

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT PRINCIPLES

Established by UN Women and the UN Global Compact Office

2020 UN Women
Asia-Pacific WEPs Awards
Regional Awardee Profile



1ST Runner-Up

Sodexo Services India



Rohit Bahety
Country President and CFO

Sodexo Services India

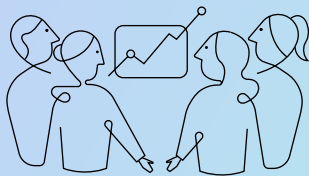
Country: India

Employees: 40000+

Industry: Integrated Food and Facilities Services

Website

<https://in.sodexo.com/home.html>



Building a Base to Promote Women's Entrepreneurship

Sodexo India is committed to advancing gender equality and advocating for women's empowerment at all levels in their supply chain. As part of their Better Tomorrow 2025 Vision, Sodexo rolled out a policy to increase the number of women/business value from women entrepreneurs in their supplier base in 2017. Recognizing a lack of formal platforms representing women entrepreneurs, Sodexo initiated collaboration with local NGOs to connect with women entrepreneurs, in addition to starting a dialogue with existing suppliers on procurement activities with women-led enterprises. This has enabled more women entrepreneurs to connect with Sodexo directly and receive support through training and financial planning.

In addition to promoting women entrepreneurship within their supply chains, Sodexo promotes gender equality through their marketing channels. In 2020, the company launched a campaign called 'Equity Begins at Home' to encourage men to take up household responsibilities and promote gender equality in household work. Sodexo's campaign 'SheWorks' engages with

Women consist of almost 50% of the total population; it is a gross mistake to leave this huge talent pool untapped, unused. Yet, ensuring a gender-inclusive workplace is not easy; the problem has to be addressed at various levels – entry, middle management and boardroom. We have to make it favourable for women to join the workforce and then continue working, despite shouldering multiple societal responsibilities.



“

Our policies should support and be in tandem with every role that a woman has to play in her life. After all, when women flourish, the society can flourish as a whole; the economy will get its desired boost.

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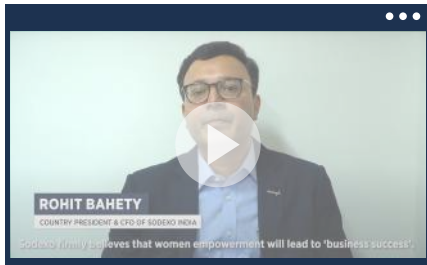
stakeholders at the community level to create job opportunities for women. Other active campaigns include messages on domestic violence and challenging gender roles in both a professional and personal setting.

Scaling Women Entrepreneurs

Sodexo has developed various policies and procedures to support women entrepreneurs at various stages through training and processes. For instance, several small- and medium-sized women-owned enterprises lacked appropriate Health and Safety know-how to meet the required Sodexo protocols. They were provided the required support to upgrade and follow best-in-class safety procedures and practices. Further, to provide liquidity, a relaxed policy was implemented to conditionally approve and reduce the credit period. To capacitate potential women suppliers, Sodexo's vendor development teams provided guidance, coaching, and process analysis for business improvement. They began training women entrepreneurs on Sodexo's internal requirements, ensuring compliance and setting up quality assurance systems.

Acknowledging that small- and medium sized women-owned enterprises require a faster payment process, Sodexo has successfully put an SSP Payment Plan in place. With collaboration as the center of Sodexo's initiatives, Sodexo developed a process where they approach potential women entrepreneurs and guide them through training to meet Sodexo's hiring expectations. They also focused on small-scale food vendor industries selling chapatti, pickle, papad, and chips, which have a high density of women entrepreneurs. One such women entrepreneur is Subhada, who shared:





**Watch the testimonial video
to learn more**

"I started the chappati supplying business 12 years ago, due to job loss and a hefty loan liability. Slowly, with word-of-mouth my business grew, and one day my former boss introduced me to Sodexo India. They believed in me, gave me an opportunity to progress as an entrepreneur. And, here I am! Today, with a few more strong-willed women we're an esteemed vendor partner of Sodexo!"

Clear Results

Following the roll out of the Better Tomorrow 2025 Vision, in addition to policies, outreach, and training activities, Sodexo was able to advance procurement from women entrepreneur by 200%. Sodexo is committed to monitoring the purchases done with women entrepreneurs on a monthly basis, in addition to continuing their efforts to foster inclusion and promote awareness on gender equality within communities in India.

Women's Empowerment Principles



High-Level Corporate
Leadership



Treat all Women and Men Fairly
at Work without Discrimination



Employee Health,
Well-Being and Safety



Education and Training
for Career Advancement




Enterprise Development,
Supply Chain and Marketing Practices



Community Initiatives
and Advocacy



Measurement
and Reporting

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