Foremost in the current development debate is the issue of the real and growing interconnectedness of people, countries, economies, and ecologies. The term "globalization" is loosely used to aggregate many of the issues, concerns, and opportunities of this growing interconnectedness.

Second is the issue of the scope and effects of poverty and inequality within and across countries. Third is the transference across borders of issues relating to the heightened security concerns that come from the global consequences of armed conflict and civil unrest. More recently, issues of corruption and good governance, climate change, and communicable diseases have been seen as systemic issues that require global action in order to be completely contained.

Illustration from the Case of Communicable Diseases

Malaria, a preventable and treatable disease, kills more than 1 million people—most of them young children in Africa—each year. The disease also takes a high toll on households and health care systems, impeding development. It is estimated that malaria reduces GDP growth by approximately 1 full percentage point per year.

The most cost-effective interventions against malaria today are rapid diagnosis and effective treatment, the use of insecticide-treated bednets, intermittent presumptive treatment for pregnant women, and epidemic preparedness.

While insecticide-treated mosquito nets are cost effective, at US$2.00 to US$5.00 per net, these are not affordable to the more than 3 billion people in the world living on an income of less than US$2.00 a day. A course of treatment using artemisinin-based combination therapy (ACT) at US$0.75 to US$2.50 is not affordable to the more than 1.2 billion people living on less than US$1.00 a day.

Obtaining results in this and other similar areas requires multisectoral partnerships. Consider, for example, Sanofi-aventis, the world's third largest pharmaceutical company with a commitment to the southern hemisphere, and a focus on malaria.

Sanofi-aventis set up a Card Access Program (CAP) that targets each malaria patient.

Private sector roles in the partnership age

The nature and scale of development issues require effective partnerships and solutions that involve different sectors of society. These interconnected and systemic issues are best looked at in a multisectoral setting requiring collaborative solutions, with a deliberate experimentational feature—learning from tinkering—which represents a challenge to the traditional motivational, organizational, and accountability mechanism long established for different sectors of society, particularly the private sector.

Frannie Léautier and Djordjija Petkoski

Frannie Léautier is Vice President of the World Bank Institute. Djordjija Petkoski is the Team Leader for the Business, Competitiveness, and Development Team at WBI.
A Multi-dimensional Approach

“A multi-dimensional approach...is required to address [development] problems...the private sector is the most important engine of development, but it’s also clear that the private sector can’t do it on its own. There are critical things that have to be done by the public sector and that’s the principal area where the World Bank interacts...governments and donors need to include the business community in policymaking decisions and use [their] expertise and experience in making the right policy choices for a good business environment”.

—World Bank President Paul Wolfowitz, Remarks at the Corporate Council on Africa Dinner, Baltimore, MD, June 23, 2005
Requirements for Success

For partnerships to succeed, the three sectors of business, government, and NGOs need to ensure that:

- There is sufficient time allocated for the partners to take stock of where things are, as this will create a common understanding of the challenges and the starting point.
- Identify opportunities to get systemic change.
- Engage in dialogue for deeper understanding of each other and discovery of new ways of doing things.
- Apply a common vision in their respective workplaces as they develop their understanding, to be better able to test hypotheses and shift practices.
- Admit mistakes and learn from failure and trials, to develop a culture of learning and experimenting.
- Engage other strategic stakeholders, such as the worker as stakeholder, or the poor as stakeholders, or future generations as stakeholders.
- Build capacities to demonstrate dynamism for change and competence, and track record of results.
Four Key Development Cornerstones

Development challenges require that four key things be properly addressed:

- **Vision**: a new story that holds people together and keeps them going in a common direction
- **Strategy**: a community of people with a common understanding of the issues, what we have termed in this paper as “partnership”
- **Process**: a change in the debate on the issues in order to innovate, improve, and shape new ways of doing things
- **Outcome**: a new form of organization that builds on public sector breadth and capacity, voluntary sector values, and business sector efficiency.