



National Young Professionals Development Program (NYPDP)

MANAGE-University Alliance for Advancing Agricultural Extension and Advisory Services

Reflections That Cultivate Tomorrow's Agricultural Extension



Dr. B. GUNALAKSHMI

Participated in the MANAGE-NYPDP at Karnataka Veterinary, Animal and Fisheries Sciences University, (KVAFSU) BIDAR, Karnataka September 8-12, 2025

 [Dr. B. Guna Lakshmi](#)

Key Learnings

I sincerely thank MANAGE for accepting my nomination to participate in the National Young Professionals Development Program (NYPDP). The program enhanced my knowledge of career opportunities and further shaped my personality. We had a wonderful opportunity to meet and interact with eminent speakers from various disciplines across the country, who broadened our knowledge and inspired the young minds present.



Day 1 : The program was held at the Veterinary College, Bangalore, from September 8-12, 2025. It was jointly organized by KVAFSU, Bidar, and MANAGE, Hyderabad. The inauguration ceremony was graced by several eminent dignitaries, including the Hon'ble Vice Chancellor Prof. K. C. Veeranna, Dr. Saravanan Raj (Director, MANAGE), Dr. Basavaraj Awati (DE), Dr. N. K. S. Gowda (Dean), Division Heads Dr. R. Nagaraja and Dr. B. N. Nagaraja, and Dr. T. M. Prabhu (ADE).

Dr. Saravanan Raj delivered an impactful talk on "New Competencies and Job Opportunities for Agricultural Extension." This session highlighted the evolving skill sets required for success in the field and the diverse career paths available to young professionals.

Alumni Interaction: Participants had a valuable opportunity to interact with NYPDP alumni, who shared their experiences and insights. This provided a real-world perspective on the program's impact and its role in career progression.



Group Activity: A significant part of the day was dedicated to an enriching group activity on “Challenges and Opportunities in Agricultural Extension for Professional Specialization and Excellence.” Participants worked in teams to brainstorm, prepare charts, and present their ideas. This collaborative exercise fostered insightful discussions and knowledge-sharing among young professionals from six different states of India.



Day 2

The day was dedicated to sessions led by Dr. Saravanan Raj. The discussions focused on key areas of modern agricultural extension, including:

Research Priorities in Agricultural Extension: This session addressed pressing issues and emerging areas where research was essential to advance the field.

Next Gen Orientation on Methods & Competencies in Extension: This segment explored new techniques and skills required for agricultural professionals to remain effective in the future.

Agri-Innovation through Incubation & Startups: This session underscored the growing importance of entrepreneurship in agriculture, emphasizing how new ventures and startups were driving innovation.

Facilitation and Creativity

Dr. Prakash Kumar Rathod led a session on “Facilitation for Development: Competencies and Job Opportunities.” This provided fresh insights into the skills needed to guide and support developmental initiatives, while also exploring related career paths.



Extension Market Place

Activity: A fun and engaging group activity titled “Extension Market Place” has been organized. Participants developed and pitched innovative research ideas to the audience, simulating real-world sales pitches. This hands-on exercise fostered creativity, critical thinking, and communication skills.



Digital Competencies

The day concluded with a creative session by Dr. Ambarish (Shrushti Media, Bangalore) on “Digital Competencies for Extension Professionals.” Participants also produced short videos as a group task, emphasizing the growing importance of digital media skills in the extension field.

Day 3

Day 3 of the program was filled with knowledge, motivation, and a real-world entrepreneurial perspective.

Morning Session: The Vital Role of Gender and Organic Farming the day began with an excellent and highly engaging session by Dr. Mahesh Chander, Principal Scientist at IVRI. His talk, “Vital Role of Entrepreneurship, Gender Equality, and Organic Farming for Strengthening Agricultural Extension,” highlighted how these social and economic factors were crucial for the future of the field. His vibrant and enthusiastic delivery kept the audience fully engaged.

Afternoon: Visit to ICAR-NIVEDI Campus. In the afternoon, participants visited the ICAR-NIVEDI Campus to explore the VIC-RKVY-RAFTAAR Incubation Center. This visit provided a practical look at how innovation was supported in the agricultural sector.

Insights on Agri-Startups: Dr. Sathish B. Shivachandra, PI & CEO of NaaVIC, shared valuable insights on startups, entrepreneurs, and enterprises in agriculture, veterinary science, and fisheries. He explained how NaaVIC facilitated innovation by providing incubation, training, and linkages to government grants and funding platforms.

Startup Journey: Participants had the chance to hear directly from Mr. Vinay S. Shetty, CEO of Ayisra Tech Solution LLP, who shared the inspiring journey of his startup.

The visit concluded with an address and interaction with Dr. B. R. Gulati, Director of ICAR-NIVEDI, making the day even more memorable.



Day 4

Day 4 of the National Young Professionals Development Program focused on exploring new academic and professional horizons, with particular emphasis on international opportunities, cutting-edge research, and collaborative learning.

Graduate Studies & Career Opportunities Abroad: The day began with a virtual session titled “Graduate Study and Career Opportunities in Extension Education and Evaluation in the United States.” This session featured insights from Ms. Laxmi Prasanna Kandi (Ph.D. Scholar, Texas A&M University) and Mr. Samrat Sikdar (M.Sc. and Ph.D. Scholar, Mississippi State University). The speakers provided a practical overview of the U.S. extension education system, offering valuable guidance on graduate study, funding options, and career prospects.

Enriching Sessions on Research and Policy: Following the virtual session, several speakers delivered presentations on advanced topics:

Exploring Methodological Landscape: From Traditional Approaches to NextGen Research Methods & Digital Features for Extension Professionals” by Dr. Rahalya S (MANAGE Fellow) highlighted the need for modern, digital-savvy research methods to replace traditional ones.



Gender Mainstreaming in Agricultural Extension” by Dr. V. Jagadeeswary (Professor, KVAFSU) emphasized the importance of integrating gender perspectives into all agricultural development efforts.

Potential of Policy Advocacy Landscape for Young Extension Professionals” by Dr. L. Manjunatha (Professor & Head, KVAFSU) empowered participants to understand their role in shaping agricultural policy.

Research on Gender in Agriculture” by Dr. Meghajit Shijagurymayum (Post-Doctoral Fellow, Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT) further elaborated on the vital role of gender studies in the field.



Collaborative Learning Experience

Throughout these sessions, participants actively engaged in group activities. They brainstormed, discussed, and developed new ideas related to the topics presented. This hands-on, collaborative approach made the learning dynamic and impactful. The program's emphasis on collaborative learning was described as "a truly wonderful experience."

Day 5



Day 5 was the final day of the training program and focused on Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E), a critical skill for agricultural extension professionals.

Morning Session Monitoring and Evaluation: The final day began with a session led by Dr. P. V. K. Sasidhar, Professor at IGNOU, New Delhi, on "Monitoring and Evaluation." The session emphasized the practical application of M&E techniques.

To make the learning interactive, Dr. Sasidhar actively involved participants in a Focus Group Discussion (FGD). This hands-on activity demonstrated how to effectively conduct FGDs, a crucial skill for participatory research and program assessment.

Program Conclusion and Reflections: The training program officially concluded with a valedictory session that included reflections and key insights from various dignitaries. Dr. R. Nagaraja, Dean I/c, Veterinary College, Bengaluru, and Dr. Saravanan Raj, Director of MANAGE, Hyderabad, delivered their concluding remarks and reflections on the program.

The overall experience can be summarized as quite enriching, as it provided valuable opportunities for participants to interact with peers from different states, engage in group activities, and learn from experienced resource persons. The training was a memorable and transformative journey of learning and networking, emphasizing how it built professional connections and knowledge for success in the future.



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