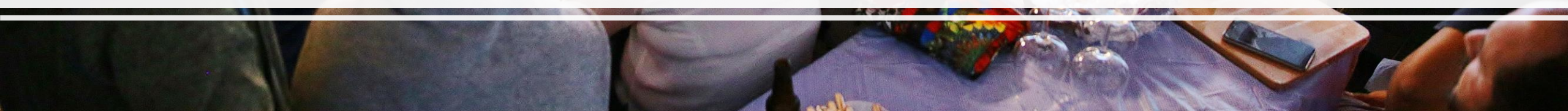




Mértola, Laboratory for the Future



demography

Very low population density

Human desertification

Area: 1,292.87km²
Inhabitants 2018: 6 202
Population Density: 4.8 inhabkm²
35.6% of residents are over 65

semiarid climate

High vulnerability to climate change and extreme weather events

Hot and dry summers;
Precipitation between 457 mm and 590 mm with decreasing tendency;
Annual average temperature rise;
Increase in extreme weather events
[heat waves; torrential rains; cyclonic winds; extreme droughts]

landscape

High vulnerability to desertification.

Shallow soils very exposed to erosion
Extremely high levels of water stress
Low water holding capacity
High evapotranspiration and salinization
vegetation degradation
Agricultural practices (livestock)



landscape management

106 villages, 4.8 inhabitants per Km²
Large land system - 131 ha medium
Agricultural practices (livestock)
Inadequacy of agricultural policies and practices
60% of the territory as a protected natural area: Natural Park of Guadiana Valley

economy

Low business density
Subsidized agriculture
Prevalence of the tertiary sector (dependence on public employment)
Low level of productivity and competitiveness
Low purchasing power and low income population

infrastructure and services

Loss of proximity services [health, education,...];
Deficit of basic infrastructures (water, sanitation, road network);
Housing supply deficit
Poor mobile and internet coverage
accessibility and mobility - lack of a public transportation system

governance

centralizing policies
absence of a civic culture and citizen participation
hierarchical relations
deficit in networking

biodiversity sanctuary

Guadiana Valley Natural Park (60%)



mosaic landscape

Guadiana valley and riparian galleries; pseudo-steppe; scrub areas; Montado holm oak forest; pine areas, wetlands, rainfed agriculture areas .



culture and heritage

Part of the national Tentative List for UNESCO World Heritage sites



place of knowledge and scientific research

40 years of continuous archaeological research



social capital

resilient community and territory





resilience



Mértola, a Laboratory for the Future

Response from a resilient and restless community that believes in a more sustainable future!

mértola . laboratory for the future
action and reseach áreas already in place

**AGROECOLOGICAL
TRANSITION**



Local Agenda for agroecological transition, Ecosystem restoration, climate change and desertification.

**CULTURE &
HERITAGE**



Cultural literacy as a factor of social and territorial cohesion. Heritage as a factor of sustainable development.

**EDUCATION
TRAINING
LITERACY**



Mértola, as pilot territory for testing educational solutions adapted to very low density territories.

**GOVERNANCE
NETWORKS
COMMUNITY**



Collaborative leadership and co-creative models. Systemic approaches to the territory.

**SOCIAL AND TERRITORIAL
COHESION**

**LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT
URBANISM
HOUSING
CONNECTIVITY [ACCESSIBILITY,
MOBILITY, DIGITAL]
QUALITY OF LIFE**



For an inclusive, resilient, safe and sustainable territory.

**THE NEW RURAL
ECONOMY**



For a new rural economy: multifunctionality, territorial specialization, sustainability and transition. Rural-urban interface



AGROECOLOGICAL TRANSITION



Local Agenda for agroecological transition, Ecosystem restoration, climate change and desertification.

the path...



15.10.2018



15.01.2019



the path...

Formal and non-formal education

Forest (Syntropic) Gardens in 5 primary schools - AECs

Food education activities for children



the path...



the path...

Formal and non-formal
education: community
empowerment

Night at the market



The path ...

Peer Learning / Communities of Practice

Participation of local farmers in courses, seminars and workshops;

Communities of Practice:

Visit to international reference projects

Visits between farmers in Mértola

Visit to Projects with agroecological and regenerative farming practices such as Key line system, Holistic grazing(Herdade das Defesinhas, Monte do Seixo, Herdade da Ribeira Abaixo)





research &
development

Demonstration Center in Agroecology

Research centre

- Production, Demonstration and Monitoring of different regenerative farming techniques .
- Garden and Nursery of the Forgotten Varieties of Al-Andaluz.

research & development

agenda for innovation, scientific research, interface with knowledge installed in the territory; research-action; monitoring; transfer of knowledge and technologies.



Mértola Biological Station

Technology Transfer and Valorization Center

Biodiversity, Agroecology and Wild Resources

Innovation in territorial contexts of vulnerability to climate change and desertification in a semi-arid (Mediterranean) context: knowledge as a factor of social and territorial cohesion.



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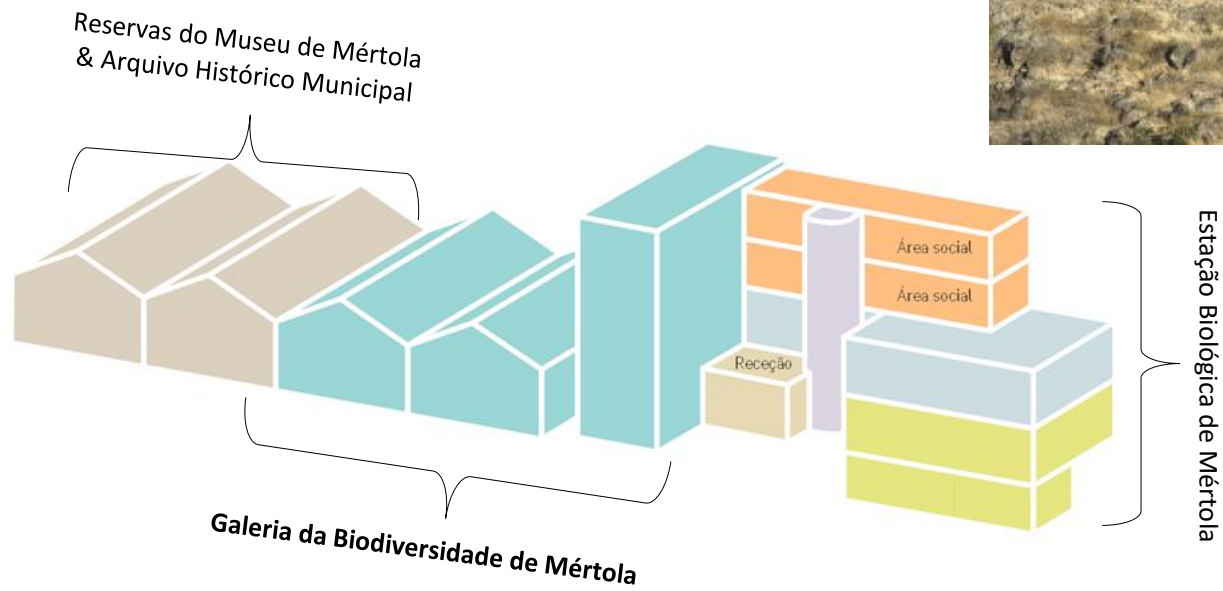




Centro de Conhecimento
Cultura & Natureza



aNC
arquitectos



- laboratórios
- alojamento
- bar, esplanada + salão
multiusos, auditório

Mértola Food System

Network of Gardens



**Associação
Montícola**
Restaurante Vila
Velha



Horta da Moura
Restaurante Espaço
Casa Amarela
Café Guadiana



Rosmaninho Verde
Horta da
Malhadinha



**Horta Social do Centro
de Apoio de Idosos da
Moreanes**



**Horta do Combral
Casa do Povo de
Santana de
Cambas**



Hortas Comunitárias do Convento
Mértola

...

Mértola Food System

Land Exchange

- 1st Phase - Training in Agricultural Context
- 2nd Phase - Test and autonomous learning with tutoring
- 3rd phase - Land Exchange / partnerships with local owners

Support:

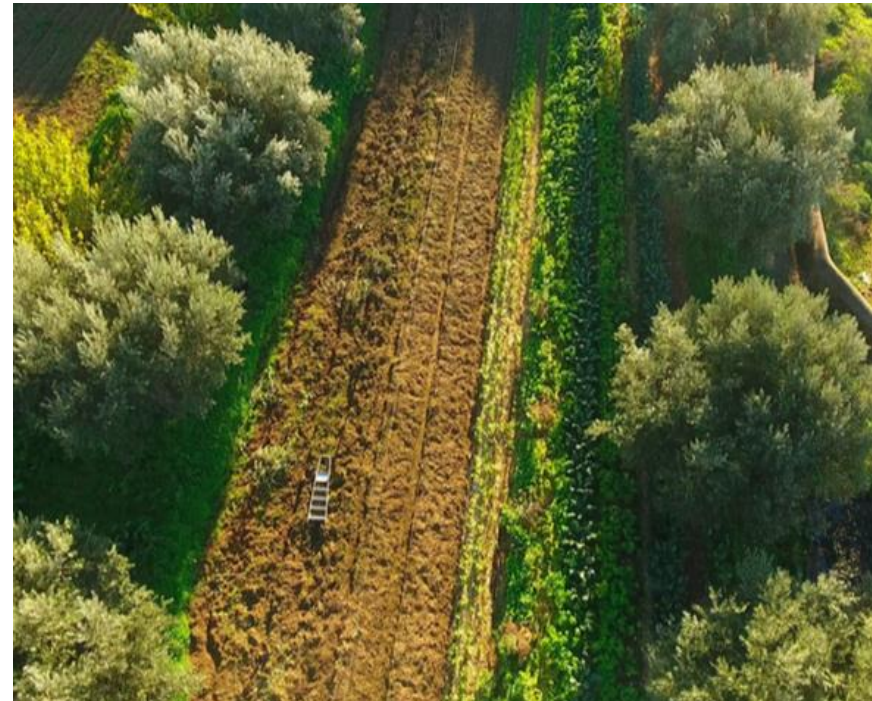
Training and Mentoring;

Accommodation and meals in the 1st phase;

Minimum Guaranteed Income 2nd and 3rd phases;

Possibility to test without fear of making mistakes;

Flow through the Local Food Network.



Short circuits

Selling in local markets

Municipal Market of Mértola

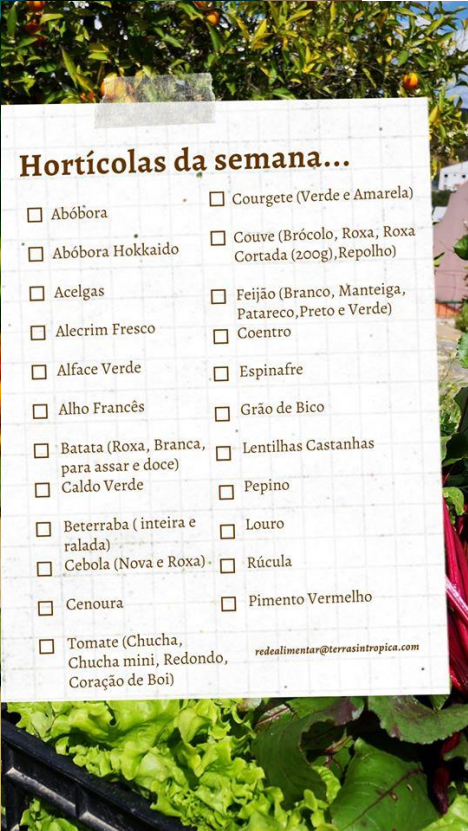
Municipal Market of Mina de S. Domingos





[Collaboration between farmers:fruit and vegetable boxes . Home delivery](#)

On March 20, 2020, Terra Sintrópica, in partnership with AEVG, the Professional School ALSUD and the Municipality of Mértola, started direct distribution, at home, of baskets of vegetables and bio fruits, as well as purchases from local businesses.



[Collaboration between farmers: From baskets at home to a Regional Food Basin](#)

With the increase in demand, the Local Food Network established commercial partnerships with other local and organic producers in the southern region of Portugal, allowing to have a diversified offer of organic products from family farming.



Collective Catering Canteens
Schools, Social Institutions



Local Producers Markets Street Markets

Promotor: [CMM - PDR2020, AEVG](#)



Frescos
sobre Rodas
REDE ALIMENTAR DE MÉRTOLA

Frescos sobre Rodas Fresh on Wheels

[Local Production Fresh Baskets](#)
[Local producers online trading platform](#)
[Municipal Markets](#)
[Delivery service with electric vehicle](#)

Promotor: [CMM - Fundo Ambiental](#); [Rede Alimentar de Mértola](#); [AEVG](#); [Ass. Terra Sintrópica](#)
<https://www.frescosdemertola.pt/>



multiplier effect ...



A Cozinha da Avó Grandma's Kitchen

[Healthy Eating, Innovation and Social Entrepreneurship](#)

[Collaborative Gardens](#)

[Cooking Academy](#)

[Food Lab](#)

[Pop Up Restaurant](#)

[Casa do Povo de Santana de Cambas](#)




Espaço Casa Amarela
[Vegetable Garden](#)
[Restaurant](#)
[Workshops](#)



Espaço Vila Velha

[Vegetable Garden](#)
[Restaurant](#)
[Workshops](#)

[Promotor: Associação Montícola](#)



Main current challenges of the Project

- Collective organization model (which is the ideal model, need for organizational innovation);
- Difficulty in giving technical response to new volunteers and participants, who want to integrate the project (we are few to do much);
- Need for permanent infrastructure (with urgent needs in view of the evolution of the project and the future potential).



Thank you so much!