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AMERICA/CUBA - Entrepreneurs trained in courses promoted by the Catholic Church

Havana (Agenzia Fides) - The Cuban Catholic Church has launched new training courses in order to obtain a diploma as entrepreneur. Thanks to a collaboration with Mexican universities, new entrepreneurs are then given the opportunity to open a business in Cuba.
These courses offer training and advice, but not "initial capital", according to what was reported to Fides Agency from a local source. Two of the projects, a three-month workshop and two years for a diploma are managed by the Society of Jesus and by the Brothers of Christian Schools (De La Salle), while another course of a month is managed and directed by the Archdiocese of Havana.
The necessary requirements vary depending on the project chosen. "Our course is designed to teach people how to run a business in an elementary way. Therefore it offers the basic elements necessary to adapt the project to our country", says a collaborator of Jorge Mandilego, director of the project "CubaEmprende" of the Archdiocese of Havana, an experience that began in mid-2012 in the Cultural Center Félix Varela .
In Cuba there is no private education and public education has been free and compulsory since the '60s. The Catholic Church has always asked to be able to engage in the sector, but authorities have so far rejected the request, although the dialogue between Church - government in recent years has made significant progress. Since 2010 President Raul Castro has initiated a process of economic opening to the management of small private entrepreneurs or cooperatives, once unthinkable in a country where 80 % of employment was handled by the state.
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