

# DESIGNING TOOLS OF ENGAGEMENT, PORTO

Date: October 2009  
Location: Porto School of Architecture, Portugal  
ASF Team: A. Frediani & N. Shinkins  
Partners: Porto School of Architecture & ASF-Portugal  
Donors: Porto School of Architecture  
Project type: International workshop

## PROBLEM ADDRESSED

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 rethink 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.

## METHODOLOGY OF WORK



Theoretically, 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.

Over the two days students were exposed to basic concepts of Sen's capability approach and relevant participatory tools to encourage community engagement. An ambitious programme included; site visits guided by Porto Vivo, on site research, engagement with residents of Morro de Se, intensive studio based design of tools for engagement and presentations. The participants' presentations were made to ASF-UK, ASF-Portugal, architect Nuno Grande and Porto Vivo.



## FUTURE PERSPECTIVE

As mentioned participants have formed the group GRUA inspired by the activities of the workshop. Students have consulted with Porto Vivo on how they can take further steps to encourage participation from residents of the area. ASF-UK will offer support for initiatives, through further workshops in Porto with GRUA and continue to work with residents of Morro de Se in conjunction with Porto Vivo.