



# National Young Professionals Development Program (NYPDP)

MANAGE-University Alliance for Advancing Agricultural Extension and Advisory Services

## Reflections That Cultivate Tomorrow's Agricultural Extension



### From Curiosity to Clarity: My NYPDP Reflections

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Attending the National Young Professionals Development Program (NYPDP) at MANAGE, Hyderabad, was truly a turning point in my academic journey. As a student passionate about Agricultural Extension, I entered the program with curiosity and excitement, but what I gained far exceeded my expectations. Here is a glimpse into my journey and the insights I gained.

## Key Learnings



**Day 1:** The first day was energizing, bringing together passionate and dynamic participants from across the country. The opening session by Dr. Saravanan Raj was eye-opening. He offered a comprehensive understanding of emerging competencies and unexplored job opportunities in agricultural extension. Despite being students of extension, we realized how limited our exposure had been to the diverse career pathways and professional skill sets required in this field.

In the afternoon, Dr. Meghajit Sharma's session on 'Gender Equality and Social Inclusion' was particularly engaging and interactive. We stepped out of our comfort zones to participate in group activities that pushed us to analyze real-world gender issues. These exercises increased our awareness and enhanced critical soft skills such as teamwork, communication, and problem-solving. Later, sessions on the 'Extension Curriculum and Time Management' encouraged us to reflect on our academic routines. It helped us realize how effective planning can significantly improve our productivity.

**Day 2:** We began with another impactful session by Dr. Saravanan Raj, focusing on ICTs and digital competencies in agricultural extension. His insights into digital tools, platforms, and resources emphasized how technology can be a game-changer in academic research and field-level work.



Dr. Sethuraman Sivakumar's session on measurement and scaling in social research provided valuable exposure to tools and methodologies often overlooked. He simplified complex concepts and highlighted the importance of sound research design.

Dr. Ramanjaneyulu's captivating session on ecological agriculture stressed that sustainability must be at the heart of all agricultural practices. His grounded knowledge and practical examples made a lasting impact. The day ended with a lively virtual session by Dr. Rasheed Sulaiman on policy engagement. He offered tools to identify research gaps and develop strong writing and policy skills, urging us to think like policy advocates not just academic researchers.

**Day 3:** The third day offered the perfect blend of field and classroom learning. A visit to Access Livelihoods Consulting (ALC) introduced us to real grassroots initiatives. Listening to Mr. Rahul discuss their work with FPOs inspired many of us to consider careers in NGOs working directly with farmers.

In the afternoon, Dr. Saravanan Raj conducted a powerful session on democratizing innovation and technology transfer. He explained how incubation centers, innovation hubs, and government schemes can support agri-startups, valuable for students like me considering entrepreneurial paths. Dr. Mahesh Chander delivered a comprehensive session on organic farming, entrepreneurship, and gender equality. His practical strategies for integrating sustainability and business in extension gave me the confidence to dream big.

**Day 4:** The day started with an inspiring session on higher education and career opportunities abroad, led by Dr. Vikram, Mr. Samrat, and Ms. Laxmi. Their stories and struggles gave us hope and clarity on planning international academic pursuits. Dr. Arun Balamatti's session on competencies, careers, and research priorities helped us map out future trajectories with clarity and purpose.

In the evening, our visit to the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) exposed us to emerging technologies like quantum computing and cybersecurity. It was eye-opening to see their application in agricultural extension and decision-making.

**Day 5:** The final day was both emotional and enriching. Dr. Sindhura led a unique session on balancing academics with physical and mental well-being, a reminder that self-care is key to success.

Dr. Raahalya delivered a practical session on research tools, methodologies, and strategies to improve research quality. This was followed by Dr. Sasidhar's engaging focus group discussion on process skills, competencies, and monitoring and evaluation. The program concluded with a cheerful photo session and heartfelt reflections from participants, leaving us with a sense of pride, gratitude, and accomplishment.

### Training Experience

The five-day NYPDP training was a transformative journey, a rollercoaster of knowledge, self-realization, and growth. Each day brought new perspectives, valuable lessons, and meaningful connections that expanded my understanding of agricultural extension.



What made this program exceptional was the holistic experience: informative sessions, eye-opening field visits, and heartfelt interactions. The food and accommodation were excellent, creating a comfortable, stress-free learning environment.

At the start, I had little idea of the vast career potential in this field. But by the end, I felt empowered, well-informed, and deeply passionate. These five days were among the most impactful in my academic life. I would rate the experience 10 out of 10.



## Change in Perspective

Absolutely, my perspective changed profoundly. Before NYPDP, I viewed agricultural extension as a relatively narrow field with limited prospects. Like many students, I underestimated its scope and importance. But the program helped me see it as a dynamic, multi-dimensional discipline essential to rural development and sustainable agriculture.

Topics like policy engagement, gender inclusivity, entrepreneurship, and global opportunities broadened my understanding. I now view extension not as a fallback, but as a field of purpose and possibility, where I can genuinely make a difference.

## Training Environment

The training environment at MANAGE was vibrant, inclusive, and highly conducive to learning. Every detail from hospitality and scheduling to accommodation and food was meticulously organized. Participants were encouraged to speak freely and engage openly. The diverse group of students from across India brought rich perspectives and created a friendly, intellectually stimulating atmosphere. The energy and mutual respect shared among all attendees made the experience truly empowering.



## What I Appreciate

What I appreciated most was the diversity and caliber of the resource persons. The speakers weren't just knowledgeable, they were deeply passionate. Their willingness to share personal experiences and practical strategies made each session relatable and engaging. Dr. Saravanan Raj's commitment to mentoring young professionals was truly inspiring. His sessions were a perfect balance of academic insight and real-world relevance. The hands-on learning through field visits and group activities also made the program memorable. And yes, the food, accommodation, and hospitality elevated the experience even more.

## Networking

The NYPDP emphasized the value of networking and collaboration. I connected with peers, seniors, and professionals from across India, learning about regional practices, challenges, and innovations in agricultural extension. Group discussions, informal conversations, and team projects fostered a sense of community and mutual learning.



I realized that knowledge doesn't only come from lectures, it grows through dialogue, collaboration, and shared experience. These connections will undoubtedly continue to support me in my academic and professional journey.

## Main Takeaway

My biggest takeaway from NYPDP is the understanding that continuous growth, academic, professional, and personal is essential to make meaningful contributions in extension. I discovered the true potential of agricultural extension as a career, learned practical tools like research methodologies and policy frameworks, and developed a mindset geared toward innovation, relevance, and purpose. The program helped me redefine my ambitions and inspired me to contribute more effectively to the agricultural sector.

## Action Plan

I plan to integrate the knowledge gained into my academic and research work. I'll apply research methods, focus group discussions, and scaling techniques to improve the quality of my research. I also plan to explore startup incubation, global education opportunities, and policy engagement. Additionally, I aim to mentor peers, contribute to knowledge-sharing platforms, and continue building networks with like-minded professionals. This training has motivated me to be more proactive, innovative, and reflective in all areas of my work.



*“The NYPDP program at MANAGE is a game changer, helping me redefine my path in extension by embracing new perspectives and endless possibilities.”*

The NYPDP journey at MANAGE was life-changing. It broadened my perspective, strengthened my passion for agricultural extension, and nurtured personal and academic growth. It was a perfect blend of learning, exploration, networking, and self-discovery. From technical knowledge to friendships, every moment was meaningful. These five days turned me from a hesitant learner into a confident, motivated, and purpose-driven extension professional. My heartfelt gratitude goes to the organizers and everyone who made this experience so special.

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