



National Young Professionals Development Program (NYPDP)

MANAGE-University Alliance for Advancing Agricultural Extension and Advisory Services

Reflections That Cultivate Tomorrow's Agricultural Extension



NYPDP: A Gateway to a New Era of Agricultural Extension

Kritika Dehariya

Participated in the MANAGE-NYPDP at Anand Agricultural University (AAU) Gujarat, during September 22–26, 2025



[Kritika Dehariya](#)

Key Learnings

When I first received the notification for the MANAGE–NYPDP program at Anand Agricultural University, Gujarat, I felt both excited and curious. As a postgraduate student in Agricultural Extension, I had always admired MANAGE for its visionary initiatives that shape the next generation of extension professionals. Attending the 2025 edition of the NYPDP was not just an opportunity—it was a milestone in my professional journey.

The program promised to focus on new competencies, research priorities and career opportunities in agricultural extension. Over five days, it exceeded every expectation, transforming how I understood my discipline and my role within it. I came away feeling more confident, informed and motivated to contribute to the evolving landscape of agricultural extension.

Day 1 - New Competencies and Job Opportunities in Agricultural Extension

The first day began with “MANAGE at a Glance,” followed by the inauguration and a powerful session by Dr. Saravanan Raj, Director (Agricultural Extension), MANAGE. He introduced us to the evolving roles and competencies required for next-generation extension professionals. A group discussion on “Challenges and Opportunities in Agricultural Extension for Professional Specialization and Excellence” encouraged us to share our perspectives and analyze how to strengthen our professional identity in this field.



The session on Next-Gen Extension Methods and Competencies highlighted facilitation and digital skills as essential for future extensionists. Later, Dr. Saravanan discussed Agri-Innovation through Incubation and Startups, which emphasized entrepreneurship and technology transfer as key opportunities. The day concluded with inspiring alumni experiences, motivating us for our professional journey.

Day 2 – Research Priorities, Methods and Climate Change

Day two started with a reflection activity called Metaphor Sharing. Dr. Saravanan Raj presented Research Priorities in Agricultural Extension, helping us understand upcoming areas like climate-smart agriculture, ICT-based services, and behavioural research. Dr. Vidya Vemireddy from IIM-Ahmedabad explained Research Frontiers and Methods, stressing on scientific rigor and interdisciplinary approaches.

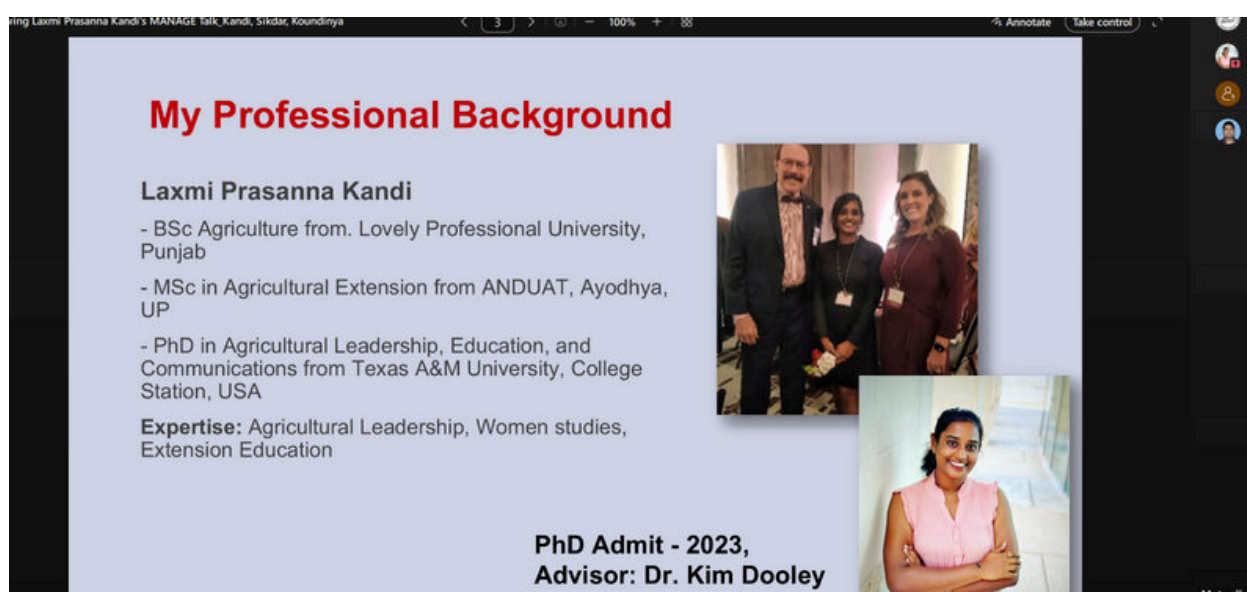
Dr. Shambu Prasad from IRMA introduced Institutional Innovations and Social Science Methods, showing how participatory and transdisciplinary models drive change.

The final session by Mr. Srajesh Gupta, Agricultural Extension in the Times of Climate Change, linked markets, communities, and policies — a truly eye-opening discussion on resilience and sustainability.



Day 3 – Higher Education, Policy Pathways, and Field Exposure

The third day focused on higher education and career development. Ms. Laxmi Prasanna Kandi and Mr. Samrat Sikdar, scholars from Texas A&M and Mississippi State University, shared insights on international education and professional prospects. A session on the Delphi Technique taught us how to achieve research consensus — a useful tool for decision-making. Dr. Mahesh Chander discussed Extension for Organic Farming and Entrepreneurship, motivating us to explore eco-friendly agribusiness opportunities.



The screenshot shows a presentation slide with a light blue background. The title "My Professional Background" is in red. Below it, the name "Laxmi Prasanna Kandi" is listed. To the right of the text are two photographs: one of three people (a man and two women) standing together, and another of a woman in a pink shirt. The slide lists her education: BSc Agriculture from Lovely Professional University, Punjab; MSc in Agricultural Extension from ANDUAT, Ayodhya, UP; and PhD in Agricultural Leadership, Education, and Communications from Texas A&M University, College Station, USA. It also lists her expertise: Agricultural Leadership, Women studies, and Extension Education. At the bottom right, it says "PhD Admit - 2023, Advisor: Dr. Kim Dooley".

My Professional Background

Laxmi Prasanna Kandi

- BSc Agriculture from. Lovely Professional University, Punjab
- MSc in Agricultural Extension from ANDUAT, Ayodhya, UP
- PhD in Agricultural Leadership, Education, and Communications from Texas A&M University, College Station, USA

Expertise: Agricultural Leadership, Women studies, Extension Education

PhD Admit - 2023, Advisor: Dr. Kim Dooley



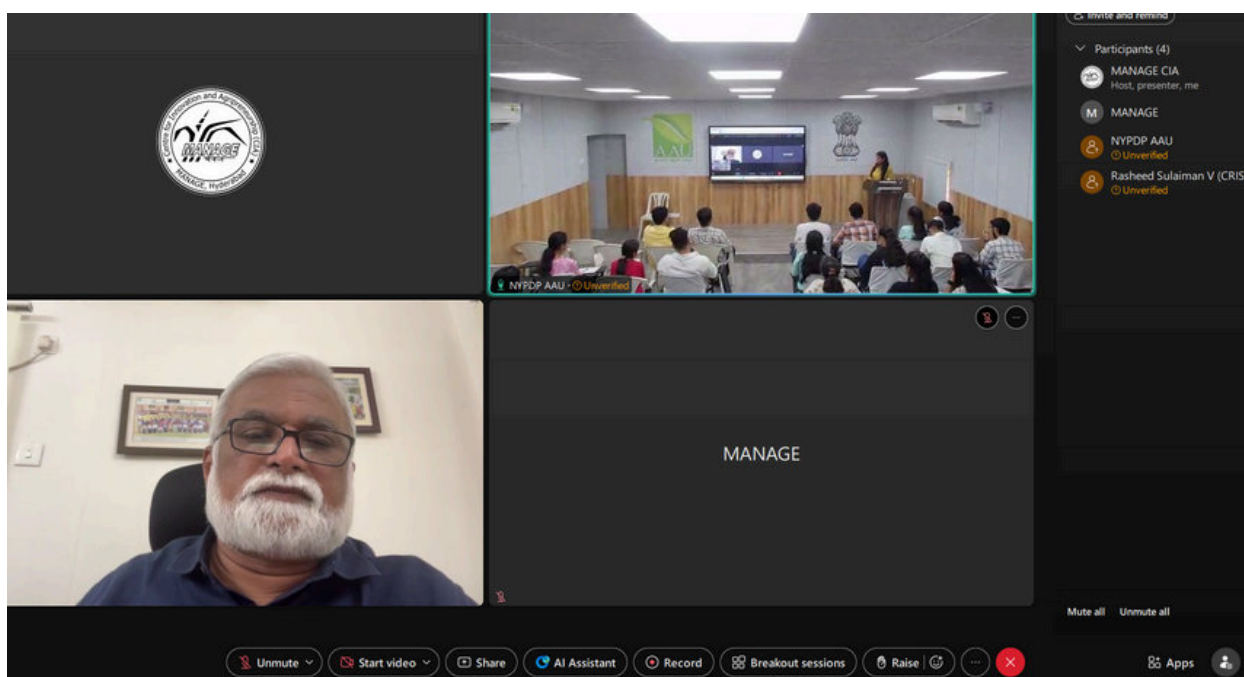
Dr. Suchiradipta Bhattacharjee from IWMI presented Policy Pathways and Engagement, helping us understand how research connects to governance. The field visit to AMUL Dairy and an FPO was highly practical — observing cooperative and farmer-led models was a highlight of the day. That was highly practical — observing cooperative and farmer-led models was a highlight of the day.

Day 4 – Monitoring, Evaluation, and Scaling Research

Day four began with Dr. Anuradha Chaudhary's talk on the Evaluation of Extension Programs, followed by a deep dive into Monitoring and Evaluation Competencies by Dr. P. V. K. Sasidhar (IGNOU). His demonstration on conducting Focus Group Discussions gave us valuable research skills.



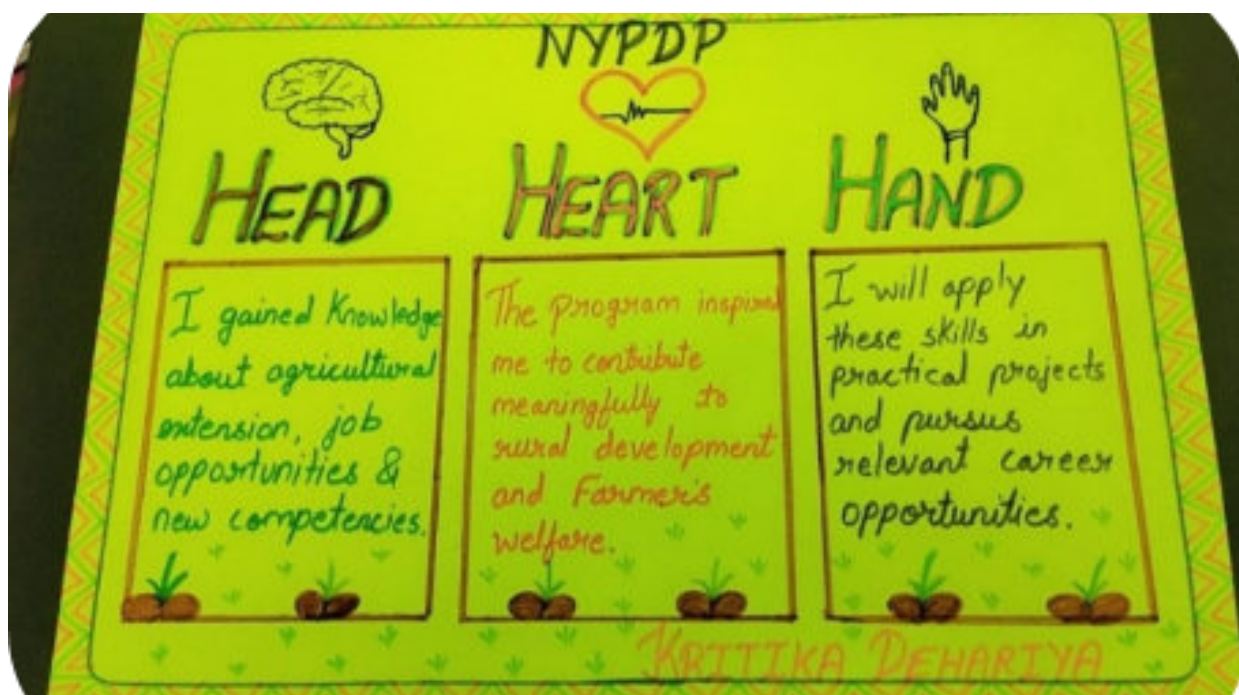
In the afternoon, Dr. Rasheed Sulaiman (CRISP) led a session on Policy Engagement for Agricultural Extension, showing how evidence-based policies can enhance the extension system. Dr. P. Sethuraman Sivakumar (CTCRI) concluded the day with a session on Emerging Approaches in Measurement and Scaling in Social Science Research, introducing advanced analytical frameworks for impact studies.



Day 5 – Knowledge Management, Digital Futures, and Valedictory Session

The final day focused on modern research and digital transformation. Dr. Krithika Sundaram from the Shroff Foundation shared her NGO experiences in Social Science Research and Knowledge Management.

Dr. S. Raahalya introduced us to Next-Gen Research Methods and discussed the Digital Future of Extension Professionals, emphasizing the importance of data literacy and digital tools. We ended the program with “Commitment Cards” under the Head-Heart-Hands framework — a reflective activity linking knowledge, emotion, and application. The valedictory session concluded the program with deep gratitude and optimism for the future.



My Five-Day Training Experience

I particularly enjoyed how MANAGE integrated learning by doing — every concept was accompanied by a discussion or reflective activity. It was not just academic learning but a professional awakening. The exposure to national-level experts, young researchers, and alumni made the experience intellectually stimulating and personally rewarding.

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Change in Perspective

Before this program, I saw agricultural extension mainly as a support system for farmers. After NYPDP, I realized it is a transformative science — influencing policy, entrepreneurship, sustainability and technology adoption. Dr. Saravanan Raj's sessions changed the way I viewed my role as an extensionist — not just as a communicator but as a change agent and facilitator of innovation.

This program made me believe that extension professionals are catalysts who connect knowledge with action. It expanded my vision from local problem-solving to creating larger societal impact through innovation and leadership.



Atmosphere and Environment

The atmosphere at AAU, Anand was vibrant and inspiring. The MANAGE and AAU teams ensured smooth coordination and created a welcoming environment for participants from across India. The interactions with speakers, fellows, and alumni fostered a sense of belonging to a national network of passionate young professionals. The multicultural diversity among participants made the training even more enriching. Every conversation, whether during sessions or over tea breaks, brought new insights about extension systems in different states.



What I Appreciated Most



What I appreciated most was the diversity of thought and experience. The training didn't just deliver lectures—it encouraged dialogue. The mentors were approachable, and their personal stories of working in extension inspired confidence and a sense of purpose in me. The balance of academic insight and field relevance made NYPDP truly exceptional.

The fact that this program was designed by extensionists, for extensionists made it even more special. It felt like a celebration of our discipline and a reminder that extension continues to evolve with every new learner and practitioner.

Peer Interactions and Networking

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My Most Significant Takeaway

My biggest takeaway is the realization that extension is the bridge between innovation and impact. The idea that “Change must begin with the change agent,” echoed throughout the sessions, remains with me. I now understand the value of continuous learning, adaptability and collaboration as essential competencies for a new-age extension professional. I left the program with a stronger sense of purpose — to be part of a future where agricultural extension drives transformation, entrepreneurship and resilience in rural India.

Application of Knowledge and Skills

I plan to apply my learning in three ways:

1. Incorporating participatory methods like FGDs and Delphi in my M.Sc. research.
2. Exploring opportunities in agri-innovation and incubation — inspired by MANAGE's startup-focused sessions.
3. Using digital tools for extension communication and knowledge management to reach wider farmer audiences efficiently.

In the long term, I aim to become a professional who blends research, policy and practice to create meaningful agricultural innovations for communities.



It was truly a journey of self-discovery and growth. The experience taught me that leadership in extension starts with empathy, adaptability and a constant drive to learn.



My MANAGE NYPDP Journey

NYPDP was not just a training—it was a transformation.

It reshaped how I view agricultural extension, strengthened my confidence as a professional, and reminded me that innovation begins with informed, inspired individuals.

I am grateful to the NYPDP organizing team — Dr. Saravanan Raj, Dr. Raahalya, and all AAU facilitators — for making this experience meaningful and memorable. Their guidance, support, and encouragement will continue to inspire me in my academic and professional journey



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