



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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Reorientation of Professional Journey: “NYPDP helped me refine my career goals”

The National Young Professionals Development Program (NYPDP) was instrumental in reorienting my professional journey, particularly by refining my understanding of agricultural extension. The exposure to global trends and emerging roles within the field allowed me to see beyond traditional advisory services, recognizing agricultural extension as a dynamic, multidisciplinary domain. The training sharpened my competencies in research methodologies, including focus group discussions (FGD), monitoring and evaluation (M&E), and policy analysis. These insights have broadened my perspective, helping me identify new career avenues in policy, research, and rural entrepreneurship. Alongside this training helped me to understand how facilitation skills plays a very important role in the career of extension professional. I now feel equipped to pursue roles and inculcate these learnings to bridge grassroots development focusing on innovation and sustainability.

Impact on Personal life

It helped me build the confidence to take initiative during group activities and step into leadership roles, while also improving my ability to clearly articulate my thoughts during discussions.

Impact on Research/Academic Activities

The NYPDP training has had a significant impact on the way I approach my research. The hands-on experience with FGDs and M&E frameworks has influenced my study design, particularly in terms of incorporating more participatory methods and evidence-based decision-making. I am now more focused on integrating gender, youth, and social inclusion (GEYSI) perspectives into my work. Additionally, exposure to bibliometric analysis has encouraged me to critically evaluate the academic landscape and focus on publishing in high-impact journals that align with global research trends. Overall, the training has reinforced the need for interdisciplinary and inclusive research methods that have real-world impact.

Networking Benefits

The networking opportunities provided by NYPDP were invaluable. Interactions with diverse young professionals, faculty members, and mentors from MANAGE and RAJUVAS fostered an environment of collaborative learning. These connections have enriched my professional network, leading to future collaborations and exchange of ideas. Engaging with experts like Dr. Saravanan Raj and other esteemed mentors not only helped me gain technical insights but also provided career advice. These relationships have been pivotal in shaping my approach to research and professional development. Also it's a great opportunity to meet like-minded peers of same discipline from different universities and those connections were supposed to last beyond training as all of us were connected in various networking platforms like LinkedIn, research gate etc.



Reflection

A key turning point during the program was the realization of the vast potential and relevance of agricultural extension as a field. Initially, I viewed it as somewhat narrow, focusing primarily on technology transfer. However, NYPDP broadened my perspective, showcasing how agricultural extension is deeply integrated with policy, entrepreneurship, and social change. The training helped me recognize the importance of effective communication, research skills, and leadership in creating sustainable development solutions. This shift in thinking has motivated me to pursue a more holistic approach to my career in agricultural extension



Ms. Upadhyayula Sai Sreelekha Participated in the MANAGE National Young Professionals Development Program (NYPDP) at Rajasthan University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences (RAJUVAS), Bikaner, Rajasthan during February 10–14, 2025.