



PRESS STATEMENT 2026 International Day of Education

Harare, 24 January 2026.

As the world commemorates the **International Day of Education under the theme “The Power of Youth in Co-Creating Education,”** Transparency International Zimbabwe (TI-Z) expresses its firm support for an **inclusive, equitable, and rights-based education system** that serves the interests of all learners, with **young people themselves as a central priority.**

Education is a public good and a cornerstone for social justice, democratic participation, and sustainable development. An inclusive education system must empower young people not only as beneficiaries, but as **active partners in shaping education systems that are fair, transparent, and accountable.**

Transparency International Zimbabwe reaffirms its commitment to **supporting a generation of integrity** through initiatives such as the **School of Integrity for Young People.** Through civic education, ethics training, and youth leadership development, TI-Z works with young people to strengthen values of integrity, accountability, and social responsibility from an early age.

By equipping young people with the knowledge and skills to challenge corruption and exclusion, TI-Z contributes to education systems that are inclusive, participatory, and responsive to the needs and aspirations of learners. This commitment directly reflects the power of youth in **co-creating education systems that leave no one behind,** in line with Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4).

While acknowledging the importance of quality and innovation in education, Transparency International Zimbabwe expresses concern over the **growing privatization and commercialization of primary and secondary education in Zimbabwe.** Increasingly high and unregulated school fees have placed quality education **beyond the reach of many families,** particularly those in low-income and marginalized communities.

This trend risks reversing the gains made since independence towards **inclusive education for all.** The expansion of fee-driven education models has contributed to the emergence of a **two-tier education system,** where learners from privileged backgrounds access well-resourced schools, while the majority rely on underfunded public institutions. Such inequality entrenches class divisions, weakens social cohesion, and limits social mobility.

Education systems that exclude learners based on their ability to pay **defeat the inclusive public service delivery agenda** and undermine the ethos of SDG 4, which calls for inclusive and equitable quality education for all.

To safeguard education as a public good and advance inclusive service delivery, Transparency International Zimbabwe calls for the following actions:

1. **Strengthen Regulation and Oversight:** Government must enforce clear regulatory frameworks to prevent exploitative fee structures and ensure affordability across the education sector.
2. **Increase Public Investment in Education:** Adequate, transparent, and accountable financing of public schools is essential to reduce disparities and improve learning conditions.
3. **Promote Equity-Based Education Financing:** Education policies must prioritize learners from marginalized communities, rural areas, and vulnerable groups to ensure equal access.
4. **Enhance Transparency and Accountability in School Governance:** School management systems should be participatory, transparent, and accountable to parents, learners, and communities.
5. **Meaningfully Involve Youth in Education Governance:** Young people must be empowered to participate in education policy dialogue, school governance, and accountability processes as co-creators of inclusive education systems.

As Zimbabwe joins the global community in commemorating the International Day of Education, Transparency International Zimbabwe calls on all stakeholders to **recommit to education as a public good. Harnessing the power of youth in co-creating education** is essential to building an inclusive, equitable, and integrity-driven education system that upholds the spirit of SDG 4 and serves both present and future generations.