



National Young Professionals Development Program (NYPDP)
on
“New Competencies, Career Opportunities and Research Priorities
in Agricultural Extension”

Journey Beyond NYPDP *Alumni Experiences*



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How NYPDP Cultivated My Vision for Agricultural Extension

The National Young Professionals Development Program (NYPDP) on “New Competencies, Career Opportunities, and Research Priorities in Agricultural Extension”, held at Siksha ‘O’ Anusandhan, Bhubaneswar, from July 22–26, 2024, was a truly transformative learning experience for me. Organized by the National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management (MANAGE), the program served as a powerful platform that redefined my understanding of agricultural extension not just as a discipline, but as a dynamic force driving innovation, inclusivity, and rural transformation.

Reorientation of Professional Journey

Participating in NYPDP reshaped my professional outlook and provided a clear direction for my future in agricultural extension. The insightful sessions by Dr. Saravanan Raj on emerging competencies, global extension trends, and the evolving role of extension professionals motivated me to align my career goals toward evidence-based extension and innovation-driven rural development. The emphasis on leadership, communication, and data-driven decision-making encouraged me to view extension as a multidisciplinary bridge that connects science, society, and sustainability. The program helped me recognize my potential to contribute not only as a researcher but also as a change agent in the agricultural innovation system.

Impact on Research and Academic Path

The program had a profound influence on my Ph.D. research orientation. Sessions on gender inclusivity, indigenous knowledge systems and monitoring & evaluation inspired me to adopt a more participatory and context-specific approach in my academic work. I was particularly influenced by discussions on research publication trends and global opportunities for extension professionals, which motivated me to publish my research findings in high-impact journals and explore international collaborations. The emphasis on integrating social science perspectives into climate-resilient agriculture helped me refine my research framework to make it more holistic and policy-relevant.

Networking and Collaborative Learning

One of the most enriching aspects of NYPDP was the opportunity to connect with a diverse group of young professionals from 22 states and 72 universities across India. The interactions during group activities, field visits, and discussions created lasting professional relationships that continue to foster collaborative learning and idea exchange. The mentorship from MANAGE faculty and experts from premier institutions like IVRI, CTCRI, and CRISP broadened my professional network and strengthened my confidence in engaging with multidisciplinary teams. The program truly lived up to its mission of building a national community of motivated young extensionists.

Personal Reflection and Key Insight

A defining realization during the program was that extension today is no longer confined to information dissemination—it is about empowerment, empathy, and ecosystem thinking. Learning about human decision modeling, climate-resilient farming, and policy engagement transformed my understanding of the farmer–extension–research interface. The field visit component helped me appreciate the significance of ground-level realities in shaping effective extension strategies. This holistic exposure strengthened my commitment to design farmer-centric, inclusive, and innovative extension models in my future work.



Professional Outcomes Beyond NYPDP

Post-NYPDP, I have noticed tangible growth in my academic and professional activities. The competencies developed during the program have enhanced my research writing, presentation skills, and ability to lead capacity-building programs for farmers and students. I have also initiated collaborative discussions with peers from other universities on digital extension tools and participatory research methods. The MANAGE alumni network continues to serve as a source of guidance, inspiration, and motivation in my ongoing journey as a young professional in agricultural extension.

The NYPDP transformed my approach toward research — I now emphasize data-driven analysis, interdisciplinary collaboration, and participatory learning.

It strengthened my commitment to pursue research that has real-world impact — improving livelihoods, enhancing sustainability, and ensuring equity in agricultural systems.

End Note:

In essence, NYPDP 2024 was not just a training program but a transformative journey that cultivated in me a renewed sense of purpose, professionalism, and passion for agricultural extension. It empowered me to envision myself as part of India's next generation of extension leaders driving innovation, inclusivity, and impact for farmers and rural communities across the nation. "Heartfelt thanks to MANAGE and SOA University for providing this exceptional learning platform that has truly shaped my professional journey."



Mr. Rayirala. Rakesh, Participated in the MANAGE National Young Professionals Development Program (NYPDP) at Siksha 'O' Anusandhan, Bhubaneswar, during July 22–26, 2024