

## ***Atelier da Rua: a participated street design process***

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### Abstract

Streets are key elements on the city urban structure. Despite the importance of this structural and living urban element, the contemporary Portuguese situation is characterized by the lack of investment in the realization, use and maintenance of many streets. Moreover it is noted the local authorities difficulties to deal with citizens everyday life problems within the street and to approach diffuse and weakened civic structures. These are some of the problems encountered in small and local scale architectural projects of the public space of the streets in Portugal. Participated project processes tackle these issues through the understanding of the existing problems and promoting new processes to face them.

This paper is done in the scope of the research of *Atelier da Rua* (Street Atelier) that is developed to meet contemporary needs of intervention in the street public space. The methodological hypothesis is to use the strategy of *Atelier da Rua*, a citizen participative process applied to propose effective design projects in order to improve community living and physical spaces. This paper aims to explore the combination of street intervention methodology of *Atelier da Rua* (Pita, 2014 b) and the values presented in the text *A ladder of citizen participation* written by Sherry Arnstein (1969), focusing in the particular issue of achieving "partnership" on the *Atelier da Rua* investigation and practice.

**Keywords:** Local; *Atelier da Rua*; Public space; Street; Partnership.

## Introduction

According to the National Association of City Transportation Officials (Baily, 2013), streets comprise 80% of the public space in the cities. Its importance in the physical structure and everyday life of the city is crucial in physical, environmental quality and sustainability of public space. The street is a privileged civic and societal civic space. Streets are particularly important in the city structure as a cultural, economic and environmental resource. The living experience and transformation of the street is the result of a complex interaction of the various actors involved. Local administrations and decision makers, street users, inhabitants and stakeholders are some of the participants involved on the complex process of street public space intervention. The development of an intervention deals with the combination of diverse elements: existing plan, buildings and constructions, green structures, infrastructures, etc.

The recent financial crisis has underlined the failures of a system of intervention in the public space as dependent on political power and public investment (Bourdin, 2011). In recent years Portugal witnessed a general reduction in resources available for public works. Following a government commissioned demand, University do Minho conducted a study about municipal investment reduction. The level of municipal investment dropped 74% from 2001 to 2014. During this period the largest investment fall occurred before the Portuguese adjustment program of the troika. Between 2010 and 2014 the lowering of investment situated on 39%, but in absolute terms the reduction was sharper in previous years, starting at the beginning of the decade (Esteves, 2015).

The reduction on the available budget has direct repercussions in promoting public works and maintenance of the public space of the streets. This fact leads to situations of stagnation and degradation of environmental quality of public space. On the other hand we are witnessing a growing civic consciousness about the limitations of local government capacity to respond to the needs and problems that arise in day-to-day citizen life. This awareness is associated with the economic crisis and the dissociation between citizens and the political power. The difficulties of communication and interaction between citizens and political power are accentuated by the ineffectiveness of planning instruments set. At the basis of this problem there is a representation deficit. Citizens do not identify with their decision-makers and decision-makers are unable to establish effective means of sharing or communication their decisions. Considering the municipality of Cascais where participative processes have been successfully implemented it turns out that the number of voting citizens for local elections has consecutively decreased from 2009 on. In the other direction the figures for abstention show an increase tendency (Pordata, 2015).

Looking for solutions to fill the gap of citizen involvement in decisions about the planning of public spaces, local authorities launched initiatives such as the *Orçamento Participado* (Participatory Budget). Referring to the case of the Municipality of Cascais, the focus is placed on the idea of strengthening the participation of citizens in the definition of budget priorities. The total budget

available for the program is Eur 1,5 million/year to be applied in projects that do not exceed 300 000 euros (Cascais, 2015a).

This instrument, which has been spread by various municipalities in Portugal, aims to create a proximity scale and stimulate civic participation of citizen. It represents an attempt to overcome the problems of communication and involvement of citizen in local governance decisions. The process comprises a collection of proposals presented by citizens to a municipal working committee. The multidisciplinary committee legitimates and selects the proposals to be submitted to popular vote. The voting process is held by mobile phone application, a large range access technology. Citizens are consulted on the solution to be implemented, but the development of the project rests under the domain of political power. We are facing what Arnstein (1969) classifies as tokenism. Citizens are heard and informed but do not have the power to ensure that their prospect will be fully answered. The level of participation is on the 3rd and 4th level, which corresponds to Informing and Consultation respectively. These levels of participation do not introduce significant changes on the status quo. The participatory process is focused on the consultation of the existing problems and informing of the selected proposals to be implemented. [Still, development of architectural design decisions still under the control of the local authority](#). However the popular involvement on the Participatory Budget of Cascais is significant. In 2014 the number of voters for the project proposal selection reached 41 005 votes (Pincha, 2015). Looking at the 2013 municipal election (Cascais, 2015b) there were 65 546 voters of a total of 172 537 registered voters. Considering that the political coalition elected (PPD-PSD / CDS- PP) had 26 455 votes, there is a larger number of voters (plus 14 550) on the Participatory Budget process.

The trigger of this research arises with the creation and participation of *Atelier da Rua on Ideias de Origem Portuguesa* (Ideas of Portuguese Origin) an initiative of *Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian*. This competition looked for pertinent projects on social entrepreneurship created by the recent Portuguese emigration. *Atelier da Rua* (Pita, 2014a) was one of the finalists with a working team composed by a three generation group of Portuguese architects, offering multidisciplinary academic experience along with professional skills<sup>1</sup>.

The research followed addressing the issue of improving the process of street design, gathering better, happier and engaged public spaces for and with the citizen. *Atelier da Rua* arises with the prospective goal to find specific and concrete answers to the following questions:

What alternatives can be offered to current dominant participation models of intervention on the public space and the street?

The participation of citizens and their representatives on the development of a urban or building design solution gathers an unanimous agreement of all the agents involved (Arnstein, 1969). Although, this foundation stone of a representative democracy frequently derives to other paths and

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<sup>1</sup> The founding group of *Atelier da Rua* crosses their academic and professional courses at ISCTE - University Institute of Lisbon. Two of the elements are teachers and researchers, the other two were formed in the institution. The professional experience of the group is developed in Lisbon, Paris and Rotterdam, covering different areas and scales in the field of architectural design.

practices that lead to inefficient results concerning the adjustment of the proposal to the users and their expectations. This gap on the fitness between the purpose of a street project and the expected success of the results (Alexander, 1964) is in many situations, in the Portuguese context, related to difficulties on establishing a cooperation process between the various intervenient involved along the process (Bourdin, 2011). In these situations it remains a difficulty to establish a common and comprehensive dialogue between the various stakeholders along the project process and on the use of public space. A dialogue that can gather the different agents - local administrations, technicians and decision makers, street users, inhabitants and stakeholders - in an effective sharing of the decision process and responsibility.

The methodology proposed by *Atelier da Rua* aims to establish a cooperation platform that is able to involve and put in dialogue the citizen, the stakeholders, the design experts and the local political entities. Through this process it is expected an improvement in the planning and design results concerning the streets public spaces. It is also promoted the empowerment of local communities on the work execution and their involvement in a “partnership” (Arnstein, 1969) relationship. To reach the rung 6 of the “Ladder of Citizen Participation” may seem a reduced ambition assumption. Although for the Portuguese context we identified this step of empowerment of the citizens towards the effective sharing of power decision as a crucial one. *Atelier da Rua* participates on the partnership process as mediator and supplier of technical skills. This enables the real possibility to redistribute the power between citizens and power holders (Arnstein, 1969).

In this paper is discussed the participated design methodological approach of *Atelier da Rua*, created in order to develop improvements to conventional design approaches. This article is organized into 3 major parts. Firstly it is explored a conventional architectural design methodology. The approach is grounded on Giancarlo de Carlo text -“An Architecture of the Participation” – that classifies it as an authoritarian methodology. In the second part *Atelier da Rua* street design methodology is exposed. This part is subdivided along the three phases that compose the methodology: Phase 1 Participated sketch, Phase 2 Participated project and Phase 3 Participated working site. On the third part is presented an implementation process located in Lisbon, *Rua do Salvador*.

### **Authoritarian methology**

Before addressing the methodology proposed by *Atelier da Rua*, it is relevant to go through the methodological processes commonly used for the realization of an architectural project promoted by public entities. This methodology it is classified, according to Giancarlo de Carlo, as authoritarian (Carlo, 2010) Design process is defined through different phases of development and implementation of an architectural project. The architectural project is understood, in this article, through a wide scope of view. Urban and built elements, the city structure and its buildings are inseparable universes and part of the whole which is the city (Rossi, 1977).

"An Architecture of the Participation". is the title of an article that, Giancarlo de Carlo wrote in the *Perspecta: Yale Journal*, in 1980. The article approaches the different phases and procedures of project methodology. In a simple and clear perspective the project methodology is addressed on the distinction between an authoritarian planning and a participative approach. According to Carlo (2010), the project methodology is defined in three main phases. The first phase is focused on the **problem definition**. The second corresponds to the **development of the project**, and the third relates to the **evaluation of results**.

The authoritarian methodology is characterized by a rigid sequence of the different phases. The articulation between the different stages is reduced and at the end of the second phase (design) the project is mostly completed. This type of approach is commonly used in the development of architectural projects. It is characterized by being carried out in separate phases in which the results of each phase little interfere with each other. On the other hand the design process is highly centralized in the design phase of the project. The designer, the political power and their technicians assume the central role and monopolize the decision process. This way aesthetic and issues about the use are taken for granted and imposed to a wider group of citizens. In a certain way the users and the use associated to the project end up having a reduced influence on the final result (Carlo, 2010). It is a level 3 (Informing) of tokenism (Arnstein, 1969). Citizens are just informed of the result. The decision-making is kept in the sphere of the political power and the designers. It is an authoritarian approach, centered on the design process of the project, focusing on policy-makers (Carlo, 2010) and designers.

It is now necessary to detail each stage of the authoritarian methodology. The **problem definition** phase starts with the order of the project and the subsequent data collection about the context (Alexander, 1977). At this stage the proceedings fall into an intuitive and non-systematic approach of gathering information. The selection of data and the definition of problems is strongly centered on the designer and policy makers options. The defined goals are taken for granted and the possibility of an expanded discussion with the users is excluded. The issue subject to be discussed is centered on the costs of the operation, technique and aesthetics aspects. The prospect of future users is rarely considered or subjugated to the interests of political power or the designer's idea. The stage of **project design development** runs since the presentation of the first intervention proposals to the conclusion of the project construction. Throughout this period the project is regarded as an absolute entity that responds to the principles set out by the designer (technician) and the public developer. The scope for changes is scarce. In case of inadequacy minor changes are introduced or in extreme cases the solution can be rejected and replaced by another proposal. If the promoter accepts the project, the work will be executed and delivered to their users. Sometimes the users who will use the space are different from those that initiated the project process. However the project keeps unchanged. The users have a small share of influence in the drafting of the project and in the final solution to be built. The knowledge potential of all the involved actors in the process is not fully explored.

The third phase focuses on the **evaluation**. Most often corresponds to a greatly neglected moment. The final work tends to be considered and evaluated exclusively from the aesthetic point of [view](#). The subjective dimension overrides the rational and objective approach. The objective issues accessed focus mainly on financial aspects related to the cost of the work. The overvaluation of the aesthetic and financial components leads to a deterministic perspective. The process as an integrated whole is neglected. The end result is not the result of a broad outlook process, but rather an isolated case that responds to the will of political power and the designer intentions. This corresponds to Giancarlo di Carlo (2010) definition of authoritarian planning.

### **The *Atelier da Rua* proposed methodology**

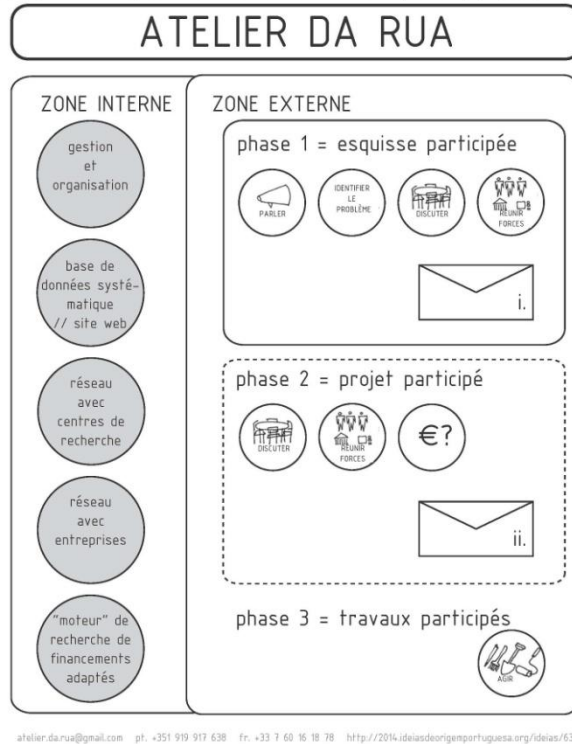
Reacting to a liberal urbanism which has characterized the last three decades with a lack of place for a scientific approach, multiplication of actors and power holders, generating too complex, unclear and incomprehensible operations and languages (Bourdin, 2010), *Atelier da Rua* aims to establish an operative methodology to be implemented. This methodology responds to the current Portuguese context where economic resources are scarce. It aims to answer to local needs and contribute to citizen empowerment through participated projects of streets public space valorization (Fig.1). The process is to be triggered by local and dynamic citizens, associations, municipalities, companies, entrepreneurs, and other institutions. Through a collective architectural design project it is possible to implicate design experts, policy-makers, private and public interests on the support of meaningful social and participative process. Through this form of collaboration it is possible to achieve improvements in the better living on the streets and reach meaningful social changes (Manzini, 2015).

In contrast with the exposed conventional, authoritarian methodology of project, *Atelier da Rua* proposes the overlap between a conventional architectural design methodology with a participatory process (Bourdin, 2011; Slocum,2003). The intersection of these two components pretends to establish an operative methodology of intervention in the public space of the street. It seeks to establish the foundations of an simple and direct instrument to communicate and implement in specific cases. Issues such as programming, architectural design and implementation (Quaroni, 1977) apply and overlap to a bottom-up approach (Mendes, 2014). The proposed methodology develops a blend between a conventional architectural design methodology and a participatory process. The proposed strategy based on the conventional architectural design phases – analysis, architectural design proposal and implementation on building site - and tools – free-hand sketches, plans, sections, detail and axonometric drawings. The working methodology establishes a systematic perspective for each project. Each project is case-sensitive to a particular context, time and space scale.

# STRUCTURE

## COMMENT FONCTIONNE ATELIER DA RUA?

ATELIER DA RUA est une structure avec une "zone" dédiée à son fonctionnement global, et une "zone" dédiée aux projets des RUES in situ. Dans son travail la dimension participative peut être assurée par des méthodes traditionnelles (comités de pilotage, assemblées, réunions, etc...) et d'autres plus innovantes (applications spécifiques de suivi, maquettes 3D in situ, débat dans la RUE et dans les réseaux sociaux, "fête du projet", etc...).



**Figure 1.** Pita, M and Marques, P and Mendes, P (2014b) Atelier da Rua, structure and methodology key phases.

The proposed methodology is implemented in **three main phases**. The holistic approach characterizes the development of the project process. The first one is based on a participated sketch (Fig. 2). The second develops a participated project (Fig. 3); and the third focus on a participated working site (Fig. 4). The three phases represent an architectural design tool, able to develop and link local projects to a global dynamic, based on a simplified and accessible language, allowing establishing a comparison between different case studies. A common and global base and approach is able to generate different scenarios, projects and local solutions. The articulation between each phase establishes an interactive relationship. Each moment of the project effects and influences succeeding and preceding phases. Definition of objectives, solutions, uses and evaluation adjust in a reciprocal mode. The project is an open process (Carlo, 2010).

In each project phase, *Atelier da Rua* defends the experience of a participated process, valuing each actor and their skills towards a dynamic of horizontal empowerment and confidence between actors, developing at the same time an accessible and synthetic architectural design process able to represent, objectivize and expose the problems and the proposed solutions to the different actors towards a co-built-work (Alexander, 1977; Bourdin, 2010).

The engagement, responsibility and valuing of the different actors involved in each project phase is crucial. Users, associations, technicians, politicians, entrepreneurs, institutions, outside professionals, but above all citizens with different skills and sensibilities are the key actors of a collective work. To achieve operative contributors it is necessary to **valorize actors** involved on the creation of a horizontal platform of know-how accumulation and sharing.

The implementation of the methodology of *Atelier da Rua* establishes the foundation stone on the production of architectural design linked to a bottom-up and top-down, global and local process. This way, it is possible to generate efficient, citizen centered public spaces (streets), enabling the public awareness and confidence on the decisions, and generating the sense of belonging to a specific place and community. The apprehension of the specific context (local communities identities, program and resources) along with the effective strengthening of citizen participation on design decision will set the conditions to reach “partnership”, the rung of the ladder where “power is in fact redistributed through negotiation between citizens and power holders” (Arnstein, 1969).

### **Phase 1 - Participated sketch**

This phase corresponds to the starting point of each street design project: an inclusive process of reflection that corresponds to the definition of the foundations and principles of the design project (Fig.2). Within this phase of the **problem definition**, based on a horizontal dialogue and debate between the different implicated actors, the initial context observations, needs, and suggestions are exposed. In this project phase, the various actors work around the problems to solve. This involves facing the management of interests, conflicts and participating on the development of specific project scenarios through a shared decision-making process.

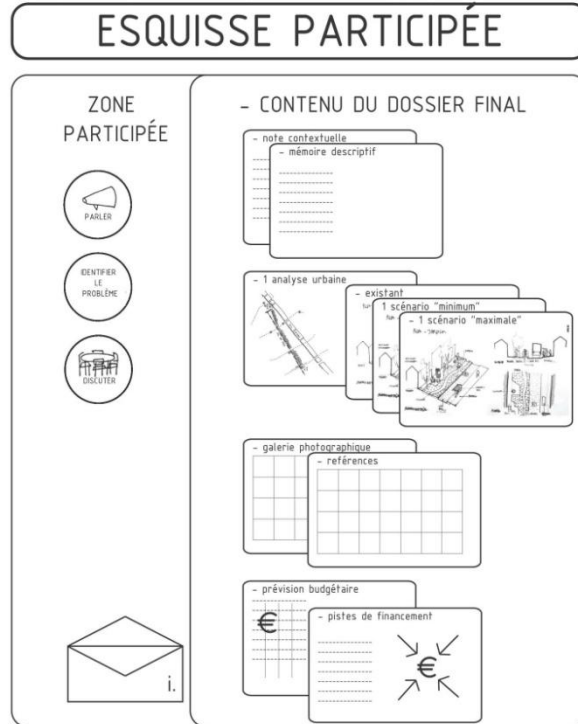
With this phase it is possible to achieve an approach that reinforces a strong link between involved actors. It implies the establishment of notions of trust and respect of different knowledge areas and points of view, entwined in a constructive dialogue between different skills. It is also the moment to implement the construction of a win-win perspective and engagement; the co-construction of a program; and the development of the sense of belonging and responsibility around a common and collective project and work.



# PHASE 1

## L'ESQUISSE PARTICIPIÉE ET SYSTÉMATIQUE: ZOOM SUR LE DOSSIER FINAL

Cette phase révèle l'expérience du processus participatif, le fort contact entre les acteurs et un dossier de synthèse constitué des planches de référence: - 1 note contextuelle - 1 note descriptive - 1 analyse urbaine - 1 dessin de la situation actuelle - 1 scénario «minimum» - 1 scénario «maximum» - 1 galerie de photos - 1 galerie de références - 1 prévision budgétaire - 1 liste des pistes de financement du projet pour la RUE.



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Figure 2. Pita, M et al (2014b) *Atelier da Rua*. Phase 1, participated sketch.

The outputs of this phase materialize on a synthesis folder that defines the current status of this phase. In result of a systematic approach the folder presents: - 1 written note to contextualize the operation and proposed program; - 1 written note about the guide lines of the two proposed design scenarios; - 1 graphic urban analysis allowing the understanding of the integration of the site in a larger urban system and consequent impacts; - 1 base drawing of the current situation (plan, section, axonometric); - 1 drawing of a soft scenario (minimum intervention) - plan, section, axonometric; - 1 drawing of a hard scenario (maximum intervention) - plan, section, axonometric; - 1 gallery of photos participating to the memory of process; - 1 gallery of references reporting similar situation and parallel solutions in other world contexts; - 1 budget forecast for each proposed scenario; - 1 list about project funding options and models adequate to the context.

## Phase 2 - Participated project

This phase develops the analysis, discussion and collective decision about the two proposals established in the previous phase 1. The goal is to produce collectively a definition of the architectural design project principles, the program, the funding and planning, moving forward together towards the working site phase (Fig.3).

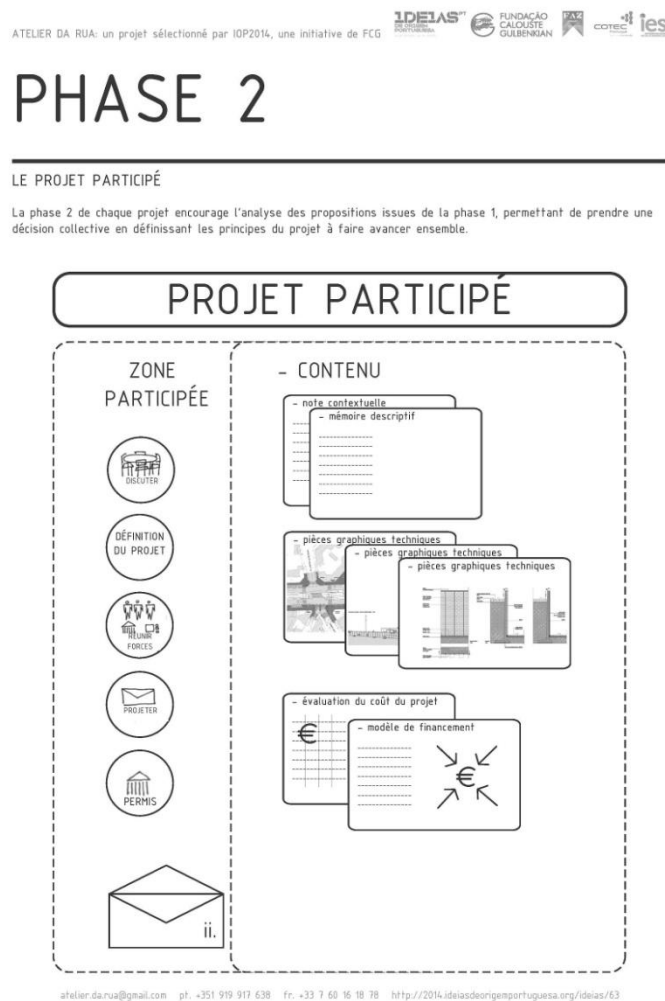


Figure 3. Pita, M et al (2014b) *Atelier da Rua*. Phase 2, participated project.

This phase corresponds to the development of the street design project, based on the collective decisions of the intervenients. In order to achieve a participative process it should be assured the involvement of all the participating agents on a partnership condition. Decisions are taken on a partnership relation, through equity principles between designers, stakeholders, local power representatives and citizen. Within this phase, key debate moments based on a horizontal dialogue

between the different implicated actors will be promoted, in order to achieve a horizontal understanding and participation on project priorities and key decisions.

The development of the project is not seen as a closed process but rather an open sequence of hypothesis subject to evaluation and debate. Adaptability and flexibility are important issues to be incorporate on the project definition.

The selected project solution is detailed allowing testing its technical feasibility. At the conclusion of this phase drawings and written elements are produced, in order to permit the physical implementation of the project. Technical and legal issues of the project are intensely addressed and developed.

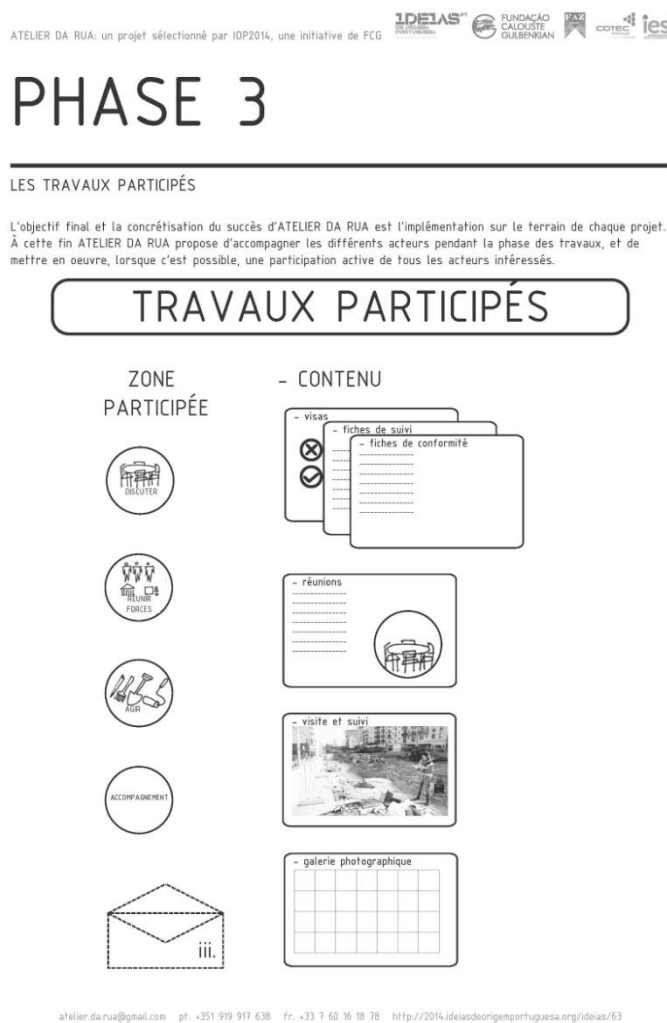
During this phase it is promoted and reinforced: a continuous approach and strong contact between actors; the establishment of notions of trust and respect about different knowledge and points of view; the experience of a participated process; a positive dialogue between different skills; the construction of a win-win perspective and engagement; the co-construction of the architectural design project; and the development of the sense of belonging and responsibility around a common choices and a collective architectural design project.

The outputs of this phase generate a folder constituted by a set of simplified reference boards: - 1 written note to contextualize the operation, previous choices, collective proposed program and architectural design project; - 1 written note about the guide lines concerning the proposed design project; - 1 graphic architectural analysis allowing the understanding of the integration of the site and proposed project in a larger urban system and consequent impacts; - technical drawings of the design project (plans, sections, axonometric); - 1 gallery of photos participating to the memory of process; - 1 gallery of references reporting similar situations and parallel solutions in other world contexts; - 1 budget forecast for the proposed design project; - 1 note about the funding model adopted.

### **Phase 3 - Participated working site**

Phase 3 consists on the physical implementation of the architectural design project on the site (Fig.4). This step towards achieving the project materialization encourages the involvement of the different actors on the working site. This can be reached either by following or actively participating, if skills are available, on the construction of the architectural design project. The traditional process of surveyed working site is partially replaced by an active participation on the working site. Different actors can take an active role, being able to participate through a direct or indirect input. Due to the technical specificities of this phase, architecture experts guide the development and control of construction work.

Within this phase key debate moments will be promoted based on a horizontal dialogue between the different implicated actors, in order to a horizontal understanding and participation on project key decisions of adjustments to the project solution. As an example situations such as the following will be attended: final working drawings validation; need of initial project adjustments due to new evolutions not previewed or lack of information on previous phases; prototypes and materials validation. All the intervenients work together around the problems to solve, and the project to build.



**Figure 4.** Pita, M et al (2014b) *Atelier da Rua*. Phase 3, participated working site.

During this phase will also be promoted: a continuous approach and strong contact between actors; the establishment of notions of trust and respect about different knowledge and points of view; the experience of a participated process; a positive dialogue between different skills; the construction of a win-win perspective and engagement; the co-construction of the architectural design project; and

the development of the sense of belonging and responsibility around common choices and a collective architectural design project.

All the intervenients work together around the problems to solve, and the project to build. During this phase will also be promoted: a continuous approach and strong contact between actors; the establishment of notions of trust and respect about different knowledge and points of view; the experience of a participated process; a positive dialogue between different skills; the construction of a win-win perspective and engagement; the co-construction of the architectural design project; and the development of the sense of belonging and responsibility around common choices and a collective architectural design project.

The construction of the project corresponds to the concretion of the collective design project on site. A registry folder of the process is constituted in order to monitor the whole project. A set of elements integrates this folder: - 1 written note to contextualize the operation, previous choices, collective proposed program, architectural design project and working site decisions; - 1 written note about the guide lines concerning the proposed design project and the final result; - 1 graphic urban analysis allowing the understanding of the integration of the site and its new form in a larger urban system and consequent impacts; - technical drawings of the built design project (plan, section, axonometric); - 1 gallery of photos participating to the memory of process; - 1 gallery of references reporting similar situations and parallel solutions in other world contexts; - the final budget of the participated architectural design project; - 1 critical note about the funding model adopted, facing its positive and negative consequences.

In parallel with the working site development, an architectural design project folder is produced. This allows the possibility to register the development of this phase process and the final results. This way it is possible to **monitor** the process during and after the conclusion of construction. The monitor process involves all the actors with particular emphasis on the inhabitants and users of the street. Through monitor process it is possible to carry out an assessment of positive and negative aspects. This enables the possibility to analyze, systematize and consequently introduce improvements on the methodology used. At first it will be **analyzed** the fit and misfit relation between form and context (Alexander, 1964). The success of the build solution is registered if the absence of misfit relations (between context and form) is reached. Secondly the same procedure is done for the specificities of contents of the participative process and funding model used. The relation between the predicted and the final cost is also registered. With the outcome of monitor process of different interventions it is possible to present, explore and compare in a systematic way the outputs of each process. The outline of a map of the different projects and themes allows the possibility to establish comparisons in a local and global context.

### **Implementation of *Atelier da Rua*: the case study of *Rua do Salvador***

Over the past year *Atelier da Rua* has been presented in Portugal and abroad (France, Italy, Luxembourg, Germany and Sweden). On the one hand several public entities have been addressed: Local authorities, Associations and citizens groups. On the other hand the project was presented in an academic context at conferences and an International symposium in Venice (Mendes, 2014) and Stockholm. This set of actions intended to identify places for the implementation of a pilot project and validate the relevance of the proposal. The feedback has been positive, which has allowed proceeding with the development of contacts and the search for a site for practical application. However until now it was not possible to implement in full extend the proposed methodology. The decision-making and response process of the approached entities has proven slow and winding.

The case presented refers to *Rua do Salvador*, located in the historic center of Lisbon, in the Parish of *São Vicente*. *Rua do Salvador* (Fig 5) is characterized by the specificities of its own physical and environmental characteristics. It is a narrow street lined with black basalt stone and no sidewalks. The existence of one of the first traffic signposts in the street gives it a unique status in the tourist itineraries of Lisbon. This stone signpost attracts a significant number of pedestrian visitors and small vehicles such as Tuc - tuc. The street is flanked with a set of partially degraded residential and commercial buildings mostly occupied by a population of aged residents. This dominant group coexists with new economic activities linked to the increase of tourism in the city of Lisbon. Rental apartments or rooms for tourists coexist with traditional grocery store and coffee shop. It is also possible to find a pottery workshop, an engravings atelier and a small objects antiques shop called "Coisas do Alberto". The owner of this shop approached *Atelier da Rua* looking for support to promote improvements in the street conditions, such as pavement leveling and prevent car traffic. Another request points to the creation of a monthly open sky fair with the participation of all residents of the street. This same claim had already been presented to the parish council. In consequence of political changes in the parish council leadership the population claims produced no response to the request.

A working meeting was promoted. The needs and desires of the merchant were presented. It was found that there was no local organization of residents that would allow the development of the process. It was agreed that it would important to create a group of residents and inhabitants of the street. This group would represent the local community on future developments of the project. To reach this goal it would be necessary to hold a meeting with residents and street traders. The first meeting would also involve the team members of *Atelier da Rua*, allowing the presentation of the procedures followed. During the preparation period to the community meeting the City Hall of Lisbon starts remodeling works in the south section of the public space of the street.



**Figure 5.** Cruz, T (2014) Case study: street in a consolidated historic urban context. *Rua do Salvador, Lisboa.*

At this time the development of the process is facing difficulties in forming a local group of residents and inhabitants that represents the community. The discredit generated by unfulfilled promises by the Parish and the City Hall of Lisbon thickens the difficulty to create a group of representatives of the street's community. Moreover the feeling among residents that remodeling works are likely to be promoted on the street without the involvement of residents and traders, who are unaware of the intentions of the project to be implemented by the municipality.

*Rua do Salvador* process is not closed or stopped. Nevertheless the reported initial difficulty to constitute a group representing the local population of the street is not allowing the development of the street project. Without an organized power-base in the community the process evolution is at risk. Until now the process is characterized for being slow and with plenty of unexpected difficulties.

## **Conclusion**

The complexity and effectiveness of design project for public street spaces requires a high level of integration of disciplinary insights, stakeholders, political representatives and citizen perspectives combined and developed through time constraints and location conditions (context). Therefore, more effective decision supports methodologies, which are able to improve citizen participation on the construction of a better fit between the context and the designed form, are needed. In order to develop an effective methodology that responds to the recent economic Portuguese condition of scarcity and the need of successful project results it is proposed the methodology of *Atelier da Rua*

improved with the principles of partnership - rung 6 of “A ladder of citizen participation” (Arnstein, 1969).

In our view the combination of a conventional project design methodology with a participated one, incremented with the empowerment of citizen leads into a partnership relation. This way it is possible to reach a higher level of fulfillment of the involved intervenient. From a higher involvement of the intervenient and a careful selection of the relevant variables, architectural project design solutions have more chances to effectively respond to context requirements.

The prospects for *Atelier da Rua* will be focused on two mains aspects. [First, the search for a suitable place and their representatives to implement the proposed methodology](#). Private – organized group of citizens - or public – Associations, County, or City Hall – initiatives are welcome and suitable to be developed. Second, *Atelier da Rua* will continue to develop contacts and partnerships that will add value and different perspectives to the project. Investigation, professional, business companies and associative organizations are seen as potentials partners to join and enrich the whole project.

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