

2nd Edition - March 2023

## Sustainability Stories of the Lives We Touched

# The Iron Workers

Hairi & Workshop Pandai Besi Kendawangan Mandiri  
Kendawangan, Ketapang

We meet Hairi and his sidekick Hartono (Ujang) reforging an old *dodos* (a tool for harvesting oil palm fruit bunches). This *dodos* was produced by his very workshop, Pandai Besi Kendawangan Mandiri, years ago. Having used the *dodos* heavily in the plantations, its owner took it back to the maker for some adjustments, hoping the faithful tool will be able to serve him well for another few years before he has to ultimately get a new one.



Hairi & Hartono

“Hairi’s workshop offers this service to everyone who has bought iron tools from him. Over the years, many have **become loyal customers** owing to his exceptional workmanship and after-sales service.”



Pandai Besi Kendawangan Mandiri Workshop

A collection of iron tools is made at Hairi’s workshop. The production cycle starts with collecting of scrap metal—mainly iron—from around the neighbourhood. Through fire and force he transforms the scrap into the plantation worker’s tools of the trade. His anvil, Hairi believes, dates back from the time of his great-grandfather. It was among the very few “original” tools that Hairi still works with today. Many have become obsolete or simply timeworn, having been extensively used by his forefathers.

Hartono skillfully uses an angle grinder to fine-tune the blade. This and other new, more modern tools for Hairi's workshop have been purchased more recently, with financial assistance and nurturing from Bumitama.



*Hartono making dodos*



Bumitama has not only given Hairi financial support, but has also been ordering a large numbers of palm fruit harvesting tools from Hairi, starting in 2015. His high-quality products are highly sought after by workers from various oil palm and rubber estates in Ketapang.

***Hairi and his team of five can sell in excess of 80 tools each month.***



Collections of blade at Hairi's workshop

Hairi posing with his own creation, a parang carved with the letters KDW, for Kendawangan, where he is from. Born into a lineage steeped in the arts of iron-working, Hairi keeps the tradition alive as the fourth-generation blacksmith in Kendawangan Kiri village in Ketapang. He harbours hope that his youngest offspring, now merely two years old, will succeed him. *“Though very young, he’s already shown a strong affinity to my tools, and is always engrossed in seeing me work,”* Hairi says, his smile tinged with fatherly pride.

