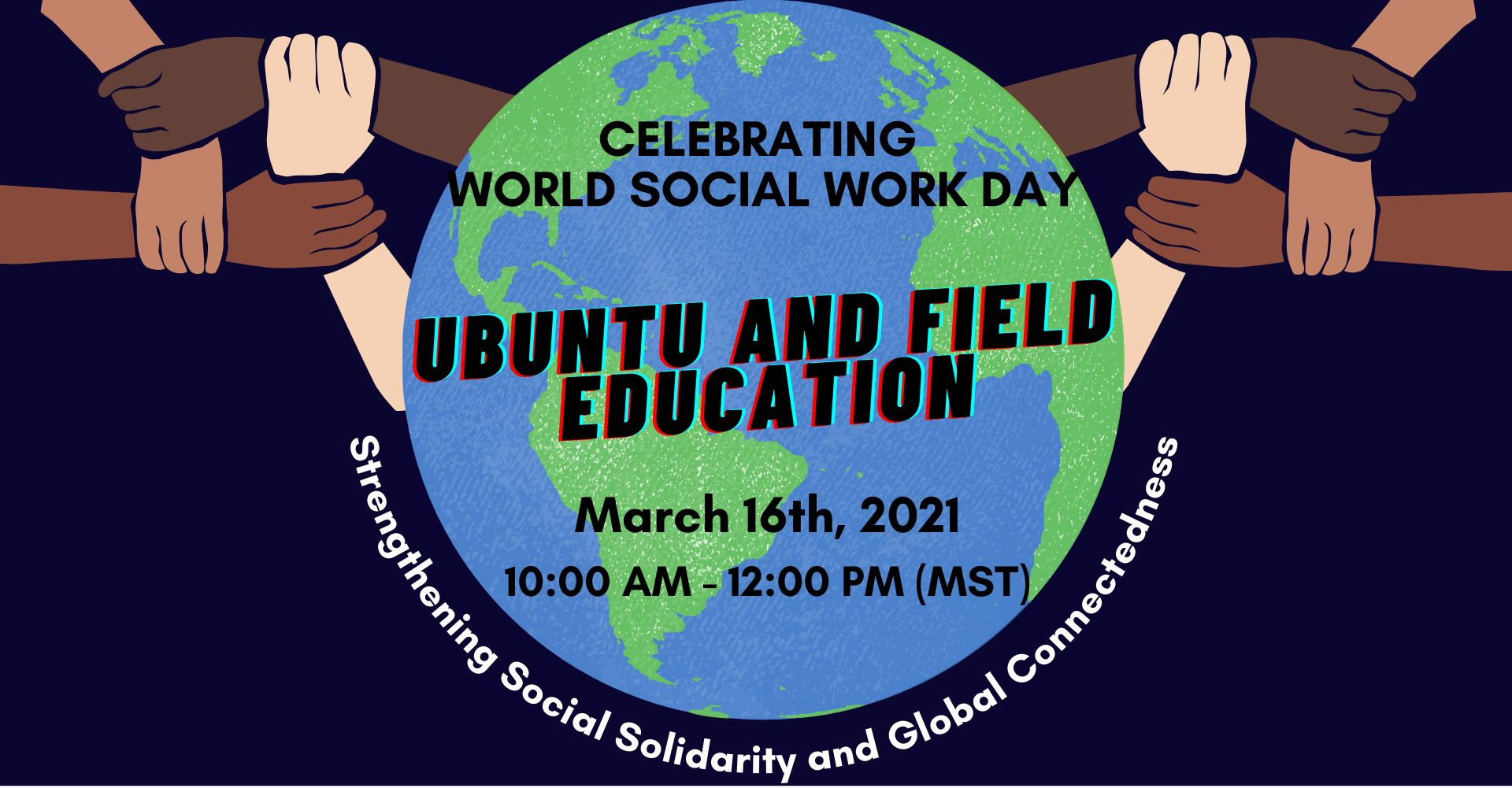
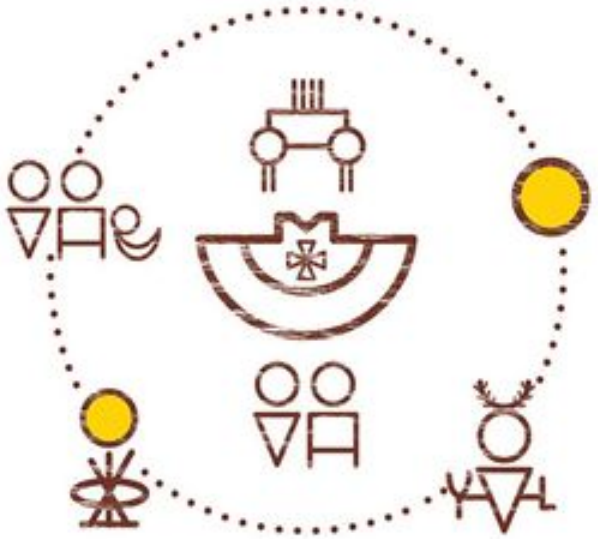


Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada
Conseil de recherches en sciences humaines du Canada
Canada

TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The University of Calgary respectfully acknowledges that we are located on Treaty 6 territory, a traditional gathering place for diverse Indigenous peoples including the Cree, Blackfoot, Metis, Nakota Sioux, Iroquois, Dene, Ojibway/Saulteaux/ Anishinaabe, Inuit, and many others whose histories, languages, and cultures continue to influence our vibrant community.

L'Université de Calgary reconnaît respectueusement qu'elle est située sur les terres du Traité 6, lieu de rassemblement traditionnel pour de nombreux peuples autochtones dont les Cris, les Pieds-Noirs, les Métis, les Sioux des Nakotas, les Iroquois, les Dénés, les Ojibwés/Saulteaux/Anichinabés, les Inuits et bien d'autres encore, dont les histoires, les langues et les cultures continuent d'influencer notre communauté si vivante.



ii' taa'poh'to'p
University of Calgary Office of Indigenous Engagement

Transforming the Field
Education Landscape

TRANSFORMING THE FIELD EDUCATION LANDSCAPE (TFEL)

Celebrating World Social Work Day:

Ubuntu and Field Education Symposium

March 16, 2021

FUNDING ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Transforming the Field Education Landscape project is supported in part by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (2019-2024)

SSHRC CRSH

UBUNTU

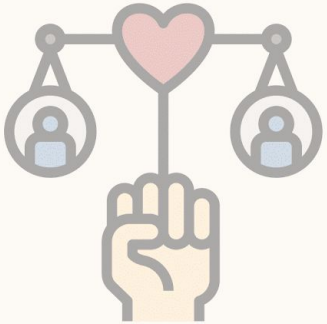
"An authentic human being is part of a larger and more significant relational, communal, societal, environmental and spiritual world"

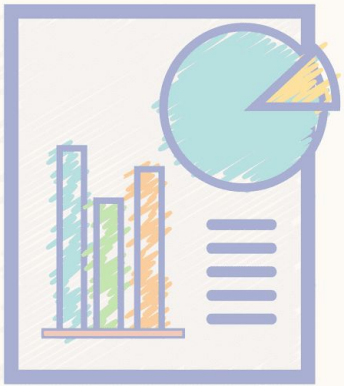
(Mugumbate, 2020)

Significance for Social Work

innovation
ideology
social justice
human rights
empowerment
strength

(Bent-Goodley, 2017)





spirituality, community, politics, management, welfare, counselling, family, administration, research

Ubuntu-Informed Ethics
→embrace the whole of humanity as part of our global community or clan,

Ubuntu-Informed Sustainable Development
→ consider our history (ancestors)
→ future (in our descendants)
→ honours our ancestors - ensures the wellbeing of descendants

Ubuntu-Informed Ecospiritual Social Work
→ consider the earth as a member of our community,
→have a reciprocal relationship.

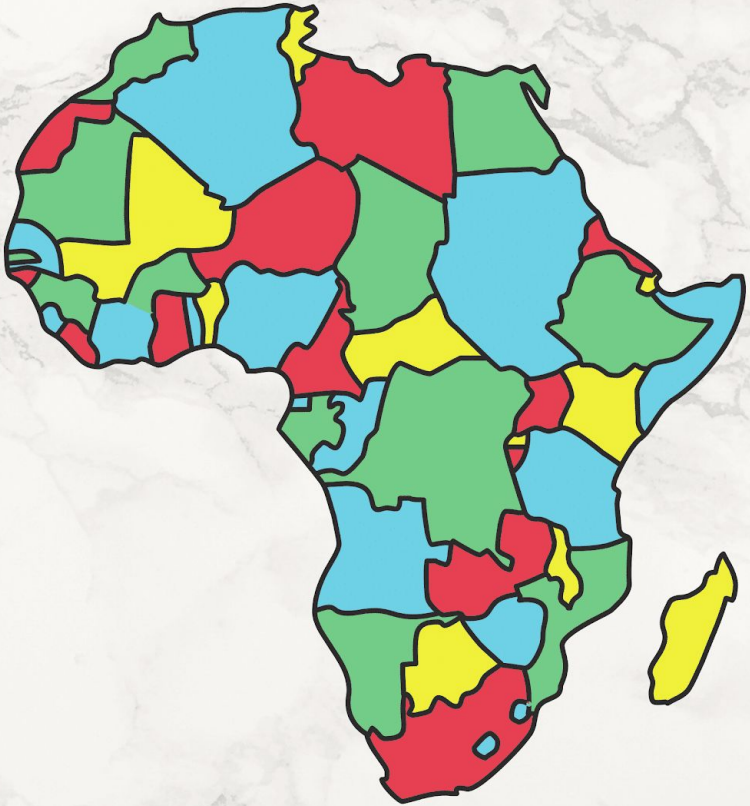
Extensions of **Ubuntu** to guide our practice

PRINCIPLE OF UBUNTU

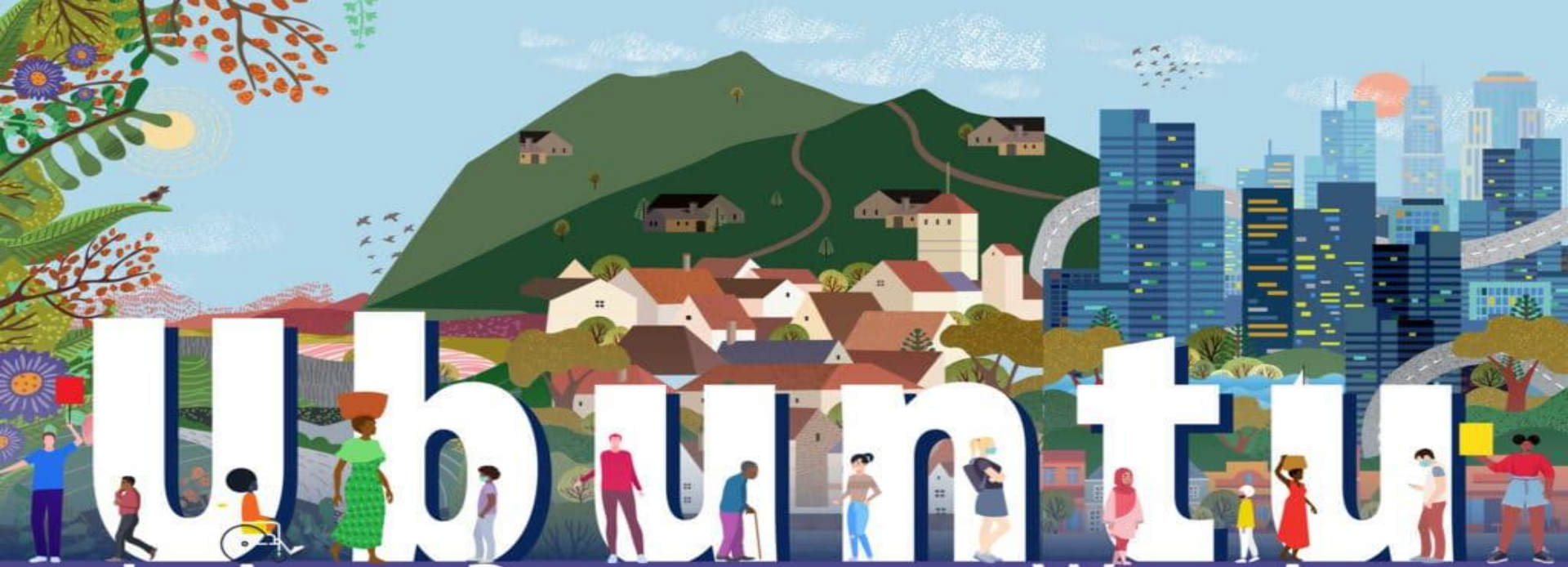
"TO BE HUMAN IS TO AFFIRM ONE'S HUMANITY BY RECOGNIZING THE HUMANITY OF OTHERS..."

(SAMKANGE & SAMKANGE, 1980)

Language/Region	Expression
ANGOLA	*gimuntu*
BANTU	*ubuntu*
BOTSWANA	*botho*
BURUNDI	*ubuntu*
CONGO	*bomoto*
ETHIOPIA	*iddir*
KINYARWANDA	*gira ubuntu*
KIRUNDI	*gira ubuntu*
LUGANDA	*obuntu-bulamu*
MALAWI	*umunthu*
MOZAMBIQUE	*vumuntu*
NDEBELE	*ubuthosi*
NGUNI	*ubuntu*
RUNYAKITARA	*obuntu*
SISWATI	*buntfu/umuntfu ngumuntfu ngebantfu*
SHONA	*bumuntu*
TANZANIA	*umuntu*
UGANDA	*ubuntu ngumuntu ngabantu*
ZULU	*ubuntu ngumuntu ngabantu*



gezma, dabare, eeba-ogdi, jjige,affini, gaze, debo, jemija,



I Am Because We Are

STRENGTHENING SOCIAL SOLIDARITY & GLOBAL CONNECTEDNESS

WORLD SOCIAL WORK DAY
16TH MARCH 2021
#WSWD2021

Transforming the Field
Education Landscape

ifsw
www.ifsw.org

READING RECOMMENDATIONS

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Keynote: Dr. Regine King

Ubuntu and Neoliberalism: A Match or Divorce for Social Work?

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

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Calgary, AB, Canada T2N 1N4 E:
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March 16, 2021

Ubuntu definition

- “A person is a person by or through other people”
- *Umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu* (Nguni language)
- *Umuntu nyamuntu* (Kinyarwanda language)

Ubuntu as a philosophical perspective

- **Ethics** of what it means to be human, to embody humanity, or humanness in action
- Embodiment of the concepts of ontological being and identity of what it means to be a human person in relation to other human persons
- **Identity in relationship c**reates **an ethical community**
- " Relationship is not merely something we observe objectively, or experience subjectively. Rather, relationships are an active lived reality that shapes our true identity and being" (*Forster, 2010, p.246)*
- An ethics of interrelationships, situated in a communitarian social fabric of caring and sharing

Examples of Ethics of Ubuntu

- Ubuntu as a set of qualities and human virtues of compassion and humanity
- Examples:
  - Day to day interactions
  - Conflict resolution
  - Connection with the cosmos

Ubuntu as a political ideology

- A more communitarian paradigm that goes beyond socialist notions of a ‘radical egalitarianism’ (Cornell, 2009)
- Decentralized forms of self-government (Benedetta & Margherita, 2013)

- A form of resistance
  - Counter-hegemonic to inform life and death struggles against capitalist enclosure and imperialism
  - Ubuntu rejects dualities (either or thinking)

Ubuntu from colonialism to neoliberalism

The ongoing colonial project continues to:

- **Misappropriate ubuntu as** senseless, and even violent, in relation to nation-building in Africa
- **Dismiss ubuntu** as hierarchical and outdated
- **Debilitate and alienate** ubuntu as way of being and knowing rooted
  - The impact is on the identity of the African people at home and abroad

Challenge for social work

Social work education and social workers operate in institutions influenced by systemic racism and discriminatory policies/practices

- Ubuntu principles may not have any real consequences on how people experience social work interventions/services

Ubuntu has been misappropriated and used in marketing, that is true for social work today!

- The rhetoric makes institutions feel good, rather than build community

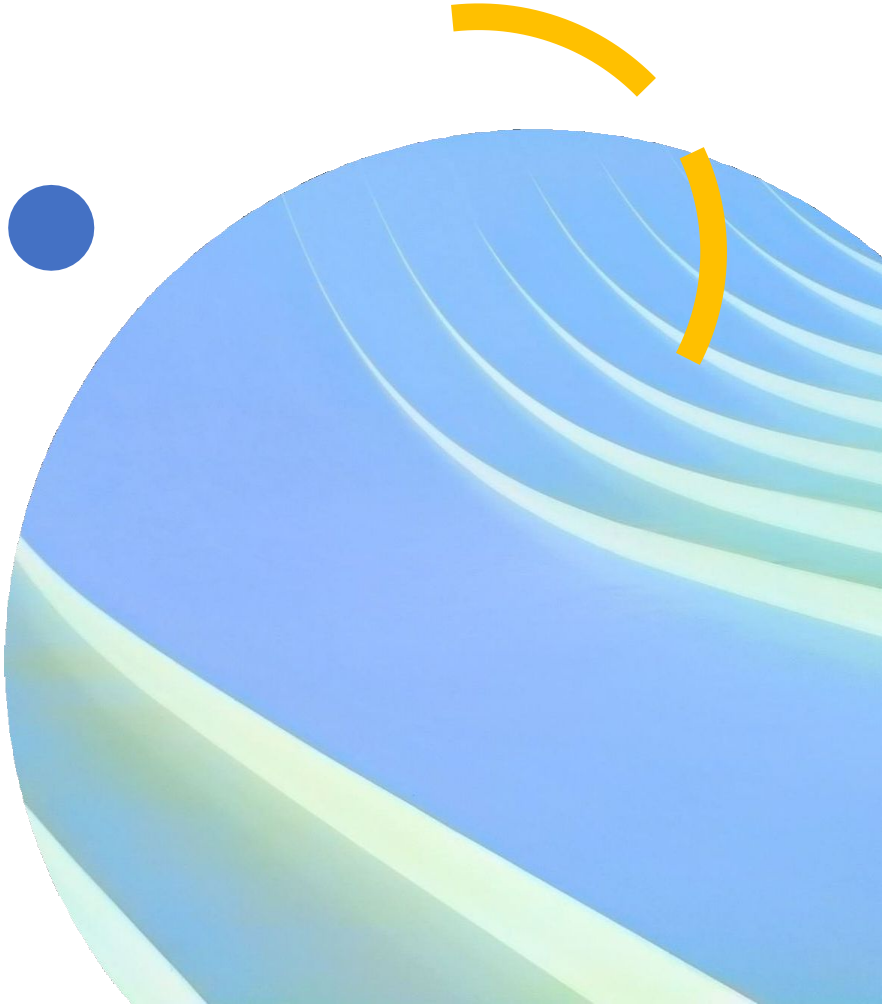
What is social work ought to do?

- Ubuntu challenges the moral principles of capitalism (commodification and consumerism of human values)
- Social work's adoption of ubuntu would require divorcing from neoliberalism
  - Take a moral/ethical stand against prevailing values of neoliberalism
  - Take a community-development approach to combat hunger and poverty, environmental degradation, and promote transformation in the spirit of *ubuntu*

Conclusion

For the practice of social work to reflect Ubuntu principles, we need to completely abandon neoliberalism

For the practice of social work to reflect Ubuntu principles, we need to abandon approaches that emphasize individual solutions to social problems!



Questions

Panel Discussion with TFEL Partners

Dr. Augusta Olaore, Babcock University

Mr. Clement Dlamini, University of Eswatini

Dr. Wassie Kebede, University of Addis Ababa

Dr. Adugna Abebe, University of Gondar

PANEL QUESTION #1

What does the spirit of Ubuntu mean to you, and how does it inform your social work practice and field education in your context?

PANEL QUESTION #2

How do we build community between ourselves, as field educators and students, and inspire a similar sense of community and connectedness in the wider society?

10 MINUTE BREAK
Strengthening Social Solidarity and Global Connectedness

UNITY
RESEARCH & PRACTICE
COMMUNITY
SERVICES
SOCIAL WORK
UBUNTU
FIELD EDUCATION
HUMANITY
STRENGTH

GOOGLE JAMBOARD - INSTRUCTIONS

1. Follow link
2. Breakout rooms numbers correspond with your Jamboard page
3. Use the arrows at the top of screen to scroll to your breakout room
4. Introduce yourselves briefly and discuss questions as a group
5. Use the features on the left bar to add your thoughts (e.g. sticky notes)
6. Designate a spokesperson to debrief after in the larger group

GOOGLE JAMBOARD DEBRIEF

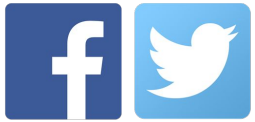
Welcome back!

Please provide 1-2 brief takeaways in the chat box

THANK YOU!
Strengthening Social Solidarity and Global Connectedness

For more information
about the partnership please contact:
tfelproject@gmail.com

@TFELProject



www.tfelproject.com

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