

**OFFICE OF THE CHIEF PRESS SECRETARY TO
ONDO STATE GOVERNOR, AKURE**

PRESS RELEASE

Graduate unemployment: Ondo engages 10,000 youths ... to establish Technology Village

Over ten thousand (10,000) youths in Ondo State are to be employed by the State government in its determination to arrest graduate unemployment. The State Governor, Dr Olusegun Mimiko who made this disclosure in Ondo town while declaring open a 6-week Training Programme on ICT and Renewable Energy organized by Tech Ville Limited, a company co-owned by the State government stated that over 4000 youths have already been employed by the State government in various sectors by the government in the last 15 months adding that in the next few weeks, the State government would commence the engagement of unemployed youths in other sectors.

Also to underscore its determination to become the Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) hub in Nigeria, the State Government is to establish a Technology Village to serve as a permanent training site for youth in ICT and renewable energy that would transform the State into Nigeria's Silicon Valley in the nearest future.

Dr Mimiko who made this disclosures noted that the training programme epitomizes his administration's avowed resolve towards making Ondo State an ICT hub in Nigeria thereby creating a vibrant opportunities for the youth engagements, stated that the training would be the first in the series of efforts at reducing graduate unemployment which he noted, has constituted a major societal challenge.

His words, "this programme is unique because it is specially designed to inculcate the spirit of self-reliance in the trainees and equip them not only for self sustenance but also to make them employers of labour in the ever expanding ICT world.

At the end of the 6-week training, the trainees will acquire new skills in two primary technology areas: Software programming and renewable energy system. In the software programming, participants will be able to develop new computer programs for communications, business enterprises, financial transactions, security, e-government, healthcare, education etc.

"On renewable energy, they will be skilled in solar power installation such as solar street lights, power for homes, commercial and government buildings; battery design and construction of energy- related electronic devices such as inverter and charge controllers; production of indigenous battery-free solar power refrigerators, water pumps etc" The trainees, according to the Governor, would also be trained in how to prepare themselves for the job market or to start their own technology business as entrepreneurs.

Dr Mimiko also disclosed that the State government in partnership with Tech Ville Ltd, has concluded arrangements to establish a Technology Village adding that if government sustain this current drive, Ondo state would soon become Nigeria's Silicon Valley.

In his address, the Managing Director of Tech Ville, Prof Olurinde Lafe stated that the Techville 2010, a 6-

week intensive capacity development workshop wholly funded by the State government was targeted at mostly young and unemployed university graduates of the State origin in the fundamentals of software engineering and renewable energy system.

The workshop, he noted was a PPP initiatives between Ondo State Government and the US-based MIDATCO LCC.

His words: "Tech Alive 2010 is a job creation engine; at the end of the workshop, the best of the trainees, who would have demonstrated mastery of the subjects, and are of good character, will be invited to be part of the development of Tech Ville, the technology-themed modern city being built in the outskirts of Ondo town.

"Trainees will be equipped for the jobs in the cutting edge ICT and emerging clean energy sectors. The programme will lay the solid foundation for the bringing up in Ondo State, Centers of Excellence for capacity development in the tele-communications, information technology, clean and renewable energy sources, sustainable engineering and architectural zero-energy building design and construction.

"The availability of trained work force and adequate capacity in vibrant technology sectors will be a powerful magnet for foreign and domestic companies to establish their development and operational bases in Ondo State."

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KOLAWOLE OLABISI,
Chief Press Secretary to the Governor of Ondo State, Governor's
Office. Akure, Ondo State

