



Launched in 1997 by Chilean university students as a summer project to provide minimum living conditions for the poor, a program mobilized 4,000 volunteers to build 2,156 homes in the poorest parts of southern Chile in the first two years. By 2004, Un Techo Para Chile had built more than 24,000 basic housing units and recruited more than 18,000 volunteers each year. The group has also developed initiatives on technical training, education, microcredit, health, judicial services, and community service. The initiative has also spawned Un Techo Para mi País to share its experiences with other countries across Latin America. (<http://www.untechoparachile.cl/>)

Why now, and how?

PART I DEVELOPING COUNTRIES' POPULATIONS HAVE more young people than ever; indeed, in many countries, there are more young people now than there likely will ever be, because of falling fertility. This presents challenges but many more rewards—if policies and institutions for the next generation of workers, household heads, citizens, and leaders are well designed and implemented. Hard to do, but, as some countries have shown, not impossible.

Opportunity. The capability to choose. Another chance when choices go wrong. These are the lenses through which policies must be viewed to examine whether they create the right climate for investment in the human capital of the young.



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