



Statement on the Commemoration of 16 June : Day of the African Child

This year, the Day of the African Child (DAC) is commemorated under the theme: ***“Planning and budgeting for children’s rights: progress since 2010.”*** The day reminds us of the urgent need to ensure that public planning and resource allocation directly address the needs of children, particularly the most vulnerable.

Transparency International Zimbabwe (TI Z) has previously identified that low and delayed budget disbursements to the education sector create fertile ground for corruption risks. These include informal fees charged for children to qualify for the Basic Education Assistance Module (BEAM) by corrupt school officials as well as illegal prepayments charged on parents which are not reimbursed. This exacerbates other challenges faced in the delivery of education such as bribery for enrolment, leakages of exam materials, personalisation and misuse of institutional assets, extra lessons/supplementary tutoring and procurement malpractices. These practices deepen barriers experienced by children in accessing quality education which is a basic right enshrined in the constitution and this is especially felt by children at risk of discrimination such as children with disability.

In light of these challenges, TI Z calls on the Government of Zimbabwe to:

- **Ensure transparency in the allocation and disbursement of public funds for education, including making timely disbursements** to eliminate resource gaps which create corruption risks
- **Conduct an impact assessment of the BEAM programme’s assistance**, with a special focus on children with disability
- **Conduct a special audit of the BEAM to review the database of current and past beneficiaries, to identify undeserving beneficiaries**
- **Use digital platforms to reduce human interference in the enrolment process**
- **Strengthen institutional governance of exams and carry out regular systems audits**
- **Introduce and implement clear guidelines for the management of institutional property and strong financial oversight mechanisms**
- **Accelerate adoption of e-procurement systems at institutional level**

- **Introduce clear policies and procedures to provide rules e.g. declaration/self-disclosure by teaching staff, compensation, scheduling and use/involvement of school resources in extra lessons**

As we reflect on progress since 2010, the Government of Zimbabwe is constitutionally mandated under **Sections 19, 75, 76, and 81** to ensure children's access to education, healthcare, protection, and prioritise their best interests. Yet, corruption in public systems undermines these rights. The government must remember upholding these rights is a legal duty. Fighting corruption and ensuring transparency is key to delivering on this mandate.

End.