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## ADVOCACY FOR LIFELONG EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN MOROCCO: EVOLUTION, ISSUES AND CONTROVERSIES

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### ABSTRACT

Lifelong Learning (LL) plays a central role in creating a green and inclusive economy based on sustainable paradigms of production and consumption, as well as in creating new or redesigned sectors, industries, and jobs. Given the contingencies surrounding the transition to sustainable economies and the unpredictable nature of the world of work, it is difficult to explicitly determine the new role that education, including LL, could play in the next fifteen years. However, education remains an opportunity that will play a crucial dual role in combating poverty and inequality while promoting the transition to a new Sustainable Development (SD) paradigm.

This research aims to analyze the advocacy opportunities that LL offers to Moroccan citizens in achieving SD. In other words, how can we rely on LL to allow for the evolution of behaviors and lifestyles that are adapted to the world and the challenges of SD in the Moroccan context?

### KEYWORDS

Advocacy, Lifelong Learning ( LL), Sustainable Development (SD), Education

### List of acronyms

Acronyms	Meanings
LL	Lifelong Learning
SD	Sustainable Development
SDG	stand-alone goal
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
LL-SD	Lifelong Learning for Sustainable Development



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## INTRODUCTION

Advocacy for lifelong education for sustainable development in Morocco has gained momentum over the years, with increasing awareness of the importance of sustainability and the role of education in achieving it. The evolution of this advocacy can be traced back to the early 2000s when Morocco committed to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and recognized the importance of education in achieving these goals.

The adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015 further reinforced the importance of lifelong education for sustainable development in Morocco. SDG 4 specifically highlights the need to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

Despite the increasing recognition of the importance of lifelong education for sustainable development, there are still several issues and controversies surrounding its implementation in Morocco. One of the major issues is the lack of adequate resources and infrastructure to support lifelong learning initiatives, especially in rural areas where access to education is limited.

Another issue is the traditional education system that does not fully integrate the principles of sustainability and does not prepare learners for the challenges of a rapidly changing world. There is also a lack of coordination and collaboration between different stakeholders, including the government, civil society organizations, and private sector entities, in promoting lifelong education for sustainable development.

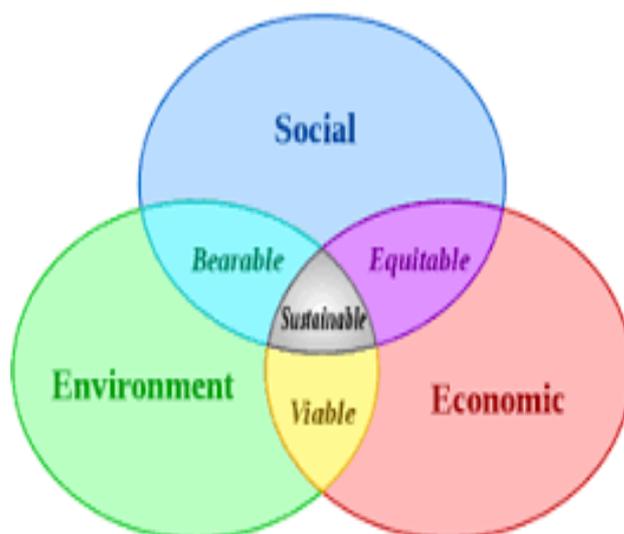
Controversies also arise around the role of education in promoting sustainable development. Some argue that education should focus on providing learners with the skills and knowledge needed to address environmental and social issues, while others argue that education should prioritize economic growth and development over sustainability.

Overall, advocacy for lifelong education for sustainable development in Morocco is a complex and ongoing process that requires the involvement and collaboration of all stakeholders to ensure its effective implementation and realization of its goals.

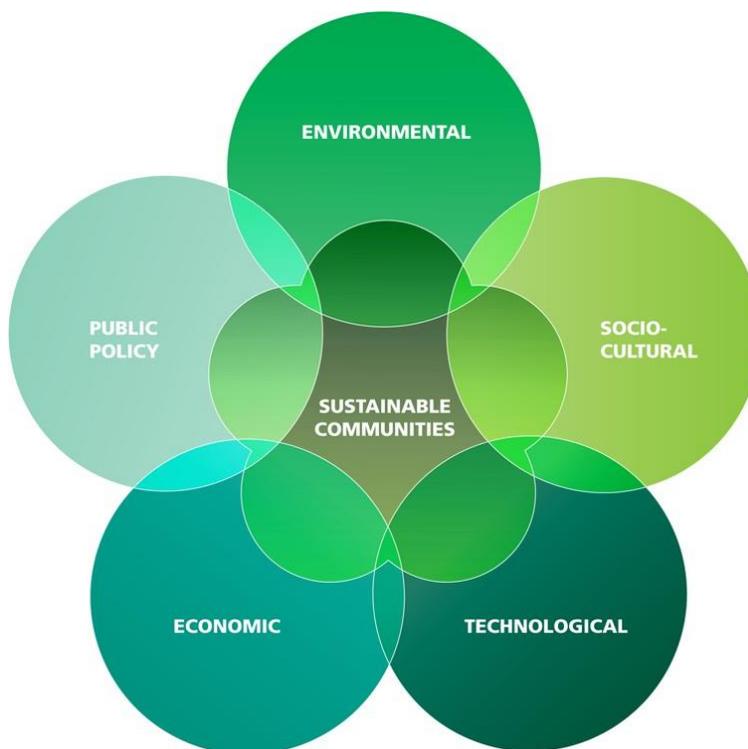
### I- Sustainable Development (SD)

The World Commission on Environment and Development defines Sustainable Development (SD) as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". Since the Rio Earth Summit in 1992 and the emergence of the concept of SD, the entire society must take into account this new issue, focusing on the three pillars of a viable economy, an equitable society, and a livable environment. The protection of the environment, integrated into this global issue of SD, benefits from greater mobilization. Indeed, the environment has become an omnipresent subject in political debates, films, books, ideological positions of famous personalities, international summits, and university courses.

The objective of SD is to define viable schemes that reconcile the three ecological, social, and economic aspects of human activities, known as the "three pillars" to be taken into account by different actors. The SD Diagram, as drawn up by Le Comte (2008)<sup>1</sup> on the Responsible Campus website, represents the three pillars of SD (Figure 1)



In addition to the three pillars of SD, there are other cross-cutting issues that are increasingly considered as "the five pillars of SD". These pillars are essential to the definition and implementation of SD policies and actions, and include governance, and cultural diversity, in addition to the previously mentioned pillars of a viable economy, an equitable society, and a livable environment. (Figure 2) <sup>2</sup>



### I- Agenda 2030: A new instrument for SD

On September 25, 2015, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda), contained in a document entitled "Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for SD". This is an innovative conception of SD that is part of a global and universal approach, characterized by an unprecedented consultation of stakeholders including civil

<sup>1</sup> Three pillars concept of sustainable development-Source-IUCN-2006.png

<sup>2</sup> Zen, A. C. and al.( 2012) Sustainability, Energy and Development: A Proposal of Indicators, International Journalfor Infonomics (IJI), Volume 5, Issue 1/2, March/June 2012

society, the private sector, local authorities, and the research community. Its main objectives are to fight against extreme poverty and to preserve the planet.

The 2030 Agenda represents the new global development framework based on 17 SD goals (Figure 3), divided into 169 targets in the fields of economy, social development, and environmental protection. Its first goal is poverty eradication, and its approach is much more ambitious than that of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), as it plans to achieve these goals while responding to the growing challenges arising from the interdependence between the economic, social, and environmental dimensions of development.



In summary, the 2030 Agenda is an ambitious and universal agenda that aims to transform our world. It represents an intergovernmental commitment and "action plan for humanity, planet, and prosperity," adopted by the United Nations in 2015. The ultimate goal is to put humanity back on the path to sustainability.

In the 2000-2015 period, the Global Education Agenda gave new impetus to education internationally. However, it was noted that the MDGs were more narrowly focused on primary education in low-income countries, and neglected the learning needs of youth and adults. Historic international agreements proclaiming the right to education were also made.

Goal 4 of the 2030 Agenda for SD aims to achieve two main goals. The first is to ensure equal access to quality education for all, while the second is to promote lifelong learning opportunities in education.

- Education is presented as a stand-alone goal (SDG-4) with its 7 outcome targets and 3 means of implementation.
- The fact that education is included in several other goals (Good Health and Well-being, Gender Equality, Decent Work and Economic Growth, Responsible Consumption & Production, Climate Change Mitigation) highlights its importance in achieving the overall goals of the 2030 Agenda.
- Other underlying principles reinforce the significance of education:
- Education is a fundamental human right that enables individuals to understand and exercise many other rights.
- Education is a public good.

- Gender equality is integral to the right to education for all.

## II- Lifelong Education: An integral part of SD:

### 1- Historical overview and emergence of Education for SD

Figure 4 below presents the historical evolution of education at the international level from 1990, the year of the first international debates on education, to 2015, the year of the Incheon Declaration.

The Incheon Declaration emphasizes that some skills and knowledge are more effective than others in promoting SD. Providing the same education to all does not produce the same benefits. Time, place, situation, and context matter greatly (Harber, 2014).

Some scholars suggest that educational systems that focus solely on preparing young people to work and consume throughout their lives for economic purposes are harmful (Nussbaum, 2010; Orr, 1994).

**Figure 4**

Events	Date
world declaration on education for all	1990
Agenda 21	1992
Dakar Framework for Action on Education for All	2000
Millennium Declaration - Millennium Development Goals	
United Nations Decade of Education for SD	2005
The Future We Want	2012
Higher Education Sustainability Initiative (HESI)	
2014 GEM Final Statement The Muscat Agreement	2014
HESI partner of the Global Action Program Incheon Declaration SD Agenda 2030	2015

### 2- Characteristics of the Education Program to 2030 :

- A broader view of the role of education in societal development.
- The reaffirmation of the right to basic education and the essential areas expressed.
- The introduction of an ambitious and holistic approach to education and learning in the 21st century.
- Youth and adult education in a lifelong perspective, essential to achieving most of the 2030 SD goals.

### 3- Main characteristics of the MDG 4 "Education 2030"

The analysis of MDG 4 on Education by 2030 reveals the following five main characteristics concerning education:

1. **A universal agenda:** The MDG 4 on education is part of a universal agenda for all countries that seeks to eradicate poverty and hunger, combat global degradation, ensure that all human beings enjoy a prosperous and fulfilling life, and foster peaceful, just, and inclusive societies. Education is recognized as a crucial tool for achieving these broader development goals.
2. **Equity, inclusion, and gender equality:** The MDG 4 emphasizes the importance of eliminating gender inequalities and ensuring that education is accessible to vulnerable populations. The goal is to achieve equity and inclusion in education, so that all individuals have an equal opportunity to learn and develop their full potential.
3. **Learning effectiveness:** The effectiveness of learning is a key aspect of the MDG 4. It is important to ensure that the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and competencies is effective and results in tangible outcomes that benefit individuals, societies, and economies.
4. **Relevance of learning:** The MDG 4 also emphasizes the importance of ensuring that education is relevant to the needs of individuals and societies. This includes the acquisition of professional and technical skills for decent work and global citizenship. Education should prepare individuals for the challenges of the modern world and equip them with the skills and knowledge they need to succeed.
5. **Lifelong learning opportunities:** Finally, the MDG 4 recognizes the importance of offering lifelong learning opportunities for all individuals. Education should be viewed as a continuous process that extends beyond formal schooling and provides opportunities for individuals to continue learning and developing throughout their lives.

#### **4- LL possibilities at the SD: ( LL-SD)**

Yes, you are correct. According to UNESCO, lifelong learning (LL) is defined as a process that begins at birth and continues throughout all stages of life, aimed at improving knowledge, skills, and competencies from a personal, civic, social, and/or employment-related perspective and promoting sustainable development (SD).

The LL-SD approach allows anyone to:

1. **Ensure equitable educational opportunities:** By taking a holistic lifelong learning perspective, it is possible to ensure that everyone has access to equitable educational opportunities regardless of their age, gender, socio-economic status, or geographic location.
2. **Ensure universal education:** Universal education leading to effective and relevant learning outcomes for all children, youth, and adults is the foundation for and in all areas of LL. This means that education should be accessible and relevant to all individuals at all stages of life.
3. **Ensure equal access to additional learning opportunities:** It is important to ensure that everyone has equal access to additional learning opportunities throughout their lifespan. This includes opportunities for upskilling, reskilling, and continuous learning, which can help individuals adapt to changing economic, social, and technological conditions.

Overall, the LL-SD approach emphasizes the importance of education as a lifelong process that contributes to personal growth, societal development, and sustainable economic growth.

### **III-Presentation of the Moroccan Education 2030 Context :**

#### **1. Legal framework**

The Moroccan constitution of 2011 recognizes the environment as a human right, and this is also reflected in the United Nations resolution of 2010. The strategic vision of the 2015-2030 education reform in Morocco aims to promote a culture of sustainable development through education, awareness, and communication programs, in line with the country's ratification of international declarations and resolutions related to human rights and sustainable development. In addition to the 2030 vision, Morocco has a diverse and rich legal framework to provide a framework for promoting Education 2030. For instance, the Education and Training Charter of 1999 sets out the principles of the education system in Morocco, including the promotion of social justice and equity, and the development of a spirit of citizenship and responsibility. Other laws and policies such as the National Strategy for Sustainable Development and the National Charter for the Environment and Sustainable Development also provide a framework for promoting education for sustainable development.

Overall, Morocco has made significant efforts to promote education for sustainable development, and the country's legal and policy frameworks provide a strong foundation for achieving the Education 2030 goals.

#### **2. Problematic of the research and working methodology**

It is interesting to note that the review of 40 UN flagship reports based on observational data found that there is a relative indifference to the relationship between education and the SDGs, particularly in addressing sustainable consumption and production patterns, climate change, oceans and marine resources, and terrestrial ecosystems. This highlights the need for more attention to be given to the role of education in achieving the SDGs.

To address this issue in the Moroccan context, your research aims to examine how to advocate for all Moroccan citizens to have the desire and opportunity to train and learn at any age despite the weakness of the offer and the deficiency of existing mechanisms to ensure the objectives of SDG4. To do this, you have adopted a qualitative approach based on a documentary analysis of the main reports of international organizations and the analysis of the content of some twenty interviews conducted with Moroccan citizens in Rabat concerned by the issue of LL-SD.

This approach is a valuable way to gain insights into the perspectives and experiences of Moroccan citizens in relation to LL-SD and to identify potential barriers to achieving the objectives of SDG-4. By focusing on the experiences of individuals, it is possible to gain a deeper understanding of the challenges they face and to develop strategies to address them. It is important to ensure that the voices of those most affected by issues related to LL-SD are heard and that their perspectives are taken into account when developing policies and initiatives.

#### **3. Summary of results:**

##### **1. LL, a new advocacy paradigm for Education SD**

Based on the research, it seems that the respondents recognize the importance of the LL as a means of promoting sustainable practices and developing informed and empowered citizens. They emphasize the need for citizens to acquire appropriate skills for sustainable production and consumption and healthy living habits, which can only be achieved through access to LL. Moreover, the respondents

acknowledge that the new paradigm of education integrating SD must address crucial issues such as equal access to knowledge, employment, and health, gender equality, diversity, and social cohesion. They also recognize that education can sometimes perpetuate inequalities, and therefore, the LL must be designed to be inclusive and equitable. While the Moroccan public school may not be able to meet these challenges on its own, the respondents suggest that effective partnerships with actors in formal and informal education and continuing education can help to address these issues. Overall, the LL is viewed as a critical tool for achieving the 2030 Agenda and promoting sustainable development in Morocco and beyond.

The challenges of sustainable development cannot be addressed by the public school system in Morocco alone. It requires the involvement of various stakeholders such as formal and informal education actors, as well as continuing education providers, to promote lifelong learning and sustainable practices. Collaboration and partnerships between these stakeholders can be effective in promoting sustainable development education and achieving the SDGs in Morocco.

## **2- The ambitions expressed around the LL-SD**

We identify the ambitions stated in our research at two levels:

- Extend SD education projects to all levels of education (Schools, Colleges, High Schools, informal and professional training).
- Develop a culture of SD education for all, throughout life.

## **3- Towards a culture of advocacy**

The majority of the respondents believe that the LL-SD can only take place if there is an upstream work by all the actors concerned in a universal logic of which the development of a culture of advocacy proves to be essential and crucial through :

- **Educate to SD:**

According to respondents, LL has become an integral part of SD education in the school system, from kindergarten to higher education and even in the informal education system, in order to train a generation of citizens adapted to the world to come, by integrating SD themes and issues (climate change, biodiversity, and their intersections with social issues, such as the fight against poverty and hunger) into the programs and curricula at all levels of formal and informal education.

- **Changing everyone's behavior:**

Based on the research, it appears that the majority of respondents view the LL-SD as an opportunity to promote sustainable development and change behaviors in society. They believe that the adoption of the Agenda 2030 in Morocco has provided a suitable framework for promoting initiatives related to education for sustainable development (EEDD) and education for citizenship and international solidarity outside the school system.

However, the respondents also emphasized the need to provide financial and technical resources to these initiatives to effectively operationalize them within the national strategy of EEDD. Overall, the LL-SD is seen as a promising approach to promoting sustainable practices and behaviors in Moroccan society, with the potential to involve various actors outside the formal education system in advancing the 2030 Agenda.

- **Educate and train all people**

It seems like you are referring to the LL-SD, which I assume stands for "Local and Sustainable Development". It is not clear what your question is, but I can provide some information on the topic.

Local and sustainable development refers to a model of development that emphasizes the use of local resources and promotes environmental sustainability, social inclusion, and economic growth. It aims to create long-term benefits for communities by taking into account the needs and priorities of the people who live there.

In this context, it seems that the LL-SD is seen as a way to address inequalities and discrimination in society, particularly among those who may have less access to vocational training and job opportunities. By promoting access to training and jobs in the field of environmental and ecological transition, it is hoped that the LL-SD can help to create more equitable and sustainable communities.

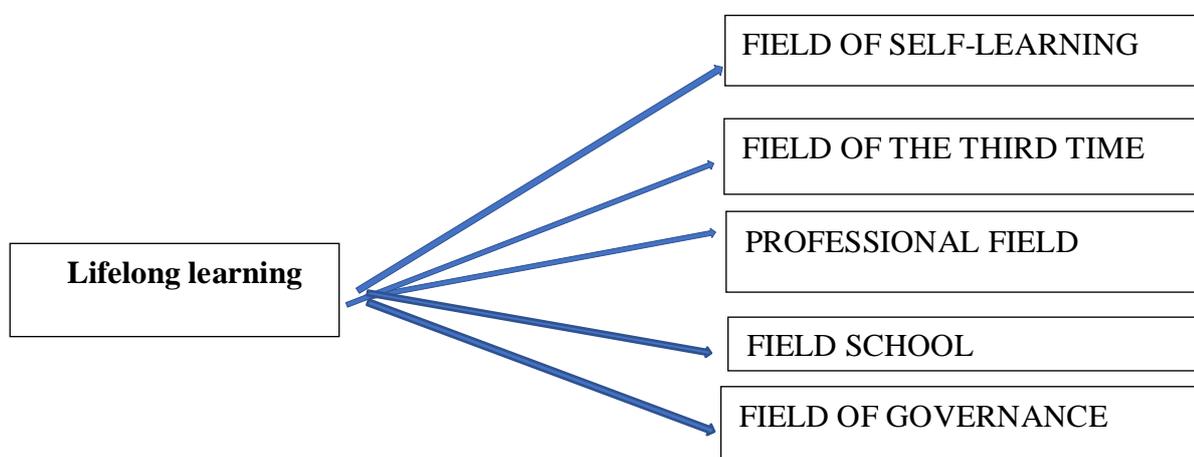
It is interesting to note that people of all ages are seen as finding the LL-SD to be a prestigious alternative. This suggests that there is broad support for this approach to development across different age groups.

#### 4- Toward a Comprehensive and Integrated Approach to LL-SD Advocacy Culture

As a result of our findings, we have identified 5 priority areas for action in relation to the development of lifelong learning in relation to SD.

It is a holistic and integrated approach in which any possible action to promote lifelong learning for SD must take into consideration the interdependence and complementarity of its components.

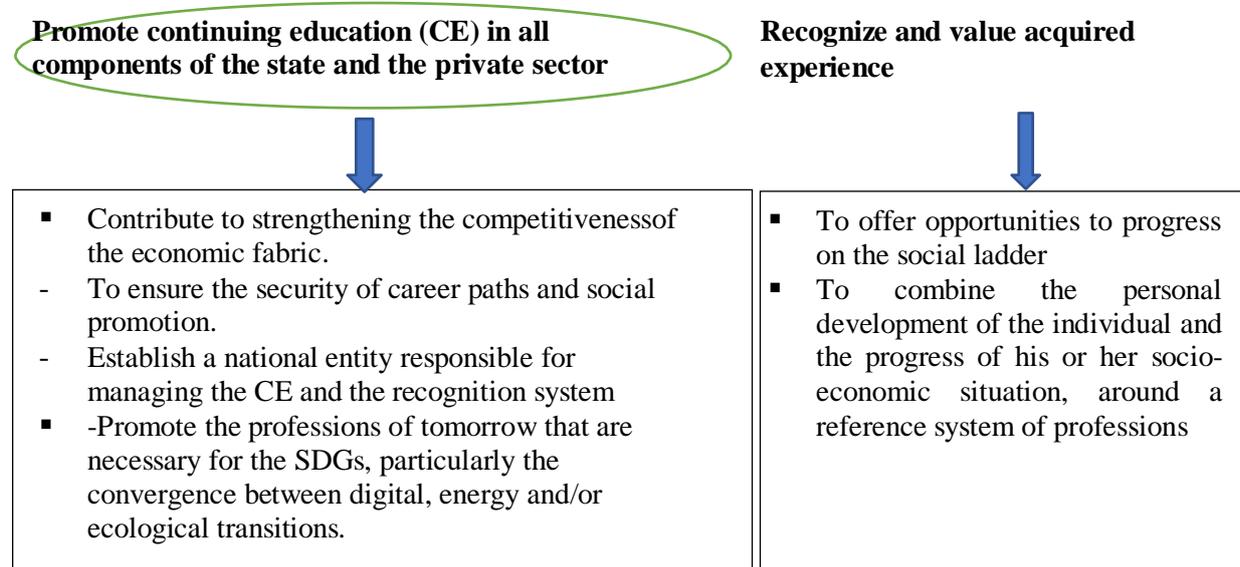
Figure 5 summarizes these key areas for the development of a new approach to integrating SSTLM into the Moroccan informal education system. For each field, we propose some recommendations to achieve the desired objective.



#### First priority : Valuing learning and work experience

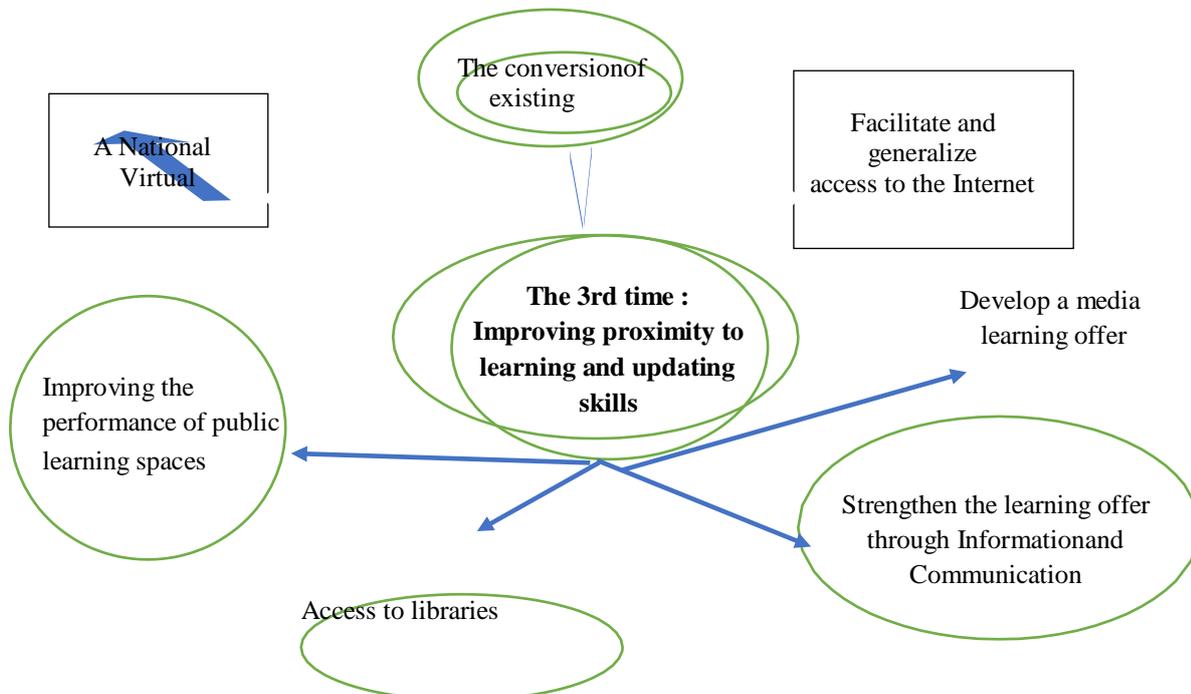
Lifelong learning can play a critical role in promoting the ecological and solidarity transition, as well as addressing the challenges posed by digital transformation. By continually developing new skills and knowledge, individuals can adapt to changing economic, social, and environmental conditions and contribute to sustainable development. In particular, lifelong learning can facilitate the development of new professions and innovative solutions that promote the achievement of the SDGs, such as those related to renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, green transportation, and responsible consumption and production.

The valorization of prior learning is an important aspect of lifelong learning and can promote the recognition of the diverse forms of knowledge and skills that individuals possess, including traditional and indigenous knowledge. It can also contribute to reducing inequalities and promoting social inclusion by recognizing the value of informal and non-formal learning, which may have been acquired outside of formal education systems.



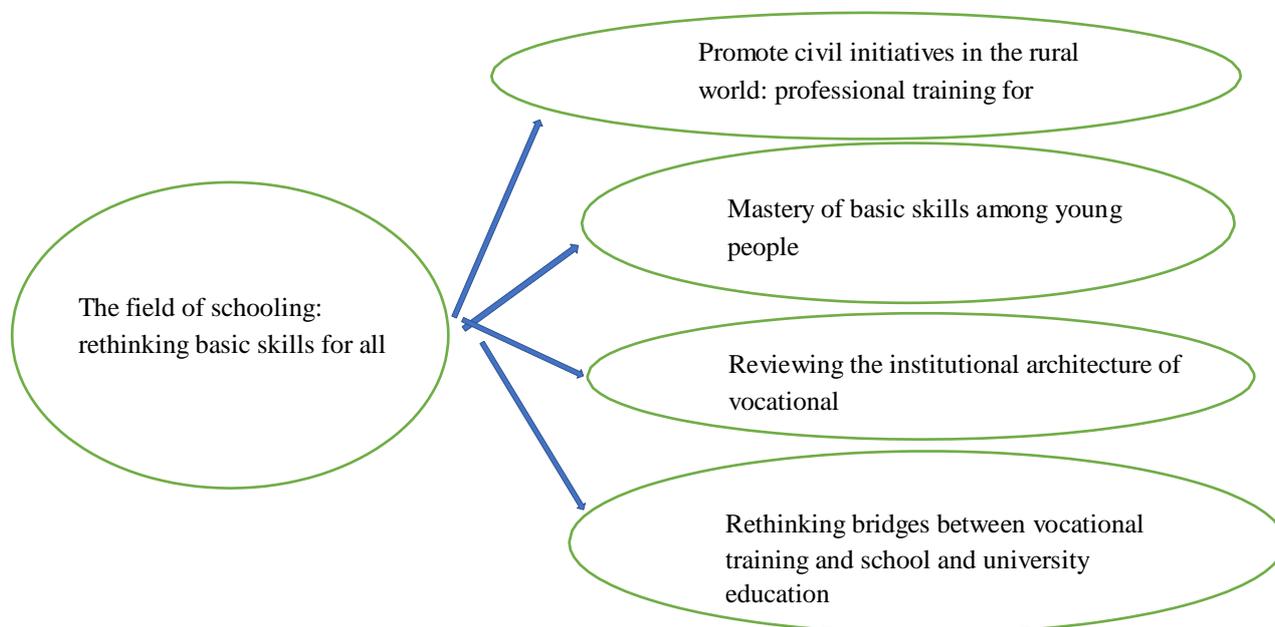
**Second priority :: The 3rd time to improve the proximity of learning and the updating of skills**

The management of the 3rd time is essential to improve the proximity of learning and the updating of citizens' skills. In order to ensure optimal and rational management of this time, figure n°6 presents the measures to be taken at this level.



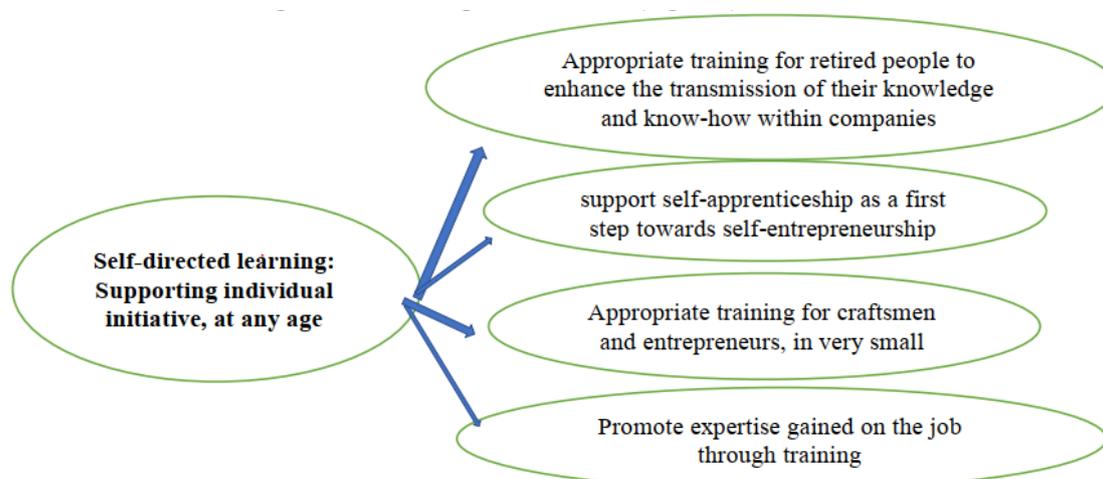
**- Third priority :: The field of schooling: rethinking basic skills for all**

The field of schooling remains the cornerstone to enable learners to rethink their basic skills. One of the weak points pointed out by the majority of citizens remains the acquisition of basic skills. To do this, we present in figure n°7 the main actions to be undertaken to reach this objective



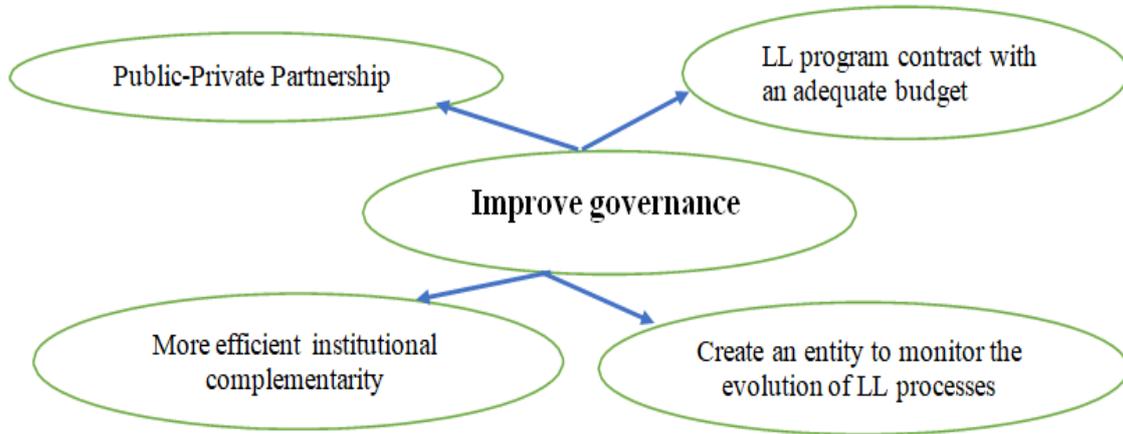
**- Fourth priority: Self-learning: Supporting individual initiative, at all ages**

Self-learning is an important aspect of lifelong learning, and it requires individuals to take ownership of their learning process. Providing support and assistance can help to motivate citizens to engage in self-learning, particularly in areas related to the environment and sustainable development. This can include providing access to relevant learning resources, creating networks and communities of learners, and offering opportunities for hands-on learning experiences. Additionally, promoting a culture of lifelong learning can help to foster a sense of curiosity and self-motivation among individuals, encouraging them to seek out new knowledge and skills throughout their lives. (Figure 8)



### **Fifth priority: Improve governance**

In its Education for All Global Monitoring Report, "Governance is an issue not only for central government but also for all levels of the education system - from the ministry to the school and the community. Ultimately, it is about the distribution of decision-making powers at all levels. In order to improve this governance, we will use Figure 9 to determine the actions to be taken to this end.



### **Conclusion**

Despite the increasing recognition of the importance of lifelong education for sustainable development, there are still several issues and controversies surrounding its implementation in Morocco. One of the major issues is the lack of adequate resources and infrastructure to support lifelong learning initiatives, especially in rural areas where access to education is limited.

These two approaches to LL can help individuals and communities adopt sustainable lifestyles and contribute to achieving the SD goals.

The first approach emphasizes the role of education in promoting new values and worldviews that support sustainability, while the second approach focuses on developing critical thinking and problem-solving skills to address complex SD challenges. Both approaches highlight the importance of lifelong learning and the need for education systems to promote sustainable development. By adopting these approaches, individuals, communities, and societies can work towards achieving a more sustainable future.

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