



Half a Year in Transition

Creating livelihoods that nurture the local economy

FINAL REPORT

Coordinated by Ana Brazão, Annelieke Van der Sluis and Sara Serrão

From December 2015 to July 2016

www.um-ano.transicaoportugal.net



FOREWORD

The Half a year in Transition project took place in São Luís, Odemira county, from December 2015 to July 2016, as a pilot experience comprised in the One Year in Transition program (1AT).

The 1AT program comes as an adaptation of the One Year in Transition program to the present conditions in Portugal. It proposes to support young adults to thrive by developing livelihoods that are aligned with the Transition principles and was previously developed by the Transition Network in the UK¹.

This Portuguese venture was first suggested by the group "Colmeia"², within the "Transição Portugal"³, the national platform for Transition initiatives, and involved a long and thorough consulting process that consisted on surveys and interviews, involving dozens of people in different transition towns and initiatives all over Portugal. Such complex preparation lasted one and a half year, from 2014 to 2015 and all the documentation can be found at the 1AT site.

At the last quarter of 2015, there was a clear need to start setting in practice the immense amount of gathered insights, to give shape to all the ideas and test them in a palpable experience. So the challenge was undertaken by three persons living in the same area, aware of the lack of economic resources around them and facing the possibility of having to give up on the entire work. The three coordinators committed to a pilot project, lasting six months, Half a Year in Transition (½ AT), inviting young adults living in the area to participate.

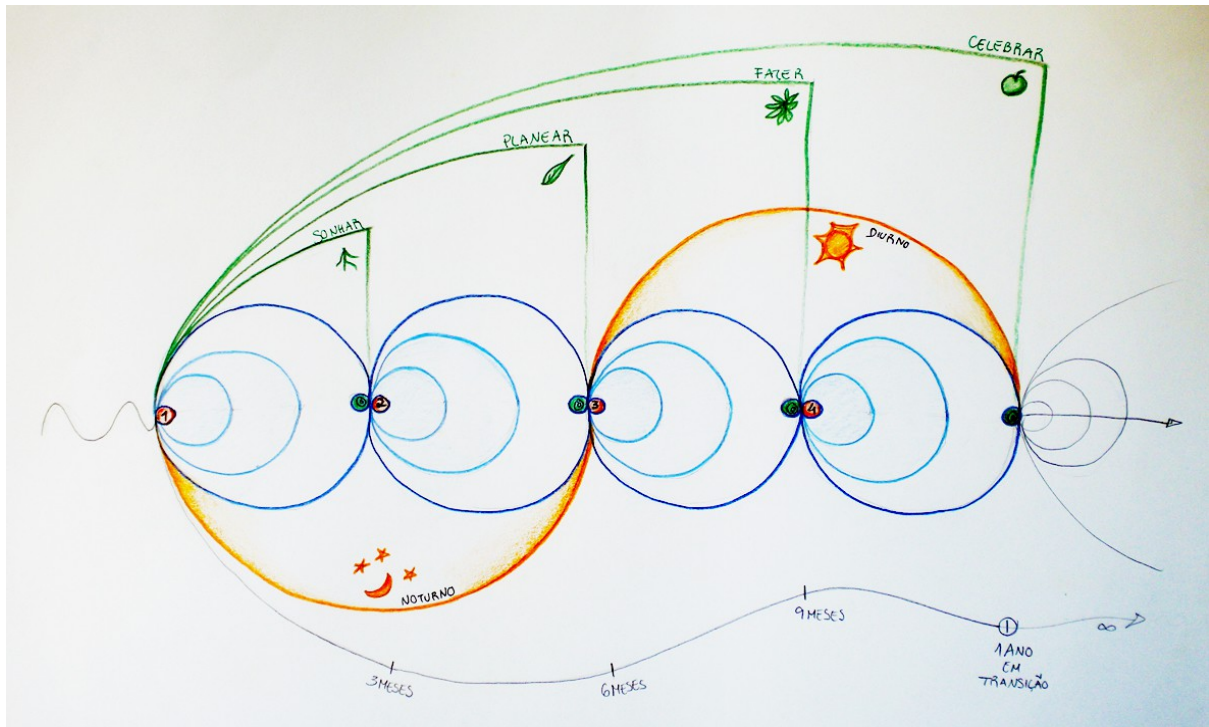
1 ¹One Year in Transition www.oneyearintransition.org | Transition Network www.transitionnetwork.org

2 ²"Colmeia" (beehive) is the name of the work group within the national transition platform, seeing itself as an agro-forest.

3 ³Transição Portugal | www.transicaoportugal.net

The objectives of the ½ AT project are:

- To support young adults in the community of São Luís to establish their life purpose and/or professional projects;
- To benefit the local community of São Luís, strengthening an involving it with this program and supporting personal projects with positive local impact;
- To carry out and evaluate the structure designed for the One Year on Transition project;
- To develop tools;
- To set a viable financial structure for the 1AT program.



Natural structure of 1AT program. Drawing by Filipa Santos.

The pilot project Half a Year in Transition was launched with a flexible structure, open to permanent (re)construction, and compressed for six months (instead of the initially planned 12 months), while maintaining the pre-defined characteristics of the drawing. It included four presential meetings, with support and mentoring throughout the process. We established São Luís as our target-community, instead of considering the whole of continental Portugal, and invited a group of young adults, living in the surrounding area, familiar with Transition's values and aims.

The geographical context in which the pilot took place was the parish of São Luís, a community with approximately 2000 residents, in a sparsely populated region, with a strong sociocultural contrast between local populations — longing for an urban lifestyle — and migrants, both national and foreign, looking for a more sustainable lifestyle, stronger community bonds and close contact with nature. Except one participant, born and raised in São Luís, all participants and coordination team members belong to the second group.

Using the river as a metaphor, we considered each project as a canoe, flowing through its course, learning at every turn. We started the journey together and met a few times, on the islands, which are the presential meetings, knowing beforehand that some canoes would follow alternative meanders, according to each project's needs, and that not all canoes would follow the collective stream. For we clearly offered the setting, the river, the riversides, the islands, but not the final destination, focusing instead on the process itself, monitoring and supporting it, while leaving the end result open.

On each meeting the process would follow the unfolding of the spiral [individual > group > community]. Below is the structure of four days meetings.

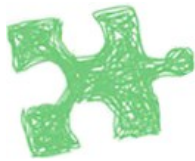
- Day 1 - Exploring, introducing concepts, setting them in common ground.
- Day 2 - Identifying.
- Day 2 - Solidifying and strengthening.
- Day 4 - Integrating, openness to what will follow.



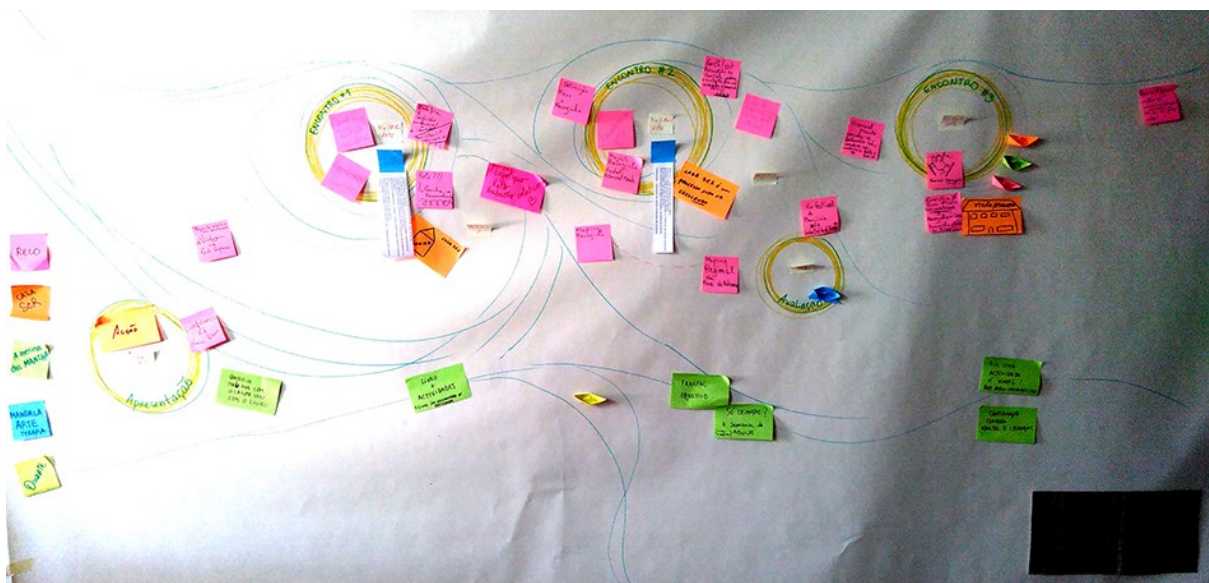
THE CALLING, THE COMMITMENT, AND THE VIDEO

Having established São Luís as our target-community, we invited young adults from the surrounding region (within a 30 km range) to participate in the pilot project Half a Year in Transition (½ AT). On December 2015 the calling took place, with 12 young adults attending. It consisted in a presentation of the project⁴, and a validation of the proposal using the cafe style interview tool⁵, establishing all the participants' commitment and co-responsibility regarding individual and group processes.

The projects started the ½ AT program by making a video presentation. These video presentations enabled to consolidate all the latent ideas related to the professional project, and they were also used further along as an evaluation tool of the projects' development.



THE RIVER HALF A YEAR IN TRANSITION AND ITS FLOW



The River ½ AT and its flow. July 2016

4 ⁴ For consultation [Documents ½ AT] Presentation of ½ AT Program * June 2015

5 ⁵ For consultation [Tools ½ AT] Interview over Coffee Tool Guide * March 2015

The journey Half a Year in Transition (½ AT) started with 10 persons and 6 canoes, that is, 6 participating projects:

- **Casa SeR** | Project developed throughout ½ AT process. A family shelter for the unprotected youth.
- **A Menina das Manchas** | Project defined at ½ AT calling phase. Children's book.
- **Recozinha** | Project developed throughout ½ AT process. Ethical kitchen, cooking for events with local and ecological products.
- Mandala Art Therapy | Therapeutic services and products.
- Freelance Consultant | Land-use planning and Low-Impact Development.
- 1AT | One Year in Transition program.

Of the six participating projects, three sailed to the end of ½ AT. About the remaining ones, Freelance Consultant gave up the idea after the first meeting, once its proponent realized the insufficiency of local demand for these services as well as the advantages of networking with other local professionals and institutions. Mandala Art Therapy had to stop after the second meeting due to family concerns. And the sixth project, 1AT made clear how inadequate it would be to provide a program and hold space for a process while attending it at the same time.

Of the 12 persons present on the first meeting, 10 accepted the commitment to the ½ AT, and 7 attended the pilot project until the end.

During the year 2016 there were three presential meetings — in February (4 days), April (4 days) and July (3 days), and two project check points, all provided by the 1/2AT coordination team, with a few interventions by the participants. Besides these meetings, there was a collective intermediate evaluation meeting in June, facilitated by an outsider to the project. None of the participating projects solicited the mentoring available throughout the project. The fourth meeting, predicted in the initial drawing of the program, was merged into the third meeting. The decision took into account the absence of input from the participants after the second meeting, and the several postponements of the third meeting, for it was hard to find a suitable date for everyone in the Summer to have the fourth presential meeting.

The three meetings had the following nature and aims:

- 1st Meeting | Seed : Dreaming | Personal development and group building. Chaos and order dichotomy.
- 2nd Meeting | Plant : Planning | The project's strategic envisioning. Intuition and logic dichotomy.
- 3rd Meeting | Flower and fruit : Implementing and celebrating | Testing the fractal and harvesting the benefits of the process.

The meetings took place in São Luís, in spaces provided by the local community. The participants prepared most of the meals, and members of the São Luís community offered three lunches.

After launching the project, we had two financial backings, one by the Rainmaker Foundation (£ 1500), and a monthly contribution by a private donor. Such a support allowed to cover expenses and to offer each of the coordinators a 600 € "prize of courage", for daring to set forth on this enterprise and dedicating a year to the preparation, establishment, and conclusion of the pilot project.

For documenting the ½ AT process, and providing useful information about the skills and tools developed, we got the support of the Hubs Grants.



TESTIMONIES

RECO AT THE HALF A YEAR IN TRANSITION PROGRAM

First meeting Half a Year in Transition | Rita's testimony * March 2016



Rede Cooperar (ReCo, Cooperating Network) participates in the Half a Year in Transition Program, aiming to get insights regarding its structural, social and economic viability...

This first meeting — TO DREAM — focused on the inner discovery of the self, addressing it as a personal and collective relationship dynamic, with exercises that helped understand how sick dynamics (personal or collective) can evolve to become healthy again. There was also a conceptual approach regarding both what the Local and Glocal Transition Movement is; from its origins to Reconomy. We played games that allowed a better visualization and understanding of the Dream of each participant/project, which was very helpful for setting priorities and figuring out the next steps to take. A few ethical standards were set in practice along the program: such as a 40 minutes yoga practice every morning, cooking with our own vegetable garden produce, and a "cabaz da horta" (farmer's basket) and shared rides, having gift economy as a basis.

Surely, during these days, questions have arisen... How to give voice to the Cooperating Network? How to be the voice of all ReCo projects? On which kind of architecture is it settled upon?

We understood that ReCo is the glue that ties several individual and collective projects!

We decided (Rita Magá and Lucie) to take charge of a project of ours as a work subject for this program: to provide an ethical kitchen/canteen for the "Essencialmente" festival, to take place on the 11th and 12th June at Santiago do Cacém.

[...]

Full testimony (in portuguese) at <http://um-ano.transicaoportugal.net/2016/03/17/reco-no-programa-meio-ano-em-transicao-sonhar/>

CARLOTA EREIRA AT THE HALF A YEAR IN TRANSITION PROGRAM - OPENING

First meeting Half a Year in Transition | Carlota's testimony * March 2016



This week, taking the first step was hard. To open my inner door, to get out of this box and connect with others... To follow the winds and get in this river! The guilt, the victim, the lesser one, the one without knowledge, the one without, the one without, THE ONE WITHOUT... AAHHH...

But I opened the door. An angel came to me; yes I can call you that. You were instrumental for breaking the chains. The sharing, the group, the listening, were then and are still enriching. Growth becomes apparent, but so do the knots as they start to unravel, there is a light, a way, a beginning of fulfilment, of the will. The acknowledgement of others and myself, taking part in the universe.

I thank, I thank myself, I thank the group deeply.

I hope my roots keep growing down and becoming strong, so they can connect to each one of you, may this connection be strong and fluid, without thoughts of stepping back. Always go forward. Forward, always.

TO MODEL | April 2016

Second meeting Half a year in Transition | Sara's testimony * May 2016

The idea for the next piece of art arrives to the Sculptor. The image of this new piece comes from the unfathomable reaches of the soul, from imagination, in the mind of those who have a message to impart or a feeling to be expressed. Let us give the Sculptor a piece of clay so he can model it! This way it will be possible to try out in matter those sought after sensory images.

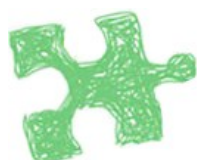
In the heart and mind of the ½ AT participants comes the idea of a project. We suggest a structure so they are able to model their ideas, making the proposal clearer with time. The clay we deliver is the Business Canvas, the strategy is visual thinking; we suggest to play an Empathy Model in which one embodies the potential clients — the so called beneficiaries of the gifts and offerings each one of us wishes to bring to the community. In a fantasy elevator trip we present our projects to each other. We went through schemes, improvisations, interviews, talks and walks, certainties and perplexities, during the four days of the second meeting of the very pilot experiment of ½ AT.





ISLANDS: PRESENTIAL MEETINGS SUMMARY OF PARTICIPATIONS

1st meeting February '16	2nd Meeting April '16	3rd Meeting July '16
Nr persons attending: 10 Nr facilitators: 3 Nr participants: 10 Nr projects: 6	Nr persons attending: 8 Nr facilitators: 3 Nr participants: 8 Nr projects: 5	Nr persons attending: 7 Nr facilitators: 3 Nr participants: 5 Nr projects: 3
Facilitators: Annelieke van der Sluijs Sara Serrão Ana Brazão	Facilitators: Annelieke van der Sluijs Sara Serrão Ana Brazão	Facilitators: Annelieke van der Sluijs Sara Serrão Ana Brazão
Participants: * Annelieke van der Sluijs 1AT * Sara Serrão 1AT * Ana Brazão SeR + 1AT * Duarte Sobral Freelancer * Filipa Saramago M. Arte Terapia * Tiago Jesus M. Arte Terapia * Carlota Ereira M. das Manchas * Rita Magalhães RECO * Patrícia Caldeira RECO * Lucie Rousset RECO	Participants: * Annelieke van der Sluijs 1AT * Sara Serrão 1AT * Ana Brazão SeR + 1AT * Tiago Jesus M Arte Terapia * Carlota Ereira M das Manchas * Rita Magalhães RECO * Lucie Rousset RECO * Duarte Sobral Group support	Participants: * Ana Brazão SeR * Carlota Ereira M. das Manchas * Rita Magalhães RECO * Lucie Rousset RECO * Patrícia Caldeira RECO
Projects: 1AT SeR Freelance Consultant Mandala Arte Terapia Menina das Manchas RECO	Projects: 1AT SeR Mandala Arte Terapia Menina das Manchas RECO	Projects: SeR Menina das Manchas RECO



CONTENTS AND TOOLS

Coordination and facilitation team: Ana Brazão, Annelieke van der Sluijs and Sara Serrão, of the São Luís Transition initiative / Colmeia (Beehive) One Year in Transition.

The documents marked [Documents ½ AT] and Tool Guides [Tools ½ AT] are available for consultation.

- Objectives
- Presenting the projects and invitation to participate;
 - Making an individual and Group Commitment;
- Documents
- [Documents ½ AT] Presentation of the Program 1AT * June 2015;
- Tools
- [Tools ½ AT] Interview over Coffee Tool Guide * March 2015;
 - Web Dynamics tool.

15 to 18 February 2016 | **1st Meeting** | Casa do Povo de São Luís (São Luís Community Centre)



Framework:

- Seed : Dreaming;
- Personal development and group building;
- Chaos and order dichotomy.

Objectives:

- Group building: getting to know each other deeply, establishing relationships of trust;
- To know each other's projects;
- To establish a common language: regarding Transition movement's key concepts + Reconomy project;
- To clarify the connection between inner and outer transition;
- To identify, externalize and transform the narratives about our selves and our projects;
- To identify developmental areas, as individuals and as a team, and to draw the following steps;
- To open a space for individual and collective dreams;
- To identify the individual and the groups' support structures.



Lunch offered by the community: Chris Bird (Transition Totnes)

Tools:

- Climate Change Card Game Tool;
- Self-analysis Walk Tool;
- Visualizing a post-Transition future Tool;
- [Tools ½ AT] Web Dynamics Tool Guide * March 2017

4 to 7 April 2016 | 2nd MEETING | Moon mother's house



Framework:

- Plant : Planning;
- Project's strategic envisioning;
- Intuition and logic dichotomy;
- Lifestyles, analysis, Reconomy, mapping the territory's resources, our specific economy: in which ways our needs and offers are complementary (within this specific group), social and ecological impacts analysis.

Objectives:

- Developing our project's strategic vision;
- Knowing the Business Canvas's visual method;
- Deepening the understanding of our proposal's value, to satisfy the needs of the community's and of our target groups;
- To have knowledge of the empathy Maps and interview styles;
- To map partners and key resources;
- To formulate a clear and concise way of communicating the project;
- Introducing the 3rd meeting's dynamics.

Tools:

- [Tools ½ AT] Flow of the Business Canvas Tool Guide * March 2017.



Framework:

- Flower and Fruit : Implementing and celebrating;
- Action: testing the Fractal | Celebration: harvesting the benefits of the process.

Previous Objectives:

- To settle the "fractal" proposals' loose ends and to test them;
- To look backwards and forwards: to define and value the fruits of ½ AT, understanding the high and low tides we live in and looking forward.

Objectives defined by the participants:

- Each project: set a fractal on trial;
- Creativity in the kitchen and in the work in general;
- Figure out how to present a Menina das Manchas (fractal) from head to toes!
- Communicating the project; how to support Casa Ser?
- To create an exhibition of the work done;
- To understand the individual and collective value of the ½ AT journey;
- To have the intuition for the next step;
- To conclude and to celebrate our journey together.



Lunch offered by the community: at Diogo and Carlota's place



FINAL THOUGHTS

Our conclusion is that the pilot project was a very intense process, with a lot of good and a lot to be improved.

Considering the predefined goals, we succeeded concerning the following elements:

- We supported young adults in the São Luís community, in achieving and evaluating their projects, individually or collectively, whether they fared or not until the end of the ½ AT journey;
- We humbly contributed to strengthening the local community of São Luís, with an aging population, by engaging it in a program involving young adults;
- We developed tools that we share with the national and international Transition Networks, and with whoever may be interested.

We did not achieve a viable financial structure to the 1AT program.

As for the evaluation of the drawing of the structure, we point out:

Solid elements, to be continued:

- The general structure of the program is good, with distinct characteristics in the 4 presential meetings: 1) self knowledge and group building; 2) logic and organization, planning the project; 3) implementation of the fractal project; 4) Harvest and celebration;
- The cyclical approach of Self/Team > Project > Community is solid;
- The general structure of the 1st meeting;
- The use of the Business Canvas⁶ as a base tool, introduced as a game in exploratory dynamics, can be enriched with results of the 1st meeting (regarding personal resources);
- Implementation of the fractal projects in the community.

Elements to be improved (or not to be replicated):

- The participation in the program must be done by self-initiative and not by invitation;
- Participants' engagement and closeness to the target community, as well as their availability to dedicate time and energy to the process, must be selection criteria;
- Coordination and facilitation should be properly rewarded financially. The overall financial structure of the program is to be improved;
- Mentorship in the intermediate moments (between the presential meetings) is necessary for the participants and projects and for the health of the group; its activation by the participants should be mandatory. Therefore these intermediate times should be reconsidered and redrawn, to include: facilitation for the establishment of personal mentoring for each one of the participants, with regular meetings throughout 1AT; regular Skype meetings among the participants, for group building; greater empowerment and responsibility of the participants regarding the needs of the group during the intermediate times;

⁶ For consultation [[Tools ½ AT](#)] Interview over Coffee Tool Guide * March 2015

- Communication. Improve the internal communication, namely explaining the program to the participants, as well as the outward communication of the participants' projects. It is necessary to communicate more clearly to the participants, before starting 1AT, the different contents and characteristics of the meetings, that they are to be attended in presence, and the need to be available during the intermediate times for the development of the projects;
- Introduction and formulation of the fractals' implementation timing must be improved;
- Develop a dynamic for assessing the social and environmental impacts of the projects.

Concluding, during the pilot project ½ AT we acquired a very good set of tools, which we consider useful to support young adults aiming at creating their lifestyles. This knowledge is ready to be re-applied as a 1AT program in another Transition initiative in Portugal, providing there is a good financial structure. It is also possible to facilitate specific moments in the development of projects, by applying specific tools.



SUMMARY OF ½ AT TOOLS

Throughout the implementation of the pilot project ½ AT we used a set of tools, some of which were specially designed for the occasion. Of the already available tools, we resorted to the dynamics of the Transition Launch Course, created by Transition Network, namely:

- Transition Principles;
- Climate Change Card Game;
- Guided Meditation: visualizing a day in a future where the Transition already took place.

We created the following tools, available to be replicated

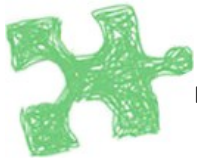
- **Interview over Coffee** | [Tools ½ AT] Interview over Coffee Tool Guide * March 2015
- **Self Analysis Walk** | For more information please contact SeR:
(https://www.facebook.com/sentirerefletir/?hc_ref=PAGES_TIMELINE&fref=nf)
- **Web Dynamics** | [Tools ½ AT] Web Dynamics Tool Guide * March 2017
- **Business Canvas Flow** [Tools ½ AT] Business Canvas Flow Tool Guide* March 2017



FINAL WORDS

"One must still have chaos in oneself to be able to give birth to a dancing star." (Nietzsche)

"Shit makes very good compost" (Lucie Rousset)



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FINAL REPORT Half a Year in Transition

Wording * Sara Serrão

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São Luís, March 2017

