

Architectural interventions in informal spaces

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Abstract

From an architectural standpoint, this article seeks to critically examine approaches to interventions in informal settlements, advocating for methodologies grounded in a “bottom-up” logic that emphasises community participation and co-creation. To this end, it presents and analyses three architectural intervention laboratories conducted in informal neighbourhoods of Almada, Portugal, involving collaborations between university students, professional architects, public institutions, and local residents. The article begins by systematising key features of contemporary intervention practices in informal contexts, drawing particularly on the experience of two laboratories that culminated in the construction of built structures. It then explores the strategies and modes of engagement adopted during the workshops, concluding with a critical reflection on the spatial, cultural, and institutional impacts these architectural initiatives have generated within the territories concerned.

Keywords: intervention lab, architecture, informal settlements, participatory processes.

Introduction

Throughout the 20th century, the predominant focus of technical, theoretical, and financial investment in urban planning was directed toward the formal city, envisaged as the principal housing solution for a rapidly urbanising global population — now exceeding 50% of the world’s inhabitants (UN-Habitat, 2013). Public policies on housing and land use were primarily oriented toward constructing a “new city,” imagined as the ideal setting for a modern, urban, and increasingly educated citizen. This urban model aimed to accommodate contemporary lifestyles, in contrast to the social dynamics of pre-industrial rural villages, characterised by strong social control, mutual familiarity, and

limited mobility—as identified by Rémy and Voyé in *The City: Towards a New Definition* (1994). While such policies partially succeeded in absorbing the influx of rural populations into urban environments — often through rapid and poorly regulated urban expansion — the transformation was neither complete nor homogeneous, whether in urbanistic nor socio-cultural terms. As Donzelot (2004) notes in the French context, urban spaces today continue to reflect a multiplicity of overlapping rhythms and socio-spatial dynamics. Consequently, more recent urban analyses have shifted focus: rather than abandoning classical frameworks—such as the evolution from village to city or the rural-urban dichotomy outlined by Lefebvre (1970)—scholarship has increasingly addressed emerging phenomena and transformative processes, including urban cultural identities (Costa, 2002), gentrification (Authier, 2008; Bourdin, 2008; Lees, 2003; Smith, 2002), and the impacts of globalisation (Sassen, 1991; 2000).

Simultaneously, critical discourses on urban social dynamics—particularly those concerning the right to the city and spatial justice (Soja, 2010; Fainstein, 2010)—have been revitalised, now incorporating more nuanced perspectives. These debates are, in part, a response to the persistent inadequacy of housing provision to address diverse needs, and to the enduring presence of multiple forms of discrimination—social, racial, and gender-based—that continue to manifest spatially. Such dynamics are exemplified in Dikeç's (2009) analysis of the Parisian suburbs and in Ramalhete's (2013) study of informal settlements in Almada.

Against this backdrop, both theoretical reflection and practical intervention in urban territories shaped by informal occupation have undergone substantial transformation. While early approaches, rooted in a rationalist paradigm of land use planning, emphasised territorial control for both physical and social reasons — typically advocating the demolition of informal settlements followed by the relocation of their inhabitants—contemporary perspectives increasingly consider the potential for integrating these territories into the formal urban fabric, favouring strategies of incremental upgrading over eradication. This shift is motivated, in part, by the growing recognition of the structural impossibility of addressing the housing needs of sprawling metropolises solely through formal mechanisms, given the persistent and systemic imbalance between formal and informal urbanisation.

Concurrently, a reconfiguration of the conceptual lens through which informal settlements are analysed has emerged, grounded in a broader understanding of housing and neighbourhoods not merely as physical constructs, but as socio-cultural artefacts shaped by the lived experiences and practices of their inhabitants. As Rapoport (1969) argued, the dwelling is not only a response to environmental constraints but also an expression of cultural values, social norms, and individual agency. From this standpoint, the spatial configurations of informal neighbourhoods encapsulate forms of knowledge, use, and adaptability that have often been lost in formal urban development processes. Their genesis in individual initiative and self-construction enables the production of built environments that are intimately aligned with residents' everyday practices and needs, revealing a vernacular logic of urbanism often overlooked by conventional planning paradigms.

The dwelling and the neighbourhood are thus understood as emerging from the interdependence between the inhabitants' modes of spatial appropriation and the physical, social, and institutional constraints that shape their environment. This process

is also influenced by the interplay of forces among various actors—residents, public authorities, and other stakeholders—who contribute to the material, administrative, and cultural construction of the territory. The temporal rhythm of these interactions allows for a negotiation of spatial occupation at a highly localised scale, typically at the level of the neighbourhood itself. This mode of incremental, self-directed construction offers several advantages, particularly in terms of tailoring-built space to the everyday practices and needs of residents, and in fostering mutual aid networks and community cohesion. However, it also tends to produce spatial discontinuities and infrastructural deficits. These include disjointed urban connectivity, inefficient waste collection systems, inadequate provision of public spaces, and, ultimately, the physical isolation of these neighbourhoods from their urban surroundings—factors that reinforce social segregation and territorial marginalisation.

Acknowledging both the potential and the limitations of informal settlements, recent decades have witnessed a proliferation of architectural initiatives aimed at addressing their most urgent challenges through context-sensitive and participatory approaches. Operating on various scales, these interventions are grounded in the premise that viable solutions to housing and territorial planning issues can emerge from within the very fabric of informal neighbourhoods. As such, they advocate for modes of architectural engagement that are conceived from and with the community, rather than imposed externally. Although often framed as innovative today, this perspective has historical roots in the work of scholars such as anthropologist William Mangin (1967) and architect John Turner (1968), who were among the first to argue that informal urbanisation should not be seen solely as a problem, but rather as a source of knowledge, adaptability, and potential solutions (Kellett, 1995).

One possible approach to addressing the challenges of informal settlements is the transformation of these territories into integrated components of the formal city. This is pursued through urban planning strategies that are less reliant on rigid design prescriptions and more oriented toward strategic, adaptive frameworks. Such approaches prioritise the development of participatory processes as a means of incorporating a wide spectrum of social, cultural, and economic realities. Sasha Tsenkova's (2011) reflections on informal neighbourhoods in Eastern European cities are particularly instructive.

The principal distinction between spontaneously emerged neighbourhoods and the formal city lies not only in their physical characteristics but, more fundamentally, in their divergent legal and institutional frameworks. Architect John Turner (1972) highlighted the critical importance of these dimensions, arguing that regularising property rights and securing tenure constitute the necessary catalysts for unlocking the latent creativity and resources within informal settlements. Drawing on his Peruvian case studies, Turner demonstrated that, as land tenure and security issues were gradually resolved, dwellings and neighbourhoods became structurally consolidated and, over time, integrated seamlessly into the broader urban fabric despite enduring various constraints (Kellett, 1995, pp. 15–16). Complementing Turner's emphasis on legal reform, a second, and perhaps more widely tested, strategy involves targeted neighbourhood interventions designed to address specific deficiencies in the hope of generating a multiplier effect. Such urban experiments take many forms: from participatory social housing projects in Chile (Aravena & Iacobelli, 2012) to adaptive repurposing proposals for an unfinished high-rise in Caracas (Brillembourg & Klumpner, 2013); from the Favela Urbanisation

Plan in Cabuçu de Baixo, Brazil (Amaral, Tamborino & Saraiva, 2014) to the construction of a school and community centre in Rocinha, Brazil (Balestra in Tanto Mar, 2014); and even to housing prototypes co-designed with residents in Yerawada, Pune, India (Balestra, 2014).

The spatial organisation of informal settlements emerges from continuous, localized negotiations among residents, whose collective practices of self-construction embody valuable vernacular knowledge and agency. Consequently, most interventions rest on the premise that community engagement is the principal driver of urban dynamism and that, despite the heterogeneity of contexts, it is feasible to conceive and implement context-sensitive solutions. As the volume of participatory projects grows—ranging from targeted upgrades to comprehensive planning—scholarly attention is increasingly turning toward research-based methodologies rather than solely direct, expedient actions. An exemplar is the Observatório da Chicala, a rigorous research initiative investigating the historical evolution, morphologies, and cultural practices of a Luanda neighbourhood (Moreira in Tanto Mar, 2014).

Despite the diversity of contexts - which naturally results in distinct approaches – certain common characteristics can be identified. The following section presents an initial systematization of the main features shared by many architectural interventions in informal spaces. This framework is the result of analysis conducted during the development of the case studies described later in the article.

Characteristics of interventions in informal spaces

A preliminary point worth highlighting is that these interventions are always strongly linked to the origins and context of the spaces. As noted earlier, there is a tendency to ensure that each intervention responds to the specific problems of its environment. This makes systematization difficult and limits the direct application of solutions to other situations. Nonetheless, it is possible to identify some common elements found in many of these interventions.

Housing and habitability conditions

Many interventions begin with the aim of solving housing-related issues — whether addressing a total lack of housing or improving precarious living conditions. These are often inseparable from broader social vulnerabilities, exclusion, and spatial injustice. In some cases, the interventions take place in culturally specific contexts, such as immigrant communities or groups linked to particular professions.

Proximity-based interventions

A notable feature of interventions in informal areas is their focus on localized, small-scale solutions. This is largely due to the difficulty of resolving all problems at once — especially in large settlements — as well as the frequent lack of financial resources. Additionally, participatory or self-build dynamics are hard to manage on a large scale. As a result, many projects concentrate on specific, contained areas, with the hope that their impact will spread through multiplier effects. These interventions often focus on public spaces or on constructing or improving local facilities, such as schools or community associations.

Counter-current interventions

Many interventions in informal settlements are underpinned by critical theoretical frameworks that challenge conventional paradigms of authorship and professional authority. These projects don't always operate outside the law, but they frequently present alternative approaches, operating within zones of juridical ambiguity. This is possible because interventions happen in already informal areas, where legal boundaries are blurred. Sometimes, these actions aim to creatively resolve problems created by the system itself; other times, they seek alternative mechanisms, such as community initiatives and alternative funding sources (e.g., crowdfunding). Ultimately, these are political (though not partisan) interventions, usually free from overt ideological agendas.

Participation and collaboration

Participation by residents is one of the most widely discussed aspects of interventions in informal areas. It is considered essential that the population is involved, first in the decision-making processes about their territory and later in the execution of the projects, including design, construction, operation, and maintenance. The spectrum of participation is broad, as are the available tools, but most agree that some form of local involvement is present in almost every case.

Temporality and permanence

Project durations vary greatly. Some are short-term interventions, lasting days or weeks, while others extend over several years, involving a growing number of stakeholders over time.

Use of local resources

Many projects prefer to use local material and human resources, seeking not only to create work for local labour, but also to make use of local materials and construction techniques, following the solutions and logic presented by informal construction. The motivation for this option is ideological and economic, given that the local economy sometimes has less expensive solutions (formal or informal) to the problems to be solved.

Contextualisation of the Portuguese case

The urban sprawl that generated informal neighbourhoods in Portugal began in the 1960s with the rural exodus and intensified during the 1970s following the return of Portuguese citizens from former colonies and the arrival of immigrants from those same countries. The metropolitan territories—particularly Lisbon—proved incapable of accommodating, in such a brief period, the housing needs and socio-economic diversity of the newcomers. Consequently, informal settlements of varying degrees of precariousness emerged on the fringes of the consolidated city, occupying public or private lands largely designated for other uses (chiefly agricultural) or deemed unsuitable for construction (risk zones).



In the wake of the 25 April 1974 Revolution, which instituted democracy, housing rapidly ascended the political agenda. The SAAL (Serviço Ambulatório de Apoio Local) initiative, operating across numerous informal neighbourhoods nationwide, not only affirmed the role of emerging architects but also stimulated critical discussion on urban dwelling and collaborative engagement with local communities.

In the following decades, and always focusing on municipalities to solve housing problems, various programmes emerged (e.g. PER - Special Rehousing Programme), with the aim of financially supporting local councils in building neighbourhoods to rehouse the population of illegal neighbourhoods that were destined for demolition.

Despite the undeniably good intentions behind both SAAL and the rehousing programmes, criticism from academics was not to be expected. Regarding the involvement of the population in participatory processes and relations between public actors and residents' associations during the SAAL process, Nuno Portas emphasised the importance of having a way of financing the processes that also involved the residents, in proportion to their possibilities. This contribution would not necessarily have to be in the form of money. It could take the form of labour or time available for the process. According to the author, this possibility was never properly realised during the SAAL process, in which residents only used the resources made available by the state, not adding other help of their own, even when they had the possibility (Portas, 1986). These criticisms of the way the beneficiaries of SAAL related to the process - along with the technicians' ambition to create participatory processes - raise the question of how the visions of the various players are often dissonant, giving rise to different interpretations that need to be analysed.

Regarding the rehousing programmes that resulted in a vast municipal social housing stock - and unlike what happened with SAAL - most of them involved residents moving to other areas of the municipality and the design of the houses and their construction did not involve the intervention of future residents, who were limited to receiving turnkey solutions. The main criticisms were based on the lack of attention to the social and cultural aspects of the various communities and the lack of support in the process of change (Cardoso and Prista, 1994; Freitas, 1990; Guerra, 1994; Pinto, 1994; Pinto and Gonçalves, 2000) and the lack of integration of the new neighbourhoods into the dynamics of the consolidated city (Coelho, 1994 and 2012; Raposo, 2012).

While the problems resulting from the choices made in recent decades - which have in fact reduced the number of illegal neighbourhoods, many of which are made up of very precarious buildings or shacks - are still being discussed, there are still situations in the Lisbon metropolitan area that are awaiting resolution. In some cases (e.g. Cova da Moura, in Amadora) studies have been carried out (e.g. Vasconcelos, 2007), the dynamics of participation have multiplied, and intervention proposals have been drawn up, but the results are still scarce. The current financial and economic crisis that the country is going through has made many of the ways of intervening in the territory that had been used unsustainable. The way of thinking about the territory that underpins many urban plans has suddenly lost its validity. This has led to inefficiencies that need to be resolved, since there are people and situations that need answers to their problems.

In this period, it seems extremely important to build strategies, even if they are temporary, that can provide answers to certain problems while the plans adapt to the new reality. This is therefore a historic moment and an opportunity to think about territorial management instruments from other perspectives that can make plans more strategic and effective and less formal and defined (Hall, 1998). The Architecture Intervention Labs presented below are part of this dynamic of reflection and seek to contribute to this discussion through research/action.

NoutraCosta, InSitu and INSITUaction Architecture Intervention Labs

This section presents three architectural intervention laboratories carried out under the coordination of CEACTION/UAL - Centre for Architecture, City and Territory Studies of the Autonomous University of Lisbon, over three years in the municipality of Almada (2012, 2013 and 2014), namely in two different illegal neighbourhoods: Bairro das Terras da Costa; Bairro do 2º Torrão da Trafaria (Figure 1). All the laboratories had a fairly small budget, which mainly made it possible to ensure the logistics of organisation and the participation of the tutors.



Figure 1 – Location of the neighbourhoods. (1) Terras da Costa; (2) Bairro do 2º Torrão da Trafaria in Almada, Portugal.

NoutraCosta Architecture Intervention Laboratory

The Noutra Costa Architecture Intervention Laboratory took place in 2012 in the Terras da Costa neighbourhood in Almada (Figure 2), following CEACTION's participation in the Urban Frontiers research project (FCT project PTDC/CPE-CED/119695/2010). It aimed to investigate areas of informal genesis based on the site and its social dynamics,

focussing on critical positioning in relation to traditional forms of rehousing. The proposal was to speculate, through architectural design, on ways of acting in these realities. The laboratory involved six teams of architects who coordinated teams of architecture students (ateliermob, atelier BASE, Likearchitects, Luca Astorri, Otto, José Castro Caldas + Sérgio Silva).



Figure 2 – View over the Terras da Costa neighbourhood in Almada.

Characterisation of the neighbourhood

The Terras da Costa neighbourhood has around 250 families of different origins, with Cape Verdeans being the most numerous. It is located in an agricultural area, surrounded by cultivated fields and irrigation systems. However, the inhabitants did not have a drinking water network and had to get their water from a public source via plastic tanks transported between the source and each person's home, a process that required skill and physical effort. One of the constructive characteristics of the houses in the neighbourhood was the improvisation of solutions to this shortage, so many of the houses resorted to ingenious rainwater collection systems, which were channelled into reservoirs. This conditioned the life of the neighbourhood in many ways, from the way in which many of the daily activities were subject to organisational demands that had to take into account the fact that water was not a resource that could be accessed simply by turning on a tap, to the way in which this shortage marked the movements and routes made to transport water.

This, combined with the physical and economic difficulties experienced in the neighbourhood, led to internal organisation and association. This organisation encompasses various dimensions of life in the neighbourhood, from mutual help in building or improving the houses, to looking after and caring for the children during their parents' working hours, to the relationship with public authorities, lobbying to make the water supply a reality. These dynamics correlated with the way in which space and housing took shape, moulding themselves to the circumstantial needs of their inhabitants.

The neighbourhood is located very close to the formal city, about a 10-minute walk from the centre of Costa da Caparica. This area can hardly be thought of as a periphery of the city, although it is an area that has no clear urban connections to the formal city, constituting a kind of enclave. The enormous distance from the city is constructed above all by urban and cultural factors, since the real distance is very small.

Interlocutors

In order to define processes that are built from the 'bottom up', i.e. from the neighbourhood and its residents to the city, it is essential to find interlocutors who are recognised by the community, since the stability of the interlocutors is often decisive for the success of the process. In this case, there were already defined and identified interlocutors, as well as a very detailed knowledge of the neighbourhood's realities (physical, cultural and economic) as a result of the Urban Frontiers project, under which a community education research/action process was being developed.

Projects

The preparation began a few months beforehand, when the architects who would be coordinating the teams visited the neighbourhood to get to know its urban morphology, social, cultural and economic logics better and to establish contact with some of its inhabitants, who would be the interlocutors. During the Lab, the student groups developed their proposals over the course of a week, without any programmatic and/or legal restrictions so that the results were not tied to existing plans or the institutions operating on the ground. This condition was only possible because it was a purely speculative architectural design exercise, which set out to think about and challenge current instruments and ways of operating.

Ultimately, the stakeholders exercised only marginal influence over the formulation of the projects, although they did participate in the presentation and discussion of the proposals. The confrontation between the formal plans, legally and materially constrained, and the proposals with more radical discourses helped to position and reframe the issues.

The projects expressed various approaches at different scales. From more utopian approaches, building a discourse and a fiction about the city of the future (Otto), to more territorial approaches, drawing up a broad plan for the area (Luca Astorri), continuing with more immaterial ones, focusing on the design of processes that would generate the energy and resources needed to transform the territory (atelier BASE), as opposed to more formal and constructive ones that proposed buildings that would generate the possibility of transforming the neighbourhood from within, framing self-construction



processes (José Castro Caldas + Sérgio Silva) and ending with those that acted directly on the territory by making an artistic intervention in a square near the neighbourhood that drew attention to its invisibility (Likearchitects) and others, proposing the construction of a football pitch and organising a (football) game in the neighbourhood as a way of creating relations between the neighbourhood and the outside (ateliermob).

Comments and critical reflection

The Noutra Costa Laboratory culminated in an exhibition held in the Costa da Caparica tourism building, with the collaboration of Almada Town Hall. The fact that the public authorities showed their willingness to publicly exhibit this work, generating focus on a neighbourhood that the city was clearly ignoring, showed how this type of event can also contribute, on its scale and dimension, to a reflection on the territory, planning and how public authorities can change the way they look at these territories.

The process ultimately fostered a rapprochement between municipal authorities and the local community. Whereas initial discussions had been confined to the drafting of planning instruments — and their evident misalignment with neighbourhood realities — the progression of the laboratory workshops and accompanying exhibition opened up new channels of communication between residents and institutional actors, making it possible to build bridges and platforms for dialogue between the parties. Crucially, participants recognised that existing urban plans were untenable in the prevailing economic and financial crisis. Moreover, the discussions highlighted the recurrent social shortcomings of conventional rehousing models predicated on the relocation of residents into standardized social-housing units.

The relationship with academia was also strengthened by this experience and resulted in the realisation of the following two laboratories.

InSitu architecture intervention laboratory

The InSitu Architectural Intervention Laboratory was held in 2013 in the 2nd Torrão neighbourhood in Trafaria. It was a partnership between CEACTION/UAL, Vitruvius FabLab (ISCTE-IUL), with the support of Almada City Council (CMA) and the sponsorship of Madeivouga (a wood company based in Aveiro), which supplied the material to build the projects.

This laboratory began in close collaboration with the CMA, starting with the choice of location, Bairro do 2º Torrão, a spontaneous and partially illegal neighbourhood. The choice was the result of a selection made from a set of places proposed by the local authority as spaces that needed new lines of thought and for which it had no functional instruments in the short term. In this sense, academia stepped in with the construction of laboratories as a means of exploring hypotheses for action. The aim was to be able to intervene, through these exercises, in solving specific problems in neighbourhoods and communities, in partnership with the population and the entities on the ground, calling them to actively participate in the project through a confluence of interests that would enable solutions to be found in order to overcome some existing needs and problems.

In this way, the InSitu laboratory became a research/action process and moved on to physical construction in the neighbourhood, taking the site and its social dynamics as its starting point. This possibility of physically intervening in the neighbourhood came about as a result of the rapprochement between the CMA and academia. This edition started from a new perspective on these territories, recognising that, in some cases, these urban situations can be repositories of some solutions, not just problems.

Characterisation of the neighbourhood

The 2nd Torrão neighbourhood in Trafaria was originally set up by the Tagus River as a fishermen's site, then became a locale of secondary residences and finally spread to private land on which the first houses were built illegally (1970s). The neighbourhood is located between Cova do Vapor and Trafaria and is flanked to the east by a NATO installation (fuel depot) and to the west by the Trafaria 2, 3 Primary School.

According to INE (National Statistics Institute) data from the 2011 census, the neighbourhood covers an area of 41,278 m² and has 160 buildings housing 1096 inhabitants in 328 dwellings. The age structure of its inhabitants is quite different from the national average, since around 50 per cent of the population is under 25. More specifically, 39.5% of the neighbourhood's population is between 0 and 19 years old, 10.4% is between 20 and 24, 46% is between 25 and 64 and only 4.1% is over 65. It is important to emphasise that it is extremely difficult to collect this type of data accurately in these informal contexts, which means that it must be confirmed on the ground. In the case of the number of inhabitants, for example, the data from the neighbourhood's Residents' Association differs from INE's, pointing to around 2,000 inhabitants.

There are several communities in the 2º Torrão neighbourhood, but three are the most prominent: the Angolan, Cape Verdean and Portuguese communities. The urban organisation of the neighbourhood is generated by the presence of a community (mostly Portuguese) that occupies the old fishermen's houses by the river, on land under the jurisdiction of the Lisbon Port Authority. For a few decades, the residents were granted an occupation licence, which in some way legalised the occupation. The rest of the neighbourhood expanded inland, in the opposite direction to the river, occupying private property and growing through informal self-construction processes (Figure 3).

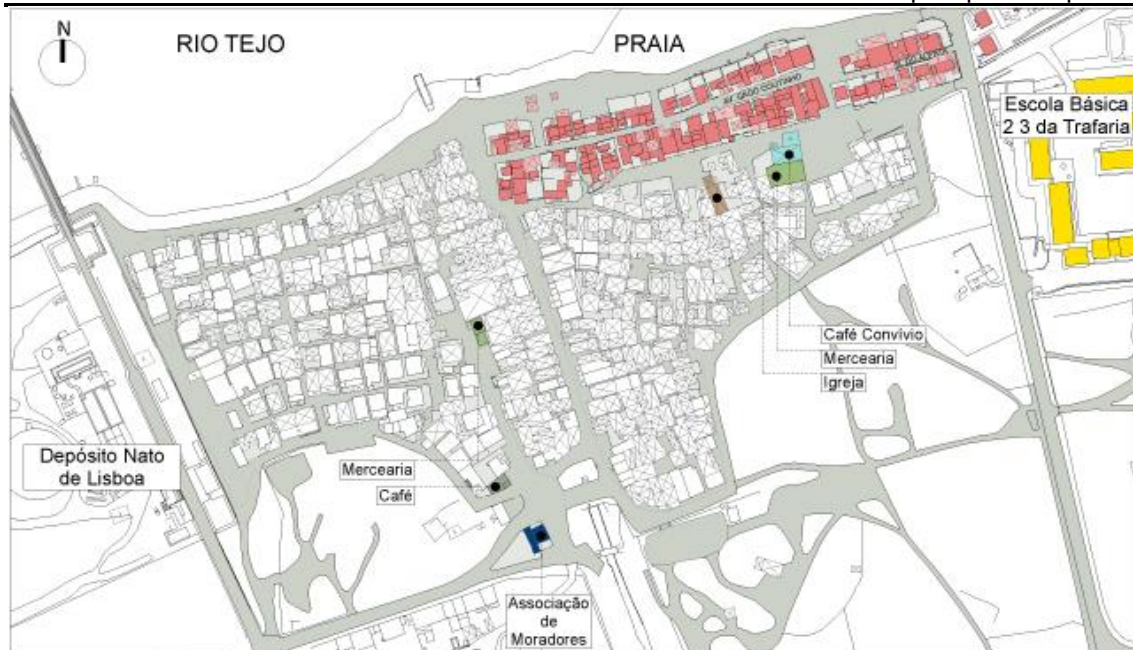


Figure 3 – Urban characterization of the 2º Torrão neighborhood. (red – the construction over the old fishermen's houses / white – informal construction)

In settings where resources taken for granted in the formal city are in short supply, the neighbourhood's vitality relies heavily on how its members interact and support one another and the coexistence of different cultures with different origins and nationalities takes on an important role. The good functioning of the neighbourhood depends on them. Unlike Terras da Costa, in the 2º Torrão neighbourhood there was apparently no unifying theme that brought the community together under a single focus. At one time, this theme was the supply of electricity, which was subject to a fee paid by the Residents' Association. However, this situation has deteriorated, and there is currently no association that represents the neighbourhood.

The morphology of the neighbourhood (apart from its two formal situations mentioned above) is typical of neighbourhoods of spontaneous and informal origin, with numerous alleys, very narrow streets and always built on a domestic scale that defines the interstitial space according to the circumstantial needs of its inhabitants. This situation generates complex situations of dubious relations between public and private space, generating intricate constructions of neighbourhoods. In effect, the neighbourhood allows for responses to be generated in nearby spaces that meet the problems and dynamics of its inhabitants, despite the fact that the construction of public space transversal to the entire community at the neighbourhood scale is very precarious. This situation is contributed to by the fact that there is very little public space available, which is little used due to the lack of comfort conditions and qualities conducive to collective use.

Methodology and research/action process

The InSitu Laboratory was structured in two phases. The first was dedicated to research, survey and identification of the neighbourhood's problems (six months of fieldwork) and the second was dedicated to intervention (two months), where five teams of invited

architects formed working groups, organizing a design and construction method with students (A+LB Yarchitects, Argot+1/2 Atelier, ateliermob, Atelier BASE and Likearchitects). The research/action process consisted of three stages: i) Research, identifying problems and studying the reality; ii) Design, defining the specific intervention program; iii) Build, producing and assembling on site and with the community.

The project also explored the potential of digital design and construction tools, namely CAD (Computer-aided design) / CAM (Computer-aided manufacturing) digital manufacturing processes and easy access to CNC (Computer Numerically Controlled) machines, generating reflection on the use of mechanical rapid prototyping approaches as a tool to act in contexts of scarcity. Considering that these do not imply a distancing from the community values and dynamics that may exist, but rather a complement, the possibility of being able to personalize the action by adapting it to specific cases allows for increased flexibility in the action, which can be a useful path to follow in specific interventions.

Field work

The fact that the 2º Torrão is connected to the city in a very precarious way from an urban standpoint makes its residents perceive the neighbourhood as a marginalized structure. Although it is not an unsafe place, the neighbourhood reacts to the presence of outsiders due to the existence of many realities that operate outside the law, starting with its establishment on private property. In this context, and with the aim of visiting the neighbourhood, contact was made with a representative of the Residents' Association who, although not clearly or formally legitimized to represent the neighbourhood's population, facilitated an initial visit and entry into the area, as well as legitimized the university's presence on site.

Fieldwork was carried out over six months and initially consisted of regular visits to the neighbourhood, with the aim of becoming familiar with some of its residents and introducing the team. The strategy mainly involved spending time in the area and listening to as many opinions as possible about the neighbourhood—its positive aspects, its shortcomings, and the most pressing needs.

From these initial exploratory visits, a clear need emerged to begin identifying potential interlocutors who could serve as partners in the project, helping to bridge the gap with the neighbourhood's broader physical and cultural reality. This was particularly important because the neighbourhood has a visible divide between the Portuguese community and the African-origin community, as well as other, less visible and harder-to-reach divisions that also certainly affect the territory.

In this regard, the interlocutors were highly significant, as it was through them that the possibility of community participation would be enabled. Since it was not feasible to work with the entire neighbourhood due to the teams' time constraints and limited construction resources, the interlocutors would also serve as conduits to different realities within the neighbourhood, while helping to ensure that care would later be taken with the built structures.

The Residents' Association building is located on the western edge of the neighbourhood (Figure 3), at one of its entrances, in an area predominantly frequented by residents of



African origin. On the opposite side, to the east, is Café Convívio, which somewhat represents the Portuguese population of the neighbourhood. Based on these representations, one interlocutor was chosen per geographic area, and a dialogue process was initiated between them and the tutor architects. Initially, mediation was carried out by the coordinating team of the laboratory (CEACT/UAL and Vitruvius FabLab/ISCTE-IUL), but the mediation that emerged from the project choices, site planning, and construction was handled by the five teams of tutor architects and their students.

Definition of the programs and intervention sites

The selection of sites and programs to be developed emerged from contacts and conversations with neighbourhood residents, always keeping in mind the goal of working primarily within public space, in order to promote encounters and generate urbanity. The themes defined resulted from a combination of material possibilities for action, the interlocutors involved, the architect teams coordinating the student groups, and the identification of some of the neighbourhood's needs.

The interventions sought out varied themes and locations—some had predefined sites, while others aimed—through their program or theme—to have a broader and more transversal scope. Special focus was placed on the two main entrances to the neighbourhood (to the west, near Café Convívio, and to the east, near the Residents' Association), and a third site was also established between these two, next to the church (Figure 3), resulting in three defined intervention locations.

Fieldwork revealed three foundational dimensions—space, resources, and organization—which materialized into five themes: (1) space for children; (2) gathering spaces; (3) community gardens; (4) waste collection and management; (5) incorporating the Residents' Association into the action plan. Four of the themes had defined locations for intervention (Figure 4), while one—waste—due to its transversal nature and because the response to the problem was primarily organizational, did not have a specific location. Instead, it would function as a unifying platform for all other interventions, acting both directly and indirectly throughout the neighbourhood. The same applied to the Residents' Association program: although it had a defined location in a very deteriorated headquarters building, it could acquire a more global reach through this intervention, due to its symbolic character and representative nature.

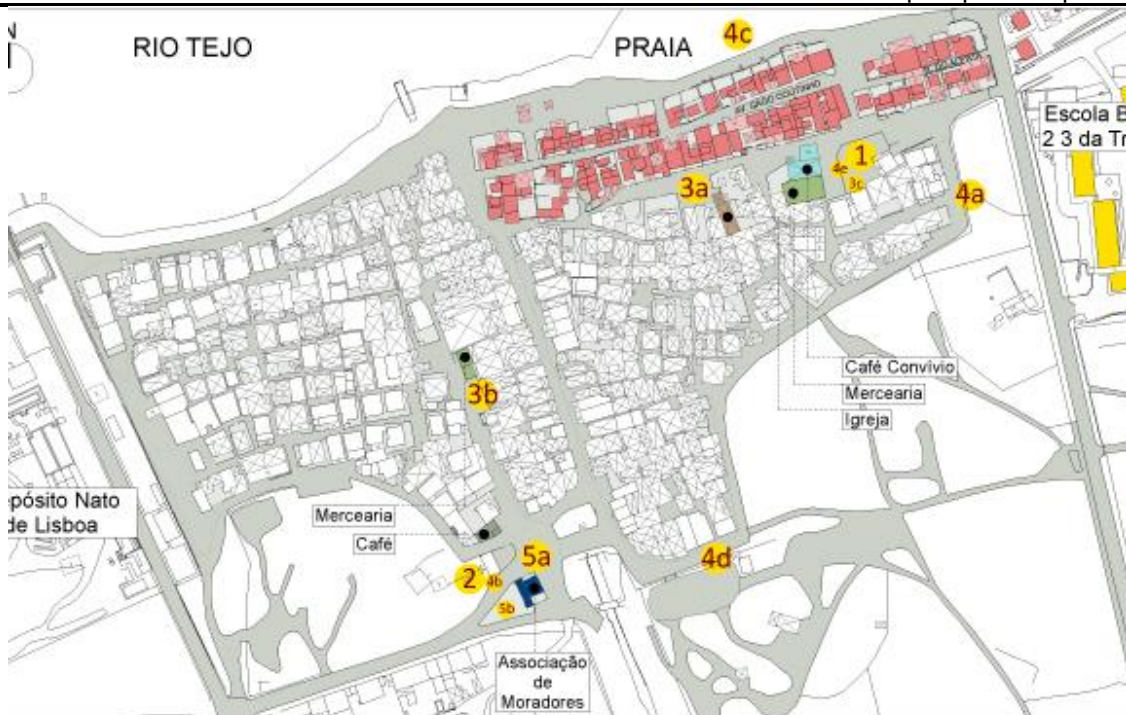


Figure 4 – Location of the interventions, InSitu Lab.

Interventions and assembly

The interventions materialized in the assembly and construction of various prefabricated wooden structures, previously designed and cut. The assembly process was the stage that encouraged the most participation from neighbourhood residents, particularly among the youth. It was also during this phase that the architecture students were fully confronted with the reality in all its dimensions, resulting in a deeper engagement with urban, architectural, and above all, human challenges.

1) Children's Space: A vacant area near Café Convívio and the Trafaria school (Figure 5) presented a rare opportunity to create public space through the construction of a playground—a project capable of bringing the entire community together by gathering parents and children in the same space. Special attention was given to building a symbolic space, easily identified and named by all, which led to the creation of a sculptural element known as “the tree.” This project included clearing the area, constructing the sculpture, planting new trees, and installing swings, ground games, and a seesaw (Figure 6).



Figure 5 – (1) Vacant space next to Café Convívio before the InSitu Lab intervention.



Figure 6 – (1) Children's play area next to Café Convívio on the final day of construction during the InSitu Lab.

2) Gathering Spaces: The fact that the neighbourhood's young population uses the square in front of the Residents' Association as a meeting point served as the starting point for this intervention. Although the square is indeed a gathering space, it is also

where the garbage containers are located (Figure 7). Starting with the construction of a large table, the project created a small garden, with new trees planted, aiming to establish future spaces for gathering and staying (Figure 8).



Figure 7 – (2) Waste disposal area before the InSitu intervention.



Figure 8 – (2) Gathering space with the table and potential garden on the final day of construction during the InSitu Lab.

3) Community Gardens: Building on existing activities near the church and a grocery store, this project was implemented with a focus beyond just the gardens. It also aimed to create public spaces linked to a new facility, plant trees to provide shaded areas in the neighbourhood, and construct organic compost bins—connecting to the waste theme and serving to produce compost for cultivation (Figures 9, 10, and 11).



Figure 9 – (3a) Gardens, construction of public space next to the church, reusing pallets.

4) Waste Management: This project aimed to define a neighbourhood cleaning strategy in collaboration with public authorities and residents, creating new routines capable of changing the attitudes of both entities and the community regarding waste organization in the area. It therefore focused on processes and building bridges between public entities and residents, resulting in the removal of 50 tons of waste. Several structures were also built, including trash bins, a cover for a container, and a swap point for used items (Figures 12 to 15 and 17). During the process, many things had to be reinvented, and this group adapted an intermediate storage structure to accommodate an existing fruit and vegetable stall (Figure 16).



Figure 10 – (3b) Gardens, tool storage shed and compost bin in the area next to the grocery store.



Figure 11 – (3c) Gardens, tool storage shed next to the children's play area.



Figure 12 – (4a) Waste management, cover for a container.



Figure 13 – (4b) Waste management, Residents' Association pond, with the former waste disposal area in the background, which was transformed into a gathering space (see Figures 7

and

8).



Figure 14 – (4b) Waste management, swap point for used items and small trash bin.



Figure 15 – (4c) Waste management, landmark on the beach intended to raise awareness about its cleanliness.



Figure 16 – (4d) Waste management, adaptation of the intermediate storage structure to a fruit and vegetable stall.



Figure 17 – (4e) Waste management, small trash bin in the children's area next to Café Convívio (see Figures 5 and 6).

5) Restoration of the Residents' Association Building: The fact that the Residents' Association (Figure 18) is not representative of the neighborhood population meant that the planned intervention project for this space had to address a sensitive issue. To work around this, the project engaged young people who use the place as a meeting spot, as well as children and parents. Doors and windows were restored in the building, and a playful space for children was created inside (Figure 19). Outside, next to an existing stage, a bench was built to serve as an assembly and debate area where neighborhood issues could be discussed (Figure 20). Additionally, an artist was invited to create a graffiti mural on one of the building's exterior walls.



Figure 18 – (5a) Residents' Association building before the laboratory intervention.



Figure 19 – (5a) Residents' Association building.



Figure 20 – (5b) Bench built in the side area of the Residents' Association building. In the background, the swap stall (Figure 14) and gathering space (Figure 8).

Comments and critical reflection

The InSitu Laboratory was the first intervention of its kind carried out in the neighbourhood. Although it was a short-term action, it still had effects that lasted for several months afterward. In a retrospective reflection on both the projects and the various dynamics developed, one of the less positive aspects was that the choice to identify key interlocutors did not allow the intervention being planned to be communicated to the entire population of 2º Torrão. Many residents only became aware that something was happening during the construction of the projects, so their participation in the process fell short of what was desired and only gained greater expression during the assembly phase of the objects.

Consequently, the impact on the neighbourhood's life was that of a sporadic event with, apparently, no structural results. In a neighbourhood of this nature, this would be an aspect to improve. On the other hand, the materials available for construction were too perishable to withstand the constraints of the outdoor environment, and the construction system along with the lack of protective material for the wood meant that many of the interventions did not survive the following winter in good condition.

In contrast, it was noted that none of the interventions were vandalized or destroyed, either partially or entirely, by the residents—an aspect considered extremely positive by the various stakeholders. The subsequent degradation of the interventions was due to weather conditions, lack of maintenance, and, above all, the poor durability of the materials used outdoors (a risk assumed from the beginning since they were the only materials available). Even so, it is worth highlighting the respect shown by the neighbourhood's population, who did not destroy, dismantle, or repurpose the installations.

The trash bins were partially destroyed by the winter rain, and the garbage that had been removed accumulated again in the same places and with the same intensity. However, the shelter over the trash bin remained intact and continues to serve its purpose. The recycling station that was installed on the outskirts of the neighbourhood, following a negotiation with the municipal company responsible for waste collection, is operating successfully. The swap box that was converted into a grocery store continues to be used and cared for, but the one intended for exchanging objects deteriorated.

The bench built next to the Residents' Association building had to be dismantled shortly after the laboratory, and the association space saw little use. However, the building, which had previously been frequently vandalized, is still in good condition, as is the graffiti painted on one of its walls.

The compost bins were never used, and the gardens, after initial enthusiasm, were not sustained. However, the tool sheds were respected despite very sporadic use, as was the space next to the church, where tables and benches continue to be used. This project also resulted in the planting of many trees in the neighbourhood, most of which have survived.

The tree in the playground was also partially destroyed during the winter and ultimately did not change the toponymy of that public space, which was already commonly known in the neighbourhood as the Café Convívio space due to its proximity. The seesaw and

ground games were also damaged by use and winter rains. However, the swings were a success and were used frequently. The area remained reasonably clean, with some maintenance over time, and the planted trees are still surviving.

The table also physically survived, and its use occurred sporadically, but the waste area that was intended to be transformed into a garden reverted to its original state.

From an institutional standpoint, the reaction of the public authorities (CMA) to the proposals of this laboratory was openly positive. This process helped unblock the possibility for CMA to visit the neighbourhood, engage with its residents, and begin building a more concrete dialogue.

Regarding the neighbourhood's internal dynamics, some interesting subsequent consequences occurred in the two spaces where the intervention was most significant, which the laboratory had not anticipated. Near Café Convívio, people painted their houses, paved the street, and built walls that marked pathways and created flower beds. Near the Residents' Association, an existing café was restored and expanded, and its owner continued to renovate a structure that had been painted during the laboratory near the gathering space, removing the graffiti from the wall.

INSITUaction Architecture Intervention Laboratory

The third and final case presented here is the INSITUaction Architecture Intervention Laboratory, held in 2014—following the already existing partnership between CEACTION and Vitruvius FabLab (ISCTE-IUL)—with the support of the Almada City Council. It was also conducted in the 2º Torrão neighbourhood of Trafaria, as a response to the need to continue the process started the previous year, consolidating positive dynamics and seeking to correct less successful aspects.

The action research dimension and physical construction in the neighbourhood were maintained, as well as the fact that it started from the site and its social dynamics. In this latter aspect, the participation perimeter was expanded and enhanced through the implementation of a more intense dynamic that directly involved more local stakeholders in the process, namely public entities (Caparica Parish Council and Almada City Council).

This involvement materialized through services provided (e.g., transportation), the use of workshops (metalworking and carpentry), and the supply of materials that existed on-site and, in many cases, were considered waste or scraps. The project and construction logic was maintained, coordinated by new tutors, namely architects Miguel Marcelino, João Boto Caeiro, and Rita Sarzedas.

Methodology and Action Research Process

The methodology used for this laboratory maintained the same assumptions as the previous one. The major change was the fact that it became possible to integrate a complex machine such as the public administration into an ongoing informal and participatory process, involving the neighbourhood through different interlocutors, the academic community (organization, tutors, and students), and public entities.

In this case, the preparatory work focused essentially on building a process that would allow the incorporation of public structures, so that the interventions could be materialized through them. In this sense, the architect tutors were inserted earlier into this dynamic, and together they sought to define what each group would require. As a form of participation, the focus was again on building processes capable of creating openings and permeability to other agents.

Fieldwork

The direct interlocutors in the neighbourhood changed almost completely. However, since there was already a prior relationship with that space, it became easier to communicate and interact with the general population. This ease revealed that there had been a positive, impression-based impact on the community. This context meant that the new teams' approach to the field was much faster than the previous year and, in many respects, deeper.

The decision to carry out the entire construction process directly in the neighbourhood (unlike the previous year, when all wooden pieces were designed and cut in the controlled environment of the FabLab and then assembled in the neighbourhood) required the creation of a specific environment for this to happen smoothly. The mediation of these issues was largely carried out by the architect tutors, who established connections through prior visits to the intervention sites, seeking to involve the population in the process. This aspect led to many more opportunities for interaction and participation.

Since each group had to produce its intervention using materials provided by the Almada City Council (CMA), it became necessary to first build, through joint visits to the council's construction yards and warehouses, a quantity map to serve as the basis for requisitioning all the elements considered necessary. This work required flexibility and adaptability in the project, as the intervention had to be generated from the existing materials while still ensuring that students and residents had room to act.

Definition of Programs and Intervention Sites

For this laboratory, only two intervention sites were defined, corresponding to the two entrances of the neighbourhood: the playground area and the Residents' Association zone (Figure 21). The choice of these locations was based on the analysis of the previous year's results, which indicated that: 1) they were the sites with the greatest potential to create diverse public spaces; 2) they had the highest levels of resident engagement; 3) multiplying points of intervention would exhaust and disperse resources, leading to a loss of intervention capacity.

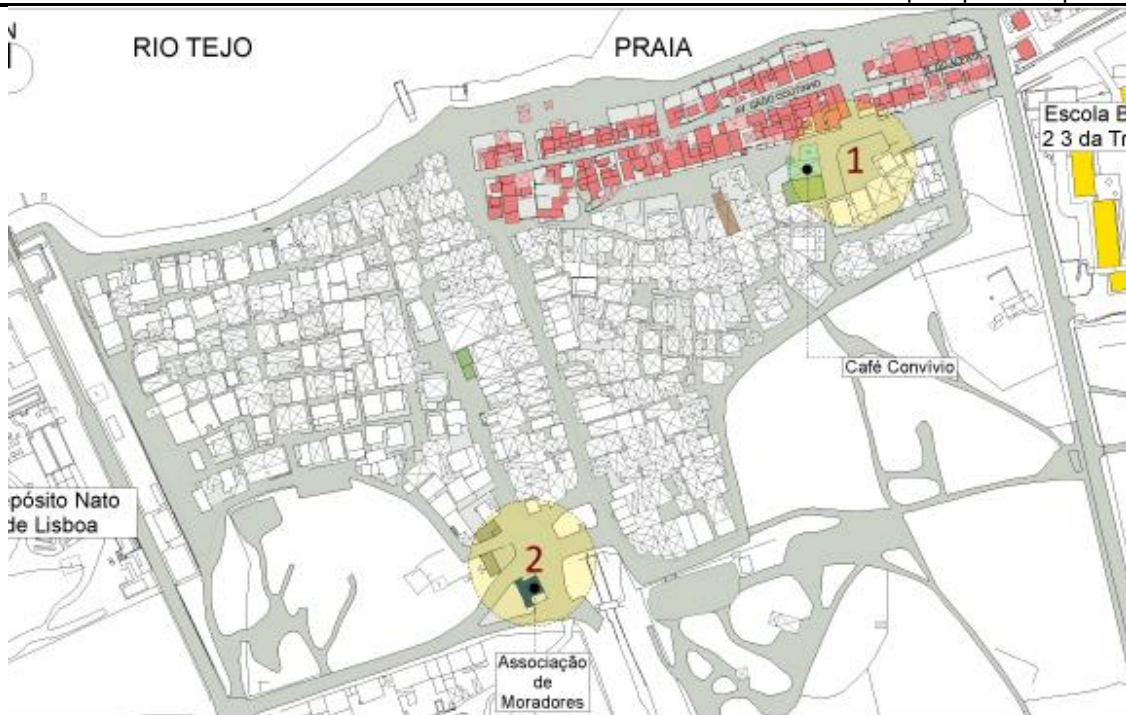


Figure 21 – Location of interventions from the InSituAction laboratory.

The playground had been a success in terms of its program but had materially deteriorated over time, thus requiring consolidation in order to firmly establish it as a public space (Figure 22). The area around it continued to be transformed by residents, improving its physical conditions, which indicated the existence of a dynamic worth accompanying and encouraging. These reasons clearly confirmed the need to materialize this intervention through the construction of a permanent playground, thereby enhancing that place both urbanistically and as a public space shared by the neighbourhood.

Regarding the area of the Residents' Association, the need remained to consider it as one of the neighbourhood's central hubs. Despite some residents' concern and investment in improving surrounding buildings, the Residents' Association still did not function as a representative institution, and the entire surrounding space required an intervention capable of constituting it not only as a plural meeting and gathering point but also as a material incentive to renew forms of associativism among the neighbourhood residents.

These two locations also represented the two largest resident groups in the neighbourhood, the Portuguese and the Angolans. For this reason, an intervention in these two places could contribute to fostering new understandings and social relations.

Interventions and assembly

In addition to consolidating the playground, the intervention also involved removing the degraded remnants from the previous laboratory, planting new trees, and removing those that had dried out. A name plaque was constructed for the square — "Largo do Convívio" — with the aim of officially recognizing the name given by the residents and

strengthening its connections with the surroundings, particularly the paths leading to the beach.



Figure 22 – (1) Largo do Café Convívio, children's playground. One year after the InSitu intervention and following a winter season.

The intervention also aimed to establish connections with the surrounding area through the construction of a wall (which could function both as a bench and as a staircase providing access to the playground). During the laboratory, the residents continued their autonomous project of building walls, which helped to more clearly define the spaces. Thus, while there was no doubt about what needed to be done in this area during the lab, the fact that the residents had been developing their own independent project since the InSitu intervention required more extensive and complex negotiations among all parties involved (Figure 23).



Figure 23 – (1) Largo do Café Convívio, playground. Last day of construction of InSituAction.

Intervention at the Residents' Association square did not have a clearly defined program from the outset, with the main intention being to strengthen the existing social dynamic and to generate a sense of centrality in safe conditions, as this area was the main road access to the neighbourhood. It was proposed to pave the lateral area next to the Residents' Association building and to construct a roof over that same space, with the aim of creating an open-access meeting point adjacent to the association (given that the building itself was usually closed) (Figures 24 and 25).

The intervention also aimed to more clearly define the street next to the building and included the construction of an outdoor fitness area and the installation of benches in the surrounding area. The concrete paving and the construction of the covered structure were the most resource- and labour-intensive tasks, requiring significant effort from both students and residents (Figure 26).

The tubular steel structures for physical activity and the swing were fabricated at the municipal metal workshop (CMA) (Figure 27). The regulation of the road was addressed by placing reused tyres vertically in the ground, and a lighting point was installed on the new covered area, resolving the issue of complete lack of public lighting in that zone.



Figure 24 – (2) Residents' Association space. One year after the completion of the InSitu.



Figure 25 – (2) Side space next to the Residents' Association. Before the implementation of the laboratories.



Figure 26 – (2) Side space next to the Residents' Association. Last day of construction of the InSituAction.



Figure 27 – (2) Outdoor exercise area. Last day of construction of the InSituAction.

Throughout this process, the Residents' Association building was used as the group's workspace, including during the design phase. This enabled a much broader process of



contact and collaboration between the group of students/architects and the residents, allowing the latter to share their ideas, impressions, and expectations.

Comments and Critical Reflections

Regarding the construction of the new playground, the mediation process proved to be more complex than in the previous year. After the public presentation of the project, it was debated with the community, who questioned some proposals and suggested changes that were made, within the limits of time and available resources. During the construction of the playground, in which the residents actively participated—particularly in building and plastering walls—the community again expressed opposition to the red colour of the wall delimiting the park. The resolution of this disagreement, initiated by the community itself, who repainted the wall white after the laboratory, demonstrated not only the community's will and capacity to intervene in a public space they had been progressively appropriating but also the relevance of the intervention and the benefits of the social dynamics it fostered.

In the space of the Residents' Association, the intervention reinforced the potential for creating urban public space. A clear sign of this was that, some time after the previous laboratory, the table installed during InSitu was moved to the covered area. This made visible a local mobilization to think about and act on the common space, which had not been perceptible during the first laboratory. Several dozen residents actively participated, whether by working on the construction, discussing it, or providing tools and some materials.

Nurturing the idea that it is possible to claim and build new urban situations in one's neighbourhood was also a goal of the laboratories. The fact that architecture guests were brought into the neighbourhood and that the project was publicized in specialized press gave visibility to the specific problems of the 2º Torrão, but also allowed the consideration of possible solutions and interventions. During the construction period, many residents collaborated in the work, lending tools and helping with manual labour, as well as people connected to the CMA who were present in the neighbourhood along with tutors, students, and the community, providing assistance.

Although it is acknowledged that many issues still deserve deeper debate and reflection, it can be said that, in general, the laboratory fulfilled the objectives it had proposed. This applies both to consolidating dynamics of use and appropriation of public space and to creating conditions for those same dynamics to develop safely, further enhancing dialogue between residents, the university, and local institutions.

Final Remarks

This article sought to describe the intervention contexts related to the development of three architectural laboratory exercises, as well as the evolution that could be traced among them through a reflective analysis. It started with the speculative and theoretical exercise of the first laboratory, moved on to the construction and assembly of prefabricated wooden objects (constituting the first physical and practical result of the developed projects), and culminated in the physical construction on site using durable materials. Alongside the interventions, the evolution of community involvement and local public agents throughout these processes was also addressed, aiming to highlight,



through the way these different contexts operated, the changing responses of all actors in the various processes. The fact that two of these laboratories culminated in physical on-site construction and were carried out through collaboration between architecture students, local populations, and agents responsible for managing these territories gives them a uniqueness worth emphasizing.

The laboratories (developed within a formative framework, with students coordinated by architect tutors) aimed to be academic exercises, committed to conducting architectural research through action in informal neighbourhoods. One objective was to bring the built reality closer to teaching and research in architecture, providing and enabling an opening of academia to communities. In practice, students were given contact with a concrete reality and confronted with the enormous practical constraints of architectural design. Simultaneously, students were also invited to reflect on themes such as housing, city, and territory, as well as on constructive realities limited by the materials and resources available for building. With the challenge of developing architectural work permeable to participation from recipients and other external agents, reflection was also promoted on the degrees and forms of construction through collaborative or participatory processes.

Over time, architects as designers have remained distant from their users, especially in projects where there is no specific client. In reality, many architects believe that knowledge of communities is not very relevant nor adds much to what they propose, assuming that, as technicians, they are equipped with all the necessary tools to carry out their projects and resolve the problems at hand (Kellett and Higdon, 1991). In this sense, the laboratories were based on the idea that it is essential to counter this perspective. Hence, their fundamental principle was the importance of the site and its social dynamics, calling for the construction of collaborative and participatory processes with the resident populations.

These processes are always conducted within a highly dynamic and unstable reality, from the attempt to provide new learning opportunities for architecture students, through the rapid formal changes (via new constructions) and social changes (population shifts) constant in these neighbourhoods, to the way reality responds to the actions of external agents (Kellett 1995, p.15). In these specific cases, the laboratories were also concerned with addressing the various local dynamics felt and, above all, with the irregular rhythms and encounters between different interlocutors. This is also why such participatory and “bottom-up” constructed processes require flexibility in the face of changing circumstances, as well as the permeability needed to incorporate new agents.

Community participation can also be an instrument to challenge the paternalistic stance that external agents – whether technical experts, politicians, or academics – tend to assume regarding the resolution of other people’s problems. The sustainability of these kinds of actions can only be achieved through the local population and their communities, and these actions are nothing more than opportunities to activate local dynamics and synergies that are intended to be autonomous and independent, over which no control can be imposed.

In projects like these, dynamics created by communities and/or individuals inevitably arise as unforeseen consequences or “collateral damage” from the actions taken. By definition, these cannot be controlled, so the only ambition can be for them to be



transformative – creating positive dynamics that foster care and change – rather than negative ones that generate indifference and inertia.

In the cases presented, highly transformative internal dynamics arose within the neighbourhoods concerning the constructions carried out as part of the laboratories, as well as external dynamics – namely within public entities such as the CMA – which gradually showed a change in attitude and perspective regarding these issues.

From these architectural intervention laboratories, it became clear that the success of these operations is closely related to how well the agents adapt to the circumstances of each moment, essentially being aware that “each case is a case.” However, one important aspect to emphasize is the importance of continuity in these processes. The results of INSITUaction are clearly connected to the results, successes, and failures of InSitu.

Working on informal urban territories implies working on and with people, which makes the task of understanding and intervening extremely complex. From this perspective, it is important to foster greater interdisciplinarity among the actors involved. In the case of the laboratories that focused on the architect’s standpoint, one cannot claim that global solutions were found; rather, from an architectural viewpoint, certain possible solutions were conceived and trialled. Finally, it is important to note that institutional involvement enables the development of new forms of dialogue, contributing to the search for solutions beyond the usual parameters. Dialogue builds bridges, allows differences to be understood, and fosters mutual understanding. In a process in which everyone participates and is placed in a position where the solution depends on them, differences must be discussed, producing a plural environment. The way institutions deal with territory is, by nature, bureaucratic, and problems tend to become abstract and overly complex. Involving institutions in informal, on-the-ground research into concrete modes of operation can help to simplify these issues.

Final Note

The Noutra Costa laboratory was coordinated by Pedro Campos Costa and Filipa Ramalhete; InSitu was coordinated by Pedro Campos Costa, Filipa Ramalhete, and Alexandra Paio, and organized by Sérgio Silva and Barbara Varela; INSITUaction was coordinated by Pedro Campos Costa, Filipa Ramalhete, and Alexandra Paio, and organized by Sérgio Silva, José Castro Caldas, and Barbara Varela.

The oversight committees were composed of various members for each project: Noutra Costa included Paulo Moreira, Pedro Clarke, Paulo Pardelha, and Euclides Fernandes; InSitu had Paulo Moreira, José Castro Caldas, and Joana Pestana; and InSituAction was followed by Paulo Pardelha, Nuno Mateus, and Joana Pestana.

Within the scope of the three laboratories, contacts were established with several teams implementing projects in those locations or who participated in the laboratories and developed subsequent projects. This includes the team of the Urban Borders project, coordinated by Mônica Mesquita; the ateliermob and atelier Warehouse teams, who built a community kitchen in Terras da Costa; and the Casa do Vapor project team, which took place in Cova do Vapor, near 2º Torrão.



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Links related to the laboratories

Noutra Costa – Relatório: http://pt.slideshare.net/CEACT_UAL/laboratrio-de-interveno-em-arquitetura-noutra-costa2012-relatorio

Jornal do Arquitecto (J-A 247, Mai — Ago 2013, p. 88-99.): <http://www.jornalarquitectos.pt/noutra-costa-da-caparica/>

Documentary Noutra Costa: <http://youtu.be/CkScFOeGqcY>

Documentary InSitu: <http://youtu.be/EnNNbf77JGA>

Video report InSituAction: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W-xSjliobfU>

Links de outros projetos com ligação diretas aos laboratórios

Community kitchen in Terras da Costa: <http://ateliermob.com/cozinha-comunitaria-das-terras-da-costa438252>

Casa do Vapor: <http://www.casadovapor.org/pt>



Biographical Notes

Filipa Ramalhete is an anthropologist with a master's and PhD in Spatial Planning. She has been a lecturer at DA/UAL since 2000 (teaching Anthropology of Space, Geography and Territory, and Scientific Work Methodology) and is the director of the Center for Studies in Architecture, City, and Territory at UAL, as well as the journal estudoprévio.net. She is also a researcher at e-GEO – Center for Studies in Geography and Regional Planning at the Universidade Nova de Lisboa and teaches Spatial Planning and Environment in the e-Learning master's program in Spatial Planning and Geographic Information Systems. Her main research interests focus on spatial studies applied to planning and management, emphasizing anthropology of space and spatial justice.

Sérgio Silva was born in Lisbon in 1980. He completed his integrated master's degree in architecture in 2007 at Universidade Autónoma de Lisboa and undertook an academic internship in Macau in 2005. He worked at the Inês Lobo architects studio between 2007 and 2009, where he completed his professional internship. In 2009, he attended a master's program in Philosophy/Aesthetics at Universidade Nova de Lisboa. In 2011, he founded the architecture office Office.inA in Lisbon, where he has been working since. Since 2012, he has collaborated as a guest researcher at CEAAT/UAL.