

## Application Form

### CATEGORIES IN WHICH YOU WANT TO APPLY THE EXPERIENCE

**1: TYPE OF EXPERIENCE:** *choose the most important element (choose only one element which you consider the most outstanding of your practice).*

<b>A) Deliberation</b> Citizen assembly / deliberation workshop / lottery / legislative theater / participatory planning	
<b>B) Decision</b> Participatory budget / referendum / consultation / participatory process with vote	
<b>C) Citizenship</b> Citizenship / community action / permanent council / civic education / associationism / other initiatives to reinforce local democracy	<b>X</b>

**2: TYPE OF GOVERNMENT:** *choose one only.*

<b>A) Up to 50,000 inhabitants</b> (towns, small cities, rural areas).	
<b>B) Cities between 50,000 and 250,000 inhabitants.</b>	
<b>C) Cities between 250,000 and 1,000,000 inhabitants.</b>	
<b>D) Large cities or urban areas of more than 1,500,000 inhabitants.</b>	<b>X</b>
<b>E) Supralocal, regional, provincial governments ....</b>	

**Experience data:** *complete the information below in a clear and concise manner.*

<b>Title of the experience:</b> "LET'S GO QC, LET'S GROW QC!"
<b>Name of the city or region:</b> QUEZON CITY
<b>Inhabitants of the city or territory:</b> 3.1 MILLION
<b>Country:</b> PHILIPPINES
<b>Institution presenting the candidacy:</b> QUEZON CITY LOCAL GOVERNMENT

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<b>Website of the experience or institution:</b> <a href="https://www.quezoncity.gov.ph">https://www.quezoncity.gov.ph</a>		
<b>Profiles in social networks of the experience or the institution:</b> <a href="https://www.facebook.com/SDAUGrowQC">https://www.facebook.com/SDAUGrowQC</a>		
<b>Start date of the experience:</b> MAY 19, 2020		
<b>End date of the experience:</b> ONGOING		
<b>Budget of the experience:</b> VARIOUS, ACROSS DEPARTMENTS		
<b>Type of candidacy</b> <i>(mark with an X in the right column)</i>	New experience	
	Innovation on an existing experience	<b>X</b>
	Continuity of an experience	
<b>Type of experience</b> <i>(mark with an X in the right column, you may choose more than one)</i>	Participatory budgeting	
	Participatory planning	
	Standing council	
	Workshop / meeting for diagnosis, monitoring, etc.	<b>X</b>
	Public hearing / forum	
	Poll / referendum	
	Assemblies / Citizen juries / Deliberation spaces	<b>X</b>
	E-government / Open government / Digital platforms	
	Citizen initiative	
	Other (specify): MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PARTNERSHIPS	<b>X</b>
	To achieve higher levels of equality in terms of participation	

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<b>Objective of the experience</b>  <i>(mark with an X in the right column, you may choose more than one)</i>	Including diversity as a criterion for inclusion		
	Community empowerment		X
	To empower non-organised citizens		X
	To increase citizen's rights in terms of political participation		X
	To connect different tools of participation within a participatory democracy "ecosystem"		X
	To improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the mechanisms of participatory democracy		
	To improve the quality of public decision-making through the mechanisms of participatory democracy		
	To improve the evaluation and accountability of the mechanisms of participatory democracy		
	To improve any public policy through the active participation of the public		X
<b>Territorial area</b>  <i>(mark with an X in the right column, you may choose more than one)</i>	All the territory	Local	X
		Regional	
	District		X
	Neighbourhood		X
<b>Thematic area</b>  <i>(mark with an X in the right column, you may choose more than one)</i>	Governance		
	Education		
	Transport		
	Urban management		
	Health		X

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	Security	X
	Environment / Climate change and/or urban agriculture	X
	Civic associations, grassroots and new social movements	X
	Culture	
	Housing	
	Job creation	X
	Decentralization	
	Local development	X
	Training / learning	X
	Economy and/or finances	
	Legal regulations	
	Social inclusion	X
	All	
	Other (write the topic)	
<b>Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) associated with the practice</b> <i>(mark with an X in the right column, more than one option can be chosen, you can also add the specific target)</i>	SDG 1 - No poverty	
	SDG 2 - Zero hunger	X
	SDG 3 - Good health and well-being	X
	SDG 4 - Quality education	
	SDG 5 - Gender equality	
	SDG 6 - Clean water and sanitation	

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	SDG 7 - Affordable and clean energy	
	SDG 8 - Decent work and economic growth	X
	SDG 9 - Industry, innovation and infrastructure	
	SDG 10 - Reduced inequality	
	SDG 11 - Sustainable cities and communities	X
	SDG 12 - Responsible consumption and production	
	SDG 13 - Climate action	X
	SDG 14 - Life below water	
	SDG 15 - Life on land	
	SDG 16 - Peace, justice and strong institutions	X
	SDG 17 - Partnership for the goals	X

## PART 2: DESCRIPTION OF THE EXPERIENCE

Fill in the following fields clearly and concisely. You can add links, images or graphics if you consider it appropriate.

### Context:

*In a **maximum of 300 words**, present the cultural, geographical, historical, institutional and socioeconomic context of the city, region or territory in which the experience takes place.*

The Philippines' first master-planned metropolis, Quezon City (QC) continues to develop the late President Manuel L. Quezon's vision for it, as an ideal haven for diverse, thoughtfully-designed, well-executed urban development.

Occupying a third of Metro Manila's total land area, QC remains the largest of cities, in terms of both population and geographic sprawl. It's home to approximately three million residents living, working, and thriving within its 161 sqkm, further housing the national legislature and multiple vital government offices.

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A center for trade, commerce, education, and culture, QC features leading-edge transportation, communication, and accommodation. QC has led the way with multiple firsts, such as computerized revenue collection and assessment system, fiscal control and capability building at the barangay level, environmental and solid waste management programs, protection for women and children, and institutionalization of citizen participation in governance, through the City Development Council.

QC also takes pride in our strong economic viability and financial standing, rational development of systems to curb graft, and a rigid budgeting process that considers the most pressing needs of our constituents, alongside the City's development-planning strategies and priorities. Systematic and cost-effective fiscal management, aggressive tax management, ever-increasing efficiency and growing discipline in the management and use of resources, and participatory governance, have presently made QC one of the most competitive cities in the Philippines.

Quezon City has been recognized and cited for various achievements, notably the dynamism of local economy, quality of life of our residents, and the responsiveness of local government in addressing business needs.

Important people, places, and events that shaped Philippine struggle for self-determination and sovereignty from early Philippine uprisings for independence to the world-renowned People Power revolution are here.

Today, the Quezon dream-vision continues to guide our efforts, toward attaining and sustaining a Quality Community that is, was, and will be Quezon City.

*(Taken from Quezon City's 2021-2022 [Annual Report](#))*

### **Precedents:**

*Explain the precedents and origins of the experience: if it is the innovation of an existing experience, what are its origins; if it is a new experience, what are the antecedents in participation in your city, region or territory. You can also indicate if you have been inspired by experiences in other cities/countries. (In a **maximum of 300 words**).*

GrowQC began with the “Joy of Urban Farming” program, initiated 14 years ago by then Vice Mayor Joy Belmonte, saying “*we want to produce our own food and feed our own people.*” It aimed to give access to a reliable food source for underprivileged communities.

The program goes beyond urban agriculture and engages the city's entire food system – working with multiple sectors as a long-term community solution by strengthening urban peri-urban food production, promoting healthy food procurement, and making the most out of food waste through circular economy initiatives. The program is shortening the food value chain and getting healthy food closer to its citizens — evolving urban backyard gardens by turning idle lands to productive foodscapes which empowered communities from all sectors.

When the pandemic struck in 2020, the City understood that the availability, accessibility, and affordability of food is vital to each resident. Simple urban farming needed to be seen as a platform that further engages the community to become more active food actors and now see the value of enhancing food systems. This paved the way for the City in partnering

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locally and internationally to benchmark the most appropriate and adequate practices to curb the effects of the pandemic in terms of food security. Quezon City became part of the C40 Cities and promoted sustainable consumption and healthy diets by signing the C40 Good Food Declaration. In 2022, QC became a signatory of the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact with aims to gain the best practices in food systems development and apply them to the largest city in the National Capital Region.

Solutions are not new, but implementation strategies allowed the city to make more land productive and connected people, processes, and programs, showing that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

### Objectives of the experience:

*What is the objective listed in Part 1 that you think is the most important, and indicate other outstanding objectives of the experience. (In a **maximum of 100 words**).*

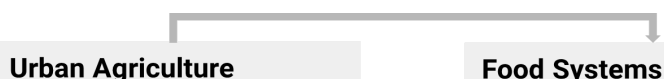
Program Objectives are anchored on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals to:

1. Ensure availability, access, stability, and utilization of food. (SDG#2)
2. Augment and/ or Complement Livelihood and Economic Recovery of supply chains. (SDG#8)
3. Promote consumption of nutritious food & better mental health for QC citizens. (SDG#3)
4. Empower communities towards a nutrition positive environment and to source locally to support the city's own urban farms. (SDG#11)
5. Create inroads for Climate Adaptation/ New Normal practices for QC food production and processing. (SDG#13)
6. Build and cultivate partnerships for food security and nutrition sustainability locally and internationally. (SDG#17)

### Methodology:

*Describe the methodology of the experience: phases of the process, participation channels. (In a **maximum of 300 words**).*

*GrowQC: Kasama ka sa Pag-unlad sa Pagkain, Kabuhayan at Kalusugan Food Security Program* is a collaborative approach on city-level food security involving a community-based participatory program platform. It is a flexible and adaptable program that facilitates the promotion of sustainable food systems and collaboration of stakeholders towards nutritious, accessible, and available food for all. It is managed through a multi-departmental and multi-sectoral entity, the Quezon City Food Security Task Force



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which is chaired by the City Mayor.

As part of the city's COVID-19 recovery plan, the GrowQC Food Security 7-Point Action Plan was created to boost the city's decade long urban farming program through a robust (A) Urban Agriculture expansion and (B) the Enhancement of the city's Food Systems or Flow.

It mitigates the prevailing problems of both hidden (micronutrient deficiency) and real (not able to eat) hunger, low household income and health risks (physical and mental health), which rapidly worsened due to the COVID-19 pandemic leading to higher food insecurity.

Corresponding strategies include (1) IEC on Food Security (2) Urban Agriculture expansion (3) Supplemental and Community Feeding/ Community Soup and Mobile Kitchen (4) Livelihood and Food Systems support (5) Urban Agriculture and Input Production (6) Crafting Legislation to Support Food Security (7) Repurposing of idle lands and vacant spaces into urban gardens (8) Localizing GrowQC through stakeholder management, participatory governance and empowerment of partners through research and continuous productivity improvement.

Primary program beneficiaries cover (A) Low-income families with nutritionally compromised children or most food-insecure based on the Quezon City Hunger Map (B) African Swine Fever (ASF) Affected Communities (C) Unemployed/ Displaced workers open to Urban Agriculture (D) Special Concern Lockdown Areas (at the height of the pandemic). Secondary beneficiaries include (E) Citizens who want to adopt the program on a household level.

### **Innovation:**

*Explain what you consider as the most innovative aspect(s) in the practice. (In a **maximum of 150 words**).*

GrowQC moves with the perspective of an entire food system that engages multiple sectors in long-term community solution, ultimately leading to food security that rely mostly on local sources and promoting healthy food procurement among its stakeholders. It promotes circular economy as it begins as a *farm to table* and *waste to energy cycle* as well as cooperative development and value-adding/market access activities that models *sustainable city* living.

Aside from expanding the program to establish more community farms, employ more farmers to increase production of healthy food, and engage in food trade and processing systems, the City Government, in partnership with the DA-ATI opened its Center for Urban Agriculture and Innovation at the Quezon City University which aims to develop different models of urban farms to meet the needs of diverse stakeholders, as well as provide training and development activities to mainstream urban agriculture into its curriculum programs.

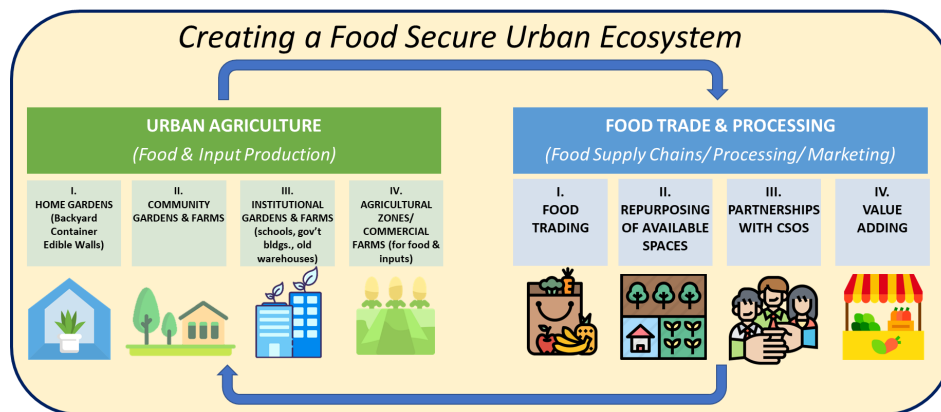


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**Inclusion:**

*Point out the importance of including as many groups and diverse populations as possible, and how you have achieved it. (In a **maximum of 150 words**).*

People’s participation and empowerment is at the heart of the experience. Food can only be grown by people. Without a dedicated urban farmer, the beginning of the food system will not be functional. Different people’s organizations and civil society organizations were involved in the coordinating the QC Food Security Task Force as it sought to engage communities to own the experience.



*Figure 2 QC Food Security Framework*

Experiences of various urban farms provided models of local food production: community gardens, school gardens, and vertical gardens. Community farms led by the *Sangguniang Kabataan* (youth), the LGBTIQ+ community, the Catholic Church, and uniformed personnel from the Philippine Military are just some of the sectors who took part. At the end of the day, empowering the community to come together, produce their own food, and collectively act during the pandemic, built their self-esteem and capitalized on partnerships that contributed to their total well-being, both physically and emotionally.



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*Figure 3 Multi-sectoral Participation*

### **Communication:**

*What has been the strategy and communication channels of the experience for engaging the population. (In a **maximum of 150 words**)*

The City has been engaging the communities through various levels to realize the program's objective of being community-based and participatory in nature. First, the urban farmers of the City are duly represented in the People's Council of Quezon City (PQOC). The City Mayor's style of leadership is embedded in decision-making that comes from the citizenry itself. This includes the sector of urban farmers which are made of 68% female. Through active citizen participation and collaboration programs such as GrowQC, the grassroots community is heard by the city and programs and projects are aligned better to benefit city residents.

Aside from the People's Council, the Food Security Task Force regularly holds meetings and community gatherings through the Joy of Urban Farming project.

Social media also remains to be an effective tool in engaging urban farming communities, the vendors from city markets and communities/ food actors participating in food systems development.

### **Articulation with other actors:**

*Explain how the experience was articulated with different actors and simultaneous or pre-existing processes. What roles did these participants assume? Explain the degree of success of this articulation. (In a **maximum of 150 words**)*

**BEYOND THE FARM**

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Civil Society Organizations (HOAs/ Church-based Organizations/ Fraternities and others), NGOs and sectoral groups (Senior Citizens/ Women’s/ Youth / PWDs/ Solo Parents/ LGBTQ and others) who already started urban gardening pledged support to GrowQC by establishing edible gardens/ farms to support food sharing in the community and even supply some of the requirements of the city’s supplemental feeding and community feeding.

During the supplemental feeding that targeted the wasted children identified in the hunger map, volunteer cooks (e.g., Parents, CSOs) participated in preparing the meals. Meanwhile, in the community feeding that targeted the granular lockdown areas, some local organizations collaborated with the barangay in serving healthy food packs. Some citizens even celebrated their birthdays and anniversaries by sponsoring a community feeding. Moreover, most of the ingredients in the GrowQC community feeding activities were sourced from the QC urban farms that are near them.

### Evaluation:

*What evaluation mechanisms have been implemented? Develop whether the citizenry has participated in the evaluation of the practice. (In a **maximum of 300 words**).*

The Quezon City Food Security Task Force serves as the platform for its members to provide feedback and inputs to the program. The multi-sectoral and multi-departmental task force provides avenues for its members to meet and provide key feedback on program implementation, project development, as well as introduce new initiatives that will benefit the City. Members from the communities—including farmers organizations—are able to engage the City and bring in valuable input from communities as needed.



*Figure 4 QC Food Security Task Force*

The GrowQC program also undergoes regular review through the City Planning Development Department and the City Administrator’s Office through submission of quarterly reports which eventually combine towards the City Annual Report.

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Apart from these methods, community members are also empowered by allowing them to engage the City's District Action Offices where the City's functions and services are devolved to allow better delivery of programs and make it closer to the people. The District Action Offices serve as "mini city halls" that cover the many functions that the City Hall also does.

### Impacts and results

*Describe the impacts and results of the process. How many people have participated, and what are their profiles? What have been the impacts on public policies, the functioning of the administration, and the citizenry? (In a **maximum of 300 words**).*

- 383,161 square meters of potential productive land across the city
- Livelihood and Food Systems Employment created work for 15,875 Urban Farmers across 675 Urban Gardens and Farms
- 146,039 seed starter kits and seedlings distributed to communities such as barangays, HOAs, parishes, and community and people's organizations.
- 784 sqm of aquaculture land area utilized by 96 Urban Fish Raisers producing 1,161kg of
- 450,000 meals served for low-income communities during the April 2022 SSDD Kalutong Pinoy Supplemental Feeding
- 232 tons of fresh produce traded through the GrowQC Kadiwa with the Department of Agriculture (DA)
- Created a cookbook highlighting Indigenous and Healthy Recipes distributed to daycare mothers, indigent families, and community centers
- Trained City Nutritionists and other technical staff on Healthy Public Food Procurement along with practical application of alternative solutions for low cost health and accessible meal within QC Nutrition Standards
- Accreditation of urban farmers to the Department Trade and Industry (DTI) and Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) and formed the first ever accredited urban farming cooperative in Metro Manila

### PART 3: EXPERIENCE SUMMARY

*A summary of the experience: origins, objectives, operation, results, monitoring, and evaluation. (Do not hesitate to repeat aspects that have already been written before. This summary will be shared on the digital platform for open evaluation and in the publication of the award). (In a **maximum of 500 words**).*

The GrowQC program has been recognized both locally and internationally as a best practice for community empowerment and participation to meet SDG#2 – Zero Hunger, SDG#8 – Decent Work, and SGD#3 Good Health and Well-Being

With over 600 urban farms and gardens established and over 15,000 urban gardeners as of April 2023, GrowQC's action to enhance urban food production through the Joy of

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Urban Farming project proves that this program is timely and relevant especially during the hardest of lockdowns, and even post-pandemic where high prices of food are felt due to the disruption in the food chain brought about by Russia's war on Ukraine.

With an inclusive and participative mindset, guided by SDG#17 – Partnerships for the Goals, GrowQC was awarded the *TOP10 Galing Pook Award* for 2021. Enabling policies like a) **Executive Order 32** - the creation of the QC Food Security Task Force, b) **Ordinance SP 2972** - Idle Land Tax Incentive, c) **Executive Order 16 s.2021** - QC Healthy Public Food Procurement Policy, d.) **Ordinance SP 3071 s.2021** – *PangkabuhayanQC* and innovative programs like a) **Urban Community Model Farms**, b) **Aquaculture** as a healthier food source, c) **Zero waste management** – converting market and industrial biodegradable waste into useful farm inputs, and now d) **Food Surplus Rescue** – rescuing edible food to feed the vulnerable has allowed the initiative to grow and thrive. As a *Galing Pook* awardee, the GrowQC initiative is a best practice that other cities can emulate.

Over 68% of QC's urban farmers are women. Many of the model urban farms are run by empowered women who can better take care of their families by having the capacity to feed their children and even their communities. Other innovative and inspiring urban farms are led by Peoples with Disabilities (PWDs) who have shown the way to show that *"if there is a will, there is a way!"*

Through GrowQC, citizens also rekindled the Filipino cultural value of *Bayanihan* – citizens uniting in heroism for the community. We have seen countless volunteer movements from youth to uniformed personnel helping out to clean, clear, and land prepare idle and trash-filled lands into beautiful and productive food spaces, even simple everyday citizens who patronize urban farmer's produce.

The other focus of GrowQC is the improvement of food systems. Our successful Kadiwa-GrowQC wholesale food market partnership with the Department of Agriculture has paved the way for the establishment of *Kadiwa ni BBM* and *Hapag kay BBM* national food security programs, championed by the President. These programs adopted QC's efforts of linking local urban food production in urban peri-urban agri-food systems.

Currently, QC's legislative arm created a new committee on food security and urban farming. The City now has two Urban Farmers duly elected as sectoral representatives for urban agriculture in the QC People's Council. Moreover, more departments outside the Food Security Task Force are now engaging food security by integrating nature-based solutions like rainwater harvesting and biodigesters and integrating city designs to contribute to the initiative.

For more details you may check the following link for [Supporting Documents](#).



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*We invite you to share annexes that allow you to better illustrate your experience: videos, photographs, documents... These can be sent through a file transfer service, such as WeTransfer, Dropbox or Google Drive.*

Thank you for participating!