



# Adv. Neena Goel

Building a Dignity-First Model of Social Change

Kaushal Kumar | The CEO Magazine

Across India's social sector, much of the work revolves around immediate relief, food drives and short-term interventions that rarely translate into lasting change. The intent to help has never been in question; what remains harder to build is continuity, structure, and a clear pathway from support to self-reliance.

It is within this gap that Hamaraa Mission Dignity took shape. When Adv. Neena Goel formally established the organisation in 2017, the groundwork had already been laid through years of direct engagement in education and community outreach, work that would eventually earn her the informal title "Slum Queen" for her deep-rooted presence in underserved communities. What began as individual efforts evolved into an initiative focused on education, skill development, and sustained humanitarian support.

## The Making of the Leader

Neena did not begin as a high achiever in the conventional sense. Early academic struggles and the pressure to fit into a rigid system built resilience and empathy for those who feel overlooked. A turning point came when she performed strongly in her secondary years, shifting her confidence and direction. She went on to study at Delhi University, later pursuing training in computer software engineering and a law degree from Chanakya Law College, later associating with the Rohini Court Bar. Yet she credits lived experience, not classrooms, for shaping her leadership instincts. Influenced by family values and humanitarian ideals, she began to see education and advocacy as tools for change, an outlook that led to the creation of Hamaraa Mission Dignity.

## Building Hamaraa Mission Dignity

Hamaraa Mission Dignity was built around four core pillars: education, hunger relief, elderly care, and environmental responsibility. The organisation works with underprivileged children, widows, street communities, and elderly individuals often outside



**Adv. Neena Goel**

Founder & Chairperson - Hamaraa Mission Dignity

formal support systems. Its pathshalas provide basic education, while women-focused skill programmes in stitching, beauty training, and creative reuse initiatives such as "Kabad se Jugad" aim to create income pathways. With Bollywood actor Arbaaz Ali Khan serving as the brand ambassador of her brand HMD, she expands her vision from social impact to the creative realm of cinema – creating meaningful and inspiring films that aim to motivate children and raise social awareness.

Relief, however, remains a pressing need. From food and hygiene distribution to large-scale winter protection campaigns, including the distribution of over 5,000 blankets across multiple states in 2025–26, the organisation balances immediate response

with sustained community engagement. It has also contributed to national humanitarian efforts such as Operation Dost, launched under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

At the same time, its curriculum increasingly integrates digital awareness and practical skills, reflecting Neena's belief that future-readiness must extend to even the most underserved children. What distinguishes Hamaraa Mission Dignity is its shift from charity to dignity. The model encourages participation, self-worth, and gradual independence rather than dependence on repeated aid. Under Neena's leadership, the organisation continues to evolve as a woman-led platform that combines empathy with structure and sustained community engagement.

## Leading Through Resistance

Working at the grassroots level has meant confronting social and operational barriers. One of the earliest challenges was mindset, apathy, caste bias, and the belief that children from slum communities did not need education. Change came through persistence, repeated engagement, and trust built over time. The pandemic brought a different test. With vulnerable communities facing hunger and funding pipelines tightening, the organisation pivoted to urgent relief, distributing rations, hygiene kits, and essentials while maintaining its presence on the ground.

As a woman leading operations in demanding environments, Neena also faced being underestimated. She responded through consistency and visibility, leading from the front and building credibility through action. Over time, that approach strengthened both institutional trust and community confidence in the work being carried forward.

## Recognition and Public Impact

Over the years, Neena Goel's work has received recognition across social, educational, and humanitarian platforms. A Rashtrapati Awardee honoured by former President Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, she has also received distinctions including the Indian Icon Award, the Padam Seva Award, and recognition from the World Book of Records, London. Hamaraa Mission Dignity has additionally been acknowledged with honours such as the Best NGO Award by Chadikala Prime TV and international recognition, including the Bhasha Seva Samman in Nepal. A well-known philanthropist will be the chief guest for Artistic Subcontinent's India chapter, online, at the All India 2026 Art Show. Her initiatives have drawn appreciation from public figures across government, culture, and civil society, including leaders such as Yogi Adityanath, Dr. Karan Singh, Kapil



Sibal, and Ramdas Athawale, alongside support and encouragement from members of the film fraternity such as Amitabh Bachchan, Sonu Sood, Shahbaz Khan, Hiten Tejwani, Kiran Kumar, Mushtaq Khan, Nishant Malkhani, Asif Shaikh, and Rakesh Bedi.

She has also been featured in national recognitions such as "50 Powerful Women" and "100 Powerful Women," with coverage across platforms including Zee News, The Tribune, and Dailyhunt. Beyond awards, she is frequently invited as Chief Guest and Guest of Honour at educational institutions, civic forums, and social impact platforms.

## Expanding the Lens

As her work has evolved, Neena has increasingly looked at visibility and storytelling as tools for social change. In 2025, she formally launched Cinematic Universe, an initiative aimed at using film and creative media to raise awareness around education, dignity, and community empowerment.

On the ground, the organisation continues to expand its reach through coordinated multi-region initiatives. Looking ahead, the focus remains on strengthening work across education, hunger relief, and elderly care while building pathways that encourage long-term self-dependency and wider systemic influence.

## Mentorship and Influence

Behind Neena's public leadership is a network of personal and professional anchors. She often speaks of her late parents and elder sister as her earliest mentors,



figures who instilled a moral compass that continues to guide her decisions. She also credits her spouse, Rajeev, for being a steady source of support through demanding phases of her work.

Professionally, guidance from figures such as Arbaaz Ali Khan and Dr. Praveen Gupta has helped shape her public engagement and strategic direction. She also draws inspiration from global leaders like Mother Teresa and Malala Yousafzai, whose work reinforces her belief in dignity-led change and education as a transformative force. For Neena, these examples reinforce a central belief: that dignity, when combined with persistence, can evolve from grassroots work into broader societal influence.

#### **A Leadership Perspective**

For aspiring women entrepreneurs and first-time leaders, her advice is rooted in emotional clarity as much as professional strength:

*"I believe leadership begins when you learn to convert anxiety into energy. The path can feel lonely at times, but you are never truly without support – your values, your experiences, and your intent travel with you. Lead with kindness, stay consistent in your actions, and let your work speak louder than your words. Over time, credibility builds not through position but through persistence."*