

# **Keep the Change: Youth Policy Lab**

## **Policy Proposals on Active Mobility and Public Transport**

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## POLICY INFOCUS:

# Puwedeng Tumawid Dito, Hindi Nakakamatay

by Janel Balitaon, James Braga, Clarize Kristine Deguzman,  
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## PROBLEM

According to the data released by the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA), in 2022 the number of pedestrians involved in a traffic incident totaled 3,397 persons (MMDA, 2022). The absence of essential safety measures such as barricades, speed restriction signs, or traffic lights in designated regions exacerbates this trend. The lack of pedestrian safety infrastructure poses a severe threat to the lives of individuals, particularly students, who are disproportionately affected. This issue not only jeopardizes the fundamental right of people to walk freely and safely but also reflects a failure of the State's responsibility to ensure the well-being of its citizens.

The pressing need to address pedestrian safety in Metro Manila stems from the fact that it has traditionally been a city of walkers, many of whom rely on walking and active mobility and public transportation for their daily travel (Leather, Fabian, Gota, and Mejia, 2011). The startling number of accidents and injuries, particularly among students, highlights the urgent necessity for comprehensive solutions. Individuals should not be compelled to compromise their lives or disobey traffic regulations due to the lack of proper infrastructure to protect pedestrians. The State bears a fundamental responsibility for this inconvenience, as citizens, including students, deserve the right to safe and unimpeded mobility.

Furthermore, ensuring pedestrian safety is not just a matter of convenience but a crucial aspect of fostering a conducive learning environment. According to a study, the design of pedestrian environments does affect people's perceptions of pedestrian safety and their willingness to walk (Kweon B.-S., Rosenblatt-Naderi J., Ellis C.D., Shin W.-H., and Danies B.H., 2021). To receive quality education, students must travel to and from educational institutions without fear for their safety. The impact of this issue extends beyond individual well-being; it influences the overall community, emphasizing the need for Local Government

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Units (LGUs) to prioritize the value of pedestrian lanes. By addressing this problem comprehensively, the government can contribute to a safer, more accessible urban environment that supports its citizens' well-being and educational pursuits.

## **PROPOSED SOLUTIONS**

- **Policy Lobbying:** The group proposes lobbying for a policy that aims to urge the government to establish pedestrian lanes that are truly functional and accessible to the public. Furthermore, the initiative seeks to mobilize traffic enforcers with relevant information regarding pedestrian safety and foster public awareness to encourage proper road crossing through pedestrian-friendly crossings. However, it is crucial to note that despite the seeming simplicity of lobbying for a policy, the process involves an extensive process and fails to ensure long-term effectiveness and sustainability.
- **Infrastructure Building:** Pedestrian lanes are most of the time seen to be inaccessible to pedestrians; this is witnessed in various accounts such as faded paintings that make the lanes appear invisible, the absence of audible or tactile traffic signals to alert Persons With Disabilities (PWDs) to a pedestrian lane, and a shortage of CCTVs to monitor pedestrian lanes. In response to these challenges, the group has proposed an ideal pedestrian lane designed with high-quality rubberized painting that resists easy washing off, in-ground solar lighting to guide senior citizens during the night, and tactile paving extending across the crossing to assist visually impaired pedestrians. Nonetheless, the feasibility of this proposal is as theoretical as its concept; while it is objectively designed for sustainability, its approval could be hindered by the associated costs.
- **Environmental Mapping:** To track down pedestrian lanes that require rehabilitation and locate places that need said crossings, the group suggests an action plan where local areas should be mapped out to observe the space's visibility, utilization, and maintenance. This solution is both cost-efficient and objective and is meant for long-term sustainability.

## **PROPOSED INITIATIVE**

To improve the accessibility, safety, and usability of pedestrian lanes, the On Wheels Advocacy Squad proposes the “Puwedeng tumawid dito: Hindi nakamamatay” (*It is okay to cross here, it is not dangerous*) project, an initiative that aims to create a conducive environment for all pedestrians, including Senior Citizens and PWDs, by addressing visibility, functionality, and awareness issues associated with pedestrian lanes.

This project is locally tailored for the vicinity of Ermita Manila, an urban locale that houses many schools. Consequently, most pedestrians navigating its streets comprise students rushing to class or eagerly heading home to rest. However, the insufficiency of accessible and visibility pedestrian lanes compromises the safety of these pedestrians. With this, the groups plan to carry out said project by scheduling meetings and coordinating with the LGUs, particularly the Barangay’s Committee on Public Works and Highways, to introduce the project and its objectives to the local office. Our goal is to secure authorization to conduct the initiative. Next, the group should seek funds through donation drives and solicitation, appropriating whatever is gathered to ensure sufficient funding for initiating groundwork and sustaining the project toward its progress and fruition.

Once the necessary funds have been raised, the group will map out the locality by physically creating a map highlighting existing pedestrian lanes and identifying areas that require additional ones. In collaboration with the LGUs, the group will conduct quarterly visits to these mapped-out crossings to observe and document any fading or loss of visibility. If identified, these areas will undergo revitalization through, at a minimum, repainting. Following the subsequent quarterly visit, the areas with revitalized pedestrian lanes will be evaluated to determine their improved visibility and any potential changes, especially in incident rates within the vicinity. The data collected during these quarterly evaluations will be presented and interpreted in collaboration with the LGU, showcasing the benefits of accessible and usable pedestrian lanes.

The group envisions a future where pedestrian lanes are visible but also functional and inclusive. The group dreams of when their small project, initially conceptualized on the four corners of a table, becomes a reality. This ideal pedestrian lane ensures safety and makes the Philippine cities more walkable. Because in our ideal pedestrian crossings, “Puwedeng tumawid, Hindi nakamamatay”.

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## POLICY INFOCUS:

# Just Transition to E-Trikes

by Asher Ayeras, Ace Bayoneta, Angel Espiritu, CJ Javier, Lavigne Obordo, and Luis Tolentino

## PROBLEM

The Philippines must improve its overreliance on traditional fuel-powered transport systems, particularly in conventional tricycles' design and operation. These vehicles, characterized by small and low-level sidecars, present accessibility issues for diverse user groups, including senior citizens and individuals with mobility issues. Additionally, their design makes them prone to accidents, posing safety risks for passengers and pedestrians. Furthermore, using four-stroke engines in traditional tricycles contributes to unhealthy carbon emissions, adversely impacting the environment and the health of drivers, passengers, and pedestrians (Balaria, Pascual, Santos, Ortiz, Gabriel, and Mangahas, 2017). The widespread use of tricycles in the market significantly contributes to noise, particulate matter, and pollutants, adversely impacting humans and the environment. This is exacerbated by poor vehicle maintenance, extended service life, adulterated fuel and lubricants, excessive lubricant use, and passenger overloading (Abuzo, 2005; Li, Hu, Zhou, Wei, and Cheng, 2011).

Addressing this reliance on traditional fuel-powered transport systems is imperative because a more sustainable and inclusive model is needed. E-trike adoption is sustainable in the long run in terms of economic, socio-political, and environmental impact (Balaria et al., 2017). The inherent challenges of inaccessibility, safety concerns, and ecological impact underscore the necessity of transitioning towards an electric-powered transport system. Embracing this transition offers green alternatives with reduced carbon emissions and opens doors to inclusive design that accommodates diverse user groups, increased carrying capacity, and improved passenger comfort. Moreover, the shift to electric-powered tricycles aligns with global efforts to combat climate change and positions the Philippines as a destination committed to eco-friendly tourism practices (Umali, 2018). A strategic and comprehensive initiative is required to facilitate this just transition, unlocking opportunities for a more sustainable, inclusive, and environmentally friendly transportation system in the country.

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## PROPOSED SOLUTIONS

- **Communications Campaign:** A comprehensive communications campaign is crucial to address the challenges posed by the reliance on traditional fuel-powered tricycles and promote the transition to electric-powered alternatives. This initiative involves crafting a targeted messaging strategy utilizing various communication channels such as public service announcements, social media, and community events. The campaign aims to raise awareness about the accessibility issues, safety concerns, and environmental impact of traditional tricycles. Simultaneously, it will highlight the benefits of electric-powered tricycles, emphasizing their inclusive design, reduced carbon emissions, and potential to enhance the overall transportation experience. Engaging the public through informative communication will garner support for the shift and encourage stakeholders to participate in the proposed changes.
- **Piloting:** A strategic piloting program can serve as a tangible and practical approach to test the feasibility and efficacy of e-trikes in specific areas. By selecting pilot locations, stakeholders can closely monitor the transition, assess the acceptance of the new transport model, and identify any challenges or adjustments needed. Piloting allows for real-time feedback from both drivers and passengers, offering insights into the practicality, accessibility, and overall performance of electric tricycles. This approach facilitates a phased implementation, ensuring a smoother transition and allowing for adjustments based on the unique dynamics of different communities. The success of the pilot programs can be used to inform and scale up the initiative across other regions.
- **City-wide Ordinance:** Implementing a city-wide ordinance that mandates the transition from traditional fuel-powered tricycles to electric-powered alternatives provides the necessary legal framework. The ordinance should outline specific timelines, incentives, and penalties to ensure a smooth and timely transition. Collaborating with local government units, transportation authorities, and relevant stakeholders is crucial in drafting and implementing this ordinance. Additionally, the ordinance can include provisions for financial incentives, tax breaks, or subsidies to encourage tricycle operators to invest in electric vehicles. Establishing a legal framework creates a cohesive and synchronized effort toward a more sustainable and inclusive transportation system at the city level.

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## **PROPOSED INITIATIVE**

The group will conduct a comprehensive survey to gather detailed insights into the experiences, profitability, and relevant data from both traditional and electric tricycle drivers in Malabon City. This survey aims to understand the specific challenges and opportunities associated with each type of tricycle operation. The collected data will serve as a foundation for crafting an effective communications campaign tailored to the social media platforms most accessible to our target audience.

Subsequently, the initiative will organize a town hall meeting involving key stakeholders to present and discuss the project. This meeting will provide an opportunity to address concerns, garner support, and ensure transparency in the transition process. Stakeholders, including tricycle drivers, community members, and local officials, will be able to engage actively in the planning and implementation phases.

The group will propose strategically piloting electric tricycles in selected barangays to initiate the transition. This phase will involve barangay officials, development partners like the Asia Development Bank, and e-trike unit providers. The gradual transition will allow for a smooth integration, addressing any challenges that may arise while showcasing the benefits of electric tricycles.

Ultimately, the goal is to transform the pilot project into a city-wide ordinance, ensuring a comprehensive and uniform transition across Malabon City. This phased approach, supported by partnerships and community involvement, will contribute to the success and sustainability of the initiative, promoting a more environmentally friendly and efficient tricycle transportation system.



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## POLICY INFOCUS:

# Policy Campaign for a Just Transition on Jeepney Modernization

by Errol Ivan Badong, Mitzi Salcedo, Michael Angelo Pereira, and Ronie Ho

## 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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## POLICY INFOCUS:

# Inclusivity in Travel: PWD-Friendly Public Transportation

by Marie Abigail E. De Juan, Johnmela E. Dela Sada, Roi Louise R. Buenaventura,  
Mark William M. Dostilla, Sydney Kashmir A. Formentera, John Lloyd Paraiso

## PROBLEM

The inadequacy of public transportation facilities represents a pervasive challenge that disproportionately affects vulnerable sectors, notably persons with disabilities (PWDs) and senior citizens. The existing infrastructure needs to provide the necessary accommodations to make the transportation experience more navigable, easier, and convenient for these groups. For instance, 80 percent of train stations in Metro Manila are not fully accessible to PWDs (Ranada, 2023). This insufficiency manifests in a need for ramps, elevators, designated seating, and other essential features that cater to PWDs and senior citizens' unique needs, hindering their ability to utilize public transportation independently and comfortably (National Economic Development Authority, n.d.).

Moreover, the absence of PWD and senior citizen-friendly facilities perpetuates their vulnerability by limiting their access to essential services, opportunities, and social engagements (Ting, 2019). For PWDs, the lack of proper infrastructure obstructs physical mobility and reinforces societal barriers, hindering their full participation in community life. Similarly, senior citizens, who may face mobility challenges, find their access to public transportation compromised, affecting their autonomy and overall quality of life.

Addressing the insufficiency of PWD and senior citizen-friendly facilities in public transportation is imperative to rectify the systemic inequalities and challenges these vulnerable sectors face. Enhancing accessibility is not merely a matter of physical convenience but a fundamental step toward fostering inclusivity and equal participation in societal activities (World Bank, 2015). By implementing infrastructure improvements that cater to the specific needs of PWDs and senior citizens, the public transportation system can instill a sense of trust and reliability among these groups. Providing ramps, elevators, priority seating, and other accommodating features facilitates their ease of travel and communicates a commitment to inclusivity and respect for diversity.

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Furthermore, an enhanced public transportation system that prioritizes accessibility for vulnerable sectors can have a positive cascading effect. Increased trust and convenience may convince PWDs, senior citizens, and the broader public to patronize such services, contributing to a more diverse and inclusive ridership. The resulting shift towards a transportation system that prioritizes the needs of all citizens promotes social equity and contributes to the overall well-being and cohesion of the community.

## **PROPOSED SOLUTIONS**

- **Retrofitting Inaccessible Facilities in Transit Hubs:** To address the issue of inadequate accessibility in public transportation facilities, a critical solution involves retrofitting existing transit hubs. This initiative would entail modifying infrastructure elements such as ramps, elevators, and walkways to comply with universal design principles, ensuring they are accessible to PWDs, senior citizens, and pregnant women. The retrofitting process aims to eliminate physical barriers, making transit hubs inclusive and navigable for all passengers. By prioritizing retrofitting, authorities can create an environment that fosters independence and facilitates seamless travel experiences for vulnerable groups.
- **Exclusive Staff Assistance for PWDs, Senior Citizens, and Pregnant Women in Transit Hubs:** To enhance the overall experience for PWDs, senior citizens, and pregnant women, a proactive solution involves providing exclusive staff assistance in transit hubs. Trained personnel would be dedicated to offering help, guidance, and support to individuals requiring special attention. This approach ensures vulnerable passengers receive the necessary assistance and creates a supportive and empathetic environment within transit hubs. Staff assistance contributes to a sense of security, fostering a positive perception of public transportation and encouraging greater confidence among PWDs, senior citizens, and pregnant women to utilize these services.
- **Re-engineering Public Utility Vehicles (PUV)/ Public Transportation into PWD, Senior Citizen, Pregnant Women-Friendly Vehicles:** To comprehensively address the accessibility challenges in public transportation, a pivotal solution involves re-engineering public utility vehicles (PUVs) to become more accommodating to PWDs, senior citizens, and pregnant women. This could include modifications such as low-floor boarding systems, priority seating areas, and safety features tailored to

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the specific needs of these passenger groups. Re-engineering vehicles aligns with the principles of universal design, making public transportation more inclusive by considering the diverse needs of all passengers. This solution not only ensures a safer and more comfortable journey for vulnerable groups but also promotes a shift towards a universally accessible public transportation system that prioritizes the well-being and convenience of every commuter.

## **PROPOSED INITIATIVE**

The proposed initiative aims to develop and implement a comprehensive training manual. This manual is designed specifically for public transportation staff and transit hubs to foster a more inclusive and supportive environment. The initiative recognizes that the inadequacy of public transportation facilities poses a significant hurdle for PWDs and senior citizens, hindering their accessibility and independence. The training manual will offer practical guidance on how public transportation staff can effectively engage with and assist these individuals. The focus will extend beyond the technical aspects of infrastructure modifications, emphasizing the importance of interpersonal skills, empathy, and respectful communication.

By equipping public transportation staff with the knowledge and skills outlined in the training manual, the initiative seeks to transform the passenger experience for PWDs and senior citizens. From ensuring seamless boarding procedures to providing the necessary assistance during the journey, the goal is to create an environment that prioritizes the well-being and dignity of all passengers, irrespective of their physical abilities or age. This initiative is a proactive step toward instilling a culture of inclusivity within the public transportation system. By emphasizing engagement, support, and assistance in the training manual, the aim is to cultivate a mindset shift among public transportation staff, fostering a more welcoming and accessible experience for PWDs and senior citizens. Ultimately, this initiative contributes to building a transportation network that reflects the principles of equality and responsiveness to the diverse needs of its passengers.

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