



National Young Professionals Development Program (NYPDP)
on
“New Competencies, Career Opportunities and Research Priorities
in Agricultural Extension”

Journey Beyond NYPDP *Alumni Experiences*




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A Transformative Journey Begins

Participating in the National Young Professionals Development Program (NYPDP) organized by MANAGE, Hyderabad, was a milestone in my academic and professional journey. The program, titled “New Competencies, Career Opportunities, and Research Priorities in Agricultural Extension,” provided me with an immersive learning experience that reshaped my perception of extension education and its transformative role in sustainable agricultural development.

This five-day training wasn’t merely a set of sessions — it was a journey of self-realization, skill enhancement, and perspective change. It made me realize how the role of an extension professional is evolving in the 21st century — from being an information provider to becoming a facilitator, collaborator, and innovator.

Key Learnings and Emerging Insights

The NYPDP offered a holistic understanding of how agricultural extension must evolve in response to digital transformation, climate uncertainty, and farmers’ changing aspirations.

Some of the most valuable insights I gained include:

Emerging Trends and Competencies in Agricultural Extension

The sessions highlighted the importance of new competencies such as systems thinking leadership, innovation management, and communication through modern tools. I learned that an extension professional today must possess both technical proficiency and social intelligence to address complex rural challenges.

Career Pathways and Opportunities

Experts shared insights on various emerging career options — from agripreneurship and development consulting to policy research and agritech startups. It motivated me to view extension not only as a discipline but as a dynamic career landscape rich with potential to influence change.

Digital Tools and Technologies in Extension

I gained hands-on exposure to digital tools like mobile-based advisory systems, data visualization techniques, and GIS-based analysis that are revolutionizing communication and decision-making in agriculture. Understanding these tools deepened my interest in integrating AI, IoT, and data analytics into my future research.

Policy, Participation, and Collaboration

The discussions emphasized the need for participatory and inclusive approaches in policy formulation. I learned that policies become truly effective only when they are co-created with the participation of farmers and stakeholders. This realization reinforced my belief that agricultural extension is the bridge connecting research, policy, and community empowerment.

Research Priorities for the Future

The program encouraged participants to explore new frontiers in research — from sustainability and climate-smart practices to digital governance and livelihood resilience. I found a clear alignment between my doctoral research and the emerging global priorities in agricultural policy.



Atmosphere of Learning, Respect, and Innovation

From the very first day, the learning environment at MANAGE was vibrant, inclusive, and collaborative. The trainers and mentors fostered a culture of open communication and intellectual curiosity. The atmosphere encouraged us to share our ideas, debate constructively, and co-learn from one another. Breakout sessions, group activities, and brainstorming exercises allowed for the exchange of diverse regional experiences, which broadened my understanding of how extension operates differently across India's varied agro-ecological zones.

Networking with fellow young professionals and experts not only expanded my professional circle but also strengthened my motivation to contribute to national development through agricultural innovation. The environment was not only academically enriching but emotionally inspiring — every session left me energized and more confident in my role as a young researcher.

My Personal Transformation

Before attending this program, I viewed agricultural extension primarily as a discipline focused on transferring knowledge to farmers. After completing the training, I now perceive it as a collaborative and tech-integrated ecosystem that connects research, innovation, and policy to empower rural communities.

The NYPDP transformed my approach toward research. I now emphasize data-driven analysis, interdisciplinary collaboration, and participatory learning. It strengthened my commitment to pursue research that has real-world impact improving livelihoods, enhancing sustainability, and ensuring equity in agricultural systems.

My Message to Fellow Scholars and Professionals

Participate: Every program like this is an opportunity to grow, learn, and network.

Be Curious: Curiosity opens the door to innovation — never stop questioning and exploring.

Be Active: Contribute actively, share your thoughts, and collaborate across disciplines.

Think Globally, Act Locally: Integrate global knowledge with local realities to design sustainable solutions.

Acknowledgement

I am deeply grateful to Dr. Saravanan Raj Director (Agricultural Extension), MANAGE and Dr. Rahalya S., MANAGE Fellow for their exceptional guidance and for giving me this invaluable opportunity. Their mentorship and vision for strengthening the capacities of young professionals have been truly inspiring. The NYPDP experience continues to shape my academic path and professional aspirations — reminding me that extension is not just a career, but a lifelong mission of connecting knowledge with people, innovation with livelihoods, and policies with progress.

Ms. E. Priyavadhana, Participated in the MANAGE National Young Professionals Development Program (NYPDP) at MANAGE, Hyderabad, during June 09-13, 2025

