

CHILDREN AND YOUTH BRIDGING OFFLINE AND ONLINE COMMUNITIES IN TIMES OF COVID-19

Children engaging and supporting their peers,
including reaching the most vulnerable

Asia and the Pacific: Nepal

Restless Development's model is founded on a peer to peer capacity building model: older youth train adolescents who train their peers, and so on. They have been sharing info related to COVID-19 online, webinars, generally informing first. This has been a challenge as their model is offline.

They have active work with LGBTIQ communities (where they have seen an increase in violence) on bridging access to health related needs, especially mental health support. They've brought in psychosocial support and conducted webinars (for all). Biggest challenge has been taking their offline models to the online world. The reason why they work offline is because children need a safe space, which has not been able to be replicated online. Children are concerned and worried about their education, and have many confusing questions. Peer model has gradually been adapted to online means, so it can continue to provide children support.

Slowly they came up with activities child-led, by recruiting young leaders, building their capacity online, and then looking to cascade this information back to their communities.

A positive aspect they have highlighted is that children wouldn't have received this training if it weren't for COVID-19. The organizations provided access to devices, and trained them on online safety. *"Now they're opening up to the world. If this model is successful, it's less expensive, it's cost effective, and we will be able to reach more young people"*. Their model bridges online and offline, as children who have access then go back to their communities and bring in their questions to the following sessions.