BANGSAMORO INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY OFFICE

# TECHronicle

## QUARTERLY ACCOMPLISHMENT REPORT 2025



Explore this quarter's edition of Techronicles, where BICTO highlights its most impactful digital initiatives and innovation-driven milestones. From expanding regional connectivity and empowering grassroots communities through digital literacy, to advancing research and strategic partnerships — this issue captures the progress of a digitally transforming Bangsamoro.



**" We make IT Happen in the Bangsamoro!"**







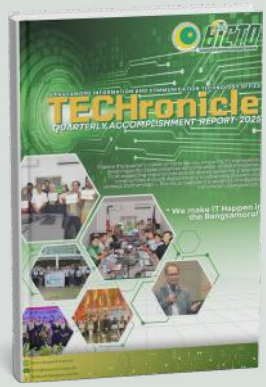



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*The Official BICTO Magazine-Newsletter Showcasing ICT Innovations, Strategic Initiatives, and Milestones Towards a Digitally Empowered Bangsamoro*

# APRIL-JUNE 2025




Welcome to the inaugural 2025 issue of Techronicles, the official magazine of the Bangsamoro Information and Communications Technology Office (BICTO). As we step into a new year, it is with immense pride and enthusiasm that we present our Second Quarter Accomplishment Report, covering the dynamic period of April to June 2025

In these pages, we invite you to explore the remarkable strides BICTO has made in advancing information and communications technology across the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao. From pioneering digital initiatives to empowering our communities through technology, this issue of Techronicles highlights the dedication, innovation, and collaborative spirit that define our work.

With a focus in transparency and accountability, Techronicle will be available for public access on our Facebook Page (www.facebook.com/BangsamoroICTO) and our official BICTO website page (www.bicto.bangsamoro.gov.ph). We believe that sharing our progress with you, our community, is essential in building trust and fostering collaboration towards our shared goal of a digitally transformed BARMM.

We invite you to explore the pages of Techronicles and witness how BICTO, together with its partners and stakeholders, is driving meaningful change—
one digital milestone at a time



# Powers & Functions

**The Bangsamoro Information Communications Technology Office (BICTO) shall have the following powers and functions:**

**a.** Periodically formulate a BARMM information and communication technology (ICT) strategic development plan for approval of the Cabinet;

**b.** Ensure the alignment of regional ICT development plans with the Bangsamoro Government's agenda;

**c.** Monitor and ensure the implementation, and undertake review and periodic updating of the Bangsamoro Government's e-government plan;

**d.** Formulate and recommend appropriate policies, procedures, standards, and guidelines relating to the acquisition, disposal, use, implementation, utilization, management, security, and protection of ICT resources;

**e.** Administer the BARMM Government domain, web hosting server, e-mail services, and other online platforms and/or services;

**f.** Facilitate the configuration of Centralized Information Systems, which shall be installed in the Information and Communications Office under the Office of the Chief Minister, to enable rapid access to reliable information and reinforce government services in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region;

**g.** Develop, manage, and maintain the Bangsamoro Government-owned ICT infrastructure, except otherwise provided by law or executive issuance;

**h.** Administer the implementation of major programs, activities, and projects relating to ICT within the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region;

**j.** Promote, provide technical assistance, and monitor the compliance of the BARMM ministries to existing ICT laws, policies, standards, and guidelines;

**k.** Promote collaborative efforts to ensure ICT capabilities and capacities across all sectors and levels in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region; and

**Perform such other related functions as may be assigned by law or higher authorities.**

## Legal Basis

The Bangsamoro Information and Communications Technology Office (BICTO) was created with its powers and functions under **section 66, Chapter 3 (B), Title III, Book IV of the Bangsamoro Autonomy Act No. 13 known as an act providing for the Bangsamoro Administrative Code and for Other Related Purposes.** Further, with reference to the Administrative Order No. 0004 series of 2021, Operationalizing the Bangsamoro Information and Communications Technology Office, Providing Guidelines Therefore and Other Related Purposes.

## Mandates

The Bangsamoro Information and Communication Technology Office shall be the **primary policy, planning, coordinating, and implementing body in BARMM for promoting, developing, and regulating the use of efficient and effective information and communication technology infrastructure, systems, facilities, and services to support a sound, systematic, transparent, and accountable form of governance.**

## Mission

BICTO is a prominent information and communication technology agency that commits to provide efficient, reliable, integrated, and secured ICT infrastructure, systems, and solutions in the BARMM.

We ensure the application of best practices and international standards in the formulation of ICT policies and implementation of ICT initiatives.

We strive to develop ICT capabilities and capacities across all sectors in the BARMM.

As a leading innovator, we facilitate ICT research and development.

## Vision

BICTO is the Learning Agency in Achieving Digitally-Transformed Bangsamoro that is Adaptive to the Advancement of Technology.

## Goal

Establish Quality E-Governance in the Bangsamoro.

# What's Inside

## Your Guide to BICTO's Digital Chronicles

*Discover how BICTO continues to bridge the digital divide and pave the way for a smarter, more connected future.*


01 FRONT PAGE

02 INTRODUCTION
Techronicle Introduction

03 ALL ABOUT BICTO
Powers and Function
Mandates and Legal Basis
Mission, Vision and Goals


## APRIL


**PAGE**

**6** **BICTO and RMDC Strengthen Partnership to Enhance ICT Training and Certification in BARMM**
*BICTO Conducts Digital Literacy Training for MIPA Staff on Microsoft 365*

**7** **BICTO ON AIR EPISODE 42: Connecting minds digitally: BARMM's Mental Health Unit Initiatives**
*BICTO Joins the 2024 Economic Performance Report News Conference of BARMM*

**8** **Ocular visit and technical site survey for the Bangsanet Free Public Wi-fi project**
*BICTO joins MILG and UNDP in LeAps training on Data privacy and Cybersecurity*

**9** **Forging Strategic Pathways in ICT: BICTO Undertakes LAKBAY-ARAL Visit to DICT Central Office**

**10** **BARMM E-Gov Software Discussion with Newtech**
*BICTO Conducts Computer Troubleshooting Training for BLOMM Personnel*

**11** **BICTO ON AIR EPISODE 43: BICTO's GAD Initiative in Digital Bangsamoro**
*First Bangsamoro Disater Risk Reduction and Management Council (BDRRMC) meeting for calendar year 2025*

**12** **Digital Literacy Training on Graphic Design Using Canva for Bangsamoro Digital Users**
*Digital Literacy Training on Computer Troubleshooting: Tech Solutions 101*


## MAY


**PAGE**

**13** **Empowering the youth with drone technology BICTO's Drone Training for Senior High School Students Takes Flight**

**14** **Empowering digital skills for a smarter future through Digital Literacy Training for Google Workspace**
*Building Trust in the Digital Age through PNPKI Training*

**15** **BICTO and OSC partner to strengthen settler communities with Digital literacy & Cybersecurity skills**
*BICTO ON AIR EPISODE 44: Planning the Digital Pulse: Steering ICT Growth in the Bangsamoro*

**16** **1st Regular ICT Sub-Committee Meeting**
*Training and Orientation on OCM Internal rules and Procedures*

**17** **Ocular Visit and Technical Site Survey for the BangsaNet Free Public Wi-Fi Project**
*Bridging Services, Building Smart Tech Bangsamoro Consultation on Ministry Integration and Service for the Bangsamoro Government digital Services mobile application*

**18** **Cybercrime Awareness Seminar Empowers Youth & Barangay Officials in Brgy. RH-4, Cotabato City**
*2024 Functional Literacy, Education, and Mass Media Survey Regional Data Dissemination Forum*

**19** **BICTO joins forces for greener BARMM: Advancing Renewable Energy and ICT Integration**
*BICTO empowers mfbm employees through Digital Literacy Training*

# JUNE

PAGE


20 **Kick-off ceremony of the 4th Bangsamoro ICT Month 2025**

22 **Groundbreaking for a Digital Future, BICTO launches BARMM Wide Internet Connectivity Project**

24 **BICTO Joins National ICT Month 2025 Kick-off & Groundbreaking Ceremony for the First Node of the BARMM-Wide Internet Connectivity Project**

*Equipping MILG for a Safer, Smarter BARMM through Digital Empowerment*

25 **Digital Literacy Training on Embedded System empowers Bangsamoro Youth**

26 **Strengthening Cyber Defenses: BICTO Joins DFIR and VAPT Training in Quezon City**

*Empowering ISAL teachers through ICT: BICTO Conducts 2-Day Digital Skills Training in Cotabato City*

27 **BICTO Conducts Bangsamoro Regional ICT Quiz bee: Challenged Accepted**

28 **1st Bangsamoro Research and Innovation Conference**

29 **Digital Literacy & Cybersecurity skills for SAPAD Women and Youth Association**

*BICTO Partners with MBHTE-TESD for Capacity-Building Training on digital literacy*

30 **4th Bangsamoro ICT Summit: Connected Bangsamoro: ONE REGION, ONE DIGITAL FUTURE**

33 **Factechnology: ICT Facts that you need to know**



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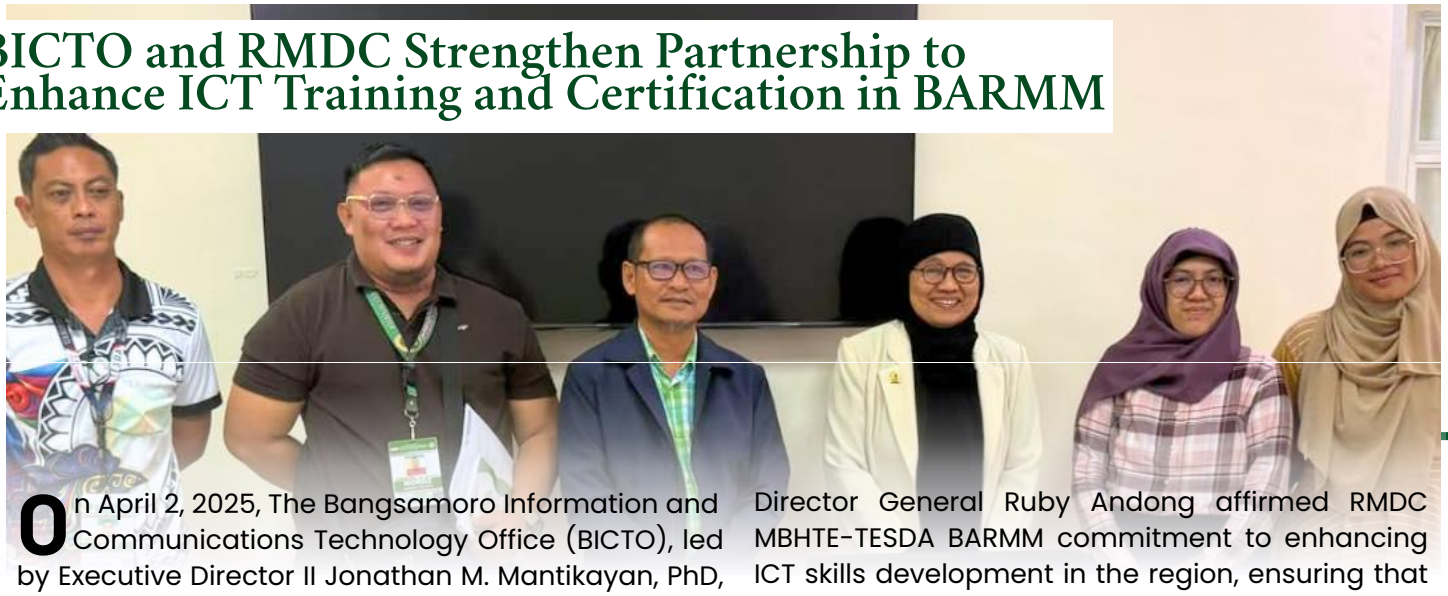
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# BICTO and RMDC Strengthen Partnership to Enhance ICT Training and Certification in BARMM



On April 2, 2025, The Bangsamoro Information and Communications Technology Office (BICTO), led by Executive Director II Jonathan M. Mantikayan, PhD, I.T., together with the Chief of the Planning and Capacity Building Division Norodin Tro Intia, LPT, MPA, MSc.IT visited the Regional Manpower Development Center (RMDC) under the Ministry of Basic, Higher, and Technical Education - Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (MBHTE-TESDA) BARMM. The delegation was welcomed by MBHTE-TESDA BARMM Director General Ruby Andong, along with RMDC officials and employees.

The meeting aimed to strengthen the collaboration between BICTO and RMDC in advancing ICT training and certification opportunities in the Bangsamoro region. Discussions focused on enhancing technical skills development and providing accessible certification pathways for IT professionals, government employees, and aspiring ICT practitioners.

Director General Ruby Andong affirmed RMDC MBHTE-TESDA BARMM commitment to enhancing ICT skills development in the region, ensuring that training graduates gain national certification for better employment opportunities. Meanwhile, Dr. Mantikayan emphasized BICTO's goal of fostering a digitally competent workforce, aligned with the Bangsamoro Government's vision of e-governance and digital transformation.

This strengthened partnership is expected to increase the number of NC II-certified IT professionals, address workforce demands and support the region's growing need for skilled ICT practitioners. Moving forward, BICTO and RMDC will continue to explore collaborative initiatives in ICT training, policy research, and workforce capacity-building to further advance digital literacy and professional development in BARMM.

# BICTO Conducts Digital Literacy Training for MIPA Staff on Microsoft 365



The Bangsamoro Information and Communications Technology Office (BICTO) successfully conducted a Digital Literacy Training on Microsoft 365 for the personnel of the Ministry of Indigenous Peoples' Affairs (MIPA) held at the BICTO ICT Literacy and E-Governance Center.

This training was requested by MIPA, and the training was facilitated by Ms. Noraymen Dimasangcay, Section Head of BICTO's Planning and Monitoring Division, who served as the resource speaker, guiding the 16 participants through the essential tools and features of Microsoft 365 that are crucial in today's digital workspaces.

The session covered practical applications of Microsoft tools for productivity, collaboration, and efficiency in government service — equipping participants with knowledge they can immediately apply in their daily tasks. This training is a testament to BICTO's commitment to building a digitally empowered Bangsamoro workforce through education, innovation, and collaboration.

# BICTO ON AIR EPISODE 42

## *Connecting minds digitally: BARMM's Mental Health Unit Initiatives*

In its 42nd episode, BICTO On-Air spotlighted the Ministry of Health–BARMM's Mental Health Unit through an engaging discussion with Ms. Hasmia Edris, RN, MPA, Program Head of Telepsychiatry, and Dr. Norman Prince Datumanong, DPCAM, Head of the Unit.




The episode showcased the Unit's key programs, from free consultations and medical assistance to the innovative telemedicine hotline—expanding mental health support across the region. Both speakers emphasized the role of digital technology in improving accessibility, particularly for remote and underserved communities. They also highlighted sustainability factors such as community engagement, proper resource allocation, and continuous training, while stressing the importance of collective participation in addressing mental health challenges. Notably, training support for rural health units and barangay health workers in BARMM's island provinces was underscored as a crucial step in ensuring no community is left behind.

Through these initiatives, MOH-BARMM continues to demonstrate its commitment to building a digitally empowered and mentally resilient Bangsamoro.

# BICTO Joins the 2024 Economic Performance Report News Conference of BARMM



Two representatives from the Bangsamoro Information and Communications Technology Office (BICTO) attended the News Conference on the 2024 Economic Performance of BARMM, held on April 22, 2025, at Surya Hall, Mall of Alnor, Cotabato City. The event, organized by PSA-BARMM, was also broadcast live via their official Facebook page to ensure wider public access and engagement.

During the conference, Engr. Akan G. Tula, OIC Regional Director of PSA-BARMM, presented the highlights of BARMM's 2024 economic performance based on the Gross Regional Domestic Product (GRDP) and Gross Regional Domestic Expenditure (GRDE). The data provided insights into the region's economic growth, trends, and key contributing sectors.



Representing BPDA Director General Engr. Mohajirin T. Ali, MNSA, Ms. Melanie M. Indar, Director I of the Planning and Policies Bureau of BPDA, discussed the implications of the GRDP/GRDE results on regional development directions and initiatives, emphasizing how these indicators guide planning and policy formulation in the Bangsamoro.

Also in attendance was Dr. Kadil "Jojo" M. Sinolinding, Jr., Minister of the Ministry of Health, along with other key stakeholders from the Bangsamoro Government. BICTO's participation in this event underscores its commitment to staying informed and involved in the broader development landscape of BARMM—ensuring that ICT programs and strategies align with the region's socio-economic goals.

# OCULAR VISIT AND TECHNICAL SITE SURVEY FOR THE BANGSANET FREE PUBLIC WI-FI PROJECT



The Bangsamoro Information and Communications Technology Office (BICTO), under the Office of the Chief Minister, conducted a strategic ocular visit and technical site survey on April 21, 2025, at the Integrated Provincial Health Office (IPHO) in Maguindanao and Cotabato Awang Airport.

The visit was led by Engr. Brian Carl R. Esmael, Information Systems Analyst III, together with Mr. Mohammad Emran S. Mamokhan, Engr. Adrian Jamil K. Tiboron, both Information Systems Analysts I, and Mr. Sherhan U. Abas, Administrative Assistant V designated as Information Systems Researcher I.

The BICTO team recently conducted a site visit to the Integrated Provincial Health Office (IPHO)–Maguindanao and the adjacent Maguindanao Provincial Hospital (MPH). The strategic assessment allowed the team to evaluate multiple critical service points in one visit, ensuring maximum coverage for essential public health facilities.








Key areas identified for access point installation included main entrances, waiting areas, and administrative offices—locations selected to benefit both employees and the public. The survey also covered existing ICT infrastructure, cabling paths, and power availability to guide technical planning.

The on-site personnel's cooperation provided valuable operational insights, enabling a realistic and responsive site mapping. The visit also extended to Cotabato Awang Airport, reinforcing the project's goal of increasing digital access in high-impact public spaces.

Through this initiative, BICTO underscores its commitment to bridging the digital divide in BARMM by equipping vital institutions with reliable connectivity—paving the way for a more inclusive and digitally empowered Bangsamoro.

# BICTO JOINS MILG AND UNDP IN LEAPS TRAINING ON DATA PRIVACY AND CYBERSECURITY




The Bangsamoro Information and Communications Technology Office (BICTO) actively joins the Ministry of the Interior and Local Government (MILG) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for the launch of a three-day Data Privacy and Cybersecurity Training under the Localizing e-Governance for Accelerated Provision of Services (LeAPS) program. Held at the Paragon Hotel Hall, this capacity-building initiative is designed to equip Data Protection Officers (DPOs) from LGUs and BARMM ministries with the tools and knowledge to protect sensitive data, uphold privacy rights, and strengthen cybersecurity across the region's digital services. Spearheaded by the MILG's Information Systems and Technology Management Division (ISTMD) under the leadership of Division Chief Jiamel B. Abdullah, with the support of LGOO II Abdullah U. Lingga and Computer Programmer I Mohammad Nor A. Anggie, the training emphasizes the importance of data governance in enhancing public trust and ensuring secure, inclusive digital transformation in the Bangsamoro region.

This initiative supports the development of the **#DigitalBangsamoro Portal**, a centralized online platform aimed at streamlining access to government services and promoting transparency, efficiency, and digital inclusion. Through collaborative learning and practical sessions, participants are expected to produce tailored Data Privacy Manuals, Cybersecurity Plans, and reporting frameworks that will serve as foundational policies for their respective agencies.






# FORGING STRATEGIC PATHWAYS IN ICT:
## BICTO Undertakes LAKBAY-ARAL Visit to DICT Central Office

In pursuit of a stronger and more in - clusive digital future for the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), the Bangsamoro Information and Communications Technology Office (BICTO) embarked on a two-day Lakbay-Aral at the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) Central Office in Quezon City from April 22–23, 2025

Led by Chief Norodin Intia, MPA, LPT, MSc.IT and guided by Executive Director Jonathan M. Mantikayan, PhD.IT, the initiative sought to harmonize regional ICT strategies with national frameworks, cultivate partnerships, and gain valuable insights into innovative programs shaping the country's digital landscape. Joining Chief Intia were Normina Adza and Noraymen Dimasangcay, and other BICTO's key personnel who actively engaged in the discussions and knowledge exchanges throughout the visit

### Day 1: Policy Dialogue with DICT Leadership








The BICTO delegation was warmly welcomed by DICT Undersecretary Atty. Jocelle Batapa-Sigue, who shared the department's strategic directions on ICT industry growth, digital inclusion, and regional innovation. She expressed DICT's support for BICTO's initiatives, emphasizing that regional integration is essential to achieving a unified national digital transformation.

Notable contributors included Jeehad J. Tanggol and Alfredo S. Jacildone III of the ICT Industry Development Bureau, alongside Engr. Gemma P. Baysic, Engr. George P. Tardio, Jian Carlo S. Cristi, Alexcenah S. Dela Vega, and Jay L. Narcisco from the National ICT Planning, Policy, and Standards Bureau. Their perspectives on policy formulation, benchmarking, and ICT ecosystem development are expected to significantly inform BICTO's regional strategies.







### Strengthening Regional-National Synergy

The BICTO delegation was warmly welcomed by DICT Undersecretary Atty. Jocelle Batapa-Sigue, who shared the department's strategic directions on ICT industry growth, digital inclusion, and regional innovation. She expressed DICT's support for BICTO's initiatives, emphasizing that regional integration is essential to achieving a unified national digital transformation.



# BARMM E-GOV SOFTWARE
## DISCUSSION WITH NEWTECH





The coordination meeting between BICTO and Newtech, held from April 22 to 24, 2025, marked a key step in implementing the TV White Space Project with mobile applications.

# BICTO Conducts Computer Troubleshooting Training for BLOMM Personnel



To strengthen the technical capabilities of its partner offices

offices, the Bangsamoro Information and Communications Technology Office (BICTO) recently conducted a specialized training on Computer Troubleshooting for selected employees of Bangsamoro Liaison Office Metro-Manila (BLOMM).
Mr. Norodin T. Intia, LPT, MPA, MSc.IT, Chief of BICTO's Planning and Capacity Building Division, was the Resource Person of the said training and was ably assisted by Ms. Normina Adza, Section Head of the Capacity Building Section, and Ms. Noraymen D. Dimasangcay, Section Head of the Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluation Section.







Held in a collaborative and interactive environment, the session aimed to equip BLOMM personnel with practical skills in diagnosing and addressing common computer issues, ensuring smoother operations and reducing downtime in daily office functions.

In attendance were selected BLOMM employees, led by Chief Administrative Officer Ms. Ibtihajz C. Lizardo-Amin, who expressed appreciation for the initiative and underscored the importance of ICT capacity building in delivering efficient public service. The activity is part of BICTO's continuing effort to foster digital empowerment across the Bangsamoro region through targeted technical trainings and capacity-building programs.

# BICTO ON AIR EPISODE 43

## BICTO's GAD Initiative in Digital Bangsamoro




On April 24, 2025, a special episode of BICTO on Air took center stage, shining a spotlight on the critical intersection of Gender and Development (GAD) and the region's digital transformation, the guest speaker is from the BICTO's GAD focal Ms. Bai Mahjubah Y. Sinsuat. As Bangsamoro advances toward a more technologically empowered future, inclusivity remains at the core of its vision.

BICTO continues to champion initiatives that bridge gender gaps in the digital sphere, ensuring that women, youth, and marginalized communities have equal opportunities to access digital tools, participate in ICT training, and engage in a safer online environment. From policy integration to grassroots empowerment, these efforts align with the broader mission of creating a more inclusive and equitable Digital Bangsamoro.

In this insightful episode, listeners explored how technology-driven GAD initiatives are shaping a more participatory digital landscape—one where every individual, regardless of gender, is empowered to contribute meaningfully to the region's growth. Through discussions, collaborations, and forward-thinking programs, BICTO reaffirms its commitment to leaving no one behind in the digital revolution.

# First Bangsamoro Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (BDRRMC) meeting for calendar year 2025

On April 28, 2025, from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM, the First Bangsamoro Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (BDRRMC) Meeting for Calendar Year 2025 was successfully convened at Bajau Hall, Office of the Chief Minister, Cotabato City. The meeting gathered key stakeholders to discuss disaster preparedness and response mechanisms within the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region.



Photo Credits: Bruce "BM" Matabalao FB Page

Among the distinguished attendees was Jonathan Mantikayan, PhD, IT, Executive Director of the Bangsamoro Information and Communications Technology Office (BICTO). His participation highlighted the importance of collaboration among government offices in disaster risk reduction and management efforts.



The First BDRRMC Meeting served as a vital platform for fostering cooperation and reinforcing the Bangsamoro government's commitment to proactive disaster risk management. With unified efforts and strategic planning, the council aims to enhance the region's ability to mitigate risks and effectively respond to emergencies, ensuring the safety and well-being of its communities.



# Digital Literacy Training

## *on Graphic Design Using Canva for Bangsamoro Digital Users*

The Bangsamoro Information and Communications Technology Office (BICTO), led by Executive Director Jonathan Mantikayan, PhD., IT, successfully held a two-day Digital Literacy Training on Graphic Design using Canva on April 28–29, 2025, at the ICT Literacy Training and E-Governance Center, Cotabato City.

A total of 22 participants from the League of Bangsamoro Islamic Advocate Association (LBIAA), composed of selected Mujahideen and Mujahidat, actively engaged in hands-on sessions focused on design principles and modern techniques. The training was facilitated by Mr. Ali-Akbar M. Hassim, who shared valuable expertise in applying Canva for advocacy, community work, and personal projects.

The event was graced by Mr. Norodin T. Intia, Chief of the Planning and Capacity Building Division, who highlighted BICTO's mission of providing accessible digital literacy programs for all Bangsamoro constituents. He commended the dedication of Ms. Normina G. Adza, Head of the Capacity Building Division, along with her team, for their role in ensuring the program's success.

This initiative underscores BICTO's continuing commitment to strengthening digital capacity and fostering inclusive access to technology across the Bangsamoro region.

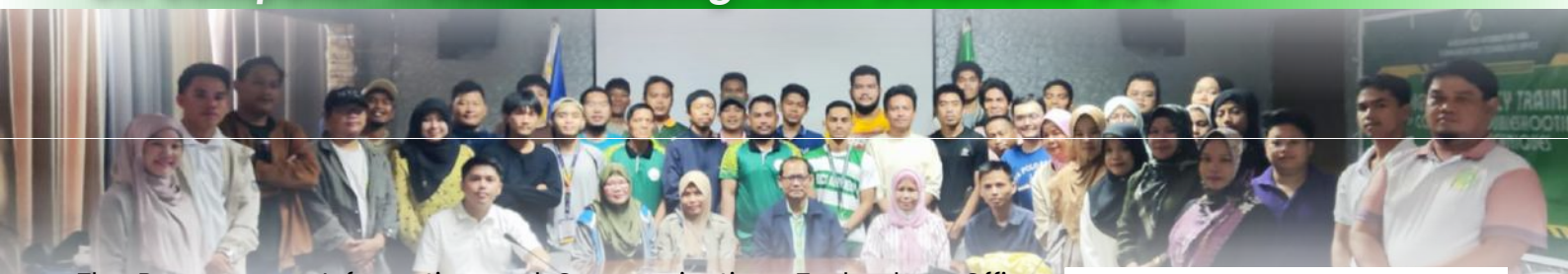






# Digital Literacy Training

## *on Computer Troubleshooting: Tech Solutions 101*



The Bangsamoro Information and Communications Technology Office (BICTO) successfully conducted a two-day Digital Literacy Training on Computer Troubleshooting on April 29–30, 2025, equipping 47 participants with essential skills to address common computer issues.




The first day, held at the BPDA Conference Hall, featured comprehensive lectures by resource person Mr. Guiali G. Abag, MIT, who shared practical strategies in diagnosing hardware and software problems. On the second day, participants engaged in hands-on exercises at BICTO's ICT Literacy and E-Governance Training Center in Cotabato City, applying their knowledge in real-world scenarios.

BICTO Executive Director Dr. Jonathan Mantikayan, PhD., IT, lauded the participants' growing interest in digital literacy, while Mr. Norodin T. Intia, LPT, Chief of the Planning and Capacity Building Division, commended their dedication during the closing program. This initiative reflects BICTO's continued commitment to bridging the digital divide and empowering the Bangsamoro community through technology-driven capacity building.

# EMPOWERING THE YOUTH WITH DRONE TECHNOLOGY

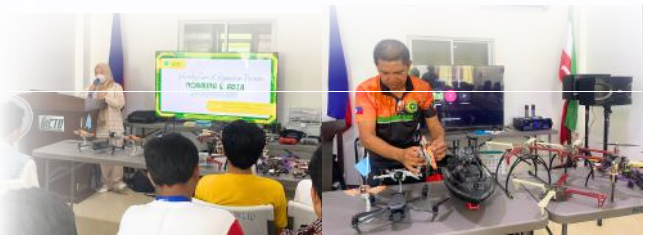


## BICTO's Drone Training for Senior High School Students Takes Flight

In a bold move to empower young minds through digital and technological innovation, the Bangsamoro Information and Communications Technology Office (BICTO), led by Executive Director Jonathan M. Mantikayan, PhD, I.T., under the Office of the Chief Minister, successfully conducted a two-day hands-on training on Drone Technology: Fundamentals, Operations, and Applications on May 6–7, 2025, at the BICTO ICT Literacy and e-Governance Training Center, 8Z Building, Cotabato City. The event brought together enthusiastic Senior High School students from across the BARMM region, all eager to explore the fast-evolving world of drone technology.

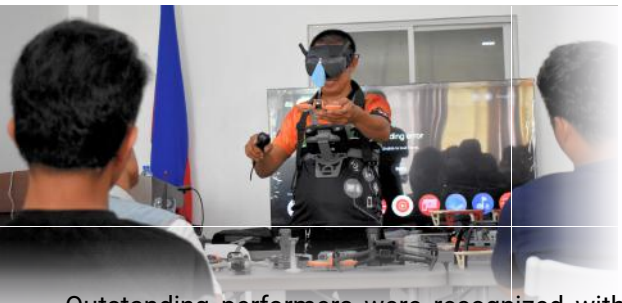


The training kicked off with an inspiring welcome from Ms. Normina G. Adza, MSc.IT, Head of BICTO's Capacity Building Section. She expressed heartfelt appreciation to the participants for embracing this opportunity and encouraged them to continue exploring the limitless possibilities of technology, emphasizing that today's youth are tomorrow's innovators. She also introduced the resource speaker, Mr. Mansur A. Panalangin, MSIT, a Senior Science Research Specialist from the Ministry of Science and Technology–BARMM and a Certified Drone Pilot.









Participants began with a pre-test to assess their baseline knowledge of drone technology. Day one focused on the fundamentals of drone operation, covering types of drones, their components, control mechanisms, and underlying principles. Mr. Panalangin engaging lecture was complemented by live demonstrations, sparking curiosity and excitement among the students.



On the second day, participants gathered at the Cotabato City Central Pilot School for a hands-on flying session, where they operated three types of drones—the DJI Multi-Rotor, DJI Fly Drone with motion goggles, and a heavy-duty DJI model. Each student experienced piloting all three, learning essential safety measures and controller functions before taking a post-test to assess their progress.

Outstanding performers were recognized with flash drives as tokens of excellence, while all participants received certificates of completion and training kits, affirming their commitment to learning. Grateful for the knowledge and free training opportunity, the students praised BICTO and its Digital Literacy Training Team for providing such a future-ready experience.





# Empowering digital skills for a smarter future through Digital Literacy Training for Google Workspace



In its continuous effort to strengthen digital capacities in the Bangsamoro region, the Bangsamoro Information and Communications Technology Office (BICTO) conducted a two-day Digital Literacy Training on Productivity Tools Using Google Workspace on May 13–14, 2025, with 27 participants in attendance. The sessions were held at the BICTO ICT Literacy and E-Governance Training Center and the DICT Digital Transformation Center.

The training was opened by BICTO Executive Director Jonathan M. Mantikayan, PhD, IT, who underscored the importance of digital proficiency in today's fast-changing workplace. Engr. Mohammad Julian Holanda from the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) served as the resource person, guiding participants through Gmail, Google Docs, Sheets, Drive, Calendar, Forms, and Gemini AI, emphasizing collaboration and productivity tools for professional use.



Participants applied their learnings through group activities, with top presenters recognized with tokens of appreciation. All attendees received certificates of completion and training kits, symbolizing their dedication to continuous digital upskilling. In her closing message, Ms. Normina G. Adza, Head of BICTO's Planning and Capacity Building Division, commended the active engagement of participants. This initiative reaffirms BICTO's commitment to bridging the digital divide and advancing inclusive digital transformation in BARMM.





# Building Trust in the Digital Age through PNPKI Training



The Ministry of Trade, Investments, and Tourism (MTIT), in partnership with the Bangsamoro Information and Communications Technology Office (BICTO), conducted a PNPKI (Philippine National Public Key Infrastructure) training on May 14, 2025, at the MTIT Regional Office. The activity aimed to enhance digital security and promote trust in government transactions by equipping staff with essential knowledge on secure communication and identity authentication.

Mr. Arnold S. Cararag, Mbaex, MDM, MCS, Head of BICTO's Security Operations Section and a cybersecurity specialist, served as the resource person. He provided an in-depth introduction to PNPKI, emphasizing its role in ensuring data confidentiality, integrity, authentication, and non-repudiation. Participants were also guided through the PNPKI registration process, enabling them to utilize digital certificates and electronic signatures in their daily government transactions.

This initiative highlights MTIT and BICTO's shared commitment to building a digitally secure, resilient, and trusted government service infrastructure in the Bangsamoro region.







## BICTO AND OSC PARTNER TO STRENGTHEN SETTLER COMMUNITIES WITH DIGITAL LITERACY & CYBERSECURITY SKILLS

The Bangsamoro Information and Communications Technology Office (BICTO), in partnership with the Office for Settler Communities (OSC), successfully conducted a three-day Seminar-Training on Digital Literacy and Cybersecurity for Settlers in the Bangsamoro from May 14 to 16, 2025, at D&M Catering Services, Cotabato City. The training aimed to equip participants—including youth representatives, staff from the Office of MP Dr. Susana Anayatin, and OSC personnel—with essential digital skills to promote secure, responsible, and inclusive online engagement.



Opening the event, Mr. Norodin T. Intia, MPA, LPT, MSc.IT Chief of BICTO's Planning and Capacity Building Division, underscored the importance of continuous learning and digital responsibility.






Sessions covered key topics such as Digital Literacy (facilitated by Ms. Noraymen D. Dimasangcay), the Data Privacy Act and Cybersecurity (discussed by Sir Arnold S. Cararag), and Creative Digital Skills through Photography and Content Creation (led by Mr. Hamdan E. Badrudin and Mr. Fahad M. Reyes).







Participants engaged in interactive activities, discussions, and hands-on exercises, highlighting their commitment to strengthening digital awareness and resilience. This initiative reflects BICTO and OSC's commitment to digital inclusion, ensuring that settler communities are empowered and not left behind in Bangsamoro's journey toward a secure and future-ready digital society.





## BICTO ON AIR EPISODE 44

### Planning the Digital Pulse: Steering ICT Growth in the Bangsamoro




Episode 44 of BICTO on Air was successfully conducted, focusing on the crucial role of strategic planning, monitoring, and evaluation in advancing Bangsamoro's digital transformation. The episode featured Ms. Noraymen D. Dimasangcay, Head of BICTO's Planning and Monitoring Section, who shared valuable insights on ICT governance, infrastructure development, and capacity-building initiatives designed to strengthen communities across the region.

Hosted by Cyber Sheikah and Cyber Khalid, the discussion reached a wide audience through simultaneous live broadcasts on BICTO's official Facebook page and 95.1 Bangsamoro Radyo Mindanao, reinforcing the importance of aligning ICT programs with the vision of a future-ready, inclusive digital society. The success of this episode underscores BICTO's unwavering commitment to innovation and empowerment through strategic ICT policies. Looking ahead, the agency remains focused on enhancing digital infrastructure, promoting digital literacy, and implementing forward-thinking strategies to build a resilient and adaptive digital ecosystem for the Bangsamoro.

# 1st Regular ICT Sub-Committee Meeting



The Bangsamoro Information and Communications Technology Office (BICTO), successfully convened the 1st Regular ICT Sub-Committee Meeting held on May 6, 2025, at the BPDA Room 2, Cotabato City. The meeting was chaired by Executive Director Jonathan M. Mantikayan, PhD. IT and aimed to strengthen coordination among BARMM ministries and agencies in the implementation of ICT initiatives that promote good governance and digital innovation.





In attendance were the representatives from the Bangsamoro Planning and Development Authority (BPDA), Ministry of Environment, Natural Resources and Energy (MENRE), Ministry of Transportation and Communications (MOTC), and the Ministry of the Interior and Local Government (MILG). The agenda centered on open-source system development for BARMM applications, policies on inter-agency ICT coordination, and other relevant matters in support of a unified and effective ICT ecosystem.

## Training and Orientation on OCM Internal rules and Procedures



The Bangsamoro Information and Communications Technology Office (BICTO) conducted a Training and Orientation on Internal Rules and Procedures on May 19, 2025, at the BPDA Conference Room 2 in Cotabato City. The activity aimed to strengthen organizational efficiency by deepening personnel's understanding of government protocols, administrative processes, and performance monitoring systems. The program was opened by Mr. Norodin T. Intia, Chief of the Planning and Capacity Building Division,





who emphasized the value of continuous learning in building a responsive and accountable institution. Sessions were facilitated by resource persons from the Office of the Chief Minister—Ms. Reishma A. Abas, Ms. Almira A. Ali, and Ms. Bai Siti Noreen Ishah H. Gandawali—covering topics such as attendance and leave policies, grievance mechanisms, payroll, performance evaluation, development planning, and compliance requirements like SALN.



BICTO recognized the efforts of its HR personnel Mr. Ameroden D. Lao, MPA, LPT, and Admin Assistant Ms. Anisa Abdulgani in ensuring the smooth conduct of the training. The initiative reflects BICTO's continued commitment to integrity, accountability, and professionalism in public service.

# Ocular Visit and Technical Site Survey for the BangsaNet Free Public Wi-Fi Project



On May 19, 2025, BICTO-ICTISD conducted a courtesy visit to the MBHTE Division Office in the Special Geographic Area (SGA) as part of the BangsaNet Free Public Wi-Fi Project. The project is managed by the ICTIMS, headed by Engr. Brian Carl R. Esmael, ECT, MPA, under the supervision of ICTISD led by Division Chief Mohajiren B. Diang, MSc.IT. This initiative supports digital transformation by providing free and reliable internet access—strengthening e-Governance.

As part of the Project, BICTO-ICTISD conducted an ocular visit and technical site survey at Datu Embak Mangansing Memorial High School in the SGA to assess its suitability for free internet installation. A meeting was also held with the school head to discuss the site's inclusion in the project, aiming to enhance Digital connectivity support learning in the area.

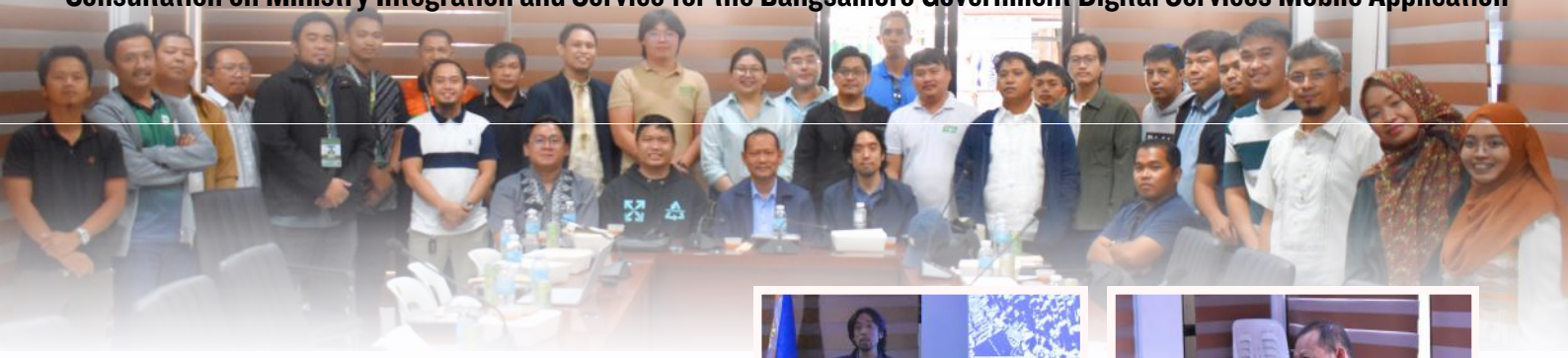





After the visit to Datu Embak Mangansing Memorial High School, BICTO-ICTISD also assessed Datu Daud Rahman High School in SGA to explore the possibility of installing free internet services that will enhance connectivity for students and school operations. On May 20, 2025, BICTO-ICTISD conducted a courtesy visit to the MBHTE Division in Lanao del Sur-I (LDS-I) in support of the BangsaNet Free Public Wi-Fi Project. The visit focused on discussing implementation plans for internet installation to help improve digital learning and connectivity at Ragayan National High School in Poona Bayabao, LDS-I.

# Bridging Services, Building Smart Tech Bangsamoro

## Consultation on Ministry Integration and Service for the Bangsamoro Government Digital Services Mobile Application







In line with the Bangsamoro Government's digital transformation agenda, the Bangsamoro Information and Communications Technology Office (BICTO) held a Consultation on Ministry Integration and Service Delivery Alignment for the BGov Super App on May 26, 2025, at the BPDA Conference Hall 1, Cotabato City.

The session brought together IT officers from various ministries, offices, and agencies across BARMM to align digital service delivery and gather technical feedback for the integration of the BGov Super App—a mobile and web-based platform designed to provide fast, efficient, and citizen-centered public services.

Spearheaded by BICTO's ICT Infrastructure and Services Division, led by Chief Mohajiren Diang B. Diang, MSc.IT, and ISDMS Head Datu Raffy Ralph S. Sinsuat, MSc.IT, the consultation also featured insights from partner developers Newtech and Lab.ph. In his message, BICTO Executive Director Dr. Jonathan M. Mantikayan emphasized the importance of building an integrated and secure digital ecosystem that responds to the needs of every Bangsamoro. The BGov Super App reflects BARMM's commitment to innovation, inclusivity, and bringing government services closer to the people through technology.

# Cybercrime Awareness Seminar Empowers Youth & Barangay Officials in Brgy. RH-4, Cotabato City

A Cybercrime Awareness Training and Seminar was recently held at RH-4, Cotabato City, engaging youth and barangay officials in proactive discussions on digital literacy and online safety. The event was supported by Hon. Mojahida S. Omar-Abasado, "Aksyon Agad," along with SK leaders and barangay officials, highlighting strong community commitment to cybercrime prevention.





Organized by third-year Bachelor of Social Work students from Cotabato State University (CSU) as part of their advocacy program, the seminar underscored the role of future social workers in promoting responsible digital citizenship. Leading the initiative was Ms. Yeasha Ross D. Ochoa, Team Leader of Ungaya Youth in Action, with support from Ms. Normina Adza, MSIT, Head of BICTO's Capacity Building Section.



The resource lecture was delivered by Mr. Norodin T. Intia, Chief of BICTO's Planning and Capacity Building Division, who discussed various forms of cybercrime, preventive measures, and the role of youth and community leaders in fostering online safety. The activity concluded with an open forum, reinforcing the importance of collaborative action in building cyber-resilient communities.

# 2024 Functional Literacy, Education and Mass Media Survey Regional Data Dissemination Forum

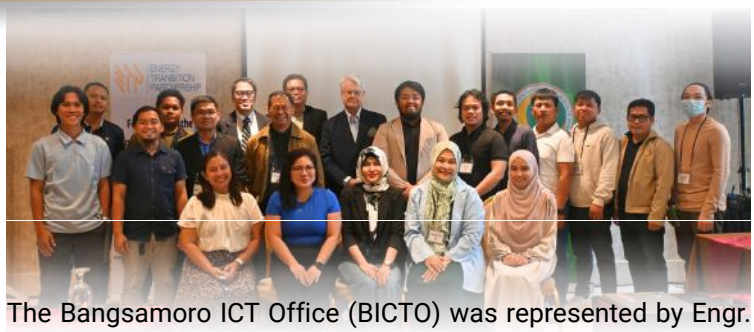



The "Regional Data Dissemination Forum 2024 FLEMMS (Functional Literacy, Education and Mass Media" was convened to discuss data results of the FLEMMS 2024. Among the attendees of the forum are the following; PSA-BARMM led by OIC-Regional Director Engr. Akan G. Tula, MBHTE representatives, BPDA representative, BICTO representative in the person of Noraymen Dimasangcay, RSCom members, Academe, Media, and other participants.

A preliminary meeting was held prior to the forum, held at PSA-BARMM. The meeting involved presentation of the results to MBHTE and BICTO, also attended by Dimasangcay, on Wednesday, May 28, 2025. Among the results related to BICTO were the 'Exposure Rate (in %) of Population 10 to 64 years old by Region and by Various Forms of Mass Media, BARMM and Philippines, 2019 and 2024' and 'Percent Ownership and Subscription of Households by Region and by ICT Devices and Subscriptions, Philippines and BARMM, 2019 and 2024'.



# BICTO JOINS FORCES FOR GREENER BARMM:
## Advancing Renewable Energy and ICT Integration



The Bangsamoro ICT Office (BICTO) was represented by Engr. Brian Carl R. Esmael, ECT, MPA, Head of ICT Infrastructure Management. Participants explored renewable energy technologies such as solar, hydro, biomass, and waste-to-energy solutions, as well as tools like HOMER, PVsyst, and Helioscope for project simulation and optimization. Key sessions also tackled feasibility studies, financing mechanisms, and microgrid system design.



Engr. Esmael collaborated with BARMM representatives to align renewable energy integration with BICTO's programs, including BangsaNet and community digital hubs, highlighting the potential of solar-powered solutions for off-grid communities.

The Capacity Building Workshop on Renewable Energy (RE) Development was held from May 18 to 23, 2025, at SotoGrande Hotel, Davao City, to enhance technical and institutional capacity in renewable energy planning, system design, financial modeling, and software-based project simulation. The training supports the implementation of the Bangsamoro Sustainable Energy Master Plan (BSEMP) and the integration of clean energy in regional infrastructure development.



The six-day workshop concluded with evaluation and certificate distribution, reaffirming BARMM agencies' commitment to advancing sustainable and climate-resilient infrastructure. Representing BICTO, Engr. Esmael emphasized the agency's readiness to apply the knowledge gained in support of energy access and digital transformation across the Bangsamoro region.

# BICTO EMPOWERS MFBM EMPLOYEES
## through Digital Literacy Training



In support of strengthening digital skills in the Bangsamoro bureaucracy, the Bangsamoro Information and Communications Technology Office (BICTO) successfully conducted a Digital Literacy Training for employees of the Ministry of Finance, and Budget and Management (MFBM) on May 27–28, 2025. The training formed part of MFBM's Learning and Development Program.





Held at the BICTO ICT Literacy and E-Governance Training Center and the Carumba Building, MFBM Extension Office, the sessions covered Microsoft Office 365, Google Workspace, and Google Gemini, facilitated by Ms. Noraymen D. Dimasangcay and Ms. Bai Sheikah Marie Cueto.

On the second day, modules on Internet Etiquette and Computer Hardware and Software were delivered to enhance responsible digital citizenship and technical understanding.



Participants engaged in hands-on activities, group tasks, and presentations, with the most active group receiving special tokens of recognition. The program concluded with closing messages from Mrs. Noria B. Usman, HRMO V of MFBM, who expressed gratitude for the partnership, and Mrs. Normina Adza, BICTO's Head of Planning and Capacity Building Division, who emphasized the importance of continuous digital upskilling.

This initiative highlights BICTO's commitment to building a digitally capable and empowered workforce, supporting the broader vision of One BARMM and advancing the region's digital transformation.

# KICK-OFF CEREMONY OF THE 4TH BANGSAMORO ICT MONTH 2025



The Bangsamoro Information and Communications Technology Office (BICTO) formally commenced the 4th Bangsamoro ICT Month 2025 Kick-Off Ceremony held on June 2, 2025 (Monday) at the Office of the Chief Minister (OCM) Front Building, Bangsamoro Government Center, Cotabato City. This annual observance aims to highlight the region's advancements in digital transformation and reinforce the commitment of the Bangsamoro Government towards building an inclusive, secure, and innovative digital ecosystem. The 4th Bangsamoro ICT Month 2025 in a vibrant Kick-Off Ceremony held in conjunction with the region's regular flag raising ceremony. Adding a cultural touch, participating employees and staff proudly wore ASEAN-inspired attire, showcasing the unity and diversity of the Bangsamoro workforce.

The program was officially opened by Executive Director Jonathan M. Mantikayan, Ph.D. IT, who underscored BICTO's forthcoming initiatives. In his message, he stated,



> ***"This year, we already hopefully In Shaa Allah that we can roll out different plans, policies, and guidelines, and some of these are the following: the Bangsamoro e-Government Master Plan, the Bangsamoro Broadband Plan, the Bangsamoro Cybersecurity Plan, the Bangsamoro ICT Policies, and the Bangsamoro Information System Strategic Plan."***

A message of support from Chief Minister Hon. Abdulraof A. Macacua was delivered through Senior Minister Mohammad S. Yacob, Ph.D., who remarked, **"Today, we're making history together. This is more than just an opening of ICT Month 2025 - it is a first step in a vision we have long shared: a Bangsamoro that is connected empowered, and fully ready for the digital age."**







Member of Parliament Susana Anayatin, Ph.D., also conveyed her support, emphasizing the importance of digital inclusion. She expressed, ***"Sa panahon ngayon ng globalization, it is very important to stay digitally connected, kaya nagpapasalamat tayo sa BARMM Government sa pamamagitan ng BICTO sa patuloy na nag-eempower sa ating mga empleyado and youth."***

For the closing remarks, Mr. Mohajiren B. Diang, MSc.IT, Chief of the ICT Infrastructure and Services Division (ICTISD) of BICTO, extended his gratitude to all participating ministries, offices, and agencies. He acknowledged their active involvement and ongoing collaboration in shaping a digitally resilient and future-ready Bangsamoro.

The ceremony was successfully held and attended by representatives from various ministries, offices, and agencies (MOAs), alongside ICT personnel and key stakeholders across the region. The event marks the beginning of a month-long series of activities, trainings, and knowledge-sharing sessions that aim to further strengthen the digital landscape of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM).









# GROUNBREAKING FOR A DIGITAL FUTURE

## BICTO launches BARMM Wide Internet Connectivity Project

As part of ICT Month 2025 with the theme **"Connected Bangsamoro: One Region, One Digital Future,"** the Bangsamoro Information and Communications Technology Office (BICTO) officially launched the BARMM-Wide Internet Connectivity Project (Infrastructure Component) through a groundbreaking ceremony on June 2, 2025, at the Bangsamoro Government Center.

The momentous event was graced by esteemed guests including Deputy Minister of MILG MP Eddie Alih, Senior Minister Mohammad S. Yacob, Assistant Senior Minister Abdullah Cusain, MP Dr. Susana S. Anayatin, a representative from the Office of City Mayor Norfahad Dimacisil, and Mr. Mike Johnson from Newtech Asia Pacific Corporation, the official contractor of the project. In his opening remarks, BICTO Executive Director Dr. Jonathan M. Mantikayan emphasized,



> **"This project is not merely about internet access-it's about connecting people, fostering innovation and building a digitally-empowered Bangsamoro for generations to come"**



He proudly announced that the project will begin in Cotabato City, with the main satellite installed within the Bangsamoro Government Center, distributing signals to all 37 barangays in the city. The next phase will cover the island provinces, ensuring that even the farthest corners of BARMM are digitally connected. BPDA Director Akmad A. Guinta delivered an inspirational message, underscoring the project's strategic alignment with the Bangsamoro Development Plan's vision for a resilient and digitally inclusive region.



Deputy Minister of MILG MP Eddie Alih commended the initiative, stating, ***"This project is a gift of progress to our people. I am personally thrilled that even far-flung areas like my hometown in Tawi-Tawi will soon enjoy free internet access. And when the groundbreaking reaches Tawi-Tawi, MILG - and I - will be there."***




Senior Minister Yacob also extended his commendation, noting the project's potential to uplift the lives of constituents through digital connected transformation. Representing the private sector, Mr. Mike Johnson of Newtech Asia Pacific Corporation remarked,



> **"We are honored to be part of this journey. With our technology and BARMM's vision, we are confident in delivering a digital backbone that empowers communities, enhances education, and drives economic growth."**



In closing remarks, Engr. Brian Carl R. Esmael, ECT, MPA, Head of ICT-Infrastructure Management System, expressed heartfelt gratitude to all stakeholders and highlighted the project's broader vision: ***"This is just the beginning of a smarter, more connected Bangsamoro. With the rollout of Wi-Fi connectivity and the integration of smart city technologies, we are laying the foundation for a truly digital future."***

This groundbreaking ceremony marks not just the start of an infrastructure project—it is the beginning of a digitally united Bangsamoro, where no community is left behind. Indeed, the BARMM-Wide Internet Connectivity Project is more than a technological development—it is a declaration that the digital future of the Bangsamoro is being built today.

# BICTO Joins National ICT Month 2025 Kick-off & Groundbreaking Ceremony for the First Node of the BARMM-Wide Internet Connectivity Project



In celebration of National ICT Month 2025 led by the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT), the Bangsamoro Information and Communications Technology Office (BICTO) proudly joined in the virtual kick-off ceremony streamed live from Basco, Batanes via zoom conference, carrying this year's theme: "*Walang Iwanan sa Digital Bayanihan*."



Executive Director Jonathan M. Mantikayan, PhD.IT, alongside Mohajiren T. Diang, MSc.IT, Chief of the Infrastructure Services Division, Engr. Brian Carl R. Esmael, MPA, Head of the ICT-Infrastructure Management Section and other BICTO key personnel, joined this nationwide initiative in support of the collective mission to ensure an inclusive digital transformation for all — a mission BICTO is steadily advancing within the Bangsamoro region.



In line with this celebration, BICTO officially launched the BARMM-Wide Internet Connectivity Project with the installation of the first out of ten tower nodes located behind the Office of the Chief Minister at the Bangsamoro Government Center in Cotabato City. This pilot node will bring internet connectivity to 37 barangays in the city, laying the groundwork for wider digital access in the region.

The installation of the remaining nine nodes across BARMM will soon follow, with site clearing already underway. This Infrastructure connectivity project is fully funded under the Special Development Fund (SDF) 2023, aims to deliver reliable, high-speed, and secure internet access to underserved and geographically isolated communities in BARMM, using both terrestrial and satellite technologies.

# Equipping MILG for a Safer, Smarter BARMM through Digital Empowerment

As part of ICT Month 2025, the Ministry of the Interior and Local Government (MILG), in partnership with the Bangsamoro Information and Communications Technology Office (BICTO), held a two-day training on "Data Privacy, Cybersecurity, and Basic Information Technology Fundamentals" at the Alnor Hotel and Convention Center, Cotabato City.







The training gathered MILG personnel from Maguindanao del Norte and Sur, Cotabato City, and the Special Geographic Areas (SGA), along with participants from Bangsamoro READi, BLGA, and SGDA. Resource speakers from BICTO, Engr. Brian Carl Esmael and Mr. Arnold Cararag, led discussions on IT fundamentals, AI, IoT, and cybersecurity, emphasizing responsible ICT practices, data protection, and real-world cyber threat scenarios.

In his closing message, MILG Deputy Minister MP Eddie Alih underscored the participants' role as stewards of information and champions of digital transformation in BARMM. The activity highlighted the region's commitment to building a secure, informed, and cyber-resilient Bangsamoro government.



# DIGITAL LITERACY TRAINING
## on Embedded System empowers Bangsamoro Youth



In celebration of the 4th Bangsamoro ICT Month, the Bangsamoro Information and Communications Technology Office (BICTO) conducted a Digital Literacy Training on Embedded Systems on June 10–11, 2025, at the ICT Literacy and E-Governance Training Center, Cotabato City.

This two-day training brought together senior and junior high school students to gain foundational knowledge and hands-on experience in embedded systems and basic electronics. This initiative reflects BICTO's ongoing mission to build a digitally empowered Bangsamoro by investing in the capacity and creativity of its youth.

Opening the program, Mrs. Normina M. Adza, MIT, Head of BICTO's Planning and Capacity Building Division, encouraged participants to embrace opportunities in the ICT field and contribute to the region's digital growth. Facilitated by Mr. Mansur A. Panalangin, CpE, MIT, MSIT from the Ministry of Science and Technology, the training introduced students to the basics of electronics, embedded systems, and Arduino programming. Participants gained hands-on experience in coding and prototyping projects, from simple LED sequences to traffic light systems.













Mr. Norodin T. Intia, LPT, MPA, commended the students' enthusiasm, affirming their potential as future innovators of the Bangsamoro. Top performers were recognized with awards, while all participants received training kits to support their continued digital learning journey.

This initiative reflects BICTO's commitment to fostering digital literacy, innovation, and technical skills among the youth, laying the foundation for a connected and digitally empowered Bangsamoro.

# STRENGTHENING CYBER DEFENSES:
## BICTO Joins DFIR and VAPT Training in Quezon City




Four IT personnel from BICTO's ICT Infrastructure and Services Division—Mr. Datu Raffy Ralph Sinsuat, MSc.IT; Mr. Faisal Imam; Mr. Arnold S. Cararag, MBAex, MDM, MCS; and Mr. Fahad M. Reyes, MIT—completed a 5-day intensive training on Vulnerability Assessment and Penetration Testing (VAPT) and Digital Forensics and Incident Response (DFIR) held from June 9 to 13, 2025, in Quezon City.

This comprehensive training program, organized by BlackBear Security, aimed to strengthen the participants' technical capabilities in addressing real-world cybersecurity threats. Through hands-on sessions and expert-led modules, the team gained essential knowledge and advanced skills in identifying system vulnerabilities, simulating cyberattacks, and conducting forensic investigations and incident response.



This training is a vital step toward enhancing BICTO's cybersecurity posture and ensuring a more secure and resilient digital infrastructure for the Bangsamoro region. A BICTO's continuous initiative efforts to strengthen its cybersecurity capabilities and provide a more secure and resilient digital infrastructure for the Bangsamoro region.

# EMPOWERING ISAL TEACHERS THROUGH ICT:
## BICTO Conducts 2-Day Digital Skills Training in Cotabato City

In its continuing mission to foster a digitally empowered Bangsamoro, the Bangsamoro Information and Communications Technology Office (BICTO), through its Capacity Building Section led by Ms. Normina Adza, MSc.IT, successfully conducted a two-day Digital Literacy Training for Islamic Studies and Arabic Language (ISAL) teachers of the MBHTE Cotabato City Division on June 16–17, 2025, at the ICT Literacy and E-Governance Training Center.

The program equipped educators with essential skills in basic computer operations, Microsoft Word, Excel, and Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools, enabling them to integrate ICT in teaching and administrative work. Ms. Noraymen Dimasangkay, Head of Planning and Monitoring, facilitated hands-on sessions on Word and computer basics, while also introducing AI applications like ChatGPT for lesson planning and productivity. Meanwhile, Ms. Adza showcased Excel's classroom applications, including automated grading systems.

In his opening message, Chief Norodin T Intia, LPT, MPA, MSc.IT, emphasized that ICT learning is valuable for all generations, as it enhances educators' ability to serve learners and communities. In closing, he lauded the ISAL teachers' commitment to growth and assured BICTO's continuous support for educators in advancing digital transformation in schools and madaris.

This initiative reflects BICTO's commitment to inclusive and sustainable ICT development, ensuring that Bangsamoro educators remain equipped to thrive in the evolving digital landscape.








## BICTO CONDUCTS BANGSAMORO REGIONAL ICT QUIZ BEE:

# CHALLENGE ACCEPTED

The Bangsamoro Information and Communications Technology Office (BICTO) successfully hosted the Bangsamoro Regional ICT Quiz Bee: Challenge Accepted on June 17, 2025, at Tanghalang, Michael Clark, Notre Dame University in Cotabato City. This competition gathered talented young individuals from across the region to demonstrate their knowledge and skills in Information and Communications Technology, as part of the key highlight event in the 4th Bangsamoro ICT Month-long celebration.






In his opening message, Jonathan M. Mantikayan, Ph.D. IT, Executive Director II of BICTO, emphasized the vital role of youth in strengthening the Bangsamoro Government through digital empowerment. He encouraged the participants to take advantage of the various ICT-related opportunities available to them and reminded them that, **"***By simply joining this quiz bee***,** *by accepting our challenge***—***you are already winners***.**" He also highlighted that this initiative is part of a broader goal to uplift the image of ICT professionals—not just as technicians, but as key contributors to governance and progress in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM).

Out of over twenty schools across BARMM, only seven institutions answered the call and accepted the challenge, making the name of the event more meaningful. The participating schools were STI College of Cotabato, Notre Dame University (NDU), Cotabato State University, AMA Computer College, COLAND Systems College, MSU Maguindanao, and GLACI. These institutions bravely represented their respective campuses, rising to the occasion with courage and competence.














The competition intensified with tightly contested rounds and narrow scores, leading to a tie-breaker battle for third place between AMA College and MSU Maguindanao. In an exciting showdown, AMA College claimed the third-place title. Coland Systems Technology College proudly secured second place, while Notre Dame University successfully defended its title as the reigning champion for the third consecutive year. This achievement showcases their consistent excellence in ICT education and training.

This regional event not only celebrated intellectual achievements but also emphasized the importance of digital skills in nation-building. Initiatives like this one enable BICTO to cultivate a digitally empowered youth who can make meaningful contributions to the transformation and development of BARMM.





# 1ST BANGSAMORO RESEARCH AND INNOVATION CONFERENCE

The Bangsamoro Information and Communications Technology Office (BICTO) proudly conducted the 1st Bangsamoro Research and Innovation Conference on June 23, 2025, at the Shariff Kabunsuan Cultural Complex. This landmark event was a key highlight of the 4th Bangsamoro ICT Month, celebrated under the unifying theme, **"Connected Bangsamoro: One Region, One Digital Future."**

This conference brought together 17 dedicated researchers from various sectors, including academes, schools represented by STI College of Cotabato, AMA Computer College Cotabato Branch, Gani L. Abpi College Inc., Notre Dame University, Sultan Kudarat State University, Cotabato State University, Maguindanao State University and ministry offices across the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) including Ministry of Science Technology (MOST), Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (MENRE) and Ministry of Basic High Technical Education (MBHTE). Their participation underscored the region's commitment to fostering a culture of research and innovation as a cornerstone for digital advancement.

The event opened with an inspiring address from BICTO Executive Director Jonathan M. Mantikayan, PhD., IT, who underscored the vital role of research and innovation in building a progressive and sustainable Bangsamoro. Adding her voice of support, Member of Parliament Dr. Susana S. Anayatin reaffirmed her commitment to the conference's goals and its impact on the community. The rationale behind the initiative was laid out by Ms. Normina Adza, Head of Capacity Building, while Ms. Noraymen Dimasangcay, Head of Planning and Monitoring, introduced the distinguished panel of evaluators, which included leaders from MOST-BARMM, the OCM-TMS, and BICTO.

Seventeen researchers presented their pioneering works, each followed by an engaging dialogue with the evaluators—an exchange that fostered critical insights and strengthened the value of their outputs. Adding to the conference's momentum was a special presentation from GCASH, represented by Ms. Bea Ranada and Mr. Dolpo Gantuangco, highlighting private sector support for innovation and digital growth.





















In his closing remarks, Chief Norodin Tro Intia expressed gratitude to all participants, panelists, and attendees for their invaluable contributions. He emphasized BICTO's unwavering commitment to providing platforms that empower local researchers and innovators. This milestone event marks a significant step in harnessing research and innovation as catalysts for regional progress, knowledge-sharing, and digital empowerment across Bangsamoro.



## DIGITAL LITERACY & CYBERSECURITY SKILLS
### FOR SAPAD WOMEN AND YOUTH ASSOCIATION

The Bangsamoro Information and Communications Technology Office (BICTO), in partnership with the Bangsamoro Development Agency (BDA), successfully conducted a three-day Digital Literacy Training on Digital Entrepreneurship and Creative Printing Marketing for the Sapad Women and Youth Association. The training was held from June 25 to 27, 2025.

The initiative equipped 20 youth participants with practical skills in digital entrepreneurship, affiliate marketing, and social media management—paving the way for self-sustaining livelihoods through technology. Sessions were facilitated by Ms. Bai Sheikah Marie B. Cueto, CpE, BICTO's Information Officer, who guided participants in using Meta Business Suite and Canva to enhance business visibility and create marketing materials tailored to their ventures.





In his keynote message, BICTO Executive Director Dr. Jonathan M. Mantikayan, PhD, IT, reaffirmed the agency's commitment to empowering grassroots communities through digital inclusion. He emphasized that the training was not just a one-time activity but a catalyst for creating opportunities that ripple across communities.

BDA representatives, including Mr. Kadafy Sinulinding, BCTP Project Coordinator, and Mr. Ricky Chan K. Gubel, Capacity Building Officer, expressed their gratitude to BICTO for its strong support in fostering local capacities through technology-driven initiatives. This collaboration between BICTO and BDA highlights another milestone in advancing inclusive digital transformation in the Bangsamoro, ensuring that women and youth are active participants in the region's digital future.



## BICTO PARTNERS WITH MBHTE-TESD
### FOR CAPACITY-BUILDING TRAINING ON DIGITAL LITERACY



In its ongoing commitment to strengthen digital literacy and upskill the Bangsamoro workforce, the Bangsamoro Information and Communications Technology Office (BICTO), in partnership with the Ministry of Basic, Higher, and Technical Education – Technical Education and Skills Development (MBHTE-TESD), conducted a one-day Digital Literacy Training on June 24, 2025, at Cren Cuisine, Cotabato City.

The training gathered twelve (12) newly hired Information Officers of MBHTE-TESD, equipping them with practical skills in digital content creation through sessions on graphic design using Canva and video editing using CapCut. These tools are vital in enhancing visual communication and digital storytelling to better engage audiences and support the Ministry's communication strategies.



The program opened with a message from TESD Specialist II Abigail Lian A. Morallas, who emphasized innovation and adaptability in today's digital era. The sessions were facilitated by BICTO's Digital Literacy Training team, led by Ms. Korina Kabagani with technical support from Mr. Adneeraf Amil, CpE. This initiative reflects BICTO's continued commitment to building a digitally empowered Bangsamoro through strategic partnerships and capacity-building efforts.



# 4TH BANGSAMORO ICT SUMMIT:

## CONNECTED BANGSAMORO: ONE REGION, ONE DIGITAL FUTURE

The Bangsamoro Information and Communications Technology Office (BICTO) successfully wrapped up the 4th Bangsamoro ICT Summit and Expo on June 24–25, 2025, at the CityMall Convention Hall, Cotabato City. Serving as the grand culmination of ICT Month 2025, this year's summit carried the theme **"Connected Bangsamoro: One Region, One Digital Future,"** reflecting the region's unwavering commitment to digital transformation, inclusivity, and innovation.

### A MONTH OF ICT MILESTONES

Throughout June, BICTO spearheaded a wide array of ICT-driven initiatives that reached across ministries, academe, youth sectors, and grassroots communities. These included the groundbreaking ceremony of the BARMM-wide Internet Connectivity Project, the 4th Regional ICT Quiz Bee, Digital Literacy Training for ISAL Teachers, Embedded System Training for youth, ICT Roadshows, the Systems and Innovations for the Digital Awards (SIDAs) honoring outstanding ministry websites, the 1st Bangsamoro Research and Innovation Conference, and the launching of the Bangsamoro ICT Women for Advancement (BIWA).



This string of activities set the stage for the ICT Summit and Expo, gathering major stakeholders and tech leaders under one roof. Exhibitors from Novare Technologies Inc., Hytera Inc., PLDT, DITO, SMART Communications Inc, TP-Link, R3Hub Technologies Inc., and Neotech Asia Pacific Corp. showcased their cutting-edge products and solutions, while delegates from academic institutions, ministries, government agencies, and partner organizations in BARMM participated in the two-day conference and expo.

Opening the summit, BICTO Executive Director Jonathan M. Mantikayan, PhD., IT, emphasized the role of ICT in shaping a sustainable future for the region.

> **"This summit is not just the culmination of our ICT Month, but a renewed call to all stakeholders to build a digitally empowered Bangsamoro. By strengthening our networks, systems and capacity, we are investing in a sustainable and inclusive digital future."**





His message was reinforced by PLTCOL Rex D. Ganaden, OIC of RCEU-BAR, who highlighted ICT's role in public safety and governance, and **MP Suharto S. Esmael, MSc, who stressed the importance of digital opportunities for the next generation.**

Day 1 of the Bangsamoro ICT Summit 2025 brought together industry leaders, tech innovators, and the region's brightest minds. The morning featured global and national perspectives: UNDP Philippines on the LeAPS Program, Sangfor Philippines on cloud security, Viettel Cyber Security on the nation's threat landscape, and the National Privacy Commission on citizen-centric data privacy. Cisco, through Ardent Networks Inc., capped the session with secure networking solutions. In the afternoon, local partners took the stage. Multisys unveiled LGUBOX for LGU automation, while Neotech Asia, R3Hub Technologies, and VST-ECS presented unified ICT protection systems. A TechTalk session with Novare Technologies and RAG IT Solutions energized participants with scalable, future-ready ICT strategies.

# HONORING EXCELLENCE AND INNOVATION

As the month-long celebration of 4th BARMM ICT Month 2025 came to a close, the Bangsamoro Information and Communications Technology Office (BICTO) formally recognized outstanding contributions in digital innovation, research, and technological advancement during the awarding ceremonies held at the culmination of the 4th BARMM ICT Summit, with theme "Connected Bangsamoro: One Region, One Digital Future."

One of the major highlights of the culminating activity was the awarding of winners in the **Regional ICT Quiz Bee: Challenge Accepted,** a competition that brought together the brightest young minds in the field of information and communications technology.



## ICT QUIZBEE WINNERS



2 **AMA College**



1 **Coland System Technology**



CHAMPIONS

**Notre Dame University**

The **System and Innovations for the Digital Awards** also took center stage as ministries and agencies were recognized for their breakthrough digital solutions and efforts in transforming public service through ICT.

**Digital Governance Award 2025**



*Office of the Chief Minister - Project TABANG*

**Digital Innovation for the Public Award 2025**



*Ministry of Interior and Local Government - LeAps Project*

**Government Website Excellence Award 2025**



*Ministry of Environment, Natural Resources, and Energy*

In line with the commitment to advance research and innovation in the region, the awarding ceremony of the **1st Bangsamoro Research and Innovation Conference** was also held during the summit.



Mr. Mansur L. Panalangin, CpE, MIT, MSIT



Mr. Norodin T. Intia, LPT, MPA, MSIT

**Bangsamoro Research Excellence Award, Most Innovative Research Award**

*"Integration of IoT - Knowledge-Based Architecture in the Development of DTR System for MOST."*

**The Best Researcher Presentation Award**

*"Optimizing Patient Referral System: Enhancing Efficiency and Outcomes in the Healthcare Network."*



Mr. Hisham M. Ebil and Mr. Charl Kennedy O. Tan

**Best Research Poster Design Award**

*"NDU-Tabulation System."*

The successful culmination of ICT Month 2025 stands as a testament to BICTO's unwavering dedication to building a digitally connected Bangsamoro. As the region continues its journey toward digital transformation, BICTO remains committed to leading the charge—bridging gaps, building futures, and empowering every Bangsamoro through ICT. Together, we move forward as **One Region, One Digital Future.**

# Ranaovate Team



**1st Place at the national-level Ideathon: P20ject YSES: Future Ideator Quest**

In further celebration of youth innovation and national representation, BICTO also honored the Ranaovate Team from MSU-CICS from Marawi City with the Excellence in Innovation Award for their outstanding achievement in winning 1st Place at the national-level Ideathon: "P20ject YSES: Future Ideator Quest", held on April 12, 2025, at the University of the Philippines Los Baños. Their climate action-themed project titled **"Klimative"** stood out among other entries for its relevance, creativity, and impact.

## LAUNCHING OF THE BANGSAMORO ICT FOR WOMEN ADVANCEMENT (BIWA)



As part of the 4th BARMM ICT Summit, a significant milestone in promoting gender equality and inclusive digital development in the region was marked through the ceremonial launching of the Bangsamoro ICT for Women Advancement (BIWA). This initiative was formally sealed with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Bangsamoro Women's Commission (BWC) and the Bangsamoro Information and Communications Technology Office (BICTO).




The ceremonial signing was graced by Hadja Bainon G. Karon, Chairperson of the BWC, who delivered an inspiring message underscoring the importance of women's active participation in the digital transformation of the Bangsamoro. In her speech, she expressed full support for the initiative, emphasizing its alignment with the region's ongoing efforts to uplift the role of women in ICT and policy-making.




Mr. Jonathan M. Mantikayan,PhD.,IT Executive Director of BICTO, highlighted that "the BIWA initiative serves not only as a platform to capacitate Bangsamoro women in digital skills, but also as a commitment to foster inclusive and gender-responsive governance through ICT."

This landmark initiative is in support of the Gender and Development (GAD) policies of BARMM, particularly anchored in the Bangsamoro Autonomy Act No. 08, which ensures the promotion and protection of women's rights, participation, and empowerment across all sectors—including technology and innovation.

# DECODING THE DIGITAL AGE:
## ESSENTIAL ICT FACTS YOU NEED TO KNOW

### DIGITAL LITERACY IS A LIFELONG SKILL

Being digitally literate doesn't just mean knowing how to use a smartphone or computer. It means understanding how to navigate the internet responsibly, analyze online information critically, and adapt to ever-changing technologies. In today's digital-first world, digital literacy is just as essential as reading and writing.





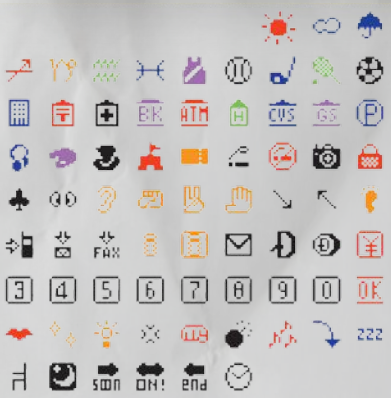

### TECHNOLOGY AND MENTAL HEALTH

While digital tools connect us like never before, **excessive screen time and constant online engagement can affect mental well-being.** Studies show links between heavy social media use and issues like anxiety, sleep problems, and reduced attention span. Balancing digital use with offline activities is vital for a healthy lifestyle.

### THE FIRST EVER EMAIL

The very **first email** was sent in **1971 by Ray Tomlinson,** a computer engineer working on ARPANET (the early version of the internet). He is also the one who introduced the @ symbol in email addresses, choosing it to separate the username from the host computer. The first message wasn't a formal note — it was just a test message, something like "QWERTYUIOP", typed randomly on the keyboard. At that time, the system was only used by researchers and programmers; email was not meant for the public yet.

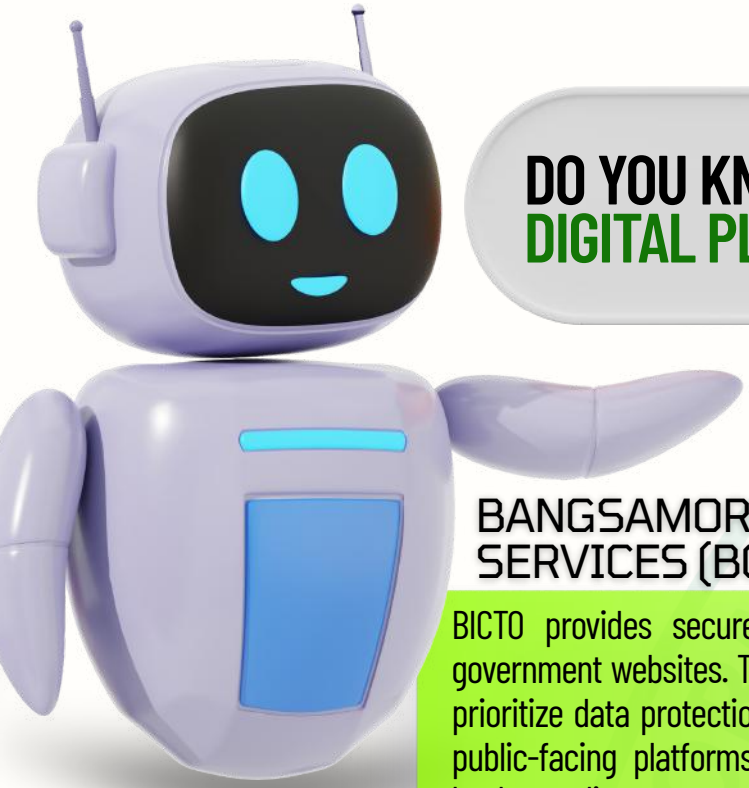




### THE BIRTH OF THE FIRST EMOJI

The very **first emoji was created in 1999 by Japanese designer Shigetaka Kurita**, who was working for the telecommunications company NTT DoCoMo. Kurita designed a set of 176 simple 12x12 pixel images as part of a mobile internet platform called i-mode, aiming to make digital communication more expressive and engaging. These early emojis included symbols for weather, emotions, technology, and everyday activities, laying the foundation for the colorful and diverse emojis we use today. Over time, emojis spread worldwide and became standardized through Unicode, transforming into a universal language of digital expression that connects people across cultures and platforms.

#FACTECHNOLOGY



# DO YOU KNOW THAT BICTO OFFERS FREE DIGITAL PLATFORM SERVICES?

## BANGSAMORO GOVERNMENT WEB HOSTING SERVICES (BGWHS)

BICTO provides secure, reliable, and scalable hosting solutions for Bangsamoro government websites. These services ensure compliance with government regulations, prioritize data protection and privacy, and offer high availability to meet the needs of public-facing platforms. This include features like cybersecurity measures, regular backups, disaster recovery, and technical support, enabling government agencies to deliver digital services efficiently to citizens while maintaining trust and transparency.

## BANGSAMORO GOVERNMENT MAIL SERVICES (BGOVMAIL)

BICTO offers secure and efficient email solutions tailored for Bangsamoro government agencies. These services prioritize data security, privacy, and compliance with government regulations, ensuring the confidentiality of official communications. This includes encrypted messaging, large storage capacities, spam filtering, and administrative controls for managing users and permissions. By providing a centralized and reliable communication platform, government mail services enhance collaboration, streamline operations, and maintain trust in official correspondence.

## BANGSAMORO GOVERNMENT WEB APPLICATION SERVICES

BICTO provides tailored solutions for developing, hosting, and managing web-based applications designed to meet the unique needs of Bangsamoro government agencies. These services support a wide range of functionalities, such as public service portals, data management systems, and e-governance tools. This emphasize security, scalability, and compliance with government standards while ensuring accessibility and user-friendliness for both citizens and government personnel. By leveraging these services, Bangsamoro governments can improve efficiency, transparency, and the delivery of digital services.

## BANGSAMORO GOVERNMENT NETWORK SERVICES

BICTO provides secure and reliable connectivity solutions for Bangsamoro government agencies, enabling efficient communication, data sharing, and collaboration across departments. These services include the design, implementation, and management of local and wide-area networks (LAN/WAN), virtual private networks (VPNs), and dedicated high-speed connections. We prioritize robust cybersecurity measures, scalability, and compliance with regulatory standards to protect sensitive Bangsamoro government data. By ensuring seamless and secure network infrastructure, these services support the delivery of public services and the operation of Bangsamoro government functions.

## DIGITAL LITERACY TRAINING

BICTO equips individuals with the skills and knowledge to effectively use digital technologies for communication, information access, problem-solving, and productivity. We cover topics such as navigating the internet, using software and apps, understanding online safety and privacy, and fostering critical thinking in evaluating digital content. The goal is to empower participants to confidently engage with technology in personal, professional, and educational contexts.

CYBERSECURITY OPERATIONS SERVICES

NETWORK AND INFRASTRUCTURE MANAGEMENT SERVICES

DIGITAL GOVERNANCE AND INNOVATIONS SERVICES



# TECHRONICLE 2025

Republic of the Philippines
Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao
Office of the Chief Minister
**Bangsamoro Information and Communications Technology Office**

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