Rationale of the strategy
The policy aims to provide an equitable and inclusive education system that grants all learners access to high-quality, free and compulsory basic, as well as senior secondary education. This should be followed by the opportunity to continue with lifelong education and training, enhancing personal development and contributing to Swaziland’s cultural development, socio-economic growth and global competitiveness. The strategy targets all learners, teachers, employees, managers and other providers of education and training in all public and private, formal and non-formal learning institutions, at all levels of the education system.

Concept of lifelong learning
Lifelong learning implies a seamless learning system with real pathways into other education and training options and equal opportunities for all. The term lifelong learning is linked to adult education. It primarily refers to non-formal and continuing education that provides options for those Swazi citizens who have missed some or all of their formal education.

Main challenges
- HIV and AIDS: information, treatment and support, and non-discriminatory labour practices
- Schools as centres of care and support: healthy, protective, and secure learning environments
- Inclusive education: consider needs of all learners regardless of gender, financial state, and disability
- Curriculum development: guidelines for content, materials, teaching and assessment methods
- Education guidance and psychosocial services
- Orphans and vulnerable children: cognitive, emotional and social development, and protection
- Education for sustainable development: norms and practices to ensure sustainable living

Main targets
- Early childhood care and development: expansion of equitable access, high standards
- Primary education: free/compulsory access, competence-based curricula, textbook policy
- Secondary education: school infrastructure, libraries, enhancing cognitive skills
- Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET): establishing the Swaziland Training Authority, initiating and regulating a National TVET Qualifications Framework
- Tertiary and higher education: establishing loan funds, flexible entry level assessment, improving cost efficiency
- Teacher education and training: competency-based teacher education, upgrading student teaching practice, reforming the demand-based financing model for teacher education
- Non-formal and continuing education: developing and regulating a non-formal and continuing education system to facilitate flexible access to relevant education opportunities for disadvantaged, over-aged or challenged learners; aligning non-formal education levels and standards in Swaziland with other countries in the South African Development Community (SADC) region

Particular feature of the policy
The lifelong leaning policy in Swaziland foresees the establishment of ‘education guidance and psychosocial services’ at schools in order to ensure that children survive to adulthood and develop into responsible adults who positively contribute to the socio-economic growth of the country. Especially in the era of AIDS, guidance and support must be considered as central classroom activities. For this reason, all new teachers in training should be required to study guidance and counselling as a compulsory and examinable pre-service training subject, with continuing education for all teachers via in-service programmes throughout their careers. This is to ensure that all teachers are fully and recurrently capacitated on issues of counselling, guidance, health, psychosocial support, life skills, Adolescent Recovery Health (ARH), HIV and AIDS, STI awareness and prevention. Teacher training should also ensure an enabling and protective environment within all schools, using the ‘Schools as Centers of Care and Support’ framework, supportive structures and dedicated counselling rooms.

References to other relevant documents:
- United Nations. 1948. *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights*
- African Union. 2008. *Windhoek Declaration on Social Development*

Further readings and web links: