



Backgrounder

LAUNCH OF WIKIEDUCATOR INDIA CHAPTER 14 November, 2008, India International Centre, New Delhi

Wikieducator is a flagship project created, developed, nurtured and financed by the Commonwealth of Learning, an inter governmental agency, with headquarters in Vancouver. Dr. Wayne Mackintosh, Education Specialist, himself is a strong proponent of open source software, leads the development of Wikieducator that is based entirely on open free source. Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia, (CEMCA) the regional office of COL, based at Delhi, is catalyzing the formation of the India Chapter which will be formally inaugurated by

Prof M.S Swaminathan, the architect of India's green revolution and a social reformer
In the presence of:

Shri Jainder Singh, IAS, Secretary, Department of Information Technology, Ministry of Communications and Information Technology

We believe that associating such eminent proponents of technology and knowledge sharing with this event, will give the necessary impetus to e-learning with the traditional Indian educational values of non commercialization of knowledge and become yet another important step in e-revolution in the country.

About Wikieducator

Wikieducator (www.wikieducator.org) (WE) is an online community project founded by Commonwealth of Learning (www.col.org) (COL) for working collaboratively towards development of free educational materials that anyone can edit and use. The founder of WE is Dr. Wayne Mackintosh of COL. It was launched in August 2006 at the Course Developers meeting of the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSCC). Like the most popular 'wiki' – the Wikipedia, it allows collaborative development of content. It is being used around the world for development of free elearning materials. WikiEducator, hence, aims at building a thriving and sustainable global community dedicated to the design, development and delivery of open and free content for learning for realization of a free version of an educational curriculum by 2015. Wikieducator now has over 7000 registered users worldwide, and is owned by the community represented by a WE Community Council of 15 members elected through an online election process. Two Council members are from India : Dr Savithri Singh, Principal, Acharya Narendra Dev College, University of Delhi and Dr. Pankaj Khare, IGNOU,

http://www.wikieducator.org/WikiEducator:Community_Council.

Indian Community of Wikieducator

India has a committed community of Wikieducators comprising Educators from different educational institutions, and volunteers from various walks of life. Many students are also a part of this initiative which is the need of time and people. Indian Educators have been actively participating in the content development as well as promotional activities of WikiEducators since its launch. The India country page (www.wikieducator.org/India) is the most dynamic, and most visited country page on WikiEducator.



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WE in Indian context

Though India has hundreds of colleges in every discipline and has positioned itself comfortably as a country that provides quality higher education to its people yet, the demand for education far exceeds the capacity of the system to provide it. Also the cost of education (especially professional education) has gone up to very high levels that prevent many families from sending their children for higher and professional education. Here the WE could play a major role – if we are able to enroll committed educators willing to create free content and upload on the Wikieducator, we should be able to help the needy with free and open educational resources. There is also a need for development of contextual India-centric learning materials that can be best done by Indian WE.

India Chapter of Wikieducator

India Chapter for Wikieducator will be a formal structure for co-ordination and facilitation of Wikieducator activities in India towards the goal of free version of the education curriculum by 2015. It will achieve this goal by establishing a sustainable community of Educators who are committed to create and promote open and free learning resources. The Indian WE community also plans to create and promote Open Agricultural Education Resources that can strengthen the Agricultural Extension services.

Organization

The Wikieducator India has an Interim Advisory Board to co-ordinate its activities. The members of the Interim Advisory Board:

1. [Dr. Savithri Singh](#), Principal, Acharya Narendra Dev College, University of Delhi, New Delhi.
2. [Dr. Pankaj Khare](#), Director, International Division ,IGNOU, New Delhi, India.
3. [Dr. R. Sreedher](#), Director, CEMCA, New Delhi.
4. [Dr. Gita Mathur](#), Reader in Botany, Gargi College, New Delhi.
5. [Dr. Sanjaya Mishra](#), Reader in Distance Education, IGNOU, New Delhi.
6. [Mr. Anil Prasad](#), Nodal Officer (Web), Finance Department, Govt. of Kerala.

WE in Indian Languages

It is important for India that we encourage the Wikieducator since it promotes collaborative learning and sharing of educational resources. We have used the space for development agricultural education materials for the farmers, vocational materials and for other educational materials. At present the Wikieducator is only In English. If we are to increase the reach then it is important that, like Wikipedia, we extend the number of languages that it is available in. This is particularly important in India. If the philosophy of the Wikieducator is to reach the rural masses it is important that communications and materials be available in a language used everyday. As a beginning we have created the main India page (<http://wikieducator.org/India>) in English and some Indian languages – this would perhaps prompt people who speak and write in other languages to use the Wikieducator as a collaborative tool to share knowledge.

Dr. R Sreedher
Director, CEMCA