

Walkabout – Guided tour¹³⁸

Summary

This process is known by different terms such as ‘wokabot’ in Vanuatu. In this process, the child will take the researcher on a walking tour of their community to help answer the research questions.

There is no one right way to do this process. Allowing the child to conduct a walking tour is just a prompt to help the child talk or communicate about the research questions.

Process

1. Ask the research question/s.
2. Explain that you are going to ask the child to show you their village or community and tell you about the things that relate to the research question (e.g. how they get to school or what places they play in their community).
3. Ask follow-up questions to explore the research questions.
4. Walk slowly from your starting point, e.g. the child’s house and move slowly around the area – such as the house, home gardens, paths, roads, rivers.
5. Ask questions in response to the child’s explanation of what they are showing the researcher.
6. The researcher must let the child take the lead and initiate the path being taken and the destination.
7. Children may get tired quickly and so there may be a number of walkabouts over different visits. This will take patience.
8. Take notes as the child talks.
9. Keep external distraction to a minimum by having researchers and child walk by themselves (unless other people are needed to assist the child communicate, or support the child).

Considerations

1. The child may feel intimidated if too many adults participate in this activity – including adults from the community.
2. The child may be influenced by other adults discussing the path being taken by the child or the places of interest being selected by the child.

Practice example

The researcher explained that she wanted to know what was important to Hana, and what her hopes and dreams for the future were. The researcher explained that Hana might like to show the researcher her answer by taking her on a tour around where she lives.

After the researcher explained the activity, Hana guided the researcher on a tour around their yard. Hana led the researcher from the kitchen to a small shelter in the middle of the yard of her uncle's house. Hana said 'Fetching water for my mother for cooking or washing or drinking is something that is very important to me. I would like to become a house girl in the future because I do not think I will go to school. So that's why my job is fetching the water and to do all activities that relates to using the water'.



(Photo taken by Hana, 11 year old girl with a cognitive disability, Vanuatu)