

POLICY INFOCUS:

Policy Campaign for a Just Transition on Jeepney Modernization

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PROBLEM

The Jeepney Modernization Program in the Philippines faces critical challenges characterized by ineffective planning, rushed implementation, and provisions considered unjust and exploitative (Mendoza, 2021). The program's hurried execution has led to a lack of clarity in the transition process, adversely affecting the livelihoods of traditional jeepney operators and impeding the seamless integration of modernized vehicles into the public transportation system (Mateo-Babiano, Recio, Ashmore, Guillen, and Gaspay, 2020). The unjust and exploitative provisions compound the issue, posing financial burdens on operators and jeopardizing economic stability. In contrast to the program's shortcomings, significant opportunities exist in active mobility and public transport in the Philippines. Residents have the potential to initiate community-driven transportation cooperatives, offering a locally rooted and sustainable approach. Moreover, the engagement of transportation sector coalitions in decision-making processes can lead to more informed and inclusive policies, ensuring that the diverse needs of stakeholders are considered.

A missed opportunity lies in the program's failure to encourage the creation of jobs at the local and community levels. Establishing community-driven transportation initiatives could provide sustainable employment opportunities and contribute to the overall development of communities (Dimalanta, Atienza, and Samonte, 2023). Additionally, the current program lacks a focus on creating eco-friendly, accessible, and inclusive jeepneys, which are essential for environmental sustainability and social inclusivity. There is a pressing need for comprehensive intervention to address these challenges and leverage opportunities. This involves revisiting the program's planning and implementation strategies, ensuring fairness in provisions, and actively involving transportation sector stakeholders in decision-making processes (Gatarin, 2023). By embracing these measures, the Jeepney Modernization Program can evolve into a model that modernizes public transportation and prioritizes local development, environmental sustainability, and inclusivity.

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PROPOSED SOLUTIONS

- **Comprehensive Land Transportation Route and Franchising Plan:** The government should establish a Comprehensive Land Transportation Route and Franchising Plan proportionate to the number of commuters in cities and municipalities. This regulatory measure aims to streamline transportation routes and franchises, optimizing efficiency and ensuring that the public transportation system meets the demand of specific areas. By implementing a well-designed plan, the government can reduce congestion, enhance service coverage, and improve the overall reliability of public transportation. This approach contributes to a more organized and responsive transport network, aligning with the goals of the Jeepney Modernization Program.
- **Inclusive Biddings and Procurements for Local Manufacturers:** To support local industries and promote fair competition, the government should enforce competitive and inclusive biddings and procurements that prioritize local manufacturers of jeepneys. By doing so, the government ensures that local businesses have equal opportunities to contribute to the modernization efforts. This regulatory approach not only strengthens the domestic manufacturing sector but also fosters innovation and ensures that the transition to modernized jeepneys aligns with the specific needs and preferences of the local communities. Prioritizing local manufacturers enhances economic resilience and sustainability in the transportation industry.
- **Mandatory Integration of Renewable and Alternative Energy Sources:** To address environmental concerns, the government should design jeepneys to be fully electric, integrating renewable and alternative energy sources. This ecological initiative aligns with global efforts to reduce carbon emissions and transition towards sustainable energy solutions. By adopting eco-friendly technologies, the transportation sector can contribute to the broader goal of mitigating climate change. Incentivizing clean energy in jeepney design supports environmental sustainability and positions the Philippines as a leader in adopting green transportation practices.

PROPOSED INITIATIVE

The primary objective of this proposed initiative is to advocate for a just transition in the Jeepney Modernization Program through the development and implementation of a **comprehensive policy campaign**. The initiative aims to address economic, regulatory, environmental, and behavioral challenges by utilizing various tools, including a Policy Manual, Position and Policy Papers, Lobbying with Policymakers, Public Forums, Focus Group Discussions, and the Dissemination of Infographics and Public Service Announcements.

- **Policy Manual:** Develop a comprehensive Policy Manual that outlines key recommendations and guidelines for a just transition in Jeepney Modernization. This manual will serve as a reference for policymakers, highlighting the economic, regulatory, and environmental considerations necessary for a successful and inclusive transition. The Policy Manual will be drafted with stakeholders, including traditional jeepney operators, local manufacturers, and advocacy groups.
- **Position and Policy Papers:** Prepare Position and Policy Papers that articulate the stance and recommendations of the initiative. These papers will delve into specific issues, providing evidence-based arguments for a just transition. They will be disseminated to policymakers, government agencies, and other relevant stakeholders to influence decision-making and garner support for the proposed changes.
- **Lobbying with Policymakers:** Conduct targeted lobbying efforts with policymakers at various levels of government. Engage in meaningful discussions, presenting the Policy Manual and Position Papers to underline the importance of a just transition. Build alliances with sympathetic policymakers and advocate for policy changes that prioritize the livelihoods of traditional jeepney operators, support local industries, and address environmental concerns.
- **Public Forums and Focus Group Discussions:** Organize public forums and focus group discussions to engage directly with affected communities, transport sector stakeholders, and the general public. These platforms will facilitate open dialogue, exchanging ideas, concerns, and solutions. The insights gathered will inform the ongoing advocacy efforts and contribute to a more inclusive and participatory policy-making process.

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- **Dissemination of Infographics and Public Service Announcements:** Develop engaging infographics and videographics to simplify complex policy information. These materials will be widely disseminated through various channels, including social media, community bulletins, and traditional media outlets. Public Service Announcements will be broadcast to reach a broader audience, creating awareness about the proposed changes and garnering public support for the just transition.

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