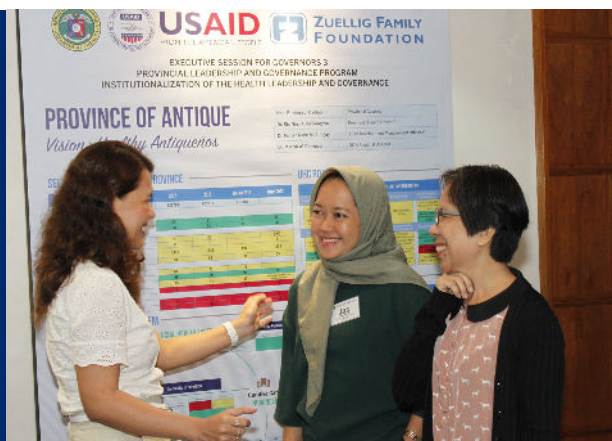


# Institutionalization of Health Leadership and Governance Program (IHLGP) - Building Solutions to Health Challenges Together with Local Chief Executives

Good Practices and Promising Interventions Series



## What is the IHLGP approach?

The IHLGP approach, supported by USAID and implemented by the Zuellig Family Foundation (ZFF), aims to improve health leadership and governance as a way to strengthen local health systems, ultimately improving health outcomes and contributing to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in the Philippines. IHLGP's primary strategy is direct engagement with regional directors of the Department of Health and local chief executives (LCEs), such as provincial governors and city mayors, to build local capacity and strengthen the response to priority health issues at the provincial and city levels.

Our documentation<sup>1</sup> of the IHLGP approach found three good practices to engage LCEs in strengthening local health systems: deep dive, roadmap, and coaching. The deep dive allows for reflection and visioning; the roadmap provides structure for diagnosis, action planning, and monitoring and coaching brings about motivation and accountability. Relationship building measures bind all interventions and strengthen social capital for LCEs, Centers for Health Development, and other IHLGP participants and stakeholders.

## Why is this important?

Given the decentralized state of health governance in the Philippines, health solutions need to be rooted at the local level and championed by local leaders. The IHLGP GPPIs reflect the transition from a traditional "top down" leadership framework to a model of collective leadership development, better suited to address the complex and varied public health challenges of communities. This is the ZFF Health Change Model.

**ZFF Health Change Model**



<sup>1</sup>USAID/Philippines Collaborating Learning and Adapting for Improved Health (CLAimHealth) Activity. 2021. Good Practices and Promising Interventions, Technical Series No. 6: Engaging Local Chief Executives to Build Local Capacity and Strengthen Health Systems. Silver Spring, Maryland: Panagora Group. March 2021.

**What are the good practices and promising interventions (GPPIs) of IHLGP?**



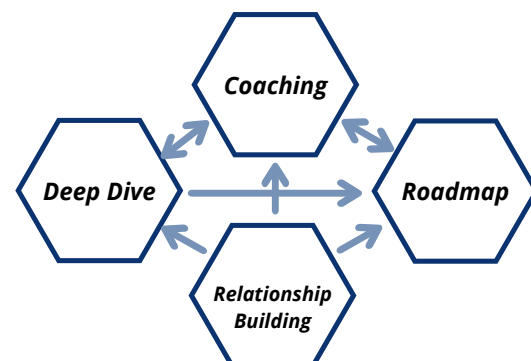
In the **deep dive**, a participant learns of system challenges by engaging directly with a health system client, such as an “index patient.” The deep dive activity helps LCEs identify leadership blind spots (such as failure to recognize a particular public health problem), enable intimate appreciation of constituents' challenges, develop a more profound sense of ownership regarding the issue at hand, and enhance their personal vision for the health of their locale.

The **roadmap** is a visual tool for identifying gaps in the health system and monitoring progress to address them. Designed after the health system building blocks framework, the roadmap provides a structure for diagnosing health system problems and planning interventions. It can also be used as a coaching tool.



**Coaching** pertains to engagement strategies for changing mindsets and perspectives, unlocking potential, improving performance, and enabling learning. Coaching helps create a sense of ownership of and accountability for health decision making among LCEs. Both leadership and technical coaching, whether structured or informal, are vital in building the capacity of LCEs and other stakeholders for local health system governance.

**Relationship building** is essential for the successful implementation of IHLGP's good practices. Formal and informal relationship building, such as through formation of core teams and activity “pre-work”, is critical to obtain LCE buy-in.



## What are the findings?

IHLGP GPPIs delivered their intended immediate results for good governance and decision making to address priority health issues:

- Built local capacity by developing positive attitudes, mindsets, and behaviors among LCEs and local stakeholders – the foundation for community health improvement.
- Generated concrete leadership actions, including an overall increase in budget allocations for health.
- Improved multi-stakeholder processes and strategic thinking on health issues.

The IHLGP process and GPPIs strengthen local leadership and relationships among all stakeholders.

### *The Bridging Leadership Process*



This is done through **ownership**, **co-ownership**, and **co-creation** of local health initiatives – the three segments of the Bridging Leadership Framework that underpin the IHLGP process

The GPPIs can be adapted to suit a variety of public health problems and diverse local contexts.



Activities and tools of IHLGP can be used to **highlight neglected yet pressing local health problems**, **diagnose gaps**, and **monitor progress** in health system-wide actions.

IHLGP helped lay the foundation for introducing Universal Health Care (UHC) reform efforts and for timely, quick, and coordinated COVID-19 response.

LCEs generally agree that their experience with IHLGP and the specific GPPIs allowed them to easily convene stakeholders and coordinate resources around big transformation efforts, such as institutionalizing UHC and mounting an unprecedented response to the ongoing pandemic.



## Recommendations for program managers and implementers:



**Implement the GPPIs as a package of interventions to maximize impact.** Best outcomes result when the GPPIs are implemented as a package to maximize their synergistic effect.

**Adopt the GPPIs in LCE engagement activities, and incorporate the GPPIs in trainings offered to LCEs and other local stakeholders.**

**Build in flexibility to adapt the IHLGP approach to local contexts and different types of LCEs.** LCEs enter the program with different levels of experience and specific geographic, political, and community contexts. Tailor the approach to meet individual needs of LCEs and local government units, as opposed to adopting a one-size-fits-all approach.

**Leverage the interest of IHLGP alumni to coach, mentor, and provide training for new LCEs.** LCEs expressed interest in participating in a community of IHLGP alumni to allow for cross-learning across regions, provinces, cities, and barangays, and in supporting new incoming LCEs.

**Consider using the IHLGP approach and GPPIs in other sectors, such as agriculture, education, and fisheries.** IHLGP tools and approaches can be applied in other sectors that are peripheral to the health sector but are key to positive health outcomes.

**When replicating GPPIs, embed research from the start.** Incorporate elements of learning and research to further understand whether and how health systems strengthening and health outcome gains can be directly attributed to specific GPPIs.

IHLGP's Engaging Local Government approach is one of several good practices and promising interventions (GPPIs) led by the Philippine Government, USAID, and USAID implementing partners. GPPIs are identified and documented by USAID's Collaborating, Learning, & Adapting for Improved Health Project (CLAimHealth). This brief results from documentation of USAID's Institutionalization of Health Leadership and Governance Program (IHLGP) (2016–2019), implemented by ZFF. IHLGP builds on the Health Leadership and Governance Program (HLGP), earlier implemented by ZFF, USAID, and the DOH from 2013 to 2016.

In consultation with IHLGP, CLAimHealth used an iterative qualitative approach to ascertain whether certain IHLGP interventions could be considered GPPIs. This included document review, stakeholder consultations, interviews with LCEs and health officials, and participation in meetings and key learning events. Using data from these sources, CLAimHealth assessed the prospective GPPIs based on standard GPPI criteria that CLAimHealth, the USAID/Philippines Office of Health, and other partners developed. To date, the IHLGP approach and GPPIs continue to be implemented in Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao.

**Contact us:** to learn more about building solutions to health challenges together with local governments in your region or province:



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