

ALWAYS ON, ALWAYS CONNECTED PCs PROMOTE DIGITAL LITERACY AND SUPPORT CONTINUITY OF LEARNING

Challenge

Education is a key driver for social and economic development. In 2020, more than 90 percent of students worldwide were impacted by school closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic. At Qualcomm, we believe that mobile technology can bring high-quality education to all communities and ensure continuity of learning, regardless of income status or location. Mobile technology, powered by Qualcomm inventions, has helped shape a better future, in part, by bringing the Internet to the unconnected and education to the unschooled. [Qualcomm® Wireless Reach™](#) is our strategic initiative to bring advanced wireless technologies to underserved communities globally.

In 2020, Qualcomm joined the [Global Education Coalition](#), an international multi-sector partnership convened by [UNESCO](#). The coalition aims to meet the urgent and unprecedented need for education continuity considering school closures, the shift to remote learning and the interruption of teaching and learning brought about by the pandemic.

Solution

Wireless Reach collaborated with [The Dariu Foundation](#) to bring educational laptops with mobile network connectivity to schools in Vietnam, ensuring continuity of learning whether students are at home or in the classroom. At the start of the new academic year in November 2020, the program delivered more than 900 “Always On, Always Connected PCs” (ACPCs) powered by Qualcomm’s Snapdragon compute platforms to teachers and students at 30 schools in rural communities across five provinces.

ACPCs are a powerful new category of PCs, with products specifically tailored for educational laptop markets. These devices are equipped with mobile LTE capabilities to ensure a continuous connection to the Internet, which is important for students who, because of the pandemic, are becoming accustomed to remote and distance learning. Pre-installed with Microsoft Windows 10 operating system, these ACPCs are ultra-thin and lightweight while offering fast performance, powerhouse multimedia capabilities and multi-day battery life. These features make them extremely portable, enabling students to extend learning time outside the classroom and to access vital learning tools anytime and anywhere.

In Vietnam, due to limitations for online learning and a proactive COVID-19 containment strategy, students resumed in-class activity in record time. Currently, students ages 9 to 15 are using the ACPCs in a computer lab format. A selected number of students are taking the devices home to work on collaborative coding assignments. The Dariu Foundation provides professional development for teachers and trains them to deliver in-class lessons that provide students with STEM skills, including coding, computer science and cyber robotics.

Learning Impact Outcomes

For eighth graders Huong Ha and Khanh Vy, getting to school is the toughest part of the school day. A journey on makeshift wood planks and vegetative debris to get across floods is common, and coordinating with classmates to remain vigilant for landslides is a matter of survival. While engaged in a coding club assignment, Ha and Vy seized the opportunity to envision the world as it can be and leveraged the ACPCs to invent an early-warning system prototype for flood and landslides. They entered their invention in a competition and was awarded an Honorable Mention. Ha and Vy are continuing to keep busy inventing for sustainable change and making their community a better place to live.

Return On Investment

Qualcomm’s work with The Dariu Foundation promotes the expansion of digital literacy. By making educational devices more widely available, this program will equip approximately 30,000 primary and secondary-level students in Vietnam with the foundational digital skills to succeed in online and blended learning environments and thrive in the digital economy. Initially deployed across Southern provinces, the program is expanding into Northern provinces with support from the [Kind Heart Foundation](#).