



## **MANAGE Agricultural Extension “Evening4Learning (E4L)” Webinar Series**

### **Theme:**



**Agricultural Extension: An Exciting Profession for Future (for UG students of Agriculture & PG students of Agricultural Extension)**



### **Topic:**

**“Career Landscape in Agricultural Extension: Why Extension is a Future-ready Profession”**



### **Schedule:**

**18-08-2025, 16:00-17:30 PM**



## About the Program

The MANAGE Agriculture Extension “Evening4Learning (E4L)” Webinar Series is aimed at enhancing knowledge and professional engagement in the field of agricultural extension. The five-day series is structured with each day focusing on a distinct topic under a common theme, allowing participants to gain comprehensive insights into key areas of extension. The program is intended for a diverse audience, including undergraduate, postgraduate and doctoral students, agricultural faculty, and industry professionals. It covers broad themes ranging from entrepreneurship and sustainability to emerging technologies in agriculture.

**MANAGE**  
**Agricultural Extension**  
**“Evening4Learning”**  
**Webinar Series**  
**August 18-22, 2025**  
**16.00-17.30 PM (IST)**

*Theme : Agricultural Extension: An exciting profession for Future (for UG students of Agriculture & PG students of Agricultural Extension)*



## Speaker

**Ms. Archana Prasad**  
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 Archana Prasad

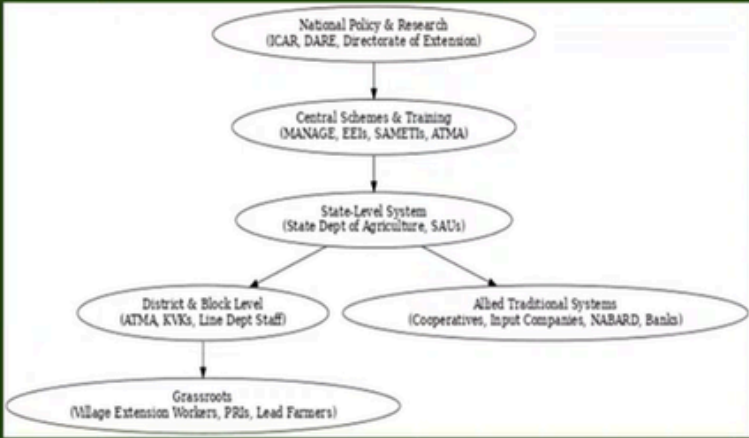
Ms. Archana Prasad is an Engagement Manager at Sattva Consulting with extensive experience in agriculture and rural development. She began her career working closely with farmers and rural communities and later strengthened Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) through governance, leadership, and market access initiatives. She now leads large-scale agricultural engagements, collaborating with global partners to design farmer-centric, future-ready solutions.

## Agricultural Extension as a career

Agricultural extension is not a backup career but the heart and future of agricultural transformation. It is a crucial profession that connects research with farming communities. The outdated perception of extension as only a government job or a fallback option is rapidly disappearing. Today, agricultural extension offers dynamic career opportunities across research, consultancy, academia, development organizations, and international agencies. Extension professionals act as "change makers" who bridge farmers, technology, markets, and policy. The relevance of extension is growing rapidly due to climate challenges, sustainability concerns, and digital transformation in agri-food systems. This shift is essential to support farmers who demand real-time, profitable, and sustainable solutions.

Via webex

When you think about 'Extension,' as a career stream, what comes to your mind?



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graph TD; A([National Policy & Research  
(ICAR, DARE, Directorate of Extension)]) --> B([Central Schemes & Training  
(MANAGE, EEIs, SAMETIs, ATMA)]); B --> C([State-Level System  
(State Dept of Agriculture, SAUs)]); C --> D([District & Block Level  
(ATMA, KVVs, Line Dept Staff)]); C --> E([Allied Traditional Systems  
(Cooperatives, Input Companies, NABARD, Banks)]); D --> F([Grassroots  
(Village Extension Workers, PRIs, Lead Farmers)]); E --> F;
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Archana Prasad

Extension is not just relevant—it's *future-ready*. And if you're curious, adaptable, and willing to learn, this profession can open doors across India and the world."

## Change in Agriculture and the Expanding Role of Extension Professionals

Agriculture has evolved from the Green Revolution to a complex system focused on food security, sustainability, and climate resilience. Farmers now operate in markets that demand safe, traceable, and certified produce, particularly for exports, while also coping with climate variability, pests, and resource constraints. Although digital tools and advisories are increasingly accessible, their effectiveness depends on extension professionals who interpret, contextualize, and localize information. Farmers today are more informed and analytical, seeking evidence-based, and profitable information. Global priorities such as regenerative agriculture, carbon markets, and gender and youth inclusion are now integral to modern agriculture. In this context, extension professionals play a pivotal role by bridging farmers, technology, markets, and policy.

## Scope of Agricultural Extension at National and Global level

The scope of agricultural extension extends well beyond traditional public sector roles. Opportunities exist in private companies, NGOs, civil society organizations, financial institutions, and global development agencies. Extension professionals work as program designers, advisors, and implementers in areas such as digital agriculture, climate adaptation, and gender and youth focused initiatives.

Via **webex**

Archana Prasad

### Scope of Extension

Your skills as extension professionals are globally

In India	Globally
<b>Public extension is the backbone</b> – State Agriculture Departments, KVKs, ATMA projects; still reach millions of farmers.	<b>Global organizations</b> – FAO, World Bank, IFAD, CGIAR invest in extension models (climate-smart, digital, inclusive).
<b>Private extension is growing</b> – DeHaat, AgroStar, ITC e-Choupal, agritech startups offering digital advisory.	<b>Cross-country learning</b> – African & Asian countries look to India for lessons on extension models.
<b>NGOs &amp; Civil Society</b> – Digital Green, PRADAN, SEWA, Aga Khan Foundation, BAIF drive participatory approaches.	<b>Global careers</b> – Indian extension professionals now work on international consulting projects.
<b>FPOs as hubs</b> – provide advisory, input services, and market linkage to member farmers.	

**Competency in agricultural extension** is defined as the integrated combination of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors that enable extension professionals to effectively facilitate, educate, and support farmers to improve productivity and livelihoods. It represents the ability to deliver quality, relevant services by adapting to technical, social, and environmental changes.

Competencies	Description
Technical knowledge	In-depth understanding of agriculture systems and technologies
Interpersonal skills	Effective communication, facilitation, and local language proficiency
Systems thinking	Integration of markets, policies, environment, and farmers
Problem solving & design thinking	Identifying real-world problems and innovating practical solutions
Economics awareness	Understanding GDP, inflation, trade flows, food security, and agri-economics
Project management & accountability	Managing programs, reporting to multiple stakeholders, delivering outcomes

## Diverse Career Opportunities and Competencies Required

- Career options extend beyond government roles to NGOs, development sector, private companies, FPOs, digital platforms, and global consultancies.
- Roles include business planning, input-output marketing, farmer training, program design, digital product management, climate-smart agriculture, gender and youth-focused programs, and policy advocacy.
- Extension professionals are increasingly required in digital agriculture platforms to advice on user experience, outreach strategies, and last-mile connectivity.
- The profession requires self-driven learning, curiosity, and proactive engagement through internships, fellowships, and networking. AI and digital tools can support students and professionals in exploring skills, opportunities, and career pathways in extension. There is no single career route; individual exploration shapes success.

## Emerging Areas

- **Digital agriculture platforms**—using AI, apps, and data dashboards.
- **Climate-smart and regenerative farming**—**extension here is about teaching new practices and linking to carbon markets.**
- **Gender and youth-focused programs**—**helping women farmers and agripreneurs gain equal access.**
- **Global consulting and policy roles**—where your **extension background is invaluable in designing large programs.**



## Key highlights

- The significance of self-driven learning, adaptability, and openness to diverse career pathways beyond traditional roles in agriculture is highlighted.
- Extension professionals play a vital role as collaborators and innovators, who work with farmers to co-create solutions, assess existing practices, and tailor programs to local conditions.
- Students were encouraged to actively pursue internships, fellowships, and project opportunities with NGOs, startups, and global foundations to gain hands-on experience.
- Participants were encouraged to reflect on and conceptualize what an effective agricultural extension system might look like by 2035, fostering innovation and future-oriented thinking.

## Interactive discussion

### **1. What are the skills needed to pursue agricultural extension after undergraduate studies?**

Students should keep their options open and avoid committing too early without understanding one's interests and career goals. Self-learning habits are essential, and AI tools such as ChatGPT or Perplexity can help explore career pathways and reflect on personal motivations. Building a solid foundation in general and agriculture helps in understanding how systems operate. Problem-solving and design thinking skills can be strengthened through collaboration with peers and faculty on real-world issues. Staying connected to the agricultural ecosystem through research, networking, and field exposure is equally important. Finally, the focus should be on relevant and impactful research and academic efforts that address practical challenges faced by practitioners/farmers rather than being driven by credentials alone.

### **2. How should we choose an organization or a sector for non-traditional careers in the NGO or private sector?**

There is no fixed formula for choosing an organization or a sector. The key is to ask the right questions before committing rather than accepting the first opportunity available. Internships and fellowships provide real world exposure and help in identifying interests. Students should actively track opportunities, engage with professional networks, and directly reach out to institutions/organizations. Hands-on experiences help identify preferred problem areas and strengths, while challenging roles contribute to skill development. Reflecting on these experiences and clearly presenting acquired skills and field exposure strengthens employability. Overall, growth comes from proactive, exploratory learning driven by curiosity, awareness, and initiative.

### **3. What is the role of extension professionals in transforming agri-food systems and attracting rural youth?**

Extension professionals act as a bridge between farmers, technology, markets, investors, and policy. In a rapidly evolving digital agriculture landscape, they must understand how technologies such as AI and IoT work and how different stakeholders operate, enabling effective program design and implementation. Their responsibility is to ensure that digital and institutional solutions genuinely address the needs of smallholder farmers by continuously engaging with them. Building strong monitoring, learning, and evaluation frameworks is essential to ensure accountability and real impact. By positioning themselves as problem-solvers and system integrators, extension professionals can help create profitable, future-ready agricultural models that attract and retain youth in the sector.

#### 4. Are there any online platforms or short-term courses for working agricultural professionals?

There is no widely recognized course in agricultural extension for working professionals, but a formal degree is not essential to build extension skills. Professionals from development or community-based backgrounds already possess relevant competencies and learn new skills by attending training programs, conferences, workshops, and webinars conducted by institutions like MANAGE, EEI, and other institutions. Strengthening skills in problem-solving, program design, and implementation through online platforms like Coursera, Udemy, and UpGrad is recommended. Extension syllabi and resources are also available online for self-study, and practical learning is best achieved by applying these concepts in real-world settings, supported by professional networking and one-on-one guidance.

##### YouTube Link:

<https://youtu.be/tirA4LC0mM8list=PL6ml4tMrzHzTysRywAR7IDXaXQ5ZH5ijL&t=1>

#### 5. Are there any specific fellowships for students?

Rather than recommending specific fellowships, students are encouraged to stay open, explore options, and select opportunities that truly resonate with one's interests and goals through platforms like LinkedIn. Opportunities should be chosen based on alignment with personal interest and problem areas rather than compulsion. It is also important to note that fellowships may not suit everyone, sometimes internships are a better fit.

**E4L Report Prepared by:  
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