

NGOs and Governmentality in Chile

The Case of TECHO and slum eradication programs

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative case study analyses the Chilean NGO TECHO, now present in 19 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, from the perspective of Foucault's concept of governmentality, as elaborated by Rose and Miller (2008). They argue that non-state modes of power are the defining features of contemporary societies, and that these operate through loose, associative networks through which actors come to define common perceptions of problems and common aims. Governmentality, it will be argued, operates with certain rationalities translated into programs that seek to shape the conduct of others. In accordance with the theoretical framework, the study focuses on the problematics, practices and programs of slum eradication, in which TECHO has been participating as a constructor of emergency housing and as an intermediate entity between the government and the inhabitants of slums, organizing them to apply for housing subsidies. My main research question is: How has the role of TECHO evolved in relation to the government programs to eradicate *campamentos* in Chile? The subquestions are: What practices has this role involved, currently and historically? How do these practices enable “government at a distance”?

The material for the study was collected during a 2,5 month volunteering period with TECHO in its office in Santiago, and includes 13 qualitative interviews with TECHO directors, government employees, housing committee members and other organizations with experience on housing policies, as well as field observation in a campamento in the Santiago Metropolitan Region and various news sources and government reports. The findings of the study situate TECHO in a complex network of relations, starting with the construction of mediaguas, to becoming a supplier in the government's constantly failing slum eradication programs. They also show how the neoliberal forms of “government at a distance” and “government through community” involve not so much the shrinking of government but expanding it into new spheres, as is the case with the “Social Inclusion”, a government methodology adopted by TECHO, which involves intervening into both group dynamics through community development and the psycho-social sphere of the group of individuals who have been defined as a problem. As a conclusion, I will argue that these forms of neoliberal governmentality have continuously failed to achieve their aims of eradicating the slums and maintaining social cohesion, as they only address the inevitable consequences of a free-market model that perpetuates inequality.

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List of acronyms and terminology

EGIS	Entidad Gestión Inmobiliaria Social (Social Housing Management Entity)
EaGIS	Entidad Autogestión Inmobiliaria Social (Social Housing Self-Management Entity)
EP	Entidad Patrocinante (Supporting Entity)
FPS	Ficha de Protección Social (Social Protection Score)
FSV	Fondo Solidario de Vivienda (Solidarity Housing Fund)
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
LAC	Linea de Atención de Campamentos (Line of attention to Campamentos)
MINVU	Ministerio de Vivienda y Urbanismo (Ministry of Housing)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
SERVIU	Servicio de Vivienda y Urbanismo (Housing and Urban Development Service)
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
UNDEF	United Nations Democracy Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

Allegados

Homeless people living with friends and relatives in conditions of overcrowding. The largest group of homeless people in Chile.

Aldea

Transitory area with emergency housing constructed after natural disasters. Can also signify a transitory area within a campamento in the process of eradication.

Campamento

According to a definition shared by TECHO and the Ministry of Housing, a campamento is defined as “A predominantly urban settlement with more than eight families inhabiting in an irregular manner a piece of land, exhibiting a lack of at least one basic service (electricity, water and sanitation system), and whose dwellings are grouped or built together.” (MINVU 2013)

Habilitación Social

A plan to be developed together with a social housing committee and the EGIS; a mandatory requirement in the social housing programs. (MINVU 2008)

Mediagua

An emergency house of usually 18m², intended for a family of 4, constructed with prefabricated wooden modules and a zinc roof on 15 stilts.

Toma de terreno

An organized land occupation.

Población/Pobladores

Working class neighborhoods/working class people.

Charity without justice will not save us from social ills, but only creates a profound resentment. Injustice causes much greater evils than charity can repair.

Saint Alberto Hurtado

Power is not an institution, and not a structure; neither is it a certain strength we are endowed with; it is the name that one attributes to a complex strategical situation in a particular society.

Michel Foucault

1. Introduction

On the 28th of March 2013, thousands of students were protesting on the streets of Santiago and other major Chilean cities for free and not-for-profit education and the reformation of the constitution¹. As has become almost ritual since the student protests started in 2010, the march ended with a confrontation between “encapuchados”, masked protesters, and the special forces of the police. At the same time, in another part of the city, the communications team of the Chilean NGO TECHO was promoting its campaign “Revolution TECHO”², using social media to promote stories of “personal revolutions” of the volunteers and the residents of *campamentos*, irregular settlements. The organization, founded by a Jesuit priest in Chile in 1997, works with the problematic of slums, irregular settlements which in Chile are called *campamentos*. It has received numerous prizes for its work from the UN Habitat, and has since 2005 been partnering with the Inter-American Development Bank³ with the mission of “overcoming” poverty and eradicating irregular settlements in Chile and 18 other countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. It states as its mission to “Work tirelessly to overcome extreme poverty in slums, through training and joint action of families and youth volunteers. Furthermore, to promote community development, denouncing the situation in which the most excluded communities live. And lastly, to advocate for social policies with other actors in society”⁴. In Chile, it is also acting as an Entidad Gestión Inmobiliaria Social, enrolling the poor people of *campamentos* into government housing programs.

Chile is often referred to as a model of development for other countries in Latin America as it has experienced 30 years of sustained economic growth, and has managed to reduce poverty to under 15%. It's GDP per capita is more than USD 22 000 and it has been a member of OECD since 2010⁵. However, economic growth has not benefited all Chileans: a recent study by Birdsall et. al

1 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-latin-america-21971511>

2 www.revolutiontecho.org

3 <http://www.iadb.org/en/news/news-releases/2005-09-21/idb-and-un-techo-para-chile-foundation-sign-35-million-to-transfer-successful-methodology-for-integrating-low-income-groups-into-the-productive-system,852.html>

4 <http://www.techo.org/en/techo/mision-vision-valores/>

5 <http://www.oecd.org/chile/chilesaccessiontotheoecd.htm>

(2013: 25) defined 41% of Chileans as “strugglers”, living on \$4-10 a day and risking to join the ranks of the poor. In 2011, there were 657 *campamentos* in all of Chile with 83 000 people living in them (MINVU 2013). Several government programs have attempted to eradicate them by transferring their inhabitants to social housing, but they have so far been unable to solve the problem; in fact between 2007 and 2011 the number of people living in them increased by 7000 (MINVU 2013). The “Integrated Plan” for *campamentos* of the current government proposes an alliance with civil society and explicitly mentions TECHO as a partner in the process (MINVU 2011).

NGOs and social movements are commonly seen as forming a part of an “autonomous civil society”, which by some is the answer to the problems of democracy, providing a counterweight to the power of an autonomous and all-powerful state (see Foley and Edwards 1997). Though the civil society discourse has become influential development thinking since the 90s, civil society as a concept is poorly defined (Edwards 2008: 2-3). There is no agreement between who is in and who is out: NGOs, for example, are seen as alternatively an important part of civil society (see Banks and Hulme 2012) or handmaidens of neoliberalism (Petras and Veltmeyer 2011). In Chile, NGOs such as TECHO have joined forces with the government in programs aimed at “erradicating poverty”. In contrast, the student movement, workers, indigenous people and regional movements demand social justice and redistribution in large scale protests. What is the sense, then, in grouping organizations with radically different strategies and aims under the umbrella of civil society?

The academic community has increasingly come to question the categorical separation of state and civil society (Frödín 2010, Tvedt 2006a, Miller and Rose 2008). Drawing on Foucault's concept of governmentality, Miller and Rose (2008) have argued that state is just one of the forms taken by government. Power, from this point of view, is exercised through “technologies of government”, diffused in various, and increasingly non-state institutions, producing knowledge and elaborating programs that enable populations to be “governed at a distance”. This study concentrates not on categories such as “state” or “civil society”, but the actual practices of governing, which are increasingly undertaken by non-state actors such as TECHO.

1.1 Aim of the study and research question

The aim of this qualitative case study is to analyze the role of the NGO TECHO in the government programs to eradicate *campamentos*. This will involve a historical analyses of how the organization came into being, what it has done, what it is doing now, and the ways in which it forms a part of governmentality. Such an analysis will inevitably also include an account of housing policy as a

technology for governing the *campamentos*. According to Miller and Rose (2008: 22) “the analytical language structured by the philosophical opposition of state and civil society is unable to comprehend contemporary transformations in modes of exercise of political power”. Instead of such “grand schemata”, studies of government should depart from “the apparently humble and mundane mechanisms which make it possible to govern” (ibid: 32).

My main research question is: How has the role of TECHO evolved in relation to the government programs to eradicate *campamentos* in Chile? The sub-questions are: What practices has this role involved, currently and historically? How do these practices enable “government at a distance”? By answering these questions, I wish to convey the story of an organization, involved in a policy, sustained by a model whose effectiveness in delivering collective goods is increasingly becoming questioned in the context of intensifying social mobilization.

1.2 Previous studies

As Tvedt (2006a) has pointed out, much of the current NGO research tradition has chosen to ignore the ways in which NGOs are connected to states. Instead, this tradition has assumed NGOs to be a part of civil society and has mainly been concerned with how to improve the work of NGOs or with evaluating their projects and programs.

There are few independent studies of TECHO, although the organization has existed since 1997 and expanded to most countries in Latin America. This may be because TECHO has its own research center (Centro Investigación Social, CIS), where interns interested in contributing may produce research for the purposes of the organization. Atría (2007), director of CIS at the time⁶, discusses TECHO's work in Chile under the title “Social capital and volunteering: the keys for solidarity financing for social housing. The Un Techo para Chile Foundation case [sic]”. He describes TECHO's work model in the *campamentos* at the time when it was getting involved in the housing policy as an Entidad Gestion Inmobiliaria Social (EGIS, Social Housing Management Entity), and emphasizing the role of volunteers in the process as creating a commitment with the poor families. However, he fails to mention that “Habilitación Social” (Social Inclusion), a process of “community empowerment” which is currently the focus of TECHO's work, is a mandatory requirement in accessing the government housing subsidies, for which the Ministry of Housing has produced a detailed manual (see MINVU 2008).

Other studies affiliated with, but not directly produced by TECHO include Wazkun's (2007) evaluation of TECHO's microcredit program, and a UNDEF evaluation report of TECHO's project

6 <http://revistainvi.uchile.cl/index.php/INVI/article/view/274/931>

in El Salvador, Argentina and Peru (Aguilar and Ferreira 2012). Wazkun found that the beneficiaries of TECHO's microcredit program increased their income twice as much as the control group. The UNDEF evaluation, though carried out in Argentina only, stated that the project had brought important benefits for the people participating in it, but criticized the organization for the lack of focus on rights.

There are numerous critical studies on the Chilean housing policy (Gilbert 2002, Rodriguez and Sugranyes 2012a, 2012b, Posner 2012, Özler 2012). Gilbert (2002), traces its history to the Pinochet Dictatorship, a University of Chile study financed by USAID in 1976, under the consultation of a group of Chicago-trained economists commonly referred to as the Chicago boys, and the Chilean Chamber of Construction. Special credit for the model is given to Miguel Kast, a Chicago-trained economist who at the time was a subdirector of the Chilean planning ministry (ibid: 313). With loans from the IDB and World Bank, the new housing model did away with state-provided public housing and replaced it with a competitive system for stimulating demand for social housing. This was to be achieved by a one time direct cash subsidy targeted at the poorest segments for buying a property constructed by the private market. Though the Washington institutions were initially not enthusiastic about the model, they began strongly promoting it as a best practice in the 1990s, after the democratic Concertación governments had consolidated the model (ibid: 319-320).

Posner (2012) applies Esping-Andersen's welfare regime typology on the Chilean housing policy, and demonstrates how housing was transformed from a right during the 1970-1973 Unidad Popular government to a commodity to be achieved by individual effort under the dictatorship. In this system, eligibility for a housing subsidy is determined by a means test (Ficha CAS, now called the Ficha de protección Social, FPS), and it has a savings requirement which favors the less poor who have more capacity to save. The poor are supposed to form a committee and elaborate a housing project, then compete against other committees for access to the funds of FSV (Fondo Solidario de Vivienda). He argues that despite the stated aims of the housing policy to promote participation and cooperation, its competitive structure creates disincentives for collective action among the poor, undermining class solidarity. Posner's interview material is from 2006, before TECHO got involved in policy implementation, so he does not discuss NGO participation in the policies. Özler's (2011) analysis of Concertación housing programs, arrived in similar conclusions. Though improvements were made in successive programs (Chile Barrio under Lagos and Linea de Atención de Campamentos under Bachelet), and the poorest are now able to access housing without credit, with a minimum 10UF (\$400) savings. However, the programs continued to be plagued by a limited scope of popular participation, segregated neighborhoods far off from the central areas of the city. Özler also mentions the role of NGOs as EGIS, intermediate organizations between the

government and the poor, their main role being “helping to manage discontent generated by government policies during the long and uncertain wait for housing that these poor citizens faced” (ibid: 10). She does not, however, delve deeper into the significance of the role of NGOs in the *campamentos*.

While the Chilean housing policy has been advertised as a model, and adopted by a number of countries, including South Africa and Colombia (Gilbert 2002: 310), its problems have become apparent. Rodriguez and Sugranyes (2012a, 2012b) call it “The emperor's new clothes”: while housing has been constructed on a massive scale, the government now faces the problem, not of “those without a roof” but “those with a roof”. The scope of this study does not allow an in-depth discussion of the problems of social housing in Chile, but a study conducted these social housing blocks in Santiago, 64% of the inhabitants would prefer to leave their apartments because of the low quality of housing, insecurity and peripheral location (Rodriguez and Sugranyes 2012a: 63). The housing is not adaptable to the requirements of the families, leading to dangerous and illegal amplifications, and it is no investment for the poor as its value does not rise over time (ibid: 58-60). Since 2006, the government has started demolishing some of the worst examples of the policies of previous decades (Rodriguez and Sugranyes 2012b: 100), such as the notorious blocks of Bajos de Mena in Puente Alto, Metropolitan Region⁷.

This study differs from the previous studies in that, instead of evaluating the impact of TECHO, or the effectiveness of specific government policies, its focus is on NGOs as actors within government programs of eradicating *campamentos*, with TECHO as the case.

1.3 Structure of the paper

This paper is structured as follows: Chapter 2 will focus on methodological questions, such as selection of the case and interview subjects. Chapter 3 will present the theoretical framework, defining governmentality and the concepts of “Government at a distance” and “Government through community”. It also discusses NGOs and governmentality. Chapter 4 analyses the practices of TECHO in relation to different governmental rationalities influencing slum eradication programs. It departs from the construction of *mediaguas* (emergency housing), then goes on to describe how the organization came to be involved in the government's slum eradication programs, in which “Habilitación Social” (Social Inclusion) forms an important part. Finally, it presents a tentative analyses of the relations of TECHO with other actors. Chapter 5 presents a synthesis and conclusions.

⁷ <http://www.puentealtoaldia.cl/cronica/demolicion-en-bajos-de-mena>

2. Method

This study approaches the case of TECHO from the qualitative research tradition, applying a case study design. The material of the study was conducted during nearly three months of volunteering in TECHO's headquarters in Santiago. I worked as a volunteer translator at the communication department of TECHO headquarters, translating press releases and internal documents from Spanish into English. This immersion in the research setting enabled me to become familiar with the organization and its work, as well as to identify interview subjects and potential themes for the interviews. I carried out 13 semi-structured interviews, 5 with TECHO (the CEO and 4 Directors of different areas), and 8 outside the organization (authorities, activists, housing committee members and a researcher). On two occasions in April – May 2013, I also had a chance for field observation in a campamento in the Metropolitan Region.

Qualitative research often involves an iterative process of data collection and specification of research questions (Bryman 2012: 384). I started out my research with the broad area of NGO – state relations in Chile. The primary reason for why I selected TECHO as a case, was that it is one of the largest and most visible NGOs in Chile, and because it has expanded rapidly to other Latin American countries, therefore having broader regional relevance. After having gathered a part of my interview material, and closely followed TECHO's external discourse as a translator, I became more interested in the deeper significance of the practices and programs they were participating in, concentrating on its role in governmentality.

2.1 Ethical considerations

In an initial meeting with my TECHO contacts, I presented a study information sheet, introducing the university and my general research area, state-civil society relations in Chile. I also made it clear that any internal material that came into my hands during my volunteering would not be used for the study. NGOs incomes to a large extent depend on their public image (Tvedt 2006a), and as TECHO has recently re-branded itself for a future global expansion⁸, I assured the interview subjects that they would remain anonymous. This is because I did not wish to make them uneasy about voicing their opinions or to cause harm to their future employment prospects. As the number of interviews I was able to conduct is limited, and I do not wish my interview subjects to be identified, the interviews will only be ascribed to the general title of the person.

⁸ <http://www.techo.org/paises/chile/por-que-somos-techo/>

2.2 Selection of interview subjects

The Santiago office of TECHO, located in an old Jesuit construction school in the municipality of San Joaquin in Santiago, is divided into TECHO-Chile, and TECHO Headquarters. The two used to be separate organizations, with TECHO Headquarters for managing Latin American countries other than Chile. However, in 2012, a reorganization and rebranding took place which turned TECHO Chile into one more country under the Headquarters. I interviewed the CEO of the organization, as well as Directors in different departments, such as Housing, Work and Education, and “Habilitación Social”.

I soon realized I would not be able to get very far with my research area interviewing TECHO alone, and found an NGO activist and a sociologist from Universidad de Chile to provide me with a broader perspective of the context in Chile. About 6 weeks into my volunteering, I was offered a chance to accompany teams of secondary school students to build *mediaguas* (emergency housing) in a campamento in the Metropolitan Region. This resulted in a snowball sample as through TECHO, I received a contact to the Servicio de Vivienda y Urbanismo (SERVIU), which is an executive arm of the Ministry of Housing. The interview with her resulted in another visit to the campamento, this time to observe a ceremony during which a private foundation was donating mattresses and bedclothes to families with children. I had a chance to interview two members of housing committees, one run by TECHO, the other recently established by SERVIU. I also received two other contacts; a person working with social organizations at the municipality, and a high official at the Secretaria Ejecutiva de Aldeas y Campamentos, under the Ministry of Housing (MINVU). These interviews provided me with an opportunity to triangulate the views and the practices of the organization with government officials working with the problematic of campamentos. In my interview with the municipal director, she mentioned a social movement of indebted social housing inhabitants. After some searching, I found contacts to a *poblador* movement in another municipality in Santiago, and interviewed them, thus being able to incorporate the view of those who have had first-hand experience with the housing policies.

2.3 Interview method

All the interviews were open-ended, and lasted from 30 minutes to more than an hour. Most often I presented a topic, and let the interview subjects talk, trying to interrupt them as little as possible. With TECHO, the topics were related to the person's work area, though with the CEO of TECHO,

the emphasis was on the history, achievements and future challenges of the organization. Interviews to the housing committee members concerned their experiences with living in the campamento and their work of the committees. With the exception of one interview subject, who had gone to an English school and was thus fluent and comfortable with speaking English, all the interviews were conducted in Spanish.

2.4 Analysis of interview and secondary material

The transcribed interviews resulted in more than 90 pages of material. In addition, I have used various studies, plans and presentations provided by MINVU and SERVIU, as well as material publicly available on TECHO's website. The content analysis of the material focuses on practices of TECHO in the campamentos and the understandings of the interview subjects of the problematic of campamentos and housing policy. Three main practices of TECHO in Chile emerged from the analysis: The construction of emergency housing (mediaguas), its participation in slum eradication programs as an EGIS, and programs of *Habilitación Social* (Social inclusion).

2.5 Limitations

Generalizability is often considered a problem in a case study approach (Punch 2005: 145, Bryman 2012: 69, 71). However, as Flyvbjerg (2001: 71) has pointed out, case studies are invaluable for human learning:

First, the case study produces precisely the type of context-dependent knowledge which makes it possible to move from the lower to the higher levels in the learning process; second, in the study of human affairs, there exists only context-dependent knowledge, which thus presently rules out the possibility of epistemic theoretical construction.

He argues that cases are of especial value in social sciences (*ibid*: 72), and no more problematic than other approaches in terms of generalization and validity. But for Flyvbjerg, context-specificity is key to producing relevant knowledge about social phenomena, and therefore social scientists should not try to imitate the hypothetico-deductive natural science models or not even seek to generalize (*ibid*: 75-77). For my study, TECHO represents a kind of a special case that is important in its own right and my intention is not so much to generalize all the NGOs in Chile than to produce knowledge about this particular case.

On a practical level, the study was limited by access to people in the office environment, and the fact that I was volunteering with TECHO Central Office, not the Chile Office, which, though

located in the premises, is organizationally separate. As to my position as a researcher, I was an outsider to the organization, and my research area was not chosen by the organization. I therefore felt I had to work hard to “earn” access to people. Some of my interview requests were also ignored. One limitation is that my study does not incorporate the volunteers' perspective on TECHO's work, but I do not consider this a great deficit since my aim is not to evaluate individual efforts in individual projects.

3. Theoretical framework – NGOs and governmentality

3.1 Defining governmentality

I will examine TECHO as part of “governmentality”. Governmentality, according to Foucault (1979: 20, quoted in Miller and Rose 2008: 27) is an “ensemble formed by the institutions, procedures, analyses and reflections, the calculations and tactics, that allow the exercise of this very specific albeit complex form of power”. In this view, power, rather than imposed upon populations by an autonomous and unified state, is diffuse and exercised through multiple locations (Flyvbjerg 2005). Elaborating on the concept of governmentality, Miller and Rose (2008) define it as “political rationalities”, normative ideals, and knowledge about the object of government, and the ways of expressing these in language. In the case of Chile, ending with the campamentos has been one such rationality.

Government is inherently programmatic in nature (Miller and Rose 2008: 29). Political rationalities are “translated” into programs that address domains for governing that are perceived as problems. In Chile, the problem of campamentos has been addressed by various government programs seeking to enroll their inhabitants into social housing programs (see Özler 2012, Posner 2012). Programs of government are operationalized through “technologies of government” involving expertise and knowledge production in the form of quantifications, statistics, maps, and definitions that make certain areas or populations legitimate objects for intervention (Miller and Rose 2008: 32). The Ministry of Housing has produced surveys of campamentos in 1985, 1996, 2006 and 2011 (MINVU 2013). The latest survey, “The Social Map of Campamentos” provides very detailed information by region, satellite maps, and characterizations of socioeconomic conditions, such as family structure, savings and employment status, and physical risks in the campamentos (MINVU 2013). The rationale has been to achieve a reliable “measurement” on which to base the optimal allocation of housing subsidies to residents of campamentos, and information for the “Integrated Plan 2012-2013” for the campamentos. Such information is crucial to the practice of governing as it enables “intellectual mastery” over the domain to be governed

(ibid: 34). Programs, however, are bound to fail, or create new problematics, to be addressed by new programs (Miller and Rose 2008, see also Özler's evaluation of housing policies).

The language of expertise is key to forms of governmentality, as it allows to construct shared understandings between formally independent actors. A process of “translation” allows political rationalities to be elaborated into programs and to construct shared understandings between actors, in

which one actor or force is able to require or count upon a particular way of thinking and acting from another, hence assembling them together into a network not because of legal or institutional ties or dependencies, but because they have come to construe their problems in allied ways and their fate as in some way bound up with one another. (Miller and Rose 2008: 34)

I witnessed the importance of the right language in a very concrete way in my translation work: it was important that some expressions were translated in a certain way in TECHO's external communications. For example “superación de pobreza” was to be rendered in English as “overcoming poverty”, not “ending with poverty”, thus construing poverty as both an individual condition to be vanquished with persistency and a common challenge. TECHO is not the only one employing such terminology, the “Fundación para la Superacion de la Pobreza” was founded by the President already in 1994.⁹ Shortly after the return to democracy, the government had an imperative to depoliticize the Chilean society, and issues of redistribution and social justice were presented in terms of poverty, understood as a technical problem with a technical solution (Silva 1999).

Shared understandings constructed through language enable loosely assembled networks between constitutionally distinct actors, allowing “government at a distance”,

It is, in part, through adopting shared vocabularies, theories and explanations that loose and flexible associations may be established between agents across time and space - Departments of State, pressure groups , academics, managers, teachers, employees, parents - whilst each remains, to a greater or lesser extent, constitutionally distinct and formally independent. Each of these diverse forces can be enrolled in a governmental network to the extent that it can translate the objectives and values of others into its own terms, to the extent that the arguments of another become consonant with and provide norms for its own ambitions and actions. (Miller and Rose 2008: 35)

These indirect, network forms of rule are becoming increasingly important in contemporary societies (Miller and Rose 2008: 64-65). In Chile, such “network forms of coordination”, including participatory governance, state – civil society alliances, and public – private partnerships have been employed to create “new forms of citizenship” (Leiva 2008: 157).

3.2 Neoliberal governmentality: communities and citizens

Neoliberal governmentality has reshaped political rationalities in distinct ways that have sought to

⁹ <http://www.fundacionpobreza.cl/webfsp.php?id=33>

realign the relations between the individual and society (Miller and Rose 2008: 80-81). From governing “from the social point of view” there has been a shift to “government through community”. The change has taken place in three key dimensions: the spatial, the ethical and the domain of identity. Whereas the “social” modes of government were concerned with a territorially unified space of a nation, to which citizens were bound by solidarity created by social insurance, the “community” is increasingly becoming the unit of analysis and intervention. These diverse and heterogeneous communities can be “micro-locales” or “moral” or “virtual” communities. The second, ethical dimension entails the movement from social citizenship with collective rights and responsibilities to “the individualized and autonomized actor, each of whom has unique, localized and specific ties to their particular family and to a particular moral community” (ibid: 92). The third dimension of identification assumes that people identify with and show allegiance to these communities that are assumed to pre-exist but that nevertheless require the expertise of various specialists to manage them.

'Government through community' involves a variety of strategies for inventing and instrumentalizing these dimensions of allegiance between individuals and communities in the service of projects of regulation, reform or mobilization. (Miller and Rose 2008: 92)

Yet the rise of the community forms of governing does not imply a reduced role for the state, merely a change in focus. To qualify as citizens, individuals are now expected to manage themselves in a way that reduces risk, by means of private insurance, consumer choices leading to health and prestige and that qualify them as responsible members of communities. Those that do not want or are not able to do this, are marginalized in what Miller and Rose (2008: 99) call “anti-communities.” These are perceived as a risk, and in turn, become targets of further analysis and expert intervention (ibid: 104-105). One of the most unequal cities in the world (OECD 2013: 57), Santiago is a living example of the division between the “affiliated” and the “marginalized”: the rich live in gated communities in the Eastern suburbs, the rest in the Southern and Western municipalities, in “poblaciones” or social housing turned to ghettos (for income and poverty rates by municipality in the Metropolitan Region, see e.g. Agostini 2010: 241-242).

As Cruikshank (2002) has argued, the perceived “powerlessness” and marginality of the poor have inspired efforts to empower them, to construct them as citizens through what she calls “technologies of citizenship”. Yet such a “will to empower” others is a power relationship in itself.

3.3 NGOs and governmentality

The role of NGOs has been on the rise globally. As Tvedt (2006a: 678-679) argues, the NGO

research tradition has been “ahistorical and non-contextual”, and rife with normative assumptions of NGOs as representatives of “global civil society”, and counterposing them to the state as being closer to the beneficiaries or more cost-effective in delivering services. This tradition has served to legitimate the image of NGOs as “autonomous from the state”, and covered up what often is financial dependence of the state. Similarly, it has assumed NGOs to adhere to a set of universal secular-humanist values, and ignored the role of religious NGOs in the international aid system (Tvedt 2006b).

According to the Comparative Non-Profit sector study of Johns Hopkins University (Irrarazaval et al. 2006), state funds constituted 46% of the funding for Chilean non-profit organizations, a lions share going to service-oriented organizations, while what the study termed expressive organizations (such as human rights advocacy or cultural organizations) received insufficient funding. A brief look at the funds awarded to “civil society” organizations thorough the “Más por Chile”¹⁰ fund set up by president Sebastian Piñera, reveals that most organizations getting funds are going to large NGOs, often with religious roots, such as TECHO, Maria Ayuda, Hogar de Cristo, and TECHO. This is partly explained by Chile's history: the Catholic Church had always played a strong role in charity, and during the dictatorship it assumed a role as a defender of the popular sectors (Irrarazaval et. al 2006: 43-47).

It would be too much of a simplification to argue a direct relationship with state funds and state agendas. Though the government compensates TECHO for services discussed later in this study, most of its budget comes from companies and private donations¹¹. In their work on governmentality and NGOs, Sending and Neumann (2006) suggest that the relationship between the state and non-state actors cannot be seen as either a simple cooptation of NGOs by the state or as a zero-sum game in which the rise of non-state actors reduces state power. They state that

the self-association and political will-formation characteristic of civil society and non-state actors do not stand in opposition to the political power of the state, but is a most central feature of how power operates in late modern society. (Sending and Neumann 2006: 652)

In parallel with Miller and Rose's (2008) argument that freedom can be an effective way of governing individuals, Sending and Neumann (2006: 658) argue that the autonomy and independence of civil society is key to government, that civil society is both the object and the subject of governance. Governmentality, thus, does not mean that the state controls NGOs, but that there is a mutual relationship in which the state has been able to draw on the NGOs expertise, of “what's out in the field”, and their legitimacy as autonomous actors (ibid: 665). Government

10 <http://masporchile.ministeriodesarrollosocial.gob.cl/donaciones-recibidas/>

11 <http://www.techo.org/paises/chile/transparencia/informe-de-transparencia/>

becomes possible through entering in relationships with non-state actors that are in accordance with governmental rationalities (ibid: 667).

4. Analysis

4.1 What is in a *mediagua*?

TECHO is widely known in Chile as a constructor of *mediaguas*, rudimentary, prefabricated emergency houses of about 18m², which the organization has been constructing on a massive scale since its beginning. I was told in the beginning that TECHO no longer constructs *mediaguas* in Chile, although I later found they still do in exceptional circumstances. As the construction continues both in Chile and in other Latin American countries, the rationalities behind these dwellings merit closer inspection.

TECHO was born in 1997, when the Jesuit priest Felipe Berrios, together with a group of students from Universidad Católica went on a mission to Curanilahue in the region of Bio Bio in the South of Chile (Interview, CEO of TECHO 2013). They constructed a chapel in the shape of a *mediagua*. These type of dwellings had been provided as emergency houses in Chile since the earthquake of Chillán in 1939¹², and as a shelter to the poorest since the 1950's by the housing foundation of another large Chilean NGO, Hogar de Cristo, founded by the canonized Alberto Hurtado.¹³

The students and the priest went on to build 350 *mediaguas* in the South, and, impacted by the experience of working with “those that were living in conditions of promiscuous overcrowding” (Berrios 2006: 28, my translation), came up with a project by the name of “2000 *mediaguas* for the year 2000”, together with Hogar de Cristo and Infocap, the Jesuit occupational school in which TECHO's Headquarters is now located. The project was a success and constructed over 5000 *mediaguas*. The organization started taking form as

to the society, it made sense, to the youth it made sense, and a lot of young people from different universities and different places joined the constructions. The private sector was fascinated to see how they could help private social initiatives of high impact, and in some way it also made sense to the authorities, and this is how TECHO was formed. (Interview, CEO of TECHO 2013)

As Tvedt (2006b) points out, NGO research has tended to be silent on the role of religious NGOs and presumed all NGOs under a secular humanist umbrella. However, like many development NGOs, TECHO's roots and value base are religious. Although TECHO pronounces itself as a non-

12 <http://www.275dias.cl/2010/03/23/arquitecto-devela-origen-de-las-mediaguas-y-pide-una-mejor-fabricacion/>

13 <http://fundacionvivienda.cl/quienes-somos/historia/reseña-historica>

denominational organization, they state that the Jesuits

“keep supporting this project through the figure of the Chaplain, who is the president of the directory, protecting the fundamental values of this project, such as diversity, its non-confessional character, the leadership of youth, and its fundamental focus on working for the most excluded families”.¹⁴ (my translation)

In Chile, this is nothing out of the ordinary, as the Catholic Church has a long tradition of charity dating back to the colonial period, and as it provided the only safe channel for NGOs during the first years of the military dictatorship (see Irrarazaval et al. 2006: 43-47). Felipe Berrios, who led TECHO from 1997 until leaving on a mission to Burundi in 2010, has been a public figure and a strong critic of the Chilean society (see Berrios 2006), but the Jesuits have since 2012 lowered their profile in TECHO and many of their other associated institutions, such as the Universidad Alberto Hurtado, and Hogar de Cristo (Sanhuaza and Lopéz 2012).

TECHO was formally registered in 2001 under the name of “Un Techo para Chile” (A roof for Chile). The expansion to other countries in Latin America started the same year with El Salvador, where the organization was known as “Un Techo para mí país” (A roof for my country). This international growth has been spontaneous, initiated by students that have come to Chile to study and have wanted to replicate the organization back home. After receiving initial support from the headquarters, the country organizations operate with their own resources (Interview, CEO TECHO 2013). The joint construction of *mediaguas* by volunteers and residents is supposed to create a kind of link which would allow entry into the campamento, and a starting point for TECHO's intervention¹⁵.

In 2008, TECHO officially stopped building *mediaguas* in Chile, after they had been criticized by the authorities for enlarging the campamentos. This dynamic has to be understood in context: the largest group of homeless in Chile do not live in the campamentos but as *allegados*, with friends or relatives in conditions of overcrowding (Özler 2012: 3). However, the government programs give priority in the housing subsidy queue to the people in the campamentos, as they are considered more “vulnerable” (Interview, MINVU 2013). This, according to the authorities of SERVIU and MINVU, gave incentives for some to go live in them in the hope that they could jump the housing subsidy queue.

while the municipality was trying to stop the campamentos from growing, many people went to TECHO or Hogar de Cristo to buy a *mediagua* or to ask for help so they would be given a *mediagua*. There was an uncontrolled handing out of *mediaguas*. So the campamentos kept growing. Unfortunately there is a contradiction with TECHO and the *mediaguas*, or could be that the opinions of the authorities are contradictory, because on the other hand they blame TECHO for enlarging the campamentos, but on the other hand when there is an earthquake or a fire and you have to make a transitory area [with *mediaguas*], who are the first to arrive, and the fastest with volunteers? TECHO (Interview, SERVIU, 2013)

14 <http://www.techo.org/techo/preguntas-frecuentes/>

15 <http://www.techo.org/techo/modelo-de-trabajo-techo/>

Instead of *mediaguas*, TECHO now concentrated on projects of social housing, launching the campaign “2010 without campamentos”. The target was not achieved, and a devastating earthquake hit Chile in 2010. TECHO returned to constructing *mediaguas*, and to date they have constructed over 60.000 of them in Chile (Interview, CEO TECHO 2013). They continue to be constructed by volunteers: for this year's voluntary work (there are two large-scale mobilizations of volunteers a year, one in the summer and one in the winter) in the North and South of Chile, high-school students were constructing “Viviendas Progresivas”, an improved, larger version of the *mediagua* with actual rooms and a kitchen¹⁶. Chilean University students are generally traveling abroad to construct; this year 1200 University students went to Paraguay to construct *mediaguas*.¹⁷

A recent study of the TECHO *mediaguas* by J-PAL (Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab; Cooper et. al 2013) in Mexico, Uruguay and El Salvador found that these basic houses improved the living satisfaction and self-esteem of their inhabitants. However, the study found no significant effects on health, household asset ownership or income of the families. They provide a sturdier roof, and a wooden floor instead of a dirt floor. What, then is the significance of the *mediagua*? One answer is provided by Joss Van Der Rest, founder of Hogar de Cristo's housing foundation, which, according to the CEO, TECHO is considering acquiring:

It is not so much the quality of the house that matters but avoiding the promiscuity that kills human values. It is true that the rooms that we built have no sophistication whatsoever, but they help a young couple to maintain their marriage, to argue in private and to make up in bed without problems because nobody else witnessed the argument and the mother-in-law was not intervening.¹⁸ (My translation)

From the Church's viewpoint then, living in a campamento, or as *allegados*, presents a moral hazard, and the *mediagua* serves as a guarantor of family values and marital happiness.

From the authorities point of view, the *mediaguas* serve other functions: in Chile the beneficiaries of social housing projects typically have to wait for on average three years for the construction of their proper houses (Interview, TECHO Director 2013). The persons need a slightly more habitable place to stay during the long wait. In the campamento where I took part in the construction with TECHO volunteers, they also had another function: people from the margins of the campamento were to be moved to a transitory area (*aldea*) within the campamento, which would allow the authorities to reduce the size of the campamento and construct an enclosure around it. They were also hoping for resources to place a police booth at the entrance to the campamento (Interview, SERVIU 2013). This would allow the authorities to prevent a repopulation of the

16 <http://www.techo.org/paises/chile/informate/secundarios-avanzan-en-trabajos-de-invierno-2013-en-chile/>

17 <http://www.techo.org/paises/chile/informate/1-200-universitarios-chilenos-construiran-viviendas-de-emergencia-junto-a-familias-vulnerables-en-paraguay/>

18 <http://www.fundacionvivienda.cl/quienes-somos/historia/nuestro-fundador>

dwellings whose inhabitants were to move to social housing. In the SERVIU maps, the labyrinth of dwellings in the campamento was transformed into neat rows of *mediaguas*, with a name of the inhabitant on each one. As the SERVIU director in charge put it:

To close this place, we want people to understand that it's not good that I live next to someone I don't know. They need to change this, it needs to be an organized community. They need to get to know the neighbor living next to them, to apply [for the subsidy] together, to create a community, to have needs, but together, not individually, not to reproduce the hopelessness but to reproduce another thing: a more social sense of community. (Interview, SERVIU, 2013)

The *campamento*, in this view, is presented as the kind of anti-community described by Miller and Rose (2008), and community-building as a remedy against social ills. Paradoxically, while the authorities have blamed *mediaguas* for the growth of campamentos, they have also become a part of the solution in the process of closing them: they help in both physically organizing and controlling the campamento, and can provide a basis for further intervention: TECHO's "community insertion process" typically starts with the building of the *mediaguas* which are supposed to create the first links of trust between volunteers and the community. In the campamento I visited, the municipality had bought the *mediaguas*, and TECHO's role was to mobilize volunteers for constructing them.

Thus, the organization which started as a religious movement with the underlying rationality of charity and family values came to be involved with the governmental rationality to eradicate campamentos through housing programs.

4.2 Programs to eradicate the campamentos and TECHO as an EGIS

Illegal settlements have been a constant problem for the Chilean governments. The accelerating rural-urban migration in the 1950s led to the formation of "poblaciones callampas", self-constructed settlements in the available spaces of major cities. In the 1960s, the lack of housing for the urban poor led into "tomas de terreno", organized land occupations where the inhabitants intended to stay on the land they had occupied and pressured the state for a solution to their housing problem. In the 1970, they intensified, and started to be referred to as *campamentos*, reflecting the militancy, organized nature and self-management of collective needs in these urban spaces. (MINVU 2013: 12-14). In the 1970s and 1980s, the military dictatorship instigated a massive eradication process, purging the *tomas* from the wealthy Eastern municipalities (Vitacura, Providencia, Las Condes, Ñuñoa), and transferring their nearly 200.000 inhabitants to low-quality social housing in peripheral municipalities (Hidalgo 2004: 229). *Tomas* were no longer a viable option, and people opted to live as *allegados* in overcrowded conditions (MINVU 2013: 28). In 1979, the land market was

liberalized, which has led to an explosive growth of the urban area and rising land prices which have further contributed to the residential segregation in Santiago (Hidalgo 2004: 226-229). After the return to democracy, the *campamentos* started growing, and by 1996, there were 712 of them in Chile (MINVU 2013). At this point, the subsidy system invented during the dictatorship had been consolidated (Gilbert 2002: 310), and a system of Technical Assistance was operating directly under the Ministry of Housing to help the housing committees of homeless to access the state subsidies.

In 1997, the Lagos government had started a multisectoral program called Chile Barrio (1997-2006) to deal with the problematic of *campamentos*. The aim was to

Contribute, through integrated action, overcoming poverty in the precarious settlements of the country, toward a substantial improvement of their housing situation, the quality of their habitat, and their opportunities of social and labour market insertion (MINVU 2013, my translation).

TECHO had also become to realize that the *mediaguas* were not enough for people to leave poverty, and other programs related to education, entrepreneurship and health had started taking shape in the *campamentos* (Interviews, TECHO 2013). In 2006, the housing policy underwent a modification, and a new actor, the Entidades de Gestión Inmobiliaria Social, EGIS (Social Housing Management Entities) were born. Their function in the housing policy was to “organize the demand” for the housing subsidies provided by the Fondo Solidario de Vivienda (Solidarity Housing Fund, FSV). In practice, this involved creating housing committees of poor families, helping them with the application process, looking for land to construct the housing, looking for a constructor, and the overall design of the housing project. This change created a new market acting with state support, as the state (SERVIU) pays the EGIS for their services:

It was the work of a function at SERVIU, who outsourced it, threw it out of their office [...], they privatized it and coincidentally, it was also the ex-employees of SERVIU who formed the first EGIS. (Interview, Poblador organization 2013)

The EGIS could be private, municipal, or not-for-profit entities. In the Bachelet government's program, the Linea de Atención de Campamentos (LAC, 2007-2010), the EGIS were consolidated, and the responsibility for the eradication of *campamentos* was transferred to the Ministry of Housing (MINVU 2011, 2013). TECHO transformed itself into an EGIS in 2006, and had, by March 2013 provided 4500 social housing units (Interview, CEO TECHO, 2013). It has been one of the largest non-profit EGIS working with the poorest families.

The experiment with the EGIS should be seen in a context a conscious demobilization of popular organizations undertaken by the Concertación governments. After democracy returned, there had been a fear of organized land invasions (*tomas*) and the possible political conflicts they would create, if successful, with the army, and if evicted, with the communist party (see e.g. Özler

2012). Thus it became necessary for the political and economic elites to find ways to limit the power of “the dangerous classes”, in the fear that they would “disrupt stability in the face of sacrifices demanded by economic restructuring, particularly by making skittish international and domestic investors flee” (Chalmers et. al 1997, quoted online). The large committees of *allegados* were de-structured by the housing policy, limiting the size of the families in each housing committee to a maximum of 200 families, when before the so called zone coordinations had consisted of thousands of organized families (Interview, NGO Activist 2013).

The state therefore found itself in a situation in which it lacked a counterpart actor with which to negotiate in the field of housing, and the EGIS were intended to fill this gap (See Trincado 2006). In addition, the EGIS were expected to address a broader set of problems than housing:

It emphasizes the need for accompaniment before, during and after the reception of the good, with the logic that housing is only one of the dimensions of the quality of life. It needs to be seen as a way of “making oneself responsible” of the housing problem in an integrated manner, and from the perspective of the user. The housing becomes an opportunity of social and personal development for the improvement of other aspects affecting community life. (Surawski 2005a, quoted in Cannobbio et. al 2011: 42)

In other words, the aim was to produce social cohesion and to avoid social problems, “violence and other social pathologies” (Cannobbio et al 2011: 42).

TECHO had many reasons to become an EGIS: it was already working in the *campamentos* through its Area de Intervención Social (Area of Social Intervention), it wanted to provide the families of the *campamentos* a better solution than a *mediagua*, and saw it as an opportunity to influence public policy (Interview, CEO and Director). TECHO-Chile currently has a team of around 50 professionals (architects, lawyers, etc.) working on the housing projects, as paid staff, not as volunteers (Interview, Director, TECHO 2013). According to my interviews with TECHO, the for-profit EGIS did not care much about the location, quality or services around the housing, thereby perpetuating the problems of social housing. They were also not very interested in working with the people from *campamentos*, which they perceived as difficult “customers”. TECHO's housing projects, in contrast, would accompany the families throughout the process:

We preoccupy ourselves with that the process of the housing application does not see housing as an end in itself but as a part of a social process, so that the families also understand that poverty does not end with housing, but that there are thousands of other issues that are important, the community organization, that they are part of the process of selecting their housing. (Interview, Director, TECHO 2013)

Most of the TECHO directors I interviewed also recognized the problems of the previous housing policies, such as the small size of the apartments, the lack of infrastructure and green areas and the socioeconomic segregation of the neighborhoods. But they insisted that TECHO had made a contribution to public policy.

In that time there were 130.000 families, today there are close to 30.000 families living in *campamentos*. From this point of view, we were able to drive an excellent public policy. And from the qualitative point of view, also the standards of the emergency houses improved. Today there are standards of localization where the policy demands that a social housing community, a condominium of social housing, is around green areas, community meeting spaces, and also the requirements of the minimum sizes of the housing have improved. So from this point of view, even if there remains a lot to do because the minimum sizes allowed are 40 to 42 m², which is still very little for the average family, but without a doubt, they have improved immensely compared to what it was before. So from this point of view we can say that there's a mission completed, as from now on the families in the *campamentos* receive housing solutions that are trampolines for overcoming poverty, not poverty traps as they used to be. (Interview, CEO TECHO 2013)

An evaluation report by SUR profesionales, however, (Cannobbio et. al 2011) reveals that the EGIS did not deliver the expected outcomes in the housing policy. The satisfaction of beneficiaries with the non-profit EGIS was only 46%, lower than that with the public or the private for-profit EGIS (ibid: 111-112). Moreover, the community leaders were in actual fact doing many tasks that the EGIS were supposed to be doing, such as organizing the demand and administrative tasks (ibid: 116). Despite the stated policy aims to reduce segregation, 57% of the social housing being built were still located in socially homogenous communities (ibid: 130), and the model was found to impede projects of urban integration (ibid: 101). This did not, however, result in recommendations to do away with the model, only to further adjust it.

According to my interview with the MINVU official, while they valued TECHO as one of the few EGIS that wanted to work with the *campamentos*, they also acknowledged that there had been problems:

in certain projects we [the state, through SERVIU] have had to assume as EGIS because it's difficult to get them along to a happy end, you know. This regardless of their [TECHO's] role that I insist has been important. However, within the closure of the settlements, in that part of the story, this government, especially this government, is the one that has put on the table that we want to close the settlements and that we don't want to go any more to the settlements giving the subsidies to the half of them, and leaving the other one in order that it becomes again repopulated, because that is what happened during the government before. (Interview, MINVU 2013)

I understood this after visiting a *campamento* in the Metropolitan Region, where the housing committee with TECHO as an EGIS only included about a half of the *campamento's* population. SERVIU had taken over the overall responsibility of the closure process, with the aim of improving the living conditions there by improving roads, installing lightning, creating a football field. With the latest modification of the housing policy, SERVIU had returned to its role as an EGIS and was running another housing committee as well running coordination meetings with the two committees and the municipality (Interview, SERVIU 2013).

The EGIS could be seen as an example of how a policy with the governmental rationality of “the free market” has required the state to intervene deeper into the non-economic sphere, devising

diverse ways of making the “demand” (the poor in the *campamentos*) respond to the incentives offered by the policy (applying for subsidies), and aiming to correct the flaws in previous programs by creating new ones. No actor in this context seems to have had an interest in questioning the basis of the subsidy model.

As Miller and Rose (2008: 35) have noted, government is a constantly failing activity and the programs often produce unexpected effects or are appropriated by people to their own ends. Tired with both the EGIS and the constructors profiting on them, and with doing, in practice, most of the work that the EGIS should have been doing (organizing the demand, doing the paperwork, looking for land), some community leaders decided to create their own EGIS (EaGIS, Entidad AutoGestion Inmobiliaria Social) (Castillo 2011, Interviews, poblador movement 2013). Due to the scarcity of land, you could only construct small projects in good locations, and private constructors were not interested in this as it was not profitable enough, so they also created their own constructor.

Obviously, we are against the market, we are not interested in profit, we are interested in people having housing, but we also play by the rules of the game to drive a project.

If the state can't and the private constructors don't want to, we the organized pobladores can and want to manage our own housing projects. (Interview, poblador movement 2013).

Operating largely on voluntary forces and using the subsidies and the money SERVIU pays the EGIS, they were able to construct small, well-located projects with apartments that were larger than the standard social housing and whose value would rise over time. One could have expected the government to welcome such a self-management initiative but that was not the case, as will be discussed below.

4.4 A strategic alliance with civil society?

The LAC program, like its predecessors, did not manage to end with the *campamentos*: in fact during the program, the number of *campamentos* increased from 490 to 657, and in 2011, there were 83 863 people living in them (MINVU 2013). In 2010, when the current government took charge, the housing policy underwent a further change: The housing fund, “Fondo Solidario de Vivienda” (FSV) changed its name into “Fondo Solidario de Elección de Vivienda (FSEV)”, and the EGIS are now called “Entidades Patrocinantes” (Supporting Organizations, EP). Committees and individuals are now also allowed to apply without a project, by selecting their apartment in a SERVIU registry of available housing constructed by the private market (Interviews SERVIU, MINVU 2012). In the preparation of the new Decree 49, the poblador movements lobbied for a land

bank, and a decree that would recognize self-management in the housing policy, but in the end, both initiatives failed (Castillo 2011). Instead, the government changed the rules for the new Entidades Patrocinantes, requiring them to have contracted staff and more financial guarantees, making it impossible for the EaGIS to function.

They started to get scared [...] because in reality they didn't understand what we were referring to when we talked about self-management, that in reality we could be administering fiscal resources. (Interview, poblador movement 2013)

A new department, “The Executive Secretary of Aldeas and Campamentos” took charge of eradicating the *campamentos*. It created an “Integrated Plan for the Campamentos 2012-2013” (MINVU 2011) which represents an important change in that SERVIU is given overall responsibility of the closure of *campamentos*. It has also meant the doubling the number of subsidies available for the families in *campamentos*, to 18 000. The subsidy itself, is the most important contribution that the government in Chile makes for poverty reduction: it's a “24 000 dollar asset, you know, for life, it's giving them private property, it's the largest subsidy that is given”. (Interview, MINVU 2013).

An interesting aspect of the plan is the “Strategic Alliance with Civil Society” it entails, with the only organizations mentioned being TECHO and the “Corporación de Dirigentas También somos Chilenos”, an organization of community leaders that was, like TECHO, founded with the help of Felipe Berrios¹⁹ and has its seat inside the TECHO office space in Santiago. The latter organization, whose leaders recently received training in Washington, paid by the IDB²⁰, has a conservative discourse in the context of social mobilization in Chile:

The biggest achievement is having created this Corporation. There has never existed a grassroots social movement in Chile that has done much more than fought with the cops on the street. (Cecilia Castro, quoted in www.dirigentes.cl, my translation)

TECHO and the Corporación de Dirigentas También somos Chilenos seem to be the kind of responsible actors that “fit into and correspond to the more general rationality of government” (Sending and Neumann 2006: 667), while, for example, the poblador organizations do not. As Leiva (2008: 168) has noted, the state in Chile has been allying itself with only such actors in civil society that, though making demands from the state, do not question the underlying structures of power.

There also seems to be considerable agreement between the government and TECHO on the aims of policy: in the foreword to the Strategy, president Piñera affirms the intentions of his government of eradicating the *campamentos*, and TECHO also makes use of the *campamento* in their campaigns. A recent example is a running event for the benefit of TECHO with Banco

19 <http://www.dirigentes.cl/>

20 http://blog.latercera.com/blog/ccastro/entry/beca_a_washington_para_mujeres

Santander, with the slogan “For a Chile without campamentos”²¹. The joint aims become apparent also on the level of language. Consider, for example, the wording of the Integrated Plan and the CEO's analysis of the problem:

A Multidimensional Strategy. The Integrated Plan for the Campamentos assumes that the housing shortage is a symptom of a very complex reality, and the solution for leaving poverty can not be based on a housing solution alone. (MINVU 2011b)

Indeed, the problematic of housing should not be confronted solely by housing, it needs to be confronted from a multi-dimensional perspective, and this is what TECHO does, and we are also promoting that the government should also do it this way. (Interview, CEO TECHO 2013)

Such common formulations, where actors share the conceptions and can translate the other's terms to their own, enable a network of “government at a distance” (Miller and Rose 2008). But what has TECHO's actual role in closing the *campamentos* been? Although acknowledging TECHO's efforts, Ministry of Housing firmly establishes government control over the process:

What they do is that they work as an EGIS and they finish the projects of housing, and the government pays them for that. The closing of the settlements is something that we as a government have assumed and which we have been charged for and responsible. TECHO has not participated in that end...I don't know if it's convenient for them. (Interview, MINVU 2013)

The MINVU official stated that I was the government, not TECHO that had the policy initiative and resources for closing the campamentos. This confirms Sending and Neumann's (2006: 652) observation that transferring some state functions to non-state actors does not reduce state power (see also Miller and Rose 2008: 81). On the contrary, civil society actors such as NGOs can bring legitimacy to efforts to govern (Sending and Neumann 2006: 652).

4.5 “Social Inclusion”: Producing responsible citizens in self-managing communities

“Social Inclusion” (“Habilitación Social”) became a permanent requirement in the housing programs in 2006, involving a plan of Habilitación Social to be created by the EGIS together with the community (MINVU 2008). “Social Inclusion” is key to TECHO’s community intervention: it has an own department and director in both the Chile office and the Headquarters, and has recently started promoting the methodology in other countries as well. One TECHO Director defined the concept as follows:

we are talking about empowering people, the development of social skills, development of political skills, and the development of more individual capacities that allow them to insert themselves into society. (Interview, Director, TECHO 2013)

I initially took the “Social Inclusion” to be a creation of TECHO, and only later discovered that it is

21 http://www.redrunning.cl/santander_techo/

a mandatory component in the housing programs. The MINVU functionary, however, confirmed that it was originally a methodology created by the government:

No, it was a job that was supposedly done by the ministry but which the TECHO started developing further, probably, and putting on the agenda the importance of this group of families that sometimes, no, they're the more difficult ones to work with. And they put on the agenda in a certain way that these families had an urgency and they started working first on the social side of the demand. (Interview, MINVU 2013)

“Social Inclusion”, for TECHO, involves three kinds of programs: education, work, and community development. It's “Strategia de Habilitación Social 2013-2015” states community development as one of its chief objectives:

We seek to incentivize that the communities generate their own *identity* that characterizes them and differentiates them from other communities, promoting spaces of community *participation* that allows them to identify their problems and *organize themselves* to look for better solutions. All these efforts should be realized through *articulation with formal networks* that allows them to access more and better opportunities, through consolidating community *self-management* in the process of overcoming poverty. (TECHO 2013, my translation, original emphasis)

This concept of community organizing involves all the components of empowerment: consciousness, knowledge and action (See Cruikshank 2002: 70). However, the strategy offers menu of pre-defined programs from education and training courses to microcredits to community projects for which funding may be applied following strict criteria and rules (TECHO 2013). These are detailed in predetermined phases, from a “participatory community diagnostic” (also mandatory for the housing subsidy application) to the implementation, coordination and quantitative evaluation mechanisms. Moreover, all these processes are to be coordinated by the TECHO volunteers (ibid). As Cruikshank (2002:82) has noted, “Establishing a relationship of governance requires first reconstituting the poor and the powerless as acting subjects. In short, according to a logic of empowerment, the poor must be made to act”.

This is not to say that such programs would not improve the lives of the individuals, families, and communities they are targeting. But it is clear that such participation is already circumscribed in its scope to the micro-level, to the community, neighborhood and municipality. Several of the people I interviewed commented on the limited scope of participation, generally in Chile, oriented towards “the result, the product, housing as a product, or the product of urban improvement, of a square, a street, a green area” (Interview, NGO Activist 2013). It could be described as participation with a “restricted horizon”:

The problem that had to be coordinated was how to produce high future expectations with a high tolerance for a non-modifiable present. This is the equation that had to be sought. So firstly, importantly, the destruction of the utopian horizon, because if you have a utopian horizon, necessarily, if you say you want something in the future, you will also advance on this road, and the present will change. So the most important thing was to abolish the utopian horizon and to keep

simply on medium term achievements that are easy to define, either you have them or not. So they tell you, “well, what is the point you want to reach?” “What I want to have is a life”, but it results in “you have these possibilities, take these possibilities”. They tell you, focus on the object you want and not so much on the process. Which is pro-authoritarian thinking...(Interview, researcher, Universidad de Chile 2013)

The residents of the *campamentos* are expected to bear with their circumstances, and the long wait for the concrete goal of a house, while participating in various community activities which they can influence but which ultimately are coordinated from above. Housing becomes something you have to be worthy of by improving yourself, managing your savings, as one member of a housing committee expressed it:

It's like TECHO helps you in our home, helps you with the kids, *helps you to be a better person, to be an entrepreneur, to train yourself better*, it's a good organization. It's like your second home. TECHO built this community space three years ago and it's a great help for the kids to go to the class room, to the library. Also in addition to helping you *they like it when people are learning*. Here in the *campamento* there were no water towers, they got people together and you pay a certain amount and they install it for you and you're better off, they give you the key and you get water, all these benefits they are bringing but there are also other organizations that are helping. (member of TECHO housing committee, my translation, my emphasis)

I got to know her during my day at the constructions, and she probably associated me with TECHO, so I do not know if she was only telling me what she wanted me to hear. But the idea of community empowerment linked to self-empowerment had clearly taken root through working in the committee. Such forms of “empowerment”, however, are in themselves an exercise of power (Cruikshank 2002: 70, Cornwall 2002: 33). Moreover, the concepts of community, or of empowerment, in these programs are not self-evident. I realized after talking to the SERVIU and Municipal directors and the members of the two housing committees in the *campamento*, that rather than the *campamento*, the unit to be empowered was the committee, the group of individuals that would live in a social housing complex together in the future, to avoid the social problems both TECHO and the authorities mentioned:

What happens is, I have in the municipality of XX, 3000 families living there in less than a year. What this does to the municipality, it kills it. Three thousand people from other parts, because the land is cheaper to construct social housing, they arrive there. What does it do to the municipality? It destroys it socially. [...] There are no services and the vulnerability of the families is super low. You haven't finished school, you go to smoke crack outside, and the children and the families that live there, they reproduce the same expectations.[...] We as a country have a serious problem with education, here the education is not provided by the state, in my personal opinion. Here the education is a privilege, more than a house, or, it's more easy to get a house than to get an education. I don't know which should come first, I don't know. (Interview, SERVIU 2013)

The governmental rationality behind “Social Inclusion” seems to be correcting the problems of socioeconomically segregated neighborhoods, not by changing the housing policy that produces such neighborhoods (see Rodriguez and Sugranyes 2012a, 2012b), but by changing the poor

individuals, responsabilizing them as “members of community”. These kinds of programs consciously operate on the socioemotional and personal-psychological level, with the aim of forging “an emotional link between the community and state agent deployed in the new micro-spatial scales of state intervention” producing a sense of belonging in a polarized society on a symbolic level (Leiva 2008: 168-169). By adopting and developing the methodology of “Social Inclusion”, TECHO also seems to have aligned itself with this governmental rationality.

4.5 Networks of influence

I had a chance to witness an event for handing out of mattresses and bedclothes for families with children at a *campamento* in the Metropolitan Region, at the social space TECHO had built a few years ago. Present were members of the two housing committees, representatives of a foundation that had organized the mattresses, the Executive Secretary of Aldeas and Campamentos, representatives of SERVIU, and a TV channel. There was music, lemonade and cookies for the children. A truck (Homecenter Sodimac, also a sponsor of TECHO) arrived with the mattresses. Speeches were held, the director of the foundation was talking about the importance of making good choices. There was a tall blond man I had seen somewhere before.

The man turned out to be Felipe Kast, the former Presidential Delegate for Aldeas and Campamentos, former Minister of Planning (MIDEPLAN) and son of Miguel Kast, Planning Minister During the Pinochet Dictatorship who has been credited as the father of the Chilean housing model (See Gilbert 2002: 313, Hidalgo 2004). Kast is also one of the youths that founded TECHO²² together with Berrios and Francisco Irrarazaval, the current Subsecretary of Housing at MINVU²³. Kast has, on several occasions, stepped in to defend TECHO against criticism related to delays in housing projects²⁴ and other irregularities²⁵. He left his office at MINVU in December 2012 to found his own right-wing party, Evolución Política, and is now running a parliamentary campaign in Santiago²⁶.

Many TECHO employees later move on to the state administration, particularly SERVIU, where, according to my interview with a former TECHO employee now working in SERVIU, TECHO has a lot of influence. This is because

²²http://www.quepasa.cl/articulo/19_2124_9.html

²³<http://www.gob.cl/subsecretarios/vivienda/>

²⁴ <http://www.lasegunda.com/Noticias/Nacional/2012/06/757289/kast-el-techo-hace-una-labor-extraordinaria>

²⁵ <http://www.13.cl/t13/entrevistas/felipe-kast-aclara-polemica-del-gobierno-y-un-techo-para-chile>

²⁶ <http://www.evopoli.cl/2013/blog/felipe-kast-entrega-con-la-fundacion-ilumina-la-ultima-de-las-dos-mil-camas-repartidas-a-ninos-de-campamentos/>

A person that has experience in the technicality of a public policy, it's typical to look for the people in the NGOs and I believe un TECHO para Chile has this role. They have experience in this. And also I believe they have the social capital to do this. They have the social networks to do this. They know the right people to do this. [...] They have distinct social networks. (Interview, SERVIU 2013)

In the interviews, TECHO does admit that, though it is not affiliated to any political party, its connections allow it to influence in public policy:

In our country, TECHO has and has achieved for the rigor of its work during all these years a position as an important actor in society which gives us credibility and permits us to raise many demands and make the decision-makers see us as we are molesting them until things happen, and we take advantage of this, and also of being a youth organization that can easily go to the minister and say: “you know what, we don't like this at all”. (Interview, Director TECHO 2013)

I started looking into these networks of influence in secondary sources, as TECHO does not publish information on its founders and board members. The following figure, based on various news articles (for a list, see Appendix 1), presents TECHO in the kind of loose network of constitutionally distinct actors that allows actors to construct common aims and perceptions (cf Miller and Rose 2008). The arrows represent direct relationships. The figure is necessarily incomplete, and not all relations are direct but may be through joint projects or funds. However, it illustrates the deceptiveness of seeing TECHO as a part of some kind of an autonomous and apolitical civil society. Rather, it resembles the concept of “elite circulation” introduced by Tvedt (2006a: 687-688), in which personnel and leaders from NGOs frequently move between positions of government and research institutions, and are thus almost simultaneously “on all sides of the table”. This practice enables the indirect use of power but is difficult to question, as

participants and outsiders regard the protagonists as participants in a good, morally commendable project, and therefore other rules should apply and one should be prepared to accept continual breaches of various types of rules regarding conflicts of interest. (ibid: 688)

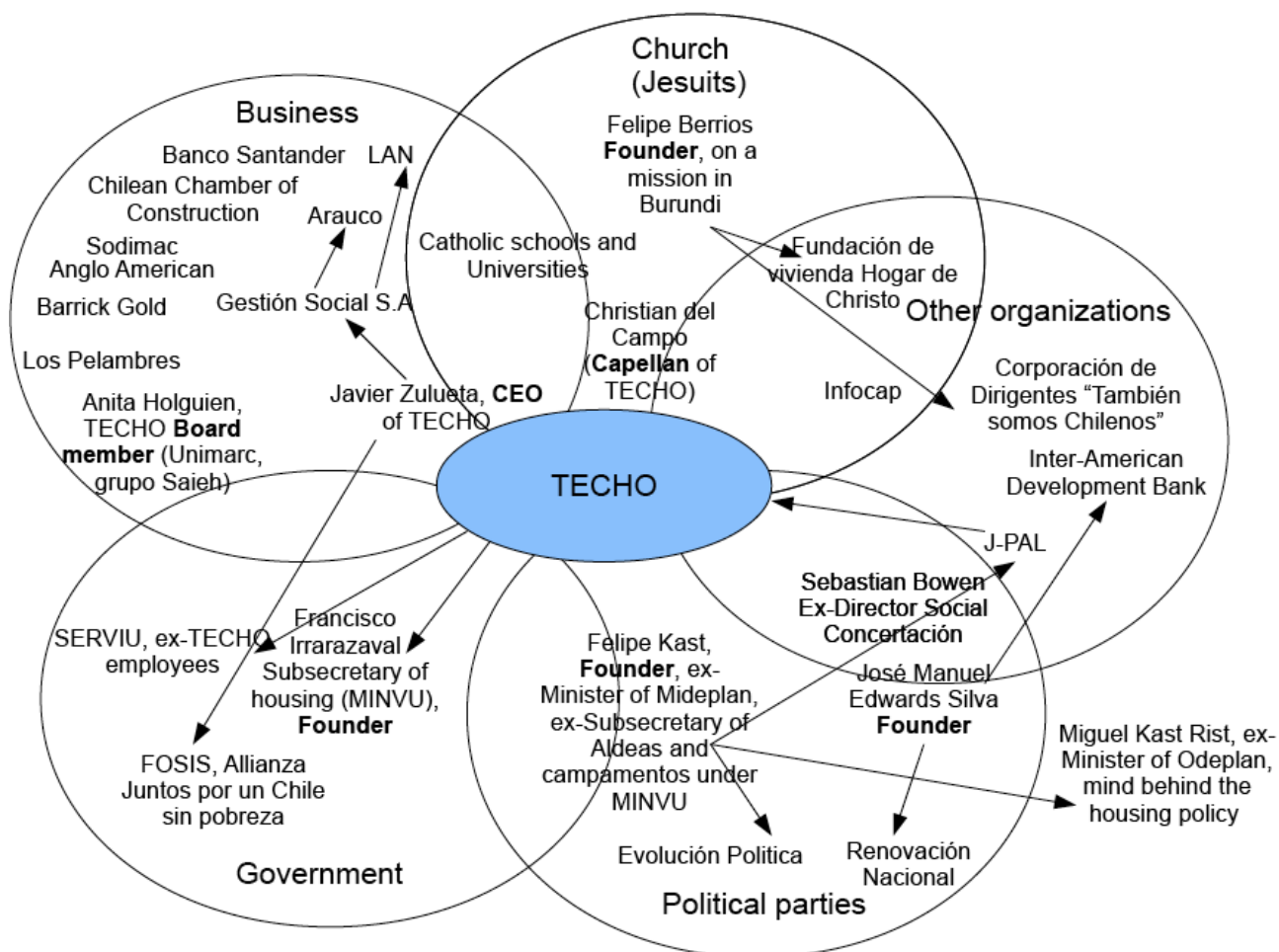


Figure 1. TECHO in a network of actors

The members of the poblador movement were sharply critical of how this system works, interpreting it as a mode of control:

Techo para Chile is a school of government for the rich. It is a school of government where the rich are trained to govern the poor. Today you can see they are in ruin because they are all working for the government. Everyone working today at the Ministry of Housing, in SERVIU, are all ex-TECHO para Chile. Whether the Concertación or the right were winning [in the 2010 presidential elections], TECHO para Chile had the priest Berrios as a leader and founder, and they could be in either one of the governments because Bowen and Kast were in the different campaigns, and TECHO would win anyway. (Interviews, poblador movement 2013)

In their perception, it is easier for NGOs to arrive with presents to the *campamentos* or *poblaciones*, (as I witnessed in case of the mattresses) to learn about the people, and the ways in which they are trying to cheat the system, especially the Ficha de Protección Social which determines eligibility to the housing subsidy as well as other subsidies. The NGO employees then move on to government and basically use this knowledge to change the rules in a way that was against their interests (Interviews, poblador movement 2013). In considering the different treatment of the EAGIS of the poblador organizations and TECHO as EGIS by the government, the politics behind this becomes obvious. But perhaps rather than constituting this as a simple left – right division, it could be the

division between the anti-establishment and the establishment. TECHO clearly takes a cautious stance toward social mobilization, stating that “It's not our fight”, or, as one director explained:

But I believe here we need be careful because: one, the social demands of our country today are demands 2.0, that speak of a country a little more developed, and that are demands that mainly seek to benefit the middle class, something that I find incredible, but there are also things that we should not forget. For example, the demands of the students for a free education of quality, they don't speak for the youth or the children that are today in the *campamentos* and that don't think about entering higher education, because the problem of these families is still primary education, so I think today in our country we are a little bit trapped, or we are running a risk of joining these demands of a country that is advancing in development and forgetting the demands that are directly and unacceptably affecting the poorest families. (Interview, Director, TECHO 2013)

The discourse is similar to that of the government: in a recent interview, the subsecretary of education said “We need to be careful not to let totalitarian visions to impose a single agenda”, that Chile has advanced but that the limited resources should be invested in “those that need them the most”, i.e. the poor.²⁷ TECHO have been the experts of poverty in Chile for years, are doing their own research on the issues, and thus can speak with a voice of authority about poverty. However, one of the inhabitants of the *campamento* gave me a completely different view on education:

I couldn't go to the university because my mum couldn't afford it, we were six siblings and imagine that here you have to pay 300 [USD 600] a month and the minimum salary is 200 000 [USD 400] and how do you eat? How do you feed your kids? There's no way! [...] I think education should be free so that people's salaries would rise, see? The others are sitting and earning millions and people that are breaking their backs every day get 200 000, it's like not logical, they are driving around Chile in their cars and the people here only have seen what's between here and their workplaces and no more, the salaries need to rise so you can pay and save at least, if the dudes [students] are marching I support them if they want to study. (Interview, Housing committee member 2013)

The minimum salary in Chile recently rose to 210.000 pesos (about USD 400). Moreover, according to the OECD country report (2012: 47-48), Chile has one of the lowest intergenerational income mobilities within the OECD, and access to higher education is a factor in this. Considering TECHO's role in governmentality discussed above, it is perhaps natural that they do not wholeheartedly support the social mobilization.

5. Conclusions: TECHO and housing as a solution to poverty

This qualitative case study was aimed at examining the Chilean NGO TECHO as a part of governmentality, the way in which power is exercised through a loose network of state and non-state actors in the programs for closing the *campamentos*, which have persisted in Chile despite

²⁷ <http://www.latercera.com/noticia/educacion/2013/08/657-537246-9-subsecretario-rojas-estudiantes-protestan-porque-chile-avanza.shtml>

sustained economic growth. It has sought to answer the question of how TECHO's role has evolved in relation to these programs. It first traced TECHO's development from a religiously motivated youth movement building *mediaguas* in the 1990s to its involvement as an EGIS in the mid 00's, a government supplier seeking to enroll the people in *campamentos* to social housing programs. Compared to autonomous social organizations and their treatment, we saw that TECHO has a special position in governmentality. It then went on to discuss the concept of "Social Inclusion" as a technology of producing social cohesion responsible citizens that would access housing through a regulated self-management of their communities and of themselves. It suggests that TECHO's special position has been established and consolidated through a kind of circulation between government positions and the organization. This has created a system of mutual understandings and influence that do not challenge the basis of the housing policy, which generates income for the EGIS and profit for the constructors and land owners.

The Chilean housing policy is often viewed as a model in Latin America for its achievement in reducing the housing deficit. Yet the social housing constructed under this policy has been of poor quality and profit logic of the model has created marginalized neighbourhoods far from the opportunities of the city. This has consolidated the sharp social divisions which characterize the Chilean society, and the fear which builds many fences prevents the creation of socioeconomically mixed neighbourhoods. There are also perverse incentives for the poor to try to compete in poverty to access the housing benefit, either by trying to cheat on the Ficha de Protección Social or by moving to the *campamento* to jump the housing queue. However, for many people of the *campamentos*, the only thing that changes is that they have a solid roof, electricity and water bills they cannot pay, and that they have lost many social benefits as they are now homeowners, seen as the new middle class of the Chilean poverty reduction "success story". But a house or an apartment does not give them education, decent salaries, or health, things that the Chileans pay dearly for but that in other many other OECD countries are provided as a matter of right so that you can later, perhaps, buy a house. As can be observed since the social mobilization started in Chile in 2010, neither housing, nor the associated community-building activities can guarantee social cohesion in a system that the majority perceives as unjust. Charity indeed begins where justice ends.

I would suggest further studies on TECHO in other countries in Latin America, as well as its connections to business, especially in the context of the mining industry with which it has had many partnerships in the North of Chile.

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APENDIX 1

News resources on the affiliations of TECHO

José Manuel Edwards Silva, Renovación Nacional

Cofounder of TECHO, in IDB 2006-2009:

http://legislativo.votainteligente.cl/Parlamentario/show/id_parlamentario/140

http://www.camara.cl/camara/diputado_detalle.aspx?prmid=935

Francisco Irrarazaval, Subsecretary of Housing, MINVU

Co-founder of TECHO

<http://www.emol.com/noticias/nacional/2012/11/12/569229/francisco-irrazaval-es-el-nuevo-subsecretario-de-vivienda-y-urbanismo.html>

<http://www.gob.cl/subsecretarios/vivienda/>

Felipe Kast, Candidate, Evolución Política, ex-presidencial delegate of Aldeas and Campamentos
Cofounder of TECHO

http://www.quepasa.cl/articulo/19_2124_9.html

http://www.latercera.com/contenido/674_224840_9.shtml

<http://diario.latercera.com/2011/08/11/01/contenido/pais/31-79711-9-kast-anuncia-18-mil-subsidios-para-familias-de-campamentos.shtml>

<http://www.capital.cl/negocios/laboratorio-contra-la-pobreza/> (affiliaton with J-PAL)

Felipe Berrios

Founder of TECHO, Founder of Corporación de Dirigentas También Somos Chilenos

<http://www.dirigentes.cl/>

Javier Zulueta

<http://www.porunchilesinpobreza.cl/index.php?>

[option=com_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=2&Itemid=6](http://www.porunchilesinpobreza.cl/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=2&Itemid=6)

<http://gestionsocial.cl/equipo/>

Anita Holuguie

<http://diario.elmercurio.com/detalle/index.asp?id=%7B346175e5-b24b-41b9-89f5-e33471df7b48%7D>

Jesuit institutions

<http://www.quepasa.cl/articulo/actualidad/2012/04/1-8159-9-la-renovacion-de-los-jesuitas.shtml>

Business

TECHO sponsors

<http://www.techo.org/chile/>

