Bringing the TICZA Common Competency Framework to Life

The **TICZA Common Competency Framework (CCF)** is an output of the Teacher Internship Collaboration South Africa (TICZA). TICZA Webinar 2 hosted by NASCEE explored the purpose of the CCF, its key features, and how it can be applied by TICZA partners – and, potentially, by other stakeholders in initial teacher education and professional development.

TICZA is a five-year collective impact partnership involving convened by JET Education Services, involving government, NGO implementers, higher education institutions (HEIs), funders and teacher unions. The focus is on Initial Teacher Education (ITE) students studying through distance learning while based in schools, in what TICZA calls **extended student teacher internships (ESTIs).** TICZA aims to show how and under what conditions ESTIs can provide high quality student teacher training, and how the model can be institutionalised within the broader ITE system.

Key Features of the CCF

- It is a set of **practice standards** setting out key competencies across three domains (knowledge, skills and attitudes) under each of the SACE Professional Teaching standards.
- Competencies **progress** across three levels: 'spark' (beginner), 'ignite' (intermediate) and 'flame' (advanced).
- The CCF was developed with the specific aim of **measuring the progress of student teachers** (B Ed or PGCE) in ESTIs throughout their years of study, and assess their readiness for to become qualified professionals.
- In ESTIs it can be a **tool** for implementer project managers to track progress, for mentors to observe, assess and advise, and for students to reflect on their own progress. A detailed assessment rubric accompanies the framework.

See the TICZA CCF Presentation Webinar 2 and the Draft Common Competency Framework here: TICZA CCF Prevalidated-draft .
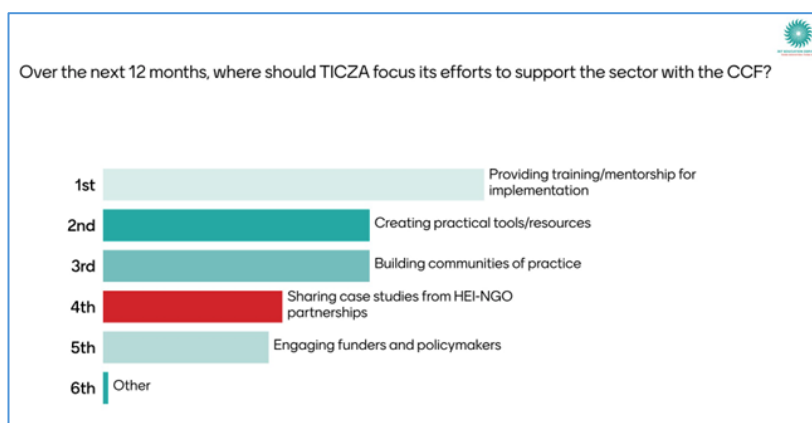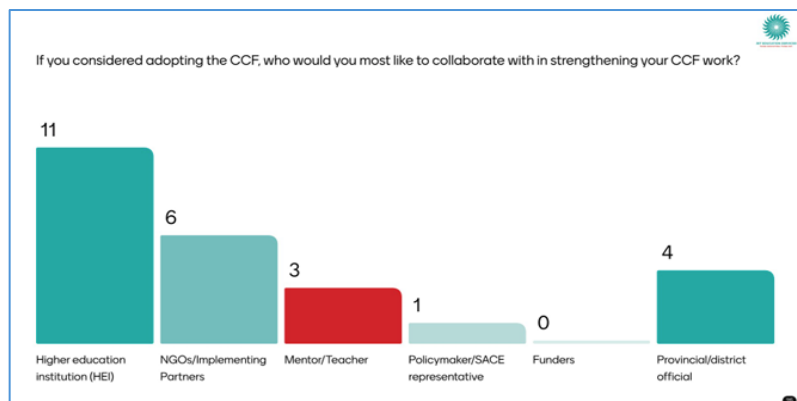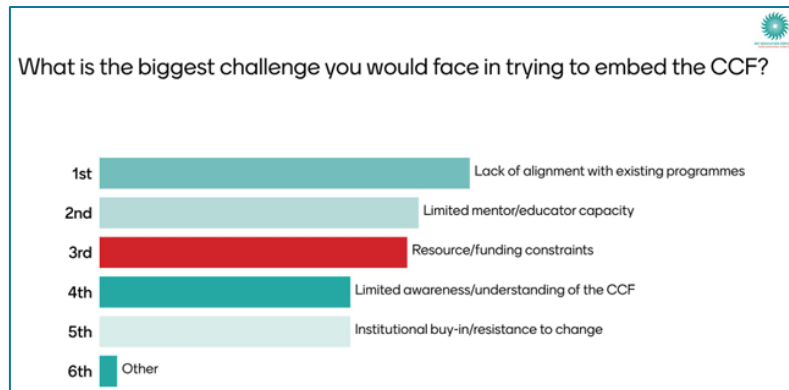
Using the CCF

TICZA NGO Implementing Partners (IPs) provide wrap-around support (including academic support, psychosocial support and mentorship) for distance learning education in schools. Two IPs (Khanyisa Inanda Community Projects and Global Teachers Institute) reflected on potential uses in their programmes.

- The CCF will serve mainly as a **high-level guiding document** rather than an everyday tool, used for baseline, midline and endline assessment. Generally, school-based mentor teachers will continue to use programme-specific lighter-touch tools.
- With **training**, IP project managers/mentors and students could use the CCF effectively.
- IPs will need to consider how to **integrate the CCF** into their own digital data platforms.
- **Digital Teaching and Learning (DTL)** competence should be added.

Though the CCF was designed for ESTIs, it could be adapted for HEIs and other sectors such as ECD, while understanding that any competency framework must emerge from the relevant profession or sector itself.

Participant responses to three questions

What is the biggest challenge you would face in trying to embed the CCF?

1st	Lack of alignment with existing programmes
2nd	Limited mentor/educator capacity
3rd	Resource/funding constraints
4th	Limited awareness/understanding of the CCF
5th	Institutional buy-in/resistance to change
6th	Other

If you considered adopting the CCF, who would you most like to collaborate with in strengthening your CCF work?

Higher education institution (HEI)	NGOs/Implementing Partners	Mentor/Teacher	Policymaker/SACE representative	Funders	Provincial/district official
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Over the next 12 months, where should TICZA focus its efforts to support the sector with the CCF?

1st	Providing training/mentorship for implementation
2nd	Creating practical tools/resources
3rd	Building communities of practice
4th	Sharing case studies from HEI-NGO partnerships
5th	Engaging funders and policymakers
6th	Other

Next Steps: The Road Ahead

- TICZA's main output is the **standardised ESTI model**, based on common and core features of IP ESTI approaches. Clearly defined 'Essential Wrap Around Support' (EWAS) components will be in the public domain shortly.
- Next year's **prototyping process** will test and pilot the CCF, and implement a statistically sound research process to compare the ESTI standardised model with conventional Work

Integrated Learning (WIL) practices offered by HEIs for distance learning students. Planning for implementation is underway.

- The research will apply to Foundation Phase student teachers in Year 3-4 of the B ED Degree, with the aim of showing that the standardised ESTI model identified through TICZA produces
  - more competent teachers
  - at a cost affordable to the public fiscus (i.e. covered by NSFAS, Funza Lushaka or ETDP SETA learnership funding)

  than teachers trained through other distance education programmes.
- Other outcomes such as quicker qualifying times or retention in the profession require longer term research.
- Applications to take part in the prototype process require opting in to the standardised ESTI model in an implementer/ HEI partnership, working in the Foundation Phase with the required student numbers.

NGO IPs help ground theory in practice, showing how research plays out in real contexts. The next stage is for NGO IPs to work with the HEIs to test the value of ESTIs. The TICZA journey has been one of learning and perseverance – the project is now at a seminal point requiring full commitment from all partners, in the interests of the next generations of teachers.

To find out more about TICZA, visit TICZA on the JET Education Services website, See also The TICZA Practice and Research Digest .