Many studies in recent years have looked at the allocation of resources at the household level. They show that a much greater share of education, health and food expenditure go to boys than girls. In many cultures, parents think that there are lower benefits from investing in girls. This is where the vicious circle starts, leaving many women in a disadvantaged position for life. The losers are not only the women but the entire society.

There has been progress in the past few decades. More girls in developing countries are enrolled in primary schools. Some thirty per cent of the women in the developing countries are part of the formal work force.

But still there are too many failures and unsolved problems. The inequalities are long and depressing. Women spend more time on paid and unpaid work than men do and they are less likely to be in the position of responsibility.