



STATEMENT ON THE DAY OF THE AFRICAN CHILD

Harare, 16 June 2026 – Transparency International Zimbabwe (TI Z) joins the rest of Africa in commemorating the Day of the African Child, a day that honours the rights, aspirations, and welfare of African children. This year's theme, *"Ensuring Universal Access to Water, Sanitation and Hygiene for Every Child in Africa,"* calls for urgent action to guarantee that every child enjoys access to safe water, adequate sanitation, and hygiene services as fundamental rights and essential foundations for health, education and development. Across many communities in Zimbabwe, children continue to face significant challenges in accessing safe and reliable water sources, adequate sanitation facilities and hygiene services. In both urban and rural areas, recurring water shortages, ageing infrastructure, climate-induced droughts, inadequate sanitation facilities and limited public investment continue to undermine children's well-being. Schools and health facilities often struggle with unreliable water supplies and inadequate sanitation, affecting children's health, school attendance, dignity and educational outcomes.

Zimbabwe's Constitution recognises access to safe, clean, and potable water as a fundamental right under Section 77(a) and guarantees every child's right to healthcare and protection necessary for their well-being under Section 81. These constitutional guarantees place a responsibility on public institutions and all stakeholders to ensure that resources allocated to water, sanitation and hygiene services are managed effectively, transparently, and in the public interest. TI Z is concerned that corruption and weak accountability continue to undermine efforts to achieve universal access to water and sanitation services. Procurement irregularities, lack of transparency in infrastructure development, inadequate oversight of public resources and limited citizen participation in decision-making can result in delayed projects, poor-quality infrastructure and reduced access to essential services. Ultimately, it is children and communities who bear the cost when resources intended for public service delivery fail to reach their intended purpose. The realization of this year's theme is intrinsically linked to the promotion of integrity and accountable governance. Sustainable Development Goal 6 on clean water and sanitation cannot be achieved without strong institutions, transparent resource management and meaningful public participation, as envisioned under Sustainable Development Goal 16 on Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions.

TI Z therefore calls upon Government, local authorities to;

- Strengthen transparency and accountability in the allocation and management of water and sanitation resources;
- Promote open and competitive procurement processes for water and sanitation infrastructure projects;

- Increase investment in resilient water and sanitation systems, particularly in underserved and rural communities;
- Enhance citizen participation and social accountability mechanisms to monitor service delivery and public expenditure;

By strengthening integrity, combating corruption, and ensuring accountable management of public resources, Zimbabwe can remove barriers to essential services and secure a brighter future for its children.

The End