



Strategic Health Service Purchasing for Integrated Primary Care

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USAID's TB Innovations and Health Systems Strengthening Project | FHI360

Context

- **TB remains a major public health threat** in the Philippines, with more than 1 million Filipinos with active TB disease. Globally, the Philippines ranks fourth among the high-burden countries¹.
- By and large, TB care remains inaccessible across the country as evidenced by people with TB who are "missed" by health systems¹. Many persons affected by TB suffer catastrophic costs during treatment which affects quality of life.
- The Philippine's **Universal Health Care Act of 2019** mandates strengthening primary care through the strategic purchasing of health services using a network-based approach to service delivery and so guarantee all Filipinos access to essential health services without the burden of direct or indirect out-of-pocket expenses. The **health-related out-of-pocket expenditure (OOPE)**² in the Philippines remains one of the highest in the region.
- The national health insurance program in the Philippines includes the **TB-Directly Observed Treatment Short-course package**, a stand-alone disease-based benefit package intended to cover segments of the population diagnosed and treated with TB.
- Meanwhile, **KonSulTa** (Konsultasyong Sulit at Tama) is a primary care benefit package, separately financed from other outpatient benefits, designed by the government to 'purchase' the most essential health care needs of the population through a mechanism of assigning patients (defined population) to a primary care provider. It offers disease-agnostic services to the population addressing at least the most common health care needs.
- The **integration of TB services into KonSulTa** is integral in making TB services (including promotive and preventive care) accessible to the broader population.
- Further, this inclusion of TB services will also serve as gateway for other vertically-organized services (e.g., HIV, Malaria, Animal Bite) to be integrated into the **comprehensive outpatient (primary care) benefit package (COPB)** as envisioned in the law.

¹ <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240037024>
² <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SH.XPD.OOPC.CH.ZS?locations=PH>

Activity Impact

KonSulTa plus costing exercise and the parallel work preparing the 'network' (PCPN) that will deliver the services helped improve coordination of national and subnational units to support and/or enable primary care delivery at different service points.

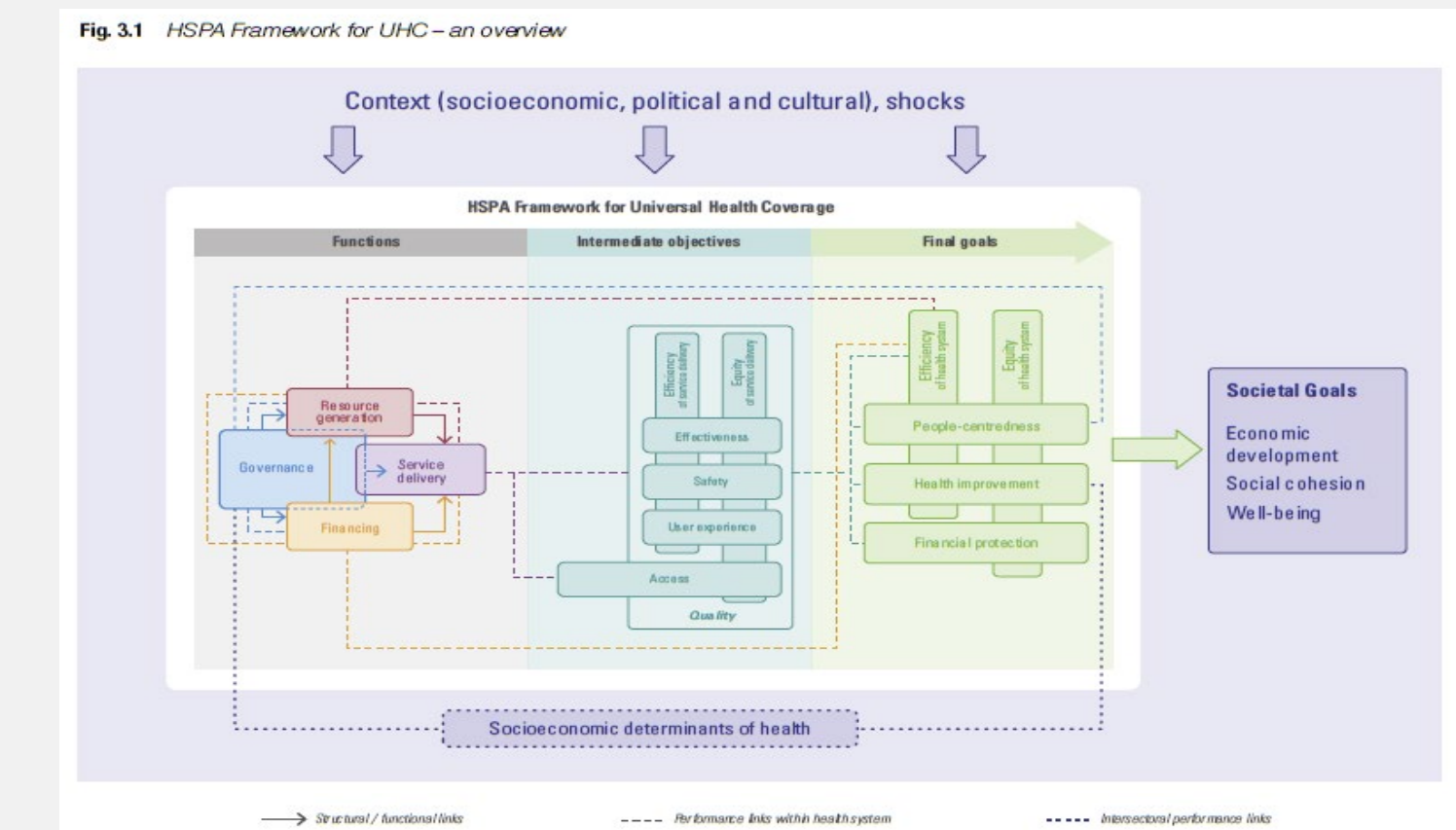
- The initiative was targeted to impact specific behaviors:

<p>Primary Care Providers</p> <p>Held accountable for the overall health of the assigned population and to intensify health promotion and disease prevention as a result of strategic purchasing</p>	<p>Population</p> <p>health-seeking and overall disposition to preventive care as a result of health financing coverage for the most essential health care needs</p>	<p>Health care managers and coordinators</p> <p>ensure that the network of services and providers are efficiently delivering services including gatekeeping for the use of higher-level care</p>
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- Health governance at various levels improved with better supportive supervision by the national and subnational units as well as leadership support by the provincial/city/municipal unit.

Facilitators

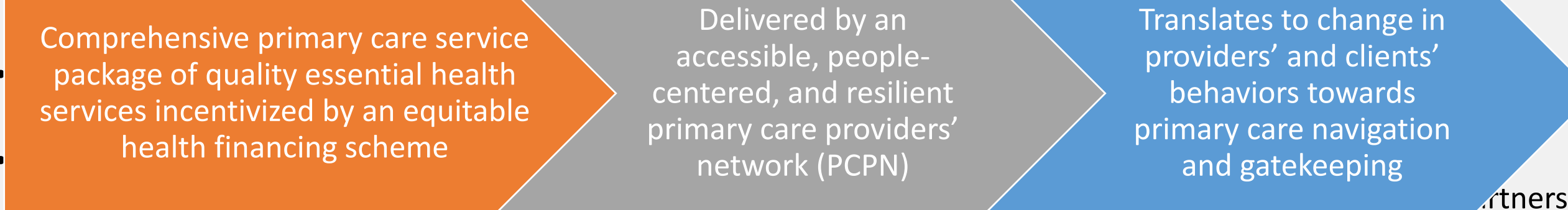
- The **UHC Law of 2019** and the **strategic re-organization** of DOH and PhilHealth towards primary care
 - ✓ Clearly articulated **DOH-DPCB Strategic Plan**
 - ✓ **COPB/Konsulta Roadmap** by PhilHealth
- **Continuous and open communication** with government counterparts (DOH, PhilHealth, LGU, Development Partners and private service providers)
- The **WHO Health Systems Performance Assessment (HSPA)**³ framework for UHC was used to inform the formulation of the proposal and will continue to be used in aligning implementation guidelines during the limited pilot testing.



³ <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240042476>

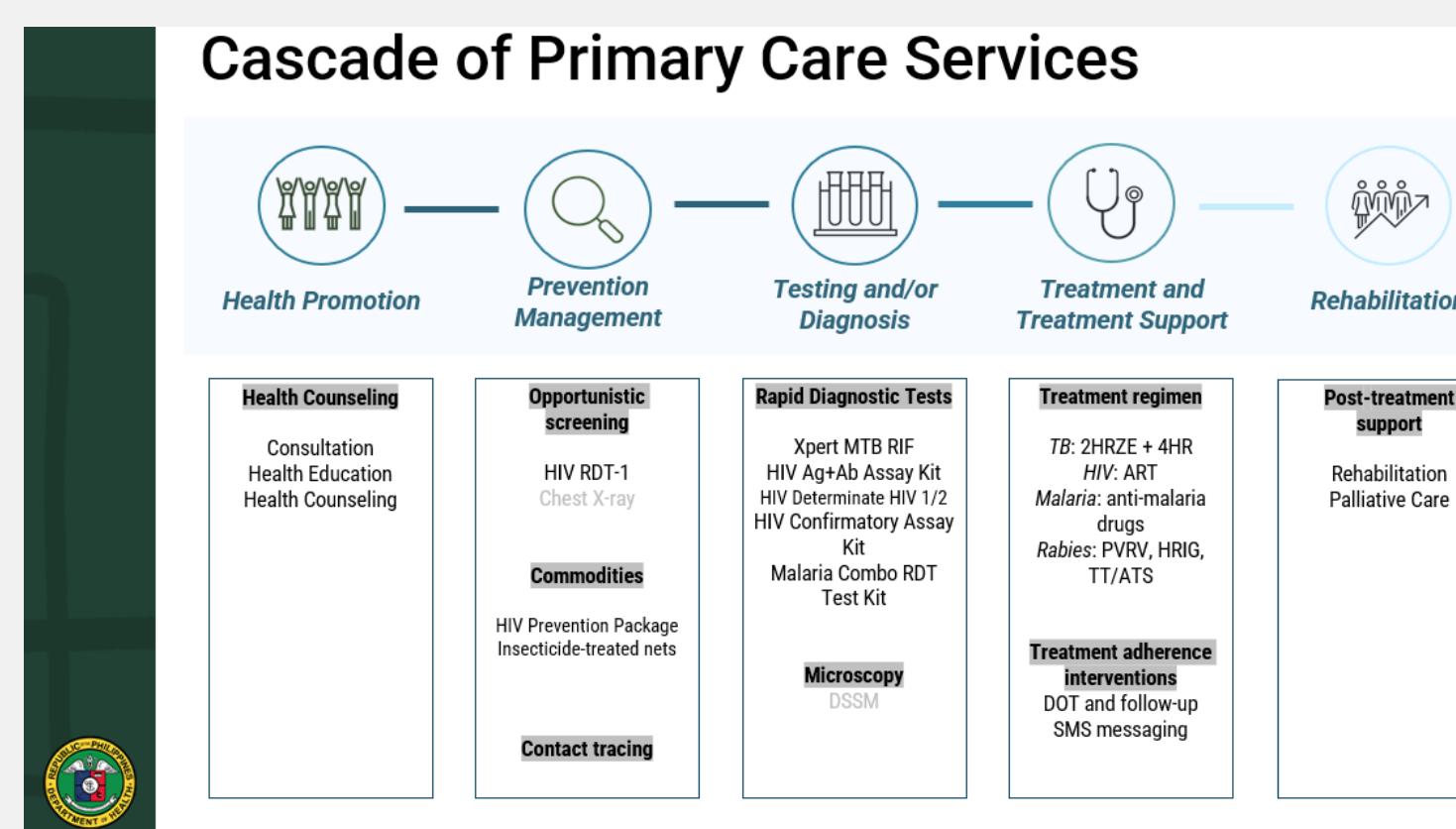
Activity Description

- KonSulTa Plus is an initiative jointly conceptualized and implemented by TB Innovations and Health Systems Strengthening (TBHSS), the Department of Health's Disease Prevention and Control Bureau (DPCB) and the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth).
- It is a two-pronged initiative: (1) package development integrating TB, HIV, Malaria and Animal bite services, and; (2) implementation of the package to enable/shape the standards for primary care providers' network service delivery
- A **costing framework** developed from the cross-analyses of different stand-alone packages (TB, HIV, Malaria, and Animal Bite) was framed from the broad categories of services i.e., health promotion, screening and prevention, treatment, post-treatment care and rehabilitation.
- **Strategic dialogue** consultations framed from foresight-based planning approach implemented in two phases:
 - 1 - Key regional, city, and provincial counterparts were held to discuss and debate issues related to accessing these services and in designing these services that are to be added in the package.
 - 2 - Subnational consultations to adjust the costing of services and piloting
- Longer-term vision (outcomes)



Evidence

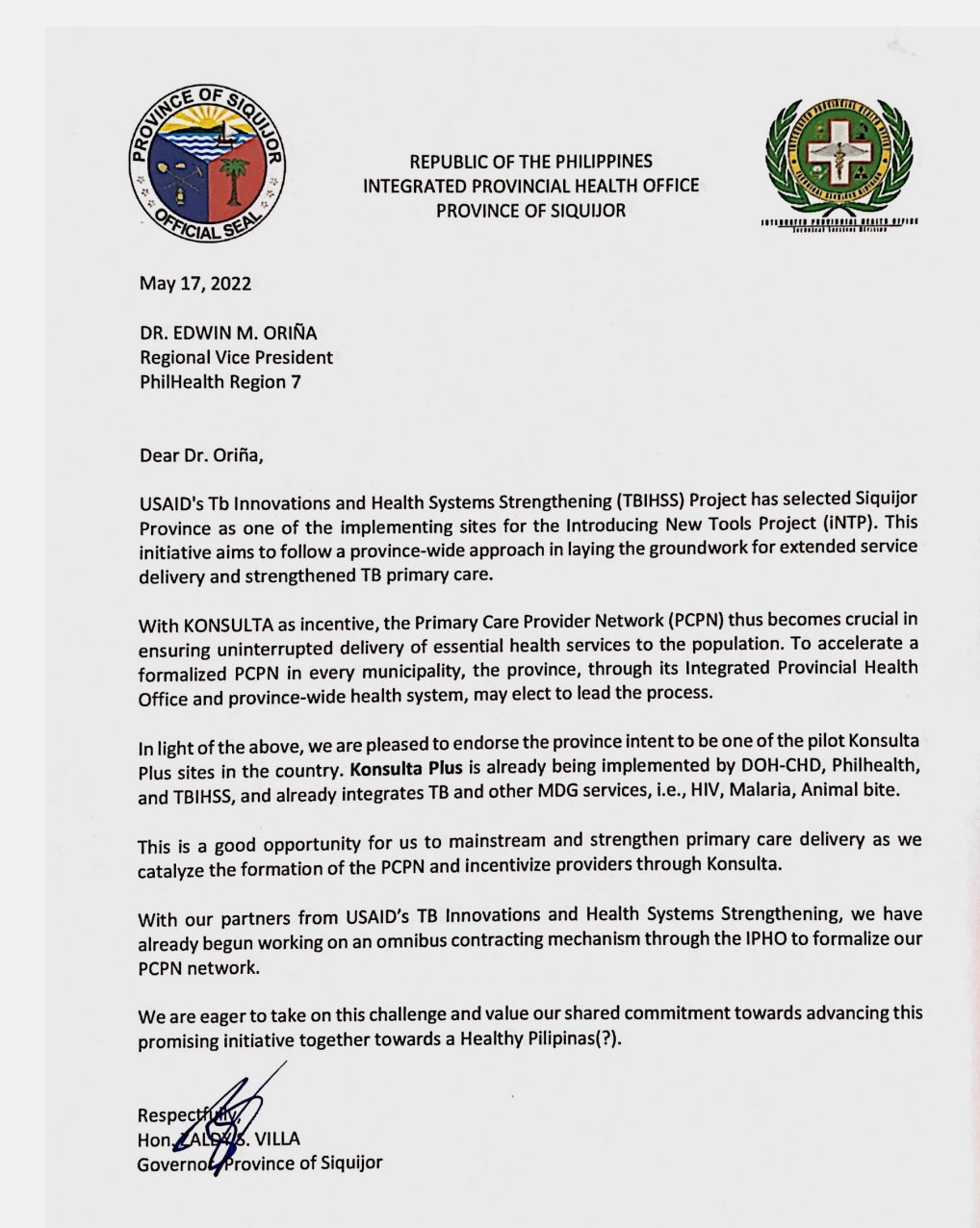
Approval of the KonSulTa plus package by DOH and PhilHealth



Major outputs/outcome include:

1. Approved KonSulTa plus package
2. Approved piloting/implementation testing sites
3. Developed standards for integrated primary care
4. Improved TB care service performance
5. Increased coverage/availment of primary care services

Interest of Local Government Units to be included in the piloting



Challenges

- **IT system issues** on patient registration and generating transaction codes which are integral in determining the 'capitation cost' and the subsequent payment mechanism to providers
- Service capacities for **other disease-based/programmatic services** i.e., HIV, Malaria and Animal Bite
- **Availability of funds** for the piloting
- **Low demand** due to reputational issues surrounding PhilHealth's pandemic-related reimbursements
- **Potential funding issue** after initial piloting/implementation testing

Mitigation

- Explored with PhilHealth the option for **manual system** at least in two or three pilot sites/providers
- **Progressive implementation (developmental)** starting with TB
- Ongoing work with PhilHealth to **secure approval of 'fixed budget'** for limited pilot
- **Targeted demand generation** for **health care providers, patients, and the general public** that introduces new tools for TB care in pilot sites
- DOH lobbied to PhilHealth the **inclusion of KonSulTa plus rollout in the next cycle of budget preparation**

Lessons Learned

- Health Financing may serve as a **good starting platform** to synchronize the adjustments in the health system (i.e., governance, resource generation, HRH, service delivery capacity, information system).
- **Leadership across health governance levels** is instrumental in all change management initiatives. A shared vision anchored on a clearly articulated results framework is imperative in shaping collaborative and highly adaptive activities like KonSulTa Plus.
 - Host government's ownership of the initiative catalyzed this unique kind of leadership and collaboration in KonSulTa plus.
- Foresight-based planning approach (i.e., building strategic information against the long-term vision and incorporating context and societal goals as a starting point), is very useful in designing packages of intervention as it requires a **clear sense of what kind of health system will work best** and in the long run can impact the drive towards a national transformation agenda.