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THE BOTTOM LINE

The decline of angkot minibus systems in Bandung is not only a transport service problem but also a road safety, access to education, social equity, and sustainability challenge. Improving this public transport system is an upstream road safety strategy that can reduce young people's dependence on higher-risk transport modes and reduce crash injuries and fatalities. Youth-led field work, concrete recommendations, and multisector partnerships now lay the groundwork for more safe, convenient, and affordable public transport.

THE CHALLENGE

Bandung's angkot network of public minibuses has long served as an affordable mobility option for low- and middle-income communities (including students, informal workers, market traders, and elderly people) and households who depend on daily public transport. However, **the system is facing a critical breaking point.** Declining ridership, ageing fleet vehicles, poor service quality, unpredictable travel times, and safety concerns are reducing trust in angkot as a reliable transport option.



YOURS - YOUTH FOR ROAD SAFETY WORKS WITH AND FOR YOUNG PEOPLE TO UNLOCK SAFE, SUSTAINABLE CITIES THROUGH BETTER MOBILITY SYSTEMS. YOURS 'YOUTH ADVOCATES PROGRAMME' IS SPECIALLY DESIGNED TO PREPARE MOTIVATED YOUNG PEOPLE TO WORK ALONGSIDE GOVERNMENT DECISION-MAKERS, TURNING THEIR PASSION TO IMPROVE THEIR COMMUNITY INTO CONCRETE POLICY PROPOSALS. THE PROGRAMME PARTNERS WITH LOCAL NGOS TO RECRUIT AND TRAIN YOUNG CHANGE-MAKERS TO COLLECT EVIDENCE ON THEIR CITY'S EVERYDAY ISSUES, COACH THROUGH POLICY ANALYSIS AND PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT, PRESENT SPECIFIC REFORMS TO GOVERNMENT, AND ULTIMATELY EMBED YOUTH AS PERMANENT ROLES IN DECISION-MAKING COUNCILS.

For the **four leaders who joined the Bandung Youth Advocates programme**, mobility is not an abstract policy issue; it is the everyday experience of waiting for an angkot, walking off-balance on broken sidewalks, and noticing how people move across the city.

The group joined YOURS Advocacy initiatives with curiosity and commitment. They studied Bandung's public transport system, the role it plays in daily life, and how movement looks different, especially for women and people with disabilities. Across the group, there was a shared motivation to move beyond simply noticing problems and begin contributing to solutions.

Their research identified a **clear gap between what students need and what the current angkot system provides**. Students depend on transport that is affordable, predictable, safe, and time-efficient. Yet irregular waiting times, uncertain routes, multiple transfers, and inconsistent service make daily mobility stressful and unreliable. Waiting times translate into stress when you consider air and noise pollution, tropical weather, and job/class schedule pressure. This has pushed many students toward motorcycles and app-based transport, even when these options may carry higher financial cost and safety risks.

The policy issue was therefore not only about improving one public transport mode. It was about protecting students' access to education, reducing exposure to road traffic risks, supporting low-income communities, and ensuring that Bandung's transport modernisation agenda does not leave behind the people who rely on angkots the most.



THE JOURNEY

In partnership with Kami Ruang Katiga and harnessing YOURS' advocacy coaching methodology, the group learned how to observe their city differently. They conducted field surveys, gathered evidence, discussed mobility challenges, and began translating their observations into practical recommendations. What started as an everyday concern gradually became structured advocacy.



"Fieldwork was one of the most valuable parts of the journey because it allowed us to directly observe mobility conditions and listen to people's experiences." - Participant 2

"Advocacy is not only about speaking loudly. It is also about listening carefully, documenting realities, and building evidence to influence change." -Sana', YOURS coach

The Bandung group's work focused strongly on public transport. The decline in student use of angkot is not simply a lifestyle change or a preference for private vehicles. It reflects a system that no longer fully meets young people's needs for safety, reliability, affordability, and connectivity.



Meanwhile, field observations revealed that angkot drivers have made informal shifts in service to better accommodate people: extra stops where people need it, support for wheelchair users, and looking the other way if a student cannot pay. Making the angkot system work well should not depend on individual goodwill alone; it needs sustainable planning, public support, policy attention, and recognition of the people who keep the system moving.

A key learning from the policy brief **was that the current setoran-based operational model undermines road safety and service quality**. Because drivers are required to meet daily deposit targets, they may be pushed toward unsafe or inefficient practices such as waiting too long for passengers, stopping unpredictably, or competing for passengers.

The Bandung Advocates explored examples from other cities, including Jakarta's JakLingko Mikrotrans model, where informal minibus-style services have been integrated into a more formal system with digital payment, clearer operational structures, and driver payment models linked to service delivery rather than passenger chasing. This helped the group see that reform is possible when modernisation protects both users and drivers.

The project also shifted how the group understood decision-making. At the beginning, many discussions focused on the problems themselves: unsafe infrastructure, gaps in public transport, and barriers faced by different road users. **Over time, the group began asking a more strategic question: Who has the power to help change this? This opened new thinking around the role of transport agencies, education institutions, local government, and community actors.**



The group discovered that meaningful advocacy requires time, coordination, trust, and clear roles. One suggestion for the future cohorts is to prioritise in-person meetings to strengthen relationships, encourage deeper reflection, and increase youth confidence to engage with policymakers.



"I still find engaging decision-makers challenging, but now I have more confidence because I understand the policy cycle, know where to find the right evidence, and how to frame it strategically. It's about being prepared, saying things clearly, and getting the right people involved." - Participant 2

Most importantly, the group learned that meaningful youth participation adds value to local government decision-making because young people can bring street-level evidence, user experience, and practical insight into planning processes. Their observations helped show how students actually experience angkot services, what barriers influence their choices, and how public transport reform can better respond to real mobility needs.



KEY IMPACT

The brief also emphasises that safe mobility is a right, not a privilege. Students should not be forced to choose between affordable transport and safe transport, and access to education should not depend on vehicle ownership, purchasing power, or the ability to pay for app-based mobility.

Their next step is to share their recommendations with relevant government stakeholders and continue exploring how youth-led evidence can support better public transport in Bandung. The group's recommendations provide practical entry points for local government and other stakeholders.

YOUTH ADVOCATES RECOMMEND



GOVERNMENT

Incorporate student transport subsidies, use survey data to redesign routes and improve services, and set and enforce safety and service standards.



ANGKOT OPERATORS

Improve vehicle conditions, service quality, and digital systems for routes and tracking.



UNIVERSITIES

Systematise coordination with transport providers and support student-oriented mobility initiatives.



STUDENT ORGANISATIONS

Continue advocacy, data collection, and representation of student needs in transport discussions.

The Bandung story shows that young people do not need to wait to be invited into mobility conversations. With the right support, tools, and spaces, they can move from observing the city to helping shape its future.

The Bandung Advocates developed more than a policy brief; they have a new way of seeing their city and their role within it. They built skills in observation, evidence gathering, communication, stakeholder mapping, and policy advocacy — and gained the confidence to put those skills into action alongside decision makers.

The model shows that youth participation can help local governments design better implementation plans. Young people can identify where policy does not match lived reality, document the hidden costs of unreliable transport, and offer recommendations that connect safety, affordability, education, and sustainability. In Bandung, youth engagement added value by turning everyday student mobility challenges into evidence that can inform more inclusive public transport reform.



PROGRAMME OUTPUTS



1 policy brief developed on revitalising angkot as an affordable, safe, and sustainable urban mobility option for students.



1 youth-led evidence and advocacy process completed, connecting field observation, student mobility needs, public transport safety, and policy recommendations.



Key recommendation package developed for the government, angkot operators, universities, and student organisations.

VALUE OF YOUTH PARTICIPATION:

The Bandung Youth Advocates demonstrate how young people can help local governments understand mobility from the perspective of daily users, especially students. Their research and observations provide practical evidence that can support route redesign, service improvement, safety standards, student subsidies and more inclusive implementation of Bandung's public transport modernisation agenda.



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