Bridging the Digital Divide: Insights on the NICTHS 2019 PIDS Discussion Paper

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Salient Points of the NICTHS 2019

Scarce ICT statistics available in PH

- only 1 out of 7 ICT indicators to monitor SDGs;
- women outdo men in ICT use;
- Affinity for online selling is less among employed individuals;
- NICTHS 2019 provides an initial baseline but needs to be done again, especially in light of the COVID-19 pandemic;

Digital divide remains a reality in PH society

- greater internet use in urban areas compared to rural ones;
- only 47% of Filipinos use the Internet; while 75% of individuals owns a cellphone, only 24% of households have a computer;
- quality of connectivity is a persistent issue; however, in GIDAS, any connection (no matter how bad) is always better than no connection at all.

Salient Points of the NICTHS 2019

Digital skills of Filipinos needs significant improvement

- internet is mainly used for social and leisure activities, access to information;
- minimal use for learning, access to government service and online transactions, especially in rural areas;
- most users are young adults; older adults and individuals with less schooling have low access to ICT;

Digital infrastructure remains a huge challenge

- only 36.3% of barangays have access to cell towers, 29.8% have access to fiber, and 12.2% have free-wifi;
- digital divide occurs not only between urban and rural areas, but also within urban areas;
- cost of equipment and subscription are key reasons for lack of internet access;

Salient Points of the NICTHS 2019

ICT Policy Framework needs to be reformed

- Living in the digital world using analog policies;
- EO 127 provides a short-term relief but needs to be further strengthened through legislation;
- National programs should have a monitoring component especially in GIDAS;
- improve digital literacy through national programs, training, and reskilling the workforce;
-regularly conduct NICTHS every 2-3 years due to rapid changes and developments in technology;

We needed the connectivity YESTERDAY!
Not next month or next year!

How do we Bridge the Digital Divide To Promote Inclusive Development?

Bridging the Digital Divide Through Telecom Satellites

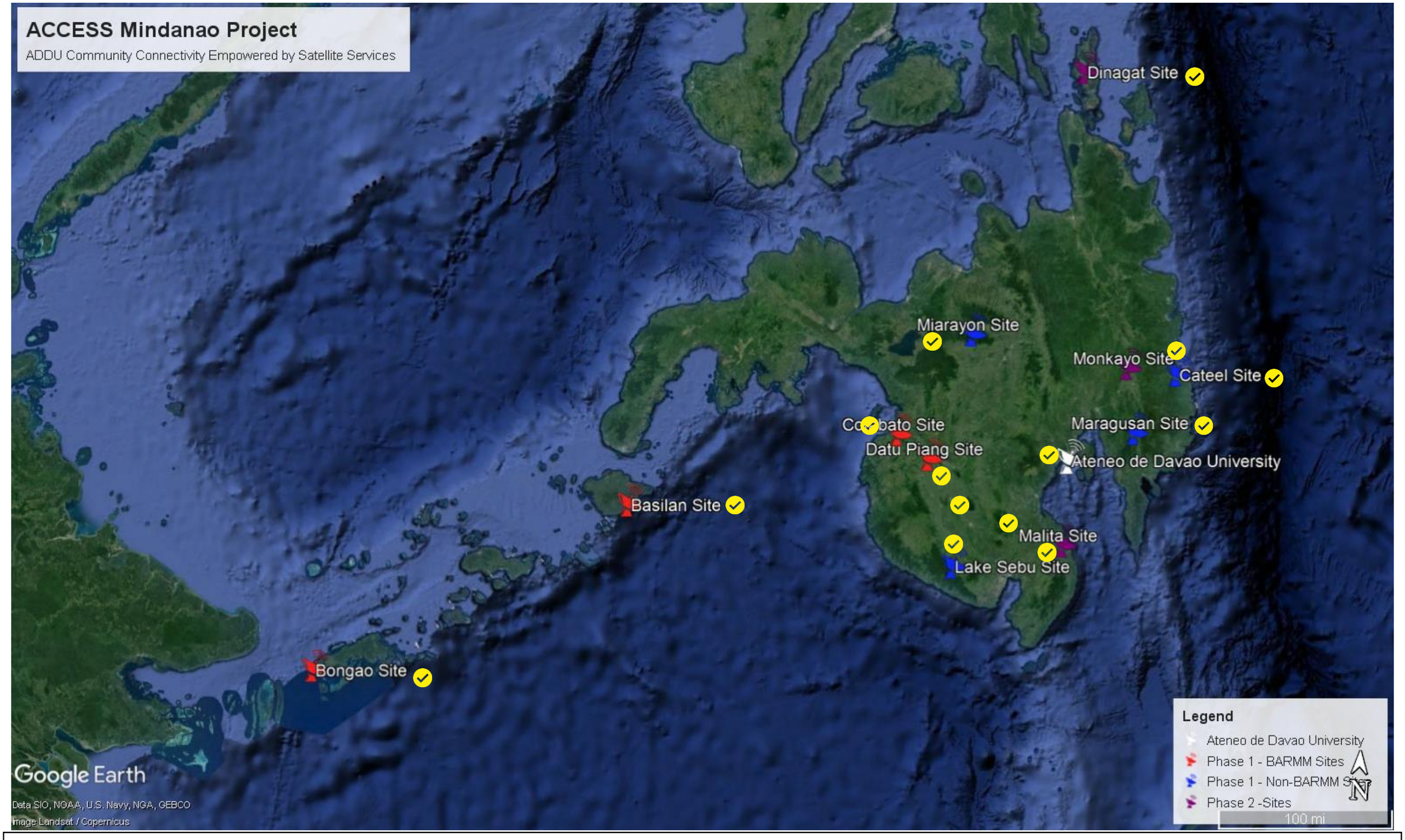
Satellites provide a means to **connect isolated islands and barangays.**

ACCESS
MINDANAO

ADDU COMMUNITY CONNECTIVITY EMPOWERED
BY SATELLITE SERVICES FOR MINDANAO

ACCESS Mindanao Program is a research and advocacy program of Ateneo de Davao University that aims to improve the state of internet connectivity in remote and isolated areas of Mindanao by establishing a network of schools, hospitals, businesses and communities that are linked to the Internet using telecommunications satellites for education, health, finance, and social/ government services.

ACCESS MINDANAO PROJECT SITES



Connectivity of 35 Mbps/5 Mbps for each of the schools in 14 different sites throughout Mindanao

ACCESS MINDANAO PROJECT SITES

Tboli Senior High School - Lake Sebu

ACCESS MINDANAO PROJECT SITES

Panglima Damsik - Bongao, Tawi-tawi

ACCESS MINDANAO PROJECT SITES

Jam-Iyyatu Tuburan Attaqaddumiya Al-Islamiya Ajul, Mohamad Adjul, Basilan

ACCESS MINDANAO PROJECT SITES

Markaz Al-Huzaim Inc. - Datu Piang

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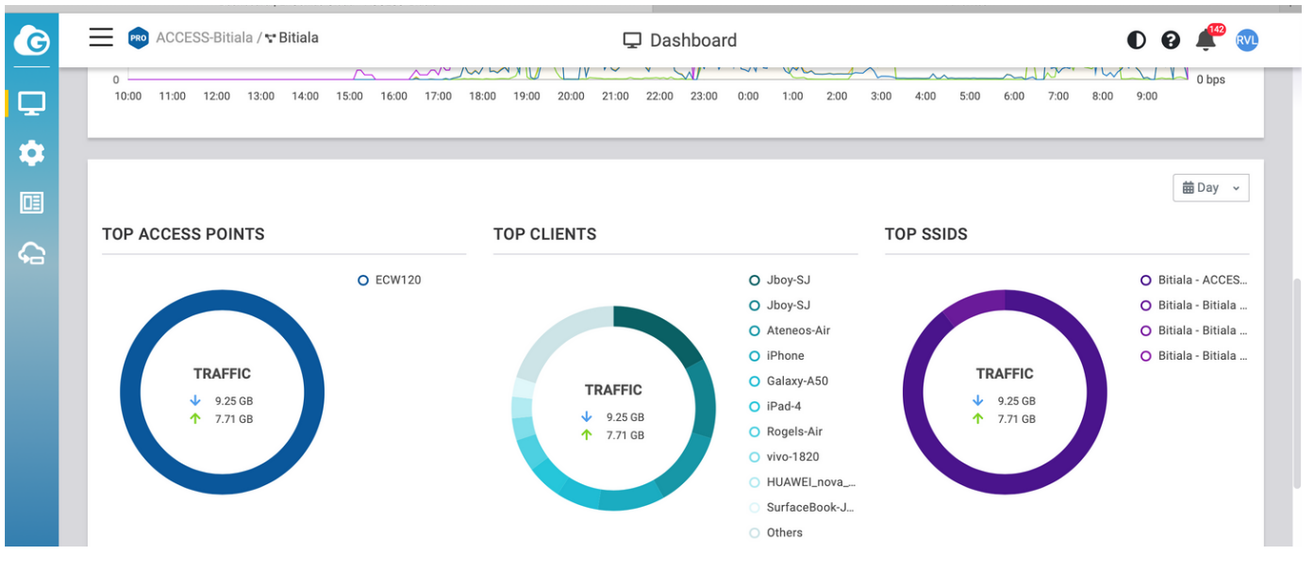
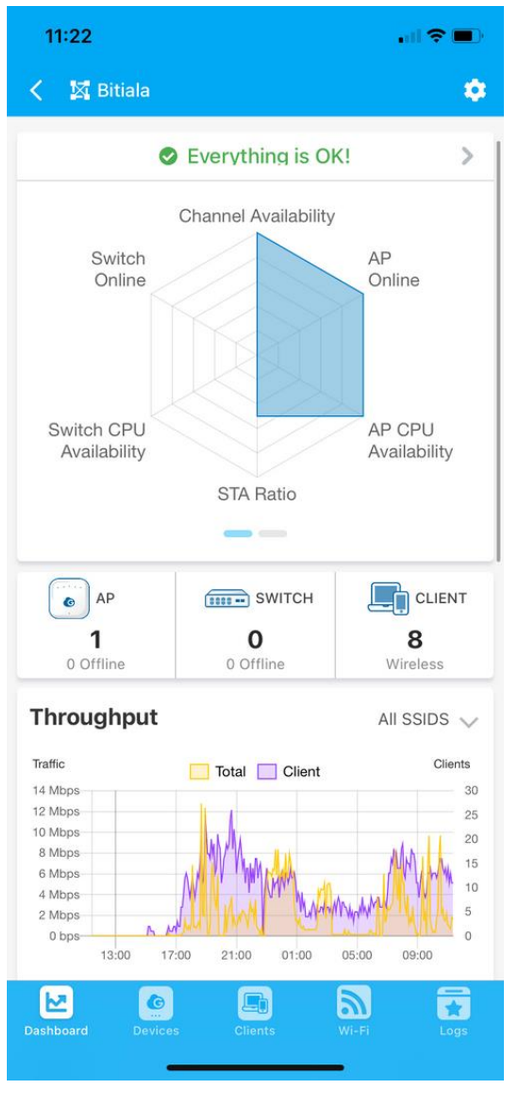
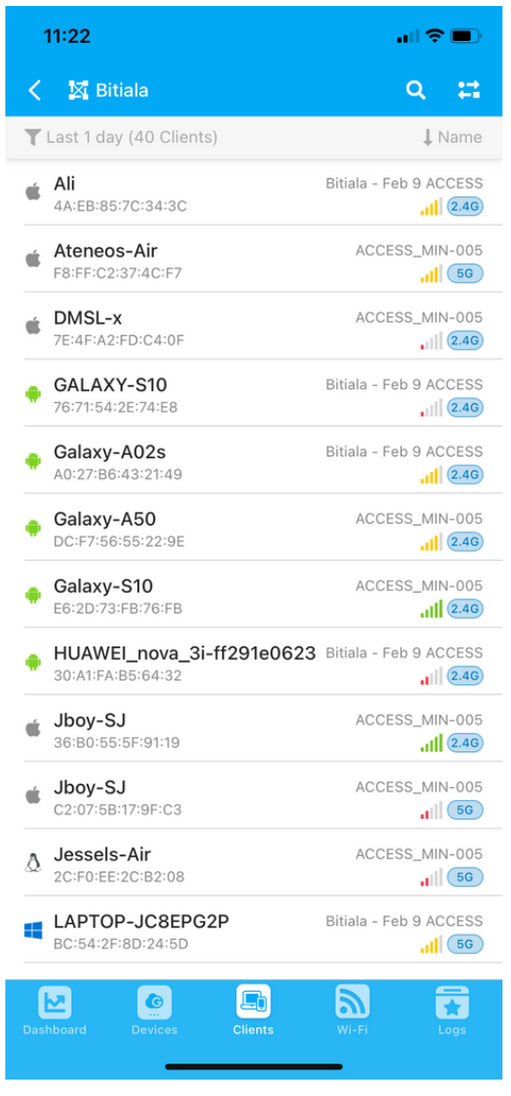
MATAMIS - Malita, Davao Occidental

ACCESS MINDANAO PROJECT

MAINTENANCE AND MONITORING







ACCESS MINDANAO PROJECT

TECH4ED PARTNERSHIP WITH DICT

Ways Forward

- **Improve the quality and quantity of digital infrastructure nationwide, including regular assessment and monitoring**;

- Address the lack of connectivity in >60% of barangays nationwide, especially in last mile areas (GIDAS); **utilize technologies such as satellites to immediately bridge the digital divide**;

- **Connectivity as a catalyst for inclusive and sustainable socio-economic development**;
  - Providing connectivity in GIDAS can open up opportunities in education, health, social services, commerce and economic activities;
  - **Integrating digital literacy programs in infrastructure development projects to drive economic activity**;
  - **Maximize the connectivity for tele-education, tele-medicine, e-commerce and e-governance**, not just for leisure and entertainment;
  - **Push for policy reforms to further open up the communications sector** and strengthen government, academe and industry partnerships;

DAGHANG SALAMAT!

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