Just 18 percent of households across Mexico have an in-home Internet connection. For students, workers, entrepreneurs, and other citizens, this lack of connection to the digital world limits education and job opportunities, and slows the economic and social development of the country.

The Digital Home program is an ambitious nationwide initiative designed to address these problems by providing affordable access to the Internet in all new housing developments. A recent pilot program in Villas del Pedregal, in the city of Morelia, Mexico, demonstrated the potential of Digital Home. In a community of about 3,500 families, more than 2,230 registered for low-cost Internet services over the course of just one year.

Digital Home is a public-private partnership formed in late 2009 between Intel, Microsoft, and INFONAVIT. The program includes Internet connectivity, training courses, and a community portal—all designed to create new opportunities for economic growth and improved quality of life.

The citizens of Villas del Pedregal now have new opportunities for education, employment, and a better overall quality of life.
This Is Digital Home

Digital Home is a nationwide program designed to provide a better quality of life in Mexico by generating education and employment opportunities, and promoting social and economic development. Several pilot projects have been completed, with Villas del Pedregal the largest to date.

Begun in late 2009, Digital Home represents a public-private partnership between Intel, Microsoft, and INFONAVIT, which is Mexico’s government housing assistance agency. INFONAVIT offers a national housing fund that will soon require Internet connectivity in new homes—a service to be provided by Digital Home.

Digital Home provides new housing developments with access to Internet infrastructure, including:
• Low-cost Internet service
• Digital content courses
• Computer equipment

Background: Life in Villas del Pedregal, Morelia

In Mexico, only 28 percent of citizens use the Internet, a lower percentage than seen in most developed nations and in nearby countries including Costa Rica and Venezuela. In addition, the ICT Development Index for 2002 to 2007—which measures ICT readiness, use, and skills—ranks Mexico 75th, behind Colombia, Kuwait, Panama, Romania, and many other developing nations.

Life in Villas del Pedregal reflects the national struggle to provide the infrastructure, technology, and skills necessary to support Internet usage. The community includes about 3,500 families, and prior to Digital Home, just two in 10 had a computer and only half accessed the Internet about once a week.

To access the Internet, the vast majority of Villas del Pedregal residents had to visit Internet cafés or, in some cases, they could access the Internet at work. Citizens like Emanuel Araiza, for whom computer skills and Internet access are critical for professional development, were limited to public access points, often with slow Internet connections.

Process and Impact of Digital Home

Beginning in December 2009, Intel collaborated with Microsoft and INFONAVIT, as well as local companies Siway, Synnex and Grup Herso, to begin the Digital Home pilot project in Villas del Pedregal. The goal of the project was to assess the feasibility of building an IT infrastructure for the community and to evaluate the level of interest in low-cost home Internet access.
With the help of several local companies, the Digital Home program made broadband home Internet service available across Villas del Pedregal for 125 pesos a month (about USD 10), with speeds of 512 Kbps. More than 2,230 of the community’s 3,500 residents signed up for the program, with the majority of users between the ages of 13 and 45.

**Education and Training**

In addition to building the infrastructure to support home Internet access, Digital Home offered free classes on computer and Internet usage. The training courses provided information to residents on electronic security and how to use e-mail, social networks, electronic banking, and other online services.

Angeles Vazquez, who attended a training session with her children, exemplifies the potential of the program to engage new users and provide new opportunities for the next generation. “We came because we know nothing of computing,” she said. With the help of Digital Home, Vazquez and her children now have greater access to computers and the Internet, and the skills necessary to take advantage of advanced technologies.

**Community Portal**

The Digital Home pilot project in Villas del Pedregal also included creation of an online community portal through which residents can communicate with each other and share important information.

In addition to providing a social connection, the portal has enabled more than 50 families in the community to begin micro-businesses that leverage the community portal to advertise their products. The new businesses include a pharmacy, grocery store, building supply store, and cyber café.

**Summary**

The Digital Home pilot project in Villas del Pedregal, Mexico, demonstrated that it is possible to provide affordable Internet access to households across Mexico—and that there is a high demand for these services.

With improved Internet access and skills training, the citizens of Villas del Pedregal now have new opportunities for education, employment, and a better overall quality of life. Best of all, Digital Home projects could result in similar benefits in other developing countries around the world.

**Achieve Your Vision**

Contact your local Intel representative to discuss opportunities to expand access to computers and the Internet in your area.
Intel World Ahead Program

The Intel World Ahead program is Intel’s global effort to improve lives, economies, and societies by driving advances in:

- Access to appropriate technologies
- Broadband networking
- 21st century education
- Locally relevant content and services
- Healthcare

The World Ahead program supports policy-driven initiatives by providing hands-on expertise and resources, and by sharing the best practices we’ve formulated from our involvement with hundreds of digital inclusion initiatives around the world. Together, we’re creating the world ahead.

For more information, visit [www.intel.com/worldahead](http://www.intel.com/worldahead)