



**For Immediate Release; 7 December 2021.**

**Urgent Need to Scrap National Identity Cards (ID's) For Students Sitting Final Examinations.**

**The Every Child In School - ECIS** hereby urgently calls on the government of Zimbabwe to intervene in calling out schools or examination centres to stop demanding national IDs for students writing their final public examinations. Some schools and colleges have been denying undocumented examination sitters entry into exam rooms for failure to produce IDs. The government of Zimbabwe in 2020 signed an inclusive new education Amendment Act that ensures that every child has access to education. It guarantees state funded basic education according to the Constitution in Section 75. The amendment act also removes all discriminations against every child to have access to this basic need of state funded basic education. Section (3) subsection (b) of the amendment act guarantees non-discrimination on the basis of; “... *imposition of onerous terms and conditions in regard to his or her admission to, suspended, excluded or expelled from any school on the grounds of his or her nationality, race, colour, drive..... or economic or social status...*”

Currently unthinkable injustice is occurring as TaLI has received reports that students are being denied entry into examination centres for failure to produce national IDs. This amounts to a lost chance for many students, as not only did they prepare to sit for the exams, but also the financial loss on the struggling parents is unthinkable. The Covid-19 pandemic has resulted in tough learning environments for many, especially poor students who largely did not access education. Demand for further conditions for one to tackle the last hurdle in their education journey is not only discriminatory but also insensitive. The Every Child in School – ECIS- Campaign calls on the government to immediately order schools and other examination centres to stop this inhuman practice and find ways to prove the identity of the students without employing punitive measures.

Ms Nyaradzo Mashayamombe, the convener of ECIS quipped “As stated, the majority of students affected are the poor. May this government find it in its heart to stop the further exclusion of the poor who are already widely excluded, who are holding on dearly to life given the current pandemic which has grossly already excluded the poor from our education system”.

Every Child in School - ECIS campaign, is the brain child of Tag a Life International (TaLI), and has a membership of more than 200 civil society organisations in Zimbabwe who work with children, women and youth.

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