



National Young Professionals Development Program (NYPDP)

MANAGE-University Alliance for Advancing Agricultural Extension and Advisory Services

Reflections That Cultivate Tomorrow's Agricultural Extension



A New Chapter Begins: The Step into Learning and Self-Discovery

Mr. Arvind Singh Rao

Participated in the MANAGE-NYPDP at MANAGE Hyderabad during June 09-13, 2025.

 Arvind Singh Rao



My participation in the National Young Professional Development Program (NYPDP) at MANAGE was one of the most enriching experiences of my academic and professional life. Being already part of MANAGE as an intern during that period, I had the unique advantage of viewing the program both as a participant and as someone already immersed in the ecosystem of agricultural innovation and entrepreneurship. This experience expanded my understanding of agricultural extension from a theoretical subject into a living, evolving discipline that drives rural transformation.

Key Learnings



Day 1 – Discovering the Essence of Extension

The program commenced with great energy and inspiration. Dr. Saravanan Raj, Director (Agricultural Extension), set the tone for the entire journey by highlighting the importance of competencies for modern extension professionals. His words deeply resonated with me as an intern and a postgraduate scholar, reminding me that extension today is about innovation, communication, and leadership.

The inaugural address by Dr. Sagar Hanuman Singh, Director General, MANAGE, further instilled a strong sense of pride and belonging to an institution shaping the future of agricultural leadership in India.

Sessions on extension competencies, global opportunities, and gender perspectives provided a holistic foundation for the program.

Day 2 – Digital Extension and Sustainable Development

The second day shifted focus toward the technological transformation of extension services. The discussions on digital tools, ICT platforms, and data-driven advisory systems made me realize how technology has become integral to modern extension delivery. As sometime I was involved in social media communication and digital outreach for MANAGE-CIA startups, I could directly relate to these ideas.

Dr. Sethuraman Sivakumar's lecture on scaling and measurement in social research introduced me to the concept of evidence-based extension—a field I intend to explore further in my research. Sessions by Dr. Ramanjaneyulu on ecological agriculture and community-led sustainability models were equally impactful.



They broadened my understanding of how farmers can be positioned not merely as beneficiaries but as co-creators of sustainable solutions.

Another insightful takeaway came from Dr. Rasheed Sulaiman's talk on policy engagement. It reinforced the importance of connecting grassroots realities with institutional decision-making, and how extension professionals can serve as crucial bridges in this process.

Day 3 – From Classroom to Community



Day three was an inspiring blend of field exposure, entrepreneurship, and cultural immersion. Our visit to Access Livelihoods Consulting (ALC) was particularly transformative. Observing their work with Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) and community enterprises provided practical insights into how collective action and participatory models can bring large-scale impact.

The visit to C-DAC Hyderabad was undoubtedly the day's highlight. Witnessing advanced applications of AI, blockchain, and big data analytics in agriculture showcased how technology and extension can merge to address complex challenges like traceability, supply chain transparency, and farmer data management. This experience motivated me to explore the integration of ICT tools in future extension research and field interventions.



The day concluded with a visit to the Charminar, blending cultural learning with shared camaraderie among participants—a perfect end to a day of both intellectual and emotional enrichment.

Day 4 – Expanding Horizons: Research, Careers, and Technology

The fourth day offered valuable exposure to research trends and international career opportunities in extension. Listening to experience of Dr. Paramveer Singh and other professionals share their journeys abroad provided a realistic understanding of global academic pathways and collaboration opportunities.

Dr. Mahesh Chander's engaging session on organic farming and gender sensitization was another memorable moment. His practical examples highlighted the importance of empowering women farmers and adopting value-based approaches in agricultural development.

Having been part of MANAGE-CIA's incubation programs, I found Dr. Saravanan Raj's session on agri-startups and innovation especially relevant. It reaffirmed my belief that startups are the new pillars of rural transformation and that youth-driven entrepreneurship can redefine India's agricultural future.

Day 5 – Reflection, Evaluation, and Way Forward

The final day was filled with introspection and forward planning. Sessions on Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E), value chain analysis, and research prioritization helped us understand how to link theory with measurable outcomes. The demonstration on Focused Group Discussion (FGD) techniques was particularly useful, as it provided hands-on experience in qualitative data collection—an essential skill for any researcher in agricultural extension.

The concluding session by Dr. P.V.K. Sasidhar reinforced the importance of accountability, feedback, and adaptive learning in extension projects. The certificate ceremony was both emotional and fulfilling—it marked the end of a beautiful learning chapter that had transformed our thinking, perspectives, and aspirations.



Overall Experience

My experience at the MANAGE NYPDP program was truly transformative. As a MANAGE-CIA intern, I found every session directly connected to my work in startup support, communication, and capacity-building. The exposure helped me understand extension as a field that blends research, innovation, entrepreneurship, and empathy.

The training environment was vibrant, collaborative, and intellectually stimulating. The hospitality and coordination of the MANAGE team were exceptional, creating a homely and motivating space for all participants.

What stood out the most for me was the diversity of participants—from different states, institutions, and backgrounds—each bringing unique insights and experiences. Together, we built a learning community that continues to inspire me even after the program.

Major Takeaways

New Career Outlook: I discovered that extension professionals can work not only in academic or project-based roles but also as policy analysts, innovation managers, and agri-business facilitators in global organizations.



- **New Career Outlook:** I discovered that extension professionals can work not only in academic or project-based roles but also as policy analysts, innovation managers, and agri-business facilitators in global organizations.
- **Integration of ICT in Extension:** I realized that technology-driven communication tools are essential for modern extension practices and farmer engagement.
- **Gender and Inclusivity:** Every discussion emphasized the need for inclusivity and equitable participation of women and marginalized groups in agricultural development.
- **Policy and Research Linkages:** Understanding how evidence-based extension can shape meaningful policies was a key learning.
- **Personal Growth:** The training improved my communication, confidence, and leadership skills—valuable assets for both research and professional work.



Most importantly, I came away with one strong conviction: “Extension is not just about transferring knowledge—it is about transforming lives.”

My MANAGE NYPDP Journey



The NYPDP at MANAGE was more than just a training—it was a journey of rediscovery. It reshaped my understanding of extension from a conventional academic subject into a dynamic and interdisciplinary profession. As I continue my work at MANAGE-CIA, I carry forward the lessons, values, and inspiration gained from this program to make meaningful contributions to the agricultural ecosystem.

For any young professional aspiring to grow in this field, I wholeheartedly recommend this program—it is not just a learning opportunity but a life-changing experience that redefines how we see agriculture, innovation, and ourselves.

Mr. Arvind Singh Rao

MANAGE-CIA Intern

M.Sc. in Agricultural Extension

CPGS-AS, CAU (Imphal) Umiam, Meghalaya

e-mail: arao4130@gmail.com

MANAGE - Center for Agricultural Extension Innovations, Reforms and Agripreneurship (MANAGE- CAEIRA)

National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management (MANAGE)

Rajendranagar, Hyderabad- 500 030, INDIA

<https://www.manage.gov.in/caeira/caeira.asp>



MANAGE-CAEIRA



MANAGE-CAEIRA



MANAGE-CAEIRA