

**TRACER STUDY IN RESPECT OF THE EXTENT THAT THE MIT BURSARY FUND/SCHEME SECURE
POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION TO THE MEAT INDUSTRY**

Summary report, 2014 to 2017

By

MEAT INDUSTRY TRUST (MIT) BURSARY WORKING COMMITTEE

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This summary report attempts to trace and track MIT Bursary recipients over the period of 2014 to 2017, to assess the extent that the MIT Bursary Scheme makes a positive contribution to the Red Meat Industry. This task has been assigned to the MIT Bursary Working Committee (BWC) to oversee the implementation of the Bursary Scheme in the Red Meat Industry Sector and it presided over a period which has seen the implementation phase. The summary reports, 2009 - 2014 as well as the current 2014 – 2017, offer an opportunity to celebrate the attainment of a continuous phase of positive achievements as is the case with the MIT Bursars. It is also intended as a simple analysis and interpretation of data collected during the period of implementation, for the reader.

The report highlights in a simple form the activities of the MIT structure – the Bursary Working Committee (BWC), which is responsible for advertising, recruitment and selection, as well as monitoring of progress and performance of the Bursars on behalf of the MIT. The BWC was therefore, established to give effect to the objectives and values of the MIT Bursary Fund. The Impact Study also points to the positive trends that have been identified over the last 8 years, as well as to areas of improvement if any. We feel privileged to have shared in so much positive, intense and ethical work for the future of the Red Meat Industry of South Africa.

THE TRACER/IMPACT STUDY OF THE MIT BURSARY SCHEME SEEKS TO:

- conduct or commission investigations on issues of importance to the implementation of the MIT Bursary Scheme, including periodic studies of the impact of the education, training and employment;
- publish the findings of the investigations referred to in subparagraph 1 above, as informed by continuous data collection and follow-ups by the BWC; It builds on a previous Impact Study conducted by MIT focusing on 2009 to 2014
- The adopted approach will bring together various sources of information and data as collated by the BWC Secretariat throughout the years as well as information collected by the Writer.

MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY

The MIT is committed to raising productivity in the South African Red Meat Industry through a skilled workforce which is central to the achievement of this goal. The MIT's commitment to promote skills development is through making available a budget annually, for six bursaries for post graduate studies in fields related to red meat at South African Universities. The objective of the scholarship is to provide an opportunity for deserving candidates to obtain a Master of Science Degree or Doctorate Degree in some aspect of Red Meat related studies that will enable them to contribute to the improvement of the Red Meat Industry of South Africa.

Who may apply?

The scholarship is open to citizens of the Republic of South Africa, who have qualified for admission to a Masters or Doctoral Degree at a recognized tertiary institution. In line with the efforts of the Government, the MIT ensures that South African demographics and gender interests are addressed when awarding bursaries to, among others, address past imbalances.

Value of the scholarship

The value of the bursary is currently at R60 000 per annum, having been increased effective 2015 by the MIT. This amount is payable in three instalments directly to the University. The first instalment is paid after receipt of proof of acceptance as well as registration at a University. The second instalment will be paid after receipt of a document from the supervisor that satisfactory progress is being made, while the final 20% of the total amount is held back until after the final submission of the Thesis by the bursar. The awarding of a bursary is not regarded as a guarantee that the allocation will again be made in successive years, but will depend on proof of progress, as confirmed by the supervisor, and re-registration at the University. The final intended value of the scholarship is R60 000 per annum, for two consecutive years in the case of a Masters' degree and R60 000 per annum, for three consecutive years in the case of a Doctors degree.

Obligations of recipients

The successful recipient must study under the leadership of a recognized supervisor at the University concerned. A formal contract must be signed by both parties; the Meat Industry Trust and the student.

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The first study was conducted by the MIT BWC in 2014 and was conceptualised against the backdrop of a general lack of researched data on the MIT funding impact, despite its existence which spanned over a period of 5 years since its inception in 2009 under the MIT. It was thus felt that it had become increasingly urgent to embark on a desk top study that would help the MIT in its future planning as the statutory agricultural funding body, in a manner that would ensure strategic intervention into and support for the sector for an enhanced long term, sustained positive impact.

The objective of this Tracer Study will be to assist in the impact evaluation of MIT funds that have been allocated to the bursary scheme. Recognizing that - like every project this evaluation will be tailored to a unique context which seeks to inform the MIT Trustees through the tracing and following up MIT bursars and graduates with the aim of evaluating their progress from the time of their initial funding and completion of their studies up to the time they get jobs. It is envisaged that the findings of the study will add value to the MIT decision making process of equitable distribution of the funds for better participation by all (would be) deserving students. Thus, the study will trace and investigate the impact of the MIT bursary scheme on the recipients through interrogating answers to the following questions:

1. Investigate and confirm whether or not the MIT is getting value/benefit for stakeholder funds invested in the bursary scheme;

2. If not, the MIT would have to investigate and consider alternative/best ways to spend industry funds or to find out what the focus should be on, in terms of training intervention for maximum benefit to the meat industry;
3. To question whether or not this is the best way of utilising the funds or the level at which to focus in terms of funding learners.

METHODOLOGY:

The study only focuses on the completed students that can be tracked as well as those that are still being funded and busy with their studies. These are students that studied MSc and PhD in red meat related studies in various fields. That information will serve as the basis for continuation of the tracer studies in the years to come. The study covered only the funded disciplines of the RMRD SA. The study used both qualitative and quantitative research methods. Numerical and narrative data was to be collected and used to analyse results. For descriptions and interpretation words, numbers and groups will be used to elaborate findings. As instrument, a questionnaire was used for the study with the questions outlined below:

SUMMARY OF STUDY FINDINGS:

In order to achieve our goal, propositional knowledge statements, which are declarations from the content area that is to be investigated were developed. These were written in the form of a simple questionnaire which is shown in ANNEXURE 1. The answers to the questions are provided below, as findings.

a. What were the objectives/goals of offering these bursaries?

The objective of the scholarship is to provide an opportunity for deserving candidates to obtain a Masters or Doctorate Degree in some area of the red meat sector that will enable them to contribute to the improvement of the Red Meat Industry of South Africa. Also, it is envisaged

that the bursary will contribute to the furthering of education relating to the red meat industry and the benefiting of the red meat industry in general whilst promoting the livestock welfare.

b. When did the program start/year?

The program started in 2009. Due to the inability to find appropriate records, we reported on what we could find for the 2009 – 2014 study, and the same for the 2014 – 2017 study.

c. How many learners have been funded during the period under (2014 – 2017)?

Twenty-Eight (28) students have been funded over a period of four years and twenty-six (26) could be traced and reported on. The students who were funded for both MSc and PhD studies.

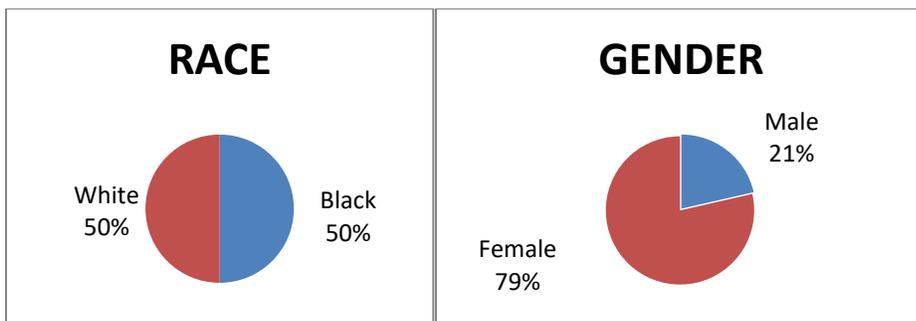
d. Who were they in terms of Race and Gender?

Please see APPENDIX 2. For this information.

However, the summary below gives further Information of interest:

RACE		GENDER	
BLACK	WHITE	MALE	FEMALE
14	14	6	22

Table 1.: Training rate in terms of demographics and gender within the period 2014- 2017

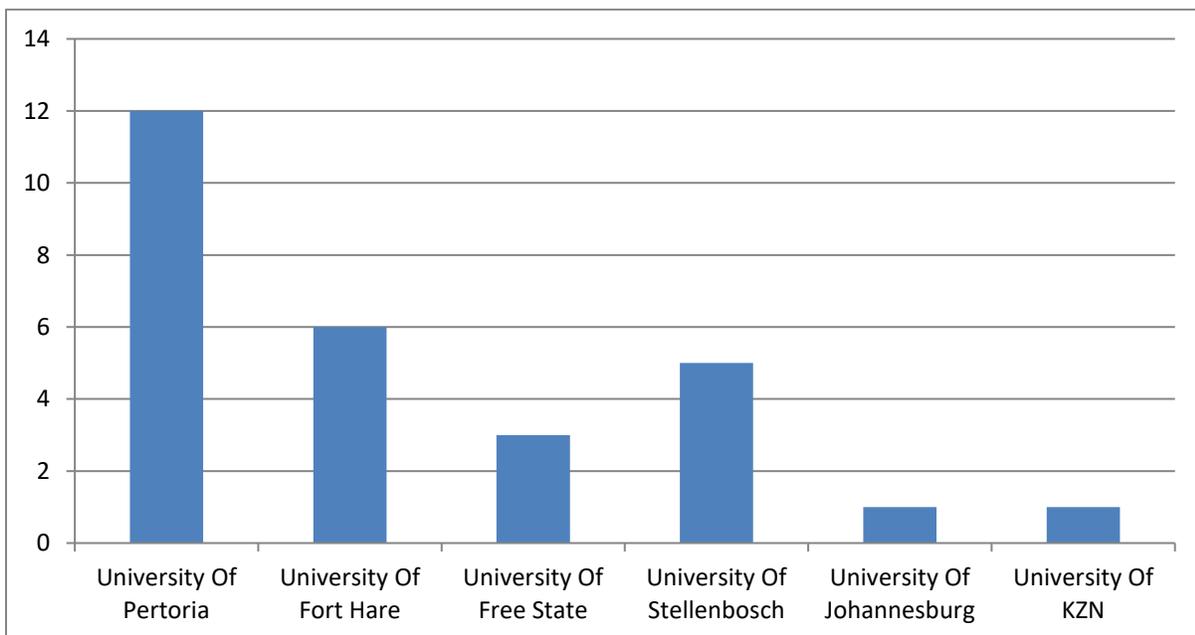


Graph 1: Table 1.: Training rate in terms of demographics and gender within the period 2014- 2017

Universities/Institutions and Provinces where the Bursars studied

UNIVERSITY	No of Bursars	PROVINCE
University of Pretoria	12	Gauteng
University of Fort Hare	6	Eastern Cape Province
University of Free State	3	Free State Province
University of Stellenbosch	5	Western Cape Province
University of Johannesburg	1	Gauteng Province
University of KZN	1	KwaZulu natal

Table 2.: Funding of students according to Universities, 2014 - 2017



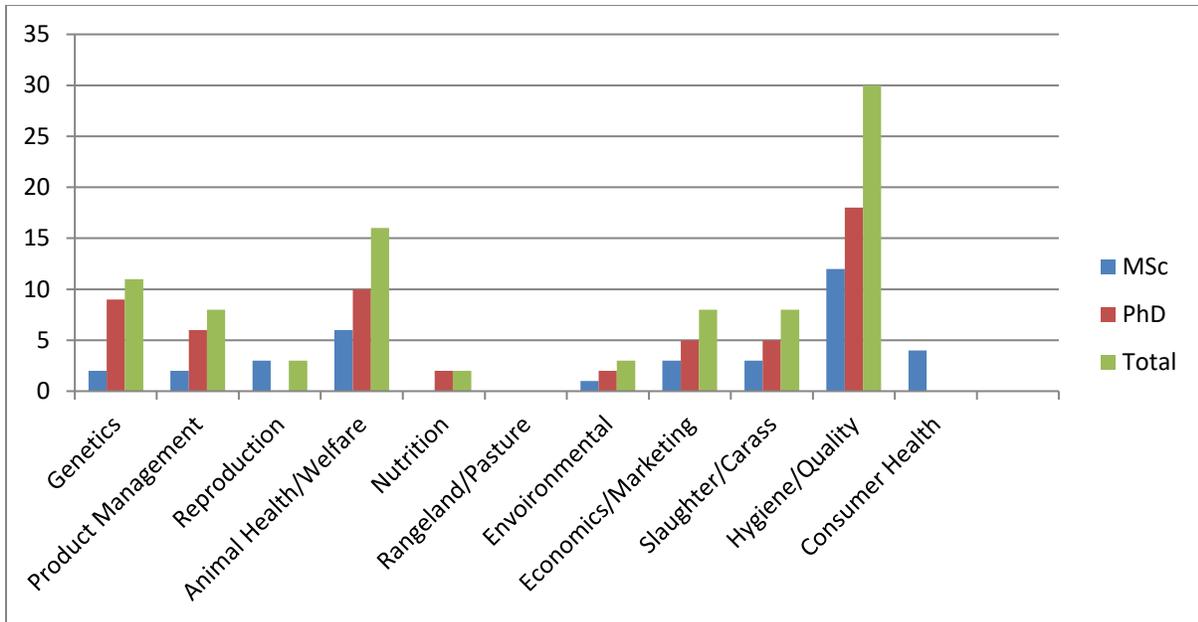
Graph 2: Funding of students according to Universities, 2014 - 2017

e. What programmes did they follow (2009 – 2017)

An analysis of the historic spread of study fields was conducted and the results revealed that there some neglected focus areas which needed to be promoted and some areas that receive more attention. From table 3 below, one can clearly see that the areas of Hygiene/Quality, Animal Health/Welfare and Genetics received more attention over the years. While Environment, reproduction, Nutrition and Economics and Marketing received least attention. No research has been conducted at all on Rangeland and Pasture Studies over the period studied. Also see graph 3, APPENDIX 2.

	MSc	PhD	TOTAL
GENETICS	2	9	11
PRODUCTION MANAGEMENT	2	6	8
REPRODUCTION	3	0	3
ANIMAL HEALTH/WELFARE	6	10	16
NUTRITION	0	2	2
RANGELAND/PASTURE	0	0	0
ENVIRONMENT	1	2	3
ECONOMICS/MARKETING	0	1	1
SLAUGHTER/CARCASS	3	5	8
HYGIENE/QUALITY	12	18	30
CONSUMER HEALTH/ACCEPTANCE	4	4	8

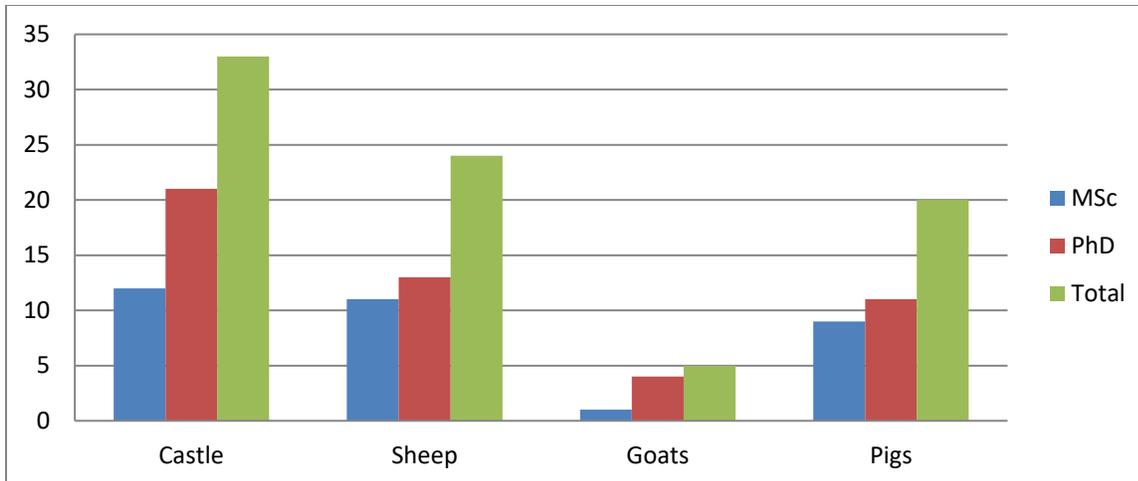
Table 3: Bursary Working Committee awards from 2009 – 2017 according to Study fields



Graph 3.: Bursary Working Committee awards from 2009 – 2017 according to Study fields

	MSc	PhD	TOTAL
CATTLE	12	21	33
SHEEP	11	13	24
GOATS	1	4	5
PIGS	9	11	20

Table 4: Bursary Working Committee awards from 2009 – 2017 according to species



Graph 4. BWC Bursary Awards: 2009 - 2017 According to Animal Species

f. Other resources invested in the bursary scheme (e.g. visits to students and admin)?

Study visits to the various institutions were conducted on an annual basis to market the bursary to new students, to check on the progress of the recipients and to clarify and iron out any possible or unforeseen problems relating to the bursary.

g. How many students completed? How many failed? How many dropped out? What were the reasons?

All the bursars completed their studies at the end of each term of study. Some completed in record time, while others took the required period to complete. Six students asked for extension of time for the submission of their Theses/Dissertation due to unforeseen delays. That, however, did not have any financial implications on the part of the MIT Bursary Scheme. No students failed or dropped out of their studies, something which is very commendable.

h. Have they all submitted copies of their Theses?

Yes, at the time of completing this study, twenty-two (22) students had submitted copies of their Theses to the BWC as evidence of their completion. Six had asked for extensions. Be that as it may, there are stringent requirements that have been put in place through policy and

signed agreements, to ensure that recipients' progress is closely monitored. The yearly awarded amount is paid out in two equal amounts each year. Payments will be subject to the correct completion of reporting procedures outlined below:

The first payment each year is subject to submission of proof of registration at the academic institution for the academic year and a written progress report from the mentor confirming that the student is qualified to begin or continue with his/her studies.

The second payment is subject to written confirmation by the mentor to be received no later than 31 July that the student is making satisfactory progress with his/her project.

The above requirements are augmented by the study visits that are carried out by the BWC Members to allocated Institutions for the purpose of monitoring progress.

A final payment of 20% of the last payment retained until a copy of the Dissertation is submitted and received to the BWC.

These measures ensure that no student progress is unaccounted for.

i. Where are the graduates now? What are they doing/ in which sectors?

The majority of the students are still studying as most of those that were funded for studies in MSc applied for funding to further their studies to PhDs (see **Appendix A**). Only four traceable PhD Graduates are currently employed.

- Two are employed as Post-Doctoral fellows at the institutions in which they studied;
- One is employed as a Lecturer in the Animal sciences faculty at the university of KZN;
- One is employed as a Research and Development Specialist in a Skin Care Pharmaceutical company; and
- The rest of the students that were funded for masters' degrees completed and proceeded to pursue their PhD studies.

j. What has been done with the findings from their studies or new knowledge generated by the studies?

The students have all published papers from their dissertations and thesis. Some have presented papers in Red Meat Research Conferences while others published peer reviewed scientific articles in accredited journals, published peer-reviewed books, chapters in books. There are also those who presented national and international conference contributions, while others won conference contribution awards.

The BWC posts information on, achievements and developments pertaining to the bursars and graduates on the website including their research papers.

k. Did the sector benefit? If so how?

The objectives of the fund were mostly to ensure that the knowledge gained by the graduates will contribute to the improvement of the Red Meat Industry of South Africa through their employment in the sector. In that regard, it would be premature to make any deductions in relation to such objectives as the achievements over the period under study are:

- 78,6 % are still studying. Of those 21,5% MSc and 57,1%PhD
- 14,3% are employed; and
- 7,1% are untraceable.

l. Are the accomplishments worth the resources invested?

Since no funding was lost due to failure or dropping out, one can safely conclude that the funds invested have yielded returns. 57% of funded students qualified to upskill themselves through further studies in PhD, 14,3% employed and only 7,1% is unaccounted for. Even in that regard, they completed their studies in PhD but they just can't be traced. The follow up Tracer/Impact study will be able to shed better light in terms of employability of the current cohort of students as they will have completed their studies and employed by then.

m. Have the objectives been achieved? To what extent? If not, what are the contributing factors?

Yes, the objectives have been achieved and exceeded as all the traced students that were funded have either completed their studies or proceeded to higher levels of studies. Those that are employed are contributing to the Meat Industry Sector Research and Development. Only one student is employed in an unrelated sector. However, her qualifications opened doors for her in a different sector, meaning that she is better employable due to her PhD qualification and research skills.

There is a significant increase in the training of females (78.6%). Those who have completed their studies have been absorbed by the sector except for one who is still job hunting (but employed in a different sector). The knowledge and expertise gained through their research will contribute to the enhancement of the Red Meat Industry of South Africa as was anticipated.

CONCLUSION

The main objective of the bursary fund was predominately the contribution and improvement of the Red Meat Industry. The bursary achieved its objectives as outlined in its policies. However, positive additional unarticulated achievements can also be attested to. Thus, in line with the government agenda of transformation the following can be highlighted:

- The most significant beneficiaries from the bursary scheme are females which were twenty-two (22), 78.6% against their male counter parts which were only six (6), 21.4%;
- There were 14 black recipients which constituted 50% of the beneficiaries within the period under study. This definitely shows a significant improvement from the past practise of white majority recipients. This is a 5% improvement in Black Students participation in the Bursary Scheme, from the previous study period;
- A trend has emerged over the years which is that of a single University that dominate in terms of post graduate bursaries awarded. It was the same case in the 2009 – 2014 Impact Study. That Institution is the University of Pretoria;

- University of Fort Hare, as a previously disadvantaged institution has the second largest number of bursary recipients (6) after the University of Pretoria which has the largest number of bursary recipients (12). The ability of UFH students to meet the selection criteria is commendable and points to good Research and Development Supervisors;
- The University of KwaZulu Natal (UKZN) has for the first time a student that qualified for being funded by the BWC. That signifies that the marketing strategy as well as the criteria and guidelines for selection used by the BWC during University visits are beginning to take effect;
- Also, there is clear uneven spread of study fields under study, a matter which needs to be addressed by the BWC;
- There is a need for an initiative to address those fields that are neglected and given none or less attention like Reproduction, Rangeland and Pasture studies;
- The animal production fraternity needs to develop animals and production systems that need only limited medicinal support. The BWC is to consider taking the lead and encourage students to enter this field of study. Students thus trained in immunology may in the near future take the lead to develop this very important focus area. This is also the focus area where post-doctoral bursaries will be able to fill a large void (BWC Report; 30 January 2017); and
- The BWC selection criteria of selecting bursary holders on the basis of the excellence of the student and the quality of the research proposal is continuing to yield good results.

It can therefore be safely concluded that the MIT is getting value for stakeholder funds invested in the bursary scheme. It can find comfort in the fact that the bursary fund is one of the best ways to spend industry funds. With the recommended information and document control systems in place, it would be possible to conduct further studies to verify the impact of the training intervention for maximum benefit to the meat industry?

At the moment, there is no doubt of whether or not this is the best way of utilising the funds or the level at which to focus in terms of funding learners.

APPENDIX 1.

PURPOSE OF THE TRACER/IMPACT STUDY

The study emanated from thoughts that emerged at one of the MIT meetings. It is envisaged that the findings of the study will provide the Trustees with answers that will enable them to make informed decisions regarding allocation of Research and Development Funds.

Their enquiry is to answer the questions below:

4. GETTING VALUE/BENEFIT FOR STAKEHOLDER FUNDS INVESTED?
5. TO INVESTIGATE AND LOOK AT THE BEST WAY TO SPEND INDUSTRY FUNDS.
6. MAYBE THIS IS NOT THE BEST WAY OF UTILISING THE FUNDS OR THE LEVEL AT WHICH TO FOCUS IN TERMS OF FUNDING.
7. WHAT SHOULD WE FOCUS ON IN TERMS OF TRAINING INTERVENTION FOR MUXIMUM BENEFIT TO THE MEAT INDUSTRY?

AREAS OF INVESTIGATION (not necessarily in this order):

1. WHAT WERE THE OBJECTIVES/GOALS OF OFFERING THESE BURSARIES?
2. HAVE THEY BEEN REACHED? TO WHAT EXTENT? IF NOT, WHAT ARE THE CONTRIBUTING FACTORS?
3. WHO BENEFITED? HOW?
4. DID THE SECTOR BENEFIT? HOW?
5. ARE ACCOMPLISHMENT WORTH THE RESOURCES INVESTED?
6. RESOURCES INVESTED?
7. WHEN DID THE PROGRAMM START?
8. WITH HOW MANY LEARNERS/YEARS?
9. WHO WERE THEY?
10. PROGRAMMES THEY FOLLOWED?
11. RACE GROUPS?
12. GENDER?
13. PROVINCES? INSTITUTIONS? AMOUNT SPENT ON EACH LEARNER? HOW MANY COMPLETED? HOW MANY FAILED?
14. HOW MANY DROPPED OUT/REASONS?
15. WHERE ARE THE GRADS NOW?
16. WHAT ARE THEY DOING/ IN WHICH SECTORS?
17. WHAT HAS BEEN DONE WITH THE FINDINGS FROM THEIR STUDY OR NEW KNOWLEDGE GENERATED BY THE STUDIES?

CONCLUSION;

18. SO, SHOULD MIT CONTINUE TO OFFER BURSARIES TO LEARNERS IN THIS FORM OR CHANGES ARE ESSENTIAL?