Shinichi Hasegawa, ILO Regional Director of Asia and the Pacific will present at the meeting and make opening speech. The officials from Japanese Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, led by Assistant Minister Mr. Kenji Tsunekawa, will participate in the meeting. Mr. Zhang Xiaojian, Vice Minister of MOLSS, and Mr. Tsunekawa will address the opening on Tuesday morning.

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