



# Citizen Services in the Age of AI

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# Introduction

- 1** Citizen services are the primary interface between the state and its people
- 2** Over the past decade, India has transitioned from paper-based administration to digital governance, yielding gains in efficiency and transparency.
- 3** The emergence of AI signals a new phase: the shift from digitised processes to intelligent, adaptive, and citizen-responsive service delivery.
- 4** A critical question remains: Does AI genuinely enhance the citizen's experience, or does it principally digitise pre-existing complexities?

# Evolution of Citizen Services: Phase I — Pre-Digital Era

## PHASE I | Pre-Digital Era

*Citizen services in India were characterised by physical processes, high discretion, and Urban-Rural differences in access.*

- Manual, paper-based application processes requiring physical attendance at government offices
- High administrative discretion with no defined service timelines or accountability mechanisms
- Procedural opacity: citizens had no means to track application status or outcomes
- Heavy dependence on intermediaries due to complexity and inaccessibility of official processes

# Evolution of Citizen Services: Phase II — Rights-Based Era

## PHASE II | Rights-Based Era (RTS)

*The rights-based phase established statutory entitlements for citizens, placing legal accountability on officials for service delivery for the first time in India.*

- Right to Information Act, 2005: citizens gained legal right to access information held by public authorities, with penalties for non-compliance
- Madhya Pradesh Public Service Guarantee Act, 2010: India's first statutory framework guaranteeing time-bound service delivery to citizens
- Subsequent diffusion of RTS laws across 30 states, establishing citizen entitlement to timely, quality public services as a governance norm
- Maharashtra MRTPS (2015): 1,500+ notified services across 36 districts: one of India's most comprehensive RTS implementations

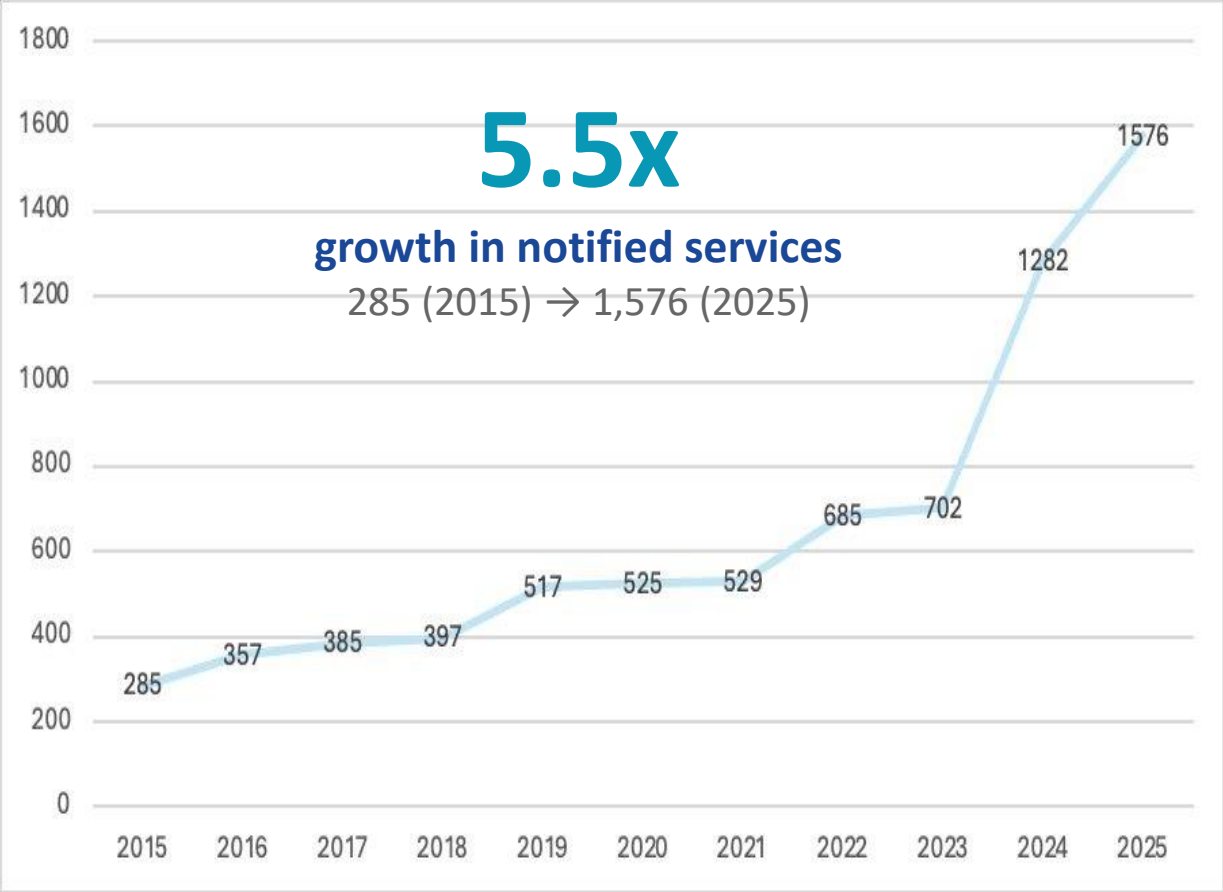
# Evolution of Citizen Services: Phase III — Digital Governance

## PHASE III | Digital Governance

*The digital phase transformed the delivery infrastructure: services moved online, processes were standardised, and data-driven governance became possible.*

- Digital India Mission, 2015: aimed to transform India into a digitally empowered society and knowledge economy
- UMANG Platform (2017): single unified platform for all Indian citizens to access pan-India e-governance services
- Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT): subsidies transferred directly to beneficiaries' accounts, reducing leakages and intermediary dependence
- Aadhaar-based biometric authentication: transformed service access and real-time monitoring of service delivery

# Maharashtra MRTPS Service Growth, 2015–2025



# Maharashtra MRTPS Service Growth, 2015–2025: Governance Challenge

# 5.5x

growth in notified services

285 (2015) → 1,576 (2025)

## Scale Beyond Manual Capacity

1,500+ notified services across 38 departments cannot be monitored or audited through manual administration alone the sheer volume demands systemic solutions.

## Compliance Monitoring Gap

Tracking statutory timelines, flagging pendency, and enforcing accountability across services in real time is structurally impossible without intelligent automated oversight.

## Citizen Visibility Deficit

Citizens have low alerts on deadline breaches, and no clear escalation path leaving them dependent on intermediaries.

## Quality and Accountability at Scale

Measuring officer performance, ensuring consistent quality, and holding the system accountable across departments demands governance architecture that manual systems cannot sustain.

# Why Was the Digital Transition Needed?

1

## Easier Application Submission

The physical model demanded citizens visit offices repeatedly a structural barrier for the rural poor, the elderly, and those in remote districts. The imperative was to make access location-independent.

2

## Real-Time Tracking of Service Status

Citizens had no visibility into where their applications stood. Opacity bred dependence on intermediaries. The goal was to make service status legible and auditable in real time.

3

## Reduction in Processing Time

Manual processing was slow, inconsistent, and unaccountable. Automation was needed to enforce statutory timelines and bring predictability to service delivery.

4

## Enhanced Monitoring and Administrative Control

Administration lacked the tools to identify backlogs or measure performance systematically. The objective was to create a unified oversight layer capable of evidence-based management.

5

## Data Generation for Governance Analytics

Policy decisions on public services were made without reliable data. Digitisation was needed to generate the structured evidence base required for iterative governance improvement.

# The Core Problem: Digitisation Does Not Equal Transformation

*Digitalisation has improved administrative efficiency; it has not, however, necessarily enhanced accessibility, equity, or citizen-centredness.*

## EXPECTATION

- Digital systems would provide citizens with direct, unmediated access to public services
- Intermediaries would be rendered structurally redundant
- Processes would become faster, simpler, and more transparent
- Citizens would navigate service systems independently and with confidence

## GROUND REALITY

- Persistent reliance on kiosks, and assisted service centres
- Complex forms
- Application errors result in rejections, placing burden on citizens
- The digital divide in literacy, connectivity, and usability remains unresolved

# Gaps: What the Evidence from RTS Implementation Reveals

## Assisted Mode Remains Dominant

Citizens continue to prefer Seva Kendras over online portals not by choice, but because the unassisted portal alone is insufficient for most users.

## Elevated Application Rejection Rates

Minor errors in submission routinely lead to rejection. The system offers no corrective guidance at the point of failure.

## Absence of Real-Time Guidance Mechanisms

There is no in-built assistance during the application process. Citizens navigate complex requirements entirely on their own.

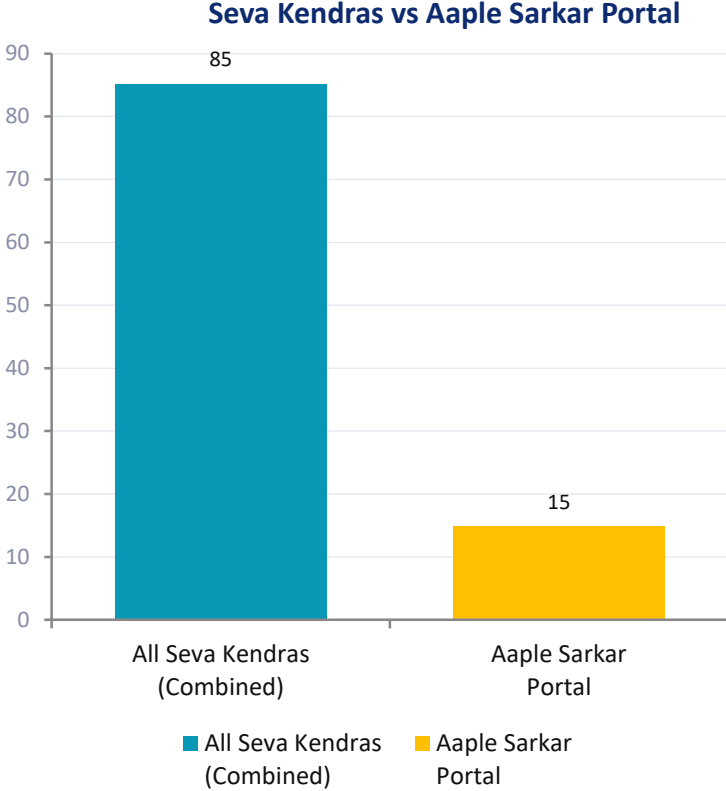
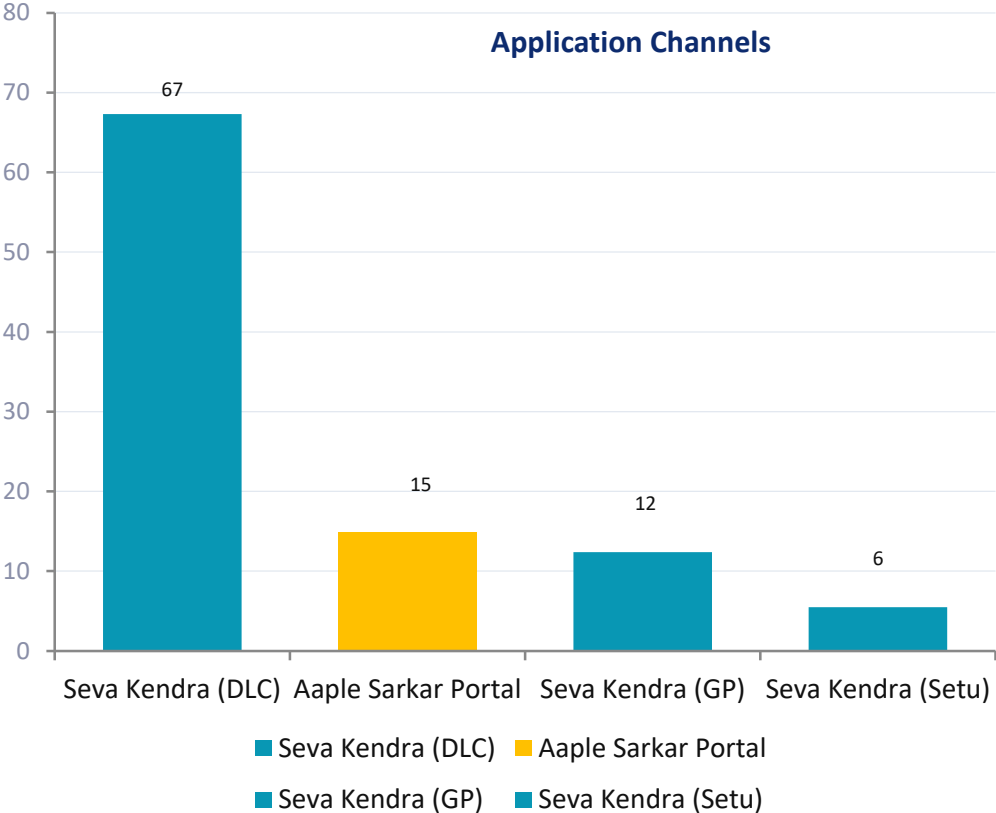
## Weak Grievance Redressal and Feedback Loops

When applications fail or are delayed, citizens have limited recourse. Accountability for procedural failures remains diffuse.

## Fragmented and Inconsistent User Experience

Services span multiple portals with different formats and logic, creating a maze for citizens rather than a unified service experience.

# Aaple Sarkar: Applications Received by Channel (2023-24)



# Channel-wise Application Trends: Maharashtra MRTPS (2018–19 to 2023–24)

Figure 1: Applications by Channel

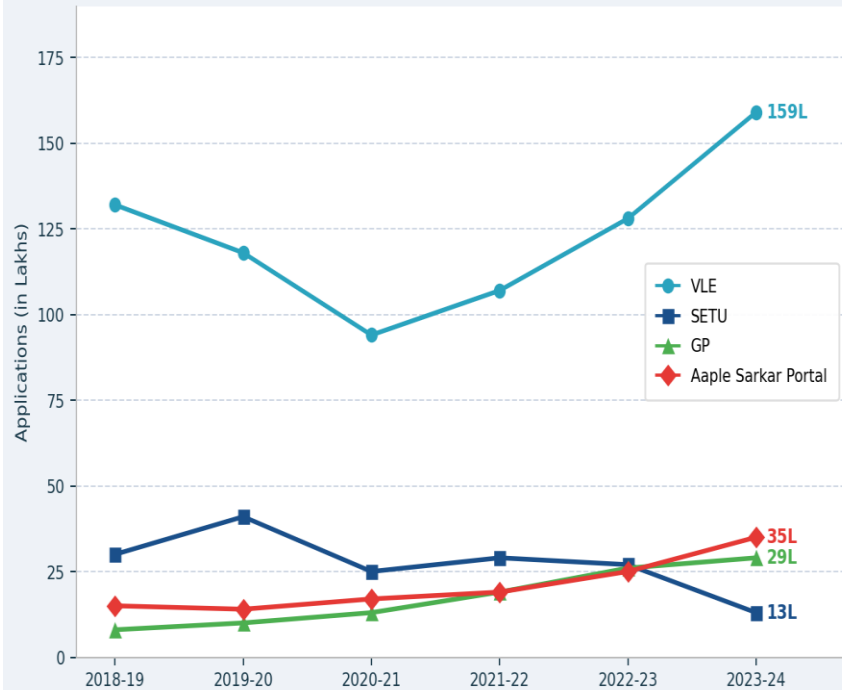
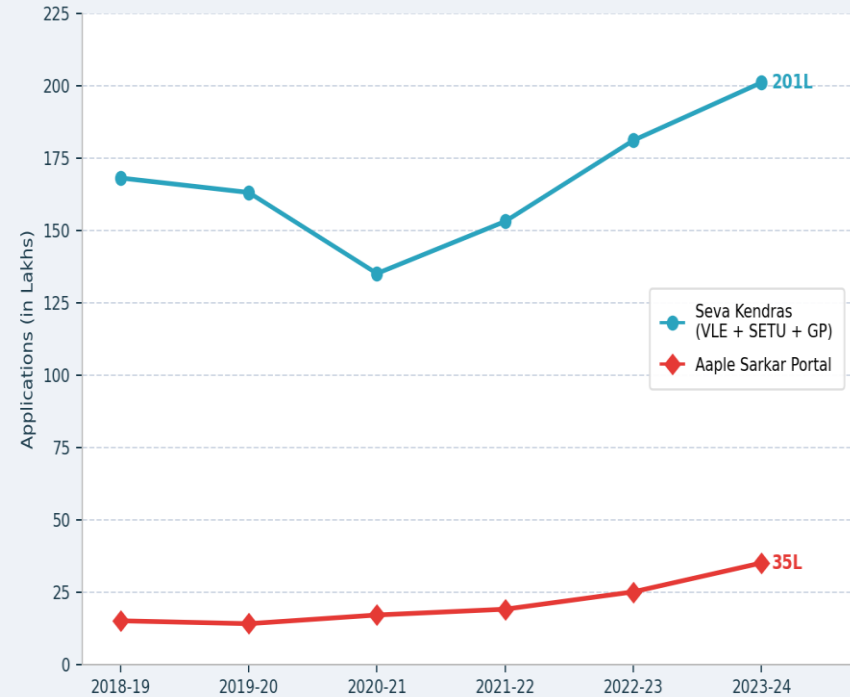
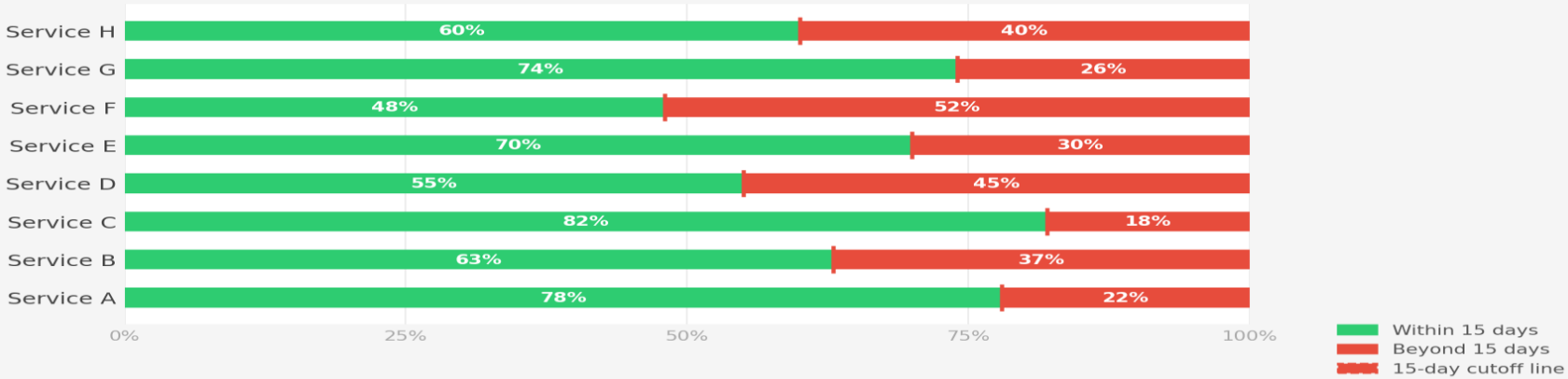


Figure 2: Seva Kendras vs Aaple Sarkar Portal

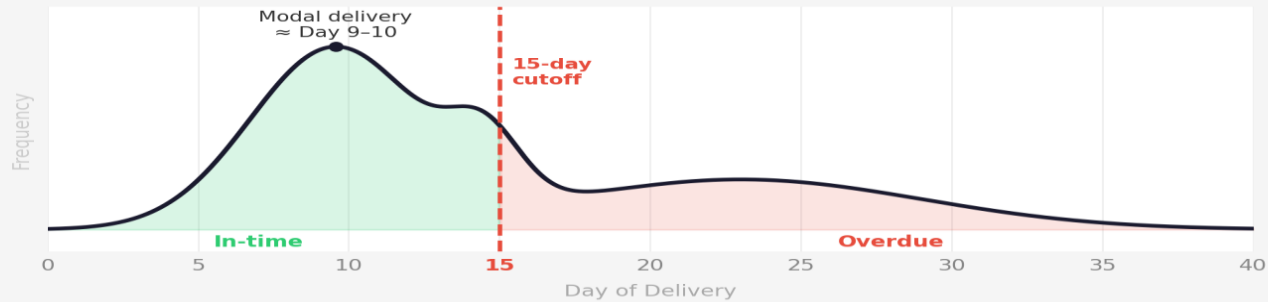


# Ideal ground: Granular information makes service more citizen centric

## What We Know



## What We Don't Know



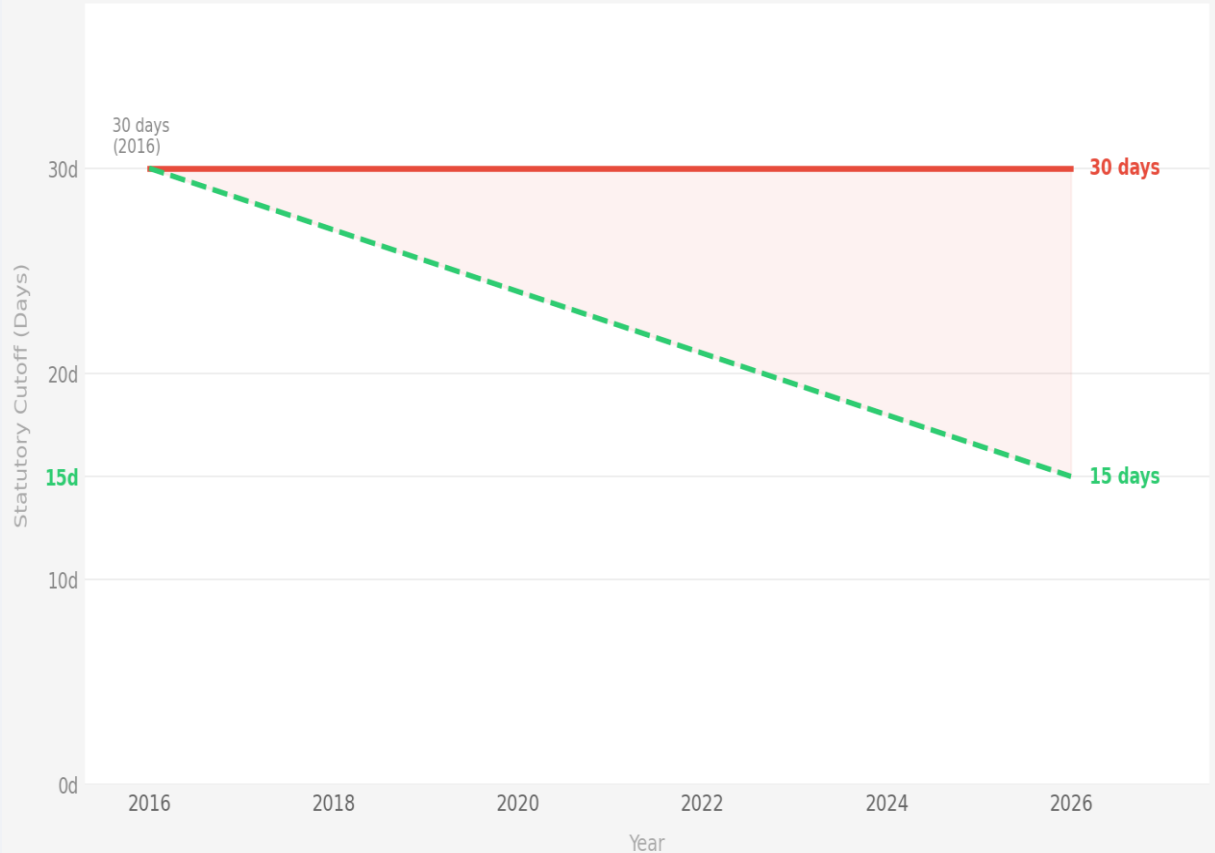
# Tightening Mandates, Persistent Gaps: The RTS Timeline Challenge

## Why it matters

Tighter mandates raise the performance bar.

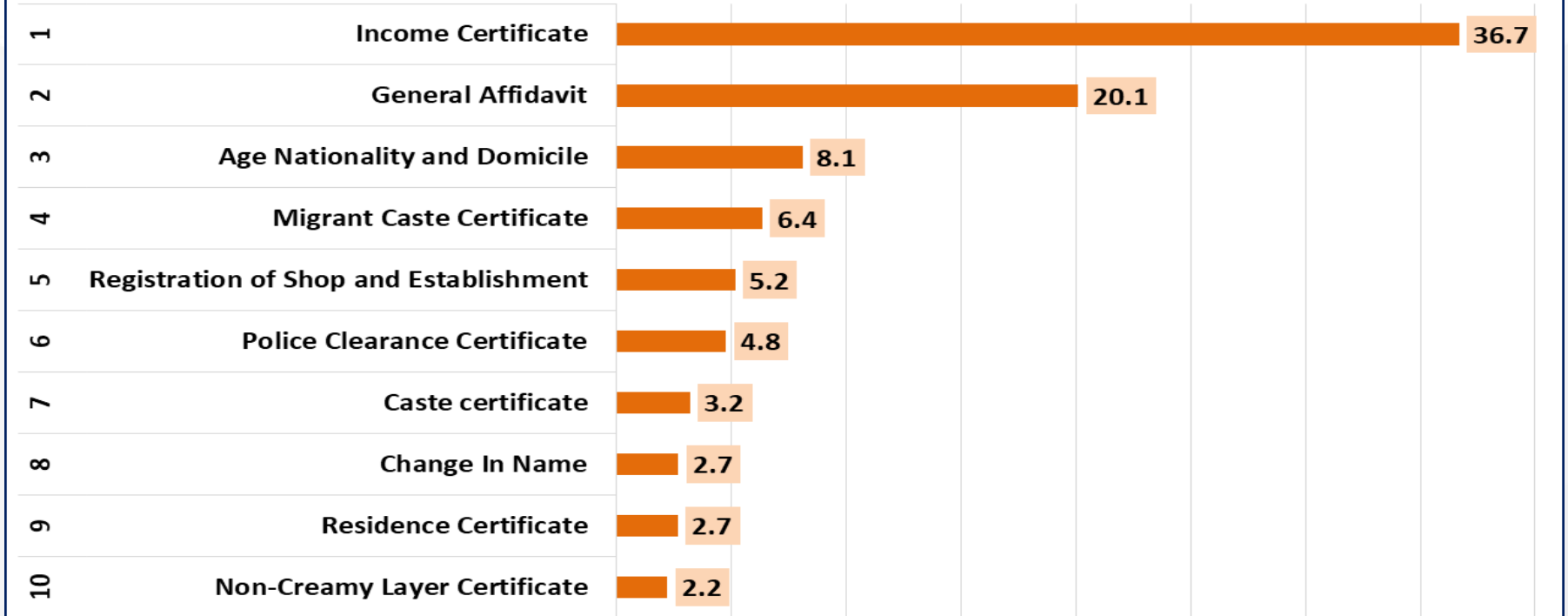
## The AI implication

AI-enabled process automation, real-time flagging of pendency, and predictive workload management offer the most viable pathway to close this structural gap as mandates continue to tighten.



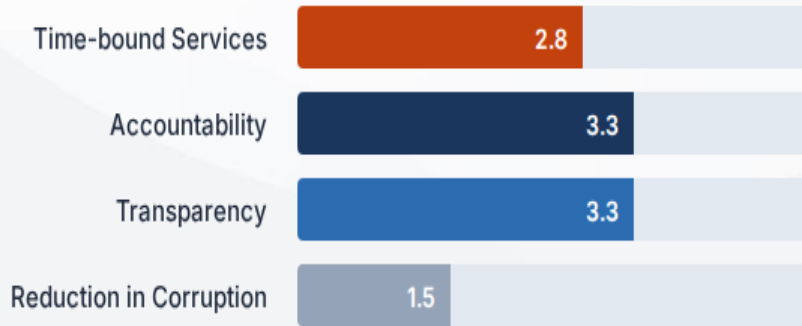
# Maharashtra MRTPS: Top 10 Services by Application

Maharashtra : Top 10 Services with maximum number of Applications Received during 2023-24



# Citizen perspective & impact in Maharashtra (IIPA Survey)

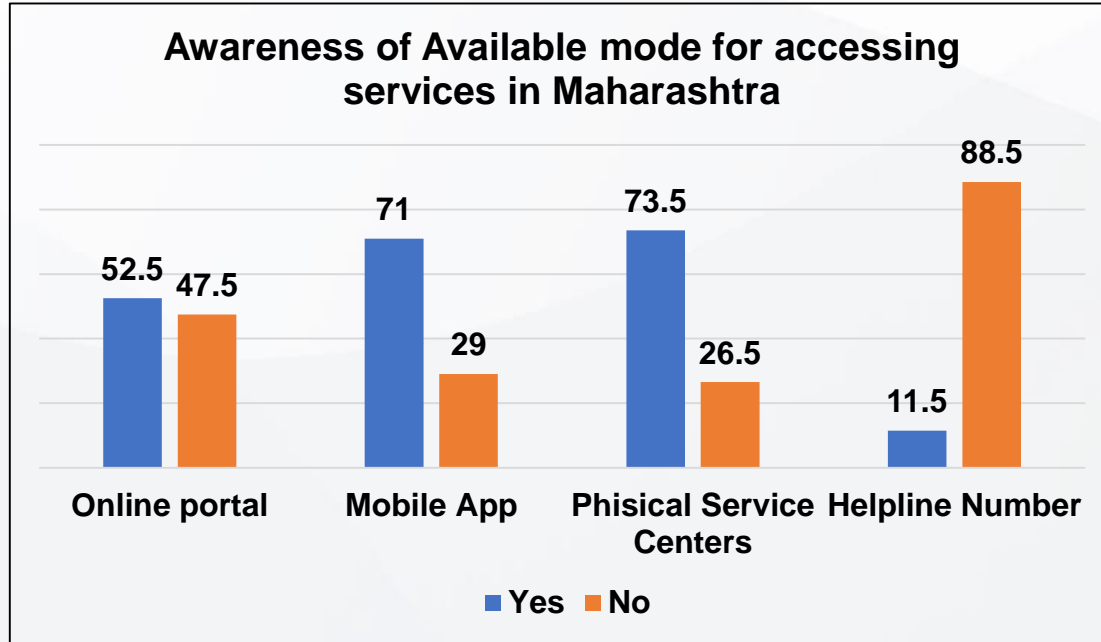
## Key Performance Indicators (1-5 Scale)



## Overall Citizen Impact

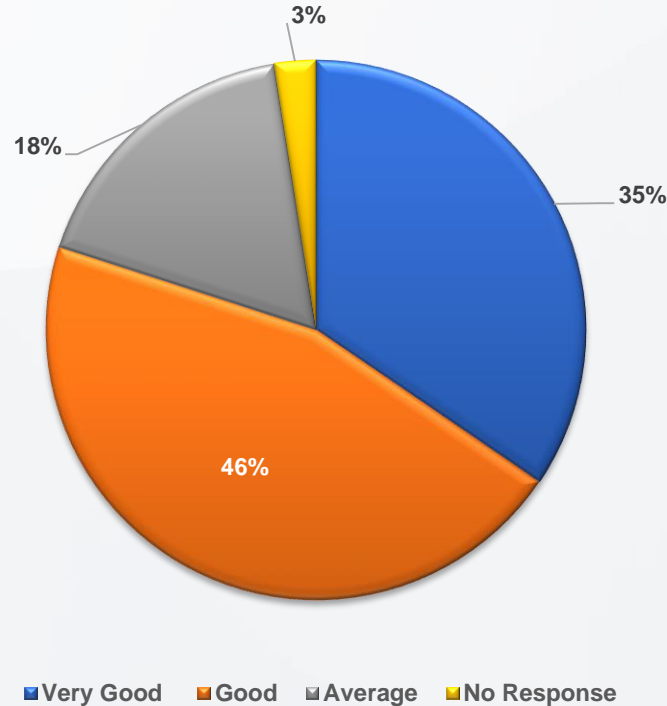
- ✓ 37% Reported Significant Positive Impact
- ✓ 52% Reported Some Positive Impact
- ⓘ 11% Reported No Significant Change

## AWARENESS OF AVAILABLE MODE FOR ACCESSING SERVICE IN MAHARASHTRA (IIPA Survey)



# Citizen Satisfaction with Service Quality — Maharashtra (IIPA Survey)

Citizens liking the Services Provided to them in Maharashtra



*81% of respondents rated services as Good or Very Good — a strong indicator of citizen satisfaction with Maharashtra's public services. Only 18% rated delivery as average, and 3% gave no response.*

Source: Field Survey IIPA

# Automatic Appeal System

751

services on AAS

2.48M

appeals processed

89.9%

resolution rate



KEY FEATURES

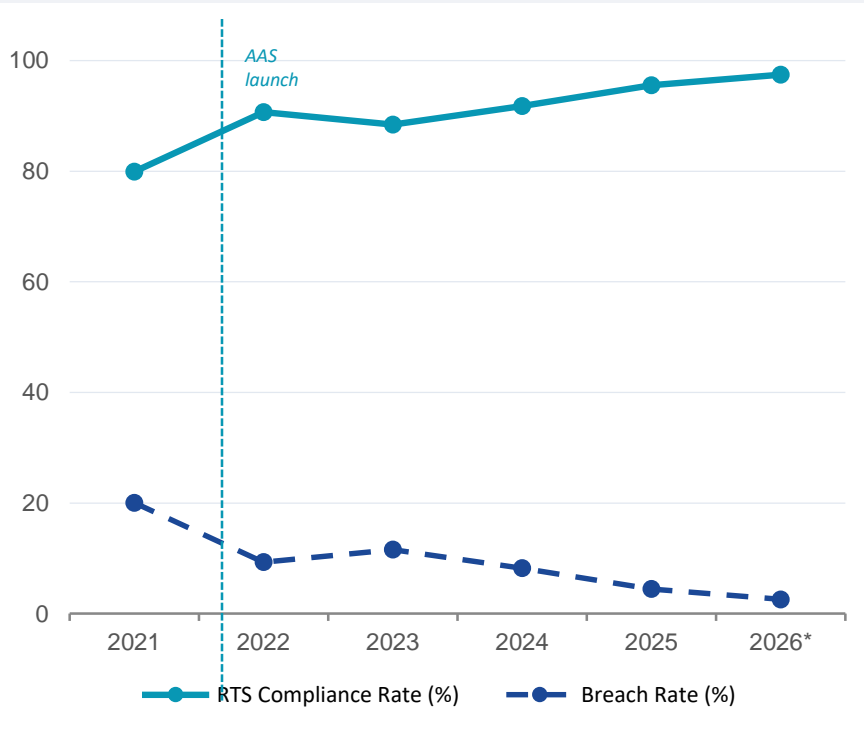
- System-triggered — no citizen action required
- Real-time notifications to citizen and official
- Three-tier escalation: DO → FGRA → SGRA → Commission
- Covers ~85% of all RTS-notified services
- Penalties up to ₹20,000 on defaulting officers
- Compensation up to ₹5,000 to affected citizens

SERVICE DELIVERY: PRE vs POST AAS

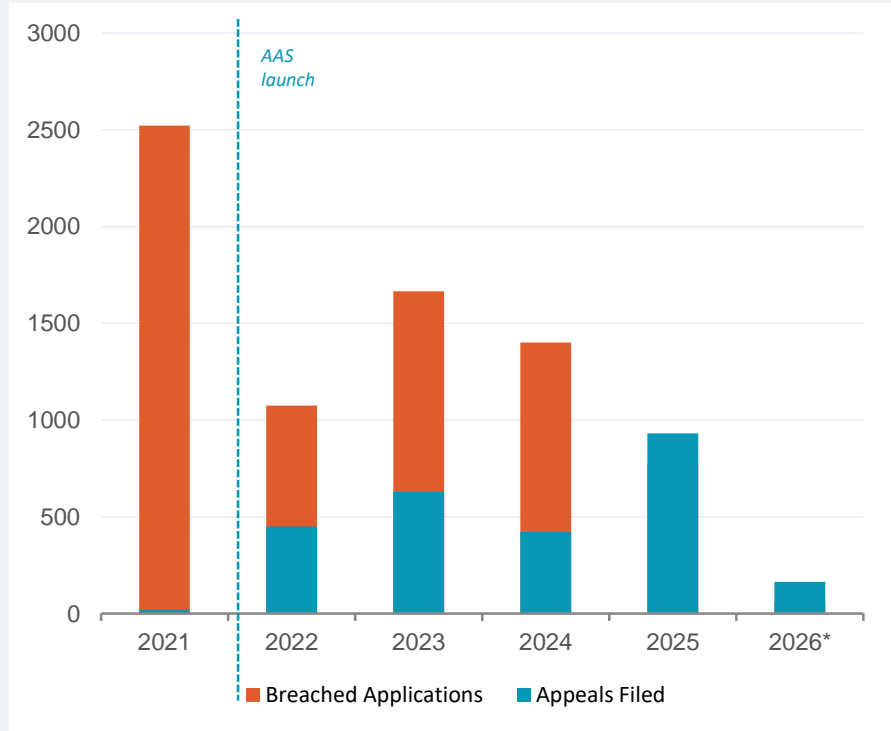
| Metric                     | Pre-AAS (2018–20) | Post-AAS (2022–25) | Change  |
|----------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|---------|
| Applications received (mn) | 34.48             | 61.32              | +26.84  |
| Timely processing rate     | 82.9%             | 90.6%              | +7.7 pp |
| Rejection rate             | 10.9%             | 7.2%               | -3.7 pp |

# AAS Impact on Service Delivery Performance

## RTS Compliance Rate vs Breach Rate



## Breached Applications vs Appeals Filed (thousands)



**Key finding:** Breached applications fell 97.5% (2.5M → 62K) while appeals rose sharply — the hallmark of a deterrence effect. Rising appeals reflect improved enforcement coverage, not deteriorating performance.

GOVERNANCE REFORM

# Samadhan Ek Din

Same-Day Service Delivery  
under Madhya Pradesh Public Service  
Guarantee Act (MPPSG)

Launched in 2017

COVERAGE

- 32 services across 9 departments
- Major Dep: Revenue, Home, General Administration
- Major Services: Income, residence certs, Land records

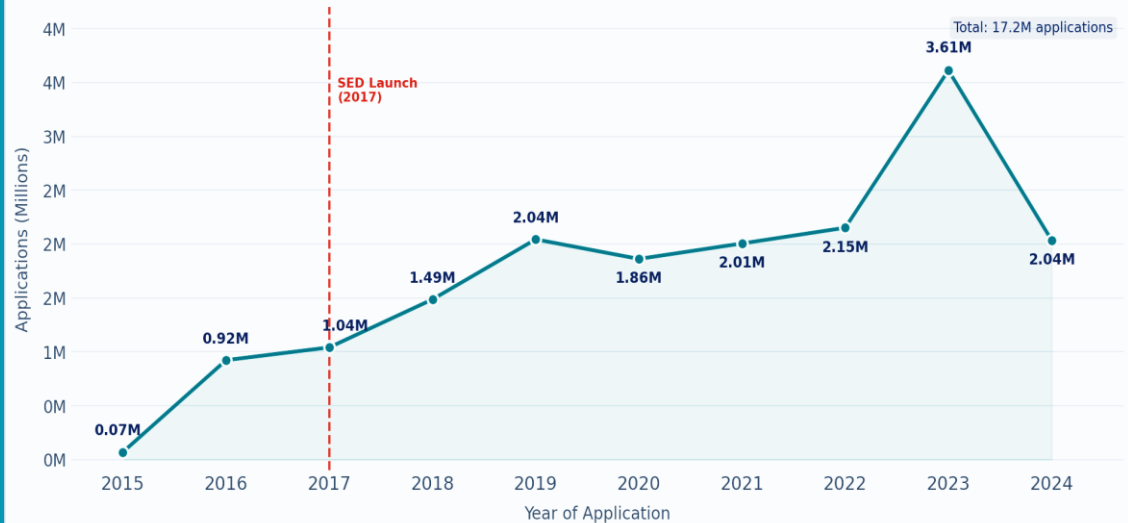
WHAT IT IS

- Instant (same-day) delivery of selected public services
- Moves beyond time-bound → immediate fulfilment

HOW IT WORKS

- Delivered via Lok Seva Kendras (LSKs)
- Self-declaration + backend verification
- Single-visit • Designated officer on-site all day

Residence Certificate — Largest Service under MPPSG & SED  
Application Volume (2015-2024)



# Samadhan Ek Din — Design Logic

## POLICY DESIGN & REPLICABILITY

### INSTITUTIONAL DESIGN

- Decision-making at frontline (LSK level)
- Simplified procedures & reduced documentation
- Backend verification post service delivery

### EVOLUTION PATTERN

- Initial rollout: 2017–18; limited expansion since
- Most services already existed under PSG

### SERVICE COMPOSITION

- 32 services; concentrated in few departments
- Dominated by certificate & high-frequency services
- General Administration Dept is the largest contributor

### ADMINISTRATIVE LOGIC

- Removes intermediate approval layers
- Empowers frontline officers
- Prioritises high-demand, high-volume services

# What Makes a Service “Citizen-Centric”?

01

## Universal Reachability

Available to every citizen regardless of region, language, age, or digital access.

02

## Zero Intermediary Dependence

If a citizen still needs a paid agent to apply, the service has not reached them.

03

## Transparency and Feedback

The citizen can track their application and has a clear channel to raise concerns.

04

## Accountability

Success is not submitting the form. It is receiving the entitlement on time.

05

## Visibility

Citizens can see how the overall system is performing not just their own application.

# Capacity Building: The Critical Institutional Enabler

*The efficacy AI in governance works is contingent upon the preparedness of not only the administrators but the citizens as well*

## FOR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

- Training in digital tools and AI-assisted decision-support systems
- Process re-engineering mindset: reconfiguring workflows for AI integration

## FOR CITIZENS

- Scaled digital literacy programmes targeting low-income, rural, and elderly populations
- Awareness campaigns informing citizens of their statutory rights and entitled services
- Guided onboarding and familiarisation with AI-powered service portals at point of access
- Provision of multilingual, voice-accessible, and cognitively accessible support across all AI-enabled service channels

# Artificial Intelligence: The Next Transformative Phase

From **Digitised Services** to **Intelligent, Adaptive, Citizen-Centric Services**

1

## AI-Assisted Form Completion

Guides citizens step-by-step in plain, local language — removing procedural barriers.

2

## Real-Time Error Detection

Pre-submission checks flag mistakes, substantially reducing unnecessary rejections.

3

## Voice-Based Interaction Interfaces

Allows citizens with limited digital literacy to access services without text-based navigation.

4

## Intelligent Chatbots for Guidance

Round-the-clock multilingual assistance, reducing dependence on human intermediaries.

5

## Personalised Service Recommendations

AI proactively identifies citizen entitlements based on administrative and demographic data.

6

## Predictive Governance Analytics

Aggregated insights enable policymakers to anticipate demand and design proactive interventions.

# AI as a Digital Mediator: Towards Citizen-Centric Governance

*The goal is to replace the intermediary.*

01

## **Structural Displacement of Informal Intermediaries**

When AI guides, assists, and verifies on behalf of citizens, Intermediation loses relevance. The system itself becomes the mediator.

02

## **Restoration of Citizen Agency**

Citizens equipped with AI interfaces navigate services independently, recovering their agency and eliminating invisible informal charges.

03

## **Reorientation of Service Logic**

A citizen-centric system is designed around the user's journey. AI translates bureaucratic processes into guided, plain-language interactions.

# Policy and Governance Implications

1

## Human and AI Hybrid Governance Models

AI should augment rather than supplant human judgement. Officials retain accountability; AI constitutes the support infrastructure, not the decision-maker.

2

## Standardisation of Public Service Processes

AI-enabled assistance is effective only when underlying processes are coherent and accessible. Process re-engineering must precede AI deployment.

3

## Strengthening the RTS Framework through AI Integration

The Right to Service legal architecture is the right foundation. AI can operationalise RTS by enforcing timelines, flagging delays, and escalating breaches.

4

## Regulatory Frameworks Governing AI in Public Administration

Sector-specific guidelines on AI use, including audit mechanisms, transparency requirements, and citizen redressal channels, are essential prerequisites.

# The Way Forward: From Efficiency to Inclusion

*Efficiency*

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**Accessibility**

*Digitisation*

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**Inclusion**

*Service Delivery*

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**Citizen Experience**

AI must not merely automate processes; its potential lies in simplifying governance, reducing friction, and restoring citizen dignity in the encounter with the state.

Policy attention must shift from efficiency metrics to accessibility imperatives, and from service delivery volumes to the quality of the citizen's lived experience.

“

*The true success of Artificial Intelligence in governance will not be measured by the sophistication of its technological architecture, but how it empowers the last citizen.”*

# AI Making Governance Visible and Accessible: Transparency and Accountability for Citizen-Centric Governance

*Citizens know How System is working.  
Much different from where their applications are?*

01

## Visible Analytics

When AI guides, assists, and verifies on behalf of citizens, Intermediation loses relevance. The system itself becomes the mediator.

02

## Data availability: Public Analytics

Citizens equipped with AI interfaces navigate services independently, recovering their agency and eliminating invisible informal charges.

03

## Reorientation of Service Logic

A citizen-centric system is designed around the user's journey. AI translates bureaucratic processes into guided, plain-language interactions.

# What We Need ..

- 1** | A paradigm shift of our Mindset
- 2** | Technology don't make change,  
Human being with right Mindset
- 3** | Technology waves come and go:  
Yesterday it was Internet, today it is AI, and tomorrow may be Quantum computing
- 4** | We will transform Citizen's experience only with different/positive Mindset,  
Enabled by AI

# THE 8-ERA EVOLUTION

Technology Paradigm → Nature of Public Service Delivery to Citizens

| ERA 1              | ERA 2              | ERA 3             | ERA 4               | ERA 5                | ERA 6            | ERA 7                | ERA 8               |
|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------|---------------------|----------------------|------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| Pre-1985           | 1985-95            | 1995-03           | 2003-08             | 2008-12              | 2012-17          | 2017-22              | 2022+               |
| TECHNOLOGY         | TECHNOLOGY         | TECHNOLOGY        | TECHNOLOGY          | TECHNOLOGY           | TECHNOLOGY       | TECHNOLOGY           | TECHNOLOGY          |
| Paper & Typewriter | Mainframe & NIC DB | Static Web & HTML | Dynamic Portal/NeGP | eCommerce Portal/PSK | Mobile + Aadhaar | Cloud+APIs +UMANG    | AI + DPI Agents     |
| PSD NATURE         | PSD NATURE         | PSD NATURE        | PSD NATURE          | PSD NATURE           | PSD NATURE       | PSD NATURE           | PSD NATURE          |
| Physical Opaque    | Back-office Only   | Info Available    | Partial Online      | Full Transaction     | Mobile First     | Integrated Ecosystem | Proactive Invisible |
| 📅 6-12 months      | 📅 3-6 mo           | 📅 2-4 mo          | 📅 45-90d            | 📅 7-15d              | 📅 3-7d           | 📅 2-3d               | 📅 24-48h            |

*A Timestamped Evolution: Physical Formats → Databases → Web → Portals → Mobile → Cloud → AI-Driven Unified Platforms*

**Fully Physical | Back-Office Digital | Partial Online | Full Digital | Proactive AI-Driven Governance**

EASE OF PSD TO CITIZENS → INCREASING



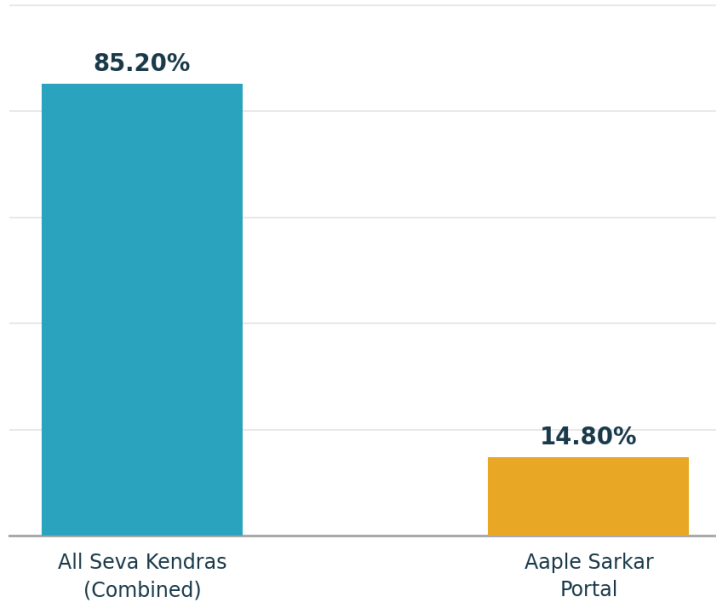
# Scenario in 2027-28

- 1** | Massive campaign for Capacity building of the officers
- 2** | AI integrated at every stage: application submission, processing, analytics
- 3** | Citizens are using AI
- 4** | We have transformed Citizen's experience

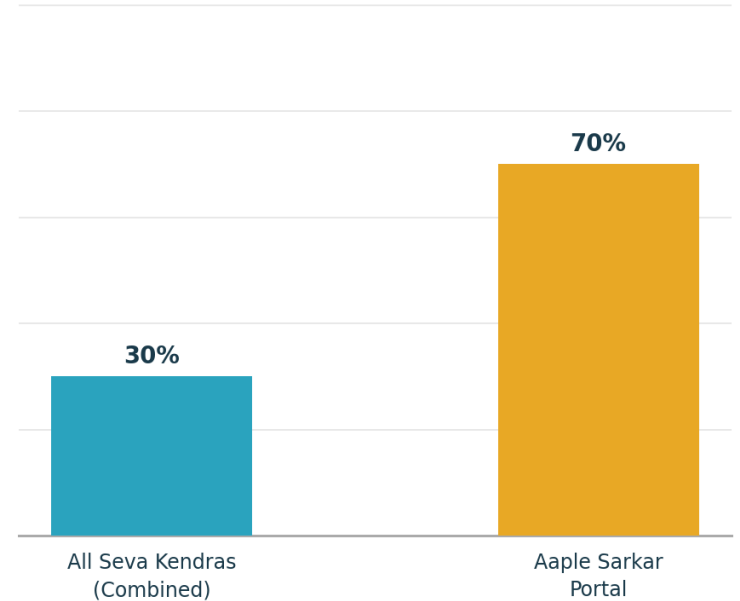
# Can AI help us Flip this?

## Aaple Sarkar & Seva Kendra: Applications Received (2027-28)

Seva Kendras vs Aaple Sarkar Portal  
(2023-24)



Seva Kendras vs Aaple Sarkar Portal  
(2027-28)



■ All Seva Kendras (Combined) ■ Aaple Sarkar Portal

# Thank You

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