

MANAGE NYPDP Diary No. 83

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National Young Professionals Development Program (NYPDP)

MANAGE-University Alliance for Advancing Agricultural Extension and Advisory Services

Reflections That Cultivate Tomorrow's Agricultural Extension



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Participated in the MANAGE-NYPDP at MANAGE Hyderabad during December 22-27, 2025.

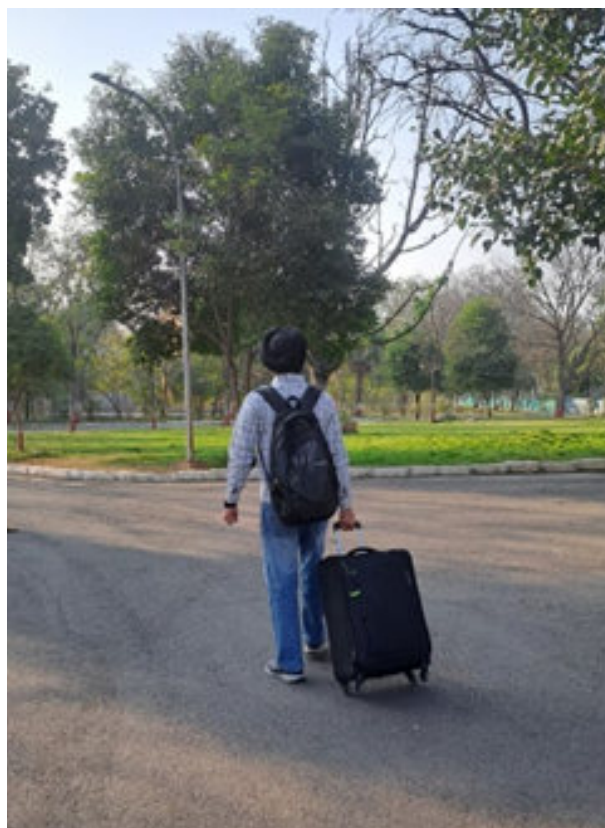
 [Manjinder Singh](#)

This reflective diary captures my learnings, experiences and takeaways from each day of the NYPDP, highlighting how the program contributed to my personal growth, professional clarity and renewed sense of purpose as an extension professional. I try to express these under the following headings as directed.

Introduction

My journey into the National Young Professionals Development Programme (NYPDP) began quite organically. One day, while browsing through social media I came across information about the NYPDP and took some time to explore its objectives, structure and focus areas. As I read through the details of the program, a strong realization emerged within me that this was precisely the kind of professional exposure and learning platform I had been searching for, one that went beyond routine academic training and addressed the evolving dimensions of agricultural extension.

My interest in the program further deepened when one of my friends shared his experience of attending the NYPDP earlier at Bengaluru. He strongly encouraged me to enroll, emphasizing the program's relevance, depth of learning and its transformative impact. Although I was highly motivated, my academic commitments and the postponement of scheduled programs made it difficult for me to apply at that time.



The opportunity I had been waiting for finally arrived when I came across a LinkedIn post from MANAGE announcing the December edition of the NYPDP at Hyderabad. Without hesitation, I applied for the program as I had been eagerly anticipating a chance to be part of this learning experience. On 21st December, I found myself stepping onto the MANAGE campus filled with enthusiasm, curiosity and a strong sense of purpose marking the beginning of a truly enriching professional journey.

Key Learnings from Each Day of the Programme

Day-1 Reimagining Agricultural Extension: The sessions challenged the conventional perception of agricultural extension, presenting it as a dynamic and multidisciplinary field with global relevance. A particularly memorable insight from Dr. Saravanan Raj - “It is not the subject that makes you great, but it is you who makes the subject great” deeply resonated with me reinforcing the importance of mindset and purpose in professional growth.



Notably, the thoughtfully designed sessions created a safe and encouraging space for interaction, helping me overcome my hesitation to speak up and seek clarifications- a feeling I believe many participants also experienced. Group discussions on challenges and opportunities further emphasized that the true strength of extension lies not only in the discipline itself, but in how professionals shape and practice it.



Day 2

Day-2 Digital Pathways and Competencies: Day 2 offering insights into the changing roles of agricultural extension, emerging research priorities and the growing importance of digital pathways for extension professionals. Sessions on digital competencies highlighted the need for extension professionals to adapt to a technology-driven agricultural ecosystem.



The hands-on Extension Marketplace activity made learning interactive and practical, while experiences shared by working interns at MANAGE provided valuable real-world perspectives. A key realization for me was the importance of professional visibility in the virtual world as a researcher and the need to design research that meaningfully benefits society, an angle I had not consciously reflected upon earlier. Overall, the day strengthened my understanding of how relevance, visibility and societal impact are central to professional growth in extension.

Day 3

Day-3 Monitoring, Evaluation and Evidence based extension: Day 3 marked a turning point in how I perceive my own discipline- Extension Education. The discussions helped me realize the true power of subject mastery, particularly how deep expertise in a specific area such as Monitoring and Evaluation can lead to meaningful, impactful and even high-value professional opportunities. This understanding encouraged me to think seriously about skill specialization and the importance of strengthening my competencies through focused and supplementary learning.

Equally transformative was the inspiration drawn from the experiences shared by senior extension professionals, which helped dissolve any lingering sense of inferiority about my subject. I emerged from the day with renewed confidence, clarity and pride in Extension Education as a discipline capable of shaping strong careers and driving real change in agriculture.

Day 4

Day-4 Entrepreneurship, Leadership and Inclusion: From here, I think beyond conventional boundaries-both in research and career planning. I realized the importance of adopting out-of-the-box research approaches and exploring unexplored areas to develop a unique and impactful research identity as an extension professional. Exposure to alternative methodologies reinforced that innovation in research begins with curiosity and the willingness to move beyond familiar tools like Social Network Analysis, Qualitative methodologies etc.



The session on extension roles in the development and NGO sector was particularly valuable for me, as my prior exposure to NGO work found much-needed clarity. It helped me understand how to identify suitable opportunities in the development sector and the key competencies required for sustained and rapid professional growth. Overall, I broadened my horizons and strengthened my confidence in navigating diverse career pathways within extension.

Day 5

Day-5 Policy, Innovation and Way Forward: Day 5 brought together innovation, policy and institutional perspectives, offering clarity on the broader role extension professionals can play in shaping agricultural systems. The discussions helped me understand how policies can be influenced through evidence, strategic communication and well-crafted policy briefs, rather than relying solely on research publications.



As someone deeply interested in policy formulation, this realization was truly enlightening, as it highlighted alternative and impactful ways of communicating research for real-world change.

A Five-Day Experience

The NYPDP journey at MANAGE profoundly transformed the way I perceive my discipline, my professional prospects and my own self-belief. Prior to this program, I often carried a sense of uncertainty and inferiority about the opportunities available within my specialization, especially when compared to the apparent scope in physical sciences, even at advanced academic levels such as a Ph.D.

However, over the course of these five days, the program revealed the true strength, relevance and global importance of Extension Education. Through expert insights and reflective learning, I began to understand my subject in its real sense - as a discipline with vast opportunities across research, policy, development, innovation systems and capacity building worldwide. Most importantly, the program inspired me to embrace my subject with renewed confidence and purpose, motivating me to develop specialization within a focused area, as emphasized by Dr. Saravanan Raj and to pursue excellence with clarity and conviction.

Atmosphere and Environment



The learning environment at MANAGE played a significant role in enriching the overall NYPDP experience. The green and disciplined campus, coupled with world-class hospitality and excellent Indian cuisine, created a welcoming and comfortable atmosphere that supported focused learning.

Peer Interactions and Networking

The NYPDP provided a valuable platform to engage with peers from across the country, making peer learning a central and enriching part of the program. Through various group activities and collaborative tasks, I gained greater confidence in communication while also appreciating the diversity of languages, cultures and perspectives that each participant brought to the learning space. The spirit of mutual support and openness created an environment where ideas, research interests and potential opportunities for future collaboration could be freely exchanged.

Beyond the formal sessions, informal interactions further strengthened these connections, allowing us to learn from one another, exchange experiences, seek guidance from senior participants and build meaningful professional relationships. Overall, the peer interactions not only expanded my professional network but also reinforced the value of collective learning and collaboration in shaping effective extension professionals.



Most Significant Takeaway

The most significant takeaway from the NYPDP for me is the importance of nurturing and refining one's specialization while continuously upgrading skills and competencies. In today's competitive and dynamic professional environment, sustained learning and self-skilling are essential for long-term relevance and success, particularly for extension professionals.

Action plan



Translating this learning into action, I began exploring suitable online and MOOC-based courses immediately after the program. I enrolled in two courses offered through the SWAYAM portal by the School of Agriculture, IGNOU, New Delhi - Agricultural Policy: Formulation, Components, Process, Implementation and Comparative Analysis, aligned with my interest in policy and Cooperatives and Farmers' Organizations, which complements my area of specialization. Both courses commenced in January 2026 and are currently contributing significantly to my capacity building. In addition, I plan to undertake a course on blog writing and actively begin writing in my domain, with the aim of strengthening science communication and outreach beyond conventional academic platforms.

Moreover, webinar series of real-world experiences of extension professionals working in non-traditional field, practicing innovative capacities etc. may also be taken into consideration.

Overall, the NYPDP at MANAGE was a deeply enriching and transformative experience that strengthened my professional clarity, confidence and commitment to Extension Education. I remain grateful to MANAGE and all the resource persons for shaping this journey and inspiring me to move forward with renewed purpose.

The NYPDP journey felt like a moment of revelation - much like a magician unveiling what was hidden in plain sight, the program revealed the true strength and potential of Extension Education. Through their insights, the experts brought clarity to a discipline I thought I already knew, yet had never fully understood. Resource persons, especially Dr. Saravanan Raj, reminded me of the wise mentors in stories who gently handhold, illuminate the path and instill purpose and courage to strive for greater heights.



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