

Statement to the Habitat III Open-ended Informal Consultative Meetings
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I would like to share my observation of cities in Kenya and Uganda – both in the urban and the rural areas. If the families in the rural areas are able to produce sufficient income to provide for their family, they will not need to move into the city and put increased pressure on the city to provide housing, food, clean water, and other services

Often, when people from the rural areas move into the city, they are ill-prepared to get a good job, and they, and their families, end up living in the slums, with little opportunity to rise out of their difficult situation.

In cooperation with an orphan-support organization, Reach the Children, my husband and I helped drill wells in the Chyulu Hills area of Kenya, to provide water for irrigation. This included introducing them to the use of drip tape, to use the water efficiently. These farmers now sell the produce on the market, provide food for their families, and share with widows and families who care for orphans. The income also pays for secondary and higher education school fees.

This is a viable alternative to solve city problems – helping families become more self-reliant in the rural areas.

In many of the developing countries, 50 to 70% of the people living in poverty are dependent upon agriculture for their livelihood. If we want to stop to tide from rural to urban we need to focus on solving the problems in the rural areas.

I would also like to add that I have heard little discussion in the meetings this week about the family unit, and how to help them adapt and grow within the city. Most people live in a family. If we empower the family, as the basic unit of society, they can participate in the process to help achieve the sustainable development goals – both in the cities and the rural areas.