

BRAZIL WORKSHOP 2009

PROBLEM ADDRESSED



Salvador da Bahia, with more than 3 million inhabitants, was chosen as our case study because of the housing crisis it is facing and the many housing interventions in a variety of formats. Within this context we explored two very different types of initiatives addressing the housing crisis. In the first week we worked in the neighbourhood of Novos Alagados, where there has been a poverty alleviation programme called Ribeira Azul managed by the state government of Bahia and the

Italian NGO AVSI. In the second week we worked with the roofless movement of Bahia, Movimento dos Sem Teto da Bahia (MSTB), to explore a more grassroots approach of addressing the housing shortage of Salvador.

GOAL ACHIEVED

The workshop exposed participants to the re-housing processes of the urban poor in Salvador da Bahia. The investigation of the two strategies mentioned above generated several reflections on the process of building communities through the process of building houses: Firstly both initiatives have recognised the interest in building on a community spirit, however, for different purposes. The state-led initiative perceived community participation as a process to enhance the



acceptance of the pre-elaborated project. While the grassroots initiative perceived community participation as a mechanism to achieve not only housing outcomes, but the various needs to have a dignified living standard. The result was the identification of a fragmented sense of community in Novos Alagados, leading to frustration and mistrust of governmental initiatives. While in Escada, the influence of the MSTB was a significant player in unifying the community and encouraging a collective spirit, but also realising the threat of encroaching individual's agency.

Date:

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Location:

Salvador de Bahia

ASF Team:

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Partners:

MSTB & Sociedade Primeiro de Maio

Donors:

Course Fees & time donated by ASF team

Project type:

International Workshop

METHODOLOGY OF WORK



Theoretically, the workshop was guided by Amartya Sen's capability approach, which focuses on people's abilities and opportunities to achieve their aspirations. Through both weeks of the workshop, the Capability Approach was applied which guided participants to focus on housing aspirations and residents' freedom to achieve them. The first week participants used photography as a tool to implement Sen's framework. Semi-structured interviews, focus groups and feed back enabled participants to produce posters based on the information collected. During the second week of the workshop, the activities aimed to examine the process of consolidation of the occupations led by the social movement Movimento dos Sem Teto da Bahia (MSTB). The aims of the activities were to clarify the necessary steps the community needed to undertake towards consolidation. To achieve this, participants were divided into three groups: group 1 addressed the house and developed tools to identify housing typologies that would relate to residents' aspirations; group 2 aimed to investigate the occupation as a whole, and elaborated a mechanism to facilitate discussions about the design of the neighbourhood and discussions about size of plots and density, group 3 explored the institutional arrangement and procedures necessary for getting security of tenure, benefits from local government and connection to services.



FUTURE PERSPECTIVE

Through evaluation of the 2009 workshop, creating equal partnerships between stakeholders of all levels proved to be the most dominant weakness. By building networks between institutional, professional and grassroots stakeholders the support needed to continue the efforts of the workshop can be created to form equal partnerships in order to create sustainable development for all parties involved.