



TRACER STUDY: ITUKISE INTERNSHIP FOR UNEMPLOYED GRADUATES PROGRAMME 2019



the dti

Department:
Trade and Industry
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

towards full-scale **industrialisation** and inclusive **growth**

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ACRONYMS

Itukise : Itukise Internship for Unemployed Graduates programme

N6: National Certificate

the dti: The Department of Trade and Industry

HR: Human Resources

DHET: Department of Higher Education and Training

NSF: National Skills Fund



1. Introduction

The Department of Trade and Industry (**the dti**) has implemented various initiatives to create employment opportunities for the youth. One such initiative is the Itukise Internship for Unemployed Graduates programme, which aims to provide unemployed graduates with relevant work experience. The programme is mostly funded by the National Skills Fund (NSF), which is part of the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET).

Graduates in various fields were placed in 244 eligible enterprises with the aim of providing work experience for a period of 12 months. In addition, Itukise provided in-service training to trainees whose graduate programmes have the requirement of a practicum.

The Itukise programme aims to:

- improve the employability of young unemployed graduates by providing them with relevant work experience, the lack of which is a key obstacle to employability;

- promote economic inclusion as unemployed graduates cannot meaningfully contribute towards the economy and their communities; and
- provide practical skills to unemployed graduates through real-life exposure to the workplace and build networks for future employment.

2. Purpose of the Itukise Tracer Study

At the close of Itukise in 2016, a report on the processes of implementation and outcomes was developed by the service provider. It provided a bird's eye view of the programme, the participants, the input of the programme owner and sponsor, and the experiences of the implementing agent. The status of the target group was also tabled.

Furthermore, another report was developed by an external assessor, who delved into the experiential perceptions of all categories of participants. Of value were the recommendations for future application to the programme in order to achieve greater impact. The impact of an internship such as Itukise, however, cannot be treated as

a single event due to the dynamic nature of employment, whereby at any given time the interns may be in or out of employment.

The idea of the tracer study came about in an attempt to document the movement of interns post programme in order to provide a realistic picture of its impact and inform on any actions that may become necessary for it to be more effective.

3. Objectives of the study

- To provide information on the employment status and geographic spread of the interns at various periods after the completion of the Itukise internship programme as well as to determine the extent to which in-service trainees were able to obtain their qualifications. This will be linked with socio-biographic and study descriptors (gender, age, field of study). This is the main objective of this study.
- To produce simple, descriptive findings about the employment status of interns who were in the programme.

- To explain employment dynamics by analysing the links between education, training and employment.
- To provide feedback that may be applicable for the improvement of Itukise as an internship programme.

4. Methodology

4.1. Sampling

The population for the study was drawn from the working-age population group, i.e. mostly those individuals between the ages of 18 and 35 years who were given the chance to do the internship or in-service training at private companies in South Africa. The respondents were interviewed after phase 1 of the Itukise programme. The study takes into consideration the total population of the interns and in-service trainees, depending on their availability and willingness to participate, i.e the census participation method was used.

A qualitative research methodology was used to achieve all the objectives outlined in section 3:

- Questionnaires were developed and sent out to interns for data collection.
- Telephonic interviews were conducted with some interns.

4.2. Data collection

Data was collected using a structured questionnaire that was administered to respondents by trained officials from **the dti's** Skills for the Economy unit. Questionnaires were sent out and received via email. All respondents were contacted telephonically and given the background to the survey.

During the fieldwork phase of the project, it was found that many of the graduates and in-service trainees were either non-contactable (their contact details were either incorrect or had changed) or chose not to participate in the interview process (data collection is still in progress for statistics updates). Details in respect of the interns are provided on the following pages.

5. Findings

This part of the research assesses the input provided by those interns who participated in the programme. A total of 68 interns were interviewed from various host companies in South Africa and contacted using a database of 246. Efforts were made to contact all interns, but they were not all available to participate in the survey.

The interns' responses are based on the questionnaire attached as Annexure A.

During the fieldwork phase of the project, it was found that many of the former interns were either non-contactable or chose not to participate in the interview process. This was due to the fact that their contact details were incorrect or no longer working.

The fact that almost all the target population were contacted means that the study then moved from a sample-based to census approach.

Table 1: Questionnaires received

Gender	Number
Male	27
Female	41
Total	68

Table 1 shows the gender breakdown of the respondents who participated in the interview process. The majority of the respondents were females (60%), while the remaining 40% were males. A total of 68 questionnaires were received out of the 246 disseminated, with 41 responses generated from female and 27 from male respondents.



Figure 1: Participants were asked if they experienced challenges when applying for internships

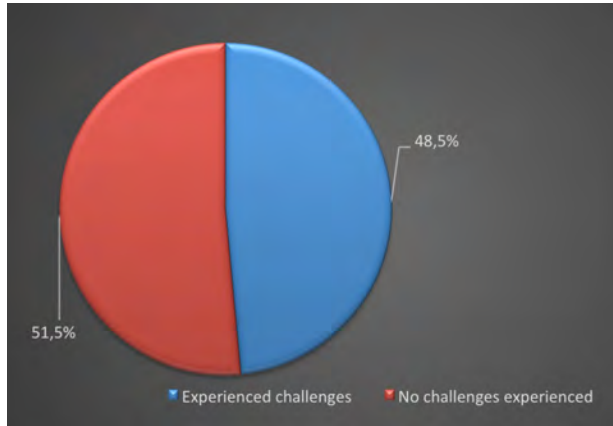


Figure 1 shows the percentage share of participants who experienced challenges when applying for internships. It looks at how long it took participants to find internships after completion of their studies; they were asked to choose between three, six, 12 or more than 12 months.

According to Figure 1, 49% of the participants experienced challenges. These are the people who took more than six months to secure internships. The 51% who did not

experience challenges took less than six months to find internships.

Table 2: Number of interns who completed Itukise Programme

	Number	%
Programme completed	50	73.5%
Programme not completed	18	26.5%
Total	68	100.0%

The participants were asked whether they completed the programme. Table 2 shows that 73.5% of the participants completed the programme, while 26,5% did not. The majority of the 26.5% indicated that they had found employment before the 12 months was up.

Table 3: Number of questionnaires received by race

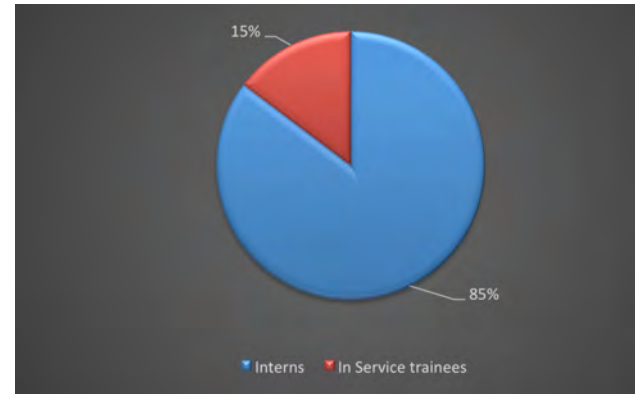
Race	Number of questionnaires	% share
African	64	94%
Indian	1	1%
Coloured	1	1%
White	2	3%
Total	68	100%

Table 3 shows the racial breakdown of the participants. Africans constitute the majority of the respondents (94%), with 64 questionnaires, followed by whites with two questionnaires (3%), and Indians and coloureds with one questionnaire each. This was in keeping with the percentage racial distribution of the interns.

Table 4: Disability profile

	Number	%
Disabled	4	5.9%
No disability	64	94.1%
Total	68	100.0%

The participants were asked to indicate if they have a disability. Table 4 shows that 6% indicated they had some form of disability, while 94% did not.

Figure 2: Share (%) of questionnaires received by category

The interns comprise both graduates, who need work experience to become more employable, and in-service trainees, who have completed N6 and need practical technical training to complete their qualifications. Of the 68 questionnaires received, 10 were from in-service trainees (15%), while the rest were from graduate interns (85%), as

shown in Figure 2. All but one questionnaire received from the male respondents indicated that they were graduate interns, while of the 41 received from female respondents, 32 were graduate interns and the rest in-service trainees.

Figure 3: Number of questionnaires received by employment status



Internship programmes give young adults who have gained theoretical knowledge from higher education institutions the opportunity to enhance these skills through vocational or practical training in the workplace, thereby increasing their chances of securing employment. Figure 3 shows that a total of 40 (59%) participants are employed, with 10 (27%) employed and studying simultaneously. Another

positive finding is that 50% of the participants who indicated they had some form of disability were employed. Two of the respondents are self-employed. Of the 40 interns who are now employed, 25 were employed permanently and 15 on fixed contracts, 18 by their host companies and 22 elsewhere.

The employed participants were further asked if their employment was relevant to their qualifications. The results show that 34 (85%) secured employment relevant to their qualifications, while six (15%) had not. Reasons for accepting employment that is not aligned to qualifications included salary and permanent posts offered by the employer. It is interesting to note that 14 were employed during the internship programme, while 26 were employed after completion of the programme.

These results show that the impact of the programme was positive as the purpose was achieved in the majority of cases.



6. In-service trainee qualifications

Of the 10 in-service trainees who participated in the tracer study, nine had managed to obtain their qualifications after completing the programme, while one did not. The reason was that the particular participant, before completing the programme, found employment that was not aligned to the qualification.

7. Skills development

In this section, interns were asked to rate their levels of skills before and after the Itukise internship programme. Interns were asked to comment on workplace capabilities such as level of communication skills, effective reporting, and computer and technical literacy skills prior and post the programme. Table 3.2 (Annexure A: Section 3 of the attached questionnaire) looks at the level of skills after the programme, while Table 3.1 (Annexure A: Section 3 of the attached questionnaire) looks at skills levels before joining the programme. In this section, interns were asked to rate their skills on a scale of 1-10, 1 being “poor” and 10 “excellent”.

Overall, according to Table 3.2 (after the Itukise programme), interns had shown significant development in all the listed skills during the course of the programme. More than 90% of interns rated their skills in computer and technical literacy, critical thinking, positive attitude and energy, and adaptability and flexibility as having significantly improved after the completion of Itukise. Approximately 85% of the interns rated these skills at 65% pre-Itukise and close to 100% post-Itukise. Similarly, approximately 75% of the interns rated their skills in interpersonal relations, time management and decision-making below 50% before Itukise and at more than 85% after completion of the programme. Understandably, only 40% and 52% of the interns rated their skills in work experience and work readiness at about 60% before starting Itukise.

8. Conclusion

From the analysis of the behavioural and quantitative factors that formed the basis of the enquiry, it can be concluded that Itukise was perceived on all indices to be effective as a tool to prepare youth for employment. The fact that 27% of the participants in employment are also engaged in further studies adds yet another dimension to the opportunity the programme offers. Even though some candidates secured employment that is not aligned with their qualifications post-Itukise, it is evident that the programme exposes participants to portable work skills that can be applied across disciplines and sectors to offer meaningful employment to young South Africans.

9. ANNEXURE A

Itukise Interns Tracking Questionnaire

Questionnaire ID

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE INTERVIEW

I HAVE BEEN INFORMED BY FEM RESE “**the dtii**”, AND UNDERSTAND THAT IT IS UP TO ME WHETHER OR NOT TO BE INTERVIEWED.

- I understand that there will be no consequences of any kind through my responding to this questionnaire.
- I understand that I can ask the person interviewing me to stop the interview at any time, and I may choose not to answer any question.
- I understand that the information that I give will be treated in the strictest confidence and that my name will not be used when the interviews are analysed.

Yes	No
-----	----

Yes, I give my permission for the interview

Interviewee’s Signature

Date

Interviewee’s Name
(Please Print)

Contact Number

Itukise Interns Tracking Questionnaire

Please note the following

1. Please complete the questionnaire even if you did not complete the programme.
2. Please note the following nomenclature that has been used:
 - a. Intern: Candidate (who participated in the programme) that is already in possession of a qualification
 - b. In-service Trainee: This refers to a candidate (who participated in the programme) that requires in-service training in order to receive their qualification.

Section 1. Demographic Information

1.1	Do you agree to be interviewed?	Yes (01)		No (02)	
1.2	Did you participate in the Itukise Internship for Unemployed Graduates programme hosted by the dti and Deloitte?	Yes (01)		No (02)	
	If yes, did you complete the programme?	Yes (01)		No (02)	
	If programme was not completed, what were the reasons?				
1.3	Which Itukise programme did you attend?	Internship (01)		In-service training (02)	
1.4	What is your name and surname?				
1.5	Gender:	Male (01)		Female (02)	

1.6	Race:	African (01)	White (02)	Coloured (03)	Indian (04)	Other (05)
1.7	Disability:	Disabled (01)		No disability (02)		
1.8	Current contact details?	Physical address				
		Email address				
		Cell number				
		Tel (work)				
		Tel (home)				
		Cell no (Next of kin)				
1.9	For how long did you look for internship before Itukise?	3 months	6 months	12 months	More than 12 months	
1.10	Did you have problems finding an internship?	Yes (01)		No (02)		
	If yes, what were the reasons for not finding the internship?					

1.11	What is your current employment status?	Employed			
		Unemployed			
		Self employed			
		Studying			
		Employed & studying			
		Unemployed & studying			
1.12	Have you acquired any additional qualifications after the Itukise Programme?	Yes (01)		No (02)	
	If yes, please specify				
1.13	If unemployed, what do you think are the reasons for not being employed?				
Note	If unemployed, self-employed or studying, then complete Section 3 (do not complete Section 2). If employed or employed & studying, then complete Sections 2 and 3.				

Section 2. Employment Information

2.1	If employed, indicate the applicable contract of employment	Permanent			
		Contract (fixed term)			
		Part-time			
		Don't know			
2.2	When did you find employment?	During internship (01)		After internship (02)	
2.3	How long did it take for you to find employment after internship?	3 months	6 months	12 months	12 months +
2.4	How did you find employment?	Applied by submitting CV			
		Reference from a friend/ family member			
		Other, specify			
2.5	Are you employed in the Itukise host company?	Yes (01)		No (02)	
2.6	Indicate the main activity of the enterprise you are working for e.g. tire manufacturing				
2.7	Do you think your current employment is relevant to your qualifications? Tick the applicable box.	Yes (01)		No (02)	

Section 3. Skills Development

3.1 Please rate, from 1-10, the level of your skills before you started the programme:

	Level of development									Poor	Excellent
3.1.1. Effective communication	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
3.1.2. Effective reporting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
3.1.3 Computer and technical literacy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
3.1.4. Interpersonal relations	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
3.1.5. Time management	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
3.1.6 Critical thinking/problem-solving	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
3.1.7 Work experience	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
3.1.8 Work Readiness	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
3.1.9 Decision-making	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
3.1.10 Positive attitude and energy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
3.1.11 Adaptability and flexibility	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
3.1.12 Are there other areas you feel have been developed during the internship process?											

3.2 Please rate, from 1-10, the level of your skills after you finished the programme:

	Levels of development									
	Poor Excellent									
3.2.1. Communication	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
3.2.2. Report writing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
3.2.3 Computer and technical literacy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
3.2.4. Interpersonal	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
3.2.5. Time management	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
3.2.6 Critical thinking/problem-solving	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
3.2.7 Work experience	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
3.2.8 Work Readiness	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
3.2.9 Decision-making	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
3.2.10 Positive attitude and energy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
3.2.11 Adaptability and flexibility	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

3.3. Give one or two suggestions for improving the Itukise Internships for Unemployed Graduates programme.

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