

## **China 's renewable energy project wins global green energy prize**

June 20 (Xinhua) --China's Renewable Energy Development Project (REDP) was rewarded the Ashden Awards for Sustainable Energy, the world's leading green energy prize, in a final competition taking place here Thursday.

The REDP was launched in 2001 by the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) and the World Bank (WB), with international grant financing provided by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), with one of its main aims to promote the installation of photovoltaic (PV) solar home systems in remote off- grid homes in nine western Chinese provinces; to improve the quality of production of PV modules and other system components in China; to provide free information about PV; and to facilitate cooperation between the PV sector in China and the rest of the world.

The REDP has enabled sales of over 402,000 photovoltaic (PV) solar-home systems (SHS) through the REDP-subsidized program since its establishment to rural people who live off the land by tending yaks or other animals in remote areas of the West and North-West of China.

Around 1.6 million people, who live in tents for at least part of the year and had little access to electricity previously, now have an improved quality of life through better light, communications and entertainment, with the portable systems ideally suited to the lifestyle of these semi-nomadic users who are able to take them with their tents into the summer pasture in the hills.

A typical SHS supplies two lights, a radio and a mobile phone charger, and is supplied in a metal carry-case so that it is portable.

Larger systems can power radio-cassettes, TVs and DVD players. For users, the main benefit of the REDP program was brighter, cleaner lighting, for study, work and recreation.

Use of radio-cassettes and mobile phones to keep in touch with the outside world is also greatly appreciated. The REDP program supported the rapid growth of the PV industry in China , and improved the quality of production while keeping costs low.

It greatly expanded the market for solar home systems, and supported the development of a network of suppliers, wholesalers and retailers.

The REDP has also supported some PV village systems to provide electricity for public facilities such as, schools, health centers, village satellite telephones, forest protection, road maintaining, climate monitoring and Buddhist temples.

The REDP was one of the six pioneering renewable energy projects from Africa, Asia and Latin America that received a prize of 20,000 pounds (some 40,000 US dollars) each announced by the Ashden Awards at a ceremony here.

At the ceremony, India's Technology Informatics Design Endeavour (TIDE) was announced to win this year's title "Energy Champion" and a prize of 40,000 pounds (some 80,000 U.S. dollars) while Bangladeshi Grameen Shakti won the 2008 Outstanding Achievement Award and a prize of 15,000 pounds.

The Ashden Awards for Sustainable Energy was founded in 2001 by the Ashden Trust, a Britain-based charity, and the competition is held annually to identify and reward outstanding and innovative projects in Britain and developing countries which provide renewable energy and energy efficiency at a local level.

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