



What is happening and what popular organizations can do, really, to challenge the crisis unveiled by COVID 19

More than 90 million infected and 2 million dead¹, a further 9% of the world's impoverished population, i.e. a further 750 million on all continents, affected by the growing health, economic and social crisis. Meanwhile, the profits of 32 big companies have increased by \$ 109 billion in a few months².

The right to health, housing and security of the territory, to the city, to social protection, are violated for the vast majority of the inhabitants of houses and slums, under eviction due to the housing market and poverty. The 1.8 billion inhabitants who live in cramped, overcrowded, homeless, sometimes without even water or sanitation, are penalized in access to health care and necessary precautions, thus paying the highest price.

Due to the inability to pay rent or mortgage, or under the pretext of rehabilitating areas infected by the Coronavirus, as in the past for other pandemics, or of resilience to climate change in urban settlements and indigenous inhabitants' territories, a global tsunami of evictions and displacements of inhabitants, families and communities from places that will be exploited in the subsequent speculative re-proposition of the economy, is being prepared. In many cases, the ruling classes are already defending their privileges by evicting illegally, even with paramilitary violence.

These data reveal the injustice and structural failure of neoliberal policies in dealing with the pandemic, which exacerbate the migration crisis caused by ongoing wars and inequalities between North and South. In fact, where there is not even an adequate public intervention to bring some relief, the affected populations migrate more and more, at risk of their lives, from cities to the countryside like in India, or from South America to the USA, or across the Mediterranean.

Data that make us understand the roots of the increase in structural, gender-based, racist violence.

It is increasingly worrying not only the increase in violations of human rights of the working and middle classes, but also the repetition of the old recipes to solve the crisis without questioning its root causes. In fact, many governments and supranational institutions are pumping huge amounts of resources, in general only to reactivate the neoliberal system and control the society. For example, by offering some money for the cost of housing, but not for public and social housing policies, the real alternative to real estate speculation and housing insecurity.

This choice, supported by the financialization of the economy, i.e. injecting massive amounts of currency without redistributing resources or taxing large assets, is a cause of public debt. In order to repay it, a hard season of cuts in social policies and privatizations of common goods, including the neo-colonial extraction of resources, is looming on the horizon.

Therefore, the popular organizations emphasize the commitment on the front of healthcare, food and defense of the right to housing, while fighting for structural changes.

A mobilization, in particular the [Zero Evictions Campaign for Coronavirus](#), now a joint global platform, which is consolidating alliances with progressive governments and local authorities, as well as with the UN Rapporteur on the Right to Housing. Mobilisation and struggles that succeed in achieving concrete results for the emergency, including a moratorium on evictions and rents, in many countries on all continents. In some cases they also obtain funds for alternative structural policies, for example the possibility of funding the public housing sector with the post-COVID Recovery Fund of the European Union.

This is what the popular organizations in the front line teach: [solidarity and re-existence to the crisis](#), not mere resilience, i.e. adaptation to its effects.

The struggle is to re-exist: resisting by questioning the causes of the crisis, reviving our lives and those of our communities through alternative policies.

Fundamental is solidarity in the defense against attacks and the growing authoritarian repression of activists for the right to housing, with the human rights defenders committed daily at the risk of their health, freedom and life.

 **[Click here to sign the Call and participate in the Virtual World Assembly of Inhabitants on 11/12/2020!](#)**

¹ World Health Organization <https://covid19.who.int/>

² Oxfam <https://www.oxfam.org/en/press-releases/pandemic-profits-companies-soar-billions-more-poorest-pay-price>