

THE DEVELOPMENT OF DISTANCE EDUCATION IN RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 CRISIS

Capitalization of the practices of the members
of PARTAGE RISE on distance education

BELSOEUR GAËL AND OLIVEIRA ANA-MARIA



TABLE OF CONTENT

2023 STUDY

05

Introduction

06

Contributors to capitalization

10

Capitalization of experiences

13

The axes of capitalization

12

Part 1:
Preparation and implementation
of the distance learning system

- 1. Identify the needs of children and families (p.14)
- 2. Working and developing skills collectively(p.15)
 - Build the action plan collectively (interdisciplinary) (p.15)
 - Get the team up to speed on this action plan (p.16)
- 3. Use your network and partners (p.17)
 - Stay connected and rely on the institutional ecosystem (p.18)
 - Find complementarities with local authorities and other local services to better support children (p.19)
 - Monitor and benefit from external expertise (p.21)

22

Part 2:
Facilitation of learning

- 4. Use learning relays: parents, community (p.24)
 - Adapting the role of parents according to their situation (p.24)
 - Raise awareness, train and reassure parents about their role (p.26)
- 5. Vary the tools, and play on their complementarity for hybrid learning (p.28)
 - Use new media (p.28)
 - Continue to produce and transmit physical media (p.30)
- 6. Vary and adapt learning situations (p.31)
 - Mix “knowledge” and “physical” experience (p.31)
 - Use the game to keep the child active (p.31)
- 7. Maintain the link to the collective (p.32)
 - Teaching in a family (p.33)
 - Organize learning in small groups in the neighbourhood (p.33)
 - Also use group and synchronous distancing (p.34)
- 8. Adapt the relationship to time: short content, consistency, flexibility (p.35)
 - Use simpler tools (p.35)
 - Use self-directed learning methods (outside of class time) (p.35)
 - Changing work habits: adapting to schedules (p.36)
- 9. Have time dedicated to the welfare of the child and parents: fun and socializing training (p.36)

38

Part 3 :
Inclusion and support of all children

- 10. Ensure reinforced, sometimes individualized communication and monitoring (p.40)
 - Preserving the health and psychological integrity of children (p.40)
 - Adapting communication to families (p.41)
- 11. Think of tools that are accessible to everyone or guarantee their use (p.43)
 - Imagine accessible play material, and reorganize the learning space (p.43)
 - Know how to support the use of tools and get them adopted (p.44)
- 12. Facilitating access to technologies for distance education (p.44)
 - Groupings around those with equipment (p.45)
- 13. Go to: keep access to places, to people (p.45)
 - Mobile devices (p.46)
 - Opening of classrooms (p.47)
 - Working from home with children (p.47)

48

Conclusion



INTRODUCTION

PARTAGE, a French charity for international solidarity, has been supporting local children's aid associations around the world since 1973.

Its objective is to accompany and strengthen the capacities of local organizations so that they can implement actions that contribute to the respect of the rights and dignity of children. Today, **PARTAGE** leads a network of local partners composed of 29 associations in 19 countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America-Caribbean and Europe working on the themes of education, health, child protection and community development.

Named **PARTAGE RISE** - Réseau International de Soutien à L'Enfance (International Child Support Network) - since 2017, this network of local actors aims to be a "learning network" and promotes the sharing of experiences and learning among peers.

In March 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in the closure of schools in many countries around the world and the interruption of face-to-face classes. To ensure continuity of teaching, most schools have had to reorganize and find alternatives to the classroom model. The members of **PARTAGE RISE**, like all other actors working on education, have been forced to take up the challenge of distance education. Even if some of them already had experience in this field, it is certain that the Covid crisis was a gas pedal and allowed many organizations to take the step.

The present work is the result of the capitalization of initiatives put in place by 10 members of **PARTAGE RISE**. It illustrates in a very concrete way the way in which the latter have organized themselves to provide responses adapted to the contexts and realities of each country. The three parts of the document present the three major challenges faced by the members:

- The need to prepare for distance education devices, a novelty for most members;
- The necessary pedagogical renewal, which is accompanied by a renewal of tools, because distance education cannot simply replicate the tools and methods traditionally used;
- Finally, the support and inclusion efforts needed, as we know that distance education can cause problems of exclusion or isolation for children.

The practices described in this document present only an overview of experiences, which have since been enriched. The reader will find the necessary ingredients to start implementing distance education practices. This document refers to four "Zoom" sheets that present concrete examples of actions implemented and that will allow those who wish to start experimenting to do so.

We hope that this capitalization will strengthen the expertise of all members of **PARTAGE RISE**, and perhaps also more broadly of other actors in the educational sector, so that distance education becomes a practice shared and integrated by the various organizations.

The members of the steering committee contributed to this study:
Fanja Randriambololotiana and Bakoly Randrianasolo of the **NGO VAHATRA**.
Youssef Dainane and Soultaine Cheihina from the **NGO MAEECHA**.
Marie Benketaf and Nahuel Dumenil from the **NGO PARTAGE**.

CONTRIBUTORS TO CAPITALIZATION

2023 STUDY

Among the 10 members of the PARTAGE RISE network participating in this capitalization of experiences:

6 structures participated only in the collective capitalization:

San Juan, INEPE, Renaitre, Bandos Komar, AGACC, Compartir

4 structures have carried out individual capitalizations in addition to the collective capitalization:

Vahatra, MAEECHA, SESOBEL and BIKALPA



MAEECHA

- Intervention area/country/region: Indian Ocean, Union of Comoros, Anjouan, Nyumakele region
- Date created: 2005
- Number of beneficiaries and target audience: 11,500 students aged 5 to 12, enrolled in 25 public primary schools in Nyumakele + Adda Maeеча Community School (ECMA) and 6,500 adults (teachers, parents)
- Main activities in education: improvement of learning and teaching conditions in Nyumakele's EPP; capacity building of education actors and community involvement in school life; awareness raising on children's rights



VAHATRA

- Intervention area/country/region: Indian Ocean, Madagascar, Vakinankaratra and Itasy regions
- Date created: 2008
- Number of beneficiaries and target audience: 540 children and youth aged 3 to 16 and their families
- Main activities in education: individualized support for children and their families, support for students with academic and social difficulties, psychological and health support for families



SESOBEL

- Intervention area/country/region: Moyen-Orient, Liban, Beyrouth
- Date created: 1976
- Number of beneficiaries and target audience: 145 children and youth aged 3 to 18 with disabilities and 403 adults
- Main activities in education: care and support for children with disabilities (speech therapy, motor rehabilitation, technical equipment, individualized schooling, etc.), involvement of parents and siblings in the children's life project, psychological support and training for families.



BIKALPA

- Date created: 1997
- Number of beneficiaries and target audience: 101,976 children and youth aged 6 to 18
- Main activities in education: open schooling for out-of-school children through several alternative schools in vulnerable neighbourhoods, support and training of children's clubs/children's councils in schools for peace education, promotion of a culture of peace and gender equality through events and a television program.



SAN JUAN

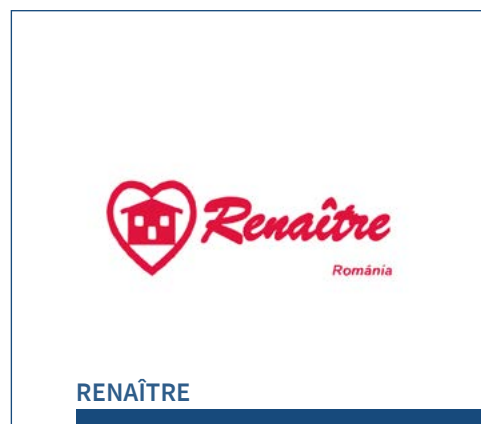
- Intervention area/country/region: Latin America, Ecuador, Quito
- Date created: 1986
- Number of beneficiaries and target audience: 200 children and young people aged 0 to 18 with disabilities
- Main activities in education: integral and inclusive support for children with cerebral palsy (physical, linguistic and psychological therapies, artistic and creative activities), support for those involved in education for the inclusion of children (teachers, parents)
- E@d's activity described in the capitalization: creation of practice sheets for the psychological support of children and families and realization of online sensitization workshops for parents; follow-up of families via digital media; sensitization on the needs of early learning activities.



- Intervention area/country/region: Latin America, Ecuador, Quito
- Date created: 1985
- Number of beneficiaries and target audience: 879 children and youth aged 3 to 18
- Main activities in education: management of a popular education school, weekly workshops of extra-curricular activities (yoga, dance, musical ensemble, crafts, etc.), design and animation of virtual courses accessible to teachers.
- E@d activity described in the capitalization: Educational continuity at a distance through a digital modality; Curriculum for online degree-granting teacher training.



- Intervention area/country/region: Latin America, Brazil, Fortaleza
- Date created: 1985
- Number of beneficiaries and target audience: 3,600 children and youth aged 6 to 15
- Main activities in education: psycho-social and educational support for children in vulnerable neighbourhoods through awareness-raising activities, the circulation of reading tents, artistic and sports workshops and awareness-raising on youth issues.
- E@d activity described in the capitalization: reinforcement of reading actions, distribution of pedagogical kits and exercise books to families to allow pedagogical continuity.



- Intervention area/country/region: Europe, Romania, Orăștie and Hunedoara
- Date created: 2000
- Number of beneficiaries and target audience: 602 children and youth aged 3 to 18 and 379 adults
- Main activities in education: accompaniment and school support for children from vulnerable backgrounds, social and medical support for families, food support, and psychological care.
- E@d's activity described in the capitalization: accompaniment of the families benefiting from the project to allow them access to educational tools facilitating pedagogical continuity.



- Intervention area/country/region: Latin America, Honduras, Tegucigalpa
- Date created: 1991
- Number of beneficiaries and target audience: 2,300 children and youth aged 6 to 15.
- Main activities in education: promotion of schooling and support for children and teenagers, provision of school supplies and uniforms, care for families in need of socio-medical and psychological support, awareness raising on protection against abuse.
- E@d activity described in the capitalization: distribution of pedagogical kits and exercise books to families to allow pedagogical continuity, promotion of reading through the distribution of books and audio broadcasting of books read.



- Intervention area/country/region: Asia, Cambodia, Pursat and Siem Reap
- Date created: 1999
- Number of beneficiaries and target audience: 15,226 children and youth aged 3 to 12
- Main activities in education: holistic/overall strengthening of education structures in the intervention areas with a view to empowering schools: access to quality education services through the provision of teaching and learning materials, school uniforms, rehabilitation of school infrastructure, access to libraries for children and training of educational teams in collaboration with local authorities.
- E@d's activity described in the capitalization: accompanying teachers in their mastery of the tools and practices made available by the State for pedagogical continuity (governmental platform for access to school at home).



CAPITALIZATION OF EXPERIENCES

Capitalization, different from an evaluation, does not question the results of actions. It aims to observe the practices and know-how mobilized by the actors. Capitalization focuses on the "how" of an action much more than on the "why". In this sense, it makes it possible to clarify and formalize empirical knowledge that is often diffuse, in order to be able to organize it with a view to both transferability and sharing.

Capitalization is based on the conviction that we learn through experience; that experience is the source of knowledge and that knowledge is not only found in books. Experience is indeed a "capital" to be valued. From there it is possible to decline the capitalization in the following way:

"To capitalize is to value what we know how to do" ¹

Capitalizing consists in taking time to analyze what you have done and to step back from your experience. In this process, one often becomes aware of the knowledge, know-how and skills created, tested and accumulated in the course of actions.

Implicit, non-formalized knowledge is lost. Capitalization makes it possible to record the memory and value the experience. From a methodological point of view, capitalization will focus on identifying and collecting the knowledge, know-how and skills used by the actors. It is not limited to listing the conditions of success of an action but to specifying "**how the actors did it**".

"To capitalize is to transform tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge"

Capitalizing is defined as transforming personal, implicit knowledge that draws on the person's experience and know-how into structured knowledge that can be passed on to others. Beyond the individual improvement of actors, the capitalization of experiences also makes it possible to strengthen and develop the capacities of organizations.

"To capitalize is to give ourselves the keys to prepare for the future"

Capitalization analyzes past experience but is not limited to "taking a picture" of what has been done. By its iterative nature, capitalization is a forward-looking approach and not a backward-looking one that seeks to immortalize actions. It aims to extract the essence of what can be sustained without wanting to be exhaustive. Capitalization does not seek to formalize knowledge, know-how and life skills in order to reproduce them identically. For other actors and other actions, the knowledge, know-how and interpersonal skills identified constitute benchmarks, sources of inspiration that need to be appropriated, modified and adapted. In this sense, capitalization feeds innovation.

¹ Cf. Villeval Philippe & Lavigne Delville Philippe, *Capitalisation d'expériences... expérience de capitalisation*, Traverses N°15, Groupe Initiatives, 2004, 46 p.

THE AXES OF CAPITALIZATION

PARTAGE RISE members developed distance education methods/practices during the Covid 19 health crisis, which, depending on the country, constrained or made impossible the "usual" education programs - implying the use of new methods and practices.

By distance education are understood here all the practices participating in the education of the child, including those concerning the improvement of the environment of the child in support of its education (material, social, ...).

The axes of capitalization presented below have made it possible to circumscribe the field of research of learning and know-how mobilized by the members. They were identified on the basis of Partage's expectations and a framing work prior to the capitalization involving the members of PARTAGE RISE (documentary reading, pre-framing interviews, framing meeting).

Axis 1: Maintaining the diversity and quality of methods for distance education

This first axis aimed at specifying the way in which the members imagined and set up actions of distance education while preserving the specificity and the diversity of their approaches. Two capitalization questions were formulated:

- How have we adapted our **various** educational methods for distance education?
- How did we ensure the quality of the proposed new tools?

Axis 2: Working with the child's environment in distance education

- Axis 2 aimed to explore how the members of **PARTAGE RISE** worked with the school environment, parents, the community, and more globally all the actors involved in the educational process. One question guided the capitalization work:
- How did we involve the different actors in this new educational environment (families, especially mothers, authorities in charge of educational programs, ...)?

Axis 3: Taking into account constraints and vulnerabilities in distance education

- Finally, Axis 3 aimed to identify how the members of **PARTAGE RISE** took into account vulnerabilities in order to propose adapted alternatives, at the beginning or during the action. For example, problems of access to technology, specific disability issues, or specific gender issues. The following two capitalization questions were stated:
- How have we responded to the crisis situation in distance education proposals?
- How did we address or circumvent the specific constraints that certain vulnerable groups faced in relation to distance education?

PART 1: PREPARATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DISTANCE LEARNING SYSTEM

Prior to the pandemic, the members of **PARTAGE RISE** had, for the most part, very little or no distance education practice. Some, like INEPE (Ecuador), had begun training teachers via online tools; most used cell phones or social networks on an ad hoc basis to transmit information. But the teaching was mainly face-to-face. No organization was prepared to suddenly have to adapt in a hurry. Yet they were faced with this during the multiple school lockdowns or closures that were imposed from January 2020 to January 2022.

To ensure pedagogical continuity and continue to support children at a distance, all the structures participating in this capitalization first found ways to (re)organize their teams and their strategy in order to adapt quickly and offer distance learning solutions.

This reorganization made it possible to define the guidelines to be able to act as soon as possible. It also favored the dynamic that animated the teams to adapt their methods and transform their way of doing things. It is based on both a collective response and a renewed involvement of individuals. This moment of crisis seems to be engraved in the memory of the organizations that were able to overcome this ordeal together and were thus able to acquire new know-how and develop a new way of doing teaching.



Identify the needs of children and families

The use of distance learning methods raises the question of the resources and needs of children (and their families) to adapt to a new learning context. School offers everyone the same learning conditions, but at home, children face very different constraints.

To propose a new adapted device, the members of **PARTAGE RISE** had to take into account the situation of the children on at least 3 levels:

- 01 The economic and material situation of families, including whether or not they have access to technology (computer, tablet, etc.), an internet connection, or the space available in the home for their children to study in good conditions.
- 02 The learning environment, such as the presence or absence of tutors (parents, innate siblings, etc.) to help children or the material and psychological difficulties of some parents and children (anxiety, fear of illness, depression, etc.).
- 03 And in some cases, the particular physical or psychological barriers of children to distance education, such as physical disability.

In order to identify the needs and propose a suitable system, the members first mobilized their teams and their knowledge of the field. Educators, social workers, legal counsellors, secretaries... all had a sense of the needs of children and families. Then they supplemented this analysis with survey work:

- Questionnaires sent to families or administered by telephone, allowed us to obtain quantitative information and to raise specific points (number of people with access to an internet connection, number of families with television, telephone, etc)
- The solicitation of people in contact with the children and families, educators, teachers, community representatives... also allowed us to get information on the needs of the children and families.

Comoros: **MAEECHA** offered courses through community radio stations

MAEECHA, in the Comoros, has chosen to broadcast the lessons for the last year of primary school, through 3 community radios. Indeed, **MAEECHA's** team discarded the idea of television, which was not sufficiently established in homes, and preferred community radio stations to national radio, which offered better coverage in the targeted rural areas.

This first phase also allowed **MAEECHA** to identify the number of families who did not have a radio. As a result, about 50 positions have been donated to homes to complete the system.

Working and developing skills collectively

Once the needs and constraints are identified, the distance learning system can be built or refined. To maximize the success of the project, it is important to mobilize the team's collective skills, and to reinforce them where necessary.

Build the action plan collectively (interdisciplinary)

The shift to distance education devices represents a profound change for unprepared organizations. The change is not just about pedagogy.

The implementation of infrastructures requires technical know-how, new methods of accompaniment and follow-up, the use of new tools or the preparation of methods/technical sheets in order to facilitate the use of the tools by the children, the parents and the animators/trainers.

In order to act quickly and efficiently, the members of **PARTAGE RISE** worked in interdisciplinary teams (teachers, computer scientists, administrative teams).

In some organizations, the presence of an IT department or of people already at ease with communication tools has facilitated the construction of adapted solutions.

In Romania: a reflection with all the teams **before** the action plan

When the lockdown was announced, **Renaitre's** teams took time to consider priorities before proposing an action plan. The management team gathered the entire team and launched a reflection on the role of **Renaitre** in this context of crisis: “what does it mean to move to distance learning? What does it entail? Does the team feel up to the challenge?”. Based on this reflection, 3 areas of work were identified:

- Keeping in touch with all children to prevent them from dropping out of school is essential
- Strengthen the school's link with families to better support children
- Quickly train teachers and then children in online learning



Get the team up to speed on this action plan

The distance education devices designed require specific skills and therefore in some cases an upgrade:

- An ability to implement and use new tools and media;
- An adaptation of engineering and pedagogical techniques;
- A new way of accompanying children and their families
- A new way to communicate with for example WhatsApp or social networks.

PARTAGE RISE members have implemented several ways to make progress on distance education tools.

01 The first source of progression was internal and partly informal: many "hidden talents" appeared during the adaptation phase. IT departments have been very helpful in discussing possible technical arrangements and in helping to get a handle on new resources. Some teachers or staff members also had advanced use of communication tools, for example WhatsApp, as in AGACC (Brazil), or making video materials, as in SESOBEL in Lebanon, and shared their knowledge.

02 Peer groups were organized in a more formal way, to encourage mutual support and sharing of experiences. INEPE (Ecuador), for example, set up weekly coordination among teachers, which allowed the team to continuously self-train. Teachers who had knowledge of the tools and platforms had dedicated time to support the rest of the team.

03 Finally, in some cases, real training has been offered to teams:

- Internal training courses were set up when the structure had the capacity, as in **Bikalpa** (see below);
- Or external training, as in the case of **Renaitre** (Romania) who wanted to accompany the children on Google Classroom (distance learning platform used at the national level). Staff and external teachers took the "Digital Nation" course on online teaching - via an e-learning platform.

With these different ways of doing things, the members of **PARTAGE RISE** made the teachers more comfortable and equipped, which allowed them to be more creative in pedagogy and devices. The more the teachers or coaches knew about the technology, the more they were able to use its specificities and propose an adapted pedagogy.

Virtual Teacher's Training: the implementation of distance learning for teachers

In Nepal, the **NGO Bikalpa** can rely on an internal service dedicated to the reinforcement of teachers. In 2020, this service offered for the first time a distance learning course for 110 teachers on the topic of learner autonomy.

Organized over 4 half-days, each animated by a different speaker, this first online training has largely mobilized the team who imagined a new

technical device, a format and contents, and an adapted animation to reinforce and convince the teachers.



Use your network and partners

Distance learning is new to most of the partners of PARTAGE RISE; however, many actors have been confronted with this challenge at the same time. The implementation of this new form of pedagogy was therefore easier to set up by collaborating with their partners (or by investing in new networks). Distance learning also provides an opportunity to review the way we work with the external environment by "opening up" the school, including changes in the way we relate to and communicate with local and national authorities.

Stay connected and rely on the institutional ecosystem

To implement distance education methods, it is not necessary to create everything yourself and it may be preferable to rely on official schemes. Governments in many countries implemented distance learning platforms or programs during the Covid-19 health crisis.

Some **PARTAGE RISE** members have valued these platforms:

- By sometimes adapting the contents on the ones made available by the government (by translating them into local languages, for example)
- By accompanying the children to use the platform at the technical level but also at the pedagogical level.

In Cambodia, facilitate the use of the national E-Learning platform

In Cambodia, **Bandos Komar** worked with children to facilitate the use of the E-Learning platform set up by the government (supported by a TV show for grades 1 to 12). At the same time, the team has adapted academic support to the priority content identified by the state - which is the subject of the school assessments.

This strategy saved the team from having to technically manage an E-Learning platform or a TV show - and instead focus on supporting the children with existing resources.



The members of **PARTAGE RISE** were also able to find solutions to adapt to the new rules in effect. **BIKALPA**, in Nepal, or **Compartir** in Honduras have, for example, installed megaphones on one of its buses in order to inform without coming into physical contact with the children in the slums.

At times, the members of **PARTAGE RISE** have acted as "contributors" to the improvement of the distance learning arrangements in place when the latter did not take into account the specificities of certain children.



In Lebanon, a plea to change the rules for children with autism

In Lebanon, **SESOBEL** has built an advocacy approach with the Ministry of Social Affairs, so that the situation of children with disabilities, including autism, is taken into account. To carry out this advocacy, **SESOBEL** relied on its network of partners and used personal contacts to reach decision-makers (for example, a mother of a child who was in contact with members of parliament).

With the help of observations made during the first distance learning courses, they were able to demonstrate the difficulty for autistic children to follow a 100% distance learning course and highlighted the need for these children to keep physical contact either with the teachers or with other children. They obtained a relaxation of the law and that accompanied children can go out without receiving a fine.

Find complementarities with local authorities and other local services to better support children

Distance learning arrangements do not facilitate direct contact with children and families. However, this contact is essential to accompany the children and guarantee the quality of the teaching. Especially in a crisis situation where sometimes new problems emerge within the households (loneliness, conflicts, economic problems...). Services, individuals, or organizations may have access to the homes because of their proximity to the families or their prerogatives, and have leverage to help the children and their families. This is particularly true of local authorities or social services.

The members of **PARTAGE RISE** have collaborated on a regular basis with public, semi-public or general interest authorities, to facilitate the follow-up and care of families when the problems went beyond their scope of competence.



In Romania, a cooperation between Renaitre and local authorities

The members of **PARTAGE RISE** have always cooperated with other actors of childhood. This cooperation proved to be indispensable during Covid, in order to be able, despite the distance, to identify possible problems in the homes. In Orăștie, Romania, **Renaitre** has strengthened its collaboration with social workers and local authorities. Social workers were able to identify families in difficulty. They provided the information to **Renaitre**, who conducted their own investigation and determined whether the family was eligible for the support program offered by **Renaitre**.

Renaitre also produced periodic reports so that the mayor's office could identify and report child protection cases.



The need to work remotely has allowed some members to strengthen communication with the authorities. The use of direct discussion channels, including instant messengers (Telegram, WhatsApp, Signal, ...), have facilitated a closer and more direct relationship with local authorities.

Members could send information at any time without having to make an appointment. These direct exchanges made it possible to better adapt to current health issues, and to avoid conflicts or conflicting information.

Using Telegram with local authorities in Nepal

In Nepal, **BIKALPA** used Telegram messaging (the only messaging accepted by the authorities) to communicate with local authorities. This made it possible to obtain information quickly, for example, on new directives at the national level.

The use of "groups" also made it possible to organize meetings with the right people and to share information regularly.

Monitor and benefit from external expertise

Technical solutions for distance learning are numerous and rapidly evolving. Similarly, in a crisis situation, restrictions or directives issued by governments can change on a daily basis. A permanent watch through social networks allows us to be informed and to take decisions quickly to better adapt the support systems for children. Monitoring also allows you to be inspired and learn from the experiences of others. The members of **PARTAGE RISE** have thus participated in peer networks, encountering similar situations:

- Networks fed by actors working in the same sector or experts sometimes offering webinars, video or text resources, etc.
- Specialized actors who disseminate quality or reliable information

For example, **Bandos Komar** (Cambodia) used a network of local NGOs, the Network of Health and Sanitation, UNICEF and the World Health Organization to monitor the health situation and adapt accordingly.

12 group videoconferences in the PARTAGE RISE network in 2022

The peer network is the first network to learn, but also to measure and relativize its difficulties and become more aware of its successes. In 2020, Share Rise members participated in group video conferences to share their innovations in distance learning. In all, 12 group videoconferences were organized (5 English-speaking, 4 French-speaking and 3 Spanish-speaking) with each time a significant amount of time spent presenting the solutions implemented by the members. They have greatly contributed to enriching members' knowledge and reflection on distance education.

The organization of webinars has also made it possible to share many other initiatives, such as making masks (by sharing the pattern/method for making masks) so that children can return to school.

These videoconferences allowed members to learn from the experiences of others and implement them at home.



To go further, members have also mobilized their network to contribute skills or time to improve their system.

For example, **Compartir** had exchanges with the faculties in Honduras, which made it possible to involve trainees to accompany the children, to elaborate pedagogical material, to accompany the families... during a period when the emergency situation and the need to rethink all the support required a lot of time for the teams.

PART 2: FACILITATION OF LEARNING

The main challenge in a distance education system is to offer adapted and varied learning mechanisms that facilitate comprehension and avoid dropping out of school and do not leave the child alone to learn.

The activities and educational tools usually used in the classroom are not perfectly adapted for distance education: non-existent, not accessible to homes, too complicated to be used alone by the child, not transposable to distance media... This raises important questions about learning: What are the different ways children learn?

How can learning be envisaged when time with the child is limited, when being in the room together is not possible?

How do you create content that is as fun as possible, and include learning both during and outside of the sessions with the teacher?



Use learning relays: parents, community

A relationship of trust is essential for the children to be in good learning conditions. However, this relationship of trust can be altered by the lack of direct contact between the child and the teacher and thus cause a dropout, especially for less autonomous children. In order to accompany the children in their homes, the members of **RISE** shares have developed interactions with the parents or close relatives of the children. The latter can play both a technical and pedagogical support role. Specific support was provided by the teachers, depending on the availability and needs of the parents, so that they could assume a supportive role on a daily basis.

This link established with the families allowed to reinforce the parents/school links and it is a real added value because it highlights the importance of the parents' investment in the success of the children's schooling.

Adapting the role of parents according to their situation

The role of the parents was essential in motivating the children and providing a supportive learning environment. In particular, they have played a valuable role:

- 01 Facilitate the transmission of information or materials from the teacher to the child ("postman");
- 02 Improving the child's learning space, helping to put the child in a better position, providing and operating equipment - telephones, radios... ("logistician");
- 03 Accompany the child in learning, help him/her to concentrate and understand the instructions ("tutor");
- 04 Accompany the assessment of the child's learning ("assessor")

In Comoros, **MAEECHA** mobilized parents to accompany children

MAEECHA has mobilized parents to accompany the children who follow the community radio programs. Parents were involved from the beginning: they were informed and made aware of the importance of the program, and then participated in the purchase of the student booklet that accompanies these programs. Each week, while listening to the radio, the children complete exercises in their notebooks. Parents bring the notebooks to school for the teachers to correct. Then the parents go the other way and report the corrections. This allowed parents to be involved in the children's learning.

A practice of collaboration between teachers and parents already existed in **MAEECHA** through the PCVA (Parents in Charge of Absence Monitoring) program. This device provides a link and mediation between teachers who identify regular/long absences of children and those parents who visit the families to understand why.

During the period of confinement, the parents' availability was not the same as in normal times: no more presence at home but very often in a telecommuting situation having to manage several activities at the same time. The members of **PARTAGE RISE** have adapted to the constraints of parents, especially in terms of scheduling. For example, some classes were scheduled in the evening, or repeated several times during the day, so that parents would be present.

Teachers also participated in informal gatherings such as the Mother's Day celebration to improve communication, strengthen the bond, and ensure that parents were also healthy. The members of **PARTAGE RISE** stress the importance of taking care of the parents' well-being so that the children are in the best conditions to learn. By putting them at the heart of learning, the role of parents has been strengthened and the academic success of children facilitated.

In Lebanon, mothers are the most involved mediators

In Lebanon, **SESOBEL** has worked extensively with parents to facilitate sessions with children. But in 90% of the cases, it was the mothers who invested in the education of the children. As in many countries, in Lebanon, the distribution of tasks within the household remains unequal and women remain the main actors of domestic and parental activities. Based on this reality, **SESOBEL** has set up specific support to strengthen the role of mothers:

- Value the crucial role of mothers, at all times, in motivating children and preventing them from dropping out of school
- Organize activities (sewing speed contest, Mother's Day celebration) and create a climate of solidarity to keep the mothers connected and motivated
- Provide specific counselling to strengthen the mother/child bond. For example, prioritize times to be available and completely present to the child while learning and not doing anything else at the same time.



Raise awareness, train and reassure parents about their role

In a context where parents are not used to follow their children in their schooling, either because of a lack of availability, but also sometimes because, not knowing how to read or write, parents do not feel able to accompany their children, the members of **PARTAGE RISE** have done a great deal of awareness raising to convince them of the necessity of their involvement so that the children succeed in their schooling. They conducted training activities on certain technical or pedagogical aspects. But the most important thing was to reassure the parents, to give them confidence in their ability to accompany the children. Indeed, it is sometimes difficult to be the teacher of one's own child and not all parents are equipped to do so.

In Madagascar, sensitized parents encouraged to form an association

In order to involve and empower parents, **Vahatra** brought them together to present the objective of the distance activities and to detail the material that would accompany the children during the school year. Then, once a month **Vaharta** would contact the parents for new information, communicate the program, explain the pedagogical exercises to do. This strategy aimed to strengthen the involvement of parents in the school education of children, so that they can better accompany their child on these new activities.

Also, **Vaharta**'s team has encouraged the creation of parents' associations in order to have spaces for discussion on the importance of education and the role of parents in school success. To convince parents, Vahatra used arguments based on concrete examples identified in the community to show that the relationship with the child, the establishment of a space for the child to work, the absence of physical violence... were factors favorable to the good development of the child in a distance education program.

Once the parents had been made aware and convinced, it was also necessary to equip them with the tools they could use. In particular, when parents were in charge of co-leading school or extra-curricular activities:

- 01 Parents have been trained to use the material and to install it for their children (radio, tablets, educational material...);
- 02 Groups of parents were informed at the beginning of the year, but also every month, sometimes every week, of the children's work program and the exercises that were proposed to accompany them;
- 03 Parents have been trained to accompany the children during the sessions or while listening to the programs, thus serving as educational relays;
- 04 And parents have been coached to position themselves to create a more supportive learning environment for their child.

In cases where parents were required to facilitate or co-facilitate activities, members mostly showed parents how to do the activities, either live or in the form of tutorials. Parents could then replicate them with their children and build their skills.

For example, San Juan (Ecuador) offered parents the opportunity to perform the activities with the children in front of the camera, and the educational team gave the parents directions to correct and therefore train them.

To go further, some members have developed a more active form of training, with a co-construction of knowledge with the parents. At AGACC (Brazil), the teaching teams have found new games and activities proposed by parents. In the case of SESOBEL (Lebanon), parents chose from a range of available activities.



Zoom sheet - Example of **SESOBEL** (LEBANON) - Working with parents -

SESOBEL in Lebanon, is a structure that offers learning, follow-up and care adapted to children with disabilities (autism, motor disabilities, mental disabilities, etc.).

With the confinement in 2020 **SESOBEL** has proposed remote activities for children. They have given an essential place to the parents, who have become the real relays of the special educators to implement the learning objectives defined for each child in his individualized intervention plan.

Depending on the case, the parents were observers, or participants, and they became “ full-time members of **SESOBEL**’s courses “.



Almost all members of **PARTAGE RISE** make the same observation: distance learning has facilitated parental involvement in their children's education. Tools like WhatsApp, Messenger allow you to communicate with each parent individually, faster and better. A relationship of mutual trust is established between parents and educators, which encourages their investment. The more parents are involved, the more the child has a better chance of succeeding in school. Parents and teachers can play a complementary role. Although the role of parents is more important in the case of distant education, it is not about parents becoming teachers instead of the teacher but to play the role of “accompanists”: rethink spaces and places for child learning, organize work areas adapted to each child, support the child to become independent in the use of digital tools, follow-up on educational activities, etc.

Vary the tools, and play on their complementarity for hybrid learning

Distance learning can be based on a wide variety of tools that can complement each other. They allow to solicit the child from different angles, and to circumvent certain constraints that families may encounter (this makes it possible not to be dependent on a single tool). For example, some tools used by members require individual or collective learning, are accessible permanently or at specific times, are interactive or not...

Hybrid training is also an interesting approach : distance education tools are used to support face-to-face sessions, either in the classroom or in the home.

Use new media

The use of new technologies is essential for e-learning and digital technology takes an important place for transmitting educational content, interact with children synchronously synchronous ("*live*") or asynchronous ("*offline*").

Some platforms are specifically dedicated to distance education (Google Classroom, Moodle, Microsoft Teams,...). But members of **PARTAGE RISE** also showed imagination by using other less specialized, less expensive media who are already known to the children or their parents.

Many of them have chosen to use radio or television, to the extent that these are media accessible to a significant portion of children (in different context) and are well controlled by parents. Moreover these media are not “exclusive”, they don't necessarily ask everyone to have a terminal – for example, several families can listen to the same radio.



Social networks are also an effective tool, which also allows interaction (synchronous or asynchronous). Although some members were already using social networks before implementing a distance education strategy, for example to pass prevention messages, several of them have created and animated a specific page for children's learning.

Social networks have served as a convenient channel to send messages, materials, course content to children. Members published mostly video in there, as well as visual materials ("posters").

In the case of a page (asynchronous), children and parents had the advantage of being able to connect when they had time and connection available.

In the Comoros, a community radio program for primary school students

In 2020, **MAEECHA** launched a radio program, accompanied by a workbook, to allow fifth grade kids who couldn't go to school to follow the essential lessons of their program and take their year-end exams.

The programs, broadcast on three radio stations, covered three themes of the school program:

Mathematics, French and awakening. 82% of students in affected areas have successfully passed their 6th grade entrance exam.



In Ecuador, **Centro San Juan**, distributed the educational videos via social networks

San Juan team has prepared educational videos for children to work from home and made them available online.

Social networks have enabled the San Juan to better support children, especially the most disadvantaged, by the lack of computer or permanent connection. Indeed, the use of a mobile phone, connected to the internet, was more than enough to access the various course contents. In addition, it allowed children to see and review the videos as many times as necessary for a better understanding and assimilation of contents.

The advantage also was that the videos produced for distribution via social networks are of short duration and therefore concise and easy to understand content for children.



Continue to produce and transmit physical media

Members were aware of the limitations of digital tools used for distance education:

- The lack of household equipment ;
- The lack of practice of children on these tools ;
- And the possible lack of interactivity for some of them (the radio does not allow to have the feedback on child labour for example).

So they made the decision to continue using physical learning materials and to organize their transmission from teacher to child and vice versa.



Weekly paper guides to complement videos in Ecuador

In Ecuador, **San Juan** has produced age-appropriate videos for children, as a distance learning medium. But these videos represented visual and audio media with which the child could not directly interact.

The team has decided to created in addition weekly paper “guides” allowing the children to learn thanks to a physical support.

These “guides” were distributed house by house. Teachers in San Juan relied on educators, who could enter the houses for therapeutic and educational activities, to ensure the transmission of the guides.

Some members also thought from the outset an interaction between two types of media, which have become intimately linked. For example, the radio broadcasts from **MAEECHA** (Comoros) referred to the student’s notebook, the two worked together.

Vary and adapt learning situations

Different ways of learning for different children – and the alternation of learning situations allows, like in class, a good transmission of knowledge.

The multiplicity of tools put in place by members allowed to vary the situations facilitating understanding and increasing motivation in children. Some tools have been made available by external partners, often by the government (distance learning platforms). Others were imagined by members.

Mix “knowledge” and “physical” experience

The learning experience for children, in the classroom, is not just a learning experience in acquiring “**theoretical**” knowledge (active or passive), but also physical experimentation. In member education practices, children interact with objects, with each other, they move in a physical space, they play sports, ...

This link between sensory and theoretical learning is particularly important for certain audiences. Children with autism or multiple disabilities accompanied by **SESOBEL** have benefited, for example, from sensory sessions provided by the parents. For example, parents had to discover textures by touch, make children listen to sounds... to awaken their senses and learn by being more active.

Use the game to keep the child active

Even at a distance, members reflected on keeping children active in their learning. Play is a method that promotes the use of fun activities to stimulate child learning and allows you to approach essential content in a simple way.

Members of **PARTAGE RISE** were able to adapt some of their methods, so that children can play and learn, even without the physical presence of the teacher and supervisors

*For example, for the children to wash their hands, parents were asked to make a point with a marker on the palm of the hand. The play was to wash your hands until the point has gone. (**Compartir**, Honduras)*

In other cases, the game could be integrated in a “reward” system associated to learning. Vahatra (Madagascar) has for example developed mini-games libraries, in which parents could recover educational games for their children once they had borrowed books.

In Ecuador, the Club San Juan’s fun learning

San Juan has set up the “*Club San Juan*”, a weekly virtual event that brought children together. Organized every Saturday, the Club San Juan offered fun activities to do at home, working on touch, taste... Far from being a theoretical teaching, the San Juan club allowed children to develop curiosity about their environment, to explore while having fun.



Maintenir le lien au collectif

L’enseignement à distance peut provoquer un sentiment d’isolement, dû au format individuel et au manque d’interactions avec les enseignant-es mais aussi avec les autres enfants. L’enfant, se retrouve seul face à son cahier et peut avoir un sentiment de solitude qui provoque un manque de motivation et peut, parfois, aboutir à un décrochage scolaire.

A travers leurs pratiques d’éducation à distance, les membres de **PARTAGE RISE** ont trouvé des méthodes et des outils permettant aux enfants de continuer à apprendre avec d’autres.

Maintain the link to the collective

Distance learning can create a sense of isolation, due to the individual format and the lack of interaction with teachers but also with the other children. The child finds himself alone in front of his notebook and can have a feeling of loneliness that causes a lack of motivation and can sometimes lead to school dropout.

Through their distance education practices, members of **PARTAGE RISE** have found methods and tools for children to continue learning with others.

Teaching in a family

During the health crisis, several members of **PARTAGE RISE** continued to provide home support where possible. Instead of individually supporting children, they made the choice to support all children in the same home. This required offering adapted learning for children of different levels/ages.

This choice made by several members allowed both to reach more children (60 to 120 children affected, instead of 30, depending on the size of the focal spot) but above all, it allowed to reach and accompany children not registered in school programs.

In the case of **Renaitre** (Romania), or **Vahatra** (Madagascar), and where certain home visits were possible, the teachers managed to bring together 5 children at a time, spread over several classes. Teachers could offer collective learning times to children, in complementarity with more individualized activities, such as homework, etc. Brothers and sisters replace the classmates to stimulate themselves.

Organize learning in small groups in the neighbourhood

Members also proposed learning groups outside the family setting, which has also provided better access to education and more collective learning. Small groups combined mitigation of risks (related to the pandemic), and direct interactions between children.

These groups have fostered more effective support by facilitating visits by teachers, particularly by overcoming the logistical difficulties related to the number of children. In a dozen visits, teachers were able to cover the forty or so students under their responsibility.

In Cambodia, small groups gather around TV programmes

Bandos Komar identified in villages small groups of children close enough to be able to watch TV programmes together.

Teams noted that children were helping each other and learning more effectively. Teachers led these small learning groups. Each teacher went to a place to work with 4, 5 and up to 8 children. He offered them a lesson and instructions for working.

Also use group and synchronous distancing

Remote tools created by **PARTAGE RISE** members have enabled children to continue to have access to learning content that they could use individually and, in the case of online videos or homework books, to do it when they wanted/could.

To complete this range of tools, members also created a link between children through online tools, which has helped maintain or develop wider communities wider than just the family group or neighbourhood groups. Facebook pages or groups, virtual class times (in video, for example on Zoom) with their comrades continued to punctuate the educational path of the children.

Those times were important because they allowed children to feel less isolated, to feel that they are always part of a community of children, and therefore not to pick up. Sometimes, the maintenance of this link could be done in person, through collective sessions, which were sometimes organized in classrooms (where these were still accessible to small groups), or sometimes at the neighbourhood level, if educators or teachers could travel.

In Lebanon, remote recreational activities that promote interaction

SESOBEL hosted online "*recreational*" events for children with "*special needs*" that they accompany (autistic children, persons with motor disabilities...). These sessions were joined by the children of **SESOBEL** staff (including educators, but also other team members): an unusual "*classroom*" situation that promotes dynamics, sharing, and ultimately acceptance among children.



Adapt the relationship to time: short content, consistency, flexibility

The relationship to time is quite different in distance education: the concentration time is more limited, it takes more discipline and regularity becomes very important to maintain the child's learning. Accessibility and clarity of tools become essential, to learn on a reduced time, as well as the choice of schedules when they are imposed.

Use simpler tools

Without the presence of the teacher, or educator, to accompany the various activities or help in case of problem, the child has difficulty learning. Members of **PARTAGE RISE** then simplified their tools, to make them more accessible. It was first necessary to simplify the instructions but also to consider shorter teaching ranges.

Members of **PARTAGE RISE** realized that it was more useful to focus on the essentials for short lessons, regardless of the medium:

- 01 On the radio, a lot of work has been done to reduce instructions and choose accessible exercises;
- 02 In the individual learning books, the format chosen was simple stories rather than major theoretical lessons;
- 03 The audio or video clips were timed to 10-15 minutes, even 5 minutes in some cases,...

That kept the kids focused. Some members, like **SESOBEL** in Lebanon, noted a disengagement of some children if the lessons were longer than 10 minutes.

In addition, these "*simpler*" tools have contributed to the accessibility of content – with shorter downloads or cheaper books. Some educational content was sent simply by SMS (smscenter.com in Nepal) with information and visual support (posters and prints...).

Use self-directed learning methods (outside of class time)

Even if the collective times, the gatherings around a videoconference, a live radio broadcast, or a visit to the neighbourhood, are important, they were much shorter than the time usually spent in the room. Also members imagined tools and times during which children could continue to learn **outside of these sessions**.

We mentioned previously the content offered on social networks, which can be reviewed at any time. Members also worked to make workbooks tools giving children as much autonomy as possible.



In Nepal, children’s self-learning books

BIKALPA has created self-directed learning books in Nepal. Using very simple content, they enable children to learn with their parents very easily and when they want. For example, a page in the English learning booklet offers the student to describe a story from a comic book.

Changing work habits: adapting to schedules

Adapting to time also requires taking into account the pace of children and families to foster learning. Learning times are no longer linked to school schedules, but at times when children are in the best learning conditions.

Some teams have temporarily committed to unusual schedules. For example, members adapted to the times at which parents were available, that is, often in the evening, outside of their working hours.

Some content has also been offered at several times, like **MAEECHA**’s radio show (broadcast 3 times a day). This temporality allowed children (and parents) to listen to the schedule where they were most available.

Have time dedicated to the welfare of the child and parents: fun and socializing training

Children learn through educational activities, but also through a whole range of social activities. When they are with the children, educators, teachers organize times that keep the child motivated – not just to learn, but more generally to wish to continue learning.

In this case, education is seen as a whole: education is not just the sum of contents or knowledge integrated by the child, but it is all experiences that contribute to his development and therefore, his well-being, his ability to interact with others.

As a result, several members organized “off-curricular” activities to support the connection to others, comrades, teachers, family... and, in doing so, to maintain motivation and strengthen the children’s desire to learn.

Compartir in Honduras - Cultural and fun activities complementary to the provision of content

Members of **Compartir** in Honduras have understood that fun activities (music, dance, etc.) were essential during distancing. Even more than in person, it was necessary to focus the courses not only on theoretical content but also work on the awakening of children and the development of their social skills. For members of Compartir, fun and entertaining activities are a vector of learning, socialization, acquisition of values, strengthening the self-esteem and development of the child. Therefore, indispensable for their development.

It was important for Compartir’s team to keep the link with children and families, to show that Compartir was there for them. This link also helped to maintain children’s interest in reading, literature, plastic activities (painting, drawing), music...

As a result, several activities were carried out throughout the lockdown period:

01

Loan of books to children
A car was driving around the neighborhood and played a little “ice truck” music to warn of their arrival. Children could borrow the books they wanted. Sometimes, with books, Compartir, also gave children paper and pencils so that children can continue to draw.

02

Distribution of brochures
The distribution of «funny» brochures but conveying essential messages for children’s socialization: compliance with collective rules, learning to share, waiting in turn, etc.

03

Distribution of audio documents
Distribution of pre-recorded children’s stories allowed them to keep their motivation and a special connection with the school. *"Every week the children looked forward to the new stories".*

04

Le "bibliosac" (the "bookbag"):
An educational games case was shared from house to house so that parents and children can play together.

05

Music activities
Music activities were kept at a distance. **Compartir** was able to distribute musical instruments to those who wish (flutes, guitars, etc). Music classes were delivered virtually or recorded by video, so that children can watch them as many times as necessary. The school choir groups were followed remotely.

06

Sport activities
Sports teachers showed the children, remotely and through small videos, how to do physical exercises and stretching at home without appropriate equipment.

PART 3 : INCLUSION AND SUPPORT OF ALL CHILDREN

same for everyone. Not everyone has a TV at home (and television was the main channel used by some governments to ensure distance learning. Internet access is limited for many families as well as the use of SMS mobile phones and social networks. For some, access to electricity is still difficult especially in non-urban areas.

Setting up distance education schemes or integration of distancing in learning, requires special vigilance in situations of visible or "hidden" exclusion (children with disabilities, children with digital divide, child labour) which can be accentuated by distance, gender discrimination, etc.). These situations can quickly create inequalities, lead to school dropout and even lead to breaches of duty to protect and guarantee the right to education of children.

Members of the **PARTAGE RISE** network have found solutions to better support and improve the children's environment. Or identify situations and find solutions when the child was not in good conditions to learn. The goal for members was to ensure that 100% of children are monitored and remain in the school system.



Ensure reinforced, sometimes individualized communication and monitoring

At a distance, the teacher or accompanying persons identify problems less easily the problems the child is facing, and they do not necessarily perceive in which environment the child is learning. Communication has therefore been at the heart of distance education.

PARTAGE RISE members used new communication tools (social networks, WhatsApp, etc.) and personalized contacts with families to ensure that children are taking programs in the right conditions.

Preserving the health and psychological integrity of children

Distance education imposed by the global pandemic has been a sensitive period for some children, who have suffered firsthand the problems of the home. Family problems of precariousness, psychological distress, social isolation, violence..., have impacted children harder during this time of crisis.

To anticipate this, members of **PARTAGE RISE** made sure they understood the problems of families to know how to support them. Overall, two strategies were used:

- 01
- Direct and regular contact with families, setting, for example, regular appointments with families;
- 02
- Maintaining links with the actors who kept in touch with the families. Good relationship and in-depth knowledge with actors have enabled various information to be gathered. Sometimes information that teachers did not have access to.

In Ecuador, an inter-institutional network to monitor families

To be alerted to the difficulties of children and the health and emotional situation of families, **INEPE** has created an inter-institutional family monitoring network.

Through a collective work involving teachers, administrative team, families and associations related to them, **INEPE** was able to follow up and propose appropriate responses to family difficulties.

Strengthening consideration of vulnerabilities for girls

During the period of the crisis, members noted that some vulnerabilities were exacerbated by children not attending school, that the economic and psychological situation of the population was in part worsened.

In some countries, such as Nepal, young women found themselves more isolated facing very difficult family issues. For example, many partners have seen an increase in gender-based violence (**BEL AVENIR**, **MAEECHA**, etc.).

BIKALPA, present in Nepal, took into account these difficulties and readjusted programs developing specific programmes for teenagers, who were more exposed to harassment and sexual violence.

Adapting communication to families

To keep trust with families and maintain their commitment in supporting children, very good communication is needed. A good relationship between teachers and parents allows the parents to transmit information on children's problems, it sometimes helps convince parents to help each other.

For this, communication with families requires an adaptation to cultural habits and a flexibility, for example by adapting schedules where parents are available.

Adapt channels of information used and information sent

To ensure that we can communicate well with families, members reflected on the means available and the costs to pass on the information, and particularly those that **were available and used by families**. In most cases, they used a combination of several methods to convey information, using both technological tools, meeting places (where possible), relays.

When households were equipped, members, like Bandos Komar (Cambodia), used smartphones and social networks to get their messages across, by being careful to use the most popular solutions (WhatsApp, Messenger, Telegram)... and ensuring an alternative for people who do not use them.

However in other contexts, the equipment in smartphones or internet connection were too weak, as in Nepal. In this case, teams adapted with simpler tools, such as the telephone.

In Cambodia, tools adapted for each user group

Bandos Komar, created groups on instant messaging Messenger

Messenger groups for parents of primary school students equipped with smartphones have enabled an exchange of information not only between school and parents but also between the parents themselves.

Messenger was chosen because it was already used by a majority of parents. The goal for **Bandos Komar** was to be able to check whether the parents received the official information and directives (among others from the government). Local authorities used Telegram to disseminate information but Telegram was not known to parents.

As some did not have a smartphone, **Bandos Komar** encouraged teachers and principals to call directly the parents concerned at home.

In Nepal, the telephone is the best way to maintain communication

BIKALPA set up telephone groups with the parents. Telephone numbers were collected in the field by contact persons, who also informed Bikalpa of the tools that were used on site. **BIKALPA** then decided to focus on regular phone calls and family visits.

On a list of 120 parents, **BIKALPA** performed rotations calling about 20 parents per day, to have everyone on the phone once a week. Visits were also scheduled twice a week. Automatic text messages were sent upstream via an emailing solution (smscenter.com) to make sure the parents would respond.

Some of the parents were not at all reachable by telephone, in which case they were informed by the community – neighbours or friends.



Depending on the channels used, members also adapted the messages sent: simple and regular for SMS, playful and short for videos, visual for illiterate people...

Moving towards and not hiding behind tools

Beyond the tools, members became interested in families, they worked to "go towards" families without retreating behind what they had put in place. The "go towards" also went through communication in the living spaces of families, a presence in the communities where possible. Behind that, there was a desire for 100% of parents to be informed.

In Nepal, **BIKALPA** was often present in communities, sometimes with snacks or shared meals, to show that they were there, that the parents were not alone.

Think of tools that are accessible to everyone or guarantee their use

Some distance education tools are more accessible than others, depending on areas, income, children's habits, household equipment... A very accessible tool in Brazil will not necessarily be in Nepal.

Imagine accessible play material, and reorganize the learning space

By implementing distance education practices, members of **PARTAGE RISE** had no longer such an important "control" of the children's learning environment. The configuration of the space, the material available, was different for each house. For some members, this has been a challenge, for example, to set up sensory learning, learning through play, etc.

In Honduras, boxes of cereals or cartons of eggs for learning activities

When **COMPARTIR** reflected on how to create fun activities remotely, the problem of equipment has arisen.

Educators then adapted to integrate into pedagogical and manual activities, equipment available at home (shoe boxes, cereal boxes, cartons of milk, or eggs).



Some members had to send additional material to the children, so that they can carry out the planned activities, or awakening equipment that can be used at any time. According to the members, these activities are called "awakening activities", "recreational activities" or "public education activities". These could be coloured pencils and drawing materials, books, etc.

Even when families were confined to small houses, educators have done a lot of work explaining how to transform spaces at home to ensure that children are in favourable learning conditions. **INEPE**, for example, proposed to make life sciences courses outside, in family gardens or vegetable gardens.

Know how to support the use of tools and get them adopted

Beyond the problem of equipment, access, members also worked on the ability of children to use, to appropriate new ways of learning and new tools. This was particularly important when the tools were newer, more complex and less well controlled by parents – especially digital learning platforms, or smartphone applications.

In Romania, a complete support to use Google Classroom

Renaitre set up a help for children who had to use Google Classroom (platform set up by the Ministry of Education). Children must log in to access it, take pictures of their work and load them onto the platform as "*proof*". Renaitre’s team supported the children in all stages, in addition to the pedagogical aspects, to teach them to be autonomous: how to print cards, how to take photos, how to load them on the platform. This took the form of a procedure to support distance education.



Members also helped parents use, for example, their smartphone to stay connected.

Facilitating access to technologies for distance education

Distance education requires access to the same material for all (computer or tablet, student notebook, radio, etc.). The situation of families is not the same and not all have the means to equip themselves.

This constraint was taken into account by the members at the time of the choice of the device (depending on the rate of the equipment) and sometimes equipment was offered with the help of partners.

Groupings around those with equipment

Another strategy used by members was to encourage or facilitate the gathering of children around equipped homes. This is a mechanism which has worked particularly well with terminals usable by several children simultaneously, such as radio and television.

In some cases, these gatherings took place automatically. In others, members have strategically equipped homes – providing, for example, a radio station in a community where there were few.

Beyond encouraging the sharing of equipment between households, some members have also made connection spaces available, where possible – as in Romania where **RENAITRE** made computers available.

In Cambodia, teachers in charge of identifying homes without equipment

BANDOS KOMAR did not create a program but worked around the availability of proposed emissions at the national level during containment. In rural areas, lack of internet connection, smartphones or televisions is a common problem. **BANDOS KOMAR** encouraged teachers to inform parents of the existence of a channel dedicated to the education of their children, and to identify homes without televisions. From this list, they were able to encourage groups of children around equipped homes.



Go to: keep access to places, to people

Some children cannot access distance education, by the lack of equipment or learning difficulties with the proposed tools.

While this proportion can be reduced, members of **PARTAGE RISE** have devised solutions to reach the children who needed them – in addition to the imagined devices.

Mobile devices

Mobile supports provide services to children without bringing them to class. By moving close to homes, it is possible to avoid the movement (or gatherings) of children while maintaining a local service.

The use of mobile media (the "go-to" logic) has allowed members not to leave children "locked up" in their personal environment. Several organisations have set up vehicles for carrying messages, equipment, educational teams as close as possible to the children. Even if the kids don't come to class, they have a more direct relationship with education tools and coaching teams.



Being in contact with those who have the materialt

Social networks are also an effective tool, which also allows interaction (synchronous or asynchronous). Although some members were already using social networks before implementing a distance education strategy, for education strategy, for example, to pass on prevention messages, several of them created and created and moderated a specific page for children's learning.

Social networks have been used as a convenient channel to get messages, materials, course content to children. content to children. Members posted mainly videos, as well as visual materials ("posters").

In the case of an (asynchronous) page, children and parents had the advantage of being able to connect when they had time and a connection available.

Opening of classrooms

Distance education can be coupled, as appropriate, with classroom presence. Some members have designed mixed devices, limiting the presence of children in the room but allowing everyone to come regularly to the room.

This was particularly true in countries where there were less restrictive periods, **or children with special needs**, in addition to distance learning. In general, the groups were smaller, which required continuing to mobilize remote tools for other children, or alternate face-to-face and distance.

Working from home with children

In some cases, children need to see their teachers in order to learn. In cases where children did not have access or the opportunity to learn with remote tools, where the health situation had prevented the opening of rooms, or that the child could hardly move, **the sessions in the homes made it possible to reach 100% of the children concerned.**

In Madagascar and the Comoros: two ways to bring books to children

VAHATRA (Madagascar) launched a mobile library system in 2020, in response to travel restrictions and school closures, related to the Covid-19 crisis. Started with 18 trunks in 18 villages, the program continues to evolve. In the Comoros, **MAEECHA** has launched its first decentralized library experiments (bibliobus) since 2003 – a device that has constantly evolved since then between mobility and decentralized mini-libraries.



In Lebanon, **SESOBEL** offers tailor-made sessions at home

In the "*adults*" department (young autistic adults), **SESOBEL** faced an additional problem: many parents (on average older) were not used to using smartphones, computers or tablets and could not properly accompany their children. **SESOBEL's** team offered sessions at home. They were more time-consuming for the teams, so the device was created "custom-made": **SESOBEL** decided to allocate different means according to the needs of the public.

CONCLUSION

Key lessons for improving distance education... or rethinking face-to-face pedagogy

Most of the distance education practices capitalised on in this document were put in place in the context of the crisis linked to the COVID 19 pandemic. An almost "forced" transition to online learning led the member organisations of Partage Rise to innovate and invent new ways of doing things in order to provide responses and ensure continuity of learning.

- **This period demonstrated the capacity of the members of Partage Rise to adapt to a new context; to rethink their pedagogy and propose original solutions. We can speak of a real "pedagogical resilience".**
- **This period was also a period of intense learning for everyone: teachers, parents and children. Everyone at their own level has shown adaptation, capacity for change and creativity, which are crucial elements in adapting the learning arrangements.**

The lessons, know-how and soft skills developed during this period and discovered during the capitalisation process can be reused to define or enrich new teaching strategies.

They will allow :

- **To be better equipped, in the face of possible crises (to improve or set up distance education proposals and devices);**
- **To renew face-to-face pedagogical practices, based on the rediscovery of distance learning, which forces us to rethink the place of education.**

Challenging conventional wisdom

Finally, here are a few elements which we feel are essential to point out in terms of the lessons to be learned from this capitalization work, and which run counter to certain preconceived ideas about distance education:

- **Distance education is not only about producing virtual content, but also about thinking about the environment in which the child accesses this content**
It is important to ask questions about the child's learning environment: who is going to accompany them in their learning?
- **Distance education is neither simple nor quick to set up - that is why it is easier to develop a multi-stakeholder scheme**
Organisations and schools should seek the collaboration and cooperation of as many partners as possible who are relevant to the overall psychosocial development of children (social services, community workers, school psychologists, security forces, etc.). This is also true internally, with the involvement of IT departments, for example. This requires an assessment of the skills and time needed and the search for resources accordingly.

- **At a distance, the complementarity between teachers and parents, in a logic of co-education, is not self-evident**

Distance education allows parents to be more involved in their children's schooling. Educators rely on parents to communicate and transmit information to children. School and parents play a complementary role to enable the child to learn in good conditions. But this complementarity is not self-evident. Creating a strong link so that teachers and parents work together, in the same direction, requires time, listening, mutual respect and a lot of dialogue. Creating a relationship of trust requires first of all very good communication, especially with parents who do not necessarily feel comfortable accompanying their children.

- **A distance education tool is not necessarily suitable for all children (universal); tools should be as diverse and complementary as possible, to promote accessibility**

Digital technology offers new possibilities for distance education. But it is not the only possible answer. It can be designed to complement face-to-face teaching, or physical media (paper, etc.). This is also the case for all media (radio, TV, etc.).

- **Distance education does not undermine the need for socialisation; finding ways for children to continue to learn in groups is a key pedagogical issue**

Learning in groups also makes it possible to work on life skills and know-how. Pedagogy must allow for sharing, mutual aid, cooperation and collective work. This concern must be present throughout the process - how do I get the children to work together? how do I help them to position themselves in relation to others? to speak up?

- **Quality distance learning is not mass training; it requires individualised support which can be very time-consuming**

On the one hand, it should not be forgotten that education systems are structured by class with a specific programme and a group dynamic. On the other hand, support is the main obstacle to increasing the number of beneficiaries. It is better to start "small" because the follow-up of children (and their families) at a distance is very time-consuming and is done in a more individualised manner. On the other hand, occasional cross-fertilisation between audiences can be interesting at a distance.

www.partage.org

French association of international solidarity created in 1973

The association PARTAGE helps the most disadvantaged children in the world to grow up in the respect of their fundamental rights.

PARTAGE supports actions that help remove the obstacles to the global development of children.

40 Rue Vivenel
60203 Compiègne cedex
France
Tel. +33 (0)3 44 20 92 92
info@partage.org

