



## National Young Professionals Development Program (NYPDP)

MANAGE-University Alliance for Advancing Agricultural Extension and Advisory Services

### Reflections That Cultivate Tomorrow's Agricultural Extension



#### Empowered to Extend: A Scholar's Diary from MANAGE NYPDP

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Discussions revolved around bridging curriculum gaps, job opportunities, and professional specialization. Brainstorming on the challenges faced by extension scholars and faculty was both eye-opening and empowering. Dr. Saravanan Raj set the tone with the powerful quote, *"The world believes in action,"* introducing us to cutting-edge research priorities in agricultural extension, including climate change, digital innovation, urban agriculture, and gender studies. Dr. Rasheed Sulaiman V further broadened our perspective on the new capacities required in extension, emphasizing the importance of adaptive roles and policy engagement. Dr. P. Sethuraman Sivakumar's session on research methodologies provided a deep dive into scale development, measurement tools, and scientific research goals. We learned how clarity and creativity can blend with robust methodologies to produce impactful research.



Dr. Krithika Sundaram emphasized the evolving role of knowledge management (KM) in the development sector, especially within NGOs. She introduced us to the core components of KM, knowledge creation, storage, sharing, and application, and highlighted its role in driving innovation, effective project implementation, and social science research.

The session emphasized growing career opportunities in NGOs and development organizations, and the critical skillsets young professionals need today: communication, facilitation, data handling, systems thinking, and digital literacy. Dr. Krithika also shed light on the scope of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) as an emerging space for development professionals to make a meaningful impact. This session helped us understand how KM and interdisciplinary competencies can bridge the gap between research and real-world development outcomes.

Dr. Meghajit Sharma delivered a thought-provoking session on gender studies, emphasizing its critical relevance in agricultural extension. He highlighted how gender dynamics influence access to resources, decision-making, and participation in agricultural development. The session shed light on the often-overlooked contributions of women in farming systems and the need for gender-sensitive approaches in extension research and practice. Dr. Meghajit stressed the importance of integrating gender perspectives into policy formulation, program planning, and capacity-building initiatives to ensure inclusive and equitable agricultural growth. His session encouraged us to critically analyze existing extension frameworks and work toward creating systems that recognize and empower all genders equally in the agricultural landscape.



Dr. P.V.K. Sasidhar's session on Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) illuminated how M&E is not just a technical task but a strategic tool for accountability, reflection, and progress. We explored logical frameworks, Bennett's Hierarchical Model, and input-output frameworks.

## Training Experience

In a word, transformational. The MANAGE NYPDP training was a vibrant blend of knowledge, mentorship, and meaningful connections. It went far beyond traditional lectures, offering a dynamic platform where we immersed ourselves in thought-provoking discussions that challenged our perspectives and stirred our sense of purpose.

Each session was carefully curated to expand our vision as future extension professionals, equipping us with emerging competencies, real-world insights, and the motivation to think critically, act responsibly, and contribute meaningfully to the agricultural extension landscape.



## Change in Perspective

Absolutely. I realized that Agricultural Extension is no longer confined to traditional advisories. It now encompasses innovation, policy engagement, social inclusion, digital leadership, and sustainability. This program broadened my outlook, from viewing extension as a subject of study to seeing it as a platform for social transformation.

## Training Environment

The training environment at MANAGE was truly exceptional - supportive, collaborative, and inspiring. Every detail, from the welcoming setting to the interactive sessions, was designed to spark curiosity and motivate growth. Seeing my name board was a small gesture that carried a powerful message of recognition and belonging. It made me feel valued and part of a larger vision, setting the tone for an engaging and enriching experience.



## What I Appreciate

What I appreciated most about the training was how real and relatable everything felt. The sessions weren't just lectures; they were conversations that connected deeply with our journeys as young professionals. Listening to experts share their personal experiences made the learning feel authentic. The exposure visits and real-world examples added another layer of understanding. It wasn't just about gaining knowledge, it was about feeling inspired, seen, and motivated to create meaningful change in the field of agricultural extension. After an intense day of learning, we wrapped up with a short exploration of Hyderabad, a city that perfectly blends history, culture, and technology.



## Networking

One of the most memorable parts of the training was connecting with fellow M.Sc. and Ph.D. scholars from all over India. It felt amazing to be in a room full of people who shared the same passion and drive. We didn't just exchange ideas; we shared stories, laughed together, discussed our dreams, and built a sense of community. These new friendships and professional connections aren't just for now, they're something I know will stay with me and support me as I move forward on my journey.

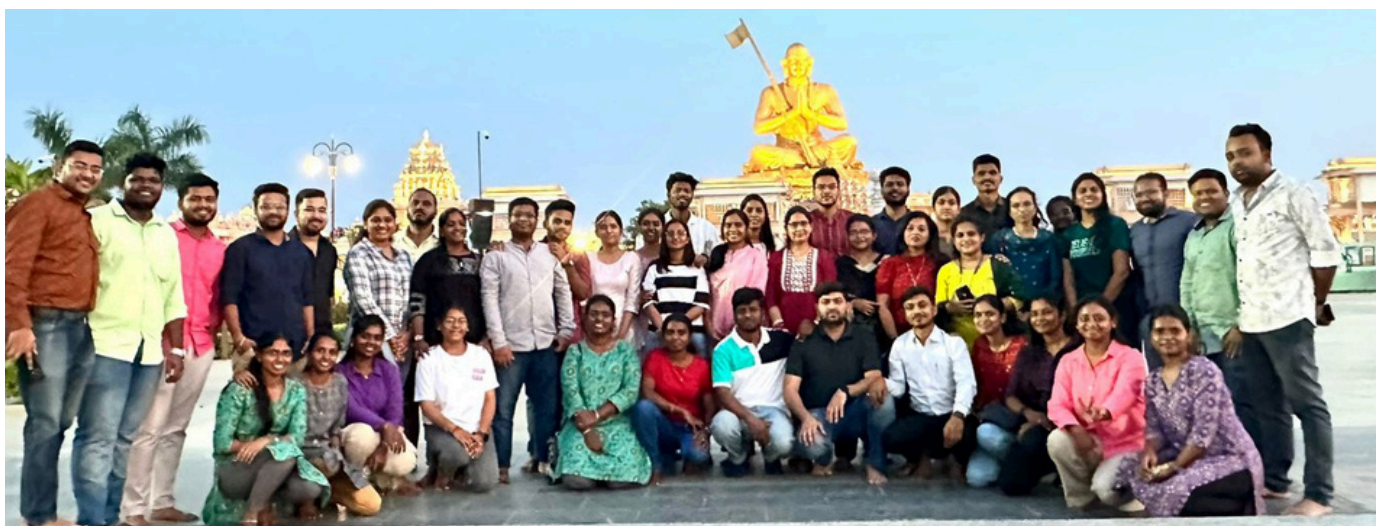
## Main Takeaway

The field of agricultural extension is evolving, and we must evolve alongside it. This training has reinforced the need to think beyond conventional approaches. The words of Dr. Saravanan Raj, "*Who stops you?*" encouraged us to act with greater insight, broader perspectives, and a deeper commitment to creating meaningful impact, not only on the farm but across the entire agricultural ecosystem. I've come away with clarity, confidence, and renewed commitment to my career growth.

## Action Plan

I plan to apply the knowledge and skills gained through this program by adopting robust research methodologies and Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) frameworks in my research on smart farming. I've realized that research is not solely about quantitative data; qualitative research plays a critical role, especially in capturing behavioral aspects that are so important in agricultural extension. As an agricultural extensionist, I now understand that we have the potential to contribute just as effectively to research as scientists do, creating impactful, well-rounded studies that address the real needs of the sector. This holistic approach will guide my future endeavours and help me drive meaningful change in agricultural practices.

## My MANAGE NYPDP Journey



The five days at MANAGE NYPDP completely transformed me, from a learner to someone ready to lead. It wasn't just a training; it felt like a launchpad for the future of agricultural extension. I came in with certain expectations, but I left with something far more powerful: a clear sense of purpose and a mission to make a real difference in the field. It was a wake-up call, showing me the bigger picture and what I can truly contribute.

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