The two day ASF-UK workshop, facilitated by Dr. Alexandre Apsan Frediani (DPU University College London, ASF-UK Associate) and Naomi Shinkins (ASF-UK Associate) in collaboration with ASF-Portugal, focused on the role of the architect in development practice. The workshop engaged with the neighbourhood Morro de Se, which is currently going through a process of gentrification. The aim was to reveal how such a process is affecting residents' freedom to achieve their aspirations.

The workshop aimed to encourage participants to re-think their role as architects in the process of urban regeneration, moving away from the role of the ‘provider’ towards the position of an ‘enabler’. Participants were asked to carry out initial research exercises on site and then design ‘tools of engagement’ to potentially reveal how gentrification processes are impacting on the use of Morro de Se by the different types of residents.

The workshop itself has inspired students to form the group GRUA in order to continue work in Morro de Se with both residents and the organisation involved in the regeneration, Porto Vivo.

The workshop was guided by Amartya Sen’s capability approach, which focuses on people’s abilities and opportunities to achieve their aspirations. Furthermore, the approach also aims to identify how social, political and economic processes affect people’s aspirations and their freedom to achieve them.