INTENSIFYING GULAYAN SA PAARALAN THROUGH GULAYAN SA TAHANAN PROGRAM

by:
Gideon V. Roberts
Teacher III, Kabalutan Elementary School

Gulayan sa Paaralan Program is an innovative organic vegetable gardening project. This program has been established to improve nutrition in school. Likewise, this aims to raise public consciousness on health and nutrition by planting vegetables in available spaces in schools. It also seeks to supplement the food given to students to support the school’s supplemental feeding program. Furthermore, it is important to have the teachers and students involved in the program so that they will become self-reliant and self-sufficient in addressing the nutritional deficiency in students.

In order to have a functional and well-managed Gulayan sa Paaralan, the school must conduct orientations, trainings or even workshops to teachers and students to help them acquire learnings on how to create, put up and design a greenhouse for the garden, spaces for planting vegetables as well as making the garden an instrument in protecting the environment. This will increase availability of vegetables in school, likewise, provides the beneficiaries heightened awareness in environmental protection through the productive use of recyclable waste and materials to be utilized as containers and pots in the garden.

The Department of Education has already released DepEd Memorandum regarding this program last May 29, 2018. DepEd Memorandum No. 095, s. 2018 was released to sustain the Implementation of the Gulayan sa Paaralan Program in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools Nationwide.
Every school has its own way on how to sustain the implementation of Gulayan sa Paaralan Program. This program must be properly monitored and evaluated to address the issues and challenges encountered during the implementation. Schools all over the country have experienced different environmental issues and challenges nowadays. Those issues and challenges have great impacts to the school specially to the learners.

Despite the efforts exerted by some schools, still not all schools have functional and productive Gulayan sa Paaralan. Schools with limited spaces or no spaces at all have experienced challenges during the implementation of this program. Though Urban Gardening can be applied to put up spaces for Gulayan sa Paaralan to address this issue, production of quality vegetables is not possible without the presence of the primary needs of the plants in order to grow healthy specially the need for sunlight. The author was once experienced this challenge in his school. The school has applied Urban Gardening but failed to harvest quality vegetables because of inadequate sunlight supply due to the demographic location of the school building. The school has only one 2-storey building, no space for garden, no perimeter fence, no playground, surrounded by the neighbors in the community and prone to flood. These challenges hinder the school to sustain a functional and productive Gulayan sa Paaralan program.

In order to address this issue, Adopt-A-School Gulayan sa Paaralan through Gulayan sa Tahanan was proposed to help the school in sustaining this program. This program aims to intensify the implementation of Gulayan sa Paaralan program through the partnership and support of every household in the community near the school. This program is more beneficial to schools without appropriate and enough areas to put up garden to be used in planting vegetables. Likewise, this will also strengthen School-Community Partnership and empower Parents-Teachers Relationship while achieving the real goals of this program.
This proposed school program aims to address the issues and challenges on poor implementation of Gulayan sa Paaralan considering the identified factors particularly in the schools with insufficient spaces for gardening or at worst schools without spaces at all. Schools may consider the following suggested process to start and implement the above-mentioned proposed program.

1. The school must conduct an orientation to the parents to introduce the proposed program in adopting Gulayan sa Paaralan through Gulayan sa Tahanan.

Topics to be discussed during the orientation must include the following:

a. DepEd Order No. 095, s. 2018—Sustaining the Implementation of Gulayan sa Paaralan Program in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools nationwide,

b. Issues and Challenges encountered by the school during the attempt of putting up Gulayan sa Paaralan despite the insufficient space to be utilized,

c. Adopt A School Gulayan sa Paaralan through Gulayan sa Tahanan Program

2. Conduct Seminar-Workshop on Gulayan sa Paaralan through Gulayan sa Tahanan. This seminar-workshop shall be attended by the parents from different grade levels. They will be equipped with the latest trends on how to put up Gulayan sa Tahanan as extension program of Gulayan sa Paaralan. The participants of this seminar must be informed about the real objective of the proposed program.

3. After the seminar, the school must also create an action plan which will serve as a guide in implementing Gulayan sa Tahanan.

4. Each family will create and organize Gulayan sa Tahanan as part of their support to intensify the implementation of Gulayan sa Paaralan.
5. It must be cleared that this Adopt-A-Gulayan sa Paaralan will benefit both the families and the schools. During harvest season, 50% of the total harvest will go the family in-charge and the other 50% will go to the school.

6. Intensive Monitoring and Evaluation must be done every month to track the progress of Gulayan sa Tahanan in each family.

7. Schools must organize and select committee-in-charge for the monitoring and evaluation. Each Grade level must have a set of officers-in-charge for the monitoring and evaluation.

8. Every quarter, schools must conduct a program to recognize the best implementer of Gulayan sa Tahanan Program.

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