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Mutual Aid Not Charity in the Philippines March 2021

Supporting Tricycle Drivers and Operators

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It has been a year now; people are still struggling economically specially the marginalized community. The government has no clear plan and support to those people in needs.

We are experiencing lockdown again in areas of Metro Manila, Bulacan, Rizal, Laguna and Cavite. Every municipalities implemented curfew from 6pm to 5am, checkpoints of police in uniform are everywhere and everyone will be penalized if they violate certain protocols and policy. The same response that they did last year, to tighten the security and control the movement of the people without a clear preparation on how to handle health crisis and how they will support the unemployed masses.

Again, the same as last year many people lost their job, struggling to have food on their table and financially broke. According to Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) there are 4 million unemployed and the number are getting higher because of the strict lockdown. The general population are still struggling since last year and one of the sectors highly affected by this crisis are the transportation sector. Most of the public utility jeepney (PUJ) are not operational, the government push for modernization and force them to convert it into electric jeep (E-Jeep). Jeepney operator and drivers are not prepared to convert their unit as they do not have a savings and enough money, the government push this modernization program, but they are not supporting the driver's and operator. Most of them end up begging until now.

Tricycle drivers also affected by the pandemic, although some of them still have a job but the problem is there are only limited passengers, and their income is not enough. Other municipalities decided to have a coding scheme, that allowed every unit of tricycle to only operate three times a week and not every day.

In this whole year of despair, everyone should take care of each other. Mutual Aid and Social solidarity should be promoted and supporting each other is a way to survive this pandemic. We already know that in times of crisis, the government are incompetent, corrupt and they really do not care. Good thing that there are still people out there helping us in some ways, 2 kilos of rice already good for two days. So, we distribute it to Buting-Sto.Rosario Pateros Tricycle Operator and Drivers Association, around 30 drivers benefited on this.