



▶ China

ILO cooperation

July 2026

The People's Republic of China is a founding Member State of the ILO. The country has ratified 28 Conventions and is one of the leading countries promoting South-South and triangular cooperation in the ILO.

▶ Overview: China and the ILO

The ILO and China have a long-standing partnership that has intensified in recent years thanks to South-South and triangular cooperation (SSTC) and voluntary contributions by China to the ILO's Development Cooperation Programme, totalling US\$ 8 million in 2021-2025. The ILO office in Beijing established in 1985 oversees ILO's activities in China (including Hong Kong and Macau Special Administrative Regions) and Mongolia.

The first Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed in 2001 between the ILO and the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security (MOHRSS) deepened the cooperation in developing labour market policies and institutions.

The ILO and its tripartite constituents in China signed a new Decent Work Country Programme 2023-25 (extended to 2027), paving the way to continue promoting social justice and advancing decent work for all.

In 2025, the ILO joined the "1+10" Dialogue in Beijing to promote equitable global governance, and co-hosted an event celebrating over 40 years of cooperation and reaffirming a shared commitment to a human-centered future of work.



In 2025, the ILO and the School of Economics and Management Tsinghua University signed a MoU to promote the ILO's Inclusive Entrepreneurship Ecosystems approach, including collaboration on G20 framework discussions and joint action.

The China Enterprise Confederation (CEC), with the support of the ILO Beijing Office, compiled a Guide on Labor Compliance for Chinese Enterprises' Transnational Operations in 2025, promoting responsible business conduct for Chinese companies going global.

In April 2026, the ILO and the State Administration for Market Regulation (SAMR) signed a MoU to strengthen cooperation in special equipment safety and occupational safety and health (OSH), which will be implemented within the context of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and the of the Global Development Initiative (GDI).

In June 2026, State Councilor Shen Yiqin attended the 114th International Labour Conference and delivered a speech in the Plenary, demonstrating China's support for the ILO to uphold its founding mission and advance social justice.



► China's South-South and triangular cooperation (SSTC) at a glance

In 2012, the first SSTC agreement between the ILO and China was signed, with China committing US\$ 1 million in support to South-South cooperation and the Decent Work agenda. In 2013, China and ILO launched their first South-South cooperation project on strengthening public employment services and labour market information in Cambodia and Lao PDR.

Under the framework of the BRI, in 2019 China has further intensified its partnership with the ILO around shared priorities such as social protection, skills development, labour governance, safety at work. Agreements were signed between the ILO and three Ministries along with the All-China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU):

- The 1st MoU envisages a cooperation with the MOHRSS. This cooperation is based on a shared vision aimed at promoting decent work, social justice, and a human-centered future of work.
- The 2nd MoU signed by the Ministry of Emergency Management (MEM) focuses on promoting ILO SCORE programme across China with particular focus on OSH, with the shared commitment to South-South cooperation for a safer and more inclusive working environment, reaffirmed by the visit of Vice Minister Song Yuanming from the MEM to the ILO headquarters in 2025.
- The 3rd MoU was signed by the Ministry of Transport, promoting of the effective implementation of the ILO's Maritime Labour Convention along the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road Initiative.

The ILO and the ACFTU renewed partnership through the ILO-ACTRAV ACFTU South-South Cooperation Project in 2024 to strengthen workers' organizations across Asia and the Pacific and Africa.

In recent years new SSTC partnership agreements were signed between the ILO and MOHRSS on skills development, employment and social protection against the background of the GDI with contributions total of US\$ 5 million, 4 million and 2 million respectively, bringing benefits to tripartite constituents in Asia & the Pacific as well as Africa.



► The Global Development Initiative (GDI)

Chinese President Xi Jinping proposed the GDI at the UN General Assembly in 2021. The initiative calls for greater international synergy to speed up the 2030 Agenda implementation, by revitalizing global development partnerships and promoting stronger, greener, and healthier development. The GDI prioritizes promoting employment and eradicating poverty for youth and women. The success story of the SSTC project on employment funded by China was featured in the GDI Progress Report 2025.

► China, BRICS, and the ILO

In 2017 and 2022, MOHRSS held the BRICS Labour and Employment Ministers' Meeting (LEMM) and working group meetings (EWG) when China held the BRICS Presidency. The ILO has played an active role in providing technical support and connecting with the BRICS Network of Labour Research Institutes.

Activities like the BRICS Knowledge series (2021) and the RBTC-SSTC project on promoting quality apprenticeship (2023) have increased mutual exchanges between the ILO and BRICS countries.

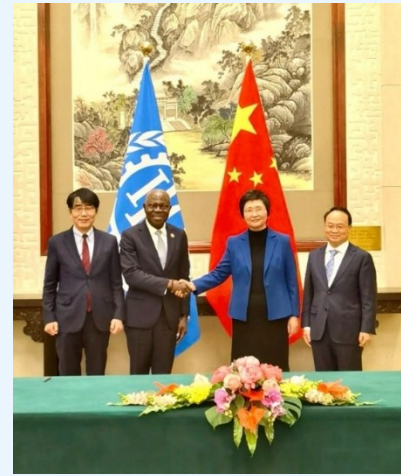
Through a new RBTC-SSTC project, the ILO will support the BRICS priorities under Chinese Presidency in 2027.

► Current and recent ILO projects funded by China

► Strengthening skills development in ASEAN through South-South and triangular cooperation (2018-27)

In 2019, the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security of China and the ILO launched the “ILO–China Partnership Programme on Skills Development under SSTC,” with a total of US\$ 5 million contribution. The programme promotes decent work and social justice in ASEAN countries by strengthening skills development systems, employment services, and TVET cooperation. In 2025, senior Chinese officials visited programme sites in Laos and Cambodia, reaffirming strong support for the ILO–China partnership and its growing regional impact.

The programme has delivered concrete results in policy support, institutional development, and skills training. It supported Laos in drafting employment and skills laws, established a South–South Cooperation Network linking 41 TVET institutions across China, Cambodia, and Laos, and benefited more than 10,000 workers in Cambodia alone. Training has expanded from traditional trades to emerging sectors such as e-commerce, new energy vehicles, and artificial intelligence, while also strengthening regional exchanges and ASEAN TVET cooperation.



► Promoting the Global Development Initiative with a focus on South-South cooperation in employment in ASEAN (2022-26)

This project, supported by US\$ 4 million contribution, provides long-term employment support to ASEAN countries by focusing on national employment policy frameworks, public employment services, and entrepreneurship development. The initiative supports strengthening employment policy frameworks through capacity building and technical assistance for employment diagnostics and evaluation.

A major milestone in 2025 was the regional policy dialogue “Policy innovations to navigate labour market transition and uncertainty for high-quality and full employment in South-East Asia”, which brought together over 50 policymakers and experts from ASEAN and China—including Timor-Leste for the first time. This event strengthened the project’s role as a trusted platform for regional policy engagement on a multifaceted labour market challenges and employment policy issues. The flagship four-tiered training model has significantly enhanced institutional performance and service delivery for both jobseekers and enterprises. The project has reached over 186,000 cumulative beneficiaries since its inception.

► Extending social protection coverage to workers in the informal economy in Lao PDR and Kenya and leveraging digital transformation through South-South cooperation (2023-26)

In 2023, the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security of China and the ILO launched a South–South cooperation programme on social protection to expand coverage for informal economy workers in Lao PDR and Kenya through digital transformation. In 2025, the programme, together with the China Association of Social Security, conducted a study on China’s experience in extending social security coverage and digital service delivery, providing policy recommendations tailored to both countries.

In 2025, it supported the launch of national roadmap on digital transformation for the Lao Social Security Organization and helped develop Lao PDR’s first “one-stop” social security mobile application. Officially launched during the 2nd National Social Protection Seminar in Vientiane, the application improves access to contribution payments, benefit calculations, and social security services, particularly for informal economy and rural workers.

► South-South cooperation to enhance the institutional capacities of workers' organizations in Asia and the Pacific - Phase II (2024-27)

Supported by ACFTU US\$ 1.2 million contribution, the project aims to strengthen workers' organizations in Asia-Pacific and selected African countries through South-South cooperation, digital transformation and capacity-building. The project is now expanding its focus to include trade union digital transformation, platform workers' rights, just transition, and regional knowledge-sharing.



► Support from the China-UN Peace and Development Trust Fund

► SSTC supported by UNDESA China Fund: Accelerating universal social protection for achieving the SDGs and ending poverty through strengthened governance and digital transformation (2023-26)

Thanks to over US\$ 1 million from UNDESA China Fund, the project aimed to accelerate and extend universal social protection through strengthening policy design, administrative governance and the digital transformation of social protection systems in Lao PDR and Tajikistan, and promote good practice learned to benefit other countries in the Global South.

The project has achieved significant progress in strengthening social protection governance, digital transformation and service delivery in Lao PDR and Tajikistan, and strengthened institutional foundations for more sustainable and inclusive social protection systems through policy reform, technical studies, and digital innovation. At the global level, the project contributed to the development of the UNDESA Digital Social Protection Gateway, providing practical tools and learning resources to support countries advancing digital social protection systems in line with SDG Target 1.3.

In addition, MOHRSS contributed over US\$ 4.45 million to the ILO through the Junior Professional Officer (JPO) and secondment programmes 2021-25.



► The Ministry of Emergency Management (MEM) and the SCORE Programme

In 2024, the International Exchange and Cooperation Center (IECC) of MEM officially became an official implementing partner of the ILO SCORE Programme. While advancing domestic practice, the IECC has established the Belt and Road SCORE Center to share China's experience via three channels: foreign-aid seminars, overseas SCORE project delivery, and safety guidance for Chinese enterprises overseas. In 2025 alone, over 1,000 participants from more than 80 countries received seminars with SCORE elements.

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