CORPORATE INVESTMENT AND SUPPORT TO ENSURE FOOD AND NUTRITION SOVEREIGNTY AND SECURITY IN BRAZIL 2020 – 2023

Fundação José Luiz Setúbal

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PARTICIPANTS:

Fundação José Luiz Setúbal

TEAM:

Pietro Rodrigues
Laura Simões Camargo
Maria Victoria Vilela
Pedro Luiz dos Santos
Karen Rizzato Pires

Pensi Social
Instituto de Pesquisa em Ciências Sociais

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SUMMARY

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

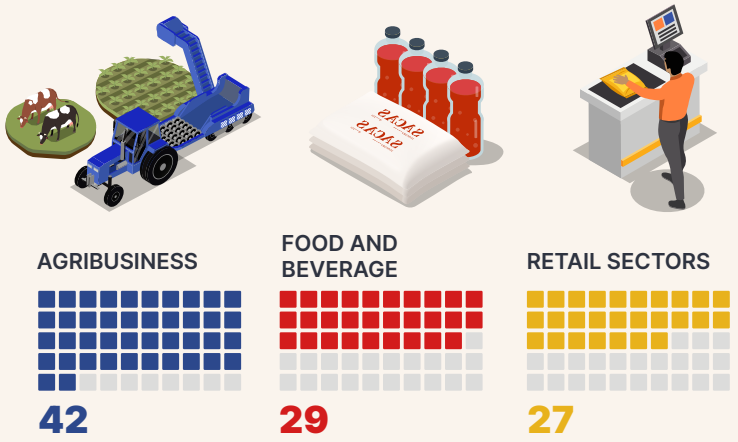
B3	Bolsa, Brasil, Balcão
CNAE	National Classification of Economic Activities
CONSEA	National Council for Food and Nutrition Security
ESG	Environmental, Social and Governance
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GEE	Greenhouse Gases
GRI	Global Reporting Initiative
G20	Group of Twenty
IAN	Food and Nutrition Insecurity
ISE	Corporate Sustainability Index
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
UN	United Nations
REDE PENSSAN	Brazilian Research Network on Food and Nutrition Sovereignty and Security
SOFI	State on the Food Insecurity on World
FNS	Food and Nutrition Security
SESC	Social Service of Commerce
FNSS	Food and Nutrition Sovereignty and Security
VIGISAN	Survey on Food Insecurity in the Context of the Covid-19 Pandemic

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This research presents the mapping and analysis of investment and support actions by companies in the agribusiness, retail, and food and beverage sectors to promote Food and Nutrition Sovereignty and Security (FNSS) in Brazil from 2020 to 2023.

Below are some key findings from the analysis conducted:

Among the **150 largest companies** in the agribusiness, retail, and food and beverage sectors,
only 98 were engaged in initiatives
that contributed to the promotion of FNSS
in Brazil between 2020 and 2023.



Common contributions by companies included **food donation** initiatives and **improving production processes** to increase efficiency and reduce losses during production.

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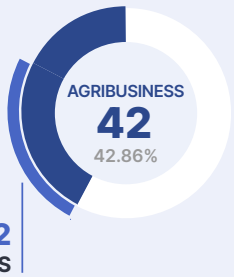
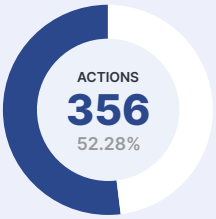
Between 2020 and 2023, the agribusiness sector was more engaged in FNSS-related actions than the retail and food and beverage sectors.



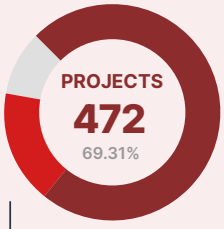
22
COOPERATIVES

Of the 98 companies mapped, 42 (42.86%) were in the **agribusiness** sector, 22 of which were cooperatives. These companies carried out 356 actions, representing 52.28% of the 681 mapped initiatives, while the food and beverage and retail sectors carried out 183 (26.87%) and 145 (21.29%) actions, respectively.



Of the 681 mapped actions, 472 (69.31% of the total) were categorized as projects.

Data collection and analysis showed a predominance of **project**-type actions, characterized by being more specific and localized, typically with limited infrastructure and target audience scope. **Programs**, which are larger-scale initiatives, formed the second-largest type group, with 118 (17.33%) actions in total.



118
PROGRAMS

Among groups with a higher probability of exposure to Food and Nutrition Insecurity (FNI), specific demographic populations[1] and those in economic vulnerability were prioritized over other groups but were not present in most of the cases.

These groups were included in 126 (18.50%) and 148 (21.73%) initiatives, respectively, making them the main beneficiaries or target audiences of actions funded or supported by companies in combating FNI from 2020 to 2023.

1 The following groups were considered in this variable: women, Black people, Indigenous peoples, riverside communities, traditional communities, people with low levels of education, individuals experiencing homelessness, people from rural areas, those affected by disasters, the elderly, among others. These are groups that face social stigmas and have been historically marginalized.

The adoption of best practices was a primary focus for companies.

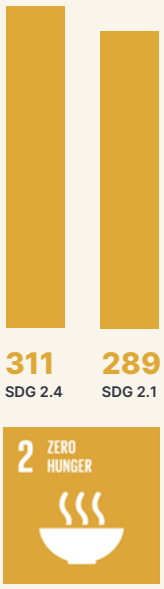
With 319 (46.84%) total actions, the goal of **adopting best practices and principles of corporate responsibility** was the most frequently cited. These actions were more closely linked to the production chain than to populations at greater risk of FNI, often addressing issues such as supply chain traceability and certification of suppliers and cooperatives.

The goal of **hunger relief**, directly related to food distribution such as basic food baskets for populations in FNI situations, accounted for 276 (40.53%) cases, making it the second most common objective.

Sustainable production was a key element of the initiatives.

With Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2 used as the baseline indicator for selecting actions, **its indicator 2.4, which focuses on ensuring sustainable production systems, had the highest association with the mapped actions**, with 311 (45.67%) total initiatives.

Indicator 2.1, which relates to hunger relief and is associated with food distribution and direct delivery, had 289 (42.44%) related initiatives, making it the second most commonly linked indicator.



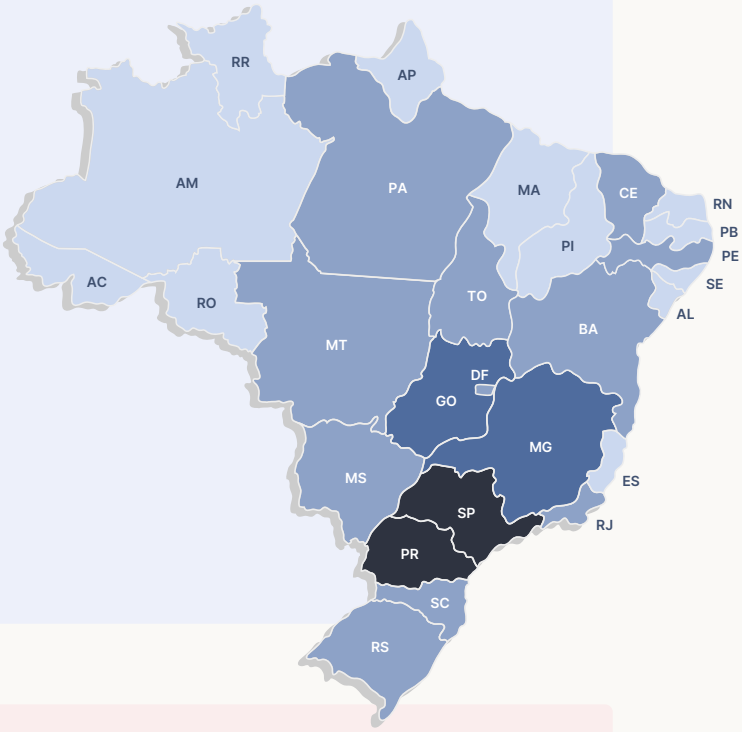
Food donation was the primary mechanism of actions,

accounting for 246 (36.12%) cases. Actions categorized as **"production/dissemination/implementation of sustainable practices"** adding up to 241 (35.39%) cases, making this the second-largest group.

The Southeast region, particularly the state of São Paulo, was the main location for these actions.

Of the 681 initiatives, 240 (35.24%) occurred in the **Southeast**, and 146 (21.44%) were in **São Paulo**.

On the other hand, the states in the North region have the lowest concentration of initiatives. Roraima has the fewest, with only 3 (0.44%) actions in its territory, followed by Amapá and Acre, with 8 (1.17%) and 9 (1.32%) cases, respectively.

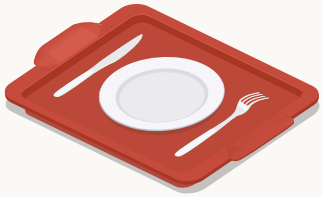


Situations such as the COVID-19 pandemic spurred corporate social investment.

Analyzing actions funded or supported by companies from 2020 to 2023, the pandemic (2020–2022) exacerbated FNI rates in Brazil and simultaneously drove initiatives to combat this increase. A total of 101 cases (14.83% of the total) were identified as being associated with **emergency motivations**, including other causes such as natural disasters.

INTRODUCTION

THE CONTEXT OF HUNGER IN BRAZIL AND THE WORLD



Brazil has made significant progress in reducing its vulnerabilities and leaving the Hunger Map, developed by the United Nations (UN). Between the late 1990s and 2014, a collaborative effort involving civil society movements and organizations, the government, and part of the private sector succeeded in mitigating a chronic issue in Brazilian society: Food and Nutritional Insecurity (FNI). From 2004 to 2014, the country's food vulnerability indicators showed consistent improvement. During this period, according to data from the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the proportion of people experiencing undernourishment or malnutrition in Brazil decreased by 82%. Thanks to this effort, the country exited the Hunger Map in 2014, becoming a global reference in the fight against FNI (FAO, 2014).

However, this positive trajectory was interrupted starting in 2015. Between that year and 2022, changes in macroeconomic and political conditions, both domestic and international, worsened hunger indicators in Brazil. In 2020, the country once again recorded high levels of FNI. According to the FAO's 2022 report, *The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI) 2022*, approximately 61.3 million Brazilians experienced moderate or severe FNI between 2019 and 2021. Moreover, between 2021 and 2022, over 30 million people went hungry (Rede PENSSAN, 2022). These figures are alarming, considering Brazil's population of approximately 213.3 million, meaning that 28.74% of citizens were experiencing some degree of FNI.

The reasons for the worsening hunger[2] situation in Brazil are multifaceted and complex. According to the State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI) 2022 report by FAO/UN (2022) and the II VIGISAN - National Survey on Food Insecurity in the Context of the COVID-19 Pandemic in Brazil by Rede PENSSAN (2022), the causes range from rising food prices to climate change. Other contributing factors include the dismantling of public policies supporting food production, challenges in accessing healthy food, socioeconomic inequalities, and logistical, storage, and distribution issues. The SOFI 2023 report also highlights the global political and economic crisis triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine as significant global aggravators.

2 The term "hunger" is used throughout the report in a broad sense, not in accordance with the definition established by the Brazilian Food Insecurity Scale (EBIA).

BOX 1

FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY AND SOVEREIGNTY

FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY:

In 1986, the First National Conference on Food and Nutrition defined in its Final Document that Food and Nutrition Security can be understood as:

> *the guarantee for everyone of access to quality basic foods, in sufficient quantity, on a permanent basis and without compromising access to other basic needs, based on dietary practices that enable the healthy reproduction of the human body, thus contributing to a dignified existence. (ABRANDH, 2013, cited in the Final Document of the First National Conference on Food and Nutrition, 1986).*

FOOD SOVEREIGNTY:

The concept of Food Sovereignty, on the other hand, is related to "the right of people to decide what to produce and consume" ***(ABRANDH, p. 17, 2013)***. It was created in 1996 as a response by social movements to the World Food Summit, which focused solely on access to food without addressing its origin, ultimately benefiting agribusiness ***(ABRANDH, 2013, cited in CAMPOS, 2007)***.

In Brazil, the development and strengthening of public policies addressing Food and Nutritional Security (FNS) have advanced in recent years. One notable example is the creation of the National Strategy for Food and Nutritional Security in Cities – Alimenta Cidades – formalized by Decree 11,822 on December 12, 2023. Its overarching goal is to expand the production, availability, access, and consumption of adequate and healthy food. The strategy prioritizes urban peripheral areas and populations in situations of vulnerability and social risk. Another significant national milestone was the reinstatement of the National Council on Food and Nutritional Security (CONSEA), an advisory body to the Presidency of the Republic responsible for producing research and key indicators to support the formulation of more effective and targeted policies.

At the international level, Brazil's governmental attention to the FNS agenda was particularly evident in 2024, a pivotal year for the country as it assumed the presidency of the Group of Twenty (G20) for the first time. The G20 is an international forum comprising the 19 largest economies in the world, including both developed and emerging countries, alongside the European Union and

the African Union. During its mandate, Brazil highlighted new priorities on the agenda, such as reforming global governance, promoting the three dimensions of sustainable development (economic, social, and environmental), and addressing hunger, poverty, and inequality. In the same year, Brazil launched the Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty, the main international initiative to tackle issues of inequality and its consequences, including FNS challenges.

BOX 2

GLOBAL ALLIANCE AGAINST HUNGER AND POVERTY

In 2024, the G20 meeting resulted in the creation of the Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty, which has already secured 148 memberships, including 82 countries. The initiative aims to accelerate global efforts to eradicate hunger and poverty. Among the main commitments announced is the goal of reaching 500 million people with income transfer programs in low- and lower-middle-income countries by 2030. To finance these actions and other initiatives, the Alliance plans to raise billions of dollars in credit and donations through multilateral development banks.

The Alliance operates based on three fundamental pillars — national, financial, and knowledge — designed to mobilize and coordinate resources for the implementation of evidence-based policies, tailored to the specific realities of each participating country.

Source:

https://www.gov.br/mds/pt-br/noticias-e-conteudos/desenvolvimento-social/noticias-desenvolvimento-social/lideres-mundiais-lancam-a-alianca-global-contra-a-fome-e-a-pobreza

https://www.gov.br/planalto/pt-br/acompanhe-o-planalto/noticias/2024/11/presidente-lula-lanca-alianca-global-contra-a-fome-e-a-pobreza-com-148-adesoes-incluindo-82-paises

Photo: Ricardo Stuckert/PR - Portal GOV

THE ROLE OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR IN COMBATING HUNGER

Brazil is an agro-industrial powerhouse, ranking as the third-largest agricultural exporter globally, behind only the United States and the European Union, and stands out as the country with the largest trade surplus in the sector (Hopewell, 2016). However, a significant portion of Brazil's crops is dedicated to producing animal feed and biofuels rather than directly for human consumption[3]. Moreover, these monocultures often occupy vast areas, significantly contributing to global warming through greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions (Cuadra et al., 2018).

In addition, Brazil faces high levels of food waste. According to the "Relatório Diagnóstico: Mapa da Fome e do Desperdício de Alimentos no Brasil" 2022 by Consultoria do Amanhã, approximately 55 million tons of food are discarded annually by the industry and the population—an amount sufficient to feed eight times the number of people living in severe food insecurity. Companies in the food, beverage, and retail sectors play a significant role in this waste, exacerbating the problem.

This scenario highlights a structural contradiction in Brazil: while it is a giant in agricultural production, the country struggles to ensure Food and Nutritional Security (FNS) for its population, with millions living in hunger. These contrasts intensify the debate on corporate socio-environmental responsibility, prompting society to demand effective actions, especially from companies in the food supply chain.

In "The Business Sector, Philanthropy, and the Social Question" (1997), Elizabeth Rico argues that corporate philanthropic actions are linked to political and economic interests, with the state delegating part of the provision of social goods to the private sector and civil society. Companies aim to better prepare the local workforce, ensure future security, improve their international image, and explore the third sector as a profitable market, while social movements expand demands for socio-environmental responsibility. Rico advocates

3 According to IBGE, the highest production values in 2023 were from soybean, sugarcane, and corn grain crops, respectively. Source: https://www.ibge.gov.br/explica/producao-agropecuaria/

for “participatory corporate citizenship,” focusing on structural actions and the professionalization of social organizations but notes that these practices remain exceptions based on the analyzed data.

Corporate philanthropy, for example, has gained prominence in the private sector, especially with the rise of discussions around Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG). The potential of ESG-driven efforts to support FNS is significant, as it encompasses large-scale donations as well as the creation and maintenance of proprietary initiatives to combat hunger. Furthermore, large companies like those analyzed in this study involve various stakeholders in their processes, including suppliers, workers, customers, surrounding communities, and more. Thus, their initiatives can exhibit greater variability and reach.

Given the growing role of corporate social responsibility driven by the ESG agenda and the gap in the literature regarding the contribution of Brazilian corporate philanthropy to FNS promotion, this research aimed to identify and analyze corporate socio-environmental actions focused on this issue. Sustainability and ESG reports from 150 companies were analyzed, comprising the 50 largest in the agribusiness, food and beverage, and retail sectors. These were selected for their relevance and integration into the food production and distribution chain (Box 6).

This report is structured into four main sections: a detailed description of the methodology used for collecting and analyzing actions; an analysis and description of the findings, divided into company profiles and action profiles; and the conclusion.

METHODOLOGY

This research aimed to provide an overview of initiatives promoting food and nutrition sovereignty and security (FNSS) that were financed or supported by the private sector in Brazil between 2020 and 2023. To define the scope of the analysis, the research team used the Valor 1000 list from the 2023 edition. Published by Valor Econômico newspaper, the list ranks the companies with the highest net revenues operating in the country. Since detailing the actions of 1,000 companies would exceed the team's capacity within the project timeline, 150 companies were selected: the 50 largest in agribusiness, the 50 largest in the food and beverage sector, and the 50 largest in retail. These sectors were chosen due to their connection to the food supply chain.

The research relied on secondary data analysis and primary data generation. It is important to note that, as data collection and analysis were conducted manually, they are subject to human error.

After defining the scope, the second step involved collecting and analyzing the activity and sustainability reports produced by the companies between 2020 and 2023. This phase took place between January and September 2024, meaning that corporate reports published after this period were not included.

Between January and May 2024, corporate reports were analyzed manually. Then, in May, the team adopted ChatGPT 4.0 as an auxiliary tool after conducting various tests detailed in the annex "The use of ChatGPT". When a corporate report was identified, the researcher responsible for analysis uploaded the PDF to ChatGPT with the prompt:

"Identify the actions, initiatives, projects, programs, campaigns, donations, collections, partnerships, activities, certifications, seals, etc., described in the document. Present the results in a table where each row is a unique action, and the columns are: the name of the action cited in the document, the full description of the action as stated in the document, and the page where the description appears."

After receiving the response, the researcher asked:

"Can you list more initiatives mentioned in the report?"

The researcher then verified the actions suggested by ChatGPT in the document and, to ensure all initiatives were captured, searched for the following keywords (both singular and plural): initiative, action, program, project, campaign, partnership, collection, donation, income, input, SDG, food, nutrition, and food basket.

To be mapped, an initiative needed to be directly related to one of the items in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2: "Zero Hunger and Sustainable Agriculture". Once an action was identified, it was mapped into a database created by the team, where its characteristics were detailed. Each row in the database represented an action categorized into columns by type, objective, years of financing or support, execution mechanism, partnerships, geographic location, links to the food supply chain, connection to SDGs 2 and 12[4], and more.

To structure and organize this database, unique identifiers were created for each mapped element, ensuring traceability of the information. The "id_emp" was assigned to distinguish each company and allow linkage with the recorded business actions. Meanwhile, the "id_ini" was created to differentiate individual initiatives. In cases where the same action was carried out by multiple companies but with different partnerships and executions, the "id_ini" remained the same, while the "id_emp" varied. This ensured that it was possible to identify which companies participated in each initiative without artificially inflating the total number of actions. Additionally, the "id_mob" was introduced to group initiatives from different companies that, despite having distinct characteristics, were part of the same external mobilization movement. These mobilizations, often promoted by civil society organizations or associations, include, for example, the Dia de Cooperar, an initiative organized by the Brazilian Cooperatives Organization (Organização das Cooperativas do Brasil), where different cooperatives carry out their own actions, all linked to the same event. Thus, the database enabled the structured and accessible identification and analysis of these mobilizations.

4 SDG 12, "Responsible Consumption and Production", was adopted in this research because it directly addresses the issue of responsible production, a central aspect in the analysis of the food production chain with a focus on initiatives financed and supported by companies. In addition, its metrics include reducing food waste, reducing waste generation, corporate sustainability reporting, among other indicators relevant to the scope of the study.

If a company presented any FNSS-related action in its reports, its characteristics were also detailed in a second database. In this database, each row represented a company, and the columns included variables such as its National Classification of Economic Activities (CNAE), economic sector and subsector, internationalization, year of establishment, headquarters location in Brazil, connection to any foundation or institute, relationship between its activities and the food supply chain, prioritization of FNS, and others.

The databases were continuously refined throughout the research period, undergoing various adjustments to ensure they were as accurate and detailed as possible. The variable names were standardized based on the SNAKE case model, ensuring consistency in nomenclature and facilitating data manipulation. A detailed description of the variables is available in the annex "*Creation and Definition of Variables*".

A total of 681 initiatives directly linked to SDG 2 were mapped, financed or supported by 42 agribusiness companies, 29 in the food and beverage sector, and 27 in retail. Each action was characterized by 67 variables, and each company was analyzed across 33 variables. All actions were financed or supported in at least one year between 2020 and 2023.

DATA DESCRIPTION

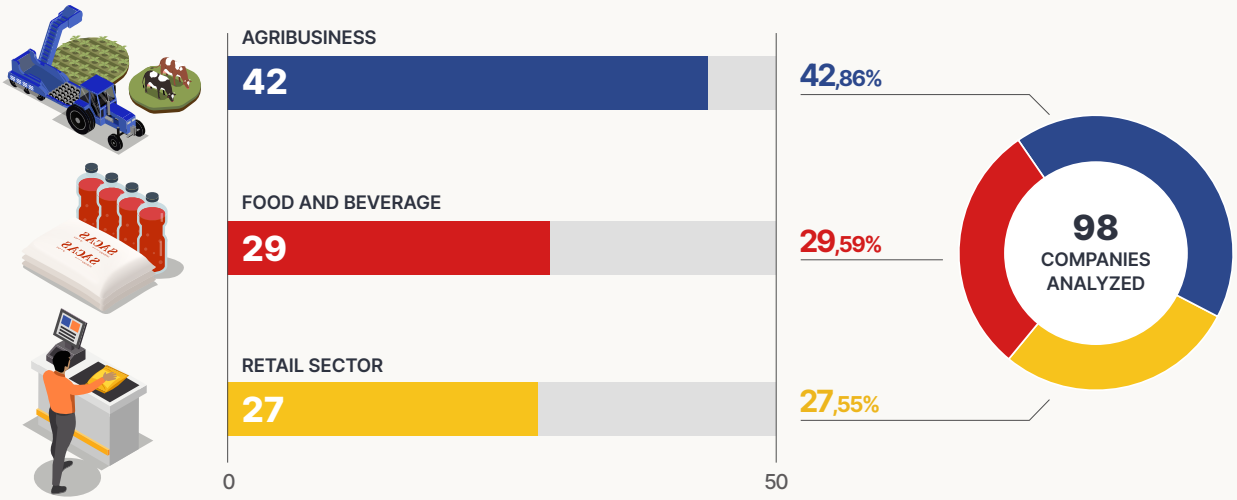
COMPANIES

This section presents the main characteristics of the companies analyzed in the research, focusing on the three selected economic sectors—agribusiness, food and beverages, and retail—due to their relevance and importance in the food production chain. Additionally, the proportion of actions by each sector, the location of these companies in Brazil—which influences their social investment decisions—their connection with the third sector, such as foundations and institutes, and the relationship between their business activities and the links of the food supply chain were observed.

BUSINESS SECTORS

Considering the links in the food supply chain and the potential connection between companies involved in the chain and the promotion of Food and Nutrition Sovereignty and Security (FNSS), the agribusiness, food and beverages, and retail sectors listed in the Valor 2023 ranking were selected. A total of 150 companies were investigated, comprising the 50 largest in each of the three sectors. Of these, 98 had actions related to SDG 2: Zero Hunger, with 42.86% of the companies belonging to the agribusiness sector, 29.59% to the food and beverage sector, and 27.55% to the retail sector.

FIGURE 1 **Companies Analyzed by Sector**

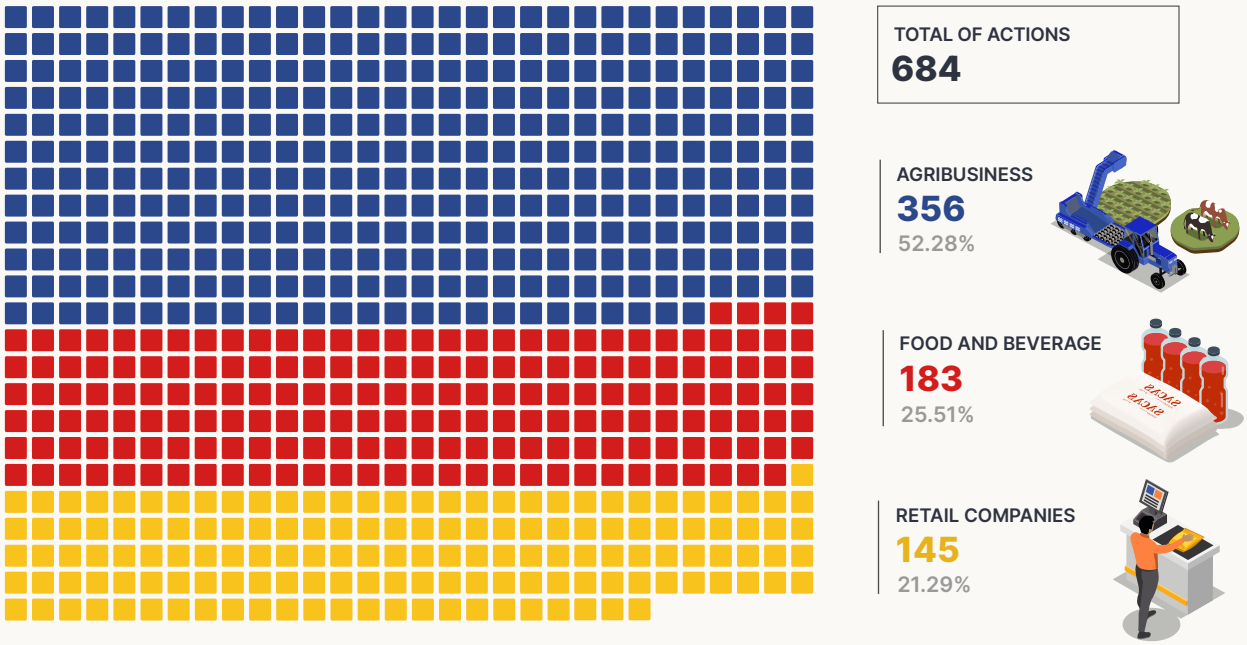


Source: Own elaboration, 2024.

Regarding the composition of the business universe, two types of organizations stand out: cooperatives and multinational companies. Among the 98 companies included in the research, 25 were cooperatives, representing 26.87% of the total. As for multinational companies, there were 31, accounting for 31.63% of the total.

In terms of actions, 356 were conducted by agribusiness companies, representing 52.28% of the 681 total initiatives, 26.87% (183 actions) by food and beverage companies, and 21.29% (145 actions) by retail companies.

FIGURE 2 **Actions by Sectors of Financing or Supporting Companies**[5] [6]



Source: Own elaboration, 2024.

5 Each action is represented by a square. Considering that 3 initiatives were funded by companies from 2 sectors, the figure contains 684 squares. The following figures have the same logic.

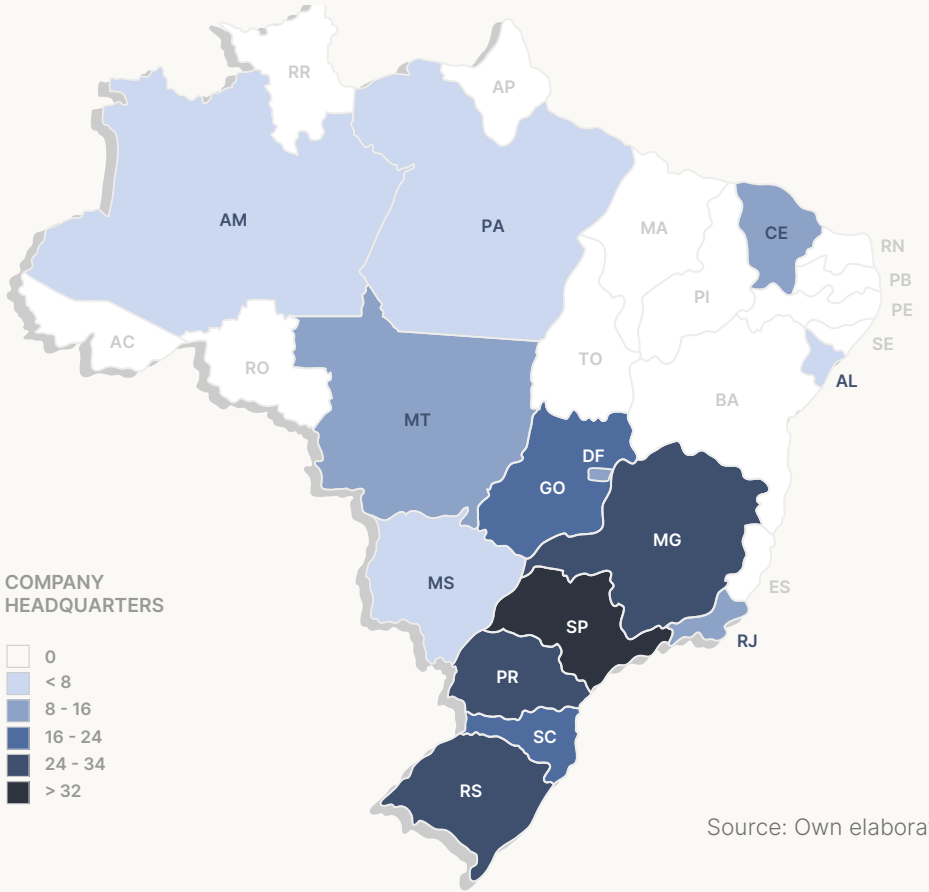
6 A total of 681 actions were identified, with three of them funded by companies from two sectors. Since the objective of this specific chart was to show funding or support by sector, these actions were counted twice. As a result, the total of 681 actions increased to 684. This duplication does not occur in the other analyses in the report. Furthermore, since the duplicated initiatives were the same, the percentages were calculated based on the total of 681 cases.

COMPANY HEADQUARTERS

As an additional element of analysis, the location of company headquarters was collected to profile the companies observed in the study. This data, beyond showing where the largest companies in each sector are located, helps to understand the relationship between the headquarters' locations and the implementation of their social investment initiatives.

As shown in Figure 3 below, the state of São Paulo has the highest concentration of company headquarters, with a total of 37 companies, or 37.76% of the 98 analyzed. Paraná is the second state with the highest number of headquarters, hosting 20 companies (20.41%). Other states vary, with cases like Rio Grande do Sul, which has 8 (8.16%) headquarters, to states with only one headquarters, such as Amazonas, Mato Grosso do Sul, Pará, and Sergipe.

FIGURE 3 **Location of Company Headquarters by State**[7]



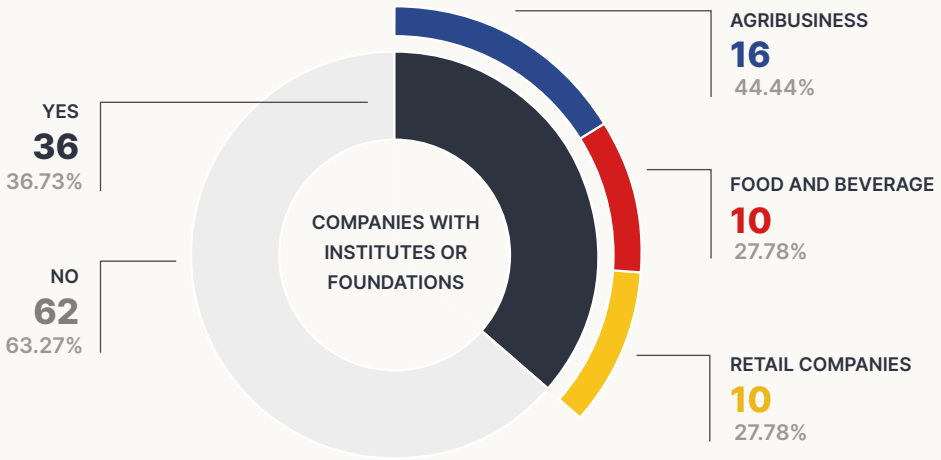
Source: Own elaboration, 2024.

7 The states shown in white do not host any of the 98 companies' headquarters. Those with at least one headquarters are categorized using a blue gradient, with the lightest shade representing the lowest value and the darkest shade representing the highest value.

CORPORATE FOUNDATIONS

Some companies have institutes or foundations responsible for their social investments, aiming to contribute to socio-environmental agendas. Of the 98 companies analyzed, 36 (36.73%) have institutes or foundations, while 62 (63.27%) do not. Among the companies with institutes/foundations, 16 (44.44%)[8] belong to the agribusiness sector, 10 (27.78%) are in retail, and 10 (27.78%) are in the food and beverage sector.

FIGURE 4 **Companies with Institutes or Foundations[9]**
total and by sector



Source: Own elaboration, 2024.

LINKS IN THE FOOD SUPPLY CHAIN

All selected companies operated in at least one link of the food supply chain. Although many companies operated in multiple links of the chain, classification was based only on stages that constituted a significant part of their business process. For example, while all companies stored their products in

8 The percentage was calculated in relation to the total of 36 companies that have foundations or institutes.

9 The number of foundations or institutes is lower than the total number of companies categorized as “has an institute/foundation” since the companies Castrolanda, Frísia, and Capal share the same foundation (Fundação ABC). Thus, the total number of foundations/institutes is 34.

some way, only those with silos or large warehouses were classified under the storage link due to scale. The same approach was applied to transportation: although all companies transported their products, only those with a highly significant role, such as international shipping via vessels, were classified in this link.

Companies were classified as operating in the input production link—the first link of the food supply chain—if they produced inputs for agriculture and livestock, ensuring the nutrition and protection of plants and animals. Inputs considered included animal genetic material, feed, and agricultural pesticides. Companies operating in input production accounted for 41 (41.84%) of the 98 analyzed. In the food production link, 49 (50.00%) companies were involved in agricultural or livestock production, either in rural or urban areas.

Companies classified as operating in the storage link had at least one significant stage of their work involving food storage, such as in silos or food banks. A total of 60 (61.22%) companies were classified in this link of the chain.

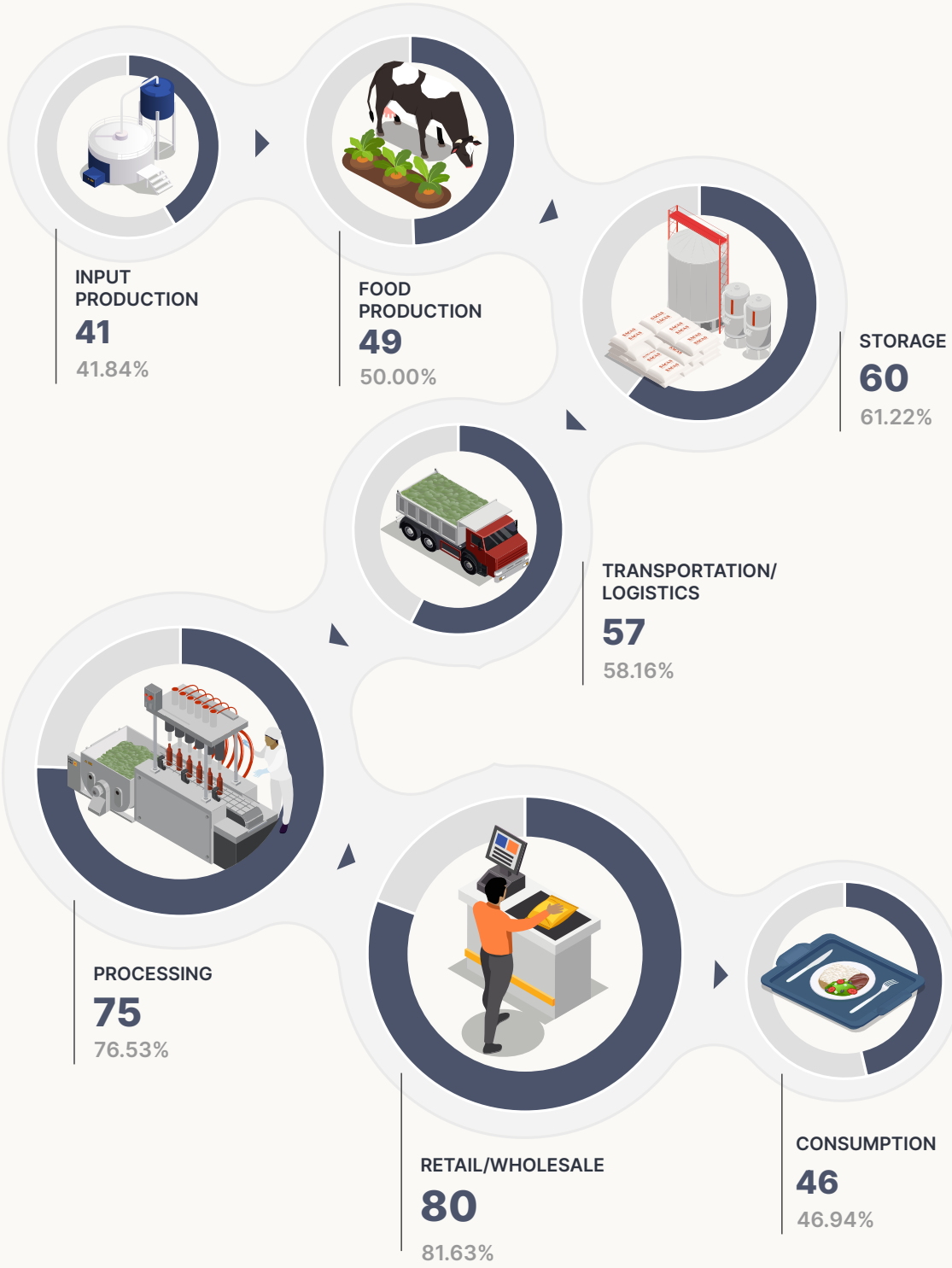
Regarding transportation/logistics, 57 (58.16%) companies were classified under this link of the chain. These included companies with at least one significant stage of their work involving logistics or the international transport of products such as inputs and food.

Companies classified as operating in the processing link had a significant stage of their work involving food processing, i.e., the transformation of food into new products, whether edible or not. There were 75 (76.53%) companies operating in this link of the chain.

For companies classified under retail and/or wholesale, they needed to have at least one significant stage of their work involving the sale of products, such as inputs or ready-to-eat food, either physically or online. Of the 98 companies analyzed, 80 (81.63%) operated in this link.

Finally, companies classified as operating in the consumption link had at least one significant stage of their work involving direct interaction with consumers, such as providing restaurant services or home food delivery. A total of 46 (46.94%) companies operated in the consumption link of the production chain.

FIGURE 5 **Companies by Operations in the Food Supply Chain Links[10]**



Source: Own elaboration, 2024.

10 The sum of the number of companies operating in each link of the food supply chain exceeds the total of 98 companies analyzed, as each company could operate in at least one link and at most in all of them.

ACTIONS

This section presents the analysis of actions promoting Food and Nutrition Sovereignty and Security (FNSS) carried out between 2020 and 2023 by the 150 largest companies in the agribusiness, food and beverage, and retail sectors, with 50 companies from each sector. The classifications cover various aspects of the initiatives, aiming to detail them. Among the variables created were the type of actions undertaken, the stakeholders involved, their objectives, their relationship with SDGs 2 and 12, ESG, geographic locations, and other factors.

TYPES OF ACTION

The classification of the types of initiatives carried out or financed by companies in their social investments to promote FNSS is essential to understand how such actions are structured and their impact within this theme. To this end, five categories were created to classify the actions: "project", "program", "campaign", "multisectoral articulation", and "organizational support". These categories were developed based on the analysis of the corporate reports describing the actions. Additionally, when provided in the document, the company's own classification was followed by the researchers.

Projects typically have a specific objective and focus. Programs tend to be more structured, have a longer duration, and function as overarching initiatives that encompass multiple projects within the same thematic area. "Campaigns" generally involve the collection and donation of food during festive periods or in emergency situations, such as natural disasters. Actions that facilitated connections between two or more groups were categorized as "multisectoral articulations", while those that invested in the infrastructure of civil society organizations—either through unrestricted donations or by renovating their spaces—were classified as "organizational support".

Among the 681 initiatives collected, 472 (69.31%) were classified as Projects, making up the largest group of actions financed or supported by companies. Programs formed the second-largest group, representing 17.33% of the total, with 118 actions. Campaigns ranked third, with 73

(10.72%) actions of this type. Organizational Support and Multisectoral Articulations were the least frequent, with 16 and 2 actions, respectively, representing 2.35% and 0.29% of the total.

BOX 3

ILLUSTRATIVE CASES OF EACH TYPE

PROJECT:

The "**Donas do Café**" project, launched in 2021 by **Cooxupé** in partnership with SMC Specialty Coffees, aimed to provide information and training to female cooperative members and partners of both companies, fostering their professional growth and increasing their knowledge of the specialty coffee market. Online meetings were also held to share knowledge on topics such as post-harvest processes, the specialty coffee market, and cultural management practices.

PROGRAM:

The "**Bezerro Sustentável**" program, by **Marfrig**, focused on fostering the professionalization of small producers in calf rearing, the first phase of cattle production. Developed in the Amazon biome, the program aimed to promote the socioeconomic inclusion of livestock farmers by offering guidance and production support, tailored financing options, technical assistance for genetic improvement, and support for land and environmental regularization.

CAMPAIGN:

The "**Juntos Por Minas**" Campaign was led by **Grupo ABC** in partnership with local associations and public agencies. In its stores, non-perishable food, cleaning and personal hygiene products, animal feed, and bedding and bath items were collected for donation to families affected by the severe rains that hit the state of Minas Gerais at the end of 2021.

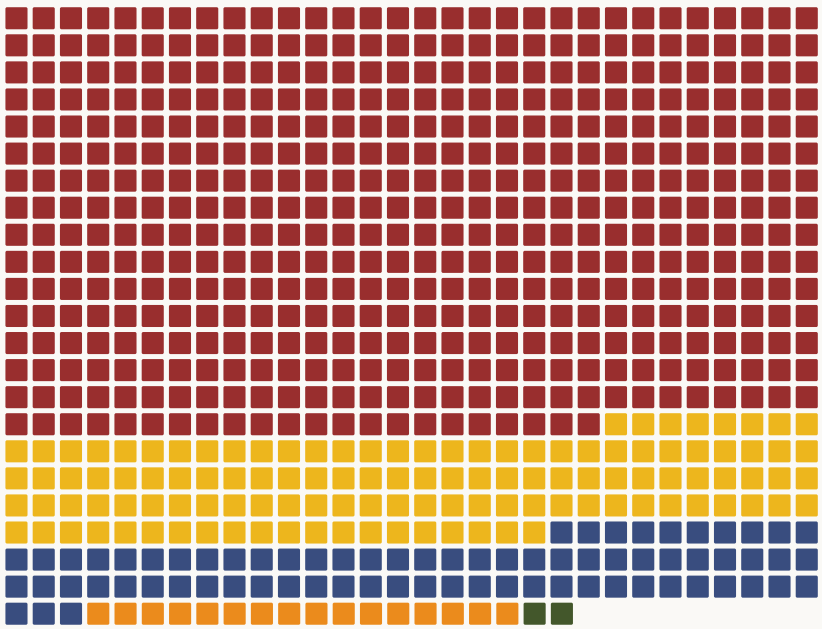
ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT:

Grupo Montesanto Tavares and **Armazém Gerais Leste** Minas allocated 0.03% of their individual revenues to cover the fixed expenses of the **Instituto Café Solidário**, characterizing organizational support. Instituto Café Solidário served 154 children and young people with sports and cultural activities during after-school hours. The institute also cultivated a vegetable garden involving 40 students, who planted, tended, and harvested the crops. The produce was used to prepare meals and was also donated for the students to take home.

MULTISECTORAL ARTICULATION:

An example of multisectoral articulation was the creation of the company **Biomas** by **Marfrig**, along with Itaú, Santander, and Rabobank banks, and the companies Suzano and Vale. The company aimed to engage producers in the Amazon and Cerrado regions in forest conservation through intensified pasture management, the recovery of degraded areas, and the restoration of deforested regions.

FIGURE 6 **Actions by Type**



TOTAL OF ACTIONS
681

PROJECT
472
69.31%

PROGRAM
118
17.33%

CAMPAIGN
73
10.72%

ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT
16
2.35%

MULTISECTORAL ARTICULATION
2
0.29%

Source: Own elaboration, 2024.

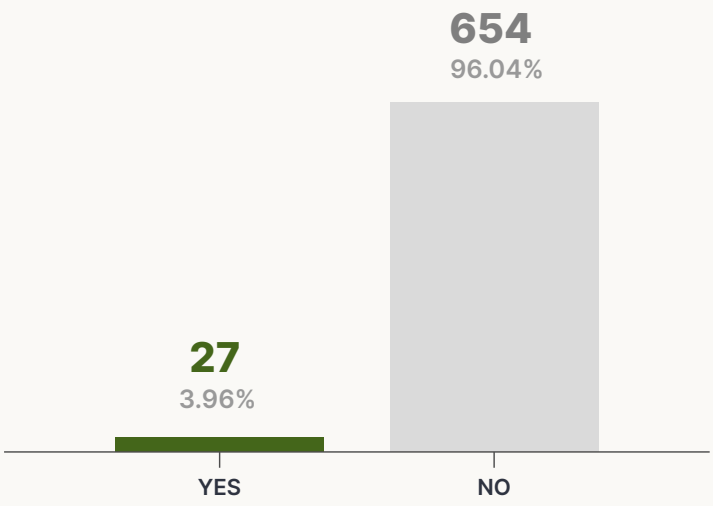
INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

Corporate financing for ensuring Food and Nutrition Sovereignty and Security (FNSS) can be carried out directly by the company or through support for projects, programs, and campaigns already implemented by civil society organizations. These initiatives vary widely, from the direct distribution of food to the training of farmers to promote sustainability and increased income in their businesses.

However, in these partnerships, there are often limitations in financing other needs of the implementing organizations, such as maintaining their spaces or hiring and training teams. This is largely due to funders' preference for investing in specific actions that generate greater visibility with the public, rather than providing flexible resources for the implementing entities.

To identify cases where companies financed or supported specific actions, such as "projects," "programs," "campaigns," or "multisectoral articulation," but also invested in events or internal improvements of the executing organization, for example, the variable "institutional support" was created. Thus, in addition to all actions classified as "organizational support," initiatives of other types that included these additional elements were considered as "Institutional Support". This was the case for only 27 (3.96%) of the 681 initiatives identified in the research.

FIGURE 7 **Institutional Support Actions**



Source: Own elaboration, 2024.

LINKS IN THE FOOD SUPPLY CHAIN

The relationship between the links in the food supply chain and actions promoting FNSS allows for an understanding of where corporate social investment is focused in the food production and consumption process. Six variables were created to classify the initiatives and their potential connection to stages of the food production chain: “food production,” “storage,” “transportation/logistics,” “processing,” “retail/wholesale,” and “consumption.”

As shown in Figure 8, the link with the highest number of related actions is “consumption,” with 363 (53.30%) cases connected to this stage. These include both the consumption of food and knowledge related to FNSS[11]. In second place is “food production,” with 324 (47.58%) actions. This is followed by “processing” with 18 (2.64%) actions, “storage” with 11 (1.62%), “retail/wholesale” with 9 (1.32%), and “transport/logistics” with 3 (0.44%) initiatives.

11 Actions aimed at raising citizens’ awareness about FNSS were considered here, but technical courses for farmers were classified as related to the “food production” link.

BOX 4

ACTIONS BY LINK IN THE FOOD SUPPLY CHAIN

FOOD PRODUCTION

The **AMAGGI Regenera Project**, by **AMAGGI**, is an initiative aimed at strengthening the company's and its suppliers' commitment to adopting low-carbon agricultural systems through the restoration of soil health and biodiversity. The project is designed to be applicable even to large-scale commodity production. Additionally, it encourages an entire generation of producers to embrace a new way of farming.

STORAGE

The **Storage Initiative**, by the **Coopercitrus** cooperative, provides silos for soybean and corn storage to cooperative members and associated rural producers. This initiative allows them to preserve product quality and sell outside the harvest season, taking advantage of better pricing conditions and, therefore, increasing their income. Furthermore, the silos support FNSS by enabling the formation of regulatory stockpiles. These aspects represent a significant advantage, particularly for small producers who lack the financial means to invest in their own storage infrastructure.

LOGISTICS AND TRANSPORTATION

The **Supporting a More Sustainable Cerrado** initiative, by **Louis Dreyfus Company**, supported small agricultural producers located in the Cerrado biome across the states of Goiás, Minas Gerais, and Bahia to adopt better environmental practices in their production and value chain. This allowed them to achieve higher production yields and better commercialization outcomes, particularly by improving, reducing costs, and increasing the efficiency of their logistics chains.

PROCESSING

The **Transforma Project**, by **Grupo Líder Supermercados**, processed all the organic waste generated by the company's stores and sent it to the group's farms for transformation into fertilizer and organic feed for livestock.

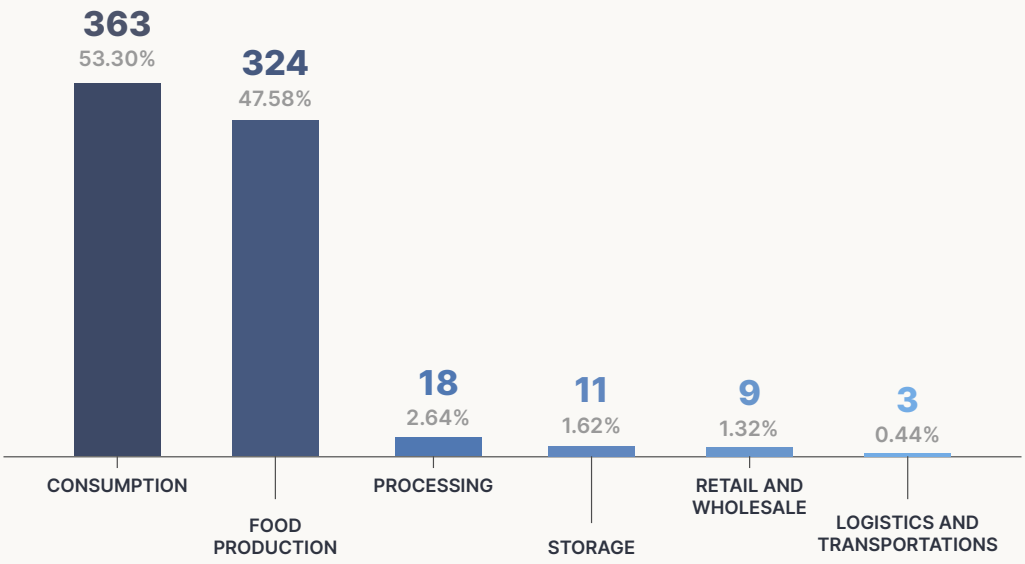
RETAIL AND WHOLESALE

The **Pangeia Initiative**, by **Via/Grupo Casas Bahia**, aimed to develop a new digital marketplace within the company's sales system. The project focused on partnering with the startup PANGEIA to create a commercial space for products that reduce socio-environmental impact and generate value for small producers, such as Indigenous peoples of the Amazon, rural and forest cooperatives, and artisans.

CONSUMPTION

The **Partnership Project with Mesa Brasil SESC**, by **Solar Bebidas**, aimed to promote the donation of beverages to SESC's food bank network, which is linked to the National Network of Food Banks. The project leveraged the company's logistics network and relationships with clients, governments, and civil society during the Covid-19 pandemic. In 2021, 768,000 liters of beverages were donated across Solar's operating areas, totaling R$4.05 million.

FIGURE 8 **Actions by Link in the Food Supply Chain**[12]



Source: Own elaboration, 2024.

12 Each action could be related to none or more than one stage of the food supply chain. Thus, the sum of the number of actions by link does not correspond to the total of 681 cases analyzed.

OBJECTIVES

Each mapped initiative was associated with up to nine objectives, ranging from one to all of them. Based on a preliminary analysis of the actions and the links in the food supply chain, the following variables were established:

FOOD PRODUCTION:
Actions that impact food production, such as community kitchen gardens, local production, and training on sustainable farming.

NUTRITIONAL SECURITY:
Actions to ensure adequate nutrition, including access to nutritionists, organic foods, or foods with high nutritional value.

HUNGER RELIEF:
Palliative actions aimed at delivering food directly to populations facing food insecurity.

WASTE REDUCTION:
Actions to combat food waste by industry, retailers, and the general population.

REDUCING FOOD LOSS:
Actions aimed at decreasing food losses during production,storage, and transportation.

REUSE:
Actions to transform or redirect food that would otherwise be lost or wasted along the supply chain.

WATER ACCESS:
Actions to improve access to drinking water, water for irrigation, and the protection of springs that supply communities. Are also related to nutrition.

STRENGTHENING FAMILY FARMING:
Actions that support family farmers by increasing their income, providing training, or offering other resources.

ADOPTION OF BEST PRACTICES AND CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY PRINCIPLES:
Actions aimed at making production processes more sustainable and responsible, such as supply chain traceability, certifications, and the use of clean energy.

Initiatives aimed at the “adoption of best practices and corporate responsibility principles” accounted for the largest group, comprising 319 (46.84%) actions. The objective of “hunger relief,” which seeks to ensure food access through activities like distributing food baskets, was identified in 276 (40.53%) cases, making it the second-largest group of initiatives.

Actions with the objective of "food production" totaled 201, corresponding to 29.52% of all cases. The objective of "nutritional security," related to the quality of food and ensuring adequate nutrition for everyone, was present in 94 (13.80%) initiatives. The objective of "access to water," which intersected with nutrition when addressing potable water, was found in 45 (6.61%) cases.

Regarding the objective of "strengthening family farming," which relates to increasing farmers' production or income, only 33 (4.85%) initiatives were identified. "Reuse," focused on adopting new uses for discarded or lost food, such as organic composting, accounted for 31 (4.55%) actions.

The objective of "waste reduction," aimed at combating food waste by the industry, retail, and population, was present in 18 (2.64%) actions. Finally, only 3 (0.44%) initiatives had the objective of "reducing food loss," which occurs during the production and transportation processes.

BOX 5

FOOD LOSS, WASTE, AND REUSE

Food Loss: This refers to the reduction in the quantity or quality of food caused by decisions and actions of suppliers along the supply chain, from harvesting, slaughtering, or catching to transportation.

Food Waste: This refers to the reduction in the quantity or quality of food due to decisions and actions by retailers, food service providers, and consumers. Waste occurs for various reasons, such as the rejection of products that do not meet aesthetic standards, the disposal of food close to or past its expiration date, and the discarding of edible food in households and restaurants.

Food Reuse: This involves the transformation or redirection of food that has been lost or wasted along the supply chain, as in the case of composting, where food scraps are used as fertilizer for crops.

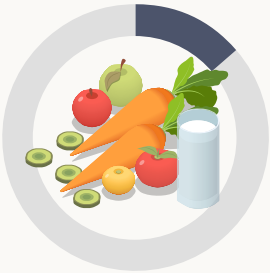
Source of definitions for "Food Loss" and "Food Waste": *"Perdas e Desperdício de Alimentos"* by Souza et al. (2021).

FIGURE 9 **Number of Actions by Objective**[13]

ADOPTION OF BEST PRACTICES/CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY PRINCIPLES
319
46.84%

HUNGER RELIEF
276
40.53%

FOOD PRODUCTION
201
29.52%



NUTRITIONAL SECURITY
94
13.80%

ACCESS TO WATER
45
6.61%

STRENGTHENING OF FAMILY FARMING
33
4.85%

REUSE
31
4.55%

WASTE REDUCTION
18
2.64%

LOSS REDUCTION
3
0.44%

Source: Own elaboration, 2024.

13 Since each action could be related to more than one objective—for example, targeting both food production and access to water—the total number of initiatives by objective exceeds the total of 681 actions analyzed.

CONNECTION WITH THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS)

Since the research focused on mapping and characterizing actions financed and supported by companies to ensure FNSS, a selection parameter for these actions was necessary. SDG 2: "Zero Hunger and Sustainable Agriculture"[14] was chosen as the primary indicator due to its cross-cutting nature. Complementarily, SDG 12: "Responsible Consumption and Production"[15] helped provide further detail to the actions beyond variables such as type, objective, and target audience.

As shown in Figure 10, the indicator with the highest number of related actions was 2.4, with 311 (45.67%) initiatives classified under this variable. Following this, Indicator 2.1 accounted for 289 (42.44%) related initiatives. Indicator 12.6[16] emerged as the third-largest group, with 189 (27.75%) related actions. Indicators 12.2 and 2.3 had 133 (19.53%) and 132 (19.38%) related actions, respectively.

Regarding the promotion of nutritional security, Indicator 2.2 had only 99 (14.54%) related initiatives. This is a significant difference compared to SDG 2.1, which addresses direct access to food, indicating that many actions provided food but did not necessarily prioritize its quality and nutritional value. The remaining indicators, which are related to food production, resource reuse, and sustainable environmental management, showed totals of fewer than 60 actions each.

End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

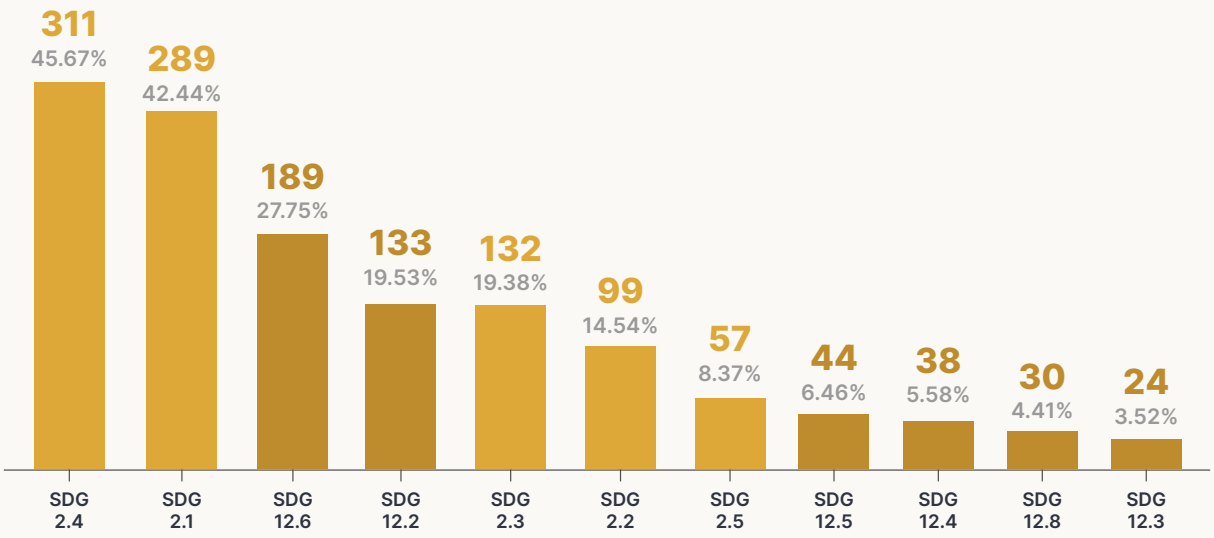
Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

14 The relationships between the actions and Indicators 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, and 2.5 of SDG 2 were selected and analyzed.

15 The relationships between the actions and Indicators 12.2, 12.3, 12.4, 12.5, 12.6, and 12.8 of SDG 12 were also selected and analyzed.

16 Suppliers and cooperatives of the analyzed companies were considered as companies.

FIGURE 10 **Actions by SDG Indicator[17]**



Source: Own elaboration, 2024.

TABLE 1 **The Sustainable Development Goals and the Mapped Initiatives**

SDG	Definition	Relation to the Actions	Presence (%)
2.1	By 2030, end hunger and ensure access by all people, particularly the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious, and sufficient food all year round.	Initiatives distributing food or means to obtain it, ensuring access to any type of food.	**42.44%**
2.2	By 2030, end all forms of malnutrition, including achieving, by 2025, the internationally agreed targets on stunting and wasting in children under 5 years of age, and address the nutritional needs of adolescents, pregnant and lactating women, and older persons.	Initiatives aiming to ensure a diverse and nutritious diet or facilitate access to organic, nutritious, and pesticide-free food.	**14.54%**

17 Since each action could be related to one or more SDGs, the total number of actions across all indicators exceeds the 681 initiatives analyzed.

SDG	Definition	Relation to the Actions	(%)
2.3	By 2030, double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular women, Indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists, and fishers, including through secure and equal access to land, other productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, markets, and opportunities for value addition and non-farm employment.	Initiatives that encouraged, trained, and supported family farming and small-scale producers, as well as advocated for land preservation and access to production resources.	**19.38%**
2.4	By 2030, ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, help maintain ecosystems, strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding, and other disasters, and progressively improve land and soil quality.	Initiatives implementing agroecological processes and practices that diversify production, promote sustainable and resilient practices, and develop mechanisms for better use of natural resources.	**45.67%**
2.5	By 2020, maintain the genetic diversity of seeds, cultivated plants, and farmed and domesticated animals and their related wild species, including through soundly managed and diversified seed and plant banks at the national, regional, and international levels, and ensure access to and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge, as internationally agreed.	Initiatives creating native food seedlings or collecting and managing seed banks.	**8.37%**
12.2	By 2030, achieve the sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources.	Initiatives focused on efficient management of natural resources, including implementing processes that promote water reuse or reduce water consumption.	**19.53%**

SDG	Definition	Relation to the Actions	(%)
12.3	By 2030, halve per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels and reduce food losses along production and supply chains, including post-harvest losses.	Initiatives that collected and distributed food that was outside commercial standards but fit for consumption, encouraged full utilization of food, extended shelf life through processing, or improved production processes to prevent losses.	**3.52%**
12.4	By 2030, achieve the environmentally sound management of chemicals and all wastes throughout their life cycle, in accordance with agreed international frameworks, and significantly reduce their release to air, water, and soil to minimize their adverse impacts on human health and the environment.	Initiatives promoting sustainable and responsible management of chemicals, such as the use of pesticides on crops and post-processing waste treatment.	**5.58%**
12.5	By 2030, substantially reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling, and reuse.	Initiatives aimed at reducing, preventing, and reusing all types of waste, whether physical or chemical, such as composting.	**6.46%**
12.6	Encourage companies, especially large and transnational companies, to adopt sustainable practices and integrate sustainability information into their reporting cycle.	Initiatives encouraging companies, cooperatives, producers, suppliers, and others to adopt more sustainable practices in the food chain.	**27.75%**
12.8	By 2030, ensure that people everywhere have the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature.	Initiatives aimed at raising awareness among people about sustainable practices.	**4.41%**

MECHANISMS OF ACTION

During the process of identifying actions and building the database, the variable "Mechanisms of Action" was defined to classify the FNSS promotion initiatives financed or supported by companies. From this, seven categories were created to specify how companies and their partners operated within the implementation of actions. These categories are: "production and/or dissemination of knowledge", "food production", "food donation," "connection between stakeholders", "resource donation", "production/dissemination/implementation of sustainable practices," and "loans and subsidies."

As shown in Figure 11, the "food donation" category has the highest number, with 246 (36.12%) actions primarily focused on the direct donation of food or food baskets. Similarly, actions categorized as "production/dissemination/implementation of sustainable practices" totaled 241 (35.39%), reflecting a corporate concern for the sustainability of their activities.

The remaining categories appeared less frequently: 87 (12.78%) initiatives were related to "resource donation"[18], 62 (9.10%) to "production and/or dissemination of knowledge"[19], 21 (3.08%) to "food production", 16 (2.35%) to "connection between stakeholders"[20] and only 8 (1.17%) to "loans and subsidies".[21]

18 Donations considered here did not include food and could consist of financial resources or supplies such as tools, seeds, and fertilizers.

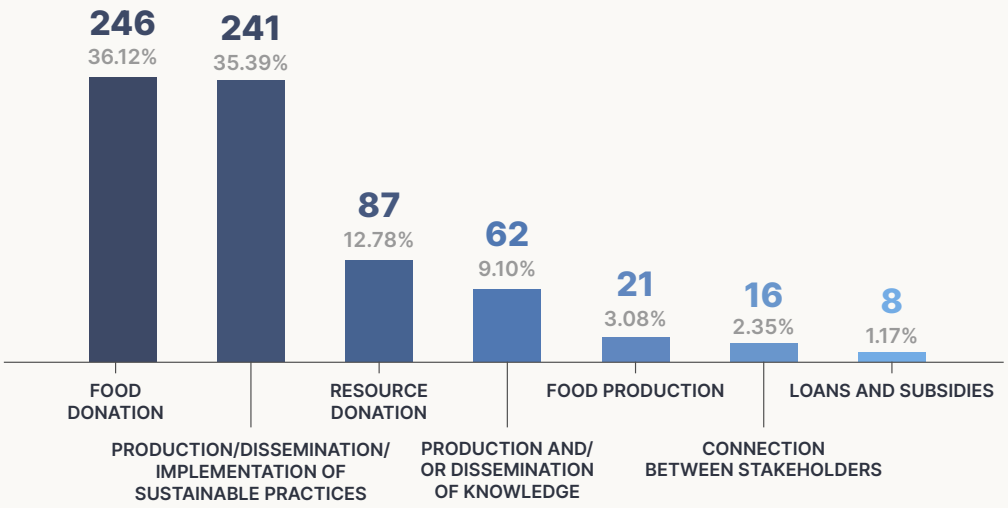
19 This category included all training courses, scientific conferences, and awareness campaigns related to FNSS but not specifically to sustainability.

20 Actions that bridged different groups, such as small producers and new consumers, were included.

21 Some companies provided loans with special conditions and subsidies to their cooperatives, suppliers, and/or small farmers.

FIGURE 11

Mechanisms of Action



Source: Own elaboration, 2024.

ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL AND GOVERNANCE (ESG)

The term ESG, which stands for Environmental, Social, and Governance, was first used in the 2004 report "Who Cares Wins." Since then, the framework it promotes has gained prominence among companies, along with the recognition that implementing corporate responsibility actions aligned with these three pillars could lead to increased profits and investments (Kell, 2018).

Analyzing the connection between the initiatives financed or supported by companies and each component of the ESG framework provides valuable insights into how FNSS actions align with these pillars and how the FNSS agenda is incorporated into corporate sustainability strategies. For this reason, three variables were created, each corresponding to one of the ESG scopes—social, environmental, or governance—and the associated benefits that an action could generate.

All the mapped actions were related to at least one ESG benefit. As shown in Figure 12, the relationship between FNSS promotion initiatives financed or supported by the analyzed companies revealed the greatest benefits in the "social" scope of ESG, with 510 (74.89%) of the 681 actions generating some social benefit. Meanwhile, 321 (47.14%) generated positive externalities for the "environment", and only 44 (6.46%) provided "governance" related benefits for the companies promoting the initiatives.

BOX 6

ESG ISSUES

According to the document “Who Cares Wins” (2004), ESG issues are as follows:

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES:

- Climate change and associated risks
- The need to reduce the release of toxic substances and waste
- New regulations expanding the limits of environmental responsibility regarding products and services
- Increasing pressure from civil society to improve performance, transparency, and accountability, creating reputational risks if not well managed
- Emerging markets for environmental services and eco-friendly products

SOCIAL ISSUES:

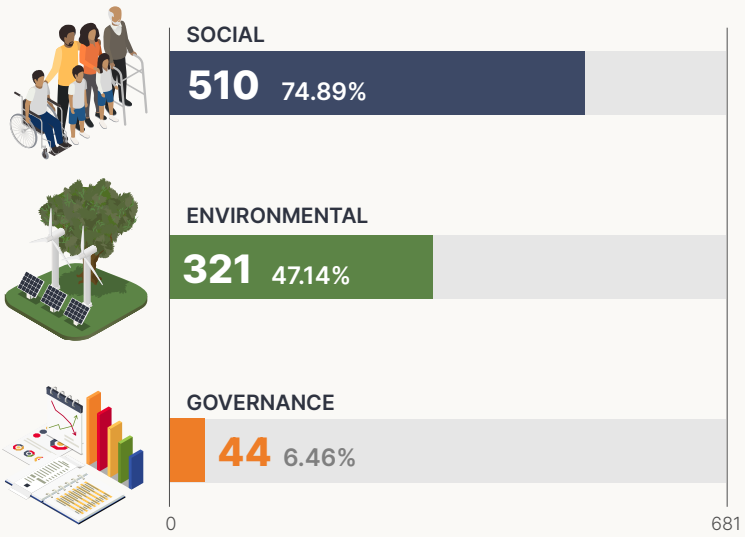
- Workplace health and safety
- Community relations
- Human rights issues within the company’s facilities and those of its suppliers/contractors
- Government and community relations in the context of operations in developing countries
- Increasing pressure from civil society to improve performance, transparency, and accountability, creating reputational risks if not well managed

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE ISSUES:

- Board structure and accountability
- Accounting and disclosure practices
- Audit committee structure and auditor independence
- Executive compensation
- Management of corruption and bribery issues

Source: Own elaboration, 2024.

FIGURE 12 **Actions by ESG Benefit[22]**



Source: Own elaboration, 2024.

STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED

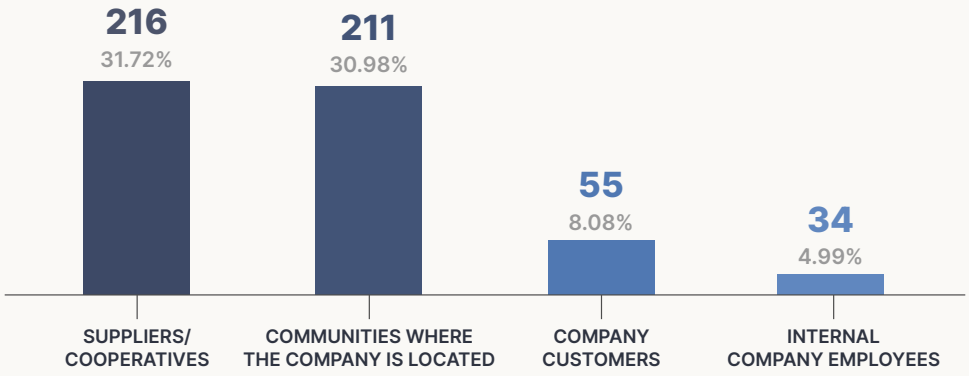
FNSS promotion actions involve a variety of actors throughout their process, from conception and execution to their impact. The stakeholders recorded in the research include the customers of the financing or supporting companies, their suppliers, cooperatives, communities within their territories, and their workers.

As shown in Figure 13, most initiatives involved, targeted, or impacted groups connected to the food production chain. Of the 681 actions, 216 (31.72%) were carried out involving “suppliers and/or cooperatives” of the financing or supporting companies. Communities in which the companies are located[23] were involved in 211 initiatives (30.98%). Additionally, 55 (8.08%) actions involved the companies’ ”customers”, and 34 (4.99%) involved their ”employees”.

22 Each analyzed FNSS initiative could generate none or more than one ESG benefit; for example, the same action could simultaneously generate both social and environmental benefits. Therefore, the sum of the totals for each ESG pillar does not correspond to the 681 mapped actions.

23 A location where some stage or part of the company’s operations is established.

FIGURE 13 **Stakeholders Involved**[24]



Source: Own elaboration, 2024.

BOX 7

EXAMPLES OF ACTIONS BY STAKEHOLDER INVOLVED

SUPPLIERS OR COOPERATIVES:

The **Mais Elas Program**, by **Cooperativa Cotrijal**, funded in 2022 and 2023, aimed to train women rural producers associated with the cooperative in topics such as the importance of the female role in cooperativism, production practices and sustainable development, rural and production chain management, and promoting inclusion and diversity in the agricultural sector.

COMMUNITIES WHERE THE COMPANY IS LOCATED:

In 2022, the **Dia de Cooperar** – **DIA C Project**, by **Comigo Cooperativa** in partnership with BASF, donated 1,165 food baskets to economically vulnerable groups in 17 cities where the cooperative operates, including Rio Verde, Goiás.

COMPANY CUSTOMERS:

The **World Food Day Campaign**, conducted by **GPA** in its supermarket network during 2021 and 2023, aimed to collect food donations for economically vulnerable populations by engaging customers and matching their donations with equal contributions from the company. In 2021, 3 tons of Qualitá white rice were donated to the Nutritional Recovery and Education Center.

24 Each action could involve, target, or impact more than one stakeholder or none at all. Therefore, the total number of actions for each variable differs from the overall total of 681 actions collected for the research.

INTERNAL COMPANY EMPLOYEES:

As an example of an initiative focused on internal company employees, the Viva Mais Program by Belagrícola implemented actions to improve employees' quality of life and well-being through partnerships with medical clinics, nutritionists, and psychologists, as well as educational lectures on healthy eating habits.

GROUPS WITH HIGHER PROBABILITY OF EXPOSURE TO FOOD AND NUTRITION INSECURITY

Beyond the stakeholders of the companies studied, the research considered groups that, according to the VIGISAN (2021 and 2022) and SOFI (2021, 2022, and 2023) reports, are at greater risk of exposure to Food and Nutrition Insecurity (FNI). The total number of actions that involved, targeted, or impacted the following groups was compiled: family farmers, specific demographic groups, economically vulnerable groups, and children and adolescents.

Specific demographic groups include women, Black people, Indigenous peoples, riverside communities, traditional communities, people with low levels of education, individuals experiencing homelessness, people from rural areas, those affected by disasters, the elderly, and others. These groups face social stigmas, belong to minorities, and are frequently marginalized.

Economically vulnerable groups encompass individuals living in poverty, residents of peripheral areas, those registered in social programs, the unemployed, informal workers, individuals in debt, and others. In other words, people who face daily economic restrictions.

Among the analyzed variables, "economically vulnerable groups" and "specific demographic groups" were the most represented, being involved in 148 (21.73%) and 126 (18.50%) actions, respectively. "Children and adolescents" and "family farmers" had smaller totals, with 65 (9.54%) and only 34 (4.99%) initiatives each.

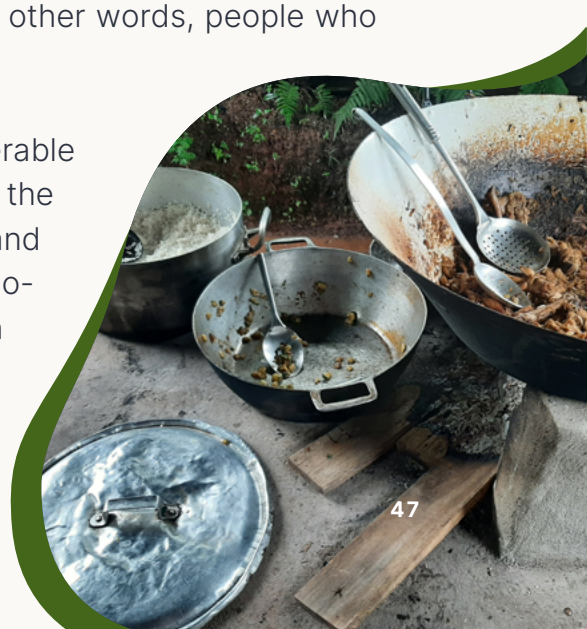
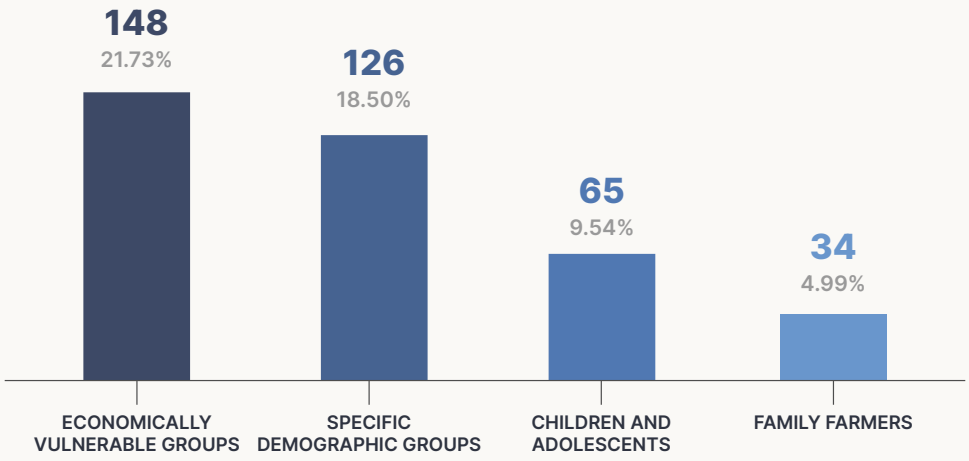


FIGURE 14 **Groups with Higher Probability of Exposure to FNI[25]**

Initiative Involves, Targets, or Impacts:



Source: Own elaboration, 2024.

LOCATION

Among the factors influencing corporate investment in combating hunger is the choice of the location where actions financed or supported by these companies are implemented. This aspect may reflect the criteria used to determine the location of investment or support, which could be linked to a targeted strategy for combating FNI in a specific region or the convenience of operating in areas close to corporate activities, for example.

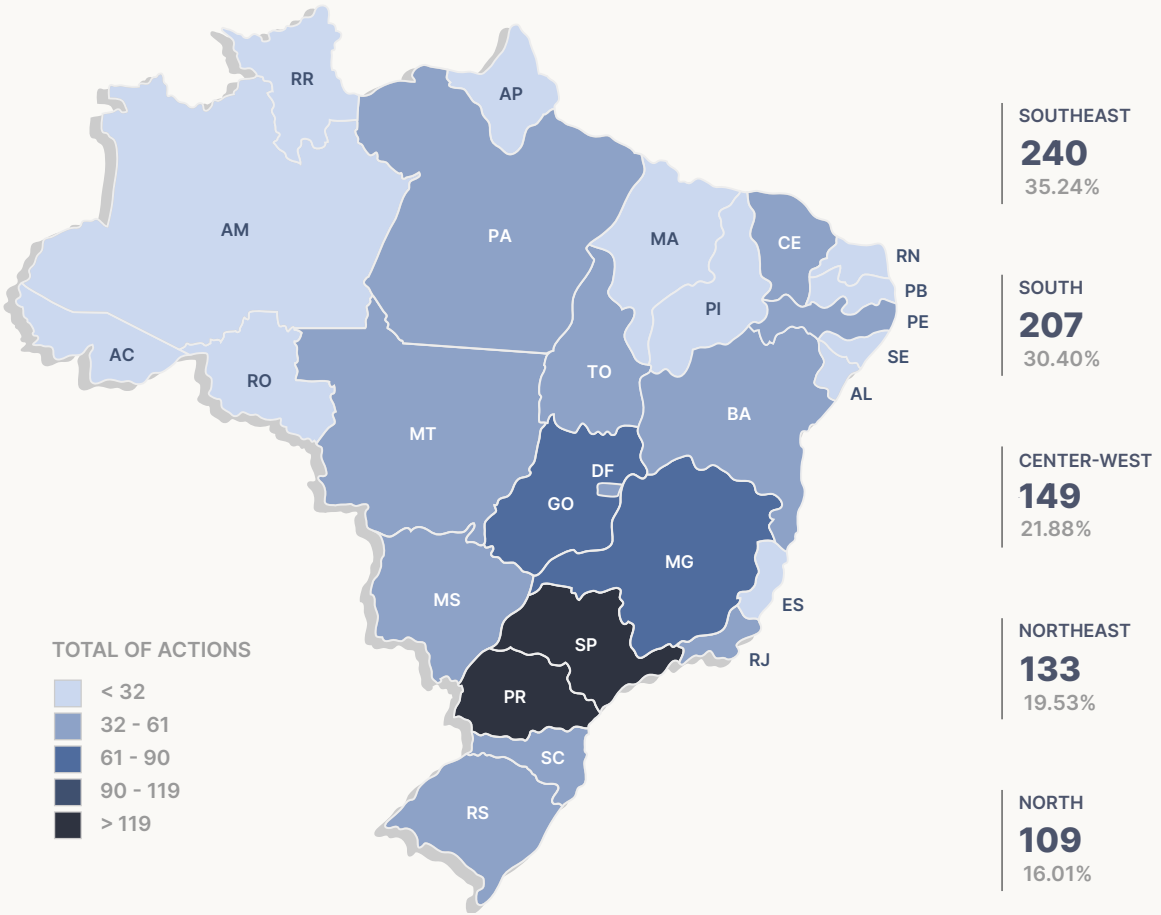
Two categories of variables were created to collect this data: “States” and “Regions” where the initiatives took place. It was identified that the state of São Paulo had the highest number of actions financed or supported by companies, with a total of 146 (21.44%) initiatives between 2020 and 2023. It was followed by Paraná, with 125 (18.36%) actions, Minas Gerais with 88 (12.92%), and two states in the Center-West region: Goiás and Mato Grosso, with 72 (10.57%) and 60 (8.81%) actions, respectively.

25 Each action could involve, target, or impact more than one group or none at all. Therefore, the total number of actions for each variable differs from the overall total of 681 actions collected for the research.

The other states had fewer initiatives carried out within their territories, with Acre, Amapá, and Roraima recording the lowest numbers, with only 9 (1.32%), 8 (1.17%), and 3 (0.44%) cases, respectively.

Regarding distribution across regions, the Southeast has the highest number of actions, with 240 (35.24%) initiatives implemented in its territory. The South also concentrated on several cases, with 207 (30.40%) actions in at least one of its states, followed by the Center-West with 149 (21.88%). On the other hand, the Northeast and North had the lowest rates, with 133 (19.53%) and 109 (16.01%) initiatives, respectively.

FIGURE 15 **Actions by Brazilian Region[26]**



Source: Own elaboration, 2024.

26 Any action carried out in at least one state within a region was considered as present in that region. Additionally, each initiative could have been implemented in one or more states and regions, which explains the discrepancy between the sum of actions by region and the total of 681 cases analyzed.

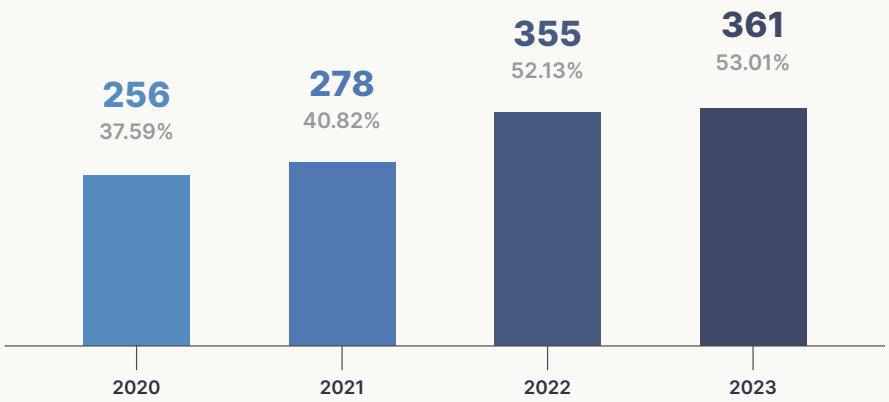
FUNDING

The temporal analysis allows for an understanding of changes in the quantity and motivation of investments to ensure FNSS. The studied period, from 2020 to 2023, includes both the pandemic and post-pandemic phases, making the funding variable a crucial element for identifying potential shifts in corporate behavior across these two contexts.

With the temporal boundary defined, a variable was created to track the presence of corporate funding or support for each analyzed year. The identification of whether an action was financed or supported each year was based on its citation[27] in corporate reports for that year.

The results observed in Figure 16 show a higher concentration of actions financed in 2023 and 2022, with 361 (53.01%) and 355 (52.13%) actions, respectively. Since these represent the final years of the analysis, it can be inferred that some actions were financed or supported in previous years, while others received support for the first time during this period. The years 2021 and 2020 show lower numbers of financed or supported actions, with 278 (40.82%) and 256 (37.59%) each.

FIGURE 16 **Actions by Year of Funding or Support (2020-2023)[28]**



Source: Own elaboration, 2024.

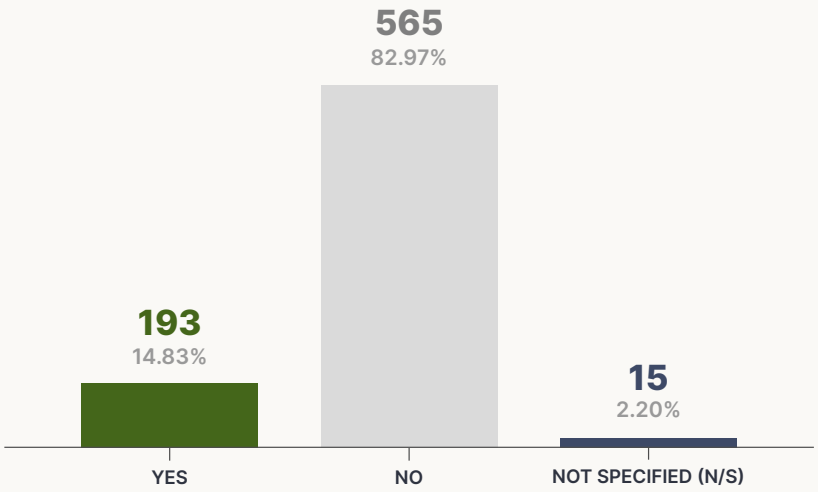
27 Since funding or support was only considered for the year in which the action was cited, it is possible that the same initiative continued but, due to a lack of corporate transparency, this data was not recorded.

28 As the same action could have been financed or supported in more than one year, the sum of the number of initiatives funded across all years does not correspond to the total of 681 cases analyzed in the research.

EMERGENCY MOTIVATION

Emergency situations, such as natural disasters and health crises, often drive companies to fund or support actions aimed at addressing FNI. For this reason, identifying the initial motivation behind a company's actions is relevant. Figure 17 shows that, of the 681 initiatives mapped in the research, only 193 (14.83%) were associated with emergency motivations, such as the Covid-19 pandemic or the floods in São Sebastião.

FIGURE 17 **Actions with Emergency Motivation**



Source: Own elaboration, 2024.

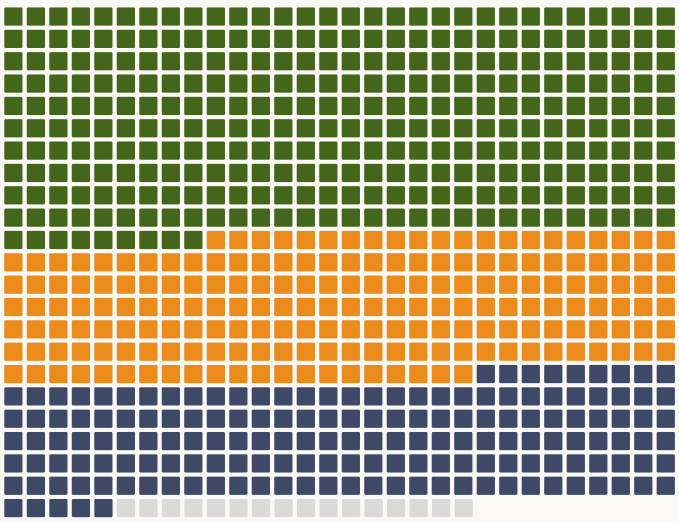
DURATION AND CONTINUITY

Given the complexity of combating FNI, a multifactorial problem, the development of medium- and long-term efforts is a key factor for better structuring and achieving objectives. However, this does not diminish the importance of short-term and assistance-based actions, such as food distribution in emergency contexts.

To understand the temporal characteristics of the mapped actions within the established timeframe, the variable "long-term initiative" was created. This variable identifies actions carried out for at least two consecutive years, regardless of whether the companies studied provided funding in only one year. For example, if an action was already underway before 2020 but received funding only in 2021, it was classified as long-term.

As illustrated in Figure 18, 309 initiatives (45.37%) were classified as "long-term". On the other hand, 192 cases (28.19%) corresponded to actions completed before reaching two years or that have not yet reached this period. Additionally, the analysis of descriptive texts did not allow the duration of 164 (24.08%) initiatives to be determined, and the 16 (2.35%) "organizational support" actions were classified in this variable as "n/a".[29]

FIGURE 18 **Duration of Actions**



TOTAL OF ACTIONS
681

MORE THAN TWO YEARS IN A ROW
309
45.37%

LESS THAN TWO YEARS IN A ROW
192
28.19%

NO INFORMATION
164
24.08%

NOT APPLICABLE (N/A)
16
2.35%

Source: Own elaboration, 2024.

29 As the "organizational support" cases involved financial donations from institutions rather than actual actions, they were not included in the temporal analysis.

CONCLUSION

This research aimed to map and analyze the actions financed or supported by the 150 largest companies in agribusiness, retail, and food and beverage sectors, with 50 companies from each sector. Its purpose was to understand how corporate social investment was carried out between 2020 and 2023, marked by the pandemic and post-pandemic contexts. The study detailed the initiatives by type, stakeholders involved, objectives, mechanisms, location, duration, and other aspects.

Although not an exhaustive mapping, it provides relevant insights by analyzing the main companies in the food chain operating in Brazil. It allows for an assessment of the companies' commitment to combating FNI and the quality of the actions financed or supported by them. Furthermore, given the exceptional circumstances of the studied period, it was possible to observe whether the pandemic context, with its socioeconomic impacts and the worsening FNI situation in Brazil, influenced corporate decision-making regarding socio-environmental investments. Counterintuitively, the years of the most severe Covid-19 crisis were not those with the highest number of financed or supported actions, nor was the pandemic the primary motivation for most initiatives.

By reviewing corporate reports for the defined timeframe, a total of 98 companies were identified, 42 of which belonged to the agribusiness sector, financing or supporting 681 actions, most of which were also financed or supported by agribusiness. Among the analyzed cases, the most notable were projects, which tend to be more specific and localized, and initiatives focused on food donation, promoting sustainable agricultural practices, and training stakeholders such as customers, suppliers, and cooperatives.

A significant concentration of initiatives was also observed in economically more developed states, such as São Paulo and Paraná, and in regions like the Southeast and South. The large disparity in the geographic distribution of actions highlights the lack of national coverage and indicates the need for greater corporate commitment to addressing regional inequalities.

Despite progress, challenges remain, such as the need for greater attention to marginalized groups, who are at higher risk of FNI, and the continuity and structuring of actions to make them more robust and efficient. Strengthening long-term initiatives and integrating actions into the corporate sustainability context (ESG) are promising paths to maximize results and align private sector interests with social demands.

Additionally, companies need to increase transparency in their data by providing more detailed reports that demonstrate the process of financing and supporting FNSS initiatives, from selection to evaluation.

Academia has paid little attention to the private sector, and this study offers a valuable foundation for developing future research and public policies that seek to expand the positive impact of companies in promoting FNSS in Brazil.

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Fundação
José Luiz
Setúbal