



## National Young Professionals Development Program (NYPDP)

MANAGE-University Alliance for Advancing Agricultural Extension and Advisory Services

### Reflections That Cultivate Tomorrow's Agricultural Extension



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Participated in the MANAGE-NYPDP at MANAGE Hyderabad from June 01 to 05, 2026.



Anusree R G

## Self-Reflection and Understanding the Essence of Agricultural Extension

### Day 1

The program began with an inspiring session on the vision, impact, and legacy of MANAGE. One of the most memorable activities involved identifying our dream identity, assessing our existing competencies, and reflecting on the competencies required to achieve our aspirations. This exercise encouraged me to introspect and evaluate my personal and professional growth.

During the sessions conducted by Dr. Saravanan Raj, I gained valuable insights into the diverse career opportunities available in agricultural extension and the competencies required to excel in them. His discussions challenged my existing perceptions about the discipline and prompted me to critically examine my own strengths and shortcomings.

A particularly impactful moment was when he asked us why we loved our subject and what evidence we had to demonstrate that passion. This question made me realize that merely claiming interest in a field is not enough; genuine passion must be reflected through continuous effort and meaningful engagement. His statement, "Extension is not coming at you; rather, it is coming from you," left a lasting impression on me and reshaped my understanding of extension education.

The session encouraged me to reflect on my lack of curiosity in exploring new areas and my dependence on social media, both of which can hinder personal growth. Later, Shri Sanjay K. Agarwal, Director General of MANAGE, highlighted emerging challenges and priority research areas in agriculture, broadening my perspective on the role of research in addressing contemporary agricultural issues.



The day concluded with an interaction with NYDPDP alumni. Mr. Sunnirudh Singh shared valuable insights on international academic opportunities and emphasized the growing importance of qualitative research methods in understanding complex social phenomena.

## Research Opportunities, AI, and Career Development

### Day 2

The second day focused on research and career development. Sessions by Dr. Vikram Koundinya, Ms. Sravani Reddy, and Ms. Lakshmi Prasanna Kandi provided practical guidance on preparing research proposals for international universities and pursuing higher studies abroad. They emphasized the importance of integrating qualitative and quantitative methods and adopting mixed-method approaches to generate more comprehensive research findings.

Dr. Saravanan Raj discussed emerging research priorities in agricultural extension and the need to align research efforts with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These discussions helped me identify several areas that I would like to explore further during my master's research and future academic pursuits.

The session by Dr. Aditya Sinha introduced various AI tools useful for academic research. Beyond their applications, he also highlighted ethical considerations, responsible usage, and the importance of acknowledging AI-assisted work.

Dr. Raahalya's session provided valuable information on competency development, e-learning platforms, internships and fellowships. She introduced several resources that can help students continuously upgrade their skills and expand their professional networks.

One of the most inspiring sessions was Dr. Saravanan Raj's personal career journey. His experiences demonstrated how perseverance, effective utilization of available resources, and a commitment to lifelong learning can lead to success. His journey reinforced the importance of focusing on opportunities rather than limitations and making the best use of what is available.

## Research Areas, Career Inspiration, and NGO Exposure

### Day 3

The third day began with an insightful session by Dr. Mahesh Chander, who discussed research opportunities in entrepreneurship, gender equality, and organic farming. His professional journey was particularly inspiring, demonstrating how determination and consistent effort can help individuals achieve excellence irrespective of their institutional background.

He also emphasized the importance of writing blogs, maintaining meeting notes, and documenting experiences, which are often overlooked yet essential for professional development.

Later, we visited Access Livelihoods, an NGO working towards rural development and livelihood enhancement. During our interaction with the founder, Mr. Krishna Gopal, we learned about the organization's vision, operations, stakeholder engagement, and impact on communities. The visit provided practical exposure to development work and highlighted the numerous opportunities available for youth engagement in the development sector.



## Policy Engagement, Strategic Thinking, and Research Ethics

### Day 4



Day four focused on policy engagement and ethical research practices. Dr. Rasheed Sulaiman discussed the importance of policy engagement in agricultural extension and highlighted ways researchers can contribute to evidence-based policymaking. He emphasized learning from successful policy interventions, participating in policy dialogues, and generating policy-relevant evidence through research.

He also discussed challenges such as inadequate stakeholder participation in policy formulation and the limited representation of farmers' voices in decision-making processes. His discussion on doctoral policy dialogues provided valuable insights into linking research with policy impact.

The session by Dr. Sethuram Sivakumar involved a simulation exercise where participants worked in teams to develop strategies for addressing agricultural problems under resource constraints. The activity was highly engaging and encouraged critical thinking, teamwork, and decision-making.

Dr. Sasidhar's session on research ethics highlighted the significance of ethical conduct in research and introduced us to the role and functioning of Institutional Ethics Committees. The session reinforced the importance of integrity, transparency, and responsibility in academic research.

## Reflection, Application, and Focus Group Discussions

### Day 5

The final day began with a reflective exercise where participants shared what they had learned, what they still wanted to learn, and how they planned to apply their learning in the future. This activity helped consolidate the knowledge and experiences gained throughout the program.

Dr. Sasidhar conducted a session on Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), including a mock FGD exercise. The practical demonstration enhanced our understanding of qualitative research techniques and their significance in collecting rich and meaningful data. The hands-on experience helped us appreciate the value of effective moderation, participant interaction, and qualitative analysis.

### Five-Day Training Experience

I would describe my five-day training experience as explorative, inspiring, and eye-opening.

It was explorative because I learned about numerous career opportunities and pathways that I was previously unaware of. The program helped me understand that agricultural extension is not confined to a single domain but is interconnected with various disciplines such as research, policy, entrepreneurship, communication, and development. As a result, my previously narrow view of my career path broadened significantly.

The training was inspiring because I had the opportunity to interact with experts who have excelled in the field of agricultural extension. Listening to their career journeys, challenges, and achievements was highly motivating and demonstrated the value of perseverance, continuous learning, and making the best use of available opportunities.

Most importantly, the program was an eye-opener. It helped me assess my current level of knowledge, competencies, and preparedness while providing clarity about the direction I need to take for my future growth in agricultural extension.

## Change in Perspective

Yes, the training significantly changed my perspective on agricultural extension. Before attending the program, my understanding of the subject was limited, and I often viewed it from a narrow academic perspective. Through the various sessions, discussions, and interactions with experts, I realized that agricultural extension is a vast and dynamic field that extends far beyond the transfer of technologies and information to farmers.



More importantly, the training helped me find answers to questions I had often asked myself about the importance and scope of the subject. The experiences and insights shared by the experts provided concrete examples of the impact agricultural extension can create. As a result, I now have a deeper appreciation of the discipline, greater clarity about its relevance, and a stronger sense of purpose in pursuing a career in this field.

## Atmosphere And Environment During The Training

The atmosphere throughout the training was friendly, interactive, and highly productive. The sessions encouraged active participation, open discussions, and meaningful interactions among participants and experts. The supportive learning environment made it easy to exchange ideas, ask questions, and learn from one another, making the overall experience both enjoyable and enriching.



## What I Appreciate

What I appreciated most was the opportunity to gain new insights and knowledge from experienced professionals working in different areas of agricultural extension and development.

The interactions with experts were particularly valuable, as they provided practical perspectives beyond classroom learning. Their experiences, advice, and guidance were refreshing, inspiring, and motivating. The program helped me understand emerging opportunities, research priorities, and career pathways, making it a truly enriching learning experience.

## My Takeaway

My most significant takeaway was the realization that my current efforts are not enough if I want to excel in my chosen field.

The program challenged me to critically evaluate myself and reflect on whether my actions truly align with my aspirations. It made me realize that if I believe I am passionate about agricultural extension, I must demonstrate that passion through consistent effort, learning, and meaningful contributions rather than words alone.



Another important realization was the need to reduce distractions, particularly excessive mobile phone usage, and become more productive with my time. The five-day program was intensive, well-structured, and highly productive, showing me how much can be achieved when time is utilized effectively. This experience has motivated me to adopt more disciplined habits and focus on continuous personal and professional development.

### Action Plan



I plan to:

- Explore and pursue the research areas identified during the program.
- Improve my qualitative and mixed-method research skills.
- Regularly write blogs and reflective notes to strengthen my communication abilities.
- Participate in e-learning courses and internships.
- Utilize AI tools responsibly to enhance academic research.

The MANAGE NYPDP journey helped me identify where I currently stand and where I need to improve. It challenged my assumptions, expanded my horizons, and motivated me to take greater ownership of my career and learning journey. More than anything, it served as a mirror that revealed both my potential and the effort required to realize it.



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