

Open education initiatives in South Africa

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[South Africa to make education more productive](#), India eNews, May 5, 2006. An unsigned news story. Excerpt:

South Africa is exploring ways of using computing to make education more productive. 'We intend to contribute to the digital commons,' said Kim Tucker, a soft-spoken South African.... Tucker, 45, is from the Meraka Institute (African Advanced Institute for Information and Communications Technology). The South African Centre for Scientific and Industrial Research manages the institute....South Africans are looking at other global tools [than Wikipedia] for education, including the Moodle, a free, open source learning management system and the Future Learning Environment (FLE3) from Finland. KEWL (Knowledge Environment for Web Learning), also a knowledge management system, is another useful option. 'It's much like the Moodle but with a lot of nice features,' as Tucker puts it. There are some digital library systems, like Koha, and Greenstone, sharable and coming in from diverse parts of the globe. South Africa is also looking at the EXE (the E-learning XML Editor), a tool that makes it easy for educators to create educational content and store it in standards-compliant formats....

As Tucker puts it, the whole stringent copyrights, patents approach is a 'threatening progress' in Africa. 'We've got people talking about the African Renaissance, and a New Partnership for African Development (a vision and strategic framework for Africa's renewal). Some of us feel that we'd make much more progress if we have 'free knowledge' policies.' Tucker considers it important for African communities to be able to create their own knowledge resources, where they can take other free knowledge resources from anywhere in the world...localise them, and share them freely....These initiatives have got some official support in South Africa. Now, they're looking for 'partners across the world' who would 'buy into the mission and vision'. India and its achievements are high on their radar.