

WE ARE THE CURE.

There is no more time. For the planet, for our world, for our lives.

We are the cure. We care.

Covid 19 has revealed truths and evidence until now hidden or repressed, which are instead the dramatic causes of the consequences of the pandemic: an increasingly sick planet, an increasingly unfair world and increasingly tiring lives.

For the first time millions and millions of women and men have simultaneously shared fears, anguish, pain, isolation and loneliness. The fragility of our bodies and our lives, the interdependence of relationships and the need to care for life have suddenly become clear. This incredible collective experience today cannot find a voice and so it is not heard.

The inertia of the old ideas remain undisputed as do the models that have proved to be a failure, which have produced more and more poverty and precariousness and shown the ineffectiveness of investments and public policies, the greed of the market which transforms primary needs into services to be consumed. Stereotypes are repeated, accepting the sexual division of labour as a natural order, leaving women without freedom. And the arrogant illusion, that the emergency phase will pass and that we will eventually return to normal, still persists.

But Covid denies any continuity and puts caring at the centre – of others, of ourselves, of the conditions of life, nature and democracy, declaring them definitively incompatible with the interests of a profit economy. The subject of caring, in its political meaning, is unavoidable as a guide to another vision of the world, of society, of human relations. Only if the change is radical, will the cultural unveiling of the value of caring in terms of rights and freedoms be a multiplier.

For this reason, just as in Europe completely new scenarios are opening up and for the first time the taboo of austerity, the tyranny of financial compatibility and budget balances is being broken, and, also for our country, there is an unrepeatability opportunity to use the enormous resources of the Recovery Fund, we say: “We are the cure”.

We are not a category, we are not a chapter of inclusion policies in the Recovery Fund Guidelines. Nor can we be valued only in the chapter of “demographic growth”. Or violence against women.

We are the cure.

As women we were protagonists in the lockdown but today we are the most penalized

by the crisis, we lose our jobs much more than men and we don't even look for one anymore. Despite the rhetoric of those months, we have been set aside, indeed re-functionalized as a structural compensation for the lack of public services essential to life. Schools, the right of boys and girls to education and citizenship, are still thought of by many as a means of reconciling women's jobs. And instead of investing in social infrastructures, where among other things female employment is prevalent, the priorities of the country's recovery plan remain the other infrastructures: those of motorways and high speed railways. The goal is supposed to be modernization. Instead it should be a scandal that our country, out of 153 countries evaluated, is still only in 76th place for Gender Policies and 125th for Pay Gender Gap.

We are the cure, because we are aware that social reproduction and economic production are interconnected areas and that the hierarchies of values and priorities must be reversed. Putting caring back at the centre involves readjusting objectives, timing and instruments.

That means, first of all, asking for the end of the bonus system and instead demanding social infrastructures, female employment and environmental protection.

We must eliminate job insecurity, strengthen the network of public health and social services, rebuild and transform support and assistance for the elderly, invest in schools, increasing the number of teachers, classes and instruments available to children, and start a major maintenance project for our territory and our cities: in one word, put life and people at the centre.

It means totally re-reading our society starting from the needs and freedom that women have won and that have increased the freedom and well-being of everyone.

This is our Recovery Fund. This is what we intend by starting to take care.

This is why women want to discuss the Next Generation EU. They want the resources, that today, finally, can be available to women and men living in Europe, to be used to combat those frailties and injustices. And we will hold politicians to account for this. Now, right away.

Women are on the move and if we work together we can make a difference. We do not want what the pandemic has revealed and taught us about the injustices of our lives to be forgotten, covered by the fear of the economic crisis and by the loud voice of those in power. We can change and influence the future choices that Italy must make. We have to. For this reason we must be active and united over and above our differences. We must be in many.

We said this at the Magnolia Assembly, on 10th and 11th October at the

International Women's House in Rome, which saw the participation of many women, feminist groups who had not met for a long time, women's places at national level, associations, women from institutions, political parties and the trade unions. Different but together. And we agreed not only to promote a feminist network, national and transnational, but also to develop connections and convergences with women teachers, migrants, public service workers, researchers, women from institutions and other realities of resistance. To make our presence felt our goal is to take action at once with concrete, symbolic and political actions all over the country but also at the place where we decisions are made. That is where we want to be.

Let's start by making ourselves heard! To begin with we have organized a chain of women around the Italian Parliament to give strength to our ideas and our voices.

"There is no more time, we are the cure!"

October 14, 2020, International House of Women, Rome - Magnolia Assembly