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Skills training for the poor to become financially independent

KUALA LUMPUR: There will be more focus on practical training and less on cash incentives under Phase two of the Malaysian Family hardcore poverty eradication (BMTKM) programme, says Datuk Seri Mustapa Mohamed.

The Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Economy) said this shift in approach would ensure the hardcore poor were given the suitable tools and skills to become financially independent.

"The usual one-size-fits-all solution will be replaced in favour of finding tailor-fit solutions for each locality.

"We will ensure that every aspect of the local community is taken into consideration before giving them any equipment and training to start their own businesses.

"They will also be taught bookkeeping and cost management skills to ensure they maintain sustainable margins," he said in his keynote address during the International Day For The Eradication Of Poverty 2022 Conference (IDEP 2022) here yesterday.

Mustapa said that this change in policy was also to address attitude issues of the local community that he encountered in the first phase of BMTKM.

"Some people refused to get help as they preferred to get direct cash assistance every month instead, which shows a serious mindset problem.

"We must teach these people to be less dependent on government handouts as skills can last you a lifetime, while one-time handouts are temporary," he said.

He also noted that there would be more strenuous and continuous monitoring of the effectiveness of the second phase of BMTKM.

"These programmes will be monitored at least once a month through reports from multiple layers of management, from the government officers in charge, down to community heads.

"This would allow us to monitor the progress of the programmes and assess if intervention is needed in case of accidents or if foul play is found," he said.

The second phase of the BMTKM is scheduled to begin this month, involving households in hardcore poverty from over 110 localities nationwide.

The first phase of BMTKM, which began earlier this year in June, involved about 2,500 household heads at 74 localities nationwide as part of the 12th Malaysia Plan to achieve zero hardcore poverty by the end of 2025.