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Offenders get a second chance at life under 1Azam programme

PUTRAJAYA: Under the Akhiri Zaman Miskin (Azam) Tani programme, ex-offenders including former convicts and ex-drug addicts as well as people living with HIV will be assisted to gain financial strength starting next year.

Agriculture and Agro-based Industry deputy minister Datuk Chua Tee Yong said the Government is currently broadening its scope to help single mothers and the disabled in addition to the poor and extreme poor households.

"Starting next year, we will expand the focus groups to include former drug addicts and those released from jail.

"This is to help them get out of their old habits and reintegrate back into society," he said.

The expansion to include ex-convicts, former drug addicts and people living with HIV was concluded during the GTP Roadmap 2.0 labs as part of the implementation under the Low-Income Households NKRA from 2013 to 2015.

Chua said there was a need to expand the reach of the Azam Tani programme as there were more Malaysians under the low-income category who were not registered under the e-Kasih system.

Eligible applicants under the programme can receive grants up to RM10,000 to purchase the necessary tools for their chosen business sectors like fish rearing cages, manufacturing of fish fries and food manufacturing equipment.

By the end of last year, a total of 7,632 applicants had registered for Azam Tani grants.