



Local Hands, Global Reach

Seniors and Disabled mending a future

Pak Kamad, alumni of Tiara's handicraft, sewing fabrics for his line.

By: Gillian JN

The street known as the Gang Dolly red-light district in 2014 has undergone a major transformation thanks to governmental policies and programmes, transformed into a thriving creative area full of MSMEs and a better alternative for income. Alongside the government's labour-intensive programme to help create jobs and maintain people's spending power, the government believes that the programme will positively impact the welfare of Surabaya's residents.

KUB Mampu Jaya, shoe production house converted from a prostitution house known as Wisma Barbarah, is located on the street of Gang Dolly. One of its workers Ms Yuni, 47, has been making hotel

sandals since 2014. She shared that the workers have a quota of 500 sandals to be made within 8am to 5pm and that they work overtime to finish their work. Yuni revealed that the rubber material of the hotel sandal makes her job harder because the sewing machine needle does not poke through completely.

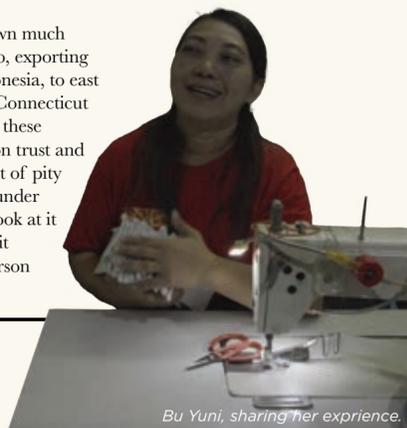
Despite these, Yuni works with her family in mind. She takes care of her granddaughter with working parents to work. Ultimately, she provides for her growing family with honest, hard-earned money, becoming the image of the working group of the renewed Gang Dolly.

In a different light, Tiara's Handicraft is another Surabayan

organization that only employs handicapped persons to make fabric crafts since 1995. Aiming to instill independence in employees who have much support from those around them, Tiara's Handicraft gives them a glimpse at a 'normal' life: working, cooking, washing their own clothes and even love!

This MSME has grown much larger since 28 years ago, exporting their crafts around Indonesia, to east Java, Medan and even Connecticut and Australia! Many of these connections are based on trust and sincerity, rather than out of pity for the workers. The founder Ms Tiara implored, "Look at it as a product, don't buy it because you pity the person

behind the product." The faith Tiara has in her employees reassures their parents of their children's future - socially and economically, that they may thrive in Surabaya's expanding, competitive environment.



Bu Yuni, sharing her experience.

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General Report

Small enterprises: Big hearts

In Indonesia, most businesses fall under the category of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) with assets and yearly turnover of not more than Rp500 million, collectively contributing to slightly above 61% to the nation's total gross domestic product (GDP). Their significant economic impact not only drives Indonesia's financial landscape, but also fosters many job creations for Indonesians. Situated in East Java Province, Surabaya has 361,000 out of 64.2 million MSMEs, proving its status as one of the largest business hub in the region.

Undeniably the backbone of Indonesia's economy, MSMEs face many challenges despite their notable

impact. Limited access to funding and changing markets persist, making growth and expansion difficult to achieve. Firstly, securing fundings is crucial for enhancing their brand, improving workspace studios and resources, expanding manpower, and implementing marketing strategies for awareness. Secondly, the sustainability of their work opportunities depends on the presence of orders. While infrequent, this still presents a challenge, as lack of orders means a scarcity of work for them.

Despite these challenges, their resilience is evident with a burgeoning presence in the international market. While they have achieved commendable success

domestically, the untapped potential for global expansion remains substantial. These enterprises are poised not only to meet the demands of a broader audience but also to solidify their standing in the global industry.

The story of these MSMEs extends beyond economic statistics; it's a testament to the entrepreneurial spirit thriving in Surabaya. Their remarkable journey from local recognition to international acclaim showcases the city as a breeding ground for business excellence. As they navigate the complexities of the global market, Surabaya's MSMEs require amplified support and strategic partnerships. These allows

the enterprises to scale their operations, creating a ripple effect that positively influences the local and national economy. As Surabaya's true gems, MSMEs embody the spirit of innovation, resilience, and untapped potential, ready to shine on the global stage.

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Profile

Tiara Handicraft cuts stereotypes

Tiara's Handicraft, established in 1995, is a micro local business that sells handmade crafts such as bags, pouches, pillow covers and more. Tiara's handicraft stitches together inclusion and skill, flagging empowerment of all. What sets this Indonesian brand apart is that they proudly employ people with disabilities. Every creation is a testament to the talent of these artisans, adding a distinctive touch to each meticulously crafted piece. Ms Tiara, founder of Tiara's handicraft, is the brain behind the designs, seeking trust and collaboration from those who share her vision. Tiara welcomes partnerships and actively proves wrong those who have doubted her organization's ability to succeed.

Since 2007, Pak Kamad has worked with Tiara's Handicraft and overcome his disabilities and roadblocks, such as the passing of his

wife and COVID-19. Tiara provides more than just a platform for handicrafts but also a space for the disabled to empower themselves. Such local gems that aim to foster inclusivity and empowerment must be supported even outside of Indonesia. One must not forget that a business can only do so

much on their own, needing support and trust from those around them as much as possible.



Bu Titik Winarti, founder of Tiara Handicraft.

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Opinions

3 ways to thread into the global market

More Surabayan companies are growing larger from just a local brand to expanding internationally to parts of Singapore. As MSMEs try to expand out of Indonesia, find out three ways your business can reach out to the international market.

Use of Digital Platforms:

To enhance global visibility, efforts in marketing campaigns is vital. With simple efforts such as creating videos across social media platforms, your MSME can increase reach and create brand awareness on an international scale. This boost in marketing efforts contributes to increased sales and the establishment of a strong brand identity. Utilising e-commerce and online sales platforms is pivotal in reaching a broader international audience. Furthermore, businesses must keep up with evolving trends of global commerce, to remain competitive while being connected with consumers worldwide and showcasing their offerings.

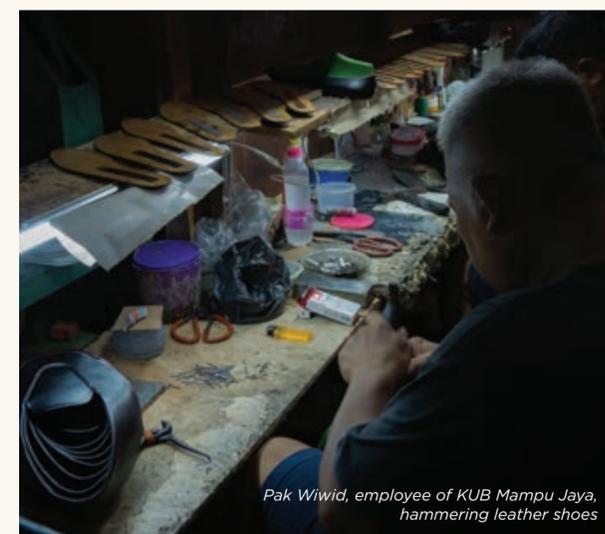
Networking:

Increased networking opportunities with established international businesses is crucial. Collaborating with international

logistics partners, such as J&T, can provide cost-effective and efficient worldwide delivery, ensuring timely deliveries and customer satisfaction. Such reliable global logistics solutions builds trust and credits businesses. At international expos and trade fairs, Surabayan products are showcased on a global stage. Such platforms allow businesses to connect with international buyers, investors, and collaborators, increasing the visibility, opportunities and markets of Surabayan MSMEs.

Government Involvement and Incentives:

The government is pivotal in encouraging international expansion for their own MSMEs that play a big role, such as tax breaks. Government incentives can alleviate financial burdens and provide the necessary support for businesses venturing into global markets, creating a supportive environment for the people's good. The government can encourage the use of digital payment platforms, enabling businesses to engage in international trade and smooth, secure local transactions. This ensures that MSMEs can seamlessly conduct business both on the local and international scale.



Pak Wiwid, employee of KUB Mampu Jaya, hammering leather shoes