March 8 is International Women’s Day. The Day the World stands still to salute women all over and to reflect on the challenges they face in their quest for equal opportunity and therefore gender equality. In Ghana, stories about women, talks and social media messages on IWD flooded our airwaves and our media. As for me, I had to delete some content to make room for new ones to drop into my WhatsApp. The messages were the same: Happy #IWD.

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Officially, UNIC Accra, in partnership with a local NGO, Abibiman Foundation, organized an outreach in a local community outside Accra. It was a good idea to have the event outside Accra because much of the IWD attention was centred around urban communities with urban residents as target audience. Beuko, in Ningo-Prampram District is located some 75km from Accra the capital of Ghana. Here at the Good Shepherd Presbyterian Basic School, we interacted with 60 students to drive home the message of #genderequality. Except for one or two students who confirmed having knowledge of IWD, much of our audience, aged between 12 years and 18 years, had no clue what IWD is about. Knowing very well how useful it is for these students to have a good understanding of the significance of IWD, UNIC Accra explained to the students what the Day is all about. At the end of the 2-hour presentation, the rather quiet and shy audience was alive and thrilled.

Later in the day, we met with residents of Beuko. Predominantly subsistent farmers whose work depended much on the rains, the residents gathered late afternoon after their day’s work to learn about IWD. They included women and men. UNIC Accra shared useful IWD information with the women and men and advised them to allow their children, boys and girls alike, to go to school.
Abibiman Foundation distributed 100 cookstove devices that have been tested to reduce firewood usage and smoke as well as increase cooking time for rural women. The gesture was in solidarity with the global call to join the momentum of empowering women and girls, especially in the rural areas to realize their full potential in contributing to nation building.

Ms Cynthia Prah, UNIC Accra National Information Officer presenting and being supported by an interpreter.

Children were also interested in what was taking place in as these boys take a look at the event banner.

A participant listening attentively to the presentation.

The energy saving and smoke reduction devise being tested on a cook stove.
The following day, UNIC Accra took the message of #genderequality to two Senior High Schools in Tema, where over 800 students were reached. At the Tema Presbyterian High School, the IWD coincided with the school’s Vocational Day during when an exhibition of students’ handiworks was mounted. Items on display included paintings, handmade dresses, drawings and pastries. Below are more photos from Tema: