

## CO-DESIGNING FUTURE-BASED PARTNERSHIP FOR A UNIVERSITY-AFFILIATED ORGANIZATION USING A FUTURISTIC APPROACH

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### Abstract

This paper explores a futuristic approach to partnerships through the lens of a university-affiliated organization, focusing on how strategic collaborations can address evolving global challenges. By examining current practices and envisioning future dynamics, the paper provides insights into the role of partnerships in fostering sustainable development, particularly in education, agriculture, and governance. Drawing inspiration from systems learning and the cultural concept of reciprocity, the paper underscores the importance of mutual respect, trust, and collaboration in creating impactful, non-domination partnerships. It highlights the contributions of Scientific Animations Without Borders (SAWBO) by showcasing its innovative use of video animations and multilingual content to enhance knowledge dissemination and empower communities worldwide. The discussion integrates futuristic elements including artificial intelligence (AI) and digital platforms, emphasizing their potential to change partnerships by bridging digital divides and fostering inclusive knowledge-sharing. The conclusion offers recommendations for transformative approaches that prioritize sustainability in building partnerships for a more equitable future.

**Keywords:** global, futuristic approach, video animations, artificial intelligence, partnership

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### Introduction

In previous papers for the *Interdisciplinary Journal of Partnership Studies (IJPS)*, the author of this paper discussed how to go beyond the global north-south divide when

doing international work (Lutomia et al., 2018) and how even steeply hierarchical arrangements can nonetheless resist or avoid dominator tendencies in such situations (Lutomia et al., 2020). Dominator paradigms often centralize agenda-setting and decision-making in one party. This can be mitigated if the implementing partner's influence is recognized, allowing them to leverage their expertise and contribute to decisions in their domain. Trusting organizations with dominator tendencies to act effectively and in good faith ensures a more balanced and collaborative dynamic, even within a hierarchical structure (Lutomia et al., 2020). The author and others also argued that a partnership can produce non-domination values and practices through negotiated processes that resulted in positive collaboration outcomes. A significant finding of the case study (see Lutomia et al., 2018) was a history of past mutually beneficial interactions as a key precondition for fostering non-dominant collaboration within such a hierarchical relationship. Further, this allowed for a more balanced approach to agenda-setting and decision-making, areas that might otherwise have been heavily constrained by the power dynamics at play (Lutomia et al., 2018).

Now, the call for papers for this issue of *IJPS* suggests we imagine the future of partnerships, and a partnership-based future, by looking to the past. This idea of looking back to inform the future recalls the Ghanaian Sankofa philosophy symbolized by a bird looking back while holding an egg (the future) in her beak (Gumbo, 2024). Her feet also face forward, symbolizing movement into the future. Like the bird, we understand our past work of cultural transformation (Eisler, 2024) toward a future responding to two critical questions: 1) What will this future mean for education, agriculture, cities, and governance, and 2) What will a partnership-based future mean for our children, elders, currently marginalized peoples, and the rest of Nature?

### **Strategic Visioning and Leadership in Future-Oriented Partnerships**

Imagining and creating a future is something that people and organizations have long grappled with, but more recently (particularly in light of the existential threat of

climate change), a growing sense of urgency now exists to remediate existing disparities and improve the world (Eisler, 2024). One current response to this includes the United Nations' (UN) 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted in 2015, as a global aspirational call to protect the planet, end poverty, and ensure peace and prosperity for all people (United Nations, 2015). Additionally, the academic discipline of future studies formally seeks to anticipate and understand the future.

At the organizational level, *strategic planning* represents one way that stakeholders, employees, and members orient toward the future, by examining their organizations' strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges for future resilience (Agboola et al., 2022). Specifically, the strategic planning process defines the long-term goals and objectives of the organizations and how they will be attained. This focuses the team and provides action plans with milestones that can lead to impact. According to Martins (2024), strategic planning is a process in which organization members map out their five-year plan, vision, mission statement, goals, and growth of their entity and how they will get there.

Vision creation in organizations does not happen in a vacuum. Leaders of organizations are central in shepherding these processes. Specifically, transformational leaders are hailed for their ability to provide a clear vision for the organization's future (Northouse, 2021). According to Bennis and Nanus (1985), these leaders' visions are usually straightforward, understandable, and motivating of action. Ideally, this vision elicits stakeholder buy-in because it fits into the organization's direction and the society at large. The transforming leader is in this sense a social architect because they communicate the transformed direction of the organization's values and norms. Importantly, these leaders create trust in the organization because they stand by their decisions. This unwavering predictability and reliability builds trust even when faced with uncertainty. Eisler's (Eisler, 1994) dominator paradigm describes social systems characterized by rigid hierarchies, control, and power imbalances, in which authority is maintained through fear, coercion, and/or domination. This contrasts with

partnership paradigms, which emphasize mutual respect, collaboration, and shared power.

Moreover, partnerships are held to be generally good because they allow organizations to synergistically accomplish more than they could alone. This supports innovation, since cooperative spaces in principle offer a space for diverse perspectives that lead to creative solutions (Bello-Bravo, 2023). Partnerships create opportunities for growth through new connections. More broadly, partnership systems uphold “beliefs that present relations of mutual respect, accountability, and benefit as natural, and support hierarchies of actualization, where accountability and respect flow both ways rather than only from the bottom up, as in hierarchies of domination” (Eisler, 2017, Para. 3). There is an emphasis for those in partnerships to stay connected because this can lead to stronger collaboration, trust building, and swifter responses to challenges and opportunities. Despite these goods, partnership also requires more coordination and connectivity, and sometimes results in an overreliance of one partner on the other that leads to dependency. In general, its more horizontal hierarchy of relations challenges the premises of oppressive dominator paradigms.

## **Background**

This paper examines how we can build whole beings, communities, and nations now and in the future through our partnerships. It explores existing partnership praxes for Scientific Animations Without Borders (SAWBO) (Bello-Bravo, Medendorp, & Pittendrigh, 2022; Lutomia et al., 2023; Rodríguez-Domenech et al., 2023) and draws from future studies approaches to imagine a future of partnerships. In particular, it draws on the idea that the knowledge developed by future studies (Gidley, 2013) can foster the holistic development of all people (Bello-Bravo & Lutomia, 2024). In general, we hold that people’s access to knowledge is not only an indispensable good but a necessary one for any future hopes for the planet. On this point, the UN’s Sustainable Development Goal 17 emphasizes effective partnerships. Combining this emphasis on partnerships with the necessity of people’s usable access to knowledge, it is necessary

to implement a scaling of educational solutions that support research for development (R4D) investments at all scales across diverse languages, literacy levels, and digital divides. The challenges are considerable, and noted in this work within the multi-lingual, multi-cultural diversity of sub-Saharan Africa.

Often, when knowledge is shared, its effectiveness can be impeded by low literacy rates and inaccurate information sharing. Linguistic, geographical, social, political, economic, and cultural barriers leave many groups intentionally or unintentionally marginalized. Government extension health, nutrition, and agriculture systems are often underfunded and understaffed. Such systems tend to be lethargic and bureaucratic, resulting in ineffective responses, especially to crises. Even when working optimally, they can reinforce unjust structures. Some governments improve the reach of extension efforts through hierarchical information-sharing systems down to the village level. Such systems are comprehensive and sustainable yet lack sufficient resources to deliver consistent and comprehensive messages. A paradigm shift toward partnerships to support highly scalable, low-cost, accessible, scientifically-based, yet practical learning interventions that transcend these barriers is urgently needed, as the technical means are effectively solved (Bello-Bravo et al., 2023a). These systems must be re-envisioned and made sustainable by introducing new channels and methods that take advantage of digital tools for sharing and learning and the inherent human thirst for knowledge.

Toward that end, SAWBO forges partnerships with international, regional, national, local, and individual change agents, authorities, and experts to 1) identify knowledge gaps (especially in essential areas of life around health, nutrition, agricultural information systems, and peace building); 2) collaboratively produce a ‘library’ or ‘menu’ of content addressing those topics and others; 3) develop a sustainable dissemination strategy to reach all communities in their target areas to measurably improve outcomes in those topic areas (participation in the strategy will not be limited—all groups may participate); and 4) not only document the past and present of

such efforts but have open channels for end-users to interact with those efforts and become producers.

This strategy—via the forms of partnership that enable it will publicly encourage groups globally to adopt a project or areas of knowledge (including ensuring that the strategy reaches communities of hard-to-access, overlooked, marginalized, or neglected the groups). Generally, such partnerships dramatically extend the reach of humanitarian efforts. Addressing only the issue of existing mechanisms for agricultural extension, combining technological and human interfaces with existing and new pathways for disseminating information can more effectively engage larger regional organizations such as the Centre for Coordination of Agricultural Research and Development for Southern Africa (CCARDESA), the Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa (ASARECA), and the West and Central African Council for Agricultural Research and Development (WECARD). These multi-level, multi-dimensional dissemination mechanisms help organizations achieve their goals while significantly expanding the reach of life-improving content through government-to-government collaboration under regional agreements. Formal government extension systems, as sustainable networks, are a backbone of SAWBO's strategy, but not the sole channel. By partnering with systems, a systems learning approach can integrate non-government organizations (NGOs), the private sector, and informal social networks in a coordinated, trans-societal effort to disseminate vital, life-improving knowledge on any topic, but especially aspects of life around health, nutrition, and food security.

### **A Futuristic Approach for Future-Based Partnership**

According to the World Future Studies Federation (2024), future studies or future research, also known as futurology or futurism, draws from scientific prediction and speculative imagination to systematically understand possible, probable, and preferred futures. Motti (2023) defines future studies as:

. . . an art and a science that strongly emphasizes imagination and creativity to create different possible futures. Its main purpose is to discover and master the

complex chains of cause and effect through conceptualization, systemic approach, and feedback loops, ultimately providing innovation in the social and technological fields. (p. 609)

Epistemology focuses on knowledge and how it can or will be produced in the future; ontologically seeks to anticipate and understand the nature of the future. As an art and a science, future studies also provide space for other ways of knowing, including Indigenous knowledge, worldviews, and mythologies that seek to explain or imagine the future (World Futures Studies Federation, 2024).

Future studies is multidisciplinary and transdisciplinary, and has been used to imagine the future of academic disciplines as well, e.g., future partnerships and collaboration (Inayatullah, 2002), future organizations (Slaughter, 2003), partnership scenario planning for organizations and societies (Selsky et al., 2013; Wilkinson et al., 2013), and urban futures (Hajer & Versteeg, 2019). Thus, although future studies is generative of insights and tools that leaders and communities can use for solving problems and innovating stronger communities (Chugh, 2021), its critical difference is how and at what time-scales those solutions and innovations are imagined. It not only highlights the importance of cross-sector partnership projects for engaging wicked problems responsibly (Selsky et al., 2013) but affords a form of solution-finding that applies the most effective short-term intervention with the least detrimental long-term effects (Bello-Bravo & Lutomia, 2022). It reflects Indigenous stewardship practices that take a long-term, multi-generational view of resource use (Waller & Reo, 2018). Wicked problems, as defined by Rittel and Webber (1973), are complex and multifaceted challenges that are difficult or even impossible to solve due to incomplete or conflicting information, dynamic and evolving conditions, increasing interdependencies, and power dynamics. Examples of wicked problems include inadequate education systems, health-care disparities, injustices in legal frameworks, transportation inefficiencies, energy crises, climate change, food and water shortages, infectious diseases, human trafficking, terrorism, illegal arms trade, and gender inequality.

In this sense, SAWBO praxes are explicitly future-oriented (Bello-Bravo, 2023; Bello-Bravo et al., 2023a). This orientation facilitates imagining beyond the short-term and the present to integrate emerging trends, potential innovations, and speculative scenarios but also long-term exploration of possible future developments and consequences through an analysis of current trajectories and anticipated changes.

## **SAWBO's Partnerships and Meaning for the Future**

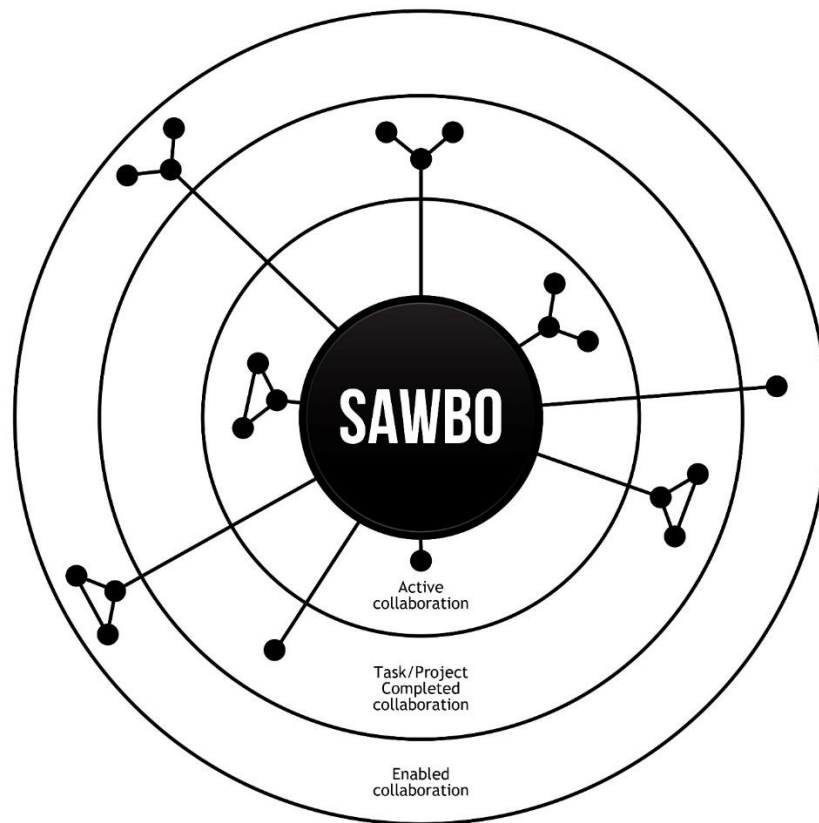
### **Partnership Frameworks**

Praxes around SAWBO's partnerships can be described in terms of four principal strategies: the theory of change framework by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID; 2016), systems learning approaches, virtual/hyper-collaboration, and network theory. The theory of change helps outline pathways for achieving partnership goals, focusing on disseminating scientifically grounded best practices in health, nutrition, and agriculture through animated videos that are linguistically accessible to diverse communities at no cost. Systems learning approaches are utilized to create adaptable and scalable knowledge dissemination methods.

SAWBO video animations provide a cost-effective, rapid, and adaptable way to tailor content to specific cultural and linguistic contexts, ensuring it is relevant to marginalized and rural populations while promoting local empowerment and supporting the SDGs. Similarly, virtual and hyper-collaboration in SAWBO's international projects emphasize quick, focused interactions to create content efficiently in response to urgent needs, like pandemics or natural disasters. This approach accelerates innovation and knowledge sharing across borders. For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic, SAWBO collaborated with USAID to translate an existing animated video into an additional 100 languages to reach millions in Ghana, Kenya, and Nigeria. The program was cost-effective and scalable, demonstrating the power of collaborative, culturally relevant content creation. The movement restrictions of COVID-19 further required the use of virtual collaboration tools, including WhatsApp, to engage farmers in real-time information sharing and problem solving. This platform helps bridge gaps in agricultural

extension services, especially in remote areas with limited internet access. Lastly, SAWBO's partnerships operate within a network theory model, categorized into three levels: active, task/project completed, and enabled partnerships. These partnerships allow for sustained collaboration, sharing of video resources, and the creation of a sustainable partnership-based future. Figure 1 depicts the structure of SAWBO partnerships.

**Figure 1.** *Structure of Scientific Animations Without Borders Partnerships*



**Active Partnerships.** Active partnerships are collaborative relationships in which both or all parties are regularly engaged in ongoing activities, communication, and/or shared projects. They involve active participation and resource sharing, with mutual goals being pursued continuously. In Figure 1, nodes within the active partnership zone represent ongoing entities or participants in a network, such as individuals, organizations, or departments. In partnership, each node signifies a stakeholder or actor involved in the project. These are the strong links that show active partnerships.

**Task/Project Completed Partnerships.** These are collaborations that were once active but are currently inactive because the activity collaborated on has been completed. While the relationship still exists, there is little or no regular communication or active partnership. These partnerships can be revived when necessary. In Figure 1, nodes within the task/project completed zone are the partnerships which SAWBO has been involved in recently. They may continue to use SAWBO's video animations, or not, because the project they were implementing has ended. An example of this is the partnerships we had during the Ebola and COVID-19 pandemics.

**Enabled Partnerships.** These are partnerships that received SAWBO video animation and are using it or not using it. This includes those who collaborate with SAWBO formally and informally. Some of these partnerships emerge from email communication indicating the use of videos by organizations not known to SAWBO. In Figure 1, nodes within the enabled partnership zone represent connections or entities that are connected to SAWBO network but not active; some are peripheral or secondary participants. The partnerships in this zone can be revived in the future. These types of partnerships take our video animations and run with them, using them and sharing them with others, sometimes without notifying us. They share these videos with others who continue to use them beyond the group. These types of collaboration depict the future-based partnerships that we envision: sustainable and independent partnerships.

### **Program Changes to Prepare for the Future**

Despite the proliferation of the Internet and the emergence of the mobile phone since 2017 as the most frequently used device for accessing it (Bello-Bravo, Brooks, et al., 2021), emergent digital divides continue to produce the wicked problem of some actors having Internet access while others do not. By emergent digital divides, the author means that growing disparities in Internet access and digital technology use create ongoing challenges. These divides are considered a wicked problem because they are deeply rooted in socioeconomic, geographic, and infrastructural inequalities, making

them difficult to resolve comprehensively. For example, in agriculture, farmers in urban areas with robust Internet connectivity can use apps to monitor weather or access global markets, while those in remote areas remain dependent on traditional methods. In education, learners in cities may participate in online classes, while those in rural regions struggle due to limited connectivity or lack of digital devices. Small businesses in regions with high-speed Internet can tap into e-commerce platforms, but businesses in areas without access miss out on expanding their customer base.

In fact, it can be argued that the technical challenge of affording billions of people access to life-improve digital information is solved (Bello-Bravo et al., 2023a); what remains unsolved involves the social challenges of doing so. In general, any system needs strategies to transfer content from online to offline (and vice versa).

Such social systems must have the capacity for groups to access and make content available in an ‘encyclopedia’ or library of video animations to those communities with no access to digital information (e.g., no Internet, no devices, no electricity). The channel of access is not specified and can be any that works (e.g., a TV or radio program, direct online digital access, access through a mobile phone app, or sharing of these with others). Consequently, any stakeholder with Internet access (from an individual change agent to an international multi-entity coalition) can identify the language of the community it plans on working in, select relevant videos in that language from SAWBO’s library of videos, and download them for redistribution in locally available channels at no cost.

Moreover, if a desired video is not already in an available local language, SAWBO can easily, quickly, and cost-effectively partner with stakeholders to produce a localized translation. For example, a chance meeting on social media connected SAWBO with a member of a minority community who had faced discrimination by a national government unwilling to produce COVID-19 prevention materials in their mother tongue; within days, the change agent provided a translation of audio content, which

SAWBO placed into the COVID-19 prevention video, thus empowering the change agent to provide crucial health information.

While new translations are the most frequent adaptations of existing SAWBO videos (Bello-Bravo, Medendorp, Lutomia, et al., 2022), requests for visual modification to videos can be quickly handled as well (Bello-Bravo & Pittendrigh, 2023). This aspect of systems learning partnerships shows how end-users ('consumers' or 'learners' of information) can be empowered as producers and teachers of knowledge. For those requesting translation into any one of the (usually Indigenous) languages now threatened with extinction, they are empowered as preservers of knowledge as well.

Successful partnerships ensure that the community is involved at all levels of the project. Scholars (Agboola et al., 2022; Eisler, 2017; Eisler & Potter, 2014) contend that when the community is involved, they can provide actionable inclusive data that contains practical perspective. Likewise, communities in various African countries where SAWBO works participate in collecting data by conducting pre- and post-test surveys to identify knowledge uptake during training. Additionally, WhatsApp groups and blog posts are informal ways for community members to generate actionable data.

### **Imagining Future Transformations in Future-based Partnerships**

Future collaborations ideally will see partners collaborating as co-leaders, not with the dynamics of a powerful and resourceful global North and a powerless and resourceless South. Rather, in a caring and democratic partnership, hierarchies of disempowering domination cease to exist, and hierarchies of actualization emerge in which power enables and *empowers* rather than disables and disempowers (Eisler, 2017).

Though not discussing the future, Peterman (2000) notes that successful partnerships share operational strategies, commitment to the shared vision, and discussion of the project's sustainability, especially what to do when the project ends. This means increasing community participation at all levels of partnership development.

Partnership then includes innovation and creativity, but more importantly, trust, flexibility, inclusion, transparency, and congeniality among partners. Partnerships evolve, but a common goal today and in the future is to build and empower local partners that could leverage local initiatives. International NGOs work with local actors, prioritizing participatory approaches to promote local solutions that combine scientific knowledge with local knowledge. We envision an improved system in which partnerships can expand toward inclusion.

Successful future partnerships will continue to include commitment among partners with a specific organizational model approved by each partner. Futuristic partnerships may concentrate more on automatizing some ways of working together with technology. Still, formal partnership arrangements must be modified to explore broader engagement for change. Admittedly, the relationships that forge the beginnings of partnerships will remain important, but it is noteworthy that establishing and building relationships and trust takes time. What the author envisions in terms of futuristic international partnerships is paying attention to social justice and transforming the digital divide into equal access to opportunities. Some frameworks could help us consider what is necessary to improve networks. Disruptive technologies will bring social changes, and the participation of diverse stakeholders and policymakers will be required to anticipate strategic planning and potential crises that could emerge among partners.

Joseph Schumpeter's (1943) concept of creative destruction comes to mind when imagining the future of agriculture interfaced with AI. AI has advantages, such as enhanced efficiency, automation of repetitive tasks, and the ability to analyze vast amounts of data for informed decision-making. It drives innovation across industries, improves health-care diagnostics, optimizes logistics, and personalizes user experiences in education and entertainment. However, AI presents challenges, such as ethical concerns about data privacy, job displacement due to automation, and potential biases in algorithms that may reinforce social inequalities. Additionally, the development and deployment of AI systems require substantial resources and expertise, often widening

the digital divide. Balancing these pros and cons is essential to ensure AI is implemented responsibly and equitably.

Schumpeter's concept of creative destruction represents the transformative power of innovation, which drives economic development by disrupting established industries by reducing costs and increasing accessibility. According to Schumpeter (1943), innovations lead to new possibilities, enable access to cutting-edge science, and reduce costs for broader applications. Creative destruction signals a shift in mindset. On this subject, Eisler (2024) observed that the relationship between technology and society is complicated, with the societal models of dominator and partnership paradigms responding to technology in distinct ways. It's essential to clarify that technology doesn't drive societal decisions; instead, the cultural context shapes how technology is applied. If a society values equality and collaboration, technology will be used to promote positive outcomes and shared benefits. Conversely, technology will likely exacerbate inequality and reinforce control structures in societies prioritizing domination.

Specifically, cross-sector partnerships with governments (or governance structures) lead to institutionalization because project activities gain buy-in, are inserted into policies, and are eventually implemented, thus achieving the intended transformational change (Igalla et al., 2021). Future governments might evolve to be at a regional or continental level. Larger and more flexible governments in terms of information sharing and people's movement will increase partnerships across borders and institutionalization of best practices.

The greatest advantage of digital resources is that they transcend boundaries. SAWBO animations share this advantage. Research has shown that when using animations in extension efforts, women achieve equally high retention of information levels as men and sometimes show greater learning gains (Bello-Bravo et al., 2018). This may result from traditional extension approaches retaining the same social biases (against women) in society, whereas animated videos can “bypass” issues of gender and socioeconomic

status. It is not so much that women learn more from digital extension as that women learn less when social barriers are in place. Animated learning tools can eliminate the gap between male and female learning and level the playing field. By addressing the challenge of knowledge delivery in multicultural, multilingual, rural, low- to non-print-literate, socioeconomically resource-strained Africa, SAWBO was compelled to focus on conventionally underserved groups. Further, the deliberate use of *push* (intentionally placing content into specific channels to reach specific groups) and *pull* (making content accessible to anyone who wants to use it) methods means that SAWBO content can travel well beyond known intended populations. In principle there is virtually no limit to the number of groups or people who might use SAWBO content, even after a project ends. Once the content is produced, the (social) barriers that might hinder its further use can be overcome by locally empowered change agents (Bello-Bravo, Payumo, et al., 2021).

The concept of creative destruction is like AI because it is neither is never only harmful nor never only benign—it is always a combination of the two. An example is the Green Revolution (Sumberg et al., 2012) which had two features relevant to this discussion. One was vast increases in the amount of food that could be produced more cheaply, more reliably, and in greater quantity. The other was, because the Green Revolution gave the competitive advantage to large scale agriculture, it put small-hold farmers out of business. However, innovations related to the Green Revolution should not be implemented at the expense of Indigenous knowledge and practices (Stenius, 2012); there may be room for Green Revolution and Indigenous knowledge agriculture to work in concert.

### **Imagining Future-Based Partnerships Using Artificial Intelligence**

A major dilemma in international collaboration is a project's sustainability after completion (Lutomia, 2019). In a future in which projects will not rely solely on donor funding but on collaboration for innovation or transformation of practices with partners as equals in non-hierarchical partnerships, the use of AI could be instrumental in

ensuring the sustainability of the project by involving communities throughout the project and giving them ownership, empowerment, and skills to document their experiences, to continue using the video animations, to be motivated to collect data, and to share with SAWBO and other collaborators. The incentive to gather data and use analytical tools may include monetary rewards, credit points, or recognition within the community at a local, regional, or global level.

AI can empower people by providing instant access to information, enabling them to apply what they learn immediately. It promotes information sharing and innovation. Future AI developments could also enable seamless translation of videos into over 7,200 languages, taking into account cultural and linguistic nuances; this would be immensely helpful given the central importance of translation to successful dissemination of scientifically grounded knowledge (Bello-Bravo et al., 2023b). Currently, the process of video translation is bottlenecked by the need for volunteers to translate, review scripts, verify accurate translation, and create voiceovers; AI could streamline that. The critical technical limit is the mandate to maintain accurate, scientifically grounded knowledge in a correct translation. At present, unsupervised AI translation is unreliable in creating correct translations.

AI could also facilitate 24/7 virtual communities of practice, connecting people worldwide and enabling real-time interaction and activity tracking. Currently, these communities rely on platforms like WhatsApp. These communities depend on platforms like WhatsApp, which can be challenging to organize, lack consistent engagement, and make it difficult to sort or retrieve older messages. Here also, without vastly mitigating the inaccuracies of large language models, the promise of these approaches remains in doubt.

In the context of SDGs, we envision a future in which communities, NGOs, governments, and the private sector collaborate seamlessly. With AI enabling instant information sharing, global efforts toward the SDGs and other development goals will be more

thoroughly documented, ensuring that contributions that have been often overlooked or unrecorded are fully captured and recognized.

In the agricultural sector, scientists will be able to collaborate across disciplines to enhance crop yields and improve farming practices. Using satellite technology and AI, data can be gathered to support more informed decision-making and promote sustainable management strategies. The sector will capitalize on tools that enable smart and sustainable agriculture, ultimately increasing food production.

Moreover, in a world without an AI divide, international development and public and private sectors will be able to collaborate seamlessly, leading to more effective exchange of knowledge that improves overall performance. In such collaborations, employees can work across sectors, applying their expertise in new contexts and returning to their original sector after completing their assignments. As a result, collaboration across sectors among people with similar skills working together on partnership projects will tend to promote comparable pay and benefits. This can be the case because if workers can enter and exit markets readily because barriers to entry and exit have been removed, differences in compensation, including pay and benefits, will tend to be reduced.

Another partnership-based future that will be foregrounded using AI is the preservation and documentation of Indigenous agricultural practices that are still used by some communities but remain largely unknown to others, especially other generations. By capturing this knowledge, AI will make it accessible to those interested now and to future generations within these groups. Additionally, AI can facilitate sharing these practices with other Indigenous communities. According to Dalbotten et al. (2017), best practice examples include the partnership between the Ojibwe Native American community in Minnesota and the University of Minnesota, which can be adapted for partnerships with other Indigenous groups. In this collaboration, learners improved math and science learning by "incorporating a cultural context and Indigenous culture; providing relevance to the culture of the student; involving the community; providing

communal learning environment and using problem based or real word bases activities” (Dalbotten et al., 2017, p. 9).

**Summary: A Partnership-Based Future**

Tables 1 and 2 summarize the author’s answers to the two questions posed in the call for papers for this issue of IJP: What will this future mean for education, agriculture, cities, and governance? and What will a partnership-based future mean for our children, elders, currently marginalized peoples, and the rest of Nature? SAWBO’s systemic approach to partnerships demonstrates how coordinating and systems learning can leverage multilingual, culturally appropriate content to bridge gaps across domains (especially education, the SDGs, and governance), while helping to build more sustainable societies in the future.

**Table 1.** *Meaning of a Partnership Future for Education, Agriculture, Cities, and Governance*

Category	Meaning
Education	SAWBO's approach to producing educational content in local languages fosters inclusivity and accessibility. In the future, this could mean more equitable education systems where language is no longer a barrier to learning, especially in marginalized communities. UNESCO advocates for mother-tongue education, and SAWBO's work in providing video animations in numerous languages support this by ensuring those in the margins can access education in a language they understand.
Agriculture	In agriculture, SAWBO's animated videos already support sustainable farming practices by providing farmers with crucial, easy-to-understand information in their local languages. This empowers smallholder farmers to adopt better practices in pest management, farming practices, and food security. As AI and digital tools like SAWBO video animations become more prevalent, future agricultural systems could become more resilient, with farmers using data and real-time information to make informed decisions, improving food production and sustainability.
Cities	As cities grow and urbanization increases, accessible public information will be critical. SAWBO's model of translating key knowledge into multiple languages could be applied in urban settings to educate citizens on health, environmental practices, civic engagement, and disaster preparedness. This could help build more informed urban populations better equipped to handle climate change, pollution, and infrastructure management, making cities more resilient and sustainable.
Governance	SAWBO's work offers a framework for transparent, inclusive governance communication. Governments can promote more inclusive decision-making and participation by providing information in the languages that citizens speak and understand. This is especially relevant in multicultural and multilingual societies

	where language barriers can hinder civic participation. Future governance models may include SAWBO-like approaches to ensure that citizens are well-informed about policy decisions, voting rights, and other aspects of governance, promoting more democratic and inclusive governance systems.
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The environment benefits immensely from a partnership-driven future that incorporates SAWBO's educational reach. By educating farmers, communities, and governments in sustainable agricultural practices and environmental stewardship, SAWBO contributes to preserving ecosystems and biodiversity. Children and adults alike will learn about the importance of protecting natural resources, which is critical in the fight against climate change. As knowledge of eco-friendly practices spreads through these partnerships, societies can develop more harmonious relationships with nature, implementing sustainable policies in agriculture, urban planning, and conservation.

**Table 2: Meaning of a Partnership Future for Children, Elders, Currently Marginalized Peoples, and the Rest of Nature**

Category	Meaning
Children	Children will have access to quality education tailored to their linguistic and cultural contexts in a partnership-based future. SAWBO's multilingual animations make complex topics like health, agriculture, and environmental stewardship accessible to young learners. As these tools expand, children from diverse backgrounds will grow up in an environment where language is no longer a barrier to learning. This fosters an early understanding of global issues like sustainability and climate change, helping to raise a more globally conscious generation equipped to address future challenges. Additionally, this will offer more opportunities in future.
Elders	Elders, often the carriers of cultural and traditional knowledge, will benefit from including local languages and culturally relevant content in SAWBO's materials. This will enable them to stay engaged with learning and community participation in a more accessible manner. In rural areas where elder communities play a key role in agricultural practices, SAWBO's work can empower them with updated information on sustainable farming, health, and community well-being, ensuring they remain active participants in societal advancement. This respect for elders' languages and knowledge also aligns with the global recognition of Indigenous wisdom in managing natural resources and fostering community resilience.
Currently marginalized peoples	A partnership-based future empowered by tools like SAWBO will bring marginalized peoples to the forefront of education and governance. By providing content in their native languages, SAWBO ensures that marginalized groups—regardless of geography, ethnicity, or socio-economic status—are no longer excluded from vital information and opportunities. This promotes greater equality by empowering these groups to make informed decisions about their health, livelihoods, and rights.

Rest of nature	The environment benefits from a partnership-driven future that incorporates SAWBO's educational reach. By educating farmers, communities, and governments in sustainable agricultural practices and environmental stewardship, SAWBO contributes to preserving ecosystems and biodiversity. As knowledge of eco-friendly practices spreads through these partnerships, societies can develop more harmonious relationships with nature, implementing sustainable policies in agriculture, urban planning, and conservation.
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## Conclusion

Responding to the call for papers for this *IJPS* anniversary issue of imagining the partnership-based future, the author built on our existing and future partners' vision of a sustainable approach to education and agriculture in international development. This paper introduces the futuristic approach which borrows from many disciplines, thus allowing for a reimagining of partnerships and envisioning future partnerships. A futuristic approach to partnerships entails adopting a framework that remains responsive to shifting contexts and the unique dynamics of evolving systems, such as resource availability or the nature of interventions. This approach emphasizes reimagining partnerships as foundational to systems that thrive on reciprocity and mutual growth. The framework encourages a participatory and iterative process, enabling individuals and organizations to embrace values like collaboration, trust, empathy, and capability as actionable principles. By fostering these qualities, partnerships grow from transactional engagements into transformative relationships that support sustainable systems. This approach highlights the importance of empowering agency and creating opportunities for participants to experience and internalize the qualities necessary for enduring and equitable relationships with one another and the broader world. Such a framework underscores the essential role of partnerships in addressing future challenges and promoting resilience in an interconnected global landscape.

This paper recognizes that transforming communities requires scientifically proven information in an accessible format. Accessible scientifically proven information has implications for health, food security, global peace, and the survival of non-human

species and ecosystems. Thus, organizations such as SAWBO partner with local and global communities and organizations to participate in problem solving for the common good. Specifically, SAWBO engages in developing content that is deemed to be a public good extension service. Specifically, public good extension services are initiatives that provide accessible knowledge and resources to that benefit whole communities. These services focus on addressing challenges such as food security, environmental sustainability, and community development by disseminating information, training, and technologies to diverse populations. Centering content creation for public good extension services in SAWBO's practice, education, and research leverages knowledge, skills, and public trust. In conjunction with partners, content creators, and innovators, SAWBO endeavors to engage in sustainable partnerships for a better world.

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