



Know Your Church, Know Your Neighbourhood



Appendix 3: Community observation guide

As you walk prayerfully around your neighbourhood, you might find it helpful to look out for some of the following things to help you think more deeply about life in your neighbourhood, asking God to help you see it with fresh eyes.

- **People groups:** Who is standing at bus stops, who is out and about in the streets, or going into businesses, or playing in the park, doing their shopping, etc? Note what you see. How much do you see people interacting with one another? What type of traffic moves about the neighbourhood?
- **Places of activity:** Shops, café's, busy main roads, playgrounds, schools, gathering places for people all ages.
- **Structures:** What are the types and conditions of the buildings (homes, businesses, roads, parks)? How much open space is there in the community?
- **Services:** Where can people go to shop, eat out, get an education, worship, and receive assistance? What appears to be the quantity and quality of available services? Who is providing services, and who is receiving them?
- **Signs of change:** Note which businesses are opening or closing, and if housing is under construction, for sale, or being demolished. Check for languages added to shop signs, and buildings used in ways different from their original purpose. Overall, do conditions appear to be getting better or worse?
- **Signs of hope:** Where is there evidence of God's grace and God's people at work? Look for playing children, uplifting artwork, voluntary organisations, social gatherings, and gardens. Look especially for local assets that could be connected with neighbourhood needs.
- **Signs of faith:** Look out for churches and places of worship. What is hopeful about church(es) in this neighbourhood? How might our neighbours of other faiths be partners in bringing positive change in this community?
- **Signs of need:** Look for evidence of hardship, hurt, or injustice. Is what you see specific to particular areas or affecting the neighbourhood as a whole? Be aware that marginalised/isolated people and social problems are often hidden, especially in communities that appear well-off.