



National Young Professionals Development Program (NYPDP)

MANAGE-University Alliance for Advancing Agricultural Extension and Advisory Services

Reflections That Cultivate Tomorrow's Agricultural Extension



Mr. Mahiwal Singh

Participated in the MANAGE-NYPDP at MANAGE Hyderabad from September 30 to October 05, 2024.

 [Mahiwal Singh](#)

Introduction

The National Young Professionals Development Program (NYPDP) aims to build future-ready young professionals by strengthening their technical, digital, and leadership competencies in agricultural extension and rural development, while fostering self-awareness, innovation, and entrepreneurial mindset, and equipping participants with the skills to explore emerging career opportunities and contribute effectively towards sustainable, climate-resilient, inclusive, and technology-driven agricultural systems.

Key Learnings

Day 1

The first day of the NYPDP programme began with great enthusiasm and excitement as all participants gathered for registration and the inaugural session. The atmosphere was vibrant, offering a perfect start to this enriching journey. The inauguration and introductory sessions provided a clear overview of the programme and its objectives & important session by Dr. Saravanan Raj on “Agricultural Extension: Time for Step Beyond Next Step” highlighted the evolving role of extension in modern agriculture. The discussion on the new curriculum in agricultural extension emphasized future career opportunities and required competencies. The day concluded with group exercises, where participants collaborated and shared perspectives. It was also a great opportunity to meet new professionals from agricultural universities across India and build networks.



Day 2

The second day was focused on ICTs and digital tools in agricultural extension, showing how technology is transforming farmer outreach. Sessions highlighted research priorities, emphasizing problem-solving and impact-driven approaches. Insights on agrobiodiversity conservation and network analysis added depth to learning. The day ended with discussion on policy pathways and career opportunities, making it highly informative and forward-looking.

Day 3

The day was dedicated to building advanced knowledge and professional competencies in agricultural extension, making the sessions highly informative and thought-provoking. It enhanced our understanding of advanced research methodologies and modern techniques, especially through the session by Dr. Bino P. Bonny, which highlighted their practical applications. An insightful session by Dr. Rasheed Sulaiman focused on new competencies for extension professionals, emphasizing innovation, adaptability, and policy engagement in a rapidly changing agricultural landscape. A key highlight of the day was learning about organic farming, entrepreneurship, and gender equality, promoting inclusive and sustainable agriculture. Overall, the practical insights shared by experts made the day inspiring, skill-oriented, and future-focused.



Day 4

Day 4 commenced with reflective notes on key learnings from the preceding which provided a global perspective on agricultural extension. Sessions by international experts highlighted global opportunities for professional development and the importance of Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) in extension systems.

The session on evaluation data analysis helped in understanding how to measure the impact of extension programs. A major highlight of the day was the field visit to Kudumbashree Mission, in Thrissur, Kerala where practical exposure to successful community-based development and women empowerment initiatives was gained. This visit connected theoretical learning with real-world implementation.

Day 5

The final day focused on emerging trends, collaboration, and future planning, beginning with a quick recap followed by sessions on modern research approaches and tools in agricultural extension.

The session by Dr. P. Sethuraman Sivakumar highlighted the shift from traditional to data-driven and innovative extension practices. Discussions on research collaboration emphasized the importance of partnerships among institutions to address complex agricultural challenges.

An insightful session on the entrepreneurship ecosystem showcased opportunities and challenges for agripreneurs, encouraging us to think beyond conventional roles. The programme concluded with take-home messages, action plans, and the valedictory session, allowing us to reflect and plan for future implementation. Overall, the day was reflective, motivating, and direction-setting for our careers.



Change in Perspective

The NYPDP programme brought a significant transformation in my perspective towards agricultural extension and development. Earlier, we students of extension education were considered as a minor subject in the field of agriculture studies, but the programme helped me realize its real potential and impact of extension. I shifted from viewing extension as simple knowledge transfer to a dynamic, technology-driven, and participatory process. The sessions emphasized that real change depends not just on ideas, but on how effectively they are communicated, incubated, and supported through policies and institutions. I also understood the importance of innovation, data-driven decision-making, and collaboration. Exposure to entrepreneurship and inclusive approaches encouraged me to focus on creating opportunities rather than waiting for them. Most importantly, the programme helped me reflect on my strengths and capabilities, shifting my mindset from being just a learner to becoming a future contributor proactive, solution-oriented, and future-ready.



Networking

During the programme, one of the most valuable experiences for me was interacting with participants from different agricultural universities across India. These peer interactions helped me understand diverse perspectives and learn from others' experiences. Group activities and informal discussions made the learning more engaging and also improved my confidence in communication and teamwork. Connecting with experts and professionals gave me clarity about future opportunities and the importance of collaboration in research and extension. I realized that strong networks can open many doors for learning and growth.

As a way forward, I plan to stay connected with the peers and mentors I met during the programme and actively look for opportunities to collaborate. I want to apply the knowledge I gained by working in a more innovative, practical, and proactive way, especially in agricultural extension and entrepreneurship. This experience has encouraged me to take initiative, keep learning, and move ahead with a clear direction for my future.



What I Appreciate

The NYPDP programme from MANAGE has been a truly enriching and memorable learning journey for me. I feel deeply grateful for the opportunity to be a part of such a well-structured and insightful programme that enhanced both my knowledge and perspective towards agricultural extension.

I would like to sincerely express my gratitude to Dr. Saravanan Raj, Director (Agricultural Extension), MANAGE, for his inspiring sessions and visionary guidance throughout the programme. His insights on extension, policy, and future opportunities were truly motivating. I am also thankful to Dr. Raahalya S (MANAGE Fellow) for her constant support, coordination, and smooth facilitation of the programme. I extend my heartfelt thanks to Dr. Helen S. and Dr. Darshana S. from Kerala Agricultural University, whose efforts and guidance made this learning experience more meaningful and well-organized.



Overall, this journey has been not just about gaining knowledge, but also about building connections, exploring new ideas, and growing both personally and professionally. I feel motivated and thankful for this valuable experience that will guide me in my future endeavours.

My MANAGE NYPDP Journey

My NYPDP journey started as just another programme, but it soon became a truly meaningful experience. Each day brought new learning, perspectives, and connections that changed how I see agricultural extension. Interacting with peers from across India and learning from experts made the journey more special and memorable. It helped me realize my own potential and think beyond traditional approaches. By the end, I didn't just gain knowledge, I gained confidence, clarity, and a sense of purpose. This journey has inspired me to move forward with a more proactive and future-oriented mindset.



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