Summative Evaluation of the Teacher Internship Collaboration South Africa (TICZA)

Final Report

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Submitted to: TICZA Research and Evaluation Committee Chair

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Executive summary

Background and context

South Africa's education system is currently navigating a critical teacher supply and demand challenge, shaped by rising learner enrolments and the retirement of a large segment of the teaching workforce. Projections from government departments and researchers indicate a growing shortfall in qualified teachers, with over 24,000 educators exiting the profession in 2021 alone, while the number of graduates produced by the current initial teacher education (ITE) system is insufficient to meet demand. Severe budget constraints are also impacting the workforce numbers. For example, budget limitations in the Northern Cape and Western Cape have led to reductions in teacher posts. In the Northern Cape, a R358 million shortfall is affecting over 600 educator positions, while the Western Cape anticipates a reduction of 2,407 posts, increasing learner-educator ratios and placing further pressure on service delivery. Subject-specific shortages, particularly in mathematics, science, technology, and African languages, further intensify the issue. Addressing these challenges will require coordinated action, including targeted teacher recruitment, support for specialisation in critical subjects, improved retention, strengthened training pathways, and a renewed focus on professional development.

Teachers are trained through public and private universities via Bachelor of Education (BEd) or Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) programmes, offered through full-time, part-time, distance, or blended modalities. However, concerns remain around the quality and consistency of ITE, particularly within distance education programmes. Notably, four universities, the University of South Africa (UNISA), North-West University (NWU), the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), and the University of Johannesburg (UJ), account for half of all new public school teachers, with UNISA and NWU delivering the bulk of graduates via distance learning. Sector challenges include low graduation rates, quality disparities, and insufficient classroom readiness. To address these issues, teacher education providers need to upscale their capacity and strengthen practical training components. Models such as student teacher internships offer alternatives that can help bridge these gaps and improve both the quantity and quality of South Africa's future educators.

Overview of TICZA

The Teacher Internship Collaboration South Africa (TICZA) was formally established in 2021 as a partnership platform and advocacy structure, with the following aims in mind:

- To gather and share evidence regarding Alternative Teacher Education Pathways (ATEP)[1], specifically extended student teacher internships, as a means of demonstrating their efficiencies and impact;
- To establish such internships as a credible alternative pathway for ITE; and
- To drive and organise cooperation between all partners involved in ITE to facilitate the effective adoption and implementation of internships as a formal pathway to a teaching qualification (Shiohira et al., 2022).

[1] It is acknowledged that there are differences of opinion in TICZA, as in the sector, on the use of ATEP as opposed to extended internships. TICZA acknowledges these tensions and is continuing the discussion about these contradictions/differences.

Through these measures, TICZA hopes to contribute towards an increase in the number of new teachers joining the profession who positively influence the education system. Other objectives of this initiative are to improve teacher retention and job satisfaction, reduce teacher shortages in the abovementioned areas of need (subjects, geographic distribution, etc.), and improve the quality of teaching by new teachers.

Evaluation overview

In 2025, JET Education Services (JET) contracted Southern Hemisphere to conduct a summative evaluation of the TICZA initiative. The evaluation aimed to assess progress towards TICZA's intended outcomes and goals, and determine enablers or barriers. It also aimed to provide evidence of TICZA's contribution to outcomes achieved. Findings were used to assess the feasibility of TICZA's Theory of Change (ToC) and to craft actionable recommendations for similar or future initiatives or interventions.

Two of the Organisation for Economic Development and Cooperation (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) criteria (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2021) were used as a framework for data collection, analysis, and reporting; namely, effectiveness (including outcomes) and sustainability. Qualitative data collection methods were used, coupled with an extensive document review. A total of 21 interviews were conducted with representatives of TICZA's convening group, its strategic partners (government, trade unions, and funders), implementation partners (non-governmental organisations and higher education institutions), and other stakeholders (potential partners, private education service providers, and education sector experts).

Evaluation findings

Effectiveness

- **TICZA design – the collective impact model**

TICZA operates as a collective impact initiative, providing a structured approach for diverse partners to work toward shared outcomes in ITE. The collective impact model includes five core components; namely, a common agenda, shared measurement, mutually reinforcing activities, continuous communication, and a strong backbone support structure.

Across these five pillars, TICZA has shown uneven but meaningful progress. One area of clear improvement is the development of a common agenda. Initial uncertainty around TICZA's objectives has given way to stronger alignment, with a ToC review process acting as a key moment to refocus efforts. Shared measurement, by contrast, remains a challenge. Gaps in baseline data and empirical evidence continue to limit TICZA's ability to assess and showcase the effectiveness of the student teacher internship model.

Structures to support mutually reinforcing activities, such as the Communities of Practice (CoPs), have helped facilitate collaboration and knowledge-sharing across participating organisations, while communication has emerged as one of TICZA's strongest areas. Stakeholders consistently appreciated the clarity and regularity of updates. However, some concerns remain about the extent to which all voices are heard and able to contribute meaningfully to the initiative.

Lastly, backbone support from the convening group, in particular, JET, has been a steady and valued asset. JET's technical expertise, established relationships, and adaptive leadership were highlighted as key strengths.

- **Outputs**

From 2023 to 2025, TICZA made substantial progress across its seven output areas. For example, governance and collaboration structures were deepened with the expansion of the Steering Committee to include new partners and teacher trade unions. In addition, the Implementer's Group and Research and Evaluation Committee were established.

Stakeholder engagement was maintained through Innovation Labs and working groups, with new platforms introduced to showcase partner work and drive cross-sector learning. Innovation efforts focused on testing and demonstrating the Extended Student Teacher Internship (ESTI) model, with multiple CoPs, workshops, and a webinar series and conference contributing to knowledge sharing.

TICZA's policy contributions also gained visibility, while a refined monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework and research plan supported these efforts. Partnerships with higher education institutions (HEIs) were strengthened, enabling alignment between non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and academia, and advancing preparations for the ESTI proof of concept. Finally, TICZA maintained strong engagement with government departments, supported ministerial-level planning, and advanced formal processes with the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) and the South African Council for Educators (SACE) to embed the initiative within the national teacher development landscape.

- **Outcomes**

TICZA's ToC provided a guiding framework for assessing the outcomes achieved across its core focus areas.

- **Collaboration and partnership successes**

TICZA helped to strengthen collaboration and build more coordinated partnerships across the ITE sector. By creating a shared space for engagement, it supported greater alignment among partners and encouraged regular communication. This collaborative approach helped establish stronger relationships and more consistent interaction across organisations. At the same time, TICZA created opportunities for joint knowledge development and cross-organisational learning. These were supported through the ITE Forum and the Professional Learning Community for ESTIs, which helped embed a more open, connected way of working. TICZA also enabled more strategic engagement with government stakeholders. By presenting a more unified voice, partners were better positioned to engage with policy actors such as SACE, the DBE, and DHET, laying the groundwork for ongoing dialogue around more systemic forms of change.

- **Service delivery progress**

One of the key developments was the creation of a draft competency framework, which aims to standardise internship expectations and practices. This effort is complemented by the growing policy-level recognition of the ESTI model, as seen in its inclusion in the Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications (MRTEQ) review process. However, challenges remain, particularly the lack of formal standards or training requirements for mentors, which continues to limit consistency and quality of mentoring support across contexts.

- **Funding advocacy**

Implementing partners are showing growing initiative in identifying and pursuing funding opportunities, both independently and in collaboration with one another. This outcome emerged

alongside ongoing efforts to share knowledge about alternative funding models. However, investment by HEIs in distance ITE remains limited.

- **Unintended outcomes**

TICZA led to several positive, unintended outcomes that extended the initiative's influence beyond its original scope. One of the most notable unintended outcomes was the formal integration of internships into the Strategic Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development, signalling a deeper alignment with national policy priorities. In addition, collaboration among HEIs strengthened in unexpected ways, fostering greater coherence between theory and practice.

Other important outcomes included the emergence of SACE as a strong champion for the initiative and higher-than-anticipated engagement from the DBE, which helped elevate the visibility and relevance of the ESTI model. Implementing partners also took initiative in documenting their programme models and exploring joint fundraising opportunities, building on TICZA's collaborative approach.

Furthermore, a paradigm shift began to take root, with institutions moving toward a more ecosystem-based view of teacher preparation, one that recognises the vital role of schools, communities, and cross-sector partnerships alongside universities.

Sustainability

The evaluation found that sustainability of TICZA's work is most likely through the institutionalisation of key components of the ESTI model within universities, NGOs, and government. Several institutions have begun aligning their programmes with these elements. However, full sustainability depends on alignment with national policies like MRTEQ and continued support from the DHET.

While TICZA was not intended to continue beyond its current phase, many stakeholders expressed a desire to maintain its convening and coordination functions. Financial sustainability of internship programmes also emerged as a concern, highlighting the need for diversified funding and potential support mechanisms like an internship fund.

Lessons learned

- **Value of collective impact and collaboration:** TICZA demonstrated the power of bringing together diverse stakeholders—government, NGOs, HEIs, funders, and unions—around a shared agenda. This diversity facilitated richer dialogue, mutual learning, and greater alignment, enhancing collective impact
- **Continuous communication and knowledge sharing:** Structured and ongoing communication, including CoPs, was key to maintaining trust and momentum. These platforms supported deeper collaboration, resource sharing, and extended benefits beyond the immediate focus and needs of ESTIs to ITE in general, for example, the value of the Common Competency Framework (CCF) to SACE and the DBE.
- **Relevance to sector needs:** TICZA addressed critical sector challenges related to teacher supply and quality, validating the relevance of the ESTI model. Feedback from M&E shaped a more robust ToC, highlighting the importance of M&E frameworks for tracking progress and adapting activities.
- **Evidence-based adaptation:** The effective use of the feedback received during M&E and its effect on the development of a more robust ToC showed the value of M&E and the need for a focus on

TICZA's M&E framework to track progress, adapt activities, and demonstrate results across multiple organisations.

Alignment, measurement, and sustainability challenges: While cross-stakeholder collaboration was valuable, aligning priorities and data systems proved complex, requiring negotiation and flexibility. Developing shared measurement tools was essential but challenging, and questions around sustainability and scaling, particularly funding and institutional buy-in, remain key for long-term sustainability.

- **Backbone support and knowledge sharing:** A dedicated backbone organisation was essential for coordination, strategic alignment, and clear communication.

Recommendations

- **Strengthen governance and stakeholder alignment:** Reinforce decision-making structures through confirmation of role definition for stakeholders to address challenges in shared agenda ownership. Develop a sustainability roadmap with phased funder exit strategies for funders while ensuring government and HEI ownership of key processes. Deepen institutionalisation to secure long-term continuity.
- **Enhance funding models:** Prioritise a proof of concept study to generate evidence to substantiate the TICZA vision and unlock various sources of funding. These could include more programmes aligned with DBE priorities.
- **Deepen monitoring and evaluation:** Expand the measurement framework to include long-term tracking of student and teacher outcomes, measuring the impact of ESTIs on effective practice during studies and first year of teaching, and measuring the impact of different types of mentoring quality. Institutionalise data-sharing protocols between HEIs, SACE, the DBE, and NGOs.
- **Scale advocacy through systemic integration:** Embed extended internships in national teacher education policy via the DHET's Revised Policy on Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education (MRTEQ) and leverage existing structures; for example, partner with SACE and the DBE to integrate internship hours into Continuous Professional Development frameworks.
- **Optimise implementation capacity:** Strengthen mentorship through creating or promoting existing standardised training for mentor teachers through the implementing tier's support for rural vs urbans or lower vs higher SES schools. Formalise HEI–NGO partnerships to co-design practicum modules.
- **Improve knowledge dissemination:** Launch an open-access TICZA Toolkit with Commons-licensed resources for internship design, M&E, and advocacy templates. Conduct regional workshops showcasing successful models like Thuto Trust, the Global Teachers Institute (GTI), and Kanyisa Inanda Community Project (KICP) internship programmes to provincial education departments.

List of acronyms

ATEP	Alternative Teacher Education Pathway
BEd	Bachelor of Education
CCF	Common Competency Framework
CHE	Council on Higher Education
CoP	Community of Practice
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DHET	Department of Higher Education
ESTI	Extended Student Teacher Internship
ETDP SETA	Education, Training and Development Practices Sector Education and Training Authority
HEI	Higher Education Institution
ISPFTED	Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development
ITE	Initial Teacher Education
JET	JET Education Services
KII	Key informant interview
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MEL	Monitoring, evaluation and learning
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MRTEQ	Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications
NAPTOSA	National Professional Teacher's Organisation of South Africa
NASCEE	National Association of Social Change Entities in Education
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NWU	North-West University
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PGCE	Postgraduate Certificate in Education
PLC	Professional Learning Community
PPP	Public-Private Partnerships
SACE	South African Council for Educators
SADTU	South African Democratic Teachers Union
SSI	Semi-structured interview
TBE	Theory-based evaluation

TICZA	Teacher Internship Collaboration South Africa
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
UCT	University of Cape Town
UJ	University of Johannesburg
UKZN	University of KwaZulu-Natal
UNISA	University of South Africa
WG	Working Groups
WIL	Work integrated learning

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1 Introduction

The Teacher Internship Collaboration South Africa (TICZA) was formally established in 2021 as a partnership platform and advocacy structure, with two key aims in mind; namely:

- To gather and share evidence regarding Alternative Teacher Education Pathways (ATEP)[2], specifically extended student teacher internships, as a means of demonstrating their efficiencies and impact and, ultimately, to establish such internships as a credible alternative pathway for Initial Teacher Education (ITE), and
- To drive and organise cooperation between all partners involved ITE to facilitate the effective adoption and implementation of internships as a formal pathway to a teaching qualification (Shiohira et al., 2022).

Through these measures, TICZA hopes to:

- Contribute towards an increase in the number of new teachers joining the profession who positively influence the education system;
- Improve teacher retention and job satisfaction;
- Reduce teacher shortages in identified areas of need (subjects, geographic distribution, etc); and
- Improve the quality of teaching by new teachers.

This report presents the findings of a summative evaluation of the TICZA initiative. It starts with a description of the background and context from which TICZA emerged. This is followed by an overview of the evaluation objectives, methodology, and sample. Thereafter, the report sections present the evaluation findings according to the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) criteria selected for this summative evaluation; namely, effectiveness, outcomes, and sustainability. The report concludes with lessons learned and a set of recommendations for similar initiatives.

2 Background and context

2.1 Teacher supply and demand in South Africa

The supply and demand of teachers in South Africa is a long-standing issue that continues to shape the education sector in critical ways. As learner enrolments rise and large numbers of experienced teachers approach retirement, the country faces a pressing challenge: ensuring a reliable supply of well-trained, motivated, and committed teachers who can deliver quality education in every classroom. This challenge is not only about numbers—it is also about ensuring that the education system produces and retains teachers who are skilled, well-prepared, and supported to deliver quality learning experiences to all children. Within this context, an adequate supply of well-trained and motivated teachers is essential to achieving Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), which calls for inclusive and equitable quality education for all. Thus, teachers remain one of the most important in-

[2] It is acknowledged that there are differences of opinion in TICZA, as in the sector, on the use of ATEP as opposed to extended internships. TICZA acknowledges these tensions and is continuing the discussion about these contradictions/differences.

school factors influencing learner outcomes (Goldhaber, 2016; Bertram, 2023). Without a high-quality teaching force, it will be extremely difficult for South Africa to deliver on its educational commitments.

Projections from the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), the Department of Basic Education (DBE), and academic researchers highlight that the country will face a significant shortfall in the number of teachers required between 2020 and 2030 (Van der Berg, Gustafsson & Burger, 2020). This shortage is being driven by a combination of factors, including a surge in learner enrolments, efforts to improve learner: teacher ratios, and the retirement of a growing portion of the teaching workforce. In 2021 alone, more than 24,000 teachers exited the profession—most due to retirement—and this number is expected to climb above 17,000 annually by the end of the decade (Mncwango et al., 2024). To meet demand by 2030, South Africa will need to almost double the number of new teachers it trains and appoints each year compared to 2020 levels (Van der Berg et al., 2020). Yet, current ITE systems are not on track to meet this need.

For example, both the Northern Cape and Western Cape education departments are facing severe budget constraints that have led to significant reductions in teacher posts, threatening the stability and quality of education in their provinces. In the Northern Cape, a R358 million shortfall for 2025 is affecting 663 educator posts, including unfunded Grade R practitioners, amidst a broader financial crisis marked by a projected overspend and regressive budget allocations. Meanwhile, the Western Cape has been forced to cut 2,407 posts due to a R3.8 billion shortfall in the Compensation of Employees budget. Although essential services like school feeding and learner transport have been protected, the resulting increase in learner-educator ratios—expected to rise from 33.66 in 2024 to 39.49 in 2025—raises concerns about overcrowded classrooms and declining academic outcomes (Parliamentary Monitoring Group, 2024). These provincial-level reductions, when viewed alongside national projections, underscore the urgency of coordinated, well-funded teacher recruitment and retention strategies. Both provinces highlight the pressing need for increased and more equitable funding to support a growing learner population and maintain quality education.

These fiscal constraints are not limited to provincial departments; they also shape national strategies for managing teacher supply and demand. Budget cuts, economic stagnation, and fiscal mismanagement have placed severe pressure on the education sector, leading to retrenchments, hiring freezes, and reductions in critical support programmes such as school nutrition, learner transport, and learning materials. For ITE, these constraints mean less funding for bursaries, fewer internship placements, and limited access for prospective teachers, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds. To mitigate the shortfall, the DBE has adjusted learner-teacher ratios and become more discerning in allocating bursaries, prioritising areas of teacher scarcity and phase-specific demand. While this allows for a more nuanced approach to workforce planning, it simultaneously narrows opportunities for future teachers and risks entrenching inequalities.

The issue is further complicated by subject-specific shortages in areas such as mathematics, science, technology, and certain African languages, disciplines that are critical for national development but remain underrepresented in teacher supply (Van der Berg et al., 2020). While efforts to increase the overall number of teachers are necessary, they must also be complemented by strategies to target these priority areas and ensure that all learners have access to competent and confident subject specialists.

Simultaneously, teacher quality remains a central concern. However, gaps in the content and structure of ITE programmes, particularly in relation to practical teaching experience, continue to undermine the readiness of new teachers (Pomerance and Walsh, 2020; Rusznyak et al., 2023). This has led to a

growing recognition of the need to strengthen the practicum components of teacher training and to invest in ongoing professional development for both new and experienced educators.

Therefore, addressing the teacher supply and demand challenge in South Africa will require coordinated action across multiple fronts that includes expanding and diversifying ITE pathways, incentivising specialisation in priority subjects, improving the retention of experienced teachers, and creating opportunities for continuous professional development. Equally important is fostering a strong professional identity among teachers—one rooted in ethics, care, and a deep commitment to the learning and wellbeing of every child.

In this context, initiatives such as TICZA play an increasingly important role. Although TICZA itself faces funding challenges due to increased competition for both public and private resources, its emphasis on quality over quantity positions it as a viable and scalable model. As a more established and proven intervention compared to experimental alternatives, TICZA offers a compelling case for continued investment through Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) and impact funding. Strengthening wraparound support for student teachers through such models may not only improve retention and teaching quality, but also help stretch limited public funds further—contributing to a more resilient and effective teacher development system in the long run.

2.2 Initial teacher education

Meeting demands for a well-prepared and expanded teaching workforce calls for a shift in how ITE is conceptualised and delivered. Aspiring teachers typically follow one of two academic pathways: either enrolling in a Bachelor of Education (BEd) programme or pursuing a general undergraduate degree followed by a Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE). These qualifications are offered through public and private Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and are delivered via a mix of full-time, part-time, campus-based, distance, and blended learning models. While many programmes now include a combination of modalities, they remain broadly categorised based on their dominant delivery method.

Irrespective of the education pathway followed, there is consensus across the education sector that the quality of ITE plays a central role in producing high quality, committed, and effective teachers (Shiohira et al., 2022). The growing pressure on universities and other training providers to produce more graduates, without compromising quality, makes it necessary to assess their ability to scale up their training both effectively and equitably.

Recent data from Spaull and Ntaka (2022) show that just four universities, the University of South Africa (UNISA), North-West University (NWU), the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), and the University of Johannesburg (UJ), account for half of all teachers entering the public school system. Notably, a substantial share of this training takes place through distance education, especially at UNISA and NWU. While distance learning has enabled wider access to teacher training opportunities, it also introduces a unique set of challenges. Research by Taylor and Shindler (2016) highlights significant concerns around low graduation rates and inconsistencies in content and standards across programmes. Moreover, questions persist about the readiness of newly qualified teachers, particularly in terms of their ability to deliver high-quality instruction in under-resourced classrooms.

Some progress is being made in addressing these shortcomings. The emergence of school-based internship models, where student teachers are placed in classrooms during their training, offers a promising alternative. These placements provide practical, on-the-ground experience that can bridge the gap between theory and practice. Shiohira et al. (2022) suggest that such approaches not only

help address skills gaps but may also improve completion rates and enhance the professional confidence of new teachers.

2.3 TICZA design – collective impact model elements

TICZA is a collective impact project[3] designed to support mutually reinforcing activities across discrete actors in the education sector with varying interests in ATEP. Collective impact as a concept is designed to address complex problems through the collaborative efforts of multiple stakeholders. In a collective impact project, emphasis is placed on alignment and partnership between government and a range of organisations that work towards shared goals and measure the same things. A backbone organisation ensures active coordination of activities and sharing of lessons learnt so that activities are mutually reinforcing in pursuit of the objectives (JET Education Services [JET], 2021).

The convening group of TICZA is positioned as this backbone organisation. The group's focus in 2021 was on enabling a common or shared agenda, creating instruments for shared measurement, identifying mutually reinforcing activities, and ensuring that channels of communication for the TICZA initiative were put in place.

The figure below outlines the five key elements of a collective impact model and how TICZA systems and processes were developed to address these elements throughout the 2021 inception period.

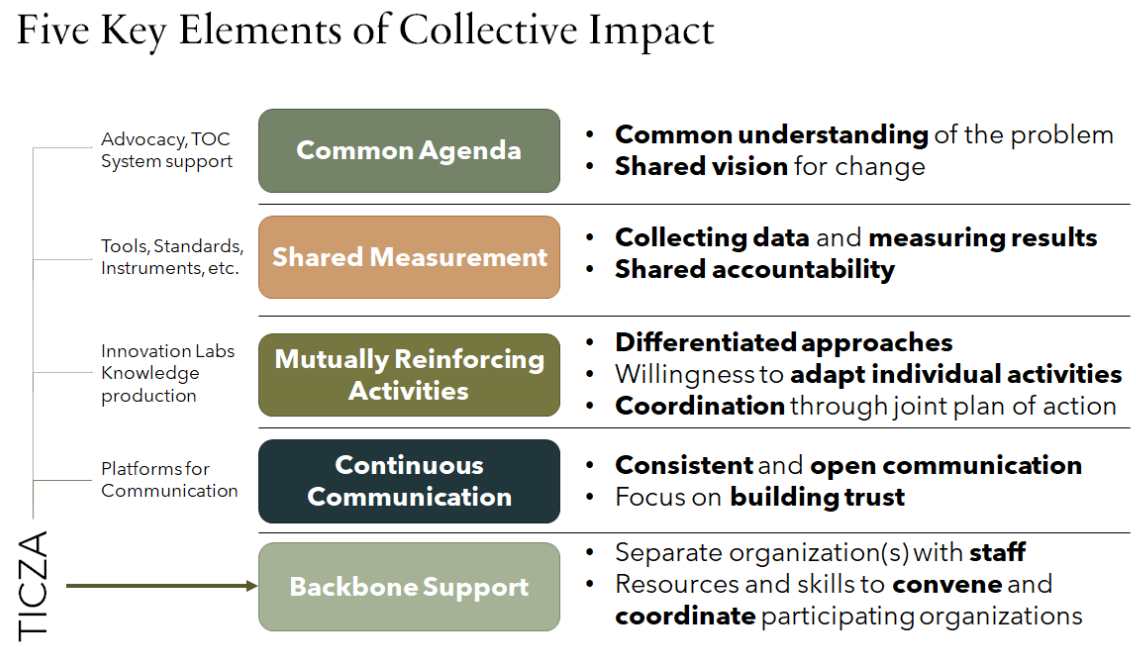

Figure 1 TICZA and the elements of collective impact

Source: Adapted from Kania and Kramer (2011)

The following section presents a description of each of the elements of the collective impact model.

[3] See https://ssir.org/articles/entry/collective_impact

2.3.1 A common agenda

The collective impact model highlights the common agenda as one of its five core conditions, and arguably the most foundational. A common agenda refers to the shared vision and commitment among diverse stakeholders to address a specific social issue. According to Kania and Kramer (2011), *"Collective impact requires all participants to have a shared vision of change, one that includes a common understanding of the problem and a joint approach to solving it through agreed upon actions."* This means that for collective impact initiatives to be effective, all participants—regardless of sector, role, or interest—must align around a clearly defined problem and collaborate on coordinated solutions. Research shows that without a common agenda, efforts become fragmented, resources are duplicated or wasted, and progress is limited. Establishing a common agenda creates a unified direction and fosters trust, accountability, and sustained collaboration, which are essential for achieving large-scale social change.

2.3.2 Shared measurement

Developing a shared measurement system is essential to collective impact. Collecting data and measuring results consistently on a short list of indicators across all participating organisations not only ensures that all efforts remain aligned, but also enables the participants to hold each other accountable and to learn from each other's successes and failures. The aim is to only use evidence-based decision-making (Kania and Kramer, 2011).

2.3.3 Mutually reinforcing activities

Mutually reinforcing activities are a key element of the collective impact model, emphasising collaboration through coordinated but differentiated efforts. As Kania and Kramer (2011) state, *"Collective impact initiatives depend on a diverse group of stakeholders working together, not by requiring that all participants do the same thing, but by encouraging each participant to undertake the specific set of activities at which it excels in a way that supports and is coordinated with the actions of others."* This approach allows each stakeholder to contribute based on their unique strengths and expertise while ensuring that their actions align with and support those of other participants. The power of collective impact lies in this strategic coordination, where diverse efforts fit into an overarching plan, creating synergy and increasing the overall effectiveness of the initiative. When activities are mutually reinforcing, the combined impact is greater than the sum of individual actions, advancing progress toward the shared goal.

2.3.4 Continuous communication

Kania and Kramer (2011) emphasise that *"Developing trust among nonprofits, corporations, and government agencies is a monumental challenge. Participants need several years of regular meetings to build up enough experience with each other to recognize and appreciate the common motivation behind their different efforts. They need time to see that their own interests will be treated fairly, and that decisions will be made based on objective evidence and the best possible solution to the problem, not to favour the priorities of one organization over another."* The same resource also notes that creating a common vocabulary takes time and that communication needs to happen between meetings.

2.3.5 Backbone support

Backbone support plays a vital role in holding a collective impact initiative together and ensuring it runs effectively. Unlike the participating organisations, the backbone structure consists of a dedicated team with the capacity and skills to coordinate the many moving parts of the initiative. As Kania and Kramer (2011) explain, managing collective impact requires a separate organisation and staff with a very specific set of skills. This team is responsible for key functions such as facilitation, communication, data collection and analysis, progress tracking, and managing logistics. They provide the structure and consistent support needed to keep the initiative focused, connected, and progressing toward its shared goals. Without this dedicated support, the complexity of collaboration can easily become overwhelming and unsustainable.

3 Study design, methods and sample

3.1 Evaluation objectives

The evaluation assessed progress towards TICZA's objectives as outlined in the initiative's theory of change (ToC), which was revised in July 2024 (TICZA, 2024d). Here, the evaluation team used the **formative assessment findings as a benchmark** for comparison and to gauge progress over the latter implementation period of the initiative.

The evaluation included a review of the internal and external factors that supported or enabled the achievement of TICZA's objectives, as well as any factors that hindered or prevented change from coming about. Thus, the evaluation gathered evidence of TICZA's contribution towards the achieved outcomes, as well as information about other possible mechanisms of change. In addition to exploring the factors and/or actors that contributed to the achievement of reported outcomes, the evaluation team investigated how these factors and/or actors contributed to or catalysed the change process.

The evaluation also assessed the sustainability of the outcomes achieved by TICZA. This included gathering input to determine if the outcomes/changes achieved thus far will last should TICZA in its current form come to an end. The evaluation also investigated possible means of strengthening the sustainability of changes achieved to date.

The evaluation findings were used to inform the crafting of actionable recommendations for similar, future interventions.

3.2 Key evaluation questions

This summative evaluation addresses the following key evaluation questions, which were stipulated in the Terms of Reference (ToR) and modified during the summative evaluation inception phase.

Key evaluation questions

- What new issues have emerged in the teacher education landscape over the past two years – and how has TICZA responded?
- What were the key strengths and challenges in using a collective impact model?
- To what extent has TICZA been implemented as planned? What were the key implementation strengths and challenges?
- What outcomes have been achieved since the formative evaluation in 2023 (that is, what changes has TICZA contributed towards over the past 18-20 months)?

- What, if any, enablers and barriers have influenced TICZA's achievement of outcomes?
- Will TICZA's achievements last? What mechanisms have been/should be put in place to support sustainability of outcomes achieved to date?
- What are the key lessons learnt over the past four years? How might these be used to inform similar interventions going forward?

3.3 Evaluation approach

The evaluation approach is summarised in the diagram below. The sections that follow discuss the adopted approaches in more detail.

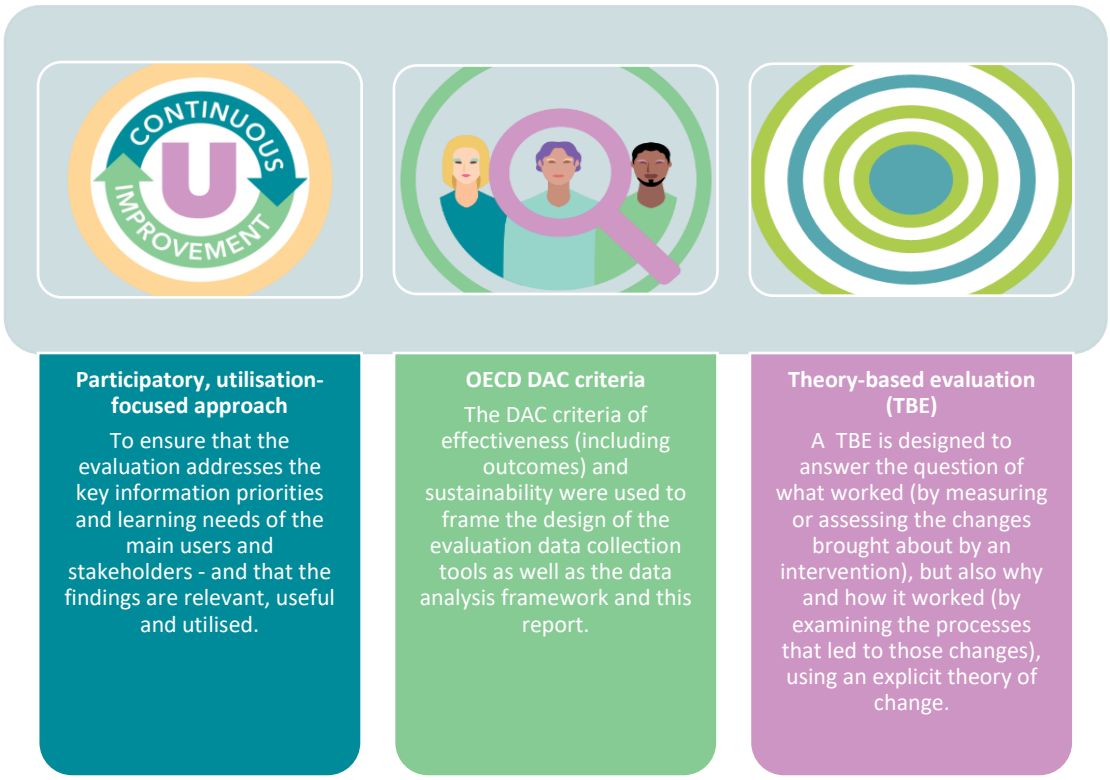

Figure 2 Summative evaluation approach

It was agreed that the evaluation would utilise **a participatory and utilisation-focused approach** to allow for meaningful stakeholder engagement throughout the evaluation process and to ensure that the evaluation addresses the needs of TICZA stakeholders. It was confirmed that key TICZA stakeholders would be invited to participate in:

- Evaluation planning, including a review of the draft inception report and draft data collection tools;
- A virtual ToC review workshop, where input on outcomes achieved, their significance, and contributing factors and actors would be gathered;
- A review and comment process on the draft evaluation report; and
- A feedback and recommendations workshop to discuss and validate evaluation findings.

In addition, it was agreed that one of the evaluation team members would present the evaluation approach, process, methods, and sample at the Research and Evaluation Committee meeting scheduled for 25 February 2025, as well as at the Steering Committee meeting on 7 March 2025. An evaluation team member will also present the key summative evaluation findings at the TICZA Steering Committee meeting scheduled for 27 June 2025.

It was decided that the **DAC evaluation criteria**[4] of effectiveness (including outcomes achieved) and sustainability would be used as a framework for the design of the summative evaluation primary data collection tools, as well as data analysis and reporting. In addition, it was agreed that TICZA's **revised ToC**[5] would be used to guide the assessment of which outcomes had been achieved, by whom (key contributing factors and actors) and how, and also how far the initiative had progressed along its envisioned pathways of change.

3.4 Evaluation process

The evaluation process consisted of **three phases**; namely, the inception and design phase; the data collection and analysis phase; and the report writing and sharing of findings phase. These are summarised in the figure below.

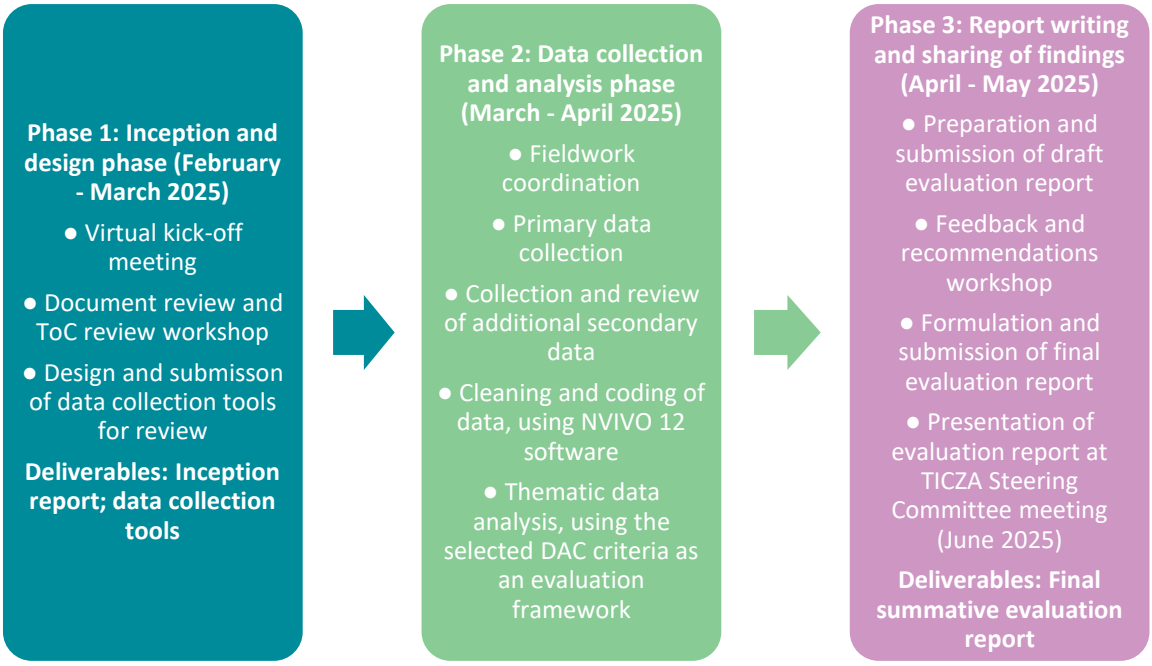

Figure 3 Summative evaluation process

3.5 Sampling and data collection

A summarised version of planned versus actual data collection is provided in Table 1 below. A non-probability, purposive sampling method was used for the selection of appropriate evaluation participants to ensure that those selected were able to provide good insights into the TICZA initiative. The sample was finalised following the inception workshop.

Table 1 Planned versus actual data collection summary

[4] see https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm

[5] Revised in July 2024

Key stakeholders	Planned data collection	Actual data collection
Convening group	4 KIIs	4 KIIs
Strategic partners: Government, trade unions and funders	8 SSIs	7 SSIs
Implementation partners: NGOs and HEIs	8 SSIs	7 SSIs
Other stakeholders: potential partners, private education service providers and sector experts	4 SSIs	3 SSIs
Total	**4 KIIs and 20 SSIs**	**4 KIIs and 17 SSIs**

Note: KII: Key informant interview; SSI: Semi-structured interview

A total of 21 interviews were completed for the summative evaluation, including one paired interview where a participant, citing limited knowledge of TICZA, invited a colleague to participate in the discussion. Three interviews did not proceed due to factors such as limited capacity to participate; the organisation's reportedly minimal engagement with TICZA until recently; and participants viewing their involvement in TICZA as primarily observational, which they felt limited their ability to contribute meaningfully to the evaluation.

3.6 Data analysis

A thematic analysis of qualitative data was conducted using NVivo 12 software. This helped the evaluation team to organise the data into pre-established categories, based on the selected DAC criteria, and to identify trends in the data. Findings were triangulated across primary data sources and across primary and secondary data to ensure their validity.

3.7 Report writing and sharing of findings

A draft report was prepared and submitted on 30 April 2025 for review and feedback. In addition, a virtual feedback and recommendations session was hosted on 9 May 2025, where the key evaluation findings and draft recommendations were presented and discussed with TICZA stakeholders. The report was then finalised based on input obtained during the feedback and recommendations workshop, as well as written feedback provided to the evaluation team.

3.8 Limitations to methodology

The following reflects challenges and limitations to the methodology, which all relate to the sampling for primary data collection.

Potential biases

Given the qualitative nature of this evaluation, which inherently involves a degree of subjective interpretation, issues of credibility (i.e. the trustworthiness of findings) and confirmability (i.e. the extent to which findings are free from researcher bias) are important to acknowledge. To help address this, the evaluation team triangulated data across multiple primary sources and collaborated closely to code, analyse, and reflect on the data and emerging insights. Correlations between primary and secondary data were also reviewed to strengthen the analysis.

Sample size

An additional limitation to consider is the relatively small sample size, with 21 interviews conducted in total. However, during data collection, the evaluation team observed that data saturation had been reached, as similar themes and insights consistently emerged across interviews.

Illustrative quotes are included in this report to highlight the nature of inputs received. These quotes were chosen for the depth of insight they offered and their ability to support and confirm the evaluation's findings.

4 Effectiveness

This section presents the findings regarding TICZA's effectiveness, including implementation progress against planned outputs, implementation strengths and challenges, and outcomes achieved to date, along with key enablers and barriers.

The analysis first examines TICZA's effectiveness through the lens of the five key elements of the collective impact model, comparing findings from the 2023 formative evaluation with current summative evaluation results to assess progress over time.

4.1 Collective impact model analysis

4.1.1 Common agenda

The establishment of a common agenda has shown improvement between the formative evaluation and summative evaluation. The findings from the former highlighted an awareness of challenges that TICZA aims to address, diverse and sometimes conflicting stakeholder understandings about TICZA's purpose, and attempts to align stakeholder expectation and understanding of TICZA's objectives. Findings from the latter highlight that the initiative has evolved toward greater alignment over time.

The ToC review process was an important moment that gave the collective an opportunity to "re-centre and align more closely" (JET education Services, 2023: 17). This helped create a clearer shared understanding about the need for solid evidence to support making the internship model part of education policy. The initiative has also transitioned from what was perceived as predominantly funder-driven to incorporating a broader range of stakeholder voices, particularly implementing partners, government departments, and regulatory bodies like the South African Council for Educators (SACE). This evolution has strengthened the common agenda by ensuring it reflects the priorities and perspectives of the full ecosystem rather than a subset of stakeholders.

> *"I think from the common agenda perspective, the purpose... initially we supported it, but as it started unfolding initially there was no common agenda, particularly from a labour perspective, because we were not the funders. It was predominantly a funder driven initiative... But I must say I'm pleased to say that eventually SACE came on board. They started listening, the DBE came on board..."*

The formative evaluation highlighted a "limited shared understanding of the common agenda" being linked with "limited buy-in from the various TICZA stakeholders" (Southern Hemisphere, 2023: 19) . In the summative evaluation, many of the respondents reiterated the limited shared understanding that existed at the beginning, but also highlighted extensive progress towards establishing a coherent agenda, as one respondent noted,

> *"I have definitely seen a shift in TICZA. At outset, there was a lot of confusion as to what the objective or agenda of TICZA actually was. Members of the convening group were taking it in a particular direction but IPs saw it differently. There were different perceptions of what it was trying to do. There was also a misalignment. There are some who are still on the periphery, maybe making a decision as to whether or not they are in or out, but there is definitely movement towards more coherence around a common agenda."*

Another respondent shared the following:

> *"TICZA has contributed significantly to building a shared agenda around improving teacher induction and professional preparation. While each partner brings their own perspective, there's general consensus on the importance of bridging the gap between academic training and classroom readiness. The agenda has matured over time and has benefited from inputs from all partners."*

4.1.2 Shared measurement systems

The development of robust shared measurement systems has been one of TICZA's more challenging aspects, with most of the data from the summative evaluation highlighting that there has been modest improvement since the formative evaluation. While significant strides have been made in developing frameworks like the ToC for the initiative, and the Common Competency Framework (CCF) aligned with SACE Professional Teaching Standards, the initiative has struggled to establish consistent baseline data and clear indicators for measuring progress and the effectiveness of the Extended Student Teacher Internship (ESTI) model.

At the formative evaluation, progress in this component of the collective impact model could be identified mainly through the formulation of a shared M&E framework and monitoring tools. However, there were challenges with buy-in from TICZA stakeholders because they initially did not "...see the purpose of the shared M&E framework while some did not submit the requested data" (Southern Hemisphere, 2023: 20) Even though the summative evaluation showed that M&E for TICZA has improved, progress is hampered by gaps in other monitoring tools in relation to the ESTI model. The majority of respondents, particularly implementing and strategic partners, highlighted that the lack of reliable measurement tools has hampered TICZA's ability to provide empirical evidence of the effectiveness of the ESTI model. The Research Plan 2024-2025 (TICZA, 2024b: 9) acknowledges this gap, noting that "to date, there is no evidence to show whether pass or retention rates are significantly different [as a result of teacher internships], so there is no real sense of the immediate economic return".

Drawing from the interviews, other challenges include the setting of initial objectives that were too ambitious, difficulties in gathering consistent data from implementing partners, and perhaps insufficient prioritisation of measurement development early in the initiative. The lack of empirical evidence remains a significant limiting factor for TICZA's overall effectiveness.

> *"Shared measurements is where I'd rate us a two or three out of 10, and I think this is our weakest point. What you decide to measure is essentially what you can manage and there was a variety of objectives around measuring cost effectiveness and getting baselines from the implementing partners. All of these things fell flat for a number of reasons."*

Another respondent pointed to an empirical gap:

> *"Where I think that there is a gap is on the empirical research that is able to show that what is being offered is an improvement or it's working or it adds value in a cost-effective way to what's already being done elsewhere in the sector. Where I think that the weakness lies is its empirical research base for its claims that this is a method that can produce high quality teachers, because there's just no evidence."*

4.1.3 Mutually reinforcing activities

During the formative evaluation, findings showed the existence of mutually reinforcing activities at a foundational level. However, the summative evaluation found that TICZA has made considerable progress in fostering mutually reinforcing activities among its stakeholders. The initiative has successfully created structures and processes that enable stakeholders to contribute their unique strengths while working toward common goals. The Communities of Practice (CoPs) have been particularly effective in facilitating knowledge sharing, problem-solving, and collaboration across organisational boundaries.

The TICZA Digest (Keevy et al., 2024) documents several successful partnerships that exemplify mutually reinforcing activities, such as the DBE-Thuto Trust partnership, where each partner contributes distinct but complementary resources and capabilities. The production of research outputs, knowledge products, and shared learning experiences has strengthened the ecosystem's collective capacity.

Even though the interviews highlighted mostly positive views regarding mutually reinforcing activities, two respondents shared that there is room for improvement when it comes to coordinated and collective effort within TICZA, particularly in terms of centralised planning and collaborative implementation.

> *“Everyone is doing their own thing. There hasn’t been centralised planning or shared curriculum development. No instructional leadership or nuts-and-bolts focus on effective implementation.”*

> *“I have to separate what my organisation does from TICZA as a collective. What has improved in terms of partnerships from the TICZA side versus what my organisation has just worked on? We've got better partnership with other institutions - that had nothing to do with TICZA.”*

Essentially, they are highlighting a potential gap and an area to invest in by TICZA in how organisations undertake specific activities, even if they are differentiated, in a way that supports and is coordinated with the actions of others and fits into an overarching plan.

The interviews highlighted another challenge, which is sustaining consistent participation across all stakeholders. While some implementing partners have remained deeply engaged, others have moved to the periphery of TICZA or disengaged entirely. The initial pool of 15 - 16 implementing partners eventually consolidated to approximately six organisations. Despite this narrowing of the active participant base, those who remain engaged seem to have developed stronger, more productive relationships.

> *"The CoPs have been crucial. That's where key discussions and problem-solving happened. Different stakeholders brought their perspectives, and through the CoPs,*

there was space to challenge and refine those perspectives into something more realistic and coherent."

A stakeholder highlighted the knowledge development aspect:

"There's been a litany of different research-oriented outputs, knowledge products, symposiums, Communities of Practice, practice notes, exchanges between people who study this field. It's been a hallmark of the whole process. We've developed a lot of knowledge, a lot of people have learned more. Everybody who's been involved in TICZA knows, depending on their involvement, more than they did before and has a better, clearer sense of the complexity and therefore can navigate it better."

4.1.4 Continuous communication

Communication has emerged as one of TICZA's most significant strengths, showing improvement from the already positive assessment in the formative evaluation. At the formative evaluation, the focus was on building trust, and there was an expressed need moving forward to proactively implement "ongoing, regular engagement…ensuring that everyone is informed and given ample opportunity for input and feedback" (Trialogue, 2022). The 2023 Annual Report (JET, 2023: 17) also identified this need for "more regular communication through more channels," which appears to have been successfully addressed based on insights gathered during summative evaluation interviews. The regular consolidation of updates into weekly emails and posts on social media platforms such as LinkedIn has been particularly effective, providing stakeholders with consistent information without overwhelming them with excessive communication.

The project management team, particularly the communications coordinator, received consistent praise from stakeholders across different groups for professional, clear, and actionable communication. This strength has been crucial in maintaining engagement and alignment across a diverse stakeholder landscape.

"The communications coordinator is astoundingly good, and I think that what's really worked amazingly is that she compiles things and sends out one consolidated email of all the updates once a week. So people aren't inundated with continuous communication from TICZA. The communication has been flawless. Outstanding."

"Absolutely excellent, particularly excellent with the communications coordinator. She's exhibiting what I would say are model standards in terms of what a project manager in this kind of complex situation needs to be like. We had more experienced project managers before, but I think she's actually a better fit and right now the communication is excellent. It's crisp, it's clean, it's simple and it's actionable."

Even with all this positive feedback, there were some divergent views. Two interviewees highlighted that there has been imbalance in terms of participation and the extent to which different stakeholders are able to participate meaningfully and share their views openly and candidly. This is a view that was also expressed during the formative evaluation. One of the respondents noted:

"No one from TICZA ever reached out to engage meaningfully. There were no practical conversations—just meetings. We didn't know what they wanted from us. And public higher education institutions weren't meaningfully participating either."

However, many of the stakeholders also highlighted that participation has improved with time and discussions are able to accommodate more voices and perspectives than before.

4.1.5 Backbone support

The backbone support provided by the convening group, which includes the Bertha Centre at the University of Cape Town (UCT), Trialogue, the National Association of Social Change Entities in Education (NASCEE), and JET, was consistently identified as a core strength of TICZA throughout both the formative and summative evaluations. JET's role in particular has been critical to TICZA's achievements.

Interviewees noted that JET's technical capacity, existing relationships, and credibility within the education sector enabled it to bring together diverse stakeholders and manage the inevitable tensions and contestations that arise in complex, collaborative initiatives. JET's approach to leadership, characterised by openness to feedback, willingness to adapt, and skill in facilitation, has been particularly valued by different stakeholders.

The TICZA Digest (Keevy et al., 2024) also highlights JET's role in brokering discussions among funding partners and leveraging established relationships to build trust. This function has been essential, not only for securing resources, but also for creating the conditions for productive collaboration among diverse stakeholders. The strong backbone support has helped TICZA navigate changing priorities, personnel transitions, and evolving understandings of its purpose and approach. This adaptability has been crucial to the initiative's sustainability and continued progress toward its goals.

> *"Having JET as an intermediary and being the convening organisation has been critical. Without this backbone organisation, we wouldn't have achieved what we have achieved just in terms of coordination and facilitation with all these other structures, bringing us together in terms of our understanding."*

> *"JET has done an incredibly good job of bringing together the stakeholders in a very collegial platform, very inclusive. And [they are a] master of dealing with contestation and challenges and taking them on board, hearing what the critiques are and not being defensive about it, but actually listening to what the concerns are and how we can navigate those."*

4.2 Outputs achieved

Key evaluation questions

- To what extent has the TICZA programme been implemented as planned?
- What were the key implementation successes/strengths and challenges?

4.2.1 Implementation as per planned outputs

An overview is provided in the table below.

Table 2 Implementation as per planned outputs

Planned Outputs	Achieved at Formative Evaluation Period (2021, 2022)	Achieved at Summative Evaluation Period (2023, 2024, 2025)	Progress Report
Output 1: Partnerships and collaboration structures are established	• Steering Committee (Steercom) established with 13 voting members in 2021, reduced to 8 in 2022 • Four Steercom meetings held annually • Stakeholders included convening group, teacher unions (National Professional Teacher's Organisation of South Africa [NAPTOSA], South African Democratic Teachers Union [SADTU[), government departments [DBE, DHET, SACE]), funders, HEIs and NGO implementers • Three Working Groups established focused on mentorship, school support, and implementing partner alignment	• Steercom ToR revised to incorporate four NGO implementing partners • Regular quarterly Steercom meetings maintained • Expanded to include additional union (Professional Educators' Union [PEU]) • Implementer Group established (secretariat transferred from BRIDGE to JET) • SACE leadership strengthened (Ms. Lechaba as SteerCom Chair for 2025) • NASCEE joined convening group, replacing BRIDGE • Research & Evaluation Committee established • Sustainability and handover plan developed • Minister and the DBE expression of interest in co-launching the CCF for use in the broader ITE space • R12 million funding request submitted to European Commission	Governance structures matured and formalised. Initial collaboration frameworks evolved into structured, sustainable relationships. TICZA transitioned from establishing partnerships to strengthening and formalising them. Leadership and ownership transitions planned for post-2025 sustainability.
Output 2: Stakeholder participation in CoPs, Innovation Labs and Working Groups (WGs)	• Good participation in CoPs (21-30 participants per session) • Three WGs met three times in 2022 • Focus areas: school support, mentoring, HEI/NGO alignment • Additional topics: mathematics, education research, curriculum design	• Maintained high participation levels in CoPs • Expanded stakeholder engagement to include more unions • Presented at NAPTOSA Gauteng School Leaders' Conference • Engaged with Education, Training and Development Practices Sector Education and Training Authority Teacher Education and Development (ETDP SETA T Teacher Education and Development (TED) Technical Committee	Stakeholder participation remained strong but shifted from establishment to deepening engagement. Growth of strategic outreach to new stakeholders, particularly unions and professional bodies - from broad participation to more

		• Partner profiles published featuring implementing organisations • Stakeholders nominating experts for research review • Implementer group in the process of preparing for the proof of concept	targeted, strategic stakeholder involvement.
Output 3: Innovation Labs and CoPs established	• CoP established with four sessions in 2021 • Five CoPs held in 2022. Topics: roles, work updates, school readiness, teacher induction, competency frameworks, M&E • First Innovation Lab held October 2021	• Focus shifted toward demonstrating effectiveness of ESTI model • Three themed CoPs held in 2024 • TICZA Institutionalisation and Research Workshop (June 2024) • Three thematic CoPs planned for 2025 • Webinar series (three sessions) planned for 2025 • Potential TICZA Conference being considered	There has been an evolution from establishing structures to utilising them strategically. Shifted from general information sharing to focused thematic work. Increased emphasis on institutionalisation and sustainability. More diverse formats (workshops, webinars) are being utilised for participation.
Output 4: Information is widely shared	• Research projects: internship provider survey, funder survey • Knowledge outputs: literature review, scoping study, intern graduate research • TICZA Road Map Collective impact webinar (118 participants) • Conference presentations • Case study published in business publication	• Policy inputs and enactments ([MRTEQ, Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development [ISPFTED], Council on Higher Education [CHE] ITE qualifications standards) • Core Elements of ESTI Wraparound Support document • TICZA Digest with diverse stakeholder contributions • Implementation Compendium series (quarterly) • Ministerial Conversation planned • Research reports on *Cost-Effectiveness* and *Wraparound Support* completed (going for peer review) • CCF development and planned launch • Meta-review development in progress (will incorporate a systematic review to map out the broader initiatives already in place and their alignment with TICZA's work)	Initial information sharing was exploratory; later efforts are more strategic. Evolution from general awareness-raising to targeted policy influence. Output quality and depth increased. Higher-level engagement (ministerial) planned to facilitate and ensure impact.

Output 5: Agreed M&E framework and associated tools built, adopted and adapted	• Theory of change developed • M&E training provided • TICZA Monitoring Toolkit produced • Piloting Newly Qualified Teachers (NQT) survey • Graduate competency testing • Initial monitoring data collection	• Formative evaluation conducted • Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) systems reviewed and refined • Focus shifted to institutionalisation • Research governance plan developed • Four key research activities established • Assessment tools developed (rubrics, frameworks) • Theory of Change review workshop • CCF validation planning and the ethical clearance application submitted to CHE • Summative evaluation underway	TICZA evolved from basic monitoring to a more comprehensive evaluation approach. Initial tools transformed into robust frameworks. Focus evolved from proving effectiveness to enabling institutionalisation. Research became more structured and strategic.
Output 6: HEIs and other research partners appointed	• Two ToRs for prototypes formulated - HEI/NGO alignment • ToR published but no successful applications	• Partnerships strengthened with key universities • Individual engagement with academic leaders • Common Competency Framework developed to support HEI-NGO alignment • Seven public universities and one private HEI actively involved by 2024 • Research partnerships for key activities • Proof of concept planning with implementing partners • Funding request for standardised approach	Initial challenges in securing HEI participation have been gradually overcome. Evolution from attempting formal appointments to building organic partnerships. Significant increase in academic engagement. Substantial progress in later evaluation period after slow start.
Output 7: Embedded resource support to government	• Initial meetings with government departments • Support requested by SACE • Embedded resource appointed • October 2021 Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) circulated but consensus not reached • Young researcher development initiative launched	• Continued policy process inputs • Resumed discussions about DBE resource support • Maintained government department involvement • Ministerial event planning • Handover process development • DHET formally communicated the appointment of their new representative to TICZA, Dr Justinus Setshedi. • SACE registration process formalisation	Initial COVID-related delays overcome in later periods. Relationship with SACE significantly strengthened. Formal agreements remained challenging but informal influence increased. Evolution from seeking resources to providing policy inputs.

		• SACE leadership in governance • Formal CCF review scheduled	Government engagement became more targeted and strategic.

4.2.2 Implementation strengths and challenges

Strengths then and now

The implementation strengths identified in the formative evaluation; namely, convening power, project management, adaptability, knowledge production, and stakeholder engagement, remained evident in the summative evaluation, but they also evolved in meaningful ways.

TICZA's convening power matured beyond simply bringing stakeholders "into the room" toward **cultivating more intentional relationships.** While the formative evaluation highlighted broad participation, the summative evidence shows a strategic shift toward deeper engagement with committed partners. As one respondent explained:

> *"We had maybe 20 odd implementers in the beginning and we've ended with five…but it landed up with five that are really committed and the others are interested but on the periphery."*

This reflects a progression in the collective impact initiative, where initial broad engagement has narrowed to a focus on committed partners.

As outlined above, the backbone support provided by the convening group, recognised in the formative evaluation for "professionalism, competence and project management skills," (Southern Hemisphere, 2023: 38) received even stronger commendation in the summative assessment, while the knowledge products, which the formative evaluation noted "tended to be too theoretical," (ibid) evolved to include **more practical resources**. This progression is evidenced by implementing partners' investment in the TICZA-developed models that will inform their practice. The development of the CCF, aligned with SACE Professional Teaching Standards, represents a particularly important achievement in translating conceptual work into practical tools.

TICZA's adaptability, highlighted in the formative evaluation through examples like "the creation of the implementing partners' working group," (Southern Hemisphere, 2023: 38) continued to be evident in the summative findings. With time this adaptability became more strategic, with deliberate refinements to the programme's focus. A respondent described how:

> *"The theory of change was impacted significantly and it aided us to navigate the transition... We focus on institutionalisation now, where in the beginning it was more broad effectiveness and efficiency."*

Persistent and new challenges

Certain challenges identified in the formative evaluation persisted through to the summative assessment. The summative evaluation revealed **continuing struggles with measurement and evidence,** with gaps reported between having frameworks and gathering empirical evidence of effectiveness of the proposed model of extended internships. The quotes below elaborate:

> *"The biggest unachieved output is the lack of measurement and baseline data... it weakens our ability to advocate outside the TICZA circle."*

> *"We've got to a point where we are busy institutionalising a model where we actually haven't actually shown that the model is more effective... we just think that teachers stay in the profession for longer, that they're better teachers, that they graduate more quickly, but we don't know that."*

This evidence gap emerged as a critical issue for many of the stakeholders interviewed. Linked to this was the difficulty in demonstrating the cost-effectiveness of the ESTI model. In reflections about CoP15 (TICZA Steering Committee, 2024a: 6), some of the stakeholders highlighted ongoing concerns: *"Cost considerations are crucial, with a target of reducing wraparound support costs to R25,000 per student."* However, concerns were raised that *"the R25,000 figure might significantly increase the cost of a degree, making it difficult for universities to absorb the costs."*

The challenge of HEI engagement noted in the formative evaluation; where "four HEIs have been engaged" but "there are a considerable number of HEIs that have not yet engaged", also remained present in the summative findings (Southern Hemisphere, 2023: 38). While specific partnerships showed progress, broader HEI engagement continued to be limited, particularly with UNISA, whose absence was described as a "glaring hole" by one implementing partner. However, input from the convening group indicated that UNISA did contribute to TICZA-related initiatives despite not being consistently involved. These contributions included the HEI's participation in a round table discussion with internship implementers hosting UNISA students.

The summative evaluation also identified challenges with provincial engagement that were not prominently featured in the formative assessment. A respondent described these difficulties:

> *"Politics are a key stumbling block. In year two, we tried to get relationships going at provincial level... I was the one trying to get these meetings set up and then I would be asked who are you and why do we need to have this conversation with you, what permission do you have? I tried to get an MoU and this was just not possible."*

This reveals the complex layers of government engagement required for institutionalisation.

4.3 Outcomes achieved

Key evaluation questions

- What outcomes have been achieved by the TICZA initiative?
- Were there any unintended outcomes?
- What key enablers contributed to achieved outcomes?
- What barriers/constraints hindered the achievement of TICZA objectives?

TICZA's ToC outlines the pathways through which the initiative seeks to strengthen and scale ESTIs across South Africa. It is grounded in the belief that systemic and sustainable change in teacher development requires coordinated action across multiple domains, **including research, monitoring and evaluation, and capacity building; collaboration and partnerships; service delivery; and funding and advocacy.** This approach acknowledges the complexity of the education system and the importance of aligning stakeholders, resources, and processes around a shared vision of quality teaching.

By investing in evidence-based practice, fostering cross-sector collaboration, improving the quality and consistency of service delivery, and advocating for innovative, long-term funding solutions, TICZA aims to transform the internship experience from a promising pilot into a scalable, institutionalised component of teacher education. The ToC recognises that no single intervention can shift the system alone, but that through interconnected strategies and collective effort, it is possible to ensure that more student teachers are equipped with the experience, support, and confidence to become

effective educators, ultimately contributing to a stronger, more equitable basic education system in South Africa.

The following section presents a visual representation of TICZA's revised ToC, colour-coded using a traffic light system to reflect progress. Outcomes marked in **green** have been achieved, those in **orange** are partly achieved, and those in **red** remain unmet. This visual acts as a diagnostic tool, helping to identify where significant progress has been made and where further effort and attention are required.

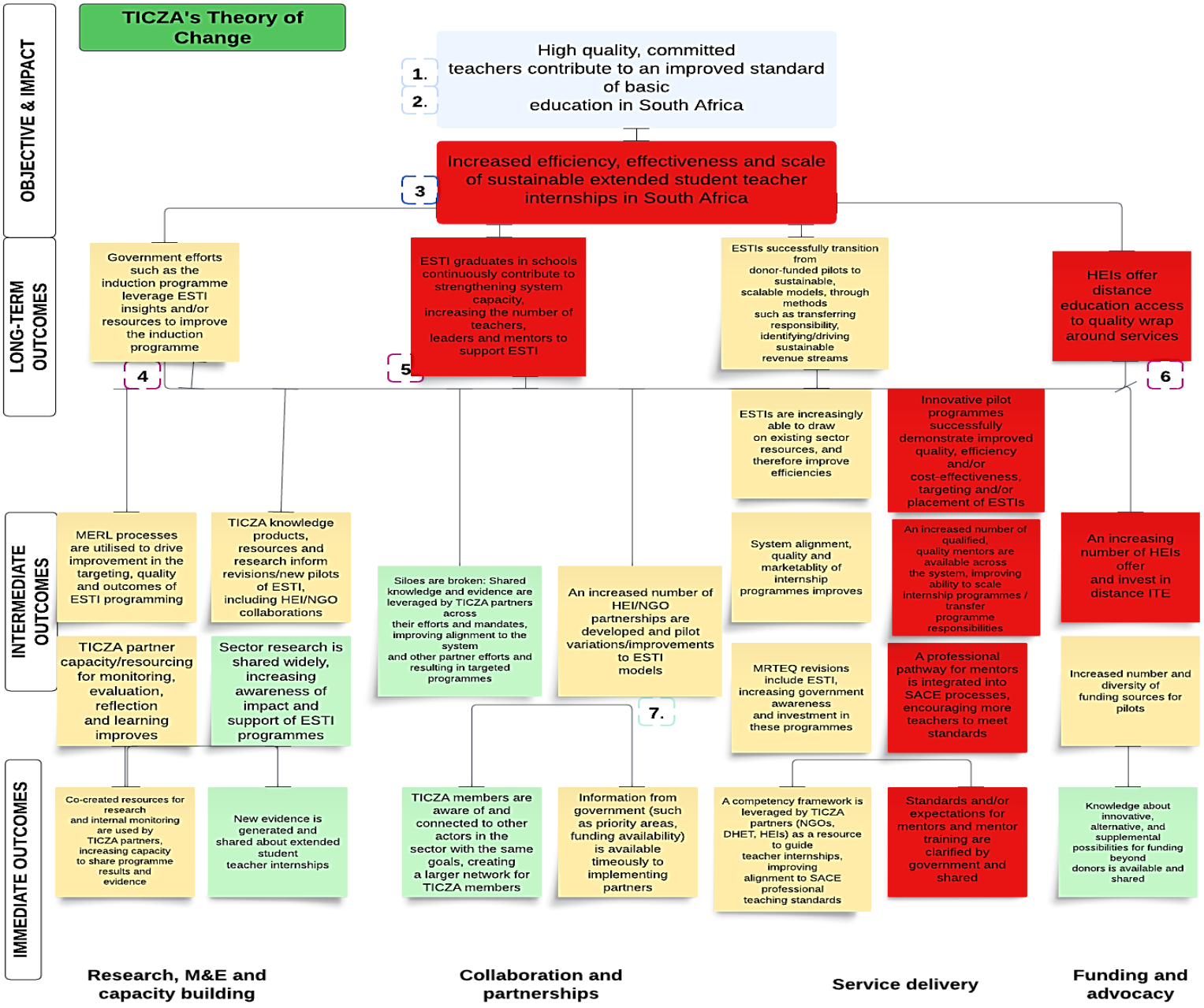

Figure 4 TICZA revised ToC

Findings from stakeholder interviews and the ToC review workshop revealed several achieved and partially achieved outcomes across TICZA's strategies. Below is a summary of the key outcomes, organised according to their classification in the ToC.

Strategy on research, M&E and capacity building

This strategy has two immediate outcomes, four intermediate outcomes and one long-term outcome. It focuses on evidence generation and dissemination to increase awareness and support of ESTI programming.

Immediate outcome: Co-created resources for research and internal monitoring are used by TICZA partners, increasing capacity to share programme results and evidence

This outcome has been **partially achieved.** Although TICZA led to the co-creation of research and monitoring resources, three interviewees highlighted that the use of the research and monitoring resources across partners remains limited. Nevertheless, regular stakeholder engagements reflect a culture of relationship-building, which will contribute to the creation of spaces for evidence-sharing and co-interpretation. This suggests that monitoring and reflection are becoming embedded in partner collaboration.

Intermediate outcome: TICZA partner capacity/resourcing for monitoring, evaluation, reflection and learning improves

This outcome has also been **partially achieved.** During the ToC review workshop, it was noted that TICZA partner capacity has improved, particularly their negotiating and bargaining power, which will contribute towards improved resourcing. While this was confirmed by other respondents, there was limited evidence of systematic capacity strengthening.

Intermediate outcome: MERL processes are utilised to drive improvement in the targeting, quality and outcomes of ESTI programming

This outcome has been **partially achieved.** The formative evaluation was cited as a key example of how evidence has been used to improve ESTI programming. Its use demonstrates a commitment to using evidence not just for accountability but as a basis for ongoing learning and programme adaptation. However, a lack of empirical data limits the ability to make strong claims about the programme's contribution to teacher education as pointed out by a sector expert:

> *"I think that where TICZA has done really well is to open up possibilities, to bring together stakeholders, to allow very robust debate. But at the moment it's still a framework in principle, without the empirical data to back up the claims of quality contribution to teacher education in South Africa."*

Immediate outcome: New evidence is generated and shared about extended student teacher internships

This outcome has been **achieved.** Four interviewees confirmed that a strong foundational body of evidence has been built around ESTIs. This includes co-created research outputs, documentation of practices, and shared tools such as the TICZA Research Digest. These resources have supported programme improvement, alignment among partners, and the potential for advocacy and scale-up.

Intermediate outcome: Sector research is shared widely, increasing awareness of impact and support of ESTI programmes

This outcome has been **achieved.** Multiple research products have been developed and disseminated, improving visibility and shared understanding of the ESTI model across partners. The production of the abovementioned TICZA Research Digest was particularly praised:

> *"Very successful, very, very successful. I think just putting that out in the public domain and getting on record what the different service providers, HEIs, funders, NGOs are doing has been an incredibly important step. TICZA has excelled."*

Intermediate outcome: TICZA knowledge products, resources and research inform revisions/new pilots of ESTIs, including HEI/NGO collaborations

This outcome has been partially **achieved.** While there is evidence that partners are engaging with and co-developing knowledge products, it remains unclear whether these have directly informed revisions or new pilots of ESTIs or facilitated new collaborations between HEIs and NGOs.

Long term outcome: Government efforts such as the induction programme leverage ESTI insights and/or resources to improve

This outcome is **partially achieved**, with encouraging signs of progress. Stakeholders highlighted growing engagement from the DBE, and recognised TICZA's role as a strategic partner in national dialogues on teacher supply. While ESTI insights have not yet been formally integrated into government induction programmes, TICZA has laid important groundwork through improved policy alignment and positioning for future uptake.

Strategy on collaboration and partnerships

This strategy aimed to strengthen sectoral collaboration and knowledge sharing among TICZA partners. It includes two immediate and two intermediate outcomes, and one long-term outcome.

Immediate outcome: TICZA members are aware of and connected to other actors in the sector with the same goals, creating a larger network for TICZA members

This outcome has been **achieved**. Despite some implementing partners and HEIs participating in TICZA inconsistently, interviewees agreed that TICZA has fostered stronger connections across the ITE sector. One respondent described TICZA as "the place to be" for ITE actors. The establishment of the Implementer Group has facilitated greater alignment, collaboration, and bargaining power among members. Regular communication and a collaborative approach have contributed to this outcome. As one sector expert noted:

> *"TICZA has developed frameworks that have got people talking and that people can react to. And again, it is putting things on the table for interrogation; that is part of the process."*

Intermediate outcome: Silos are broken: Shared knowledge and evidence are leveraged by TICZA partners across their efforts and mandates, improving alignment to the system and other partner efforts, and resulting in targeted programmes

This outcome has been **achieved.** Partners are actively engaged in joint knowledge creation, contributing to a culture of trust and cross-organisational learning. These collaborations have enhanced the contextual relevance and scalability of tools and models used across diverse institutions.

TICZA has helped foster a vibrant CoP, particularly through the establishment of the ITE Forum/Professional Learning Community (PLC) on ESTIs. This platform has become central to shared learning and iterative programme design. TICZA's collective platform also enables more strategic engagement with government, particularly in navigating provincial-level complexities:

> *"The platform created by TICZA allows groupings to come with a strong voice… as opposed to one implementing organisation knocking on doors at every province."*

However, it was noted that while NGOs are actively sharing practices, HEIs have not consistently done so. As one respondent explained:

> *"We've been hearing a lot about the wraparound support provided by NGOs... but not necessarily seeing any sharing from HEIs. This is still finding its feet."*

Immediate outcome: Information from government (such as priority areas, funding availability) is available timeously to implementing partners

This outcome is partially **achieved.** TICZA has become a trusted channel for sharing updates from government agencies, including SACE and the DBE. This enhances partners' ability to align their work with policy developments. However, access to information about funding opportunities appears to be limited. One respondent noted:

> *"We don't get that. We get that ourselves… That would be a good idea. TICZA should give us that information."*

This suggests that while communication channels have improved, there is room for strengthening the flow of practical information that supports programme planning and sustainability.

Intermediate outcome: An increased number of HEI/NGO partnerships are developed and pilot variations/improvements to ESTI models

This outcome has been **partially achieved.** There is growing convergence around a shared approach to ESTIs, reflecting reduced fragmentation and increased alignment. Several partners reported piloting adaptations of the model and revising practices such as intern recruitment and fundraising strategies. As one partner explained:

> *"We have adapted and adjusted some of our ways of doing recruitment and approaching funding…There is learning there."*

However, emerging partnerships have largely been initiated independently, rather than through TICZA. As one respondent explained:

> *"It's not TICZA. These partnerships aren't developed and piloted collectively. It should be, but it's not."*

This highlights the need for TICZA to play a more intentional role in fostering collective HEI/NGO collaboration.

Long term outcome: ESTI graduates in schools continuously contribute to strengthening system capacity, increasing the number of teachers, leaders, and mentors to support ESTIs

This outcome has **not yet been achieved.** There is currently no evidence that ESTI graduates are contributing to sustained system capacity at scale. This long-term goal remains aspirational, with foundational efforts still underway.

Strategy on service delivery

This strategy focuses on improving the quality and scalability of teacher internship programmes through standardisation, alignment with national policies, and development of supporting frameworks and pathways. It has two immediate and six intermediate outcomes, as well as one long-term outcome.

Immediate outcome: A competency framework is leveraged by TICZA partners (NGOs, DHET, HEIs) as a resource to guide teacher internships, improving alignment to SACE professional teaching standards.

This outcome is **partially achieved.** TICZA has developed a draft competency framework outlining the core competencies for ESTIs, which has been acknowledged as an important step in aligning internship expectations across implementing partners. While the framework has yet to be validated or formally adopted by government bodies such as SACE and the DHET, it lays a strong foundation for performance monitoring and mentor training. However, one sector expert raised concerns about the framework's level of detail and practical applicability:

> *"The competency framework doesn't yet get into the nitty-gritty of classroom practice... It's still too broad and not fit for purpose."*

Despite these critiques, the effort represents measurable progress in establishing shared standards and a common language for quality in internship delivery.

Intermediate outcome: MRTEQ revisions include ESTIs, increasing government awareness and investment in these programmes.

This outcome is **partially achieved.** Although revisions to the MRTEQ policy are not yet complete, ESTIs have been incorporated into the review process, signalling increased government recognition and validation of the model. This inclusion enhances the long-term potential for formal alignment with the national teacher education framework.

Intermediate outcome: System alignment, quality and marketability of internship programmes improves.

This outcome is also **partially achieved.** TICZA has made visible contributions to aligning internship models with national education priorities, fostering engagement with the DBE, and supporting the inclusion of ESTIs in frameworks such as MRTEQ (as noted above). The launch of several pilot programmes by implementing partners reflects early-stage proof of concept, offering opportunities for refinement based on practical feedback and iterative learning.

Intermediate outcome: ESTIs are increasingly able to draw on existing sector resources and therefore improve efficiencies.

This outcome is **partially achieved.** Stakeholders, particularly during the ToC review workshop, noted that SACE views TICZA as a strategic platform for engaging with ITE actors. This recognition enhances the sector's ability to coordinate and share resources effectively, supporting more integrated approaches to educator development. It also contributes to the development of mentor pathways, although formal structures remain incomplete.

Immediate outcome: Standards and/or expectations for mentors and mentor training are clarified by government and shared.

This outcome has **not yet been achieved.** No formal standards or expectations for mentor roles or training have been issued by government entities. While TICZA has laid some groundwork, formal clarification and dissemination remain pending.

Intermediate outcome: A professional pathway for mentors is integrated into SACE processes, encouraging more teachers to meet standards.

This outcome is **not yet achieved**. While TICZA has worked on developing a professional pathway for mentors and contributed to the competency framework, neither has been formally validated or integrated into SACE's systems. As a result, this pathway remains conceptual rather than operational.

Intermediate outcome: An increased number of qualified, quality mentors are available across the system, improving ability to scale internship programmes/transfer programme responsibilities.

This outcome is **not yet achieved**. TICZA has introduced the 25/25 model, an effort to define scalable internship arrangements and outline conditions for quality mentorship. However, this has not yet translated into a significant increase in qualified mentors across the system. Feedback from the ToC workshop indicates that the enabling conditions for scaling mentor support are still being developed.

Intermediate outcome: Innovative pilot programmes successfully demonstrate improved quality, efficiency and/or cost-effectiveness, targeting and/or placement of ESTIs.

This outcome is **not yet achieved.** TICZA has supported pilot implementation, introduced discussions on sustainable costing, and encouraged the adoption of wraparound support models. Although some implementing partners have launched or adapted programmes based on shared learning, it remains too early to confirm improvements in quality, efficiency, or cost-effectiveness. Ongoing monitoring is needed to assess the impact of these pilot innovations.

Long term outcome: ESTIs successfully transition from donor-funded pilots to sustainable, scalable models, through methods such as transferring responsibility, identifying/driving sustainable revenue streams.

This outcome is **partially achieved,** with important foundational progress made in three areas:

- Growing interest from private HEIs, signalling openness to adopting the model and expanding delivery partnerships.
- Increased clarity on the value proposition of ESTIs—including mentorship, tutoring, and psychosocial support—supporting advocacy and integration into strategic planning.
- Improved understanding of costing, equipping stakeholders with essential information for planning scale-up and securing diverse funding sources.

While sustainability has not yet been realised, the conditions for transition have been established. Moving forward, emphasis must be placed on piloting scalable models in diverse contexts and identifying multi-source funding strategies beyond donor support.

Strategy on funding and advocacy

This strategy focuses on enhancing the financial sustainability of ESTI models by promoting diverse funding sources and encouraging institutional investment. It has one immediate outcome and two intermediate outcomes, as well as a long-term outcome. These are outlined below.

Immediate outcome: Knowledge about innovative, alternative, and supplemental possibilities for funding beyond donors is available and shared.

This outcome has been **achieved.** Several implementing partners have begun to actively explore and pursue alternative funding opportunities, both individually and collaboratively. These efforts demonstrate increased initiative and resilience among partners. Sharing of funding strategies within the TICZA network has supported broader awareness of viable financial models beyond donor reliance, contributing to stronger financial planning and positioning the ESTI model for long-term viability.

Intermediate outcome: Increased number and diversity of funding sources for pilots.

This outcome is **partially achieved**. There is credible evidence of growing interest from new donors, including those considering support for pilot models and proof of concept initiatives. This expanding donor base reflects positive momentum toward financial diversification, an essential step toward scaling ESTI interventions and reducing dependency on singular funding streams.

Intermediate outcome: An increasing number of HEIs offer and invest in distance ITE.

This outcome has **not yet been achieved**. There is currently no evidence that HEIs have begun to offer or invest more extensively in distance ITE programmes, despite recognition of their potential to expand access and flexibility in teacher preparation.

Long term outcome: HEIs offer distance education access to quality wraparound services.

This outcome has **not yet been achieved.** At present, there is no indication that HEIs are integrating quality wraparound support such as mentorship, tutoring, and psychosocial services into distance education offerings. This long-term goal remains aspirational and requires focused investment and coordination to become a reality.

Impact: Increased efficiency, effectiveness and scale of sustainable extended student teacher internships in South Africa.

This impact statement was refined during implementation to emphasise the institutionalisation of the ESTI model as a pathway to scale and sustainability. Over time, TICZA has clarified the mechanisms required for institutionalisation, and implementing partners now demonstrate a stronger conceptual understanding of what institutionalisation entails. As one sector expert reflected:

> *"It's almost like there's a skeleton and now it needs the flesh on it... we are definitely in a better place in understanding than we were five years ago... TICZA has produced a whole lot of possibilities for what is possible in the extended teacher internship space."*

While progress in conceptual development and alignment has been substantial, **institutionalisation has not yet been achieved.** Stakeholders agreed that the absence of robust empirical evidence limits the ability to fully institutionalise the model within the national teacher education system:

> *"Institutionalisation of this model hasn't been achieved and can't be until we have empirical research to back up the findings...This phase of TICZA isn't designed for that level of research."*

However, there is strong consensus that the groundwork has been laid and that a follow-on phase of TICZA, focused more explicitly on empirical research and national advocacy, is needed to advance institutionalisation. As another expert noted:

"TICZA has a name and a brand. It's the 'body that knows.' It would be a pity to shut it down completely. There is space for a version 2.0.... maybe with a different purpose: more research, more advocacy. That's what's vital now."

Impact: High quality, committed teachers contribute to an improved standard of basic education in South Africa

Implementing partners reported that ESTIs are benefiting from the structured support provided through TICZA, and that these improvements suggest advancements toward the broader goal of enhancing the quality of basic education. However, the scale of implementation of ESTIs remains limited. With an estimated cohort of 600 interns, the current reach is insufficient to support an improved standard of basic education in the country. While the changes are promising, larger-scale implementation and longitudinal research are needed to substantiate this impact at a national level.

Unintended outcomes

TICZA catalysed several significant outcomes that were not originally planned. One notable achievement is the integration of internships into the Strategic Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development. As one strategic partner explained:

"I think an important unintended outcome has been how TICZA has contributed to discussions about teacher development that are now being incorporated into larger policy frameworks. For instance, I mentioned that the internship has now been integrated into the Strategic Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development. This wasn't necessarily the initial goal, but TICZA's work has clearly influenced how the internship is being viewed within the broader educational landscape."

Although the ToC anticipated increased collaboration amongst and between participants and HEIs, there have been reports of deepening collaboration between HEIs themselves. This is an unintended but important outcome. Additional **unintended outcomes** include the following:

- NGO implementing partners were afforded opportunities to reflect on and document their programme models.
- Implementing partners initiated collaborative efforts for joint fundraising to sustain elements of TICZA's collaborative impact model.
- SACE emerged as an unexpected yet strong champion within TICZA.
- The DBE demonstrated stronger engagement and interest than initially anticipated.

Another important shift was in how institutions conceptualised teacher preparation, expanding beyond a university-centric model. As one strategic partner observed:

"One unintended outcome is the shift in how some institutions view teacher preparation, moving from a university-only model to a more ecosystem-based model that includes schools and communities. There's also been more openness to cross-sector collaboration."

4.3.1 Factors and actors contributing to achievement of outcomes

The success of TICZA in achieving its outcomes can be attributed to a combination of organisational strengths, collaborative practices, stakeholder engagement, and enabling conditions within the broader ecosystem. The key enablers are as follows:

The role of brand and reputation: TICZA's association with reputable organisations, including the convening group members; namely, JET, Trialogue, NASCEE, and the Bertha Centre, helped to secure participation and build confidence among stakeholders. The TICZA "brand" opened doors for productive engagement with funders and policymakers

Technical expertise: The technical capacity within the convening group (in areas such as project management, research, M&E, and education expertise) allowed for efficient, high-quality outputs. Different strengths across the organisations complemented each other, improving the overall quality of implementation.

Effective convening structures and platforms: Structures like the CoPs, and regular (quarterly) Steering Committee and sub-committee meetings provided spaces for stakeholder engagement, dialogue, and problem-solving. The establishment of the sub-committees afforded deeper engagements, and the CoPs, in particular, enabled the refinement of diverse perspectives into more coherent, realistic strategies.

Strong communication, stakeholder engagement, and space for relationship-building: Regular, transparent communication built trust amongst the different actors and facilitated collaboration. In addition, effective stakeholder engagement ensured buy-in from both government and the broader ecosystem, particularly crucial support from the DBE.

4.3.2 Factors and actors hindering the achievement of outcomes

A number of barriers hindered the achievement of outcomes. These are listed below:

Provincial engagement challenges: One major barrier has been limited provincial buy-in. While TICZA successfully negotiated an MoU with the DBE at national level, this did not automatically unlock access to provincial departments of education. Provinces such as Gauteng required separate MoUs, creating a fragmented and time-consuming negotiation process. This severely limited TICZA's ability to scale and implement activities uniformly across the country.

> *"You negotiate with DBE at the national level. You have a national MoU that allows you to go and operate with them in the programmes that they control at national level, but you need a MoU with, for example, the Gauteng Department of Education to operate in Gauteng."*

Leadership changes at provincial levels compounded this challenge; for example, when a new Head of Department was appointed, previous agreements sometimes became invalid or needed to be renegotiated, leading to delays and uncertainty.

Unmet assumptions: TICZA's design assumed certain conditions that did not hold in practice. It was assumed that implementing organisations would consistently collect good quality monitoring data and track intern pathways. However, variations in capacity and practice meant that critical data for proof of concept was incomplete or missing. It was assumed that programme implementation would be similar across contexts, but there was significant variation between provinces, institutions, and implementing organisations. TICZA also assumed that there would be high enough numbers of interns participating to demonstrate trends and validate claims. However, in reality, the numbers often fell short of what was needed for robust evidence-building.

Overambitious objectives: TICZA set objectives that were too ambitious for its scope and timeframe. For example, aiming to prove that extended internships produce higher quality teachers was unrealistic without rigorous longitudinal research; and, without empirical evidence, it was unlikely that

HEIs would formally adopt NGO-run mentorship and internship programmes. While TICZA succeeded in building a framework and started important conversations around institutionalisation, the lack of a strong evidence base meant that deeper systemic change was out of reach during the project timeframe.

Weak M&E systems: TICZA's lack of a robust M&E framework from the start also posed a critical barrier. Without initial baseline indicators, it became difficult to measure progress and demonstrate impact. As a result, much of the data remained anecdotal rather than systematic and longitudinal. The absence of strong M&E outputs weakened TICZA's ability to advocate effectively outside its immediate circle, making it harder to convince stakeholders (such as HEIs and provincial departments) of the programme's value. While the narrative around TICZA's potential is strong internally, externally it lacked the data-driven "story" needed for broader credibility and buy-in.

Funding model uncertainties: The lack of clarity around sustainable funding models emerged as an ongoing constraint. HEIs, and potentially other partners, needed more detailed information about how the funding models would work to support extended internships sustainably. Different institutional contexts meant that a one-size-fits-all funding model was not feasible, and further work is required to tailor models to different university needs and constraints. Thus, while funding objectives were not described as "unachieved," they remain an area needing more work to enable long-term sustainability.

Despite the barriers listed above, TICZA demonstrated notable adaptive capacity:

- The programme was able to realign goals in response to practical constraints.
- It developed a foundation and framework for extended internships that, while not yet institutionalised, create an important starting point for future advocacy and refinement.

5 Sustainability

Key evaluation questions

- Will TICZA's achievements last?
- What mechanisms have been/should be put in place to support sustainability of outcomes achieved to date, as well as TICZA itself?

This section discusses how TICZA achievements will be sustained. This involved looking at existing and suggested mechanisms required to sustain outcomes achieved thus far, as well as considerations around how to sustain TICZA as a platform or initiative beyond its current phase. Factors that either enable or hinder sustainability of TICZA's emerging outcomes are also considered.

What needs to be differentiated is the sustainability and continuation of the work carried out by and in the TICZA construct and envisaged mainly through the institutionalisation of the work. There is general agreement that this is the key avenue for the sustainability of ESTIs as a desirable pathway for ITE. A secondary aspect is the continuation of the TICZA construct itself in some institutional form. There is less agreement on the viability and desirability of this element of the sustainability discussion. A third aspect of sustainability is the continued (financial) sustainability of implementers. Views on this have varied over time. Recently, there is greater recognition of the role that TICZA could potentially play in assisting with the financial sustainability of implementing organisations.

5.1 Sustainability of achieved outcomes

The sustainability of outcomes achieved through TICZA is dependent on several interrelated factors including institutional integration of successful elements, funding continuity, policy alignment, and collaborative momentum among stakeholders.

There is strong agreement among several stakeholders that certain elements such as the CCF, integrated workplace-based learning models, and mentorship systems are likely to endure beyond the life of the project. These components are already being recognised by HEIs, NGOs, and select government actors, creating a foundation for institutional uptake. Stakeholders highlighted that these features respond to a significant gap in the current ITE landscape, particularly regarding the lack of meaningful work integrated learning (WIL) within many HEI programmes. As one respondent noted,

> *"Five weeks in a term is like a doctor going to a hospital for five weeks in a year."*

The TICZA model is seen as filling this systemic shortfall, which increases its perceived value and potential for sustained impact.

Several respondents proposed that the long-term institutionalisation of WIL may be best achieved through strategic partnerships between HEIs and NGOs. In such models, NGOs, many of which are already TICZA implementation partners, would formally deliver WIL components on behalf of universities, particularly those struggling with capacity constraints or serving distance-learning students. This offers a practical, scalable pathway for sustaining TICZA-aligned practices in diverse institutional contexts.

Institutions like UNISA were frequently cited as key actors in scaling the TICZA model due to their reach and their role in training large cohorts of distance-learning student teachers. Stakeholders noted that effective collaboration with such institutions could enable a wider uptake of the extended internship model, especially among non-traditional students who are typically underserved in current WIL frameworks. However, stakeholders also acknowledged that such collaboration requires formal commitment and system-wide alignment, which remain a work-in-progress.

Funding was widely identified as essential to sustaining outcomes beyond TICZA. Stakeholders stressed the need for ongoing financial support to maintain partnerships and scale the internship model, but raised concerns about transitioning to public or blended funding without formal institutional and policy backing. Long-term sustainability hinges on government commitment, particularly policy recognition of internships within teacher education, and the institutionalisation of the model by HEIs. To support this, the Sustainable Funding Working Group aims to enable TICZA-member internships to deliver 1,000 graduate teachers annually by 2028, up from 100 in 2022 (JET, 2023: 11). Plans include engaging targeted funders and exploring mechanisms such as an internship fund and impact investing (JET, 2023: 12) to avoid disruption post-TICZA.

While core programme elements are progressing toward institutionalisation, stakeholders consistently emphasised the urgent need for a proof of concept to validate the model's scalability and cost-effectiveness. Respondents noted that although foundational elements are in place, a coordinated and funded proof of concept has not yet been implemented. Without this, policy uptake may remain constrained. Several stakeholders stressed the importance of using the next phase to test the model in diverse contexts and demonstrate its comparative value across variants (e.g., one-year versus three-year internships). As one respondent emphasised,

> *"We need to compare apples with apples — students that are going through our programme versus students that are not."*

As a strategic response to current resource constraints, others recommended beginning with an analysis of existing implementers' models as a low-cost, empirical foundation to build upon.

Policy alignment is widely recognised as critical to sustaining TICZA's impact. Stakeholders emphasised the need to embed successful elements such as extended internships and mentoring structures into national education frameworks, rather than operating in parallel to them. This includes alignment with DBE and DHET policies, and specifically, integration into the revised MRTEQ, as highlighted in the 2023 Annual Report (JET, 2023: 10). While there is strong support for institutionalising these innovations, some stakeholders cautioned against the risk of commodifying education and called for transparency and accountability in aligning with national priorities.

While there is broad agreement on the need to sustain aspects of TICZA's work, there is less clarity on what sustainability should mean beyond 2025. Stakeholders widely recognised that TICZA was never meant to become a permanent entity, but rather a catalytic collaboration designed to initiate change and hand over responsibilities to actors like the DBE, HEIs, and NGOs. Yet, concerns were raised about losing momentum without a central mechanism to support coordination, learning, and advocacy. Many discussions focused on sustaining some form of collective impact approach, rather than the outcomes themselves, sometimes blurring the distinction between sustaining the collaboration and institutionalising its results. As one respondent put it:

> *"TICZA is not an organisation… it's a collaboration… there's no organisation. If you talk about institutionalisation, it is institutionalisation of extended student teacher internships. It's not institutionalisation of TICZA as an entity."*

Additionally, several respondents noted that TICZA's visibility outside its internal convening spaces is limited, raising concerns about whether its influence will persist in broader policy conversations. Some stakeholders called for stronger advocacy and external communication to ensure that TICZA's tools, research, and lessons remain accessible and relevant to future actors in the system.

Finally, the importance of evidence generation—including comparative research on different internship models, cost-effectiveness analyses, and long-term tracking of outcomes—was highlighted across all groups. Stakeholders stressed that institutionalisation and scale will only occur if there is rigorous data to convince policymakers and funders of the model's value. Without this, there is a risk of regression or stalled uptake, especially if decision-makers or political priorities shift.

5.2 Key enablers of sustainability

5.2.1 Policy and structural integration

One of the most significant enablers of sustainability is the integration of the ESTI model within the existing higher education and teacher preparation policy frameworks. Respondents emphasised the importance of embedding TICZA in policy as a primary mechanism to institutionalise change within universities, particularly those lacking in field-based practice capacity. Policy governance was consistently identified as the most viable pathway for driving and sustaining systemic change in HEIs.

Moreover, the embedding of TICZA into the ecosystem of teacher training through practice and professional practice schools ensures continuity and relevance. Such structural embedding would align the initiative with the long-term strategic functions of teacher education institutions, fostering both buy-in and operational longevity.

5.2.2 Stakeholder alignment and political will

The alignment of roles between HEIs and service delivery providers, as well as political support for innovation, emerged as crucial. Sustainability is enhanced when there is clear direction and accountability across different institutional players, and when entities such as the CHE enable practical change through regulatory support.

5.2.3 Evidence and value proposition

Another enabler (outlined in the previous report sections) is the generation and use of robust evidence demonstrating the impact of TICZA. This includes documentation of progress and clear plans for institutionalising programme activities. A transparent and well-communicated value proposition that emphasises TICZA's non-competitive stance, particularly its commitment not to access funds at the expense of the implementing partners, also fosters trust and long-term partnerships.

5.2.4 Government buy-in and financial diversification

Sustainability is also linked to obtaining government recognition and funding, including through established public funding channels such as the Funza Lushaka bursary and ETDP SETA. These sources can gradually replace reliance on private funding, providing a more stable financial foundation.

Achieving government buy-in requires not only demonstrating programmatic effectiveness but also investing in awareness-building among officials and aligning with national education priorities. Relationship-building with respected stakeholders also increase legitimacy and influence, further cementing TICZA's position in the national education ecosystem (JET, 2023: 18).

5.2.5 Mentorship and capacity development

A critical operational enabler is the presence of a mentorship programme, without which efforts to establish a viable ESTI programme may falter. Engaging stakeholders such as SACE in standardising and endorsing mentorship efforts can solidify TICZA's impact and broaden its reach (TICZA Steering Committee, 2024b).

5.2.6 Institutional forums and feedback mechanisms

The establishment of regular forums that include NGOs, unions, government departments, and universities facilitates ongoing dialogue, feedback, and compliance management. These forums are vital for aligning stakeholder expectations, addressing emerging issues, and refining operational frameworks in real time.

5.3 Potential barriers to sustainability

5.3.1 Lack of sustained funding and coordination mechanisms

Multiple respondents flagged the uncertainty of continued funding as a major threat. Without a central convening body or mechanism to mobilise resources, TICZA risks fragmentation. Although some outcomes like the CoPs may endure, the broader initiative lacks financial and structural continuity. Secondary data reinforces this, citing reduced government funding and the absence of demonstrable impact at scale as constraints to long-term support (JET, 2023).

5.3.2 Weak institutional and policy buy-in

Respondents noted that uptake of ESTI models depends heavily on institutional willingness, which is unlikely without clear policy mandates. The slow pace of formal agreements such as MoUs with government or other implementing partners creates uncertainty. Delays in securing formal institutional agreements with key HEIs such as UNISA were also raised as a concern. Stakeholders cited leadership changes and bureaucratic hurdles as contributing to stalled progress, despite UNISA's potential to significantly expand the reach of TICZA-aligned internships.

Additionally, the formative evaluation identified a lack of shared understanding among stakeholders regarding TICZA's core objectives (Southern Hemisphere, 2023). This limited conceptual clarity weakened commitment and created ambiguity around roles. The absence of a unified vision has continued to undermine institutional engagement, reinforcing the need for TICZA to clearly articulate its intended outcomes and align them with national policy and planning frameworks.

5.3.3 Disconnect between teacher education theory and practice

A persistent disconnect between universities and schools was identified as a potential barrier to sustaining TICZA innovations. Respondents highlighted fragmented partnerships and limited professional learning spaces, which hinder integration into teacher training. Some stakeholders also cited top-down decision-making and complex, opaque processes as factors undermining trust and collaboration.

5.3.4 Contextual and equity-related challenges

Sustainability is also threatened by socio-economic disparities and infrastructure gaps. Respondents pointed to the financial burden of supporting student teachers in rural areas and the need for incentives, scholarships, and digital teaching resources. These requirements will particularly affect under-resourced institutions and communities. Secondary sources also highlighted financial constraints, bureaucratic hurdles, and geographic mismatches as limiting factors. Without explicit focus on how under-resourced students and institutions will be supported, sustainability risks being unevenly distributed (Southern Hemisphere, 2023).

6 Conclusion

The summative evaluation aimed to provide TICZA with a summary of views from a representative group of stakeholders regarding how well the initiative has achieved its goals, using the formative evaluation as a benchmark.

The summative evaluation affirms that TICZA has made meaningful strides in improving its overall effectiveness since the formative evaluation. It has achieved notable progress in aligning stakeholders around a common agenda, particularly through inclusive dialogue and the refinement of the original ToC. However, shared measurement systems remain a key weakness, with persistent gaps in baseline data and evidence generation limiting the initiative's ability to demonstrate the effectiveness of the ESTI model.

TICZA has also made advances in fostering mutually reinforcing activities, with successful partnerships and knowledge sharing taking place via CoPs. Communication has also emerged as a major strength, with well-structured and consistent updates enhancing stakeholder engagement and alignment, though some stakeholders still report limited opportunities for meaningful participation.

The convening group's role as backbone support has been instrumental, providing strategic coordination and the adaptability required to sustain momentum. Together, these elements position TICZA as an evolving and maturing initiative with strong foundations, while also highlighting clear areas for strategic investment moving forward.

Importantly, while TICZA has achieved several of its short- to medium-term outcomes, its long-term impact, measured as the institutionalisation and scaling of extended internships, has not yet been realised. Provincial-level policy engagement, formal buy-in from HEIs, and integration into national teacher education frameworks such as the MRTEQ remain essential next steps. A proof of concept phase, coupled with targeted advocacy and cost-benefit analysis, is urgently needed to substantiate the model's value and feasibility at scale.

The sustainability of TICZA's outcomes will depend on the continued alignment of institutional actors, the development of funding models that blend public and private sources, and the formal integration of TICZA's frameworks into policy and practice. Encouraging signs of government interest and early steps towards structural integration offer a pathway forward, but these must be bolstered by stronger empirical evidence and clearer strategies for scaling mentorship, institutionalising collaboration, and sustaining programme components post-TICZA.

Overall, TICZA has demonstrated the value of a collective impact approach in addressing complex, systemic challenges in teacher development through partnership, evidence-based practice, and collective action. It has proven its relevance, adaptability, and convening power, and has catalysed important policy conversations and partnerships. However, its future impact will hinge on the sector's ability to transition from foundational work to demonstrable results, ensuring that more student teachers enter the profession well-prepared, supported, and equipped to drive quality learning outcomes across South Africa's education system.

7 Lessons learned

The evaluation of TICZA has yielded several important lessons into the strengths and challenges of implementing a collective impact approach to education system transformation initiatives such as ESTIs.

7.1 Value of collective impact and collaboration

TICZA successfully brought together diverse stakeholders—including government, NGOs, HEIs, funders, and unions—around a common agenda. This diversity facilitated richer dialogue, mutual learning, and shared ownership of the common agenda, with stakeholders aligning unique contributions to enhance collective impact.

7.2 Continuous communication and knowledge sharing

Ongoing structured communication was vital for maintaining alignment, momentum, and trust among partners. Establishing CoPs facilitated deeper collaboration and resource sharing, enhancing system alignment and programme delivery. This also extended beyond the immediate focus and needs of ESTIs to ITE in general, for example, the value of the CCF to SACE and the DBE.

7.3 Relevance to sector needs

TICZA proved effective in addressing teacher supply and quality, validating the relevance of ESTIs. The use of feedback during M&E informed a more robust ToC, emphasising the importance of M&E frameworks for tracking progress and adapting activities.

7.4 Evidence-based adaptation

The effective use of the feedback received during M&E and its effect on the development of a more robust ToC showed the value of M&E and the need for a focus on TICZA's M&E framework to track progress, adapt activities, and demonstrate results across multiple organisations.

7.5 Alignment, measurement and sustainability challenges

Achieving alignment among various organisations proved complex, requiring negotiation and flexibility. Developing shared measurement tools for consistent data collection was essential yet challenging. Questions about the sustainability and scaling of the initiative, particularly regarding funding and institutional buy-in, remain.

7.6 Backbone support and knowledge sharing

A dedicated backbone organisation was crucial for coordinating activities, sharing lessons, and ensuring strategic alignment. TICZA's commitment to creating open-source resources fostered broader sector learning.

In summary, the evaluation highlighted that the collective impact approach is effective for complex, systemic education challenges when built on the collective impact framework. However, sustained alignment, robust data systems, and strategies for long-term sustainability remain ongoing priorities for TICZA's future impact.

8 Recommendations

8.1 Strengthen governance and stakeholder alignment

- Reinforce decision-making structures through confirmation of role definition for stakeholders to address challenges in shared agenda ownership.
- Develop a sustainability roadmap with phased exit strategies for funders while ensuring government and HEI ownership of key processes (e.g. accreditation of internship programmes).
- Deepen institutionalisation processes to ensure the continuation of TICZA work.

8.2 Enhance funding models

- Focus on the proof of concept study: This should provide the required evidence to substantiate the TICZA vision and unlock various sources of funding. These could include more programmes to address specific specialisations and focus needs as defined by the DBE.

8.3 Deepen monitoring & evaluation

- Expand the shared measurement framework to include:
  - Longitudinal tracking of students including completion rates and entry into the profession, as well as first stage retention (1/2 years post qualification);
  - Measuring impact of ESTIs on effective practice during studies and first year of teaching;
  - Measuring the impact of different types of mentoring/difference in quality of mentoring – however that is defined requires further clarification.
- Institutionalise data-sharing protocols between stakeholders including HEIs, SACE, the DBE, and implementing NGOs.

8.4 Scale advocacy through systemic integration

- Embed extended internships in national teacher education policy via the DHET's Revised Policy on Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education (MRTEQ).
- Leverage existing structures; for example, partner with SACE and the DBE to integrate internship hours into continuous professional development frameworks.

8.5 Optimise implementation capacity

- Strengthen mentorship systems by:
  - Creating or promoting existing standardised training for mentor teachers, (e.g., certified via the ETDP SETA);
  - Implementing tiered support for rural vs urban or lower and higher socio-economic status schools;
  - Formalising partnerships between HEIs and NGOs to co-design practicum modules.

8.6 Improve knowledge dissemination

- Launch an open-access "TICZA Toolkit" with Creative Commons-licensed resources for internship design, M&E tools, and advocacy templates.
- Conduct regional workshops showcasing successful models like Thuto Trust, The Global Teachers Institute (GTI), and Khanyisa Inanda Seminary Community Projects (KICP) internship programmes to provincial education departments.

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Appendix 2: Evaluation matrix

Criteria Area	Evaluation Questions	Data Source
Relevance and design	What were the key strengths and challenges in using a collective impact model?	SSI_TICZA_Strategic partners SSI_TICZA_Sector experts SSI_TICZA_Implementation partners SSI_TICZA_Convening group SSI_TICZA_Education providers
	Have there been any changes or shifts in the teacher education landscape since the formative evaluation in 2023? If so, what were these changes? If so, how has TICZA responded to these changes – and how effective was this response?	
	Do you think that TICZA should have been more focused on raising funds for NGO implementers?	
	To what extent do you think TICZA operates according to the five elements of a collective impact model? Are these elements functioning well within TICZA? (Probe: Is there any element that is working particularly well in TICZA?) Is there any element that is not working particularly well in TICZA? (Probe: How could this be improved?)	SSI_TICZA_Implementation partners SSI_TICZA_Convening group SSI_TICZA_Strategic partners SSI_TICZA_Sector experts
	Subsequent to the formative evaluation in 2023, have there been any shifts in these five elements as they are being operationalised within TICZA?	
	Does a collective impact model differ in any way to conventional collaboration methods?	SSI_TICZA_Implementation partners SSI_TICZA_Convening group SSI_TICZA_Strategic partners SSI_TICZA_Sector experts
	Do you think that a collective impact model presents any particular strengths or challenges?	SSI_TICZA_Strategic partners SSI_TICZA_Sector experts SSI_TICZA_Implementation partners SSI_TICZA_Convening group SSI_TICZA_Education providers
Effectiveness	To what extent has TICZA been implemented as planned?	SSI_TICZA_Sector experts SSI_TICZA_Strategic partners

Criteria Area	Evaluation Questions	Data Source
	Are there any particular TICZA project achievements that you are aware of?	SSI_TICZA_Implementation partners SSI_TICZA_Convening group
	Are you aware of any key strengths in TICZA? (What has worked well?)	
	How effective has the convening group (also referred to as the backbone organisations, i.e. JET, Trialogue, NASCEE and Bertha) been to keep TICZA on track?	SSI_TICZA_Strategic partners SSI_TICZA_Sector experts SSI_TICZA_Implementation partners SSI_TICZA_Convening group SSI_TICZA_Education providers
	What challenges has TICZA faced? (What hasn't worked so well?) How were these challenges addressed? Were these measures successful?	SSI_TICZA_Strategic partners SSI_TICZA_Sector experts SSI_TICZA_Implementation partners SSI_TICZA_Convening group SSI_TICZA_Education providers
	Have private/public HEIs been able to play a role in TICZA? If so, has this involvement in TICZA been meaningful and useful? If not, what were the barriers to HEIs playing a role in TICZA?	SSI_TICZA_Education providers
Outcomes	What changes or outcomes have been achieved by TICZA?	SSI_TICZA_Strategic partners SSI_TICZA_Sector experts SSI_TICZA_Implementation partners SSI_TICZA_Convening group SSI_TICZA_Education providers
	Has TICZA established a more vocationally orientated option for student teacher training? How did it achieve this? (Probe: Do you think that a vocational option is needed at all?)	SSI_TICZA_Education providers SSI_TICZA_Implementation partners
	Have there been any changes for your organisation as a result of being involved in TICZA? Please explain your answer	SSI_TICZA_Implementation partners
	As far as you know, has TICZA catalysed any unintended outcomes or changes (positive or negative?)	SSI_TICZA_Convening group SSI_TICZA_Implementation partners
	What were the key enablers of the outcomes or changes achieved by TICZA?	SSI_TICZA_Sector experts

Criteria Area	Evaluation Questions	Data Source
	[Probe: a. Contribution of TICZA? b. Contribution by other actors and factors?]	SSI_TICZA_Strategic partners SSI_TICZA_Convening group SSI_TICZA_Implementation partners
	What if any, barriers / bottlenecks hindered the achievement of outcomes? Were any strategies implemented to address these barriers? How successful were these strategies?	SSI_TICZA_Sector experts SSI_TICZA_Strategic partners SSI_TICZA_Convening group SSI_TICZA_Implementation partners
Sustainability	Do you think that the outcomes that we have just discussed will be sustained?	SSI_TICZA_Strategic partners SSI_TICZA_Sector experts SSI_TICZA_Implementation partners SSI_TICZA_Convening group SSI_TICZA_Education providers
	If yes, what would enable or support the sustainability of the outcomes achieved thus far?	SSI_TICZA_Strategic partners SSI_TICZA_Sector experts SSI_TICZA_Implementation partners SSI_TICZA_Convening group SSI_TICZA_Education providers
	Are there any potential barriers to the sustainability of TICZA-related outcomes? If so, what are these barriers? How might they be addressed?	SSI_TICZA_Strategic partners SSI_TICZA_Sector experts SSI_TICZA_Implementation partners SSI_TICZA_Convening group SSI_TICZA_Education providers
	In what way would you suggest TICZA continues beyond 2025? What sustainability mechanisms have / should be put in place to continue key TICZA elements going forward?	SSI_TICZA_Strategic partners SSI_TICZA_Sector experts SSI_TICZA_Implementation partners SSI_TICZA_Convening group SSI_TICZA_Education providers
Lessons learned	What lessons have emerged from TICZA implementation over the last four years? How might these learnings be used to inform similar, future interventions?	SSI_TICZA_Strategic partners SSI_TICZA_Sector experts SSI_TICZA_Implementation partners SSI_TICZA_Convening group

Criteria Area	Evaluation Questions	Data Source
		SSI_TICZA_Education providers
Recommendations	Should the TICZA model be strengthened in any way? If so, how might this be done? What changes do you suggest?	SSI_TICZA_Strategic partners SSI_TICZA_Sector experts SSI_TICZA_Implementation partners SSI_TICZA_Convening group SSI_TICZA_Education providers