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O13 - ITCA Teacher Training Workshop: Expanding Access to Astronomy Education Through International Teacher Training

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Astronomy education has received more interest in recent years, with growing demand for professional astronomical resources. However, accessibility gaps remain a recurring problem in many regions around the world. To help bridge this gap and promote equal access to educational opportunities, the ITCA Teacher Training Workshop was developed for international audiences. The primary objective of this workshop is to equip educators as key contributors to passing on knowledge to future generations with practical tools, accurate content, and inclusive approaches to improve astronomy instruction in diverse classroom settings.

Many educational systems and cultures, particularly in developing countries, still rely on traditional, passive learning methods that struggle to keep up with the needs of today's learners. As such, hands-on and active learning activities, connecting astronomy to real-life experiences relevant to teachers and students are keys to implementing impactful changes to the participants. For instance, reconceptualizing familiar phenomena through an activity comparing themselves to the Earth to learn the moon phases more clearly. Realizing the vast scale of the solar system simply by walking through a scale model. The materials used in all activities are widely available and easily adaptable with local resources—ensuring that teachers could confidently bring these activities into their own classrooms. The workshop has been conducted with collaboration with local partners across Southeast Asia, including Laos, Myanmar, Malaysia, Timor-Leste, Singapore, Indonesia, Vietnam and Philippines. It has also expanded to other regions, such as Nepal and Botswana.

Participants gained effective and accurate methods for communicating astronomy in simple and accessible manners, and they were inspired by unique experiences and fresh ideas that they can apply and implement in their instructional contexts—passing on knowledge from generation to generation. These outcomes help ensure that astronomy can connect people across borders in a sustainable way. Future collaborations with interested partners from around the world are welcomed, with the aim of continuing to encourage educators globally, aligning with NARIT's mission "Leave no one behind."

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