From 3 to 4 March 2011, members of the ILO Decent Work Technical Support Team (ILO-DWT) in conjunction with the Department of Labour Protection and Welfare (Ministry of Labour) facilitated a Training of the Trainers Workshop; Protecting Workers and Business from Influenza and Other Emerging Infectious Diseases.

Participants included government officials from Lampang and 17 neighbouring provinces, whom were identified as having a capacity to build upon the knowledge provided by the workshop to train others in their sectors and local communities.

The training was conducted at the request of the Ministry of Labour to maintain the knowledge and lessons learned over the course of recent pandemics such as H1N1 (Swine) and H5N1 (Avian) influenza. Participants were provided with advice on practical measures to help small enterprises in preparation for a future pandemic and also some information on business continuity planning.

Participants also received information on the combined experiences of the United Nations System Influenza Coordination (UNSIC), the Ministry of Public Health (MOPH), and the business community. In particular participants were shown examples developed by the ILO-DWT on how to incorporate influenza prevention and preparedness knowledge and practices into existing and future efforts related to Occupational Safety and Health (OSH).

“All the participants demonstrated a strong conceptual and technical understanding of best practices and how they should be applied.”

Dr Hitoshi Murakami
UNSIC
After being introduced with how to use ILO developed materials, participants visited a nearby medium scale food processing factory and conducted an assessment of the OSH/Influenza arrangements in the workplace. Participants then identified existing good practices and areas that could be improved upon.

As a final component of the workshop, participants were advised on how to apply for financial assistance from the ILO influenza project to conduct similar training activities to increase the network of trainers in their respective provinces. Participants provided draft proposals outlining anticipated expenditure and methodologies. The ILO-DWT and the Ministry of Labour have encouraged participants to develop formal proposals to be implemented in the respective provinces.