

# Improving quality of people's life a principle of Shanxi government

Local authorities investing in employment, education and healthcare to ensure the public can personally benefit from progress every day



By YUAN SHENGGAO

Shanxi has achieved steady and high-quality development over recent decades, allowing this North China province to make a hefty investment in improving people's livelihoods.

Adhering to a principle of being people focused, governments at various levels in Shanxi have devoted energy to promoting employment, safeguarding social security, improving services for education, healthcare and the care of seniors and the underprivileged, as well as launching infrastructure projects related to livelihoods.

In the southeastern Shanxi city of Jincheng, for instance, vocational training is popular not only among ordinary job seekers, but among university graduates.

Dou Yunhe is a graduate from Jin-

cheng Open University. He took part in a training program called Qinhe Miners.

The program was established by the local government in partnership with local businesses as part of their efforts to address concerns over employment.

"The training began when I accepted the job offer from the Yonghong Coal Mine, a subsidiary of the local coal-mining giant Qinhe Energy Group," Dou said. "Our class consisted of students who had signed job contracts with Qinhe Energy, one of the partners of the program."

Qinhe Miners is now a renowned training brand in Jincheng. It is a tailor-made program for local enterprises. The enterprises place orders with the school, buying training classes for their newly recruited employees.

According to Dou, the training is free for students and the curriculum has been designed by the demand-side enterprises. "When I was at the school, I studied intelligent mining, obtaining skills related to various kinds of smart operations."

He added that the training had

helped him quickly adapt to his new career. He is now a technician at Yonghong Coal Mine.

Jincheng launched the Qinhe Miners program in 2020. By the end of 2022, the program had trained 3,232 employees for local enterprises.

Across Shanxi, vocational training is among the measures to boost employment. Local statistics show that more than 6.2 million people in the province have received training at various vocational schools.

The province intensified its efforts in employment promotion this year by applying 18 new measures to help job seekers.

One such measure is organizing job fairs for job seekers. Statistics show that a total of 4,207 such fairs had been held in Shanxi by the end of September.

Over the first three quarters of this year, Shanxi saw an addition of 426,000 jobs for urban residents, fulfilling 94.69 percent of its annual target.

Another achievement in improving Shanxi people's livelihoods is expanding the coverage of its government-sponsored social security



An acrobatics troupe performs in a village in Shanxi. Enriching the cultural well-being for rural residents is a part of the province's efforts in livelihood improvements. LI ZHAOMIN / FOR CHINA DAILY

system, which includes pensions for seniors and insurance for basic medical care, unemployment, workplace injury and birth.

Statistics show that more than 95 percent of Shanxi residents are covered by the basic medical care and pension systems. The unemployment, workplace injury and birth insurance systems have achieved 100 percent coverage.

Now that a nine-year compulsory and free schooling system is in place, Shanxi's authorities found there is still room for improvement in the education sector. One is to offer a safe lunch for primary and middle school students. Shanxi launched a safe lunch program in 2022. The program covered 275 schools and has expanded to another

284 schools this year.

Another effort of the Shanxi authorities is to relieve the burden of underprivileged students in higher-learning education.

This year, the province began a program to aid physically challenged students and students from families with physically challenged members. Their tuition fees at universities or colleges are now covered by the government. The latest statistics show that a total of 5,806 students are receiving this assistance.

Meanwhile, preschool education is not being left behind in Shanxi although it is not a part of compulsory education. Over the past five years, the province has built more than 3,000 affordable kindergartens. The move is aimed to balance

the allocation of resources for preschool education, especially between the urban and rural areas, according to local officials.

In the medical service sector, Shanxi is encouraging leading medical institutions in bigger cities to branch out, allocating more resources to county-level regions and rural areas.

Shanxi is now implementing a "double-thousand" campaign throughout the province, dispatching more than 1,000 experienced medics to aid the development of rural medical services and upgrading more than 1,000 rural clinics with better equipment.

Gao Jianhua contributed to this story.

## Farmers count profits from mechanization during harvest festival

By YUAN SHENGGAO

Shanxi began to celebrate the sixth Chinese Farmers' Harvest Festival on Sept 22. Since then, more than 1,000 events were held throughout the province, with the participation of more than 1.55 million people.

Farming activities, promotions of agricultural products and farming skills contests, as well as performances and shows, were major parts of the celebrations.

The opening ceremony of the festival was held on Sept 22 in Datong, the main venue. Following the opening ceremony, there was a farm produce fair in the city where 24 companies from across the country signed agreements on the supply and purchase of grains produced in the province.

In Yaodu district of Linfen city, the festival's celebration was marked by mechanized harvest of corn.

Liang Daming, a farmer in the township of Jindian, said he was happy with the yield on his farm.

"The yield on my one-hectare farm is estimated at nearly 9 metric tons," Liang said. He added that what made him happier was the efficiency brought by mechanized farming.

“The per-hectare millet output of a part of Haifeng Farm was 7.73 metric tons. This is a record for mechanized millet farms in Shanxi.”

Yuan Xiangyang, chief of the Institute of Crop Sciences of Shanxi Agricultural University and a leading millet researcher in Shanxi

"With the assistance of machines, the farm can be operated by myself," Liang said. "This allows other members of my family to engage themselves in other jobs and get more revenue."

Jindian's farming cooperatives own 44 combine harvesters, 110 tractors and other farming machines. These are leased to local farmers at affordable prices during different seasons.

In addition to mechanization, technological advancements in breeding and seedling cultivation, soil improvement, irrigation and



An overhead view of farmlands in the county of Wanrong, where harvest has been completed recently. LI KERONG / FOR CHINA DAILY

fertilizing optimization contributed greatly to the rise of output and quality in Shanxi's agricultural industry.

Haifeng Farm in the county of Fansi is a mechanized farm for dryland farming. It is also a research base of Shanxi Agricultural University for millet and sorghum.

"The per-hectare millet output of a part of Haifeng Farm was 7.73 tons," said Yuan Xiangyang, a professor of SAU. "This is a record for mechanized millet farms in Shanxi."

Yuan, chief of the SAU Institute of Crop Sciences, is a leading millet researcher in Shanxi. Haifeng Farm in Fansi is a major research base backed by Yuan's team.

The team's research activities include the breeding of high-yield and high-quality crop varieties, mechanized farming, and intelligent technologies for water-saving irrigation and efficient fertilization.

Statistics show the autumn har-

vest of crops had been completed on 2.62 million hectares of farmland, or 96.2 percent of the total planted area in Shanxi, by the end of October.

In the provincial capital of Taiyuan, a large-scale agricultural expo was another highlight of the harvest festival.

The eighth Shanxi Agricultural Products Trade Expo, held from Sept 26-29, showcased Shanxi's farm produce, farming technologies, equipment and research achievements across 15 exhibition zones, attracting the participation of about 60,000 suppliers, buyers and visitors.

While on-site transactions reached 319 million yuan (\$43.6 million), agreements on 200 cooperative projects were signed during the expo, with a combined value of 25.12 billion yuan.

Wang Xiujuan contributed to this story.

## Digital entrepreneurs and innovators in focus

By YUAN SHENGGAO

From concept to action, from action to commercialization, an innovation and entrepreneurship contest, which concluded in Shanxi in September, has drawn the attention of the business community and raised enthusiasm among university students and graduates.

With a focus on digital and intelligent technologies and applications, the first Shanxi University Innovation and Entrepreneurship Contest in the Digital Economy concluded on Sept 16 in the Shanxi Data Traffic Ecology Park in Taiyuan.

The event, starting from June, attracted more than 100,000 students from nearly 60 universities and colleges nationwide to attend. Representatives for hundreds of enterprises were present at the final competition and award ceremony.

A team from North University of China, based in Taiyuan, Shanxi province, were named as winners for their intelligent non-invasive blood glucose meter.

A member of the team said one of his senior family members has diabetes. He observed that the conventional meter involves collecting blood from the finger, which is painful and runs the risk of infection. So he and his several schoolmates decided to invent a non-invasive meter.

The new meter, integrating near-infrared spectroscopy, metabolic heat conformation and digital analysis technologies, features an accuracy 10 percent higher than the conventional versions, and greater convenience for patients.

Digital technology applications, especially in the new media sector, were a highlight of the event and attracted great interest from the business community.

A new media production team called Wusuowei was another

award winner at the event for its short videos featuring the cultural and tourist attractions of Shanxi. Its short video series with the Douyin hashtag of "very young, very Shanxi" have generated more than 110 million views since June.

On the sideline of the award ceremony, Zhao Shiquan, chairman of Lecuntao Network, a rural e-commerce company in Shanxi, talked with several award-winning teams in the livestreaming and video-producing sectors regarding possible partnerships.

Ma Hongbin, a professor from Tsinghua University, said at the event that "the digital economy is not only a driving force for high-quality growth, but also an area with great potential for entrepreneurship".

In Shanxi, the digital economy had a scale worth about 568.8 billion yuan (\$77.7 billion) in 2022, growing 11.5 percent from the previous year. This growth rate ranked the province 11th nationwide.

The booming growth of Shanxi's digital economy is also evidenced in its rapidly developing infrastructure, including 85,000 5G base stations, a supercomputing center in Taiyuan and a number of dedicated industrial parks throughout the province.

The Shanxi Data Traffic Ecology Park is one of the crucial development zones for the digital economy. Since it began operation in January 2021, it has attracted more than 600 enterprises to settle, offering jobs to more than 9,000 people, according to He Han, board chairman of the park.

"A talent pool is crucial for the development of the digital economy," He said. "We hope the data traffic park can offer a venue for the innovative-minded and enterprising university graduates to develop their careers and start their businesses."

Li Lian contributed to this story.

## Bosses of Xinghuacun Fenjiu raise a glass to Belt and Road Initiative

By YUAN SHENGGAO

With the 10th anniversary of the Belt and Road Initiative taking place this year, executives of Shanxi's renowned white liquor producer Xinghuacun Fenjiu have said the company will continue contributing to this global initiative by expanding its presence in countries and regions involved in the BRI and sponsoring more cultural and economic exchanges.

One of its recent efforts to engage with the initiative was to sponsor a large-scale Chinese media tour of the Central Asian country of Uzbekistan in September.

A part of the 2023 Chinese Media Tour of the Silk Road, the Uzbekis-

tan leg had Xinghuacun Fenjiu Group as its official sponsor.

While mobilizing its representative office staff members and local dealers to help the media group in tour planning and exchange events organization, Xinghuacun Fenjiu also used this opportunity to showcase its products and the culture related with its white liquor.

Tasting events were held in restaurants and bars in Uzbekistan, allowing customers to experience the white liquor varieties unique to China.

Over the past few years, Xinghuacun Fenjiu has already won the recognition of customers in the Belt and Road countries.

In a BRI-themed international food industry show held in Hong



Xinghuacun Fenjiu sponsors a Chinese media tour of Uzbekistan. WEN ZHAOYAN / FOR CHINA DAILY

Kong this summer, the company's Fenjiu brand won the best Chinese white liquor award. The judges for the award included experts and buyers' representatives from the Belt and Road countries and regions.

Xinghuacun Fenjiu is one of the pioneers of China's white liquor industry to go global. It began volume exports after it won a gold prize at the Panama Pacific Inter-

national Expo in San Francisco, the United States, in 1915.

Xinghuacun Fenjiu is now among the top three exporters within China's white liquor industry. To date, its products have been sold to more than 80 countries and regions, through its dozens of overseas dealers and thousands of outlets in foreign countries.

Wu Jia contributed to this story.



Businesses sign agreements for cooperation with award winners during the Shanxi University Innovation and Entrepreneurship Contest in the Digital Economy. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY