

Zimbabwe Book launch, Harare, 24 November, 2009.

The Zimbabwe GRACE team launched the GRACE book at Harare Quality International Hotel on the 24th of November, 2009. Invited to the launch were civil society groups (in particular women's organizations), academics and librarians, as well as the Ministry of ICTs.

Dr Buhle Mbambo-Thata, the lead researcher, took the guests through the research journey of GRACE, how the project started, and the research that was undertaken by the 14 member countries and specifically by the Zimbabwean team. She elaborated on the research activity that took place at the University of Zimbabwe, the results, and the recommendations made. She noted that the remaining task is now to take up the recommendations to see if they can be implemented. The research team members remaining in Zimbabwe have taken this initiative and are progressing with it.

Dr Margaret Rukuni, a lecturer at Women's University in Africa in charge of the ICT division, reviewed the book. She noted that the book is refreshing as it uses qualitative methods in such a way that the reader interacts both with the researcher and researched. For her the journey of walking through GRACE has spoken to her as a reader. She felt that policy makers should be compelled to read and understand it.

The Permanent Secretary from the Ministry of ICTs who officiated at the launch, hailed the work that is being done by women and particularly the GRACE Zimbabwe team. He highlighted the developments in the ICTs industry and the work that the ministry is doing to improve ICT infrastructure in Zimbabwe.

The launch participants recommend that the issues raised be taken up further, not end just as research and gave some suggestions as to how women can be empowered by ICTs. The team presented a copy of the book to the Permanent Secretary from the Ministry of ICT. In accepting the book he thanked the team, assuring the contributors that his ministry will look at the issues raised and how they can be used to inform ICT policy in Zimbabwe.