

BIO: NEIL BUTCHER

Neil Butcher is based in South Africa, from where he has provided policy and technical advice and support to a range of national and international clients regarding educational planning, uses of educational technology and distance education, both as a full-time employee at the South African Institute for Distance Education (SAIDE) from 1993 to 2001 and as Director of Neil Butcher & Associates. He has worked with various educational institutions, assisting with transformation efforts that focus on effectively harnessing the potential of distance education methods and educational technology. Neil has travelled extensively through Africa conducting research on higher education, distance education, and educational technology for a range of organizations, governments, and donors. He is currently working as an OER Strategist with SAIDE on its new OER Africa Initiative, which is funded by the Hewlett Foundation and is managing the Partnership for Higher Education in Africa's Educational Technology Initiative.

Neil has developed a range of instructional materials for various types of educators, including education policymakers, development agency staff, teachers, and universities. In the field of IT applications, he led the development of South Africa's national education portal for the Department of Education – www.thutong.org.za – for six years before its full integration into the Department. He has managed a range of online database and web development projects for various organizations, including for the Federation of Tertiary Institutions of the Northern Metropolis (FOTIM), Higher Education South Africa, International Association for Digital Publications, UNESCO, and the Southern African Regional Universities' Association.