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WHAT IS THE ROLE OF SUB-NATIONAL AUTHORITIES IN PUBLIC TRANSPORT POLICY? – A MULTI-LEVEL GOVERNANCE PERSPECTIVE IN INDONESIA

Mutiasari Kurnia Devi¹, Miming Miharja², Alhilal Furqan³

*^{1,2,3} Urban and Regional Planning Study Program,
School of Architecture, Planning and Policy Development,
BANDUNG INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, INDONESIA*

*¹Urban and Regional Planning Study Program,
INSTITUT TEKNOLOGI NASIONAL YOGYAKARTA, INDONESIA*

Abstract

This paper examines the role and engagement of sub-national authorities in BTS Teman Bus policy-making in Yogyakarta Special Region (DIY) Province. The national government has primarily taken the lead in the program without significant involvement from regional authorities. Using the multi-level governance (MLG) theory, this study provides a new perspective on transport governance. Despite limited resources at regional levels, the non-involvement of regional governments is questionable. This poses a question whether the BTS Teman Bus policy-making reflect the emergence and existence of MLG. To address this issue, we conducted interviews with eight key informants in BTS Teman Bus policy-making and gathered information through documentation study. The results revealed two institutional types of MLG in Yogyakarta, but this did not necessarily translate to MLG being evident in the BTS Teman Bus policy-making process. This case study in DIY Province provides insights into the BTS Teman Bus policy-making process. It has significant implications for the understanding of public transport policy-making in Indonesia, emphasizing the need for more effective decision-making and collaboration in the future.

Keywords: Sub-national Authorities, Policy-making, Public Transport, Multi-Level Governance

¹ Corresponding author. Email: mutiasarikd@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

Efforts to coordinate transportation and urban development at the metropolitan level in Indonesia face persistent challenges. Unlike other developed countries with supportive institutional capacity, the task of overseeing metropolitan governance remains a complicated problem in Indonesia (Diwangkari, 2014). After the decentralization policy through the Decentralization Act 22/1999 (further reiterated by Act 32/2004), Indonesia experienced a massive transition in the spatial planning system from a highly hierarchical and centralized system to less hierarchical and empowered local governments (Firman, 2010). This transition, while enhancing local autonomy, also created policy fragmentation across jurisdictions (Talitha & Hudalah, 2014). This sudden transformation pushed local governments to seek a new regional governance instrument through collaborations that conform to the current system (Okitasari & Kidokoro, 2014).

Even though some countries have developed national transport policies, the implementation remains challenging due to weak institutions, poor governance mechanisms, and inadequate capacity of policymakers (Sridhar et al., 2019). Furthermore, in the case of spatial planning law in Indonesia, the content of the spatial plan formulated by lower-level governments should be aligned with the directions for urban development that the central government has decided in the national spatial plan. Similar to spatial plans, sectoral planning (transport, environment, and energy) is also prepared in a hierarchical fashion involving multi-level actors. It is imperative for sectoral planning to be in alignment with the national and provincial spatial plans. Regarding this matter, the arrangement and implementation of policies can indirectly reflect the multi-level governance (MLG) concept, in which policy actors and organizations at different levels can make decisions that may influence the types and characteristics of policies and projects.

Public transport governance often remains fragmented and must face coordination challenges (Rye et al., 2018). Previous studies have found that frequent changes in governance structures, including their responsibilities, lead to coordination and integration challenges (G. R. Marsden & May, 2006). In most developing countries, changes in governance structure, responsibilities, and authorities have also occurred, including in Indonesia. Employing comprehensive metropolitan transportation planning among several local authorities' jurisdictions becomes a critical issue in the metropolitan transport context. Creating an efficient public transport system will require a successful collaboration among several discrete organizations, both public and private organizations (Hrelja et al., 2018). Therefore, local and regional public transport planning processes must be developed in accordance with the MLG culture based on negotiation and consensus with local governments.

In 2020, the Ministry of Transportation (MoT) launched BTS Teman Bus to implement a road-based mass transportation development program with Buy the Service (BTS) scheme. BTS was first introduced in five pilot cities: Medan, Palembang, Surakarta, Yogyakarta, and Denpasar. Regarding governance, the Ministry of Transportation (MoT) has been responsible for all decision-making processes of BTS Teman Bus program. Regional authorities, on the other hand, have been restricted to providing transport infrastructure and suggesting operation routes, positioning them as policy receivers rather than active contributors. Regardless of the limited resources at regional levels, the non-involvement of regional governments is questionable. This also raises a question whether MLG emerges and exists in the BTS Teman Bus policy-making.

Drawing insights from the aforementioned discussion, it is critical to elaborate on the metropolitan public transport governance and understand the policy-making processes in public transport planning and policy. This paper is structured by using MLG theory as an entry point to understand the complexity of transport governance in metropolitan public transport planning, which serves as instances of multi-level policy-making. Using MLG approach, this study examines the role and engagement of sub-national authorities in BTS Teman Bus policy-making in Yogyakarta Special Region (DIY) Province. BTS Teman Bus has been chiefly directed by the national government without significant involvement from regional authorities. The governance discussion is structured through an introduction to the critical concepts of MLG, which was introduced by (Bache & Flinders, 2004; Hooghe & Marks, 2003; Piattoni, 2009)

LITERATURE REVIEW

Inter-local Government Collaboration

In terms of transportation, urban problems such as traffic congestion, pollution, and economic losses are closely linked to the effectiveness or inadequacy of the provision of efficient transportation services, the design of which would raise challenges that transcend local government boundaries (Miharja et al., 2021). An imbalance between the supply and demand for transportation can be readily caused by local governments' fragmented planning, which has become one of the leading causes of severe transportation problems cities are facing today (Hirschhorn et al., 2019).

(Phillimore, 2013) shows how informal processes and power dynamics have historically dominated intergovernmental relations, but that formalization and institutionalization have grown and can offer sub-national governments more security and protection when interacting with the state government. Developing countries, which mainly apply a decentralized system to their state system, have a growing financial independence and autonomous decision-making authority of their regional governments.

Top-down decision-making is different from inter-local collaboration. Inter-local collaboration occurs when local governments work horizontally to address social challenges across geographic boundaries. It incorporates varied ideals, brings stakeholders from different fields and cities together, and holds all stakeholders accountable for effective collaborative solutions (Shen et al., 2016).

Actualizing a collaborative governance environment will encounter some challenges, not to mention the process of participation and methods of communication among institutions, organizations, and actors across levels which tend to pass through various frictions (Tanner et al., 2009). Consequently, there would be a tenuous relationship and minimal communication between regulators, providers, operators, and public transport users in developing countries (Sohail et al., 2006). This also accords with research by (Kumar et al., 2012) which found that non-technical aspects of planning, such as communication, need to be prioritized in developing countries. Regarding planning regulations in Indonesia, the importance of public participation is already acknowledged in the Spatial Planning Law, but with limited implementation during the planning process (Rukmana, 2015).

Interesting findings were found in a study of transport governance in the UK, in which the interaction between governance scales and the relationship between transport stakeholders and other actors might be necessary (Pemberton, 2000). In the context of metropolitan areas, transport authorities can play an essential role as an agency responsible for coordinating transport planning and policy by involving various actors across levels and territories. (G. R. Marsden & May, 2006) highlighted the need for authorities with financial capability and powers across all territories to facilitate the implementation of public transport policies. In the inter-local government collaboration process, actors may use their power under their hierarchical structure to intervene in policy-making while potentially dealing with a reactive move made by other actors.

Multi-Level Governance

MLG was previously employed to define the outcome of different governance structures in tackling transport issues at various spatial scales (Hooghe & Marks, 2003). The governance study in the transport sector, which uses an agglomeration area in the UK, demonstrated the significant role of higher-level government in decision-making as well as the intervention of sub-national governments throughout the process of formulating policies in transport governance within the agglomeration area (Pemberton, 2000). A recent study sought to discover the challenge of a national transport program using MLG context due to the involvement of actors from different levels of government and non-government organizations (Mladenović et al., 2022).

Multi-level governance (MLG) recognizes policy-making that involves multi-actor within and across institutions at diverse levels (Stephenson, 2013). The key principle of multi-level governance theory emphasizes that the central government is not necessarily the dominant policy-making unit. Thus, policy formulation and implementation mainly occur within 'a system of continuous negotiation among nested governments at several territorial levels' (Marks, 1993, cited in (G. Marsden et al., 2014), which are international, national, regional, sub-regional or local levels. Another characteristic of MLG is defined as a large and diverse group of actors, being non-hierarchical (which is not being controlled from higher level), not being bound by formal agreements or rules (informal bargaining can be just as important as formal power), and largely ignoring structure (instead focusing on process and outcomes) (Peters & Pierre, 2004). Previous studies have examined sub-national governance structure within the case of Australia. Sub-national levels are identified as an adequate scale for addressing several policy challenges, for instance the significant contribution that regions make to specific policy domains (Fawcett & Marsh, 2017). However, some scholars pointed out that power still matters as (Fairbrass & Jordan, 2004) argued that MLG might serve the interests of the nation states as the dominating players although it is conceptualised as giving structurally weaker sub-national entities more power.

According to Hooghe and Marks (Hooghe & Marks, 2003), MLG can be explained within Type I and Type II institutions. Type I is used to define a hierarchical description of roles of formal central, provincial, and local or city government institutions in planning and policy-making processes. This type discloses vertical relationships and power in hierarchical settings. Type II refers to intersecting actors with specific tasks, who build horizontal relationships. This type indicates power diffusion in a polycentric model that allows public and private actors to collaborate in policy-making.

In order to operationalize MLG in a given policy area, three criteria must be met: 1) the relative roles and responsibilities of territorial actors, with a weakened but still dominant role for the central state; 2) the presence and functionality of forums for bargaining and negotiation between national and regional actors regarding the definition of priorities and resource allocation; and 3) the ability of various sub-national actors to take advantage of opportunities created nationally and/or develop policy from the bottom-up (Crespy et al., 2007). The hallmark of MLG is the ongoing negotiation of institutions and actors at different levels within ad hoc, flexibly defined decision-making processes. Institutional contacts can be more ad hoc and less formally formed, with less emphasis on hierarchies than at-level interactions or between-level interactions (G. Marsden et al., 2014)

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Data Collection and Analysis

The study adopts a qualitative approach to achieve the objective of this study. The primary data was collected through documentation study and semi-structured interviews with stakeholders involved in the BTS Teman Bus policy-making. The interviews, conducted in Bahasa and recorded by the authors, aimed to collect data regarding the policy-making processes of BTS Teman Bus. Interviewees included actors from all levels, from national to sub-national levels. The features of roles and functions of each actor in the BTS Teman Bus policy-making were determined by a thorough case study and an examination of current legitimate regulations. Table 1 shows the list of interviewees in this study. The respondents selected for the interview were individuals who were responsible for and in charge of the BTS Teman Bus program within the institution.

Table 1: List of interviewees

Interviewee	Level	Affiliation
I1	National	Ministry of Transportation
I2	National	BAPPENAS
I3	Sub-national	Transport Agency (Dishub) of DIY
I4	Sub-national	BAPPEDA of Yogyakarta
I5	Sub-national	BAPPEDA of DIY
I6	Sub-national	PT. Jogja Tugu Trans
I7	Sub-national	Transport for Yogya (TfY)
I8	Sub-national	Transport Agency (Dishub) of Yogyakarta

After data collection, we transcribed the interview results, together with the relevant documentation from documentation study. The transcripts were uploaded in NVIVO for coding process. The analysis was performed by categorizing data into various thematic headings. In line with the research objectives, the process of identifying codes and thematic headings focused on the roles of actors and interaction among actors in the policy-making of BTS Teman Bus.

There are two main reasons for choosing DIY Province as the case study. By choosing DIY Province, it was possible to capture the cultural character of the government and the political characteristics that could influence government interactions in the policy-making process. Moreover, Yogyakarta was also a pilot city in the BTS Teman Bus implementation at the beginning of the program although it was not plotted as a major urbanized area for the urban mass development program from the national planning document.

Study Area

Yogyakarta Special Region (DIY) is a province located in the south of Java Island in Indonesia with rapid development in the economy. DIY is comprised of four

regencies and one city as the provincial capital, namely Yogyakarta City. The existence of a development catalyst in the city of Yogyakarta has triggered the growth of the Yogyakarta Urbanized Area (YUA) as a result of the overflow of various activities. YUA has grown beyond the administrative boundaries of Yogyakarta City and expanded to several sub-districts in Sleman Regency and Bantul Regency. This area becomes the center of the provincial government, a regional scale service center, and has the potential to develop a cultural area and tourist destination due to its large number of cultural heritage sites.

DIY Province already has a public transport system called TransJogja, which has been operating since 2008. TransJogja was first initiated to improve the public transport system, which was served by the regional bus. The operator of TransJogja was the regional bus consortium, which was later incorporated as PT. Jogja Tugu Trans (PT. JTT). However, since 2016, the operation of TransJogja has been taken over by PT. Anindya Mitra Internasional (PT. AMI) through an assignment scheme from the regional authority. The Transport Agency of DIY is the regional government agency responsible for the TransJogja planning, operation, and evaluation. Currently, the regional authority is funding public transport subsidies through the provision of TransJogja services, not to mention the cost of planning and infrastructure development of the system.

Case Study

In order to resolve development issues, the government has prepared a strategic priority project to implement the national priority development agenda of the National Medium Term Development Plan (RPJMN) 2020-2024 on public transport. One of the strategic priority projects is developing an urban mass public transport system in 6 metropolitan areas. To expand the scope of development of urban public transport in Indonesia, a Strategic Plan Document for the Directorate General of Land Transportation, Ministry of Transportation (MoT) 2020-2024 has been prepared, which determines urban areas that receive subsidized programs for urban mass public transportation through a Buy the Service (BTS) scheme in 21 cities.

Since 2020, the Indonesian government through the MoT has been committed to improve public transport services by implementing the BTS Teman Bus program. This program is a service purchasing scheme by the central government using state budget allocation (APBN) of the MoT to pay the operators who provide the services with minimum service standards (SPM) through auction mechanism that has been determined on specific routes in several cities in Indonesia. Ten regions have been selected to receive the BTS Teman Bus program: Medan, Palembang, Yogyakarta, Surakarta, Bali, Bandung, Banyumas, Surabaya, Banjarmasin, and Makassar.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Mechanism of BTS Teman Bus Policy and Management

The BTS Teman Bus program is a scheme for purchasing urban public transport services by the central government through the MoT, which purchases the services from operators. The operators are legal entities using a predetermined SPM-based auction mechanism. The operator for the BTS Teman Bus program in DIY Province is PT. JTT. In the service purchasing scheme, the government posits themselves between operators and public transport users, where the government collects revenue obtained from users and other sources through business entities which is then used to purchase public transport services provided by the operators. Cooperation between the government and operators in implementing service purchases is outlined in a work agreement or contract that contains the SPM and a standard operating procedure (SOP), which operators must comply with. Public transport services provided by operators are monitored and evaluated by the Management Business Entity, called BUMP, based on the SPM and the SOP (ITDP Indonesia, 2023).

The MoT appointed the BUMP to prepare, supervise, and evaluate the operational implementation of urban public transport. In this case, the BUMP ensures that the operations of urban public transport services provided by the operators run well in accordance with the SOP and SPM. The BUMP for the BTS Teman Bus program is PT. Surveyor Indonesia (PT SI).

The government appointed an IT Systems Business Entity to improve the monitoring function and effectiveness of services and provide a technological approach to services. The IT system is tasked with procuring equipment and systems that support BTS Teman Bus program activities and creating an integrated, transparent, effective, and efficient system to ensure the optimal functioning of monitoring and evaluation of urban public transport operations. Information and data monitoring play a central role in implementing the BTS Teman Bus program. Information and data are used as a reference for developing urban public transport systems and verifying the performance of urban public transport services that operators have run. Based on the results of the verification, which meet eligibility, the BUMP then recommends the MoT to pay for urban public transport services provided by the operator. In this case, the BUMP function is to verify subsidy payments to operators.

Distribution of Actor Roles in BTS Teman Bus Policy

The MoT plays a crucial role in the development of urban public transport through coaching, implementation, and provision. The government's role in the coaching aspect is regulated in Law Act No. 22 of 2009. The state is responsible for road traffic and transportation, with the government providing essential guidance. Apart from that, following the Law Act No. 22 of 2009, the government

is responsible for organizing public transportation. In this case, the government needs to guarantee the availability of road-based mass transportation to meet transportation needs of public motorized vehicles in urban areas. Therefore, as a manifestation of the government's responsibility, the government provides subsidies for mass public transportation as regulated in the RPJMN 2020-2024 and the Minister of Transportation's Regulation No. 9 of 2020. Technically, through the Strategic Plan of the Directorate General of Land Transportation 2020-2024, the government has prepared a road-based mass transportation development program with a BTS scheme known as BTS Teman Bus. In carrying out its role in providing services, the central government is assisted by state-owned enterprises, regional-owned enterprises, or other legal entities as stipulated in Law Act No. 22 of 2009.

Regarding the purchase of the services, the MoT, governors, and regents/mayors have the authority to determine routes, set tariffs, and monitor and evaluate. Route determination is based on the results of studies or general plans for the existing urban transport route network. In the case of BTS Teman Bus, the route is determined through a route proposal mechanism submitted by the DIY Transport Agency to the MoT. Meanwhile, the MoT determines tariffs based on input from a study on the community's capacity and readiness to pay. The BUMP carries out monitoring and evaluation by referring to the SPM and the SOP outlined in the service purchase contract. According to their authority, the results of the monitoring and evaluation conducted by the ministers, governors, and/or regents/mayors can be used to consider granting subsidies. Furthermore, following the Minister of Transportation's Regulation No. 2 of 2022, subsidies for urban public passenger transportation are given to public transportation companies appointed by the minister, governor, or regent/mayor in accordance with their authority through an election process. In this case, the appointment of a public transport company to operate the BTS in DIY is carried out by the MoT through the Directorate General of Land Transportation. The appointment of a public transport company as the BTS Teman Bus operator was conducted through an auction mechanism with PT. JTT as the auction winner. Both the operators of BTS Teman Bus, PT. JTT and the BUMP are directly responsible to the MoT.

In implementing the current BTS Teman Bus program, the central and regional governments also signed a memorandum of understanding. In this agreement, the role of local governments is still limited to 1) providing a budget for the development of BTS supporting infrastructure, 2) proposing BTS service routes in accordance with their authority, 3) preparing traffic engineering management, 4) preparing the required data and information, and undertaking an outreach programme and facilitating the exchange of information and learning related to the BTS program. This supports the arguments that the role of sub-

national authorities is restricted to the planning and evaluation of BTS Teman Bus. MLG practice in the BTS Teman Bus is in line with (Fairbrass & Jordan, 2004)’s argument about overstating the autonomy of sub-national actors as the state can still play a significant role in shaping and gatekeeping in post-decisional politics. Additionally, MLG frequently perceives sub-national actors as being largely passive, in which also happened in the case of BTS Teman Bus. The MLG of BTS Teman Bus in YUA is presented in Figure 1.

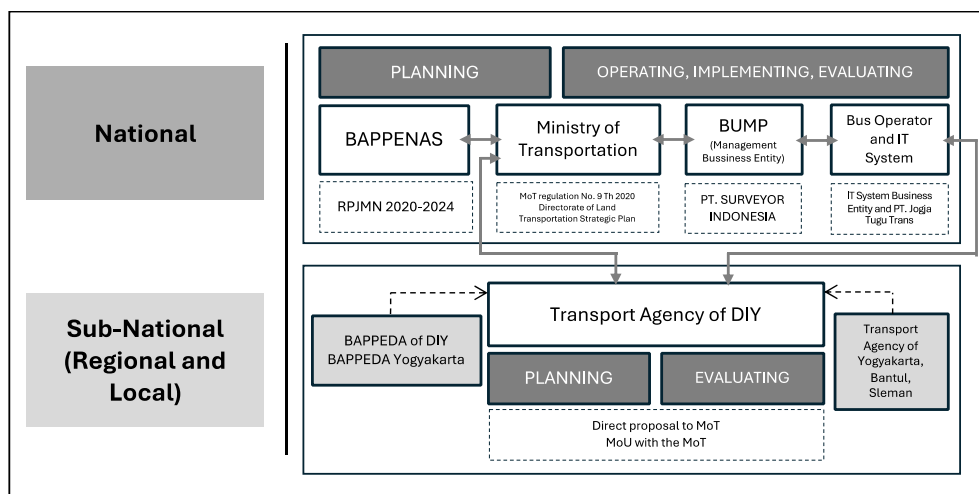


Figure 1: MLG of BTS Teman Bus

Regarding urban transport services in DIY, the service coverage consists of three areas, including two districts, Sleman and Bantul, and one city area, Yogyakarta City. According to Minister of Transportation’s Regulation No. 9 of 2020, the governor should provide urban transport subsidies that exceed district/city boundaries in one province. However, because the governor, in accordance with his authority, is unable to provide subsidies, he can apply for urban transport subsidies to the minister. As a requirement for the application, the region must be able to prepare supporting facilities for urban transport. Therefore, in implementing the BTS Teman Bus program, local governments should provide supporting infrastructure, especially in the forms of bus stops, markings, and signs.

Furthermore, the interviews revealed that the regional authorities (Transport Agency of DIY) and the bus operator (Teman Bus, PT. JTT) have a pseudo-relationship. PT. JTT, as the BTS Teman Bus operator, is not obligated to report and build a network with the regional authority. The MoT evaluates them through third parties, PT. SI, as the BUMP. However, according to the results of the evaluation, MoT could directly summon the regional authority to

discuss the improvement of the BTS Teman Bus services. For example, in 2022, based on the results of the evaluation, the MoT asked to reroute the services to the Transport Agency of DIY. One of the routes had a low ridership level, which became one of the service's success parameters. The MoT demanded a route that could attract a large number of passengers. Meanwhile, the primary consideration of the Transport Agency of DIY in determining routes was the service coverage area and intersecting routes with other public transport services in DIY. Therefore, to address the MoT's request, the Transport Agency of DIY rerouted one of the BTS Teman Bus's corridors by swapping it with the TransJogja corridor, which had a busy route. This indicates that different interests and perspectives among actors at different levels on public transport success parameters affect the public transport policy-making in the region.

This further suggests that the different institutional structures and governance settings or arrangements at the sub-national level might show different results towards the BTS Teman Bus implementation. Interviewee I1 from the MoT said that regional government commitment was essential in ensuring the BTS Teman Bus's sustainability and readiness to take over the management, which was previously managed by the MoT. As the interviewee explained:

“Well, it goes back to the regional government's commitment regarding urban transportation. For now, we set to maximum 5 years according to the duration of MoU (related to the duration of program funding). But we encourage them to take it as early as possible. Banjarmasin is one of the cities that has already taken action, but unfortunately, Jogja has not”. (Interviewee I1)

It was further explained that the lack of regional financing capacity remained the biggest issue in most regions, including DIY Province.

During the interview, staff from the Transport Agency of DIY were aware of the obligation to take over the management of BTS Teman Bus in the future. However, until now, the Transport Agency of DIY admits that they are not prepared to take over BTS Teman Bus, given the considerable financial burden of TransJogja subsidies on the regional budgets. Apart from the areas served by the BTS Teman Bus corridor, the regional governments of Sleman and Bantul do not seem to be involved or help implement the services.

“As for now, the future is still uncertain, just bearing TransJogja subsidies is already burdensome”. (Interviewee I3)

Following the MLG framework, non-governmental actors also influence the policy-making (Marsden et al., 2014). In the context of the BTS Teman Bus, non-governmental actors do not involve themselves in policy-making processes. However, some NGOs are seen to be indirectly involved in the evaluation process. At the sub-national level, there is Transport for Yogya (TfY), a social media-based transport community that actively reports customer complaints to the service provider of public transportation, including BTS Teman Bus, in Yogyakarta. Furthermore, TfY also developed a wayfinding of the public transport system in Yogyakarta to ease the passengers' access to public transport. Interviewee I7 stated that members funded their activities by themselves.

“Usually we collect money from the members. Fortunately, both PT. AMI and transport agency appreciate it and sometimes hire us to help them in improving bus services”. (Interviewee I7)

At the national level, there is the Institute for Transportation and Development Policy (ITDP), an international nonprofit organization that focuses on public transport, non-motorized transport, travel demand management, parking, transport policy, and urban development. Most ITDP's work promotes environmentally friendly and equitable transport policies and projects worldwide. In recent years, ITDP has focused on working with city government and other NGOs to implement some transport projects. In early 2023, ITDP released their report on the BTS Teman Bus program evaluation in Indonesia, including the BTS Teman Bus in Yogyakarta. ITDP's study aims to evaluate and measure the success of the current BTS Teman Bus implementation. The ITDP study offers some recommendations that can be adopted to improve the current BTS Teman Bus services.

CONCLUSION

Public transport planning and policy can represent the architecture of MLG towards policy-making process, which involves actors across different levels. BTS Teman Bus is a product of the national policy. The MoT seems to be the most important actor in terms of the power and control of the BTS Teman Bus program as they are responsible for allocating funding to subsidize BTS Teman Bus in DIY Province. The BAPPENAS set out the national policy regarding the development of urban public transport systems through the RPJMN 2020-2024 document. This policy was further translated into strategic planning, which is listed on the Strategic Plan Document of Directorate General of Land Transportation, MoT 2020-2024. One of the implementation strategies is the implementation of subsidized urban public transport through the buy the service (BTS) scheme. The Transport Agency of DIY, as a sub-national authority, has

proposed the funding for the BTS Teman Bus to the MoT; however, its role is limited to the planning and evaluating process.

The study underscores the importance of sub-national actors in public transport policy-making and identifies regional financial constraints and self-interest as critical barriers to local government involvement. Unlike the traditional notion of MLG, where state and non-state actors collaborate on policy programs, the BTS Teman Bus policy demonstrates a more centralized approach with the national government as the primary decision-maker. This case study in DIY Province provides insights into the BTS Teman Bus policy-making process. It offers implications for public transport policy-making in Indonesia, emphasizing the need for more effective decision-making and collaboration in the future.

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