I. Defining the ecosystem

State and Civil Society Entities (SCSEs) are a more accurate description of the world of civic action that exist in the development/humanitarian sectors. It is a more inclusive term than non-government, as it includes more informal resistance and advocacy movements that are now defining the direction of civic space in different countries. It also directly represents the affected communities instead of those who may be externally representing them.

II. Creating a Framework

A Cooperation Framework or mechanism should be developed in terms of how entities in different countries working on similar issues can come together to form coalitions or regional groups.

III. Defining the scope

There are no “international” entities in this ecosystem because every entity is national by virtue of where it is based and is also “international” for another country. This removes the North/South convention of only referring to organisations based in the North, as “international”.

IV. Operating Environment

- SCSEs are not classified as international or local. They are simply in-country organisations based in their country of origin, e.g. in Country A.
- Country offices of INGOs do not exist, e.g. Oxfam, SCF etc have one main location in one country and work in collaboration with existing country of origin entities across the world.
- External staff does not exist in these SCSEs. They are run and managed by national staff only.
- There is no SCSEs “intermediary”. Funding goes directly from source to recipient. If at all, if the funding comes from outside the country, the national government can be the intermediary (see risks).
- Funders have pools of money for specific sectors, e.g. gender, humanitarianism, education, climate, health etc.
- Sub-sectors within this, but no technical ToRs. That comes from the SCSEs looking for the funds. They design the ToRs to fit the donors’ ethical objectives to address a cause.
- Sectors, causes and functions will overlap.
- Regional collective will bring together SCSEs from each region to develop regional knowledge.

V. Benefits (that could also be risks)

- Funding and implementing intermediaries based outside countries are removed (INGOs in current parlance).
- Country offices do not exist.
- Management is purely national. Accountability is to national staff, beneficiaries and governments.
- No expat staff in charge or HQ to report to (except in financial accountability).
- Can strengthen relationships between national governments and their own civil society - force them to work together and hold each other to account.

VI. Risks (some could also be benefits)

- Donor and government funding conditionalities and mandates.
- Multiple levels of collaboration among organisations and funders could cause greater complexity in financial management.
- Such a structure may mean that multilaterals may not want to directly fund community organisations if there is no non-national intermediary for country (i.e. INGO in current terms).

VII. Intended outcomes

- Wider pool/approach of funding available.
- No direct control of North over South.
- Focus on knowledge exchange rather than leading projects.
- No distinction between “international” and “local”.
- No compulsion to seek funds only from Northern donors.
- Priorities are not designed by donors.
- Each country works to strengthen needs in only their own country. Cross-country collaborations will be based on the need to build on and learn from experiences in other countries.
- Everything is national, associated with an individual country. Everything is imagined and designed in-country. Everyone also supports it in some way.

Figure 1: An alternate ecosystem for global development and humanitarianism