

MANAGE NYPDP Diary No. 98

March 2026



## 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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#### Ms. Aarthiga A P

Participated in the MANAGE-NYPDP at MANAGE Hyderabad during December 22-27, 2025.

 [Ms. Aarthiga A P](#)

## Key Learnings from Each Day of the Programme

The training provided a comprehensive understanding of how agricultural extension as a discipline is rapidly expanding beyond conventional advisory services. Sessions emphasised the emerging research priorities and new competencies in extension, including Research methodology, Gender mainstreaming, policy engagement and Livelihood development.

Discussions on curriculum gaps, job prospects, and professional competencies enabled me to reflect on how upcoming extension professionals must integrate cross-disciplinary knowledge and adopt evidence-based approaches.

Dr Saravanan Raj opened the program with the compelling reminder to “seek opportunities for yourself,” which encouraged me to reflect on the need for self-driven professional growth in agricultural extension.

A key insight was recognising that clarity, creativity, and methodological rigour are not contradictory but complementary elements that produce impactful research. This reframed my understanding of research in agricultural extension; it need not be purely quantitative; qualitative methods and mixed-methods approaches are equally valuable in capturing behavioural and social dimensions of extension work.

Especially, M&E sessions emphasised that evaluation is far more than a compliance requirement; it is a strategic instrument for accountability, organisational learning, and program improvement.

Dr P. V. K. Sasidhar’s session strengthened my methodological orientation by highlighting the strategic importance of Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) for learning, accountability and impact assessment.

Additionally, Dr Sreeram Vishnu’s session on Social Network Analysis and Textometry introduced analytical tools that I found particularly relevant and applicable to my current research interests.

## Training Experience



The training was intellectually stimulating and transformative. Sessions were not confined to lectures but were deeply interactive and discussion-oriented, enabling critical thinking and peer learning. The environment at MANAGE was collaborative and motivating, encouraging us to share viewpoints openly.

Rather than purely didactic lectures, the sessions were designed as interactive discussions that genuinely engaged participants and encouraged critical thinking. The facilitators created an environment where diverse perspectives were welcomed, and complex issues were examined from multiple angles.

The integration of real-world case studies and exposure visits grounded the theoretical concepts in practical contexts. This experiential learning approach made the content deeply relevant to ongoing research and professional aspirations. The interactive nature of the program fostered continuous questioning and reflection, exactly the mindset required for emerging agricultural extension professionals.

The five-day intensity of the program, while demanding, created a focused learning environment that minimised distractions and maximised engagement with both content and co-participants.

## Change in perspective:

This training has fundamentally shifted my understanding of agricultural extension. Previously, extension was primarily conceptualised as the dissemination of technical information from researchers to farmers.

The program revealed an enhanced vision of extension as: A platform for social transformation, an innovation and technology integration hub, a policy engagement mechanism, an inclusive development approach, and a sustainability facilitator. This expanded perspective has strengthened my commitment to the field and clarified the potential for meaningful impact in agricultural extension research and practice

The NYPDP training helped me in understanding the Extension as a multidimensional platform for social innovation, capacity building, entrepreneurship development and policy influence. It reinforced the idea that extension professionals today must contribute not just to farms, but also to research, institutional strengthening and rural development.

## Training environment:



The training environment at MANAGE was exceptionally well-organised and conducive to learning. Every detail, from welcome gestures to structured reflection sessions, communicated that participants were valued members of a professional community. The small-group discussions and interactive formats fostered a sense of psychological safety where participants felt comfortable asking questions and challenging assumptions. The provision of time for informal networking and social interaction alongside formal sessions created a holistic learning experience that extended beyond classroom knowledge to include professional relationship-building.

### What I Appreciate:



Authentic Expert Engagement- Rather than learning only from textbooks, interacting directly with leading scholars and practitioners in agricultural extension provided real-world, up-to-date insights into professional practice. The willingness of experts to share personal experiences and career journeys made learning feel genuine and relatable.

Peer Community Building - Connecting with fellow researchers and extension professionals M.Sc and PhD scholars from across India created an invaluable professional network. These interactions went beyond routine academic discussions, helping to build genuine friendships. This peer community continues to serve as a valuable source of professional support and opportunities for collaborative research.

## Networking



One of the most valuable outcomes of the training was the opportunity to build professional networks across India. The diversity of backgrounds, different states, institutions, and research focuses enriched discussions and broadened perspectives on how agricultural challenges vary across India's diverse agroecological and socioeconomic contexts. These connections have already led to tentative plans for future collaborative research and knowledge sharing.

### Main takeaways:

The sessions demonstrated how agricultural extension today demands innovation, interdisciplinarity, and proactive leadership. The emphasis on seeking one's own opportunities motivated me to step out of passive learning and engage with broader research and policy spaces. I have gained greater clarity about my role as a budding extension professional.

### Action plan

In the future, I plan to incorporate the competencies gained from the program into my academic research and field engagements. I intend to strengthen my use of Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) tools, qualitative designs, and analytical methods to better understand stakeholder interactions and research outcomes.

I am also planning to use Social Network Analysis as an analytical tool in my research on natural resource management, particularly to map relationships, information flows and decision-making dynamics among stakeholders. Through this training, I have also recognised the importance of linking research with policy processes and institutional contexts, and I hope to engage more actively in such spaces. Overall, the program has provided me with direction and confidence to pursue research that is both relevant and impactful.



### My MANAGE NYPDP Journey

Attending this training was a pivotal moment in my professional journey. The training served as a catalyst that clarified my professional purpose. It reinforced that working in agricultural extension is not merely an academic pursuit but a contribution to social change. It enhanced my confidence and motivation to pursue research in agricultural extension and contribute meaningfully to bridging gaps between farmers, institutions and emerging technological landscapes.

This experience prompted me to unlearn the habit of relying on others to create opportunities on my behalf. Instead, I have learned that true independence lies in taking initiative—creating opportunities rather than waiting for them to arise. Moving forward, I will consciously apply this understanding by taking full responsibility for my own growth and professional development, guided by the belief that **“True independence is creating, not waiting.”**



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