



TOPIC 64

CONNECTING COMMUNITIES IN RURAL VIETNAM

THE CHALLENGE

Over 70 percent of Vietnam's 82 million people live outside urban communities. At a time when Vietnam plans to re-allocate hundreds of millions of dollars to expand information and communications technology industries, only 1.85 percent of its entire population uses the Internet. In rural areas traditionally dependent on agriculture and forestry, access to modern telecommunications remains scarce. Communities with little or no exposure to information and communications technologies (ICT) are not prepared to equip young workers with the technical skills they need to join an increasingly ICT-oriented workforce.

THE APPROACH

To meet Vietnam's IT goals, the Training Online Partnership in ICT for Community (TOPIC 64) Global Development Alliance seeks to create or upgrade one Community Technology Learning Center in each of Vietnam's 64 provinces. By using Qualcomm's wireless technology to build on Vietnam's fiber backbone, TOPIC 64 connects its learning centers through an extensive wireless network that brings broadband and voice access to the country's rural areas. TOPIC 64 employs Microsoft's Community Learning Curriculum to train students in basic computer skills, Internet skills and digital media, and software program lessons. The training, which includes Windows, the K-12 curriculum, and a range of other applications useful to local citizens is available in Vietnamese. TOPIC 64 has also teamed up with other donors to distribute the curriculum to 300 vocational schools.

PARTNERS

Microsoft, Qualcomm, Electricity of Vietnam, Centre for Research and Consulting on Management



RESULTS

- TOPIC 64 trained 5,067 students in the first fifteen learning centers by March 2007. 1,723 students received free training.
- 474 ICT instructors have received training through TOPIC 64.
- 12,000 students will receive training in all 64 centers by the end of 2007.
- 70,692 students will receive training at affiliate learning centers in 2007.
- TOPIC 64 enables youth population to compete for better paying jobs across the country.
- By harnessing leading-edge technologies, Vietnam is positioning itself for expanding job creation and a more prosperous future.