



## National Young Professionals Development Program (NYPDP)

MANAGE-University Alliance for Advancing Agricultural Extension and Advisory Services

### Reflections That Cultivate Tomorrow's Agricultural Extension



**MANAGE NYPDP: Where knowledge grows and progress follows**

#### **Rishabh Singh**

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



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## Key Learnings

When I received the notification about the MANAGE–NYPDP program at Anand Agricultural University, Gujarat, I felt both eager and curious. As a postgraduate student of Agricultural Extension, I have long admired MANAGE for its forward-looking initiatives aimed at developing future-ready professionals. Participating in the 2025 edition of NYPDP was not just an opportunity but a defining moment in my academic and professional journey.

The program focused on emerging competencies, research priorities, and career opportunities in agricultural extension. Over five enriching days, it surpassed all expectations and completely reshaped my understanding of the discipline. I returned with a renewed sense of confidence, knowledge, and motivation to contribute meaningfully to the dynamic field of agricultural extension.

## NYPDP: A Step Toward the Future of Agricultural Extension



## Emerging Competencies and Career Opportunities in Agricultural Extension

The opening day began with “MANAGE at a Glance,” followed by an inaugural session led by Dr. Saravanan Raj, Director (Agricultural Extension), MANAGE. He highlighted the evolving roles and essential competencies for next-generation extensionists. A group discussion on “Challenges and Opportunities in Agricultural Extension” encouraged critical thinking about strengthening our professional identity.

Sessions on Next-Gen Extension Methods emphasized digital and facilitation skills, while discussions on Agri-Innovation through Startups inspired entrepreneurial thinking. Alumni interactions provided valuable career insights and motivation.



## Day 2 – Research Priorities, Methods and Climate Change

The day began with a reflective activity, “Metaphor Sharing.” Dr. Saravanan Raj outlined emerging research areas like climate-smart agriculture, ICT applications, and behavioural studies. Dr. Vidya Vemireddy (IIM Ahmedabad) discussed research frontiers and the need for interdisciplinary rigor, while Dr. Shambu Prasad (IRMA) explored institutional innovations and participatory methods. The day concluded with Mr. Srajesh Gupta’s insightful session on agricultural extension in the era of climate change, linking policies, markets, and community resilience.





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

The third day focused on academic growth and career advancement. International scholars Ms. Laxmi Prasanna Kandi and Mr. Samrat Sikdar shared their experiences from U.S. universities. Sessions on the Delphi Technique and Extension for Organic Farming expanded our research and entrepreneurial perspectives. Dr. Suchiradipta Bhattacharjee (IWMI) connected policy research with governance. A field visit to AMUL Dairy and an FPO offered practical exposure to cooperative and farmer-led business models.



### Day 4 – Monitoring, Evaluation, and Scaling Research

The day started with Dr. Anuradha Chaudhary's session on program evaluation, followed by Dr. P. V. K. Sasidhar's (IGNOU) practical demonstration on focus group discussions. Dr. Rasheed Sulaiman (CRISP) emphasized evidence-based policy engagement, while Dr. P. Sethuraman Sivakumar (CTCRI) introduced innovative approaches to scaling and measurement in social science research.



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

The concluding day focused on digital innovation and knowledge systems. Dr. Krithika Sundaram (Shroff Foundation) shared insights from NGO-led social science research. Dr. Saravanan Raj discussed data-driven research methods and the digital transformation of extension. The “Commitment Cards” activity under the Head-Heart-Hands framework encouraged personal reflection and goal-setting. The valedictory session ended with gratitude and optimism for the profession’s future.



## My Training Experience

Despite the rigorous schedule, the program was engaging and energizing. The sessions effectively blended theory with practice through lectures, group discussions, and field exposure. I found sessions by Dr. Saravanan Raj, Mr. Srajesh Gupta, and Dr. P.V.K. Sasidhar particularly impactful. MANAGE’s “learning by doing” approach transformed academic learning into professional development. The interaction with experts and peers made the experience both intellectually stimulating and personally fulfilling.





## Change in Perspective

Before attending, I viewed agricultural extension mainly as a service for farmers. After NYPDP, I understand it as a transformative science that drives innovation, sustainability, and policy change. Dr. Saravanan Raj's insights redefined my perception of an extensionist—as a facilitator, change agent, and innovator. The program expanded my vision from solving local issues to achieving broader societal transformation.



## Environment and Atmosphere

The learning environment at AAU, Anand, was dynamic and inclusive. The teams from MANAGE and AAU ensured smooth coordination and provided an inspiring platform for exchange. Interactions with peers, experts, and alumni fostered a strong professional network. The cultural and academic diversity among participants enriched each discussion and broadened my understanding of extension across India.





### Highlights and Appreciation

The greatest strength of NYPDP was its diversity of ideas and approaches. The sessions encouraged open dialogue rather than one-way lectures. The mentors' personal experiences added depth to theoretical learning. As a program created by extensionists for extensionists, NYPDP celebrated the spirit of our discipline and reinforced my passion for contributing to it.



### Peer Interactions and Networking

Collaborating with peers from different regions was one of the most valuable aspects. The Extension Marketplace and team exercises fostered collaboration and future networking possibilities. Conversations with MANAGE alumni provided clarity on post-training career paths and inspired me to pursue joint research and publications.





### Key Takeaway

The program reinforced that extension bridges innovation and impact. I learned that meaningful change begins with adaptable, informed professionals. Continuous learning, collaboration, and innovation emerged as vital traits for modern extensionists. I left NYPDP with a renewed commitment to contribute to sustainable and entrepreneurial agricultural systems.





## Application of Learning

I intend to:

- Apply participatory research tools such as FGD and Delphi in my Ph.D. Studies.
- Explore incubation and agri-innovation platforms inspired by MANAGE sessions.
- Integrate digital tools for effective extension communication and knowledge management.

Long term, I aim to combine research, policy, and practice to create inclusive innovations for farming communities.

I extend heartfelt thanks to MANAGE, Hyderabad, for organizing this visionary initiative and to Anand Agricultural University, Gujarat, for hosting us so warmly. Special gratitude to Dr. Saravanan Raj, Mr. Srajesh Gupta and Dr. P.V.K. Sasidhar whose sessions deeply inspired me to pursue excellence in this field.



I am grateful to the NYPDP organizing team — Dr. S.R. Patel, Dr. J.K. Patel, Dr. Raahalya, and all 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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