

Supporting Remote Teaching and Learning in Developing Countries: From the global to the local (edited Michael Hammond)

British Council Nepal (2022)

Online publication at

https://www.britishcouncil.org.np/sites/default/files/teaching_learning_book.pdf

It is a great pleasure for me to introduce this book on the use of technology to support remote teaching and learning (RTL) in schools in developing countries. The book is written for an audience of academics, policymakers, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), school leaders, teachers, community volunteers and, for that matter, anyone interested in RTL in general and the response of national educational systems to the lockdown of schools during the Covid-19 pandemic in particular.

The aim of the first half of the book is threefold: to present a broad overview of RTL in developing countries (Leask and Hordatt Gentles); to show the responses to the lockdown of schools during the Covid-19 pandemic in South Asia (Pradhan and Hyde); to describe in greater depth the response to the lockdown by teachers, school leaders and policymakers in Nepal (Rana). In the second half of the book the focus on Nepal is extended by presenting reflections on teaching during lockdown by local educators. Taken together, the chapters speak to the value of RTL and the efforts made by policymakers, teachers and students to make RTL work during lockdown. However, we do not shy away from setting out the challenges, chiefly that of access to online learning in rural communities, or from pointing out important gaps in what was on offer to students.

What we learn from the accounts in this book is the range of approaches to supporting students, the creativity of teachers and students and the enduring value of school in the lives of young people. We also learn the importance of a joined-up approach to dealing with the challenges of lockdown so that the work of teachers, school leaders and policymakers pulls in the same direction.

The book is forward-looking, and we draw out lessons to inform the future development of remote learning. This is important, as the technologies used during lockdown can help find a role in the teaching and learning that goes on in physical schools. However, it is also important as

access to school will remain problematic for those in remote communities, and there will be future occasions when schools are closed due to physical events such as flooding and

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