



**URBANICE**  
MALAYSIA

# KOTA BELUD

## Voluntary Local Review 2023

Implementing the 2030 Agenda in **Kota Belud**



# KOTA BELUD

## KOTA BELUD DISTRICT COUNCIL VOLUNTARY LOCAL REVIEW 2023

This report and any files are intended only for reference use in implementing SDGs for Kota Belud District Council (MDKB). You are hereby notified that the taking of any action in reliance upon, or any review retransmission, dissemination, distribution, printing or copying of this report or any part thereof by anyone is strictly prohibited. Opinions, conclusions, and other information in this report that do not relate to the official business of URBANICE MALAYSIA and Ministry of Housing and Local Government (KPKT) shall be understood as neither given nor endorsed by any of the fore mentioned.

The designations employed and presentation of material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Malaysia Local Governments concerning the legal status of any territory, city or area or its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or development. Excerpts may be reproduced without authorization, on condition that the source is indicated. The findings, interpretations, and conclusions expressed in this report are entirely those of the author(s) and should not be attributed in any manner do not necessarily reflect those of KPKT and Malaysia Local Governments. URBANICE MALAYSIA and KPKT do not guarantee the accuracy of the data included in this publication and accept no responsibility whatsoever for any consequence of their use.



© 2023 | URBANICE MALAYSIA  
Centre of Excellence for Sustainable  
Cities & Community Well-being

This report is prepared for  
**Kota Belud District Council**



This report is prepared by  
**Urbanice Malaysia**



# Table Of Contents

## PART A

<b>1.0 Introduction</b>	<b>4</b>
1.1 Structure of the Report .....	6
1.2 Process and Framework.....	6
1.3 Stakeholders Engagement.....	9

<b>2.0 City Profiling</b>	<b>10</b>
2.1 Kota Belud at a Glance.....	11

<b>3.0 City Sustainability Journey</b>	<b>15</b>
3.1 Perception Assessment.....	16
3.2 Kota Belud Sustainability Journey.....	17
3.3 Internal Department Roles and Functions.....	18

## PART B

<b>4.0 Progress On 17 SDGs By Indicators</b>	<b>20</b>
--	-----------

<b>5.0 Way Forward</b>	<b>65</b>
5.1 Next Step for PBT.....	66



# Part A

## *1.0 Introduction*

Kota Belud is a town and district located in the West Coast Division of Sabah, Malaysia. It is situated approximately 70 kilometers north of Kota Kinabalu, the state capital. Known for its scenic landscapes, rich cultural heritage, and vibrant local traditions, Kota Belud is often referred to as the "Land of the Cowboys of the East" due to its famous Bajau horsemen.

# 1.0 INTRODUCTION



## Malaysia SDG Cities

The Malaysia SDG Cities introduced by URBANICE Malaysia, as we recognizes that ***cities and communities are crucial in determining its own set of priorities and deciding on the means of implementation*** to ensure that the SDG Goals and targets are met.

The framework is set to encourages a bottom-up approach in developing local action plans that will accelerate the SDGs achievement for Malaysia where the 17 SDGs and its 169 targets of the 2030 Sustainable Agenda must be achieved. Localizing the global goals at cities and urban areas is important for an urban nation like Malaysia and the Malaysia SDG Cities will ensure that vertical integration between national and state policies at all levels are aligned to the SDGs by realizing the aspirations and ensuring of its effective implementation locally.

**“There are 17 SDGs and 169 targets in total”**

### Why Malaysia Need SDG Cities ?

- 1 Raise local government awareness, commitment and capacities towards sustainable agenda.
- 2 Set local priorities and focus attention on urgent urban challenges to harness future opportunities.
- 3 Create a platform for Partnership to mobilize and empower stakeholders to identify practical integrated and innovative Solutions.
- 4 Develop an Action Plan to match the SDG and synchronized and align with National, State and Local development agendas.
- 5 Facilitate local government access to funding resources and develop business models to finance SDGs actions.
- 6 Strengthen role of Local Governments to monitor, evaluate and report SDG progress to national and state level

## 1.1 Structure Of The Report

Under Malaysia SDG Cities Project, there are three steps in preparing Voluntary Local Review (VLR) for Kota Belud city. During the first step, SDG Assessment Report is written as the first interim report of Voluntary Local Review, which is based on ***My Local Statistic of Kota Belud 2021 (published by Department of Statistics Malaysia, DOSM), Kota Belud District Council Strategic Plan 2020 - 2024 and Focus Group Discussions (FGD)***. This report is divided into two parts;



## 1.2 Process and Framework

### Introduction

**SDG Workshop Kota Belud District Council** is held for one day on August 16th, 2023, convening department representatives from different internal departments of MDKB, council members, and technical agencies. The workshop aims to review Kota Belud SDGs progress and set the agenda for the next stage of Kota Belud SDGs journey. This is also part of the Malaysia SDG Cities framework for cities to embark on SDG localisation.

Then, the key outcomes from the workshop are recorded and summarized in SDG Assessment Report and should inform the strategic direction moving forward. The report is written to build upon and tie together existing efforts in Kota Belud which ultimately set the foundation for the reporting of SDGs performance in Voluntary Local Review later at stage 3 of Malaysia SDG Cities Project.

The strengths and challenges of each SDGs were examined to provide an overview of the SDGs for Kota Belud. This comprehensive analysis was conducted by reviewing engagement sessions and analysing relevant documents, including the local plan and strategic plan.

## Workshop Objectives

- 1 Assessing the role and functions of MDKB towards achieving SDGs targets
- 2 Assessing the understanding and level of perception of stakeholders SDGs
- 3 Inculcating the participants on how localization of SDGs improves efficiency and supports the Kota Belud and the 2030 agenda

## Workshop Modules

The one-day workshop started with a talk from Deputy CEO URBANICE Malaysia, **Dr Azmizam bin Abdul Rashid** to introduce participants about SDGs and its importance for cities, the Malaysia SDG Cities Framework, and case studies from across the Malaysian network cities. This introductory talk was to improve participants' familiarity with what a localizing SDG at city looks like. Then, the participants are divided into three groups to engage in a module with three different themes – social, governance and environment. Each groups led by a facilitator who was partnered with a cofacilitator.

The facilitators used indicators of each SDGs as discussion points with intentions to, (1) assess the role and functions of MDKB internal departments and agencies towards achieving Sustainable Development Goals targets, and (2) identify Kota Belud's perceived issues and challenges in progressing towards achieving each SDGs. Lastly, a representative from each groups presented the summary of outcomes to the other participants. These facilitator-led activities helped participants better understand SDGs across the Kota Belud .

The outcomes from the stakeholder's engagement are set out in more details across this report according to related indicators of each SDGs. Supporting data are extracted from My Local Statistics Kota Belud 2021 and other supplementary documents provided by MDKB.

***"A structured approach to achieving SDG goals through stakeholder engagement."***



## Key Outcomes

The workshop generated wide-ranging discussion about the current state of Kota Belud, existing SDG efforts, and where future localising the SDG efforts should focus. This information will form the foundation of the Kota Belud SDG Roadmap. The workshop is a physical session to encourage an open, informal and interactive discussion among MDKB internal department officers and agencies. The workshop, which is held in three small groups, encourages the free flow of ideas, points of view, and inputs that are critical in establishing a path for SDG implementation in Kota Belud. The sessions were divided into three groups based on the outcomes, which are as follows:

### 3 KEY OUTCOMES for Malaysia SDG Cities

Outcome 1

#### Ensure Inclusive Growth and Development for All

**SDG 1, SDG 2, SDG 3, SDG 4, SDG 6, SDG 7**

Outcome 2

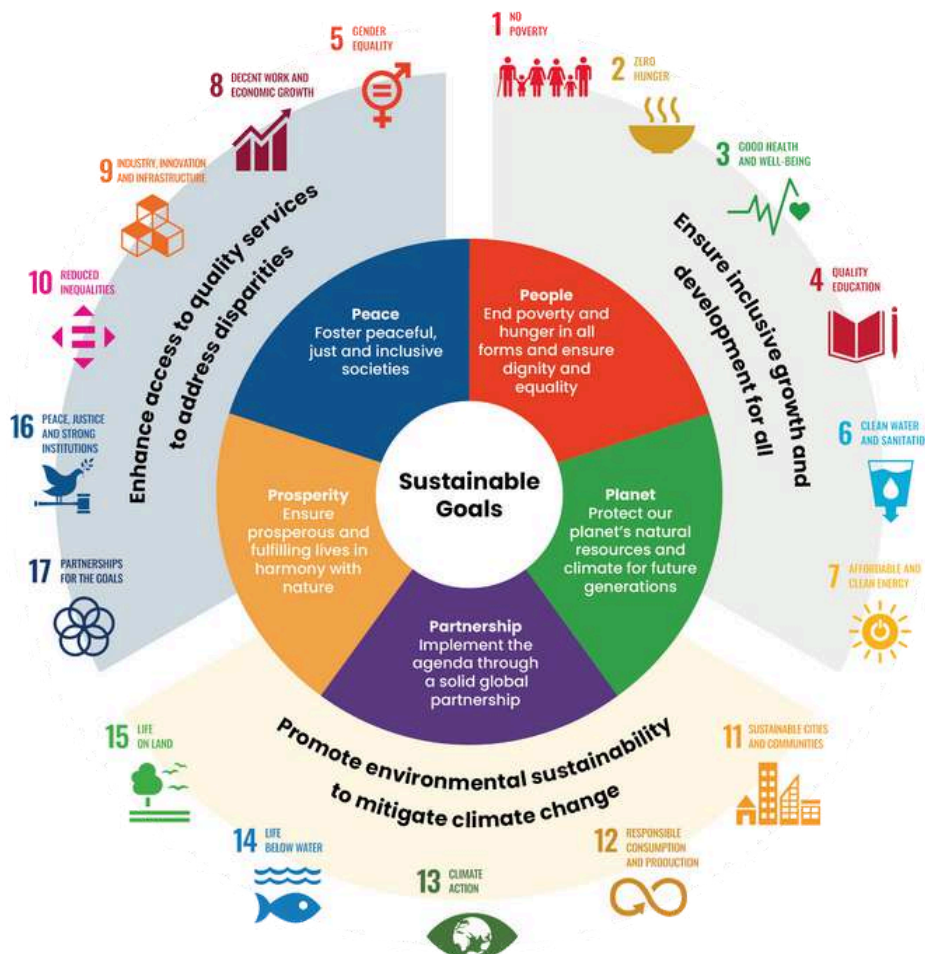
#### Enhance access to quality services to address disparities

**SDG 5, SDG 8, SDG 9, SDG 10, SDG 16, SDG 17**

Outcome 3

#### Promote Environmental Sustainability to Mitigate Climate Change

**SDG 11, SDG 12, SDG 13, SDG 14, SDG 15**



# 1.3 Stakeholder Engagement

33

Participants

3

Groups

11

People in each Group

## WHICH STAKEHOLDERS WERE INVOLVED?

### Group 1: Outcome 1

1. Pegawai Daerah MDKB
2. Pejabat Kesihatan Kota Belud
3. Pejabat Pertanian Daerah
4. Sabah Electricity Sdn Bhd (SESB)
5. Jabatan Pendidikan
6. Pemimpin Kemajuan Masyarakat Kawasan N8 & N9
7. Ahli Majlis (4 persons)

### Group 2: Outcome 2

1. Jabatan Perancang Bandar & Wilayah MDKB
2. Unit Perancang Ekonomi Negeri (UPEN)
3. Ibu Pejabat Polis Daerah
3. Jabatan Kerja Raya
4. Pejabat Pertahanan Awam Malaysia (APM)
5. Pusat Inkubator Kraf
6. Ahli Majlis (3 persons)

### Group 3: Outcome 3

1. Jabatan Pengairan dan Saliran
2. Jabatan Perhutanan Daerah
3. Pejabat Kementerian Pertanian dan Keterjaminan Makanan Kota Belud (IADA KB)
4. Pejabat Perikanan Daerah
5. Pemimpin Kemajuan Masyarakat Kawasan N11
6. Ahli Majlis (3 persons)



# City Profiling

## *2.0 Kota Belud City Profile*

Kota Belud is situated approximately 77 kilometers northeast of Kota Kinabalu, the capital of Sabah. It is bordered by the South China Sea to the west, Kudat to the north, Ranau to the east, and Tuaran to the south. The district covers an area of about 1,385 square kilometers, encompassing coastal areas, plains, and mountainous regions. Agriculture is the backbone of Kota Belud's economy, with rice farming, coconut plantations, and livestock rearing being the primary activities. Fishing is also significant, especially in coastal areas. Tourism is growing, thanks to the district's natural attractions and cultural events.

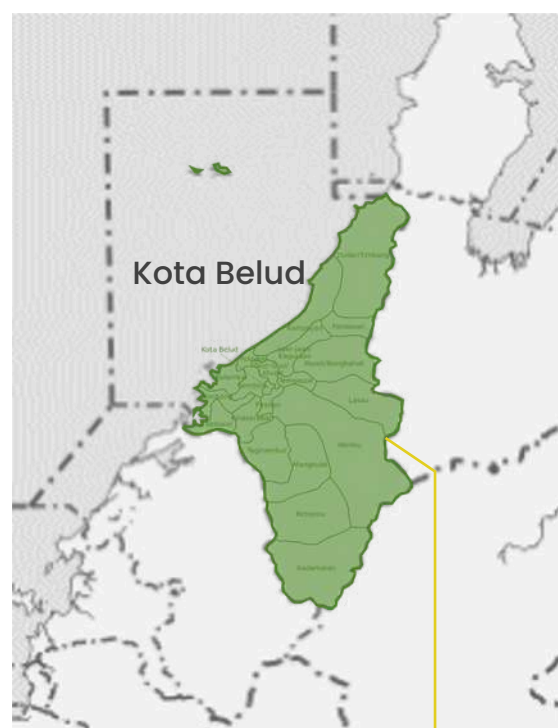
## 2.1 Kota Belud at a Glance

The **Kota Belud** District is located in the northwest coastal area of Sabah, approximately 77km from Kota Kinabalu via Pan-Borneo Highway. It is one of the West Coast Division of Sabah along with the districts of Kota Kinabalu, Papar, Penampang, Putatan, Ranau and Tuaran. The district comprises a land area of 1,386km<sup>2</sup> in 2021 and its capital is Kota Belud Town.

The strategic geographical location of Kota Belud District being surrounded by coastal area to the west and mountain areas to the east provides the district an abundance of natural resources and cultural elements, making it a popular destination for tourism.

### Significant of Kota Belud

- Mantanani Islands, located opposite the town of Kota Belud, is one of the main tourist attractions in Kota Belud District. It consists of three islands namely Mantanani Besar, Mantanani Kecil and Linggisan. Its rich marine life makes it popular for its waterbased activities such as snorkelling, kayak and diving.
- Having rich marine biodiversity in Kota Belud District, small-scale traditional fisheries is one of the major source of income for many villagers like many other coastal towns in Sabah.
- The entire area of Kota Belud District is part of the aspiring Kinabalu UNESCO Global Geopark (aKUGGp), alongside Kota Marudu and part of Ranau district. Kota Belud District is one of the main towns in the Kinabalu Geopark, having 176 out of 423 villages located in the District with approximately 38% of the total population.



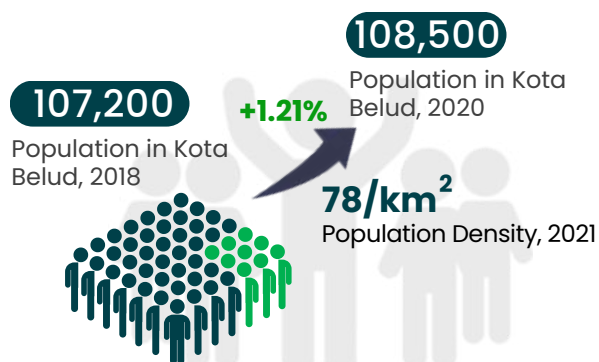
**138,600 hectares**  
Administration Area

**108,500**  
Population in 2021

**78/km<sup>2</sup>**  
Population Density in 2021

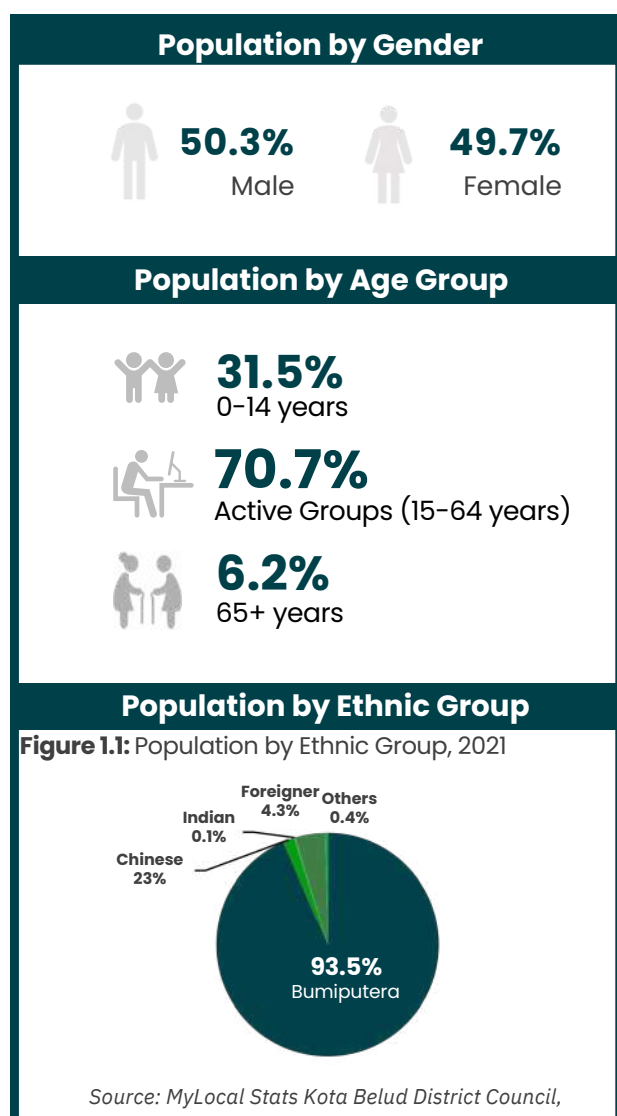
Source: MyLocal Stats Kota Belud District Council, 2021

## Demographic Profile



Source: MyLocal Stats Kota Belud District Council, 2021

The population in Kota Belud District has a **1.21% increase from 2018 to 2020**, which reflects a 1% annual population growth rate on average. The active group population of 15–64 years old dominated the total population of Kota Belud District by 70.7% in 2020.



## Household Size & Gross Income

The monthly household gross income in Kota Belud District has seen an increase from 2016 to 2019, however, the figure is lower when compared to Sabah State in both years.



### 5.1 Average Household Size, 2020

**Figure 1.2:** Monthly Statistics Household Gross Income

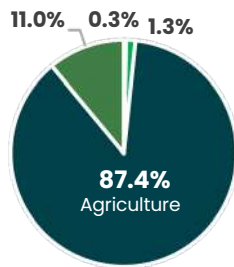
State/District	Median (RM)		Mean (RM)	
	2016	2019	2016	2019
Sabah	4,110	4,235	5,354	5,745
Kota Belud District	2,933	3,025	4,130	4,382

Source: MyLocal Stats Kota Belud District Council, 2021

## Economic Activities

The service sector is the main contributor to job opportunities with 2,092 jobs (87%) in 2021. It is followed by the construction sector with 261 jobs (11%).

Figure 1.3: Main Field of Employment in Kota Belud



■ Agriculture ■ Manufacturing ■ Services ■ Construction

Source: : MyLocal Stats Kota Belud District Council, 2021

### Labour Force

**49,100** Labour force in Kota Belud, 2021 **49,100** Labour force in Kota Belud, 2020

### Labour Force Participation Rate

**63.1%** Labour force participation rate in Kota Belud 2021 **+0.6%** **62.7%** Labour force participation rate in Kota Belud 2020

### Unemployment Rate

**9.2%** Unemployment rate in Tampin, 2020 **+1.1%** **9.3%** Unemployment rate in Tampin, 2021

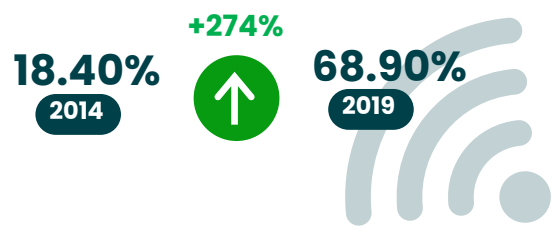
Source: MyLocal Stats Kota Belud District Council, 2021

## Facilities



Source: MyLocal Stats Kota Belud District Council, 2021

## Telecommunication System & ICT



Source: : MyLocal Stats Kota Belud District Council, 2021

There is a significant increase in the subscription of internet at home in Kota Belud District between 2014(18.4%), 2016(46.7%), and 2019(68.9%).

## Governance, Legal Frame Work and Finance

**Kota Belud District Council (MDKB), also known as the Kota Belud District Council, is the local government body responsible for governance and administration in the district of Kota Belud.**

Kota Belud District Council was established in 1951 and it is one of the oldest Local Authorities in the State of Sabah. Kota Belud District Council was established through the Kota Belud District Council Instrument made based on Section 3 of the 1961 Local Government Ordinance, which provides council services to the residents living within the Council's taxation area. As an organisation placed under the Ministry of Local Government and Housing, State of Sabah, the Kota Belud District Council is also responsible for the planning and development of Kota Belud Town.

Due to the increasing development that took place in the district council, the existing organisational structure was unable to cater for the increasing workload and the demand for more efficient services from the local community. The Kota Belud District Council was then reorganised in accordance with the 1961 Local Government Ordinance. This ordinance allows for the unification of powers, duties and responsibilities to be made in a principled manner and is stipulated under one Law that can be used for all levels of PBT in the State of Sabah. At the beginning of the establishment of the Kota Belud District Council, the area of taxation was 94.75 acres, and it was expanded to 1,200 acres in 1982. In December 1996, the council office was shifted to the center of Kota Belud Town



### **Kota Belud District Council (MDKB)**

and it functions as the administrative center of the Kota Belud District Council. Today, the Kota Belud District has one main town, Kota Belud Town and two small towns, Nabalu Town and Taginambur Town.

The objective of the Kota Belud District Council's financial administration is to establish a systematic financial and account management system and to ensure that the Council's financial and account system is in line with the Local Government Ordinance, 1961 as well as the Local Authorities Financial Directive.

### **The main functions and services Kota Belud District Council's financial administration provide include :**

- 1.** Financial management and administration in accordance with the rules and procedures of the Local Authorities Financial Directive.
- 2.** Collection of various results of the Council
- 3.** Various payments of staff salaries, management and development expenses
- 4.** Accounting

# City Sustainability

## *3.0 Kota Belud Sustainability Journey*

Kota Belud, like many regions globally, is increasingly focusing on sustainability to balance economic growth, environmental conservation, and social well-being. While specific initiatives may still be evolving, the district has the potential to leverage its natural resources, cultural heritage, and community-driven efforts to build a sustainable future.

### 3.1 PERCEPTION ASSESSMENT

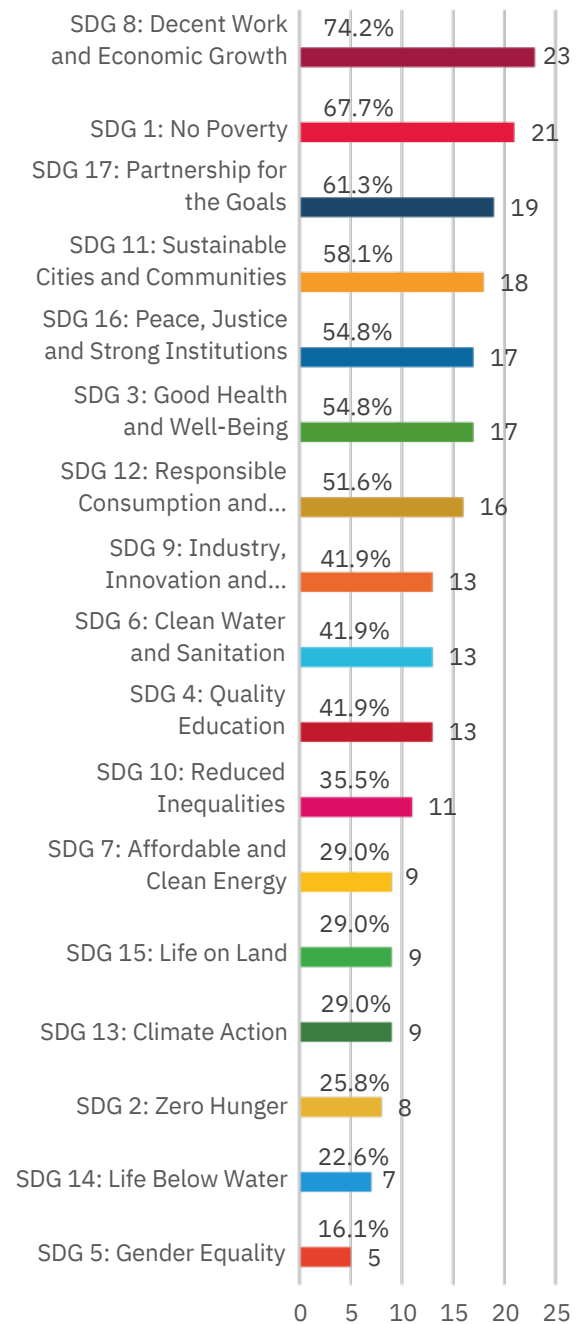
#### Online Readiness Survey

Before the FGD took place on August 16th, 2023, an online survey was carried out to evaluate the preparedness and initial perception of residents, stakeholders and communities in Kota Belud District Council regarding the SDG knowledge and implementation by the city council.

The survey aimed to gather valuable information regarding the specific importance of SDGs within the Kota Belud district and identify areas that require additional focus and attention. A significant number of respondents actively participated in the Readiness Survey, providing valuable insights into the readiness and perception of Kota Belud District with regards to the SDGs and the city council's initiatives. The following chart illustrates the outcomes of an Kota Belud District Council survey assessing the significance of the SDGs in the Kota Belud district, ranked in order of importance. According to the survey,

- **SDG 8:** Decent Work and Economic Growth holds the highest level of importance among the SDGs in Kota Belud
- It is closely trailed by **SDG 1:** No Poverty, which holds the second position in terms of significance
- Subsequently, Kota Belud considers **SDG 5:** Gender Equality to have relatively lower levels of importance.

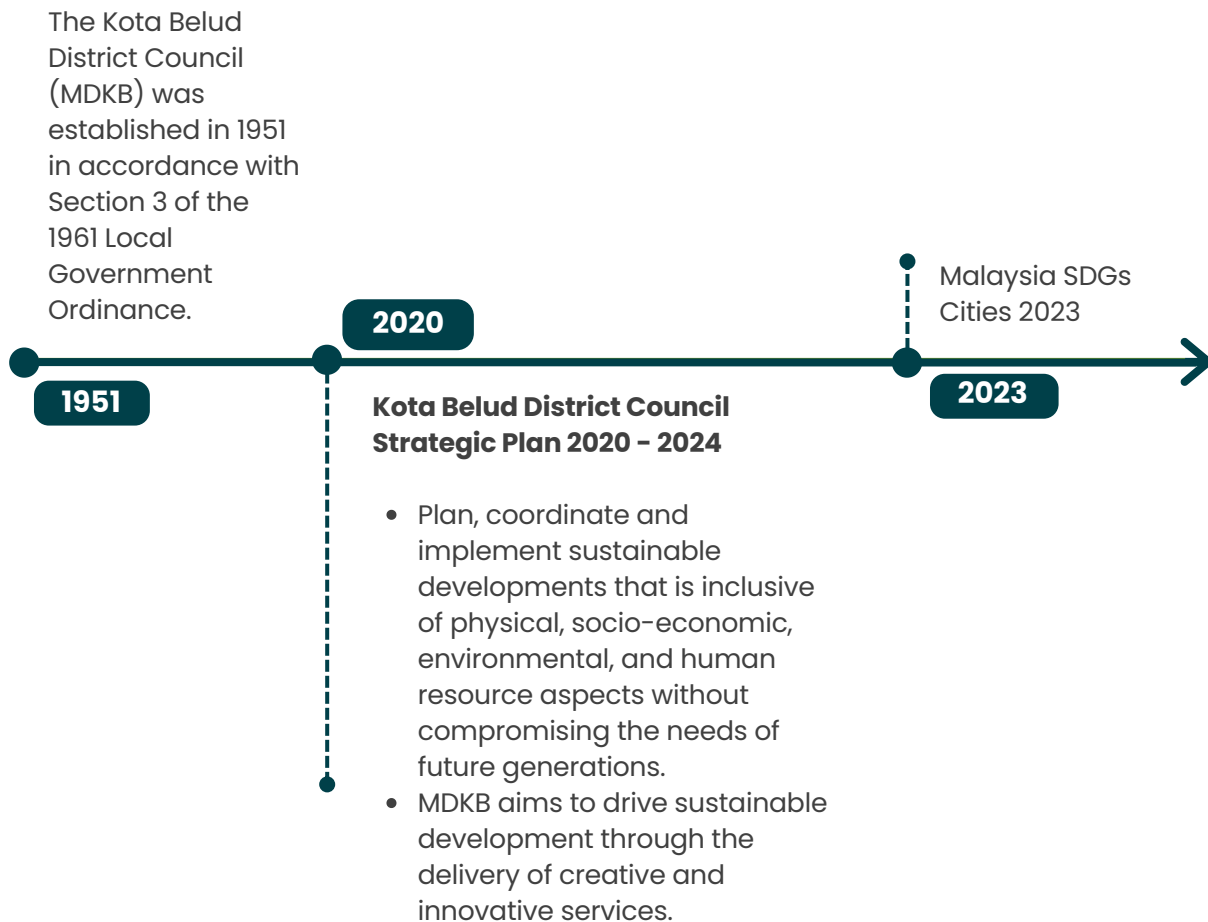
Figure 1.4: Online Readiness Survey



Source: Questionnaire Survey MDKB, 2023

## 3.2 KOTA BELUD SUSTAINABILITY JOURNEY

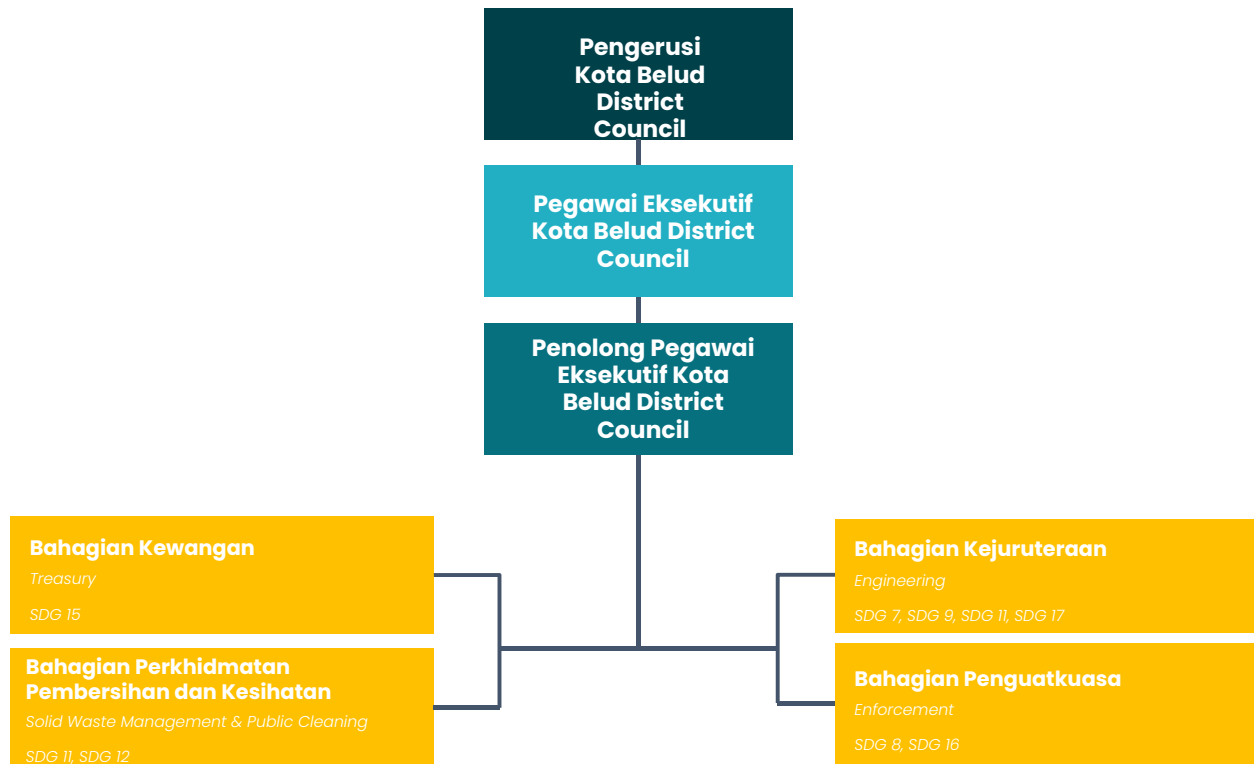
Over the years, the council has been actively engaged in various initiatives aimed at **promoting sustainable development and improving the overall well-being** of the district's residents since its establishment in 1951.



### 3.3 INTERNAL DEPARTMENT ROLES AND FUNCTIONS

The alignment between the SDGs and the internal department roles and functions of the MDKB was meticulously carried out across its four departments, with the most **aligned SDGs being SDG 11**.

**Figure 1.5 :** Alignment between the SDGs and the internal department roles and functions of the MDKB

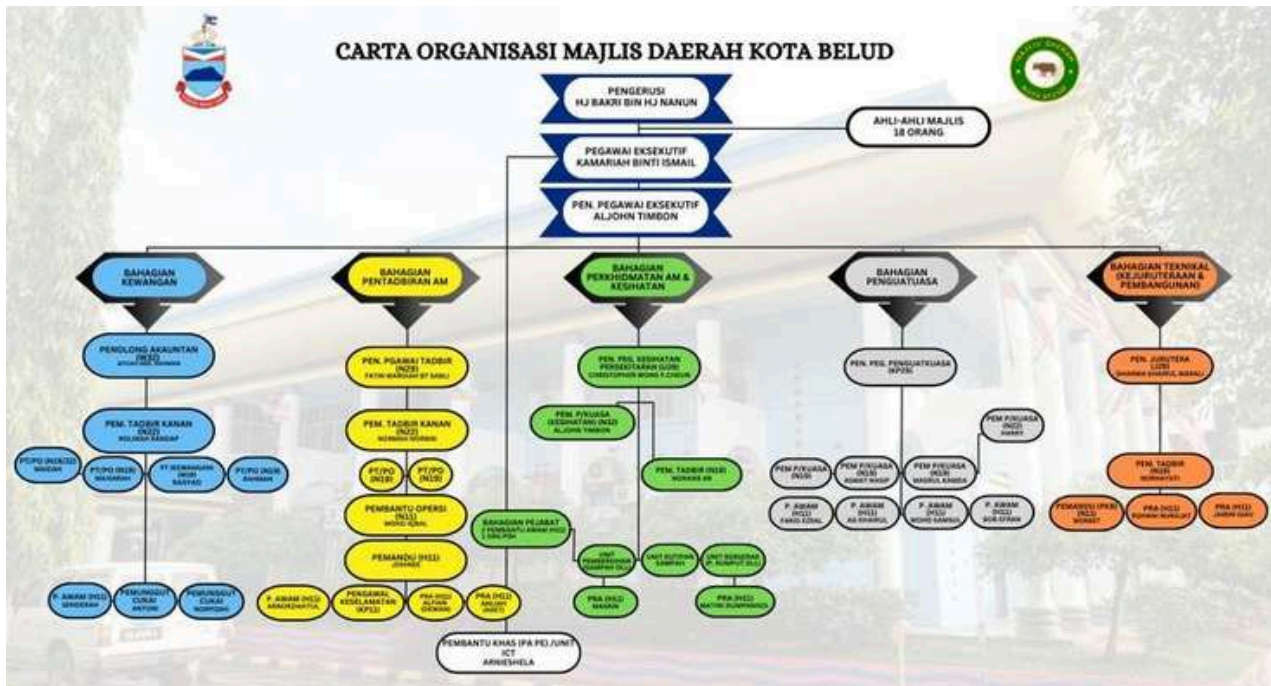


This process aimed to integrate the principles and objectives of the SDGs into the core activities and operations of the organization, fostering a holistic approach towards sustainable development. To ensure effective alignment, MDKB initiated a comprehensive review and analysis of the SDGs and their corresponding targets. The organization recognized the importance of addressing the interconnected nature of the goals and sought to identify areas where its departments could contribute to achieving the SDGs in a coordinated and impactful manner. Each unit and department then conducted an in-depth assessment of their roles, functions, and ongoing projects, mapping them against the SDGs and relevant targets.

This exercise allowed MDKB to identify areas of synergy and potential gaps, ensuring that every department's efforts were aligned with the broader SDG framework.

By carrying out this comprehensive alignment process, MDKB aimed to institutionalize the SDGs within its organizational culture and operations. This approach ensured that sustainable development considerations were integrated into decision-making processes, resource allocation, and performance management throughout the organization.

Figure 1.6: Organisation Chart of MDKB



Source: Kota Belud District Council Official Website, 2023



## Part B

### *4.0 Progress On 17 SDGs By Indicators*



## No Poverty

In the Kota Belud district, there has been a steady increase in the number of poor households registered in the eKasih system from 2019 to 2021. This rise is largely attributed to the desire of families to qualify for the Program Perumahan Rakyat, as many are living in overcrowded conditions. The Gini Coefficient for Kota Belud, which measures income inequality, was recorded at 0.412 in 2019. This figure is higher than the national average of 0.407 but lower than the 2016 value of 0.430. Notably, the district also experienced a 4.4% reduction in poverty incidence in 2019 compared to 2016.

However, the district faces challenges in poverty monitoring and assistance distribution through the eKasih system. During the COVID-19 pandemic, it became evident that there was an urgent need for more resources, as the existing aid often fell short, especially for households with multiple children. The assistance provided frequently did not adequately meet their needs.

Furthermore, in times of disaster, the District Office of Kota Belud plays a crucial role in coordinating response efforts, particularly in "red zones" that are prone to flooding. They collaborate with various agencies, including the police, fire departments, the Ministry of Education (KPM), the military, and local organizations such as the 4x4 club and members of parliament to ensure effective disaster management.

# SDG 1: NO POVERTY

## End poverty in all its forms everywhere

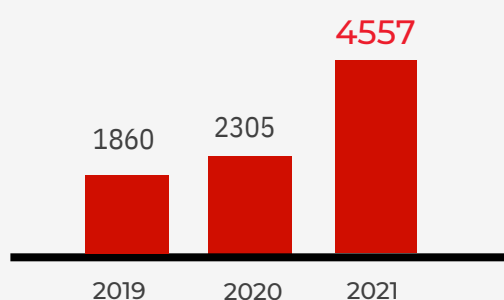
### 1.1 ERADICATE EXTREME POVERTY IN KOTA BELUD DISTRICT

In Malaysia, extreme poverty is defined as a situation where an individual or community lacks the financial resources and essential items needed to maintain a minimum standard of living. It also refers to income levels from work that are so low that basic human needs cannot be met. In Sabah, a person or community is classified as living in extreme poverty if their household monthly income is less than the Poverty Line Income (PLI) of RM1,179 (approximately \$251.71) or RM392.66 (roughly \$57.86) per capita, based on data from 2019.

### 1.2 REDUCE POVERTY BY AT LEAST 50% IN KOTA BELUD DISTRICT

In the city of Sabah, households with an average income of less than RM2,537 per capita are considered poor. Data shows a continuous increase in the number of poor households registered with eKasih over three years, from 2019 to 2021. Findings from focus group discussions (FGDs) indicate that the significant rise in eKasih registrations is primarily driven by the desire to qualify for the Program Perumahan Rakyat. Many of these households currently live in cramped and uncomfortable conditions, often sharing their homes with three generations under one roof.

**Number of head of poor households registered with eKasih in Kota Belud district, 2019–2021**



Source: MyLocalStats DOSM Kota Belud, 2021

### Incidence of Poverty in Kota Belud district

**19.5%**  **23.9%**  
(2019) (2016)

**0.412** **Gini Coefficient Kota Belud district, 2019**

Source: MyLocalStats DOSM Kota Belud, 2021

The Gini Coefficient of Kota Belud, which measures household income inequality, stands at 0.412. This value is higher than the national average of 0.407 in 2019, indicating relatively greater income inequality in Kota Belud. However, this figure shows a decrease from the Gini Coefficient of 0.430 recorded in 2016. Additionally, the incidence of poverty in Kota Belud was significantly reduced by 4.4% in 2019 compared to 2016.

### CITY GAPS AND CHALLENGES

The Kota Belud district faces challenges in distributing assistance through the e-Kasih system, which monitors poverty levels. Aid under the e-Kasih program is provided to heads of households through the District Office. To identify individuals who have yet to register for poverty assistance, a focus group was conducted. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted an urgent need for more supplies. Furthermore, it became evident that the assistance allocated was often insufficient, especially for households with multiple children, where the support provided might not adequately meet the family's needs. This situation underscores the importance of addressing the specific circumstances and requirements of larger families in the poverty assistance program.

## 1.4 BUILD RESILIENCE TO ENVIRONMENTAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DISASTERS

During disasters, the District Office of Kota Belud operates an emergency operations center that ensures a swift and effective response around the clock. This center serves as a central hub for coordinating essential agencies, including the police, fire departments, the Ministry of Education (KPM), the military, and the 4x4 club, all of which play vital roles in disaster management. For example, during flooding events, the operations center focuses particularly on "red zones," which are low-lying areas prone to flooding due to heavy rainfall and shallow rivers. Additionally, the center facilitates the distribution of disaster assistance, a task managed by members of parliament in their respective areas. Working closely with the Natural Disaster Committee, the operations center provides guidance and coordinates cohesive actions during these critical situations.





## Zero Hunger

Kota Belud district in Sabah plays a crucial role in ensuring food security, particularly in rice production. The designated paddy fields in the area meet the rice consumption needs of the region. To combat child malnutrition, the District Health Office has implemented a six-month monitoring program that provides carefully planned meal schedules and food baskets for children.

Agricultural production in Kota Belud has experienced fluctuations from 2019 to 2021. While industrial crops have increased, the production of primary fruits and spices has declined. Various programs and initiatives are in place, supported by Jabatan Pertanian and the Integrated Agricultural Development Area (IADA), to enhance agricultural practices. These initiatives include rental agricultural plots, subsidies for rice production, the adoption of drone technology, and improvements to drainage systems.

Safety measures for agricultural produce are strictly enforced, with regular testing confirming that the produce is safe for consumption. Overall, these combined efforts demonstrate a commitment to modernizing and optimizing agriculture in Kota Belud, benefiting both local businesses and the broader farming community.

## SDG 2: ZERO HUNGER

End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

### 2.1 UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO SAFE AND NUTRITIOUS FOOD

The Kota Belud district plays a crucial role in ensuring food security in Sabah, particularly through the mass production of rice. Designated areas for paddy fields have been established to support rice consumption across the entire state of Sabah.

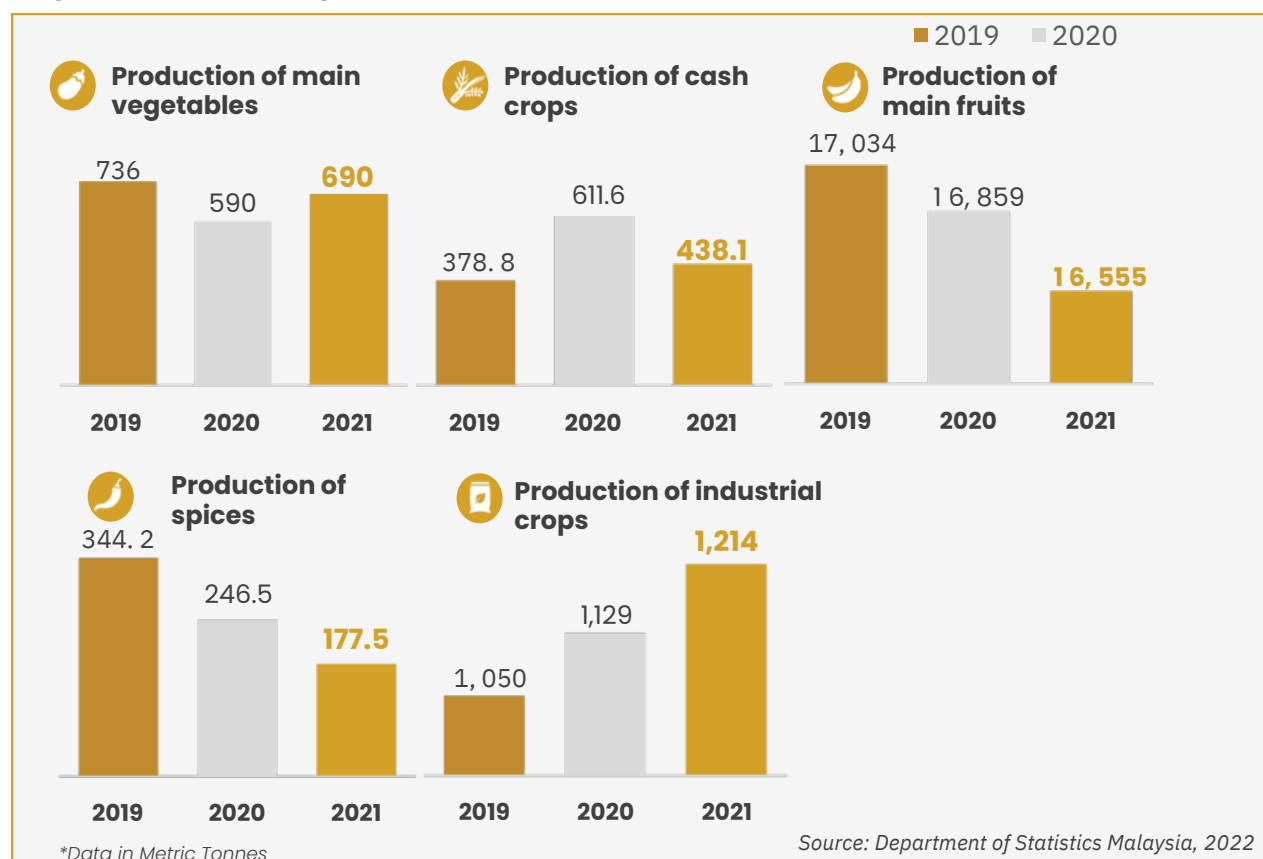
### 2.2 END ALL FORMS OF MALNUTRITION

To address child malnutrition in the Kota Belud district, the District Health Office (Pejabat Kesihatan Daerah) has implemented a comprehensive six-month monitoring program. This initiative includes carefully planned meal schedules for children, along with the provision of food baskets.

### 2.3 DOUBLE THE PRODUCTIVITY AND INCOMES OF SMALL-SCALE FOOD PRODUCERS

Between 2019 and 2021, agricultural production in the Kota Belud district for various types of produce fluctuated. During this period, there was a consistent increase in the production of industrial crops, while the production of primary fruits and spices declined. In 2021, a rise in the production of main vegetables was noted following a decrease in 2020; however, this production remained lower than in 2019. Additionally, production of cash crops decreased in 2021 despite having increased in 2020.

**Graph 2.1:** Production of agricultures in Kota Belud District, 2019–2021



### 1. Rental agricultural plots

The Jabatan Pertanian offers rental agricultural plots for individuals who do not have access to land for farming. The rental fee is set at RM1 per day for one acre of land. Currently, seven farm operators have benefited from this opportunity, collectively renting a total of 49 acres to cultivate banana and pineapple crops.

### 2. Subsidies for Rice Production

Entrepreneurs registered with the agriculture department have received support from the government and various agencies, including subsidies for rice production. This support is part of a comprehensive strategy that also encompasses fruits and vegetables. For instance, the State Government provides RM200 in subsidies for farmers, while the Pertubuhan Peladang Kawasan (PPK) supplies fertilizers and pesticides. Additionally, rice sales are regulated by Bernas. However, it is important to note that the Self-Sufficiency Level (SSL) of local rice remains inadequate, leading to the import of agricultural products, particularly from Vietnam and Thailand.

## 2.4 SUSTAINABLE FOOD PRODUCTION AND RESILIENT AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES

The Department of Agriculture has taken proactive measures to ensure the safety of agricultural produce. For instance, they collect vegetable samples to test for residues of pesticides and fertilizers, sending these samples to laboratories for thorough analysis. The results consistently confirm that the produce from the Kota Belud district meets safety standards for consumption. Additionally, technicians from the Department of Agriculture conduct weekly farm visits, including those with rice crops. They provide assistance and guidance, such as briefings on the proper use of fertilizers and pesticides. Furthermore, the use of gravity-fed water systems for agricultural purposes has become standard practice in the Kota Belud district.

In Kota Belud district, there has been a noticeable **increase in the engagement of young agropreneurs** in the cultivation of fruit and vegetable crops. However, there has been a decline in the active involvement of younger individuals in rice farming, with the majority of farmers in this sector being aged 40 and above.

## **2.A INVEST IN RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE, AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH, TECHNOLOGY AND GENE BANKS**

The Integrated Agricultural Development Area (IADA) has played a crucial role in improving agricultural infrastructure, particularly by enhancing drainage systems essential for rice field farming. Additionally, the adoption of drone technology for fertilization is gaining popularity among local companies and farmers in the area. These stakeholders have enthusiastically embraced this innovative approach to improve agricultural practices.

To support this initiative, the Jabatan Pertanian has provided a fleet of 10 fertilizer machinery units. However, it is important to note that currently, only six of these units are actively in operation in collaboration with state authorities. Furthermore, the department has enhanced agricultural capabilities by supplying two-wheeled tractors for various farming tasks. Together, these initiatives demonstrate a strong commitment to modernizing and optimizing agriculture in the region, ultimately benefiting both local businesses and the broader farming community.



## Good Health and Well-being

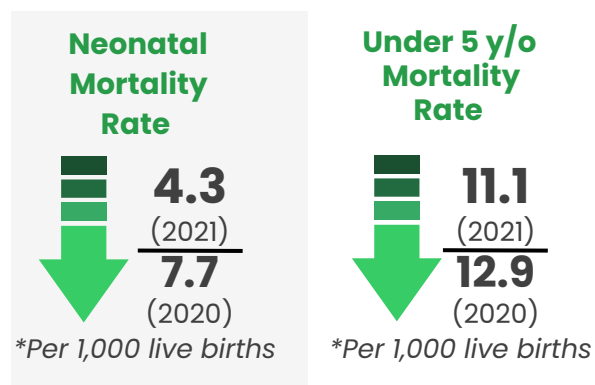
In the Kota Belud district, health outcomes have improved, as evidenced by lower neonatal and under-5 mortality rates in 2021 compared to 2020, meeting the targets set by SDG 3.2. Collaborative efforts for dengue control are being implemented, including fogging and community engagement. However, cardiovascular disease and cancer remain leading causes of premature mortality in the district, with significant increases in cardiovascular disease and chronic respiratory conditions in 2021. On a positive note, the premature mortality rates for cancer have declined from 2019 to 2021, while premature mortality related to diabetes was observed in 2021.

Additionally, the district has seen a decrease in road accidents, with most incidents not resulting in injuries or fatalities, although challenges such as inadequate street lighting and animal crossings persist. Healthcare services are currently facing difficulties due to a shortage of personnel and ambulances, and immunization data may not fully capture vaccinations administered outside the district. Lastly, the "1 Rumah, 1 Juara" initiative aims to promote a smoke-free environment through the involvement of community champions.

## SDG 3: GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

### 3.2 END ALL PREVENTABLE DEATHS UNDER 5 YEARS OF AGE



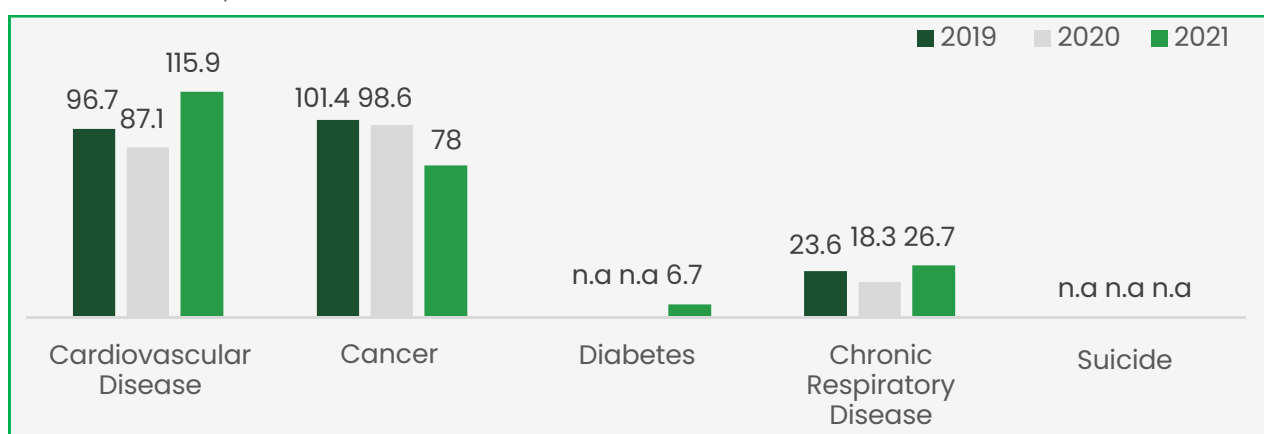
In 2021, the neonatal and under-5 mortality rates in the Kota Belud district decreased to 4.3 and 11.1 per 1,000 live births, respectively, compared to 2020. These rates are lower than the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3.2 targets of 12 and 25 per 1,000 live births, respectively.

### 3.2 FIGHT COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Findings from focus group discussions (FGDs) indicate that dengue is being controlled by the Kota Belud District Council through fogging operations in collaboration with the Pejabat Kesihatan Daerah Kota Belud. Community efforts are also underway to combat dengue outbreaks. Additionally, pertussis cases in the Kota Belud district are primarily caused by unvaccinated immigrants, which poses a risk of infection to the local population if timely measures are not taken.

### 3.4 REDUCE MORTALITY FROM NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASES AND PROMOTE MENTAL HEALTH

**Graph 3.2:** Premature Mortality Rates of Major Non-Communicable Diseases per 100,000 Populations in Kota Belud District, 2019–2021

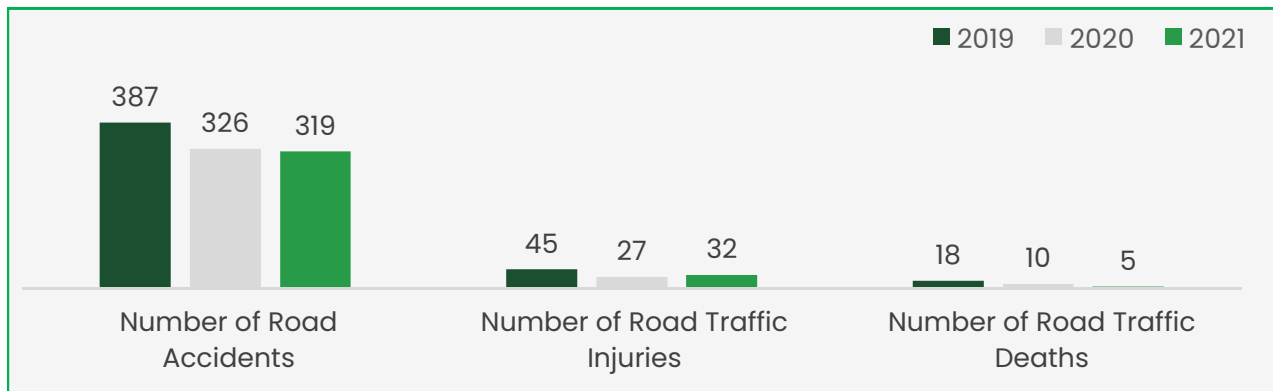


Source: MyLocal Stats DOSM, 2021

Between 2019 and 2021, premature mortality rates in Kota Belud showed a significant increase in cardiovascular disease and chronic respiratory disease in 2021. Conversely, premature mortality rates for cancer in the district have been decreasing from 2019 to 2021. In 2021, diabetes-related premature mortality was recorded at 6.7 per 100,000 people in Kota Belud. Notably, there were no recorded cases of suicide-related premature mortality from 2019 to 2021. Typically, local villages and schools send invitations to nearby clinics to conduct health screenings.

### 3.6 REDUCE ROAD INJURIES AND DEATH

Number of injuries and deaths from road accidents in Kota Belud district, 2019– 2021



Source: MyLocal Stats DOSM, 2021

The number of road accidents in the Kota Belud district decreased in 2021, along with the number of road traffic deaths. In 2020, there was a reduction in road traffic injuries in the district, but there was a slight increase in 2021. It is important to note that the majority of road accidents in Kota Belud do not result in injuries or deaths.

#### CITY GAPS AND CHALLENGES

##### 1. Inadequate street lights and animal crossings.

One major factor contributing to road accidents in Kota Belud is inadequate street lighting and the presence of animal crossings. During a focus group discussion, it was revealed that the rapid development in the area has led to increased traffic on main roads. However, the lack of proper street lighting and the frequent, unmarked crossings of animals create significant dangers for road users, particularly for those who are not familiar with the region.

### 3.8 ACHIEVE UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE (UHC)

There is one public hospital in the Kota Belud district, named Hospital Kota Belud, which is located in the city. This facility is a non-specialist hospital, meaning that patients who require specialized care are referred to Hospital Queen Elizabeth I and II in Kota Kinabalu, as well as Hospital Likas. While there are no private hospitals in the district, several private clinics do exist. Additionally, for patients who have transportation difficulties in accessing healthcare treatments, healthcare professionals from nearby clinics offer home visits.

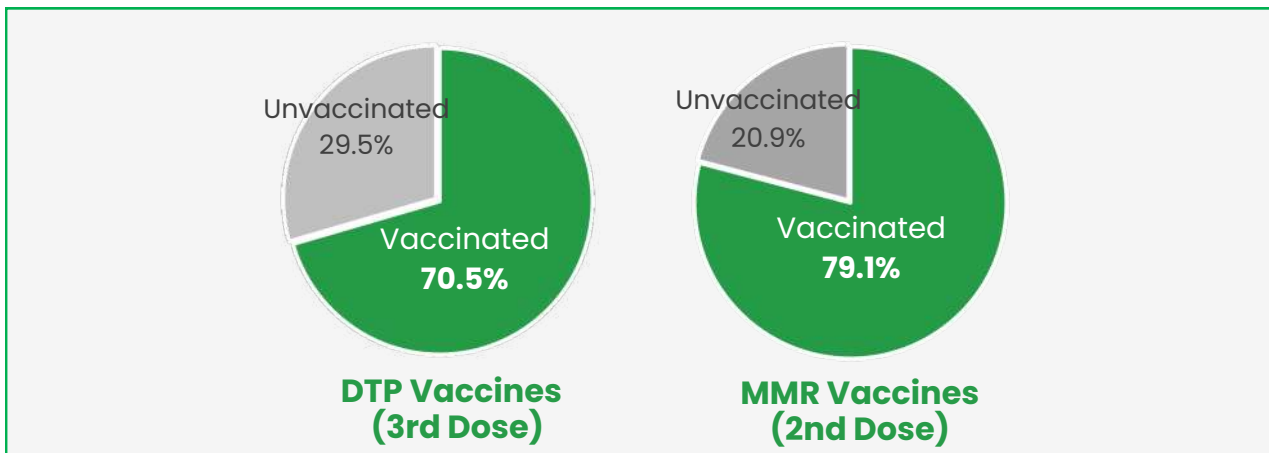
#### CITY GAPS AND CHALLENGES

##### 1. Limitations in Healthcare Service Delivery

Hospital Kota Belud faces several challenges, including delays in delivering healthcare services stemming from a shortage of healthcare personnel, despite a high patient volume. There is also an inadequate number of ambulances available at Hospital Kota Belud.

### 3.B SUPPORT RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT AND UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE VACCINES AND MEDICINES

Proportion of the target population in Kota Belud district vaccinated by vaccines included in the national immunization programme, 2021



The national immunization program in the Kota Belud district has achieved coverage rates of 70.9% for the third dose of Diphtheria-Tetanus-Pertussis (DTP) vaccine and 79.1% for the second dose of Measles, Mumps, and Rubella (MMR) vaccine. However, these statistics have limitations, as they do not account for individuals who may have received their vaccinations in other districts. Additionally, there are some cases of individuals opting out of vaccinations altogether.

### 3.A IMPLEMENT THE WHO FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON TOBACCO CONTROL

#### 1 Rumah 1 Juara

Encouraging a smoke-free environment in the Kota Belud district is a community-driven effort. One promising approach to achieve this is the "1 Rumah, 1 Juara" initiative for tobacco control. This program encourages individuals from the community to volunteer as champions within their households, actively promoting tobacco control measures. These champions raise awareness about the dangers of smoking and assist their families and communities in making informed decisions to reduce tobacco use. By empowering local champions committed to a smoke-free lifestyle, this initiative enables communities to take charge of their health and work together towards a tobacco-free future.



## Quality Education

The education landscape in the Kota Belud district faces several challenges and opportunities. Key issues include school dropouts driven by factors such as early marriages and students engaging in businesses. There is also a noticeable preference for private kindergartens for pre-primary education, alongside the availability of technical and vocational education options.

Initiatives like ICT programs and village community centers aim to enhance digital literacy, and basic facilities in schools are generally accessible. However, there has been a decline in the availability of computers for educational use. Addressing the imbalance in teacher expertise and ensuring active involvement of school management in selecting educational officers are crucial steps toward improving the quality of education in the district. Additionally, some schools suffer from poor facilities, which need to be evaluated and resolved.

## SDG 4: QUALITY OF EDUCATION

Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

### 4.1 FREE PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION



**Number of students by gender in primary and secondary schools in Kota Belud district, 2021**

	Male	Female	Total
57 Primary Schools	5,946	5,516	11,462
9 Secondary Schools	4,289	4,132	8,421
Post-Secondary Schools	114	253	367

Source: MyLocal Stats DOSM, 2021

### CITY GAPS AND CHALLENGES

There are school dropouts cases in Kota Belud district. Among the factors that contributed to this issue are early marriages and sometimes, the students miss schools without concrete reasons. During home visits, it is found that entertainment until late night might also be the reason students are too tired to go school the next day. They are also students who are more preferred to involve in businesses rather than attend schools to gain an income for their families, especially those who are from low income families.

### 4.2 EQUAL ACCESS TO QUALITY PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION



Number of students in pre-schools and kindergarten in Kota Belud district, 2021

**27** Private kindergartens

**683**  
Students

Source: MyLocal Stats DOSM, 2021

According to the Department of Statistics Malaysia (DOSM), it appears that the majority of children in the Kota Belud district are enrolled in private kindergartens for their pre-primary education.

### 4.3 EQUAL ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE TECHNICAL, VOCATIONAL AND HIGHER EDUCATION

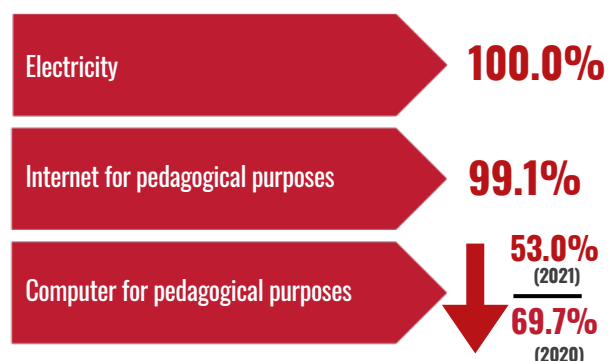
In terms of technical, vocational, and higher education, Giat MARA Kota Belud in Sabah is well-received by those who are ineligible to pursue university studies.

### 4.4 INCREASE THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE WITH RELEVANT SKILLS FOR FINANCIAL SUCCESS

The Pusat Ekonomi Digital (PEDi) organizes ICT programs, and the Ministry of Communication has established village community centers with designated officers to oversee these ICT initiatives. Additionally, many students utilize the library to access computers for internet use and to improve their ICT skills.

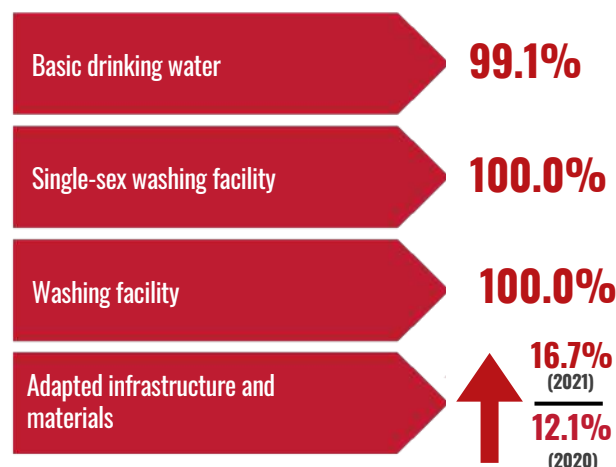
## 4.A BUILD AND UPGRADE INCLUSIVE AND SAFE SCHOOLS

Proportion of schools offering basic services, 2021



Source: MyLocal Stats DOSM, 2021

Proportion of schools offering accesses to, 2021



Source: MyLocal Stats DOSM, 2021

The data indicates that schools in the Kota Belud district have provided substantial basic services and access to essential facilities. Each school is equipped with electricity, internet for educational purposes, and access to basic drinking water and washing facilities. Additionally, there was a 4.6% increase in adapted infrastructure and materials for special students in 2021 compared to 2020. However, there has been a significant decrease of 16.7% in the availability of computers for educational purposes. This decline raises concerns about the accessibility and sufficiency of digital resources for education in the region.

### CITY GAPS AND CHALLENGES

#### Schools with Poor Facilities

There are seven schools with inadequate facilities that have been submitted to the Ministry of Education for further examination. In some cases, land issues have hindered the development of these schools. Furthermore, the existing facilities cannot accommodate the increasing number of students. The District Education Office is taking initiatives to transfer tables and chairs from other schools to meet the needs of these institutions. In some instances, teachers have had to use tables for students to complete their work.

## **4.A BUILD AND UPGRADE INCLUSIVE AND SAFE SCHOOLS**

### **CITY GAPS AND CHALLENGES**

In the Kota Belud district, a significant challenge is providing schools with adequately qualified teachers, especially in addressing the imbalance in teachers' expertise in specific subjects. This issue is particularly prevalent in areas such as Islamic Studies, the Arabic Language, Special Education, and the Form 6 syllabus.

Moreover, there is an urgent need for school management to take a proactive role in selecting officers responsible for overseeing School Improvement Partners (SIP) and School Improvement Specialist Coaches (SISSET). These officers play a crucial role in guiding and mentoring teachers to enhance their instructional methods, often working closely with targeted schools. Therefore, it is essential for schools to participate in the selection of these officers to ensure that there is a strong alignment between teachers' subject expertise, their educational backgrounds, and the unique educational needs of each school.

This collaborative approach is key to fostering more effective educational improvements within the school system.

Figure 1.3: Main Field of Employment in Segamat, 2017



## Gender Equality

The initial awareness of Sustainable Development Goal 5, which focuses on gender equality, is hindered by a lack of facilities that support this goal, such as ramps for individuals with disabilities. At the state level, particularly in Kota Belud, there is currently no policy on gender equality that local authorities can integrate into their planning. Gender-based violence remains a significant issue in Kota Belud. Within the local municipality, there are more female staff members than male staff members. Additionally, urban areas lack sufficient hospitals and clinics, and healthcare coverage does not reach all parts of Kota Belud. The existing facilities and services in Kota Belud are considered inadequate.

## SDG 5: GENDER EQUALITY

Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

**SDG 5 in Kota Belud** is currently in its initial stages, and more data is needed to support this claim. Localized data is essential for assessing the progress of SDG 5 and its targets within the district. Gathering additional information will help provide a comprehensive understanding of the specific challenges and opportunities related to gender equality and women's empowerment in Kota Belud, facilitating targeted efforts to effectively achieve SDG 5.

### 5.1 END DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

Instances of domestic violence persist in Kota Belud, although precise data on the prevalence of gender-based violence needs to be obtained from the Royal Malaysian Police (PDRM) due to the sensitive nature of the issue.

### 5.4 VALUE UNPAID CARE AND PROMOTE SHARED DOMESTIC RESPONSIBILITIES

Awareness of SDG 5 is at an early stage, and there is a lack of facilities to support gender equality, such as ramps to make public transportation more accessible for people with disabilities and other examples of universal design.

### 5.5 ENSURE FULL PARTICIPATION IN LEADERSHIP AND DECISION-MAKING

Regarding women's participation and opportunities in leadership, it can be observed that within the MD Kota Belud, there is a higher presence of female staff compared to male staff. Although specific data is not available to validate this observation, it suggests a potential trend toward greater gender representation within the organization. This focus on inclusivity aligns with the principles of SDG 5, which aims to promote gender equality and empower women in all aspects of life.

### 5.6 END DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

#### Sexual and reproductive health services

Additionally, hospitals and clinics are still lacking in urban areas, with the catchment areas not covering all parts of Kota Belud. Furthermore, the facilities and services available in Kota Belud are not considered adequate.



## Clean Water And Sanitation

Water resource management in Kota Belud is primarily overseen by the Jabatan Air Negeri Sabah (JANS). The village relies on a combination of traditional gravity-fed water systems and modern services, demonstrating adaptability in their approach. However, residents occasionally face challenges regarding water accessibility. During periods of 2-3 days when water access is restricted due to limited tank capacity, villagers often need to purchase water from alternative sources.

In Sabah State, nearly all residents have equitable access to sanitation and hygiene facilities. Upon request from the villagers, the Unit Bekalan Air Kesihatan Keliling (BAKAS), under the Jabatan Kesihatan Negeri Sabah, utilizes gravity-fed water sources and wells to maintain water quality and minimize the risk of waterborne diseases. Despite these efforts, many areas of the village still lack proper drainage for toilets.

A Rainwater Harvesting System (SPAH) is installed in agricultural and clinic areas, but its usage declines once local water sources become readily available.

## SDG 6: CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION

Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

### 6.1 UNIVERSAL AND EQUITABLE ACCESS TO SAFE AND AFFORDABLE DRINKING WATER FOR ALL

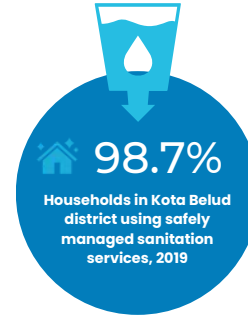


**71.4%**  
Households in Kota Belud district has accessed to piped water in the house, 2019

The government of Malaysia provides subsidies for water supply since it is considered a basic necessity. This ensures that residents nationwide, including those in Sabah state, have access to clean piped water. In the Kota Belud district, over 70% of households have piped water in their homes. The management of water resources is primarily the responsibility of the Jabatan Air Negeri Sabah (JANS). However, not all villages have fully transitioned to using JANS services. A significant portion of the community still relies on gravity-fed water systems, which utilize the natural flow of water to meet their daily needs.

This combination of traditional and modern water management practices highlights the adaptability and resourcefulness of the village in maintaining a consistent water supply. The quality of water from local sources remains acceptable during rainy periods, thanks to an effective filtering system. However, the community occasionally faces challenges in accessing water for 2 to 3 days, often depending on the capacity of their water tanks. Typically, they need to purchase water from alternative sources during these times.

### 6.2 ACCESS TO ADEQUATE AND EQUITABLE SANITATION AND HYGIENE FOR ALL



Almost all residents in Sabah State, including those in the Kota Belud District, have equitable access to sanitation and hygiene facilities, ensuring that everyone can maintain proper sanitation practices and hygiene standards. The Unit Bekalan Air Kesihatan Keliling (BAKAS), which operates under the Jabatan Kesihatan Negeri Sabah, **focuses on preserving environmental water quality** by utilizing gravity-fed water sources from elevated areas like hills and underground wells. Access to these water sources is granted upon application. This approach not only ensures a sustainable water supply but also plays a crucial role in protecting the community's health by reducing the risk of waterborne diseases. However, it is important to note that many villagers still lack adequate drainage systems for their toilets. BAKAS is actively working to address sanitation and hygiene concerns within the villages.

### 6.4 INCREASE WATER-USE EFFICIENCY AND ENSURE FRESHWATER SUPPLIES

The Rainwater Harvesting System (SPA) is used in agricultural zones and clinics. However, once these areas receive water from local sources, they often stop using the SPAH system.



## Affordable And Clean Energy

Recent data from 2019 indicates that nearly all households in the Kota Belud district have access to electricity, with many residents utilizing solar lighting. However, there are challenges in the electricity supply system, including a heavy reliance on a single power station, which leads to the need for generators during blackouts. New neighborhoods that wish to receive electricity from Sabah Electricity Sdn Bhd (SESB) must be connected by road and cover the associated costs. SESB requires a minimum of 20 houses in an area to extend its services.

There is potential for cost subsidies through UPLB. When electrical disruptions occur, SESB implements power supply rationing, resulting in 12-hour intervals of electricity followed by 12-hour blackouts, often utilizing oil or diesel generators. Additionally, many areas depend solely on SESB and do not have their own generators, making them vulnerable to power outages.

On Pulau Mantanani, a solar farm project is underway as part of the Rural Electricity Supply Project, managed by KPLB Sabah. The island's favorable sunlight conditions make it an ideal location for energy generation, with private companies responsible for selling the generated electricity to SESB.

## SDG 7: AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY

Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

### 7.1 UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO MODERN ENERGY



**Households in Kota Belud district have access to electricity supply, 2019**

*Source: MyLocal Stats DOSM, 2021*

Recent data from 2019 indicates that nearly all households in the Kota Belud district have access to a reliable electricity supply. The community also widely uses solar lights for personal use.

#### CITY GAPS AND CHALLENGES

1. There is a heavy reliance on a single power station, which often leads to technical issues. During blackout incidents, generators are employed to supply energy to the affected areas.
2. New neighborhoods must be connected by road and agree to cover the associated costs in order for them to gain access to electricity from Sabah Electricity Sdn Bhd (SESB). A minimum of 20 houses is required for SESB to extend its power services to a new area. A subsidy to cover these costs may be applied for through UPLB.
3. In the event of electrical disruptions, SESB implements a power supply rationing system, alternating between 12 hours of electricity and 12 hours without. This rationing relies on oil or diesel-powered generators.
4. In most areas, residents depend solely on SESB and do not have their own generators, making them particularly vulnerable to electricity disruptions.

#### PROGRAMS/PROJECTS

##### SOLAR FARM PROJECT (PULAU MANTANANI)

A solar farm project is currently underway on Pulau Mantanani as part of the Rural Electricity Supply Project, coordinated by KPLB Sabah. This location was chosen due to its favorable light intensity conditions, which are ideal for energy generation. Private companies overseeing the solar farm will sell the electricity produced to SESB.

**8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH**

## Decent Work and Economic Growth

In Kota Belud, the region faces several economic challenges, particularly a high unemployment rate among youth, which worsens the area's financial struggles. The tourism sector primarily benefits private owners, resulting in minimal economic impact on the local community. To tackle these complex issues, there needs to be a shift towards agriculture, as the area has significant untapped potential.

Government support remains inadequate, especially regarding banking services and assistance for farmers. Agricultural challenges, such as rising pesticide prices and bureaucratic obstacles, persist, while many young people are migrating to urban areas, further weakening the agricultural sector. Additionally, most tourism managers are outsiders, and there is a lack of promotion for local products, despite the availability of crafts and technical skills within the community.

Kota Belud also lacks specialized tourism courses and offers limited employment opportunities. To align with Sustainable Development Goal 8, it is essential to prioritize inclusive tourism, improve financial accessibility, boost agricultural development, and implement targeted measures to address youth unemployment. These efforts aim to promote decent work and sustainable economic growth in the region.

## SDG 8: DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

### 8.5 FULL EMPLOYMENT AND DECENT 8.5 WORK WITH EQUAL PAY



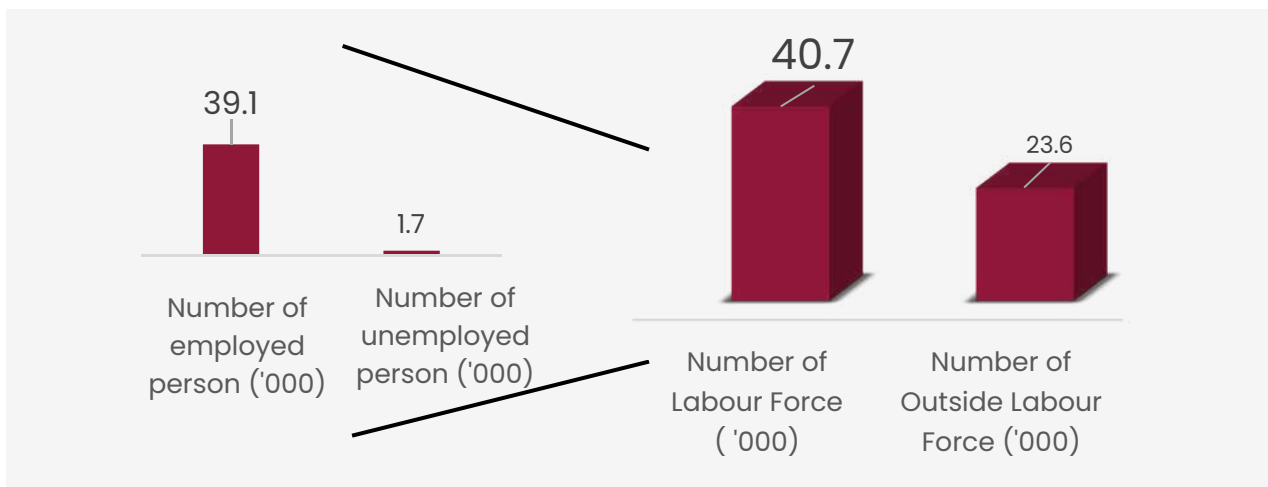
**62.7%** Labour force participation rate in Kota Belud, 2020p

**9.2%** Unemployment rate in Kota Belud, 2020p

*\*Note: p=Preliminary data*

The labor force in Kota Belud showed fluctuations from 2018 to 2020, significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2018, the labor force was recorded at 48.3, rising to 51.1 in 2019, but then decreasing to 49.1 in 2020 due to the economic disruptions caused by the pandemic. A similar trend was observed in the number of employed individuals, which increased from 45.5 in 2018 to 48.2 in 2019, before dropping to 44.6 in 2020 as a result of the pandemic's effects on businesses and employment. Additionally, the number of unemployed individuals in Kota Belud rose from 2.8 in 2018 to 3.0 in 2019 and then surged to 4.5 in 2020, with the pandemic worsening the challenges in the job market.

**Graph 8.1:** Number of employed person, unemployed person, labour force and outside labour force in Kota Belud, 2021



To tackle the challenges brought about by the rise in unemployment in 2020, local authorities should consider implementing targeted policies and programs aimed at supporting workforce development, creating jobs, and promoting economic diversification. This analysis highlights the significance of adaptable labor market policies to ensure the well-being and stability of the labor force in Kota Belud.

## INPUTS FROM ENGAGEMENT FOR SDG 8 IN KOTA BELUD

Kota Belud faces significant challenges, particularly in terms of limited employment opportunities in the tourism and agriculture sectors. To improve the economic situation, the region should focus on eco-tourism and agriculture, with an emphasis on rice cultivation for food security. It is crucial to implement strategies that ensure the economic benefits of these sectors reach the local community.

Currently, the tourism sector, including eco-tourism, fails to provide substantial economic gains for local residents; instead, most benefits are accrued by private owners. To address the economic issues in Kota Belud, a shift towards prioritizing agriculture is necessary. Despite its abundant resources and potential, Kota Belud remains one of the more underdeveloped areas in Sabah.

Several factors contribute to this economic disparity. Government support and assistance are insufficient, especially regarding banking services, which are notably lacking from commercial banks. Additionally, rising pesticide prices and a lack of price control negatively impact local farmers.

The migration of youth to nearby urban areas leads to a decrease in contributions to the agricultural sector, worsening economic challenges. The dominance of non-local tourism managers in Kota Belud also results in limited economic returns for the local community, despite the area's untapped potential.

Inadequate promotion of local products, despite the presence of crafts and technical skills in Kota Belud, hinders economic growth. While there is active participation in MARA activities, specialized tourism courses remain lacking. Furthermore, government facilities and aid intended for farmers often do not reach the intended recipients, which hampers agricultural progress.

In the tourism sector, private owners and small-scale enterprises dominate, with few benefits flowing back into the local community. The youth's disinterest in agriculture exacerbates the situation, even though there is potential for establishing agricultural factories. Although tourism associations exist in Kota Belud, their impact on tourism products has been limited.



## Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure

Kota Belud faces several developmental challenges that significantly affect the well-being and economic prospects of the community. The region's unreliable telecommunication infrastructure, which depends on an inconsistent electricity supply, limits access to information and hinders participation in the digital economy. Additionally, although the ongoing development of road infrastructure is promising, it also underscores the historical inadequacy of transportation networks in the area, which could further restrict economic growth.

## SDG 9: INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

### 9.1 DEVELOP SUSTAINABLE, RESILIENT AND INCLUSIVE INFRASTRUCTURE

 **1,392.8 KM**  
Road Length, 2020

 **1**  
Number of Rural Internet Centre

**6**  
Number of Community Internet Centres in Kota Belud, 2020

 **1**  
Number of Citizen Information Centres in Kota Belud, 2020

#### Road Length

As of the most recent data available, the total road length in Kota Belud is approximately 1,392.8 kilometers (km). This road network includes various types of roads, such as highways, rural roads, and urban streets. Road infrastructure plays a critical role in facilitating economic activities, connecting communities, and providing access to essential services. Therefore, assessing the extent and condition of road networks is vital for evaluating progress towards Sustainable Development Goal **(SDG) 9**.

#### Internet Centre

In 2020, Kota Belud was equipped with six Community Internet Centers (Pusat Internet Komuniti), one Village Internet Center (Pusat Internet Desa), and one People's Information Center (Pusat Maklumat Rakyat). These centers are part of efforts to enhance digital infrastructure and improve access to information and communication technologies in the region.

### ISSUE AND CHALLENGES ON SDG 9 FOR KOTA BELUD

Addressing the complex challenges in Kota Belud requires a comprehensive approach that includes infrastructure development, improved administrative efficiency, enhanced environmental quality, and support for local industries. This holistic strategy is vital for promoting sustainable economic growth and enhancing the overall quality of life for residents in the region.

Kota Belud faces a variety of developmental challenges that collectively impact the well-being and economic prospects of the community. The unreliable telecommunication infrastructure, which depends on the electricity supply, not only affects access to information but also hinders the region's ability to effectively participate in the digital economy. Additionally, while the ongoing road infrastructure development is promising, it underscores the historical lack of adequate transportation networks in the area, which could limit economic growth.

Inefficient government departments highlight the need for administrative reforms to improve service delivery and reduce bureaucratic obstacles to development. Poor air quality directly impacts residents' health, necessitating environmental measures. Furthermore, inadequate water supply and quality issues emphasize the importance of addressing essential needs for the local population.

The limited growth of the handcraft sector indicates untapped potential in the region's local industries; however, a lack of marketing strategies and innovation in machinery and equipment presents obstacles to fully harnessing this potential.



## Reduced Inequalities

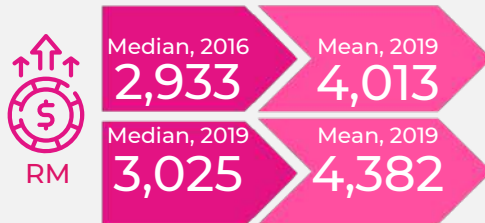
Kota Belud has experienced positive income growth, likely due to increased economic activities, improved job prospects, and supportive government policies. However, there is a notable gap between median and mean incomes, indicating income inequality in the region—some individuals earn significantly more than the majority. Additionally, both median and mean incomes in Kota Belud are below the national average, which underscores ongoing economic challenges.

To address these disparities and align with Sustainable Development Goal 10 (Reduced Inequalities), policymakers should focus on promoting inclusive and sustainable economic development. This includes creating more job opportunities, improving access to education and skills training, and implementing social safety nets for lower-income households. These measures will help reduce income disparities and enhance overall well-being in the region.

## SDG 10: REDUCED INEQUALITIES

### 10.1 REDUCE INCOME INEQUALITIES

Monthly household gross income in Kota Belud, 2016 and 2019



#### Monthly household gross income

The median income in Kota Belud increased from RM 2,933 in 2016 to RM 3,025 in 2019. Similarly, the mean income rose from RM 4,130 in 2016 to RM 4,382 in 2019. However, despite these improvements, both the median and mean incomes in Kota Belud are still below the national average.

The difference between median and mean incomes is significant. The median income represents the middle value in the income distribution, indicating that half of the population earns less than RM 3,025, while the other half earns more. In contrast, the mean income is affected by outliers or higher earners, which can skew the average upward. This suggests that income disparity may exist in Kota Belud, with some individuals or households earning significantly more than the majority.

In conclusion, the increase in both median and mean incomes in Kota Belud between 2016 and 2019 is a positive indicator of economic progress. However, the fact that these incomes still fall short of the national average highlights the need for targeted policies and investments to address income inequalities and promote more inclusive and equitable economic growth in the region.

### 10.2 PROMOTE UNIVERSAL SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL INCLUSION

#### • Youth Representation and Political Ideologies

The presence of youth representatives in every constituency of Kota Belud demonstrates a form of political participation and inclusion. Sustainable Development Goal 1 emphasizes the importance of reducing inequalities by ensuring that marginalized groups, including youth, have a voice in decision-making processes. However, it is suggested that their influence may be shaped by political ideologies, potentially leading to inequalities in representation and decision-making based on political affiliations.

#### • Political Interference and Spatial Inequalities

The statement also highlights a perception of excessive political interference and strong political leadership in Kota Belud. This can have serious implications for spatial inequalities within the region. If political decisions and resource allocations are primarily influenced by political considerations rather than equitable development principles, it could worsen disparities between different areas of Kota Belud. Effective leadership should prioritize addressing these spatial inequalities and ensure that resources are distributed fairly to benefit all residents, regardless of their political affiliations or geographic locations within the region.

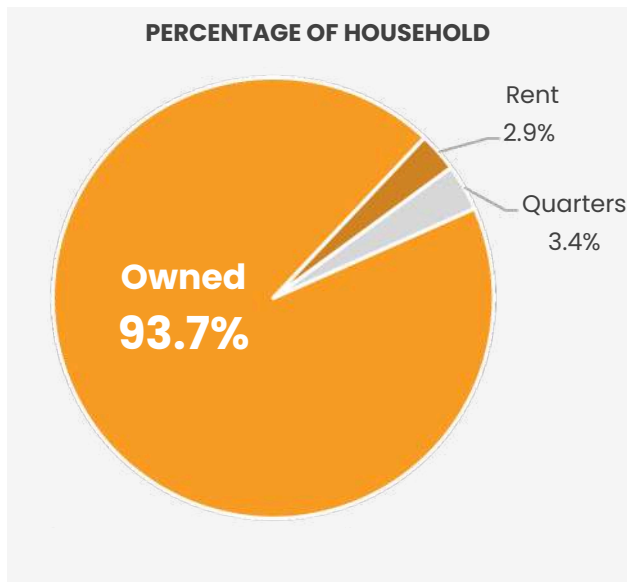


## Sustainable Cities and Communities

Kota Belud is experiencing challenges due to limited access to waste collection facilities, which leads to negative environmental impacts. Housing conditions, especially in rural areas, often do not meet building guidelines and planning requirements, and there is a lack of essential amenities. Despite having Geopark status, Kota Belud has not yet realized significant socio-economic benefits for the region.

## SDG 11: SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

### 11.1 SAFE AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING



### 42 Poor House Repair Programme in Town

In 2021, there were 42 poor house repair programs in town, the highest number among all administrative districts in Sabah State, accounting for 25% of the total programs available.

### Housing Developments

Many houses in rural areas are constructed by the residents themselves without following building guidelines and planning requirements. As a result, these houses often lack essential facilities, such as septic tanks and waste management access. This issue stems from the limited authority of the local council, which operates under the outdated 1961 Local Government Ordinance, hindering its ability to manage building permissions and construction activities effectively. Therefore, there is a need for a modernized ordinance and a more empowered local authority. Additionally, the implementation of the Uniform Building By-Laws 1984 (UBBL) could help promote effective and sustainable building regulations and requirements.

### 11.2 AFFORDABLE AND SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT SYSTEM

According to findings from focus group discussions, the public transport system in the Kota Belud District is not systematically integrated, as each area has its own privately owned bus operators. While this system may work well for smaller areas, bus services are primarily accessible only within Kota Belud town, with limited access for villages located further away. Additionally, facilities for public transportation are very limited, as there are no designated bus stop areas. Engaging with local drivers and users could provide valuable insights into improving the situation.

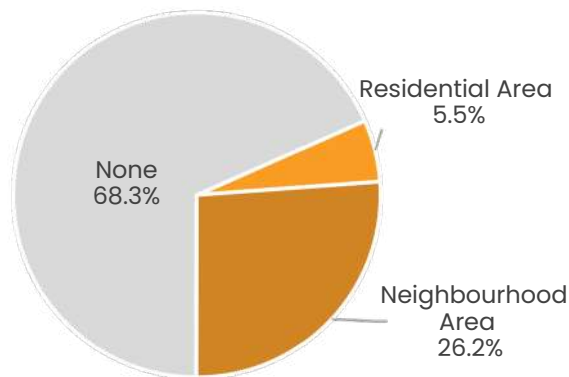
### 11.4 PROTECT THE WORLD'S CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE

Kota Belud District has been designated as part of the aspiring Kinabalu UNESCO Global Geopark (aKUGGp). Achieving UNESCO Geopark status allows Kota Belud to better conserve its diverse and unique geological and environmental assets, while also boosting the local economy by attracting tourists and nature enthusiasts. Furthermore, Geoparks can assist Kota Belud in preserving its cultural identity by integrating cultural heritage into conservation efforts.

However, according to findings from focus group discussions (FGDs), the designation of Kota Belud as a UNESCO Geopark has not significantly impacted the region's socio-economics. This is primarily due to the poor management of the tourism industry. Kota Belud faces challenges, such as conflicts among tourism operators, and the local council has limited enforcement capabilities to regulate tourism-related businesses.

## 11.6 REDUCE THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

### Percentage of Households Received Basics Amenities by Administrative District, Sabah, 2019



Source: MyLocal Stats DOSM Kota Belud, 2021

### Solid Waste Management

The percentage of residents in the Kota Belud District without access to garbage collection facilities is relatively high at 68.3%, compared to 30.5% in the rest of Sabah State as of 2019. However, this marks a significant decrease of 20.1% since 2016, indicating an increase in garbage collection availability in the area, which rose from 4% to 26.2% between 2016 and 2019.

Additionally, there are challenges related to the cost of waste collection services. According to findings from focus group discussions (FGD), the council provides only two waste collection trucks. This limitation results in garbage being picked up only when it accumulates to a certain volume. Furthermore, residents in the villages are reluctant to pay the RM30 fee per trip for waste collection services.

12 RESPONSIBLE  
CONSUMPTION  
AND PRODUCTION



## Responsible Consumption and Production

Waste management continues to be a major challenge in the Kota Belud District. This issue arises from a shortage of garbage collection facilities and the limited capacity of waste collection services. When the rate of garbage collection is low in the district, it directly leads to a decrease in the recycling rate. Contributing factors to this low recycling rate include the absence of a dedicated authority to oversee recycling activities, inefficiencies in waste collection methods, and high logistical costs.

## **SDG 12: RESPONSIBLE PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION**

### **12.5 RESPONSIBLE MANAGEMENT OF CHEMICALS AND WASTE SUBSTANTIALLY REDUCE WASTE MANAGEMENT**

According to FDG findings, the participation rate in recycling and responsible waste management processes within the Kota Belud communities is low. When waste collection services are inadequate in the Kota Belud District, it inevitably leads to a decline in recycling activities. The absence of a dedicated authority to oversee recycling initiatives in Kota Belud creates obstacles in enforcing recycling guidelines and promoting awareness about recycling.

Additionally, the cost-effectiveness of inefficient collection methods and logistical expenses contributes to the low recycling rates in the district. The high costs associated with collecting recyclable waste, which outweigh the perceived benefits, make recycling less favorable for the community. This situation has also resulted in the lack of plastic recycling operators, as the low recycling value of plastic makes it less economically viable compared to other recyclable materials.

#### **PROGRAMS/PROJECTS**

- **Program Pengkomposan Sisa**



## Climate Action

Kota Belud faces significant challenges in water supply during droughts, relying on only two functional tube wells as the primary source for residents. This situation affects approximately 200 villages, forcing them to extract groundwater from shallow wells. This practice not only causes land subsidence but also increases the risk of flooding during heavy rainfall. To address the scarcity of water supply, it is essential to identify degraded riverbanks in critical condition and implement a cost-effective siphon system to improve water accessibility.

## SDG 13: CLIMATE ACTION CONSUMPTION

### INPUTS FROM ENGAGEMENT FOR SDG 13 IN KOTA BELUD

To conduct a more thorough assessment of the progress towards achieving SDG 13 in the Kota Belud District, it is essential to gather additional facts and localized data. This information will enable a more detailed analysis of the specific challenges and issues associated with climate change in the area. Ultimately, this will help identify strategic opportunities to meet the targets of **SDG 13**.

#### 1. Water Supply During Droughts

Kota Belud faces significant challenges with water supply during droughts, including limited usable tube wells and unsustainable groundwater extraction practices. According to focus group discussions (FGD), the primary water supply during the drought season for residents relies on tube wells, but only two tube wells—the Bayayat Water Treatment Plant and the Pandasan Water Treatment Plant—are currently operational. This limited access to clean water during droughts affects up to 200 villages and forces villagers to extract water from underground sources like shallow wells. However, excessive groundwater withdrawal has led to land subsidence, which can exacerbate flooding risks during heavy rainfall and disrupt local ecosystems.

#### 2. Identification of Riverbank Restoration Needs

There is an urgent need to seek assistance from the Jabatan Pengairan dan Saliran (JPS) for identifying riverbanks that are in critical condition. Cooperation with the Sabah State Government is essential to deepen the riverbank of Sungai Kedamaian.

#### 3. Implementation of a More Effective Water Supply System

The introduction of a siphon system in the water supply can significantly improve accessibility to clean water for residents in Kota Belud. The siphon system is a cost-effective infrastructure suitable for mountainous terrain and can transport water over elevations more efficiently than traditional pumping systems, thereby providing a more reliable supply for a larger number of residents, especially those living at higher altitudes. Success has also been noted with the Water Gravity system, which extracts water from an uphill source to smaller villages below. While this method has been used in the past, maintenance and repair work must be performed approximately every decade. Therefore, it is crucial to upskill and train local technicians to ensure proper maintenance of the system.



## Life Below Water

Kota Belud has an extensive network of rivers and streams that flow through the mountainous terrain of the region, eventually reaching the coastal areas. The natural beauty of these waterways and the rich marine biodiversity in the ocean provide a source of income and livelihoods for the local communities through fishing and the tourism industry.

While the rivers in Kota Belud are vital resources for these communities, several factors negatively impact the river ecosystem in the area. Inappropriate dredging practices lead to problems such as habitat loss, degradation of water quality, the spread of waterborne diseases, and the mortality of aquatic animals. Additionally, in the traditional fishing industry, the inability to adapt to modern fisheries technology poses a significant challenge for improving fishing operations.

## SDG 14: LIFE BELOW WATER

### 14.1 REDUCE MARINE POLLUTION

#### INPUTS FROM ENGAGEMENT FOR SDG 14 IN KOTA BELUD

To provide a more comprehensive assessment of the progress towards achieving Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14 in the Kota Belud District, it is essential to acquire additional facts and localized data, particularly since rivers and the ocean play a crucial role in the region's sustainable development. This information will allow for a more thorough analysis of the specific challenges and issues faced, serving as a foundation for identifying strategic opportunities to meet the targets of **SDG 14**.

#### 1. Healthy River Ecosystem

The flow of rivers in Kota Belud varies significantly depending on elevation and rainfall patterns. Several factors affect the river ecosystem in this district. Inappropriate river dredging practices, often driven by profit from sand mining, may disrupt the ecosystem, leading to habitat loss and degraded water quality. Additionally, frequent and escalating flooding has caused the spread of waterborne diseases among aquatic habitats. Conversely, the poor environmental conditions during droughts have resulted in significant mortality among fish, oysters, and cockles.

#### 2. Inability to Adapt to Modern Fisheries Technology

While traditional fishermen receive subsidies from Lembaga Kemajuan Ikan Malaysia (LKIM) to support their livelihoods, the main challenge facing the fishing industry in Kota Belud is the inability to adapt to modern fisheries technology. Traditional fishing methods may not be as efficient or sustainable as modern techniques, putting traditional fishermen at a disadvantage in terms of profitability and productivity.



## Life on Land

The Kota Belud District is located in a geographically diverse area, with a coastal region to the west and mountainous terrain to the east. This positioning provides the district with a rich variety of biodiversity and natural resources. The mangrove swamps surrounding Mantanani Island function as both biodiverse ecosystems and natural barriers against coastal erosion. They play a crucial role in stabilizing shorelines, ultimately protecting the well-being of the coastal communities. However, the mangrove forests have been adversely impacted by the St. Joseph oil platform located near Mantanani Island, along with the waste released into the ocean from the platform.

## SDG 15: LIFE ON LAND

### INPUTS FROM ENGAGEMENT FOR SDG 15 IN KOTA BELUD

To assess the progress towards achieving Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 15 in Kota Belud District more comprehensively, it is essential to gather additional facts and localized data. This information will enable a deeper analysis of the specific challenges and issues encountered, serving as a foundation for identifying strategic opportunities to meet the targets of SDG 15.

The construction of the Pan Borneo Highway and Jalan Taburan-Mendawang has led to soil erosion in certain areas of Kota Belud. While the highway enhances the local economy and improves accessibility to the district, it is crucial that protective measures for the rich biodiversity and animal movement are incorporated into the planning process. Improperly planned road construction can disturb the natural soil structure.

According to findings from focus group discussions (FGDs), pollution from the St. Joseph oil platform, located near the coastal area of Mantanani Island, has negatively impacted the mangrove ecosystems. The mangrove swamps along Kota Belud's coastline are biodiverse habitats that support a wide variety of plant and animal species. The extensive root systems of these mangroves act as natural barriers against coastal erosion and help stabilize shorelines, thereby offering protection to coastal communities. However, the presence of the St. Joseph oil platform, combined with its pollution discharge into the ocean, has harmed the mangrove forests, leading to the disruption of aquatic habitats and the relocation of some communities in the area.



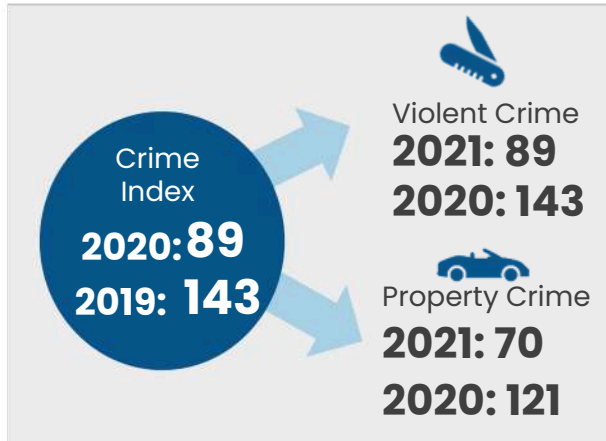
## Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

The initiatives in Kota Belud align with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16, which focuses on promoting peace, justice, and strong institutions. These efforts aim to enhance collaboration and cooperation, address challenges related to data reliability and integration, implement digital taxation for revenue transparency, prevent corruption, and raise awareness about scams and community safety.

These actions reflect SDG 16's objectives of fostering effective institutions, ensuring transparency and accountability, reducing corruption, and promoting peaceful, inclusive, and just societies. In summary, the initiatives in Kota Belud demonstrate the district's commitment to achieving the principles of SDG 16, ultimately leading to improved governance and community well-being.

## SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

### 16.1 SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCE ALL FORMS OF VIOLENCE AND RELATED DEATH RATES EVERYWHERE



In 2020, Kota Belud experienced a notable decrease in its crime index, which can be closely linked to Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16 that focuses on promoting peace, justice, and strong institutions. The crime index fell by 37.8%, with reported cases dropping from 143 in 2019 to 89 in 2020. Both violent and property crimes saw significant declines, with violent crimes decreasing by 13.6% and property crimes by 42.1%.

Within the category of violent crimes, the highest number of cases involved causing injury, totaling 9 cases, followed by 7 cases of rape, 2 cases of robbery, and 1 case of murder in 2020. In terms of property crimes, the most frequently reported were other thefts, with 47 cases. This was followed by burglary and theft with 18 cases and vehicle thefts with 5 cases.

In conclusion, the reduction in crime rates in Kota Belud serves as a positive indicator of progress toward various aspects of SDG 16, including the promotion of peace, justice, strong institutions, and the rule of law. These improvements contribute to safer and

more equitable communities, aligning with the broader objectives of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

#### Data Challenges:

There is a recognized need for improved data management and integration. Fragmented data can impede decision-making, underscoring the importance of coherent and accurate data collection and usage.

#### Digital Taxation:

Transitioning to online tax payments is a positive step that enhances efficiency and transparency in revenue collection. Additionally, implementing property taxes in residential areas increases local revenue.

#### Economic Development:

Efforts are underway to engage in international programs and promote Kota Belud as a UNESCO Geopark. These initiatives aim to stimulate tourism and economic growth through skill development and the promotion of tourism.

#### Anti-Corruption and Social Awareness:

There is a strong commitment to good governance and community well-being, evident through anti-corruption measures and awareness programs. These initiatives address pressing issues like scams, bullying, and community safety, fostering a safer and more transparent community.

**17** PARTNERSHIPS  
FOR THE GOALS



## Partnership for the Goals

Kota Belud has made significant progress in advancing Sustainable Development Goal 17 (SDG 17), which focuses on revitalizing global partnerships for sustainable development. This progress has largely been achieved through strong collaborations with the Sabah State Government, as well as various international and local organizations.

Looking ahead, it is crucial to highlight the importance of SDG 17—Partnerships for the Goals—in Kota Belud. Strengthening partnerships among diverse stakeholders is essential for successfully implementing the SDGs and achieving sustainable development in the district.

## SDG 17 : PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

### Collaborative Initiatives at Local Level

Utilizing Kota Belud has engaged in numerous collaborative initiatives with international organizations, government bodies, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to tackle various development challenges. These partnerships have been vital in promoting sustainable agricultural practices, enhancing education, improving healthcare services, and ensuring a sustainable water supply for rural communities.

A notable example is the partnership with the local Civil Society Organization, Hopes Malaysia. Through collaborative efforts with the villagers, Hopes Malaysia has provided sustainable water supplies to over 10,000 residents across 15 rural settlements by installing more than 70 kilometers of piping. One significant project recently completed in Kampung Sayap Magambai involved the implementation of a gravity water system, ensuring reliable access to clean water for the community.



Source: Borneo Echo, "Hope Malaysia helps rural villagers in Kota Belud to solve water woes".

## Strengthening Partnership for Kinabalu Unesco Global Geopark (KUGGP)

The Kinabalu UNESCO Global Geopark, which spans the districts of Kota Belud, Kota Marudu, and Ranau, is a transformative initiative that impacts approximately 291,300 residents across 423 villages. This extensive project highlights the significance of collaborative partnerships in driving economic growth through sustainable tourism and the preservation of cultural heritage.

By bringing together government bodies, local communities, NGOs, and international organizations, the geopark has revitalized the local economy while also strengthening social cohesion and environmental stewardship. It serves as a model for effective multi-sector collaboration, promoting inclusive development that respects and integrates traditional knowledge and practices. This approach not only enhances the quality of life for local residents by creating job opportunities and stimulating business growth but also ensures the preservation of natural ecosystems and cultural diversity.

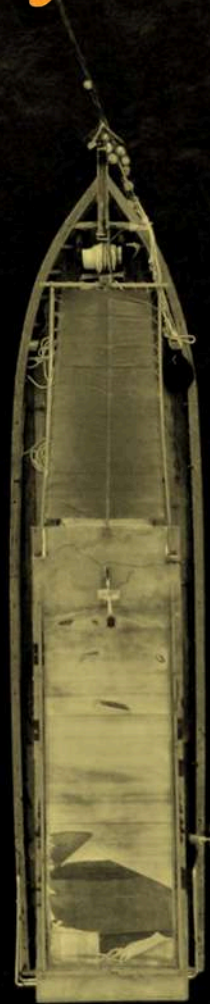
In alignment with Sustainable Development Goal 17 (**SDG 17**), the geopark demonstrates how partnerships can promote sustainable development by utilizing diverse expertise and resources to achieve common objectives. These efforts not only enhance the economic well-being of local communities but also contribute to the global agenda for sustainable development, making significant progress toward a more inclusive and resilient future.



Source: New Straits Times, January 2024

# Part B

## *5.0 Way Forward*



## 5.0 Next Steps for Kota Belud

In Kota Belud, the next steps for local authorities in their Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) journey are outlined as follows:

**Phase 2:** The priority areas for the SDGs in Kota Belud will be identified. Ongoing stakeholder consultations will play a vital role in developing the SDG roadmap for the city. All participants of the workshop, including those who were unable to attend, as well as newly identified stakeholders, will be invited to contribute to this process.

**Phase 3:** This phase will focus on accelerating the drafting of the SDG Roadmap report for Kota Belud. It will involve conducting a comprehensive analysis of each SDG, proposing actions to expedite progress, and establishing indicators to measure achievements.

These steps illustrate a proactive approach to incorporating the SDGs into the development planning of Kota Belud. The involvement of various stakeholders and the systematic roadmap will guide the city toward effective implementation and monitoring of the SDGs, ultimately leading to sustainable development and an improved quality of life for its residents.

In addition to these steps, data collection for each of the 17 SDGs will be conducted to enhance the analysis and understanding of the current status and progress of each goal in Kota Belud. This data collection process will provide valuable insights and enable informed decision-making regarding the specific actions required to achieve the SDGs in the city.

Moving forward, SDG implementation in Kota Belud will involve a collaborative and participatory approach. Engaging

***Regular monitoring and reporting of progress will be essential to track the achievements and identify areas that require further attention and improvement. This will involve establishing appropriate indicators and measurement mechanisms to assess the impact of actions taken towards the SDGs.***

stakeholders from various sectors—including government agencies, private companies, civil society organizations, and community members—will be crucial for driving progress and ensuring the success of SDG initiatives.

The path forward for implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Kota Belud depends on the ongoing commitment of all stakeholders. This includes effective coordination among different sectors, making decisions based on data, and adopting a participatory approach that engages and includes all community members. By collaborating towards the SDGs, Kota Belud can create a sustainable and prosperous future for its residents.



**URBANICE**  
MALAYSIA

