

## 2020 Year in Review



In mid-March 2020, OIE Headquarters closed its doors in compliance with government regulations attempting to control the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic. Faced with this unprecedented situation, together with the facts that one of the Budget Unit's staff members was on sick leave and I would be joined by two new 'colleagues', aged 3 and 5 years, respectively, in my home office, I realised that many challenges would lie ahead. The Budget Unit, like other OIE teams, had to deal with a whole new way of organising its work as we entered a new digital world. A digital world that had been dreamt of for so long but for which we were not yet fully prepared... But at

least all members of the team were equipped with a laptop, and most of our files had already been scanned and saved on the server.

As working from home and managing a team remotely were completely new to me, I sought information...

According to a very interesting podcast « Outils du Manager » providing tips for managers, three tools are essential for working from home: a tool to meet virtually, such as Zoom; a collaborative tool allowing files to be shared, such as Teams or SharePoint; and a means of communication, such as WhatsApp (or Zoom chat, Teams chat). Luckily, we had all these tools!

**Put on your pants!  
Time for school!**



**No! You have to!  
I want a skirt!**



**Ok. Sit down,  
it's about to start.**

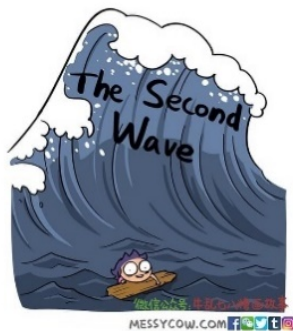


**Please put down  
your legs.**



A lot of articles (impossible to miss them during the lockdown...) talked about how to be efficient while working from home, such as creating morning or evening routines, creating your own workspace tailored to your individual constraints, finding a good work-life balance, dressing like you are going to the office, etc. Yes, exactly, be dressed...

The first step we took was to agree, along with colleagues from the Accounting Unit, on an operating procedure that would address our immediate needs. This required a lot of e-mail exchanges with all colleagues and the distribution of tasks between the members of the Budget Unit.



The three tools essential for working from home were fully used and proved to be very useful. This year, Zoom became our best friend allowing us to have formal meetings, but also to be attentive and to support each other, replacing the in-person morning coffee-break revelations about how many times our children woke up the previous night. What about the Zoom or Teams chat functions? Both are much quicker and easier than writing e-mails. Teams is also becoming a great tool for collaborative work with other colleagues, eliminating the need to send e-mails, which is a welcome bonus.

Although difficult, this period of working from home on a full-time basis was also a blessing in disguise, pushing the Budget Unit to embrace this digital world more quickly, replacing the traditional paper trails and *parapheurs*. Needless to say, all the IT tools mentioned above are well and good, but they do not answer all our needs and expectations, because all tasks now require more time to be completed. From the Budget Unit's perspective, 2020 was a good opportunity to think about what we want to improve and to achieve, in order to gain efficiency and to save time. And we know that what we have built and what we will build are useful beyond the period of compulsory working from home.

So 2021, don't be shy! Come and welcome us to a new digital adventure!

And a warm thank you to the artists, some of whom are included above, who helped us to keep smiling in 2020!

*We wish to thank our colleague Alix Weng for writing this article for the OIE In-house Times.*

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