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O01 - Beyond the Classroom: Government-Led Astronomy Education Outreach in the Philippines – Insights from DOST-PAGASA's Programs

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As the International Astronomical Union (IAU) Office for Astronomy Outreach-National Outreach Coordinator and the Philippines' primary agency for astronomical services, the Department of Science and Technology – Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (DOST-PAGASA) has been providing free and accessible astronomy education outreach, continuously adapting its outreach strategies to engage diverse audiences and promote scientific literacy beyond traditional classroom settings.

Over the years, DOST-PAGASA has expanded its initiatives from the annual National Astronomy Week (NAW, every 3rd week of February) to a nearly year-round program aligned with international astronomical celebrations (February-NAW; March-Women and Girls in Astronomy; April-Global Astronomy Month; May-Dark and Quiet Skies; June-Asteroid Day; August- Philippine Space Week; October-100 Hours of Astronomy & World Space Week). The COVID-19 pandemic prompted a shift to virtual platforms, enabling broader audience reach through webinars, virtual planetarium show, online telescope viewing sessions, and interactive activities. Post-pandemic, the agency has fully transitioned back to in-person outreach, reinstating physical events such as planetarium lectures, public stargazing and telescope viewing, seminars for teachers and workshops for junior high schools and interested participants to enhance direct community engagement. We create a cohesive and impactful outreach schedule by strategically aligning our year-round activities with international astronomy celebrations. Despite the challenges of reaching diverse communities nationwide, DOST-PAGASA's successes demonstrate the vital role of government-led, strategic, and adaptive outreach in democratizing astronomy education and fostering a scientifically literate society, underscoring the necessity of sustained government support for STEM education and national development.

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