

Road to Doha: The Local Way

Local Workshop towards the
Second World Summit for Social Development (WSSD2)

Paraná Hub - Curitiba/PR, Brazil

Workshop Report Template

October 10th - 10a.m - 11:30a.m

1. Workshop Details

- **Title:** Workshop on Social Development at Local Level
- **Date & Time:** October 10th - 10a.m - 11:30a.m
- **Location:** Curitiba/PR - Brazil | online
- **Organizing Entity:** Paraná Hub
- **Facilitators:** Ms. Aline Calefi, representing Fiep with the Indústria Acolhedora program; Ms. Andrea Bruginski, representing the Paraná State Department of Education, with the Organic School Meals program; Mr. José Maurino, representing the Paraná State System of Environments Promoting Innovation; Mr. Leandro Ângelo, representing the Coalizão pelo Impacto; Mr. Paulo Rocha, representing SRI Iguassu Valley; Mr. Pedro Eilert, representing Freehelper.
- **Participants:** State public sector, national private sector, and local civil society with academic purposes.

2. Workshop Background & Objectives

Background

This workshop is part of the Road to WSSD2: The Local Way, a global process led by the Local2030 Coalition in the lead-up to the Second World Summit for Social Development. The initiative emphasizes locally led, innovative social policies that foster equity, inclusion, and resilience, aligning with the 30th anniversary of the landmark 1995 World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen.

In Paraná, localized social impact actions are spread throughout the state. In this sense, Paraná Hub, through SGDES, brought together different areas of society to learn about their activities, connecting representatives from public, private, and social institutions.

The workshop provided a platform for local actors to discuss social solutions, share best practices, and contribute to a global synthesis of case studies and tools demonstrating the transformative impact of localized social development policy.

Objectives

- Highlight local efforts in advancing inclusive social development, emphasizing multi-actor and multi-level approaches.
- Showcase innovative local policies and successful case studies.
- Develop key messages and policy recommendations for localizing social development to contribute to the Road to WSSD2 Outcome.
- Create a report involving public sector actors, private institutions, and the local third sector, aiming to compile data and produce a document that showcases successful and replicable initiatives related to social development in the state of Paraná.

3. Summary of Discussions

Key Themes and Challenges Identified

- **Freehelper:** Freehelper is a non-profit organization (NGO) founded in Paraná, Brazil, with a nationwide reach. Their mission is to bridge the corporate and social sectors by transforming knowledge into a powerful tool for change. The work goes beyond simple volunteer hours by facilitating specialized mentoring and pro-bono consulting to strengthen NGO management, digital presence, and organizational sustainability, thereby empowering and structurally enhancing these organizations. To date, they have carried out over 1,500 activities, generating R\$10 million in savings for the Third Sector and allowing these resources to be redirected to their core causes. Their work is centered on the theme of Inclusive Local Economies and Social Innovation, using technology to address the persistent problem of low professionalization and limited resources within NGOs, which often hinders their ability to measure impact and achieve

scale. Key challenges they tackle include the low maturity of many Brazilian companies in ESG and social impact practices, where there is often a limited integration of social objectives alongside business goals. Furthermore, their initiative continuously works to build trust and engagement across different sectors and actively seeks to engage with large-scale corporations generating over R\$1 billion annually to amplify their impact.

- **Separtec - Paraná State Innovation Ecosystem:** Main goal is to develop public policy for the establishment of technology parks in Paraná, identify priority sectors, and approve and monitor the implementation of these parks. The key theme is Participatory Governance and Territorial Transformation, aiming to strengthen the innovation infrastructure in the state of Paraná. The main challenges for Paraná's Innovation-Promoting Environments (APIs) include dependence on public policies, as changes in government or budget priorities can affect continuity and funding; bureaucratic delays in accreditation, resource allocation, and reporting; limited funding relative to the growing demand of over 490 accredited environments; regional disparities in impact and access; economic instability that may reduce available resources; talent retention challenges due to competition with larger national or international centers; administrative hurdles from other public agencies; and the risk of overlapping or duplicating efforts with other funding programs, which can dilute focus and resources.
- **Coalizão Pelo Impacto (Impact Coalition):** The key theme is Participatory Governance and Territorial Transformation, the initiative creates or supports local impact businesses that generate jobs and promote initiatives balancing economic, social, and environmental objectives on the Paraná coast. Impact businesses face the same challenges as early-stage innovative ventures, however they have specific needs and require a longer timeframe for business modeling and maturation.
- **Indústria Acolhedora (Welcoming Industry Program):** The key theme is Inclusive Local Economies and Social Innovation, the solution connects companies with migrant workers who have technical, language, and socio-behavioral qualifications, generating formal employment, productivity, and team diversity, with measurable results and scalable potential across Paraná's industrial sector. The main challenges include engaging the private sector, the concentration of industries in regions with a low presence of migrants, and misinformation about the benefits of formal employment. Overcoming these barriers requires continuous awareness-raising and structured partnerships.

- **Iguassu Valley:** The key theme is Participatory Governance and Territorial Transformation, their ecosystem succeeded in bringing together stakeholders that would not typically collaborate, including competing companies, by identifying shared needs across sectors such as municipalities, businesses and universities. Western Paraná has shown significant economic development, driven by agriculture, businesses, and its population, with good living standards and education. However, the main challenge to sustaining this growth is a shortage of labor across all skill levels. Technological and entrepreneurial education is seen as a key strategy to address this gap, improving both productivity and job quality in the region.
- **Alimentação Escolar Orgânica (Organic School Meals Program):** The key theme is Participatory Governance and Territorial Transformation, since the purchase of organic food for school meals improves the quality of students' diets, promotes the socio-economic and environmental development of municipalities, and ensures income for a vulnerable population. The main challenges include: ensure scale and regularity of supply, provide universal access through family farming to all more than 2,000 schools, overcome the low availability of organic animal-based foods, raise awareness among school managers, and achieve 100% organic products in school meals.

Best Practices & Successful Approaches

- **Freehelper:** Freehelper strengthens Brazil's Third Sector through a professional volunteering platform connecting individuals and companies to NGOs. Key initiatives include specialized volunteering programs, corporate mentorship projects, digital presence support, and an impact measurement model showing over R\$10 million in savings. With a network of 12,000 volunteers and 2,000 NGOs, Freehelper has directly impacted more than 5 million people, promoting social innovation, institutional strengthening, and efficient collaboration between stakeholders. Since 2018, Freehelper has conducted over 1,500 professional volunteering activities with NGOs across Brazil, generating over R\$ 10 million in savings for the Third Sector. Its network includes 12,000 volunteers and 2,000 NGOs, impacting more than 5 million people in areas such as technology, communication, economics, and legal services.
- **Separtec:** Since 2016, Paraná has structured its innovation ecosystem through the creation of the State Council of Technology Parks and the Separtec system.

Following Law No. 20.541/2021, 489 Innovation-Promoting Environments (APIs) were accredited in 64 municipalities between 2023 and 2024, including technology parks, incubators, accelerators, innovation centers, hubs, and maker spaces. Investments in science and technology rose from R\$100 million in 2022 to R\$708 million approved for 2024, largely through the Paraná Competitivo Program. Funding supports projects from accredited APIs and training of ecosystem managers, such as the GAPI program, which graduated 96 students from 17 municipalities. The initiative strengthens innovation infrastructure, regional development, and human capital in Paraná. Paraná has built a robust Innovation Ecosystem, though challenges remain in financial sustainability and technological updating of Innovation-Promoting Environments (APIs). Strong strategies and partnerships have enabled the state to promote innovation efficiently, benefiting the local economy and Brazil's scientific and technological development. In 2025, Paraná became the 3rd most innovative economy in Brazil, rising from 6th in 2015, driven by record investments in science, technology, and innovation.

- *Coalizão Pelo Impacto*: The initiative strengthens impact business ecosystems in Paranaguá through mapping 177 environmental ventures, hackathons to foster new ideas, and the Regenerative Territories Program offering loans or seed capital. Local governance, systemic leadership training, and technical support enhance coordination among universities, incubators, and accelerators. Financial mobilization from philanthropic, public, and private sources aims to provide around R\$29 million by 2026, supporting up to 600 impact businesses. Since its launch, the program has strengthened impact business ecosystems in Brazil, particularly along the Paraná coast, mobilizing over R\$ 8 million annually and efficiently executing 87% of the budget. By 2026, it aims to support 600 impact businesses. Key achievements include institutional strengthening, multi-sector coordination, systemic leadership training, and creation of Local Councils and regional coordinations, fostering collaboration and innovation. Initiatives like hackathons, mentorship, and regional mapping have stimulated sustainable businesses and awareness of local biodiversity. Sustainability is ensured through strong local governance, diversified funding, and ongoing public-private integration, enabling replication and scalability.
- *Indústria Acolhedora*: it fosters social inclusion and industrial competitiveness by integrating migrants and refugees into the formal labor market. Key activities include job matching, industry preparation, migrant training, and network strengthening. The program has reached 144 industries in 29 cities, trained 336

industry employees, engaged 549 participants in events, and awarded 23 companies with the Sesi Partner Industry for Migrants Seal.

- Iguassu Valley: The Biopark's Fine Cheeses program develops both tropicalized and original cheeses in the laboratory, which are then transferred free of charge to small local producers. These products have won awards at state, national, and international levels, with the Passionata cheese ranking ninth at the 2024 World Cheese Awards. Donaduzzi Educação is a nonprofit educational initiative that uses active learning methodologies and fully includes neurodivergent students, training hundreds of professionals, with around 90% of current students already employed, providing early income and improved living conditions. The NAPI Healthy Foods program is a public–private innovation initiative that leverages twenty times the private investment, focusing on reducing and even eradicating Salmonella across the protein production chain. The research outcomes are applied commercially by participating companies, generating local jobs and income.
- *Alimentação Escolar Orgânica*: The school organic food program prioritizes local farmers, women, agrarian reform settlers, Indigenous, and Quilombola communities, promoting short supply chains and supporting vulnerable groups. A School Organic Food Implementation Committee coordinates expansion through financing, partnerships, certification, and legislation, aiming for 100% organic school meals by 2030. Results include a 50% increase in organic production by family farmers, expansion from 29 to 291 municipalities served, and growth in supplied organic food from 77,000 kg in 2011 to 4 million kg in 2025.

4. Key Messages & Recommendations

- Freehelper: Freehelper's key lesson is that connection drives sustainability. By linking professionals and companies with NGOs, volunteering becomes a tool for real institutional strengthening, generating measurable results. Success factors include translating volunteering into economic value, providing a simple platform for fast, personalized connections, and using impact metrics to demonstrate results. The experience shows that professional volunteering is an organizational development strategy, relies on active digital engagement, and can be replicated when aligned with NGOs' real needs, making social impact scalable and sustainable.

- **Separtec:** In 2024, Paraná invested a record R\$ 581.6 million in science, technology, and innovation, a 535.9% increase since 2019. This growth strengthened the state's Innovation Ecosystem, though challenges remain in financial sustainability and technological updating of Innovation-Promoting Environments (APIs). With strong strategies and partnerships, Paraná is well-positioned to continue fostering innovation and contributing to Brazil's scientific and technological development.
- **Coalizão Pelo Impacto:** Effective impact requires prior assessment, local governance, and multi-sector coordination. Developing systemic leadership, providing flexible financial mechanisms, and allowing budget adaptation enhance sustainability. The model's design across multiple cities ensures scalability and replicability for other regions.
- **Indústria Acolhedora:** By facilitating connections between companies and skilled talent while combining technical training with cultural preparedness, the program accelerates hiring and smooths workplace integration. Public recognition via the seal incentivizes inclusive practices and enables comparable goals and metrics across companies.
- **Iguassu Valley:** Innovation ecosystems are most effective when actors collaborate, leveraging their specific strengths rather than competing directly. By addressing demands from both companies and society, they can generate innovations that create positive social impact and drive regional economic development.
- **Alimentação Escolar Orgânica:** Prioritizing organic food in school meals, supported by guaranteed one-year contracts, has successfully expanded organic production. The key lesson is that clear, stable public policies increase adherence and scalability. This approach is replicable across Brazil and adaptable to international school feeding and assistance programs.
- **Policy Recommendations:**

To consolidate Paraná's progress and scale its global relevance, policies should prioritize coordination, sustainability and measurable impact. Strengthening multi-level governance can be a key, aligned local, state and national agendas to ensure coherence across innovation, inclusion and sustainability efforts. Collaborative mechanisms among governments, private actors, and civil society should be deepened to transform isolated initiatives into integrated development systems.

On the same spot, ensuring financial sustainability is equally essential. Expanding blended finance models and impact investment tools can secure long term resources, while linking funding to tangible social and environmental outcomes. After all, developing human capital remains central to sustaining progress. Integrating vocational, digital and intercultural skills into education and workforce programs will strengthen employability and inclusion, particularly for vulnerable groups.

Paraná offers experience in social development localization, by sharing knowledge, methods and lessons from its initiatives and how they can be a guide to other regions in localizing the SDG's, demonstrating how coordinated, inclusive innovation can generate lasting social and economic transformation, but yet with points to assemble and correct.

- **Call to Action:**

To transform local innovations into a global standard, the collective commitment must be to concrete action. Actors are called on in order to forge multi-sector partnerships, adopt transparent impact metrics, and systematically document their implementation models. This practical knowledge is essential to advocate for enabling public policies and replicating effective solutions in other regions. Through this structured collaboration, their model of territorial development can be properly positioned as a tangible contribution to the global sustainability agenda.

- **5. Next Steps & Follow-Up Actions**

Paraná's initiatives exemplify how local action can generate systemic impact and contribute to global social development through inclusion, innovation, and sustainability.

Freehelper's accelerated growth, with a projected 75% growth rate for next year, as they are expecting, expands digital engagement and civic participation, strengthening social cohesion and promoting digital inclusion as a tool to reduce inequality around the world, providing greater opportunities for companies to engage in volunteer work and connect with interested parties.

Separtec enhances innovation capacity through structured environments and maturity programs, aligning local technological development with global efforts toward inclusive and sustainable industrial transformation.

Coalizão Pelo Impacto integrates financial and social instruments to convert traditional enterprises into impact-driven businesses, reinforcing the global transition toward regenerative and purpose-based economies.

Indústria Acolhedora promotes social and labor inclusion for refugees and migrants, contributing to international goals of decent work, equality, and human mobility with dignity.

Iguassu Valley strengthens territorial innovation and education networks, embedding entrepreneurial learning in schools and expanding access to opportunities — a foundation for long-term, inclusive growth.

Alimentação Escolar Orgânica, with the goal to make 100% of the Paraná schools with organic food by 2030, drives the transition toward sustainable food systems, ensuring fair compensation for producers and advancing food security and climate resilience in line with global sustainability agendas.

Together, these initiatives demonstrate how Paraná translates the Sustainable Development Goals into measurable, localized action — establishing a model of territorial innovation that supports equitable and sustainable development globally. Through the workshop, new connections are being made so that systems and state actors can work together, connecting their efforts with one another.

6. Annexes

Workshop Agenda

> [Access here](#)

Photos and Videos from the Workshop

> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-rRsLIDhD54>

>  Photos

List of Participants

> [Access here](#)

During the event, 52 participants were present, but not all of them filled out the participation registration form.

Presentations & Supporting Documents



> [Access here](#)

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