



TRANSECT WALK

Transect walks are part observation, walking interview, stakeholder engagement and visual documentation.

Often conducted with a notebook and camera (smartphone), in small groups (2-3 people), participants and facilitators explore a particular context. Often key stakeholders such as village heads, government officers or private sector partners help 'show' the team around.

In WASH, transect walks are most commonly conducted in communities to understand behaviors and services or in market shopping areas to understand available products.

OBJECTIVE

Transect walks are a participatory walking activity through a particular space to create a common contextual understanding.

WASH-HCD CONNECTION

In WASH interventions such as CLTS, transect walks have been a common tool in identifying community sanitation practices. Yet in HCD, they can be used to help create a common understanding of strengths and challenges in a variety of contexts. They are typically used alongside other data collection tools.

TIMING

20-30 minutes

MATERIALS

- QUESTIONS LIST
- PAPER OR NOTEBOOK
- PENS OR PENCILS
- CAMERA

STEPS

1. Plan.

- Before the walk, create a list of questions for discussion with the key stakeholder who will introduce you to his/her context
- Prepare your materials
 - i. Transect Walk note page OR notebook page divided into four sections (common, different, surprises, opportunities)
 - ii. Pen (small tip)
 - iii. Camera (smartphone or other)
 - iv. (optional) Photography consent forms

2. Generate.

- Introduce the members of the walk to one another and the objectives of the walk.
- Break into smaller groups of 2-3 to foster richer conversations.
- As you go, note and document aspects in four categories:
 - i. Common: things that come up multiple times, that are common across groups, households or shops
 - ii. Different: things that come up rarely, that are not common across groups, households or shops
 - iii. Surprises: things that cause the group to stop and discuss, that are unexpected
 - iv. Opportunities: things that the group recognises as things that can be done to improve the context



3. Generate (continued)

- As you go, create ethical photographs. With permission, take photographs of anything that catches your attention even if it does not seem immediately relevant, as you never know what you might require later on.
- Facilitate conversations with the stakeholders around emerging themes.



Tips:

- *Allow any discussion to emerge naturally*
- *Be sure to collect consent from all individuals within photographs, either verbally or written*
- *Be sure to explore widely. Community leaders may only want to show the best or worst of a community, aim for breadth.*

4. Synthesize.

- Depending on your data collection modality, synthesize data from a range of data collection activities.
- Use the TOES framework to debrief a group of surprises, themes, extremes and opportunities.
- Use an insight generation format to support the development of concise findings.

5. Utilize.

- Use photographs from a transect walk within the documentation of the DISCOVER phase to illustrate challenges and opportunities.
- Use insights from the transect walk to develop design criteria for the CREATE phase.

