**Transcription of Participant Observation notes**

Site: Streets of Santo Domingo

Type of event: Water Defence Committee meeting, street assembly

Duration: 120 minutes

Date and time: 16 December 2022. I arrive in Santo Domingo at 17:44 and leave at 19:40. The meeting starts at approximately 18:25.

Additional notes (in addition to field notes): At this meeting I am given some of the first completed participant diaries.

Observer: A

Arriving at the meeting point, in the streets of Santo Domingo, I greet people I recognise. They are the neighbours with whom I had a group interview. They ask me about my progress on my thesis and the interviews. In this conversation, the topic of an upcoming trip to Monterrey and my origin also comes up. They ask me how we celebrate Christmas in Monterrey, and what kind of food we eat on those days. I tell them that I will be away for those days but that I will be back the following year. I also greet Leticia, to ask her how she has been doing with the diary. She tells me that she has been ill, as she has had the flu. So she hasn't had much time to do this activity. When I listen to her I notice in her voice that her throat is still a little sore. I tell her that there is no problem if she can’t do the diary and ask her about her health. She tells me that she is feeling better now, because she has been feeling a bit sick.

In the meantime, people are still arriving for the meeting. We are waiting for it to start, but in the meantime people are taking their places, sitting on the pavement or standing on the corner of these two streets. Some people bring their own small chairs. I see that there are now a higher number of men than in previous meetings. I see many people I already recognise, but also some others I have never seen before. Today is Friday.

Before the meeting starts, I also greet Martina, who has been writing down the names of the people who are already arriving on a list. I also greet Tita and Juan, with whom I have not yet been able to have the interview, even though we had arranged dates for it, but they couldn't make it because they were a bit busy. Tita is sorry that she has not been able to meet me, but I tell her not to worry. I tell Tita not to feel bad or embarrassed, and that the interview is not obligatory.

The meeting begins when Waldo arrives. There are approximately 50 people at the beginning, and in the course of the meeting more and more people arrive, until there are approximately 60 people this time. Of these 60 people, approximately 15 are men. I am standing next to the people and I have the street behind me, with cars or people passing by. I hear the noise of the cars and it dulls a bit what they are saying in the meeting. First Martina and then Beni start explaining what was discussed in the meeting with the SACMEX people. Despite the noise of the cars passing behind us, I can hear people talking.

I see that the neighbours are listening attentively, and I recognise more and more people. Their faces are familiar to me, as are their voices and personalities. What at the beginning of the fieldwork was a group of mostly unknown people now appears to me as a group from which I identify personalities, characteristics, and individual people. This has been part of the process of recruiting and recognising not only places, but also people, and of becoming more and more familiar with the everyday life of the neighbourhood and the group.

Among the dynamics of the neighbours, I see that people are signing up on the list that Martina is carrying as they arrive at the meeting. When I arrived, I spoke to a neighbour and asked him whether or not he had signed up on the list, and he told me that he had not yet signed up. Among other things I noticed, there were also the chats and greetings between neighbours who already knew each other. I also saw Marisol arrive, bringing with her a notebook that is the diary I left with her. I see that Leticia has a small bench with her, and she gives it to an older neighbour when the meeting begins. I see some more young people than at other times. This may be because the people who go to the meeting are sometimes representing their families, so parents or grandparents send their younger children to get on the lists and be at the meetings. While the meeting was going on, a passerby stopped to listen to what was being discussed, very close to where I was standing. Martina asked him his name or who he was coming on behalf of, to put him on the list, and he said he was coming alone, on behalf of no one but himself. After a while of listening, this person went on his way. I notice that, like that person, others also, as they pass by, stop for a while to listen to what is being talked about, and then go on their way. This is a way for neighbours to find information, and also to find allies in case they need support.

The topics of the meeting were as follows. First Martina and Beni spoke and gave information about the meeting they had with people from SACMEX earlier in the day. They say that the start date for the work is very close and that everything is almost finished. They talk about the possibility of an inauguration, and a celebratory event with everyone as neighbours.

Waldo then takes the floor and talks about the issue of the adjoining neighbours. He regrets that politics has already become mixed up with public works, and hopes that the government will soon be able to solve the problem for the neighbours. He emphatically comments that he thinks it is very bad that politics has become mixed up with public works. He mentions this because he says that there are political interests behind whether or not this work is completed, and criticises people who are taking advantage of the needs of the neighbourhood to promote their own political interests and projects. In saying this, he refers to people who are seeking to be candidates or to occupy positions of popular representation.

Beni speaks of the importance of participating as neighbours, to show that this well is an achievement of the Committee and not of other groups or individuals who are seeking to take advantage of the current situation to promote themselves. Waldo also takes the floor to comment that it is wrong that other groups seek to take advantage of the well and say that it was them, because of their political ambitions, and that now they are trying to take advantage of what the Committee achieved, saying that they were the ones who made the well. He says that it should be very clear that the well is an achievement of the neighbours as a community, not of the political parties who are campaigning for votes or publicity. He says that they have the initiative to inaugurate the well regardless of what the government authorities do. Beni also mentions that it would be important for the Committee to carry out activities to inaugurate the well, to be present, and that there should be no doubt that the well is their achievement. Beni comments that today, government personnel suggested that they were responsible for having achieved the well, which is false. He says that it is thanks to the committee that the well was not suspended, as they were able to calm down and negotiate with the neighbours.

After the subject of the well and the adjoining neighbours, I took the floor. I gave a report on my progress with the interviews. I say how many interviews I have done and thank the people who have participated so far. I say that they can approach me for interviews, and that with the people I have not yet been able to talk to, not to worry, because we can do the interview in January, after the new year. After I speak, a list is made of people who are going to do the monitoring this week.

At the end of the meeting, I talk to some of the neighbours, especially about my interviews, and whether or not they have had water.

I greet Julia, who tells me that she hasn't had any water these days. She is a bit worried about it, but tells me that they will ask for a water truck and hope that this will help them to be better off. I also talk to Marisol, who tells me that she has finished her diary. She tells me that she found it a bit repetitive, and that's why she didn't write too much, but only what she thought was important. She tells me that she hopes the diary will be useful to me, and that she hopes it will be useful to me. I thank her very much for the diary and tell her that I am sure that what she wrote will be useful to me. I say goodbye to Leticia, wishing her better health. I talk to some other people I know, like Javier, and I also joke with Waldo. I talk to Juan and we walk together to the metro.