

## Cabin project set to boost fishing community's economic wellbeing

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**PAPAR:** The Kampung Mandahan's fishermen community here is set to receive an economic stimulus and capacity building through the implementation of a drying cabin project with the help of Technology Park Malaysia Corporation Sdn Bhd (TPM).

TPM Group Business Development and Corporate Affairs Vice-President Zulkifli Fitri Ismail said the project, which was also being developed in Kemaman, Terengganu, was part of several capacity-building and financial inclusion projects driven by Bank Negara Malaysia under the Community Empowerment Programme.

He said through the initiative, TPM, as a technology-based and innovative development agency, would develop innovative infrastructure facilities with the objective of increasing the productivity of the community's economy and hence, increasing their household income.

"The feasibility study, carried out to ensure the needs of the community and its innovative solutions can be matched, demonstrates the need to improve the economic well-being of the two communities, namely in Papar, Sabah and Kemaman, Terengganu can be implemented if technology interventions and innovations that can help spur value chain production yields are introduced," he said in a statement here yesterday.

To ensure the project meets its objective, Zulkifli said the community would continue to be guided in two aspects of capacity development, namely in technology and product quality improvement; and through financial institutions and support agencies such as the Credit Counselling and Debt Management Agency's guidance on financial management to enhance financial inclusiveness, especially among the B40 community.

"The strategic collaboration between financial institutions and TPM, through its social innovation capability, has provided a channel to empower the economic status of the low-income segments of the community through technology injection," he said.

In terms of benefits, Zulkifli said the drying centre would speed up the drying of anchovies from 70 hours to only four hours, while fish drying would reduce to seven hours.

"Compared to the traditional process, drying cabins allow fishermen to enjoy higher quality fish and anchovies, and also offer greater capacity of up to 500 kg or half a tonne of dried anchovies at any one time.

"The impact of drying cabin will enable every fisherman to increase his average monthly income from RM400 to RM1,200, which is three times that of the traditional method," he said, adding that the fishermen would also enjoy a steady stream of income even during the rainy season.

Zulkifli said the effort was in line with the government's desire to empower the community by devising a targeted approach through holistic assistance undertaken by various agencies.

He said that TPM would collaborate or assist other agencies in undertaking initiatives to empower the community through the use of technology, innovation and automation of production processes to improve productivity and household income and would continue to be committed to the Community Empowerment Programme.

Zulkifli said hence, TPM invited government agencies, the private sector or non-governmental organisations to work with the company to implement the Community Empowerment Programme by capitalising on technology and innovation intervention approaches.