RESEARCH NOTE smeru
No. 1/OCT/2022

Wandira Larasati/SMERU

TOWARD AN INCLUSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AGENDA IN KABUPATEN KAYONG UTARA

Wandira Larasati, Abdullah Faqih, M. Sulton Mawardi

HIGHLIGHTS

- The economic growth of Kabupaten (District of) Kayong Utara (KKU), albeit quite high, has not exactly translated into inclusive economic development. Its relatively low Inclusive Economic Development Index (IEDI) score has put KKU in the 9th place among the 12 *kabupaten* in West Kalimantan Province.
- The low inclusive economic development in KKU has been caused by inadequate economy-supporting infrastructure—mainly roads—and the people's low education level, which lead to suboptimal productivity, innovation, and adoption of technology, and result in low economic returns. The consequences are poor quality employment and high poverty rates.
- It is urgent that the quality of the human resources be improved, especially by increasing the years of schooling. Another aspect to pay attention to is the acceleration of economy-supporting infrastructure development, notably that of roads in steady (*mantap*) condition[1]. These can help achieve more inclusive economic development in KKU.

[1] A category of roads with 'good' and 'fair' ratings (BPS, 2019).

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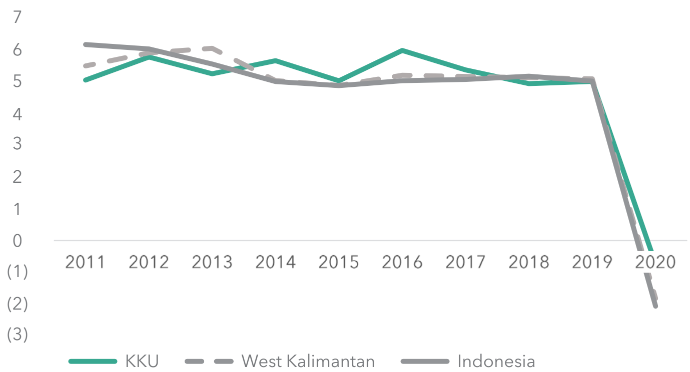
HIGH ECONOMIC GROWTH, BUT LOW IEDI

KKU has experienced a quite high economic growth, reaching an average of 5.34% in the 2011–2019 period with a -0.74% drop in 2020 because of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. The drop was lower than those at the national (-2.07%) and even West Kalimantan Provincial (-1.82%) levels (Figure 1). Nevertheless, KKU's IEDI score in 2021 was relatively low, namely 5.1, which was below those at the national and provincial levels—6.0 and 5.4, respectively (Figure 2). An IEDI score shows the inclusiveness level of economic growth, which should be accompanied by low poverty and inequality rates and greater access to economic opportunities. This means that a relatively low IEDI score demonstrates that economic growth, albeit relatively high, may not be inclusive enough, as it has not benefited all levels of society.

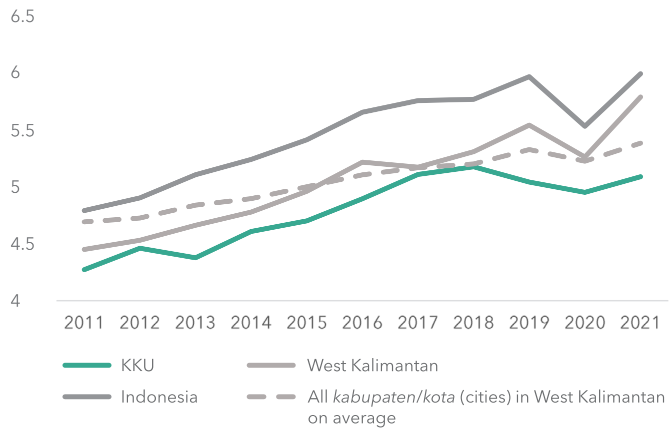
Figure 1. Economic Growth of KKU, West Kalimantan, and Indonesia (%)



Source: BPS, BPS of West Kalimantan Province, and BPS of KKU data, 2011–2020.

Note: Economic growth is determined based on the gross regional domestic product (GRDP) growth rate at constant prices.

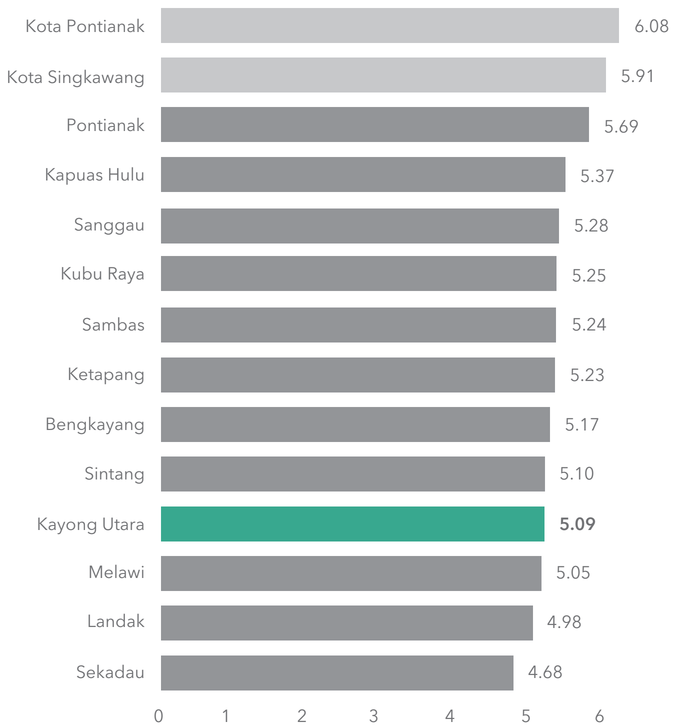
Figure 2. IEDI 2011–2021



Source: Bappenas[2], 2021.

According to certain IEDI indicators, KKU have shown good performances in several aspects. For example, the percentage of people with access to health insurance has reached 100%. This means that all people in KKU have been guaranteed access to health services. Moreover, the unemployment rate was only 3.8%, lower than those at the national and provincial levels, which reached 6.5% and 5.8%, respectively (BPS, BPS of West Kalimantan Province, and BPS KKU data, 2021). However, these indicators could not help to improve the inclusiveness of the region's economic development. Because of the relatively low IEDI score, KKU held the 9th place among the 12 *kabupaten* in West Kalimantan Province[3] (Figure 3).

Figure 3. IEDI Scores of *Kabupaten/Kota* in West Kalimantan, 2021



Source: Bappenas, 2021.

Considering the abundance of natural resources in KKU, we conducted a study using quantitative and qualitative approaches to analyze factors behind KKU's low IEDI score compared to those at the national and provincial levels. In conducting the study, the research team carried out a descriptive analysis of several IEDI indicators, a series of focus group discussions (FGDs), in-depth interviews, and group interviews with selected stakeholders in KKU.[4]

[2] National Development Planning Agency.

[3] *Kabupaten* in West Kalimantan with IEDI scores from the highest to the lowest: Mempawah, Kapuas Hulu, Sanggau, Kubu Raya, Sambas, Ketapang, Bengkayang, Sintang, Kayong Utara, Melawi, Landak, and Sekadau. The analysis did not include Kota Pontianak and Kota Singkawang because it only compared administrative areas of *kabupaten*.

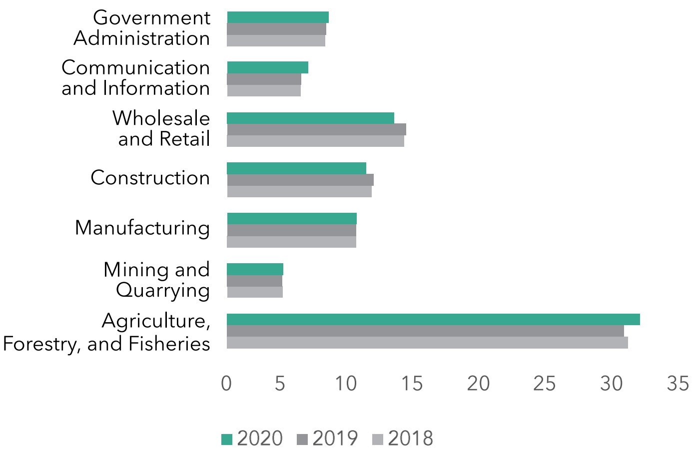
[4] This study was conducted by The SMERU Research Institute in collaboration with the Ministry of National Development Planning/Bappenas and the Regional Development Planning Agency (Bappeda) of KKU, with the full support from the Directorate-General of Regional Development of the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Ford Foundation.

MAIN ISSUES OF INCLUSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN KKU

Primary sectors[5] are the focus of the economy even though their growth and development are not optimum.

People in KKU rely heavily on the primary sectors, which contribute the most to KKU's GRDP. In the last decade, on average the primary sectors in KKU have shares of around 31.9% of the region's total GRDP (Figure 4). Moreover, in 2020, the primary sectors absorbed 49.6% of the total labor force in KKU (Sakernas[6] data, 2020). This means that almost half of the people who worked in KKU depend on the primary sectors for their livelihood (BPS KKU, 2021). Produce from the primary sectors in KKU includes food crops, horticultural crops, oil palm fruit, and fish. Thus, the economic growth in KKU cannot be separated from the growth of the primary sectors.

Figure 4. KKU's GRDP Shares in the 2018–2020 Period by Sector (%)

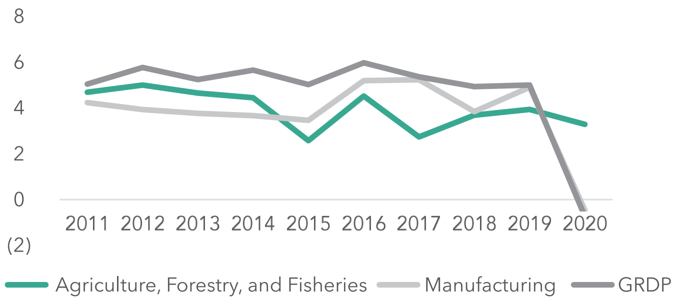


Source: BPS KKU data, 2018–2020.

Although the primary sectors have the largest contribution to the GRDP, their average growth in the last decade has been stagnant at around 3.96%. On the other hand, the average economic growth in KKU in the same period has reached 4.73% (Figure 5). One of the reasons is suboptimal productivity because of the low quality of human resources that manage the primary sectors. For instance, people lack innovation, still use simple tools and technology, and have limited knowledge of producing and managing yields from the primary sectors.

The mean years of schooling (MYS) in KKU is quite low, i.e., around 6.9 years (the lowest among all *kabupaten/kota* in West Kalimantan). People who work in the primary sectors have even lower MYS, i.e., 5.3 years. This means that on average people working in the primary sectors do not even finish elementary school. It is not surprising that the productivity of the primary sectors tends to be low, leading to low economic returns. The average expenditure per capita in KKU is 1.146 million rupiah per month (Figure 6), while those working in the primary sectors spend even less, i.e., 1.060 million rupiah per month (Susenas[7] data, 2021). This indicates that KKU's poverty rate was relatively high (9.3% in 2021) and its human development indicator was relatively falling behind (with the Human Development Index score standing at 62.90).

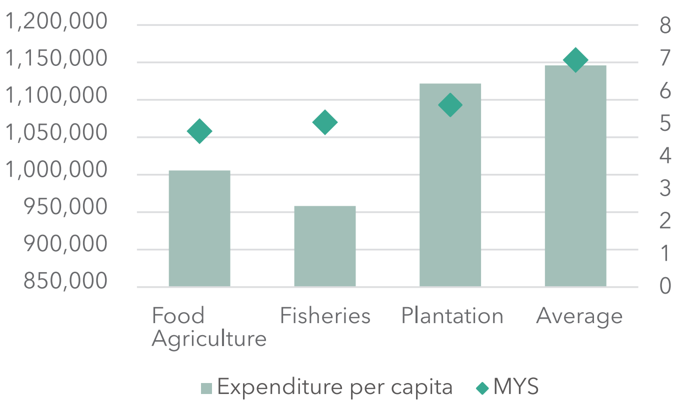
Figure 5. KKU's GRDP Growth by Sector (%)



Source: Susenas data, 2021.

Productivity in the agricultural sector is relatively low compared to the manufacturing sector (Lewis in Martin and Mitra, 2001). Some literature even mentions that the large agricultural sector may threaten the prospect of economic growth (Sachs and Warner, 1995; Rodríguez and Rodrik, 2000). Nevertheless, KKU still relies heavily on agriculture and has not shown the initiatives to develop the manufacturing sector. Produce from the primary sectors, e.g., oil palm fruit, is mostly sold raw to companies. The downstreaming[8] of products from the agriculture, plantation, and fisheries sectors mostly takes the form of home industries, is not massive, and has not become the priority for development in KKU.

Figure 6. Expenditure Per Capita (in Rupiah) and MYS by Employment Sector, 2021



Source: Susenas data, 2021 (processed).

[5] The primary sectors referred to in this article are agriculture, forestry, and fisheries. The mining and quarrying sector is excluded because the share of this sector in KKU's GRDP in 2021 is relatively small, i.e., around 4.2%.

[6] National Labor Force Survey.

[7] National Socioeconomic Survey.

[8] Downstreaming (*hilirisasi*) is a strategy to increase added value of commodities by transforming them into semi-finished or finished products (Kementerian Investasi/BKPM, 2017).

As a result, the share of the processing industry in KKU's GRDP has shown no significant improvement in the last decade and remained at 9%–10%, quite far from those at the national and provincial levels in 2021, which reached 19.3% and 16.5%, respectively. The processing industry in KKU is dominated by small- and medium-scale industries (SMIs). There are 1,764 SMIs, which consist of food, craft, clothing, chemical, and metal industries. They manage to absorb around 4,383 workers (BPS KKU, 2021) or around 4.8% of the total labor force in KKU (Sakernas data, 2021). Since 2016, the processing industry has shown higher growth than the primary sectors, except in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic. This shows great potential for developing the processing industry in KKU by nurturing the region's micro-, small-, and medium-scale enterprises (MSMEs) (Figure 7).

In the Regional Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMD) 2018–2023, growth and shares of the processing industry have not become the targets or outcomes to be achieved by the regional government. In this document, the development target regarding the industry still focuses on the output, e.g., the number of SMIs that receive assistance, training, and business permits, with even a small number of target recipients. For instance, in 2023, the Government of KKU only targets 21 SMIs to receive assistance and 75 SMIs to participate in training programs to improve their product-packaging skills (RPJMD KKU 2018–2023). The reason for the small number of target recipients is the small portion of budget allocated for developing the MSME sector. For example, the budget for training programs targeting MSME owners in 2023 is only 67 million rupiah (KKU Regional Government Work Plan/ RKPD 2022). Meanwhile, there has been no sign of investors being interested in developing a big-scale industry in KKU.

Poor road infrastructure has negatively affected economic growth and people's quality of life.

In KKU, the quality and quantity of the infrastructure needed to support the economy, such as roads, electricity, and means of connectivity, are still insufficient (Figure 8). This condition plays a role in hampering the development and growth of the processing industry in KKU. This is because roads are the main prerequisite for the growth of the processing industry, especially as they ensure the smooth supply of raw materials and distribution of the products (Jackson and Jabbie, 2021). Lacking the main prerequisite makes investors reluctant to invest their money in the processing industry. As a result, until now, we cannot find even one big-scale industry in KKU.

KKU has roads that stretch for 300.59 km. Of these roads, 179.86 km or 59.8% are in steady condition. With an area of 4,568 km², however, this is insufficient, as the ratio of steady roads in KKU is only 0.04, whereas the ratio of the national steady roads is 0.20. KKU needs another 95-kilometer stretch of steady roads to catch up with the percentage of the national steady roads, which has reached 91.3%.

There are two main factors that cause this small ratio. **First**, the development of steady roads is slow because of the inadequacy in the management of the regional budget. In the RPJMD document, the budget allocated for road development is around 45 billion rupiah a year for the 2019–2023 period. According to the public works and spatial planning agency, the length of roads in KKU that require repair and improvement to become steady roads is around 122 km, whereas the budget required to build 1 km of road is around 2.5 billion rupiah. This means that if

Figure 7. One of the MSMEs in KKU that Support the Local Economy

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Figure 8. The Condition of a Road Segment that Needs Repair

we go by the current allocation scheme, it will take seven years to maximize the percentage of steady roads in KKU; this excludes the calculation of any planned new roads[9] and budget for periodic maintenance.

In 2020, the regional budget per capita in KKU is quite high, i.e., Rp5,847,311, compared to those in other regions that share similar economic characteristics, namely Ketapang (3.9 million rupiah), Melawi (4.3 million rupiah), and Sambas (2.6 million rupiah) (BPS KKU, 2021; Dirjen Perimbangan Keuangan Kemenkeu, 2020). In the same year, KKU recorded a difference in income and budget expenditure of around 42 billion rupiah or budget absorption of 94.6%. Meanwhile, in 2021, budget absorption by the public works and spatial planning agency was only 88.03% (Government of KKU, 2022). Therefore, it is crucial that KKU plan and manage the budget more carefully, making sure that development priorities with a stronger leverage effect receive appropriate budget allocation.

Second, KKU is surrounded by a conservation area, i.e., Mount Palung National Park (TNGP) with an area of 108,043.90 hectares, bordering with five *kecamatan* (subdistricts), namely Kecamatan Matan Hilir, Kecamatan Sukadana, Kecamatan Simpang Hilir, Kecamatan Sungai Laur, and Kecamatan Sandai (Dirjen KSDAE KLHK, 2019). To build roads in areas that border with TNGP, the Government of KKU needs to settle issues related to bureaucracy and permits with the national park management, which in this case is the Ministry of Environment and Forestry. So far, the *kabupaten* government has not had any records regarding successful negotiations held with the TNGP management to build roads in the area.

Aside from hindering the downstreaming process and productivity improvement, insufficient road infrastructure also affects people's quality of life, especially with regard to obtaining access to electricity from the State-Owned Electricity Company (PLN). Up until now, 12.6% of the population in KKU still cannot enjoy electricity (Figure 9). The geographical conditions in KKU, with separated islands and landmass, and the insufficient road infrastructure have made it hard for PLN to provide services for all areas in the region. Added to that is the population distribution in the many scattered islands, which is considered as a disincentive for PLN from the business point of view. People in KKU who do not have access to electricity rely on several strategies to meet their need for electricity. They either get electricity from neighbors whose house has electricity, use a power generator which can provide them with electricity for only 12 hours per day, or resort to using kerosene lamps.

Roads are vital to the socioeconomic development in a region and can boost people's quality of life (Aschauer, 1989; Agenor and Moreno-Dodson, 2006; Grundey, 2008). Hence, insufficient road infrastructure will lead to a domino effect, including hindering the development of communication facilities, as well as people's access to education and health facilities, and financial institutions. In 2021, the expected years of schooling in KKU is 11.84 years. This means that a child born in KKU today is projected to be unable to finish senior high school. Moreover, basic immunization for children under five years of age is considered low with the percentage of children receiving complete basic immunization recorded at only 38% in 2021 (Susenas data, 2021). The health agency in KKU has different data and informed us that the immunization coverage in the region in 2021 already reached 62.91%.

[9] In 2022, the budget allocation for constructing steady roads and bridges in KKU is 87 billion rupiah, as stipulated in the RKPD 2022 document. This is different from what is written in the RPJMD document. With this scheme, the time needed to achieve the maximum ratio of steady roads in KKU is four years.

Figure 9. Some Households without Access to Electricity

The percentage, however, is still relatively low, considering that the national target for complete basic immunization is 79.1% (Kementerian Kesehatan, 2021), whereas to achieve herd immunity, the immunization coverage should reach 95%. High immunization coverage and herd immunity are indispensable to achieving strong human resources. The relatively low quality of human resources in KKU has led to the region's inability to achieve inclusive economic development.

One of the reasons for the low expected years of schooling in KKU is the fact that education facilities and road infrastructure are still insufficient. Improvement in education facilities should be accompanied by the improvement in road infrastructure and good connectivity to achieve optimum results. Another issue is the fact that children in KKU, notably those living in the islands, still have a low interest in attending school. Some people living in the more scattered islands tend to choose to send their children to schools in Kepulauan Bangka Belitung because they are more accessible and better in quality, while the schools in KKU are too far from where they live. The others feel that there is no urgency to send their children to school. They believe that even without schooling, their children will still be able to find a job and earn income, considering the potential of the natural resources in their region. For instance, they still can catch and sell fish even though the income from this work may be low compared to the income received by those with an educational attainment.

> "Children in this area can do whatever job is avalaible; there is no need for high education. Elementary school children can help out with carrying fish and get paid for it after school. They can use the money to buy what they want. For working at an oil palm plantation, they don't need to go to school for too long either; they can work as farmhands transporting oil palm fruit. (FGD participant, a woman, 17 March 2022)

From the in-depth interviews with multiple stakeholders in KKU, we learn that there has been no breakthrough in the form of effective programs to boost the quality of education in KKU. Another issue is that changes to the bureaucratic structure happen often and this makes any existing program to improve the quality of education suboptimal.

Inclusive economic development is not mainstreamed in the regional development planning.

Of the seven priority indicators of development in KKU, economic growth is still the prime target, while its inclusiveness has not yet been made into a target. Of the 21 IEDI indicators, only 6 are included in KKU's RPJMD 2019–2023. They are quality of education, quality of health, gender equality, economic infrastructure improvement, households with private toilets, and households with access to clean water. Aspects such as improvement in the downstreaming effort, quality of the labor force, and inclusive finance have not become the development targets in KKU.

KKU's RPJMD 2019–2023 has not yet included the economic growth target for each sector or the potential revenue targets of the region. Ineffective development planning is also apparent from the lack of synergy between local government organizations (OPD) in the mapping of the region's leading economic potentials. This is despite the fact that economic potentials are important as a point of reference for the regional government to develop potential sectors and carry out downstreaming of commodities from the priority sectors.

Development planning that is not inclusive and comprehensive has made it difficult for the technical OPD to translate the vision and direction of KKU's economic development. Consequently, each OPD has a different view with regard to economy-supporting sectors that need to become priorities. As an illustration, the Industry, Trade, Cooperative, and Small- and Medium-Scale Enterprise Agency (DPPKUKM) of KKU has formulated the *Kabupaten* Industrial Development Master Plan (RIPIK). The master plan lists down the regional main commodities that need to be prioritized. They are fish, forest produce, and horticultural crops. Unlike DPPKUKM, however, the Investment and One-Stop Integrated Service Agency of KKU is of the opinion that rice and coffee beans are the potential commodities that need to be prioritized. Such disharmony in mapping regional main commodities has led to several issues, one of which is that the direction of economic development in KKU has become less focused.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that although KKU's economic growth is relatively high, the region's economic growth and development are not inclusive. The affecting factors are as follows.

a) Inadequate economy-supporting infrastructure, i.e., the small number of steady roads, has hindered the downstreaming process and development of education, health, and connectivity facilities in KKU. The absence of commodity downstreaming causes the economic value added to be low, leading to suboptimal economic growth. Meanwhile, problems in developing education, health, and connectivity facilities have led to the low quality of human resources in KKU.

b) The low quality of human resources has limited the growth of the primary sectors, on which KKU's economy depends. People's low education makes productivity and technological innovation or adoption in the primary sectors minimum, which eventually limits the economic returns. This has resulted in poor quality employment and high poverty rates.

c) The direction of development policies in KKU has not fully adopted the concept of inclusive economic development. The focus of economic growth to improve the productivity of the primary sectors is not accompanied by massive downstreaming of commodities and people's empowerment through the development of MSMEs. Moreover, the region does not have a development road map and maps of regional potentials synergized between regional-level executives. This has resulted in a lack of coordination between the achievement target and the direction of policies formulated by the regional government.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

It is clear that more serious efforts and innovative programs are required to make KKU's economic development more inclusive. In general, there should be medium- and long-term efforts to achieve inclusive economic development in KKU. However, the Government of KKU can pursue several things in the short term as a form of support for high economic growth, accompanied by poverty reduction, as well as improved economic access and opportunities.

In the long term, improving the quality of the human resources, especially by increasing years of schooling, should become the main key in achieving inclusive economic development. Efforts to improve the quality of education should not be limited to providing physical facilities, such as school buildings. The Government of KKU needs to make sure that when the physical facilities are available, children can participate in the education. To achieve this, one of the steps the *kabupaten* government can take is creating an educational system that provides dormitory facilities for students of secondary education and above, especially those living in the coastal areas. Moreover, the government should optimize the Smart Indonesia Card (KIP) scheme, which guarantees free education for children from poor households.

In the medium and long terms, the *kabupaten* government needs to accelerate the development of sufficient economy-supporting infrastructure, namely roads, electricity, and information and communication technology. In any *kabupaten*, including KKU, economy-supporting infrastructure may serve as an indicator with a strong leverage effect. For example, the road infrastructure can improve access to education and has the potential to attract investors. This means that the road infrastructure should become the priority target of development in KKU, especially with regard to the budgeting.

In the short term, the *kabupaten* government can do the following: (i) map the potential home industries in each *kecamatan*, (ii) create breakthroughs and training programs assuring sustainable improvements to the capacity of the targets, (iii) create innovations for financing the programs through partnerships with the private sector, and (iv) adopt the inclusive economic development concept and use it as KKU's development policy direction.

A map of potential home industries can serve as the basis for developing the MSME sector as part of the downstreaming effort. In the meantime, capacity improvement programs for farmers, fishers, or MSME owners should be designed to be sustainable. One of the ways is to have training of trainers, in which the targets of the training are tasked to train another group of trainees upon completion of their training program. This can help with the transfer of knowledge even if the resources are limited. To address the problem of limited capacity to finance the programs, the *kabupaten* government needs to create innovations, such as establishing partnerships with the private sector (companies at the provincial level), the provincial government or state institutions at the provincial level, or donors. For instance, the Government of KKU can design MSME empowerment programs in collaboration with the local banks, the provincial government, or Bank Indonesia, which has an MSME assistance program.

All these efforts need to be accompanied by the adoption of inclusive economic development in KKU's regional development planning. Thus, the development targets can be integrated into the same goal, i.e., economic growth that is accompanied by the reduction of poverty and inequality, as well as an improvement in access to economic opportunities. ■

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Jl. Cikini Raya No. 10A,
Jakarta 10330 Indonesia
6221-3193 6336
6221-3193 0850
smeru@smeru.or.id
smeru.or.id
@SMERUInstitute
The SMERU Research Institute
@smeru.institute

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Research Institute

Editor:
Wiwin Purbaningrum

Design & Layout:
Novita Maizir

Suggested citation:
Larasati, Wandira, Abdullah Faqih, and M. Sulton Mawardi (2022) 'Toward an Inclusive Economic Development Agenda in Kabupaten Kayong Utara.' Research Note No. 1. Jakarta: The SMERU Research Institute.

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