in Accra, Ghana

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Abstract

Owner-Drivers in the Tro-Tro Industry: A Look at Jitney Service Provision in Accra, Ghana

This study focuses on the motivations of owner-drivers who participate in the *tro-tro* industry. Using in-depth interviews, I analyze who drives and owns tro-tros in Accra, Ghana, and why. Owner-drivers were asked to discuss why they participate in the tro-tro industry by offering mass transport services, their attitudes about it, the competition from other transportation options, and why they chose to operate their business where they do. This research examines policy debates about local vehicle travel, privatized transit, informal transit, and informal employment. This study contributes to understanding about the diversity of owner-drivers and how this small, locally-controlled informal private mass transport service (*tro-tro*) industry is regulated by local and central government agencies in Accra. This research project clarifies the range of entrepreneurial involvement in the supply of tro-tros in Accra by focusing on routes, fares, and vehicle types. The goal of the project is to clarify who operates *tro-tro* businesses, and the barriers to entry that they face. The results inform policymakers and researchers about the reasons why this informal service industry continues to thrive in Accra, and highlights the conflicts between *tro-tro* civil society organizations and government agencies over the proposal to expand public sector rapid bus transit systems.

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