

APRU Global Health Conference 2025

Towards Planetary Health Equity: A Global Call for Shared Solutions

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Early Lessons from Financial Integration in Batangas and Quezon: Advancing Universal Health Coverage in the Philippines

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Background and Context



**ALL FILIPINOS ARE
GUARANTEED
EQUITABLE ACCESS**

to quality and affordable
health care goods and
services.

UHC Integration Points



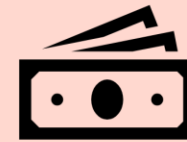
Managerial Integration

Overall health policy directions, strategic thrusts, and investment plans



Technical Integration

Health services are linked through health care provider networks



Financial integration

Pooling of financial resources for health within a Special Health Fund (SHF)



The Special Health Fund



- Pool of resources from DOH, LGUs, PhilHealth, and development partners.
- Enables strategic, unified financing for province- and city-wide integration.



CHALLENGE

Operationalization requires navigating complex financial, administrative, and governance processes

Objectives

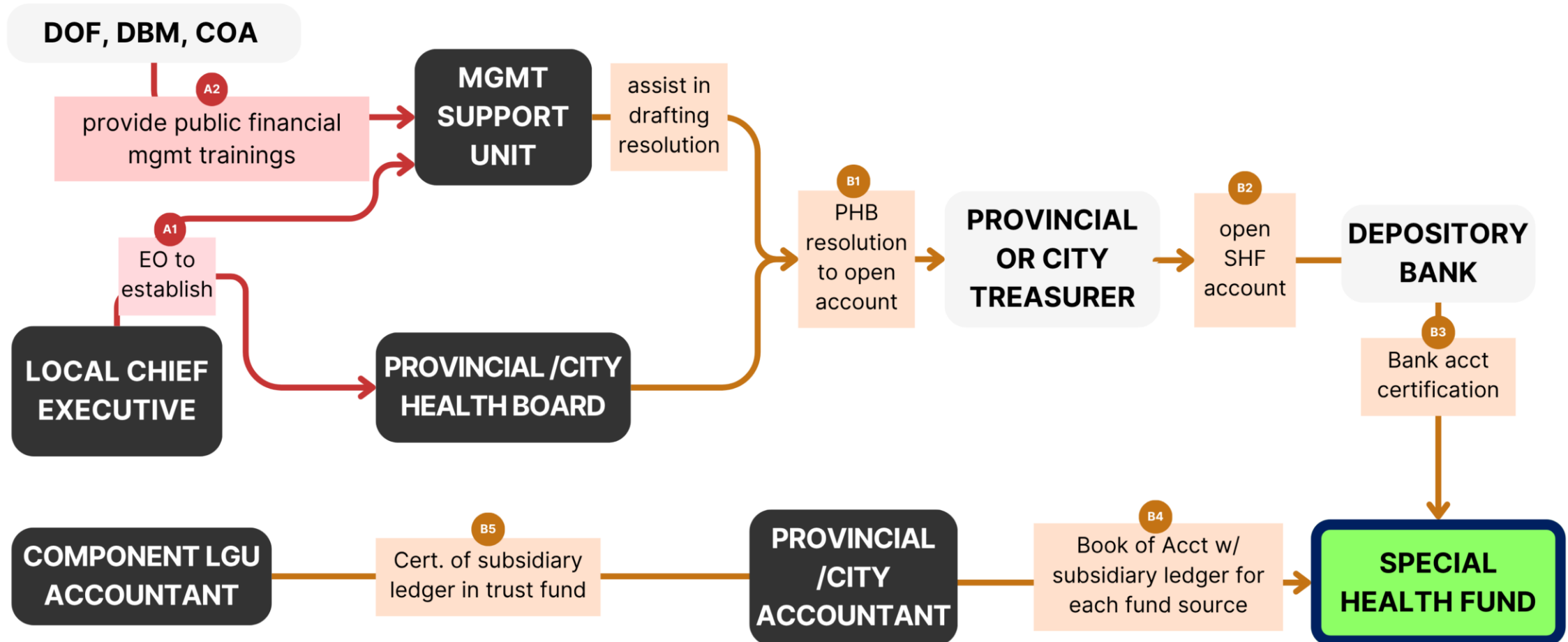
- Present early implementation experiences of SHF in **Batangas** and **Quezon provinces in the Philippines**
- Identify **key actors and their roles, core processes and mechanisms**, and **enablers and barriers in SHF** establishment and management

Study Design and Methods

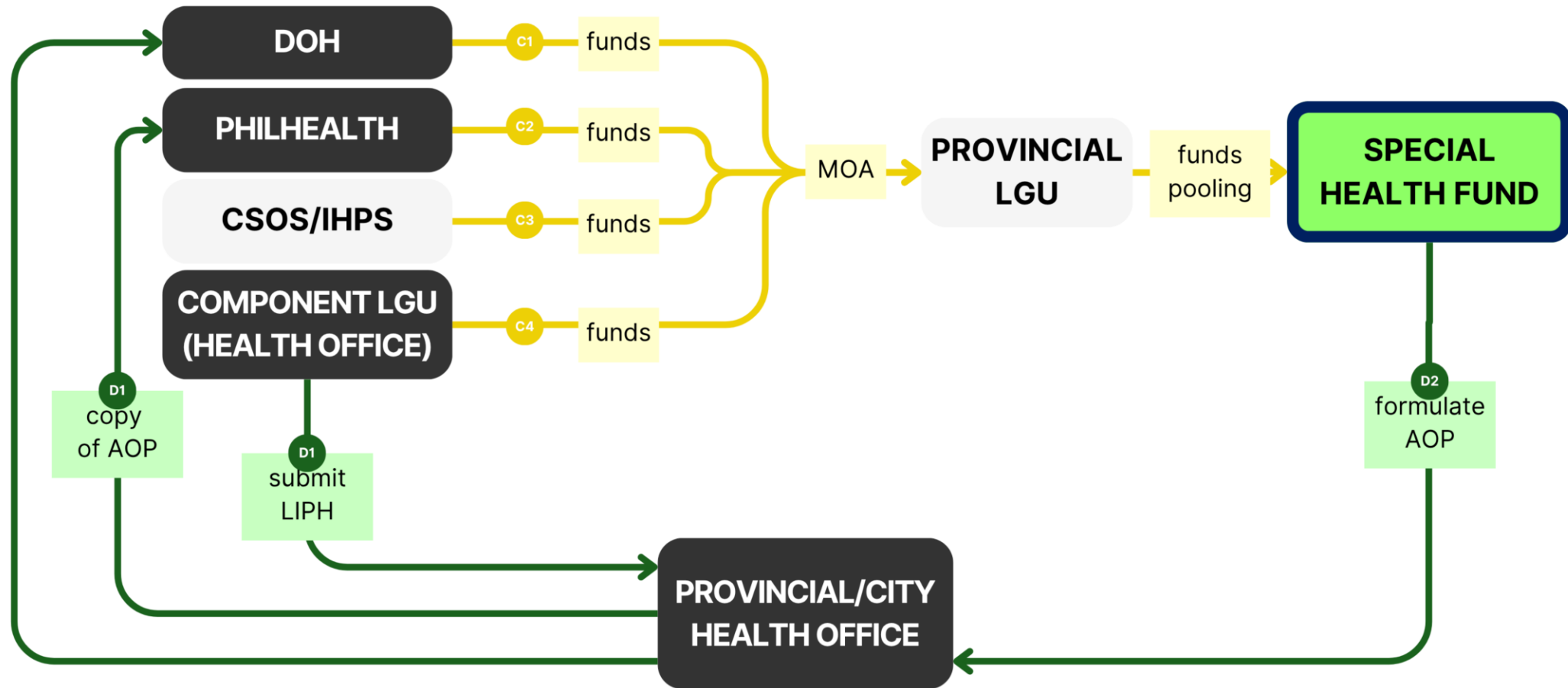
- Qualitative case study through document review and key informant interviews of health, budget, and accounting officials

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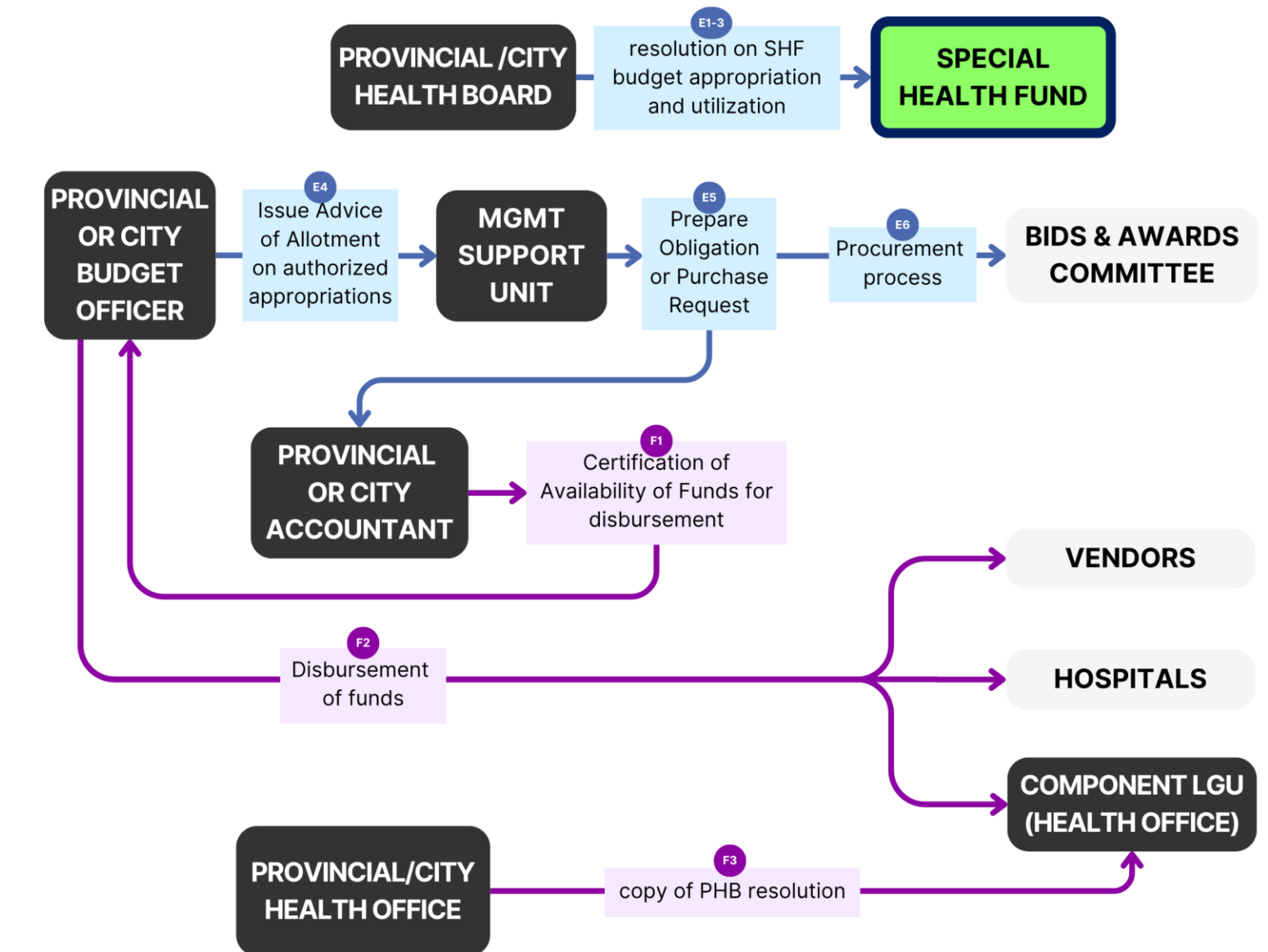
Management Support Unit and Opening of SHF



Pooling of Funds and Planning for Utilization



Budget Execution and Disbursement of Special Health Fund



Next Core Processes in Health Financing

- SHF Accounting (bookkeeping)
- SHF Reporting
- SHF Accountability (SHF Utilization Tracking)

Key Actors



**Provincial/City
Health Board**



**Management Support Unit
(admin. Secretariat)**



**Provincial/City Health
Officer (tech. secretariat)**



**Local Chief
Executive**



Component LGU



**Provincial/City
Budget Officer**



**Provincial/City/ Component
LGU Accountant**



**Department of
Health**



PhilHealth

**Provincial/City
Treasurer**

**Department of Interior and
Local Government**

**Department of Budget &
Management**

**Department of
Finance**

Commission on Audit

**Authorized
Depository Bank**

**LGU Bids and Awards
Committee**

**Civil Society Organizations and
International Health Partners**

Enabling Factors



Having a functional provincial health board, with active support from local chief executives



Commitment of LGUs to implement Universal Health Care: counterpart in roles, responsibilities, and funding, written in inter-LGU agreements



SHF manuals and guidelines by DOH serves as a foundational reference for the LGUs



A dedicated MSU collaborating with other key actors accelerate the financing process



Having readily-available data for effective financial planning

Key Challenges in SHF Implementation



Complex and unclear requirements from national agencies (DBM, COA, DOH, PhilHealth) make it difficult for LGUs to implement policies



Capacity gaps of major key actors in financial management system



Delays in downloading of fund from PhilHealth to support province-wide health system implementation



Weak coordination and communication among internal and external stakeholders

Recommendations



Develop functional SHF implementation models with clear templates and standardized guidelines that LGUs can adopt



Strengthen local capacity of health offices, MSU teams, and finance staff on financial management system, and evidence-based planning



Formalize governance structures and clearly define responsibilities among key offices to reduce overlaps, strengthen accountability, and improve coordination.



Establish regular financial and performance reviews to track SHF utilization and facilitate cross-LGU learning.

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THANK YOU

