

Community Observation Guide

Look for evidence of the following:

- *People groups:* Who is standing at bus stops, hanging out on street corners, going into businesses, playing in the park, waiting in line at the store? Note ages, ethnicities, languages, apparent economic status. How much do you see people interacting with one another?
- *Places of activity:* A pizza joint crowded with youth, a shopping plaza, a heavily trafficked intersection, playgrounds, school zones
- *Structures:* What are the types and conditions of the structures (homes, businesses, roads, parks)? How much "free space" is there in the community? What is the mix of private and public space?
- *Services:* Where can people go to shop, eat out, get an education, worship, 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:* Businesses opening or closing, housing construction, sales or demolition, languages added to shop signs, buildings used in ways different from their original purpose. Overall, do conditions appear to be getting better or worse?
- *Signs of hope:* Evidence of God's grace and God's people at work: churches and nonprofits, playing children, uplifting artwork, Christian symbols, social gatherings, gardens. Look especially for local assets that could be connected with neighborhood needs.
- *Signs of need:* Evidence of hardship, hurt or injustice, specific to particular areas or affecting the neighborhood as a whole. Be aware that marginalized people and social problems are often hidden, especially in communities that appear well-off.

People groups	Places of activity	Structures	Services	Signs of change	Signs of hope	Signs of need