Case Study

Online Monitoring of the Delhi Right of Citizen to Time Bound Delivery of Services Act, 2011

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Governance Knowledge Centre

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Executive Summary

Public Service Guarantee Acts, also known as Right to ServiceAct (RTS), enacted by some Indian States aim to create a transparent and accountable public service by making a citizens' right to a public service within a stipulated time legally binding. These Acts empower the citizens with the right to demand for time bound delivery of services from the government, failing which the concerned government official can be penalized.

Till the end of 2011, 10 Indian States had enacted RTS Acts with Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and Delhi leading the way. While the Act in itself is landmark legislation for efficient service provision, its effective implementation is dependent upon complementary reforms in service delivery processes and adequate capacity building measures to strengthen public administration. Recognizing the urgency of such reforms in the administrative system, the Government of NCT of Delhi has developed an online monitoring system, electronic Service Level Agreement (e-SLA) for recording and tracking the delivery of various services guaranteed under its version of the RTS i.e. the Delhi Right of Citizen to Time Bound Delivery of Services Act, 2011.

Delhi's online monitoring system captures the submission of service applications and their disposal electronically through acentral software. Various departments' data is integrated and linked to the central software which can then be used to generate reports and evaluations that assist higher authorities in overseeing and monitoring the performance of their departments and tracking delays. For the government, the e-SLA helps in keeping a check on non performing departments and personnel and for citizens it provides a facility to track their applications and rightly demand their services on time. So far the e SLA system covers 70 services of 22 departments of the GNCTD. Eventually, this system will monitor up to 100 services.

The e-SLA monitoring system for implementing Delhi's Right to Service Act provides an excellent example of leveraging ICT tools for supporting and strengthening governance processes and monitoring mechanisms. Since most Indian states are in the process of implementing their own Right to Service Acts, they can learn and adapt from Delhi's experience to develop an ICT monitoring infrastructure of their own.

Methodology

The Governance Knowledge Centre (GKC) documents best practices in governance in India in support of further replication. For this purpose, select initiatives that are significantly contributing towards the betterment of public service delivery are identified by the GKC research team. The team conducted extensive secondary research using credible web sources to establish the suitability of e-SLA monitoring system as a best practice. This research reflected the manner in which the e-SLA system is successfully harnessing information and communication technologies to monitor the timely delivery of various public services for ensuring the successful implementation of a vital government legislation.

Having recognised e-SLA as a best practice, the next step was to identify the key stakeholders and interview them to gain a deeper insight into the operation and impact of the initiative. Information for this best practice documentation has been gathered through secondary research and primary research methods. In-person interviews were held with the Additional Secretary, Department of Information and technology, Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (GNCTD) and the Principle Consultant of the State e-Governance team.

Efforts have been made to provide objective information in the document. However, since only the implementers of the project were interviewed, there is a possibility of the percolation of subjective bias.

Background

Right to Service Acts in India

Corruption is among the most widespread problems that plague India's administrative and bureaucratic set-up. In 2010, India ranked 87 out of a total of 178 countries in Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index[1]. Corrupt officials and non-transparent procedures result in inefficiencies, delays and a general attitude of disillusionment and cynicism amid the general public towards service-delivery procedures in the country.

Aware about the need to develop anti-corruption tools and introduce reforms for making administrative procedures transparent, accountable, efficient and citizen-centric, the

[1] 'Activists, lawyers seek Right to Service Act'. DNA India. 13 March. 2011. Web. 10 January. 2012. <http://www.dnaindia.com/india/report_activists-lawyers-seek-right-to-service-act_1519602>

Government of India has introduced various administrative reforms. Among the most recent of these efforts are the Public Service Guarantee Acts also known as Right to Service(RTS) Acts that are being enacted by various Indian States for making a citizens' right to a public service within a stipulated time legally binding.

The Public Service Guarantee Acts take the idea of the Citizen Charter further - Citizen Charters issued by various departments define the quality of public services that citizens can expect, the Public Service Guarantee Acts make it compulsory for in charge officials to deliver services within a given period of time, failing which he/she can be penalized. The Acts empower citizens with a legal right to demand time bound delivery of services from the government.

Till the end of 2011, 10 Indian States enacted their RTS Acts under varied nomenclature with Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and Delhi leading the way. It is important to note that while the Act in itself is a landmark legislation for efficient service provision, its effective implementation is dependent upon complementary reforms in service delivery processes and adequate capacity building measures to strengthen public administration. Recognizing the urgency of such reforms in the administrative system, the Government of Delhi has developed an online monitoring system for recording and tracking the delivery of various services guaranteed under its version of the RTS i.e. the Delhi Right of Citizen to Time Bound Delivery of Services Act, 2011.

e-SLA monitoring system

Under the Delhi (Right of Citizen to Time Bound Delivery of Services) Act, 2011, various government departments sign Service Level Agreements (SLA's) to deliver the concerned service/s of the department within a given time period failing which the in charge official is subject to a penalization of Rs. 10 per day. For one official the upper limit of penalization goes up to Rs. 200 per day. If by the end of the financial year, 25 such instances of failure to deliver services are aggregated against an official s/he can be subjected to suitable administrative action.

To implement the Act, government departments are required to appoint a competent officer i.e. First Appellate Authority, (FAO) who the citizens can approach for filing a complaint against a defaulting official and a Second Appellate Authority (SAO) who can review and decide on the order passed by the FAO and then penalize or repeal the complaint made against an erring official.

To facilitate the purpose of time bound service delivery under the Act and the subsequent SLA's signed under it, an online monitoring system i.e. electronic Service Level Agreement (e-

SLA) has been developed by the National Informatics Centre (NIC) in consultation with the Department of I.T, GNCTD. GNCTD initially sought to implement the Act manually; however manual monitoring of service delivery proved to be an extremely difficult task and presented a large scope for inconsistencies during monitoring. Since, Delhi has a strong existing I.T infrastructure, there was a possibility of developing an efficient system for electronically monitoring service delivery without incurring major systematic changes and investment and address the problems faced under the manual system. Hence, GNCTD decided to leverage this strong I.T presence in Delhi's administration to design an in-house e-monitoring software.

The online monitoring system captures the submission of service applications and their disposal electronically. For the government, the e SLA helps in keeping a check on non performing departments and personnel and for citizens it provides a facility to track their applications and rightly demand their services on time. So far the e SLA system covers 70 services of 22 departments of the GNCTD.

Objective

- The effective implementation of The Delhi Right of Citizen to Time Bound Delivery of Services Act, 2011
- To streamline service delivery by developing an adequate service delivery monitoring mechanism
- To encourage an attitudinal change among service providers by providing them with adequate human, infrastructural support and incentives.
- To empower citizens by creating various tools for making service delivery procedures citizen friendly.

Programme Design

Key Stakeholders

- **National Informatics Centre (NIC):** The NIC developed and designed the e-SLA monitoring software
- **Department of Information and Technology, Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (GNCTD)**: The GNCTD is responsible for operating and upgrading the software, ensuring its successful usage and bringing various departments on board.
- Various **Departments under the GNCTD** that have signed SLA's and agreed to be covered under the monitoring system.
- **Citizens** who demand services and use the e-SLA system to track their applications.

Salient features of the e SLA

A pilot phase was conducted from September 2010-June 2011 covering 13 services from 6 departments of the GNCTD to test the feasibility of the e- monitoring system. During the pilot phase the localised software that the concerned departments were already using for their day to day functioning was fine tuned and integrated with the central e-SLA

monitoring software developed by NIC. Time taken to efficiently deliver services was tested and timeline of various services fixed accordingly. Every departments' Management Information System (M.I.S) reports were also modified to facilitate their integration with the e-SLA software. During these ten months, constant improvements and tweaking was made to the software in order to make it suitable for operating a centralized monitoring system.

BASIC FEATURES

- The e SLA monitoring software has been hosted on the Delhi State Wide Area Network (DSWAN) at www.delserv.nic.in accessible only to government officials through intranet.
- The software has been integrated with various departmental databases to get daily data on applications received, disposed and pending along with other attributes of the applications.
- Each Department is issued a username and password to access the e-Monitoring software, by NIC
- The software automatically calculates the delay in service provision and subsequent penalty to be paid.
- Various reports are available on www.delserv.nic.in
- The system is monitored by senior officers.
- Citizens can track the status of their application at www.esla.delhi.gov.in

Departments and services covered

Once the pilot was completed and the software had been tried and tested, its usage was up scaled to monitor 52 services from 18 departments. Today the software covers 70 services from 22 departments of the GNCTD.

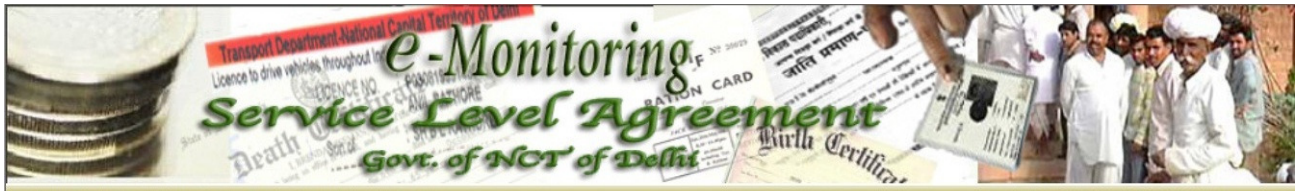
Department	Services Covered
Revenue Department	Issuance of SC/ST Certificate (Other State), OBC Certificate, Solvency Certificate, Domicile Certificate, Income Certificate, SC/ST Certificate , Nationality Certificate
Food Supplies and Consumer Affairs	Issuance of Ration Card (APL)
Municipal Corporation of Delhi	Issuance of Birth & Death Certificate, Booking of Parks & Community Halls
New Delhi Municipal Council	Issuance of Health License, Birth & Death Certificate , New Electricity Connection, Water Connection (Domestic), Booking of Parks, Community Halls, Building Plan Approval

Transport Department	:Issuance of Permanent & Renewal of Driving License, Registration Certificate of Vehicle, Transfer of Ownership of Vehicle, Certificate of Vehicle Fitness Issuance of Learner's Driving License
Delhi Jal Board	New Water Connection (Domestic)
Trade & Taxes	Registration under Delhi Value Added Tax (DVAT) and Central Sale Tax, Act
Delhi Park and Garden Society	Work Plan for Financial Assistance
North Delhi Power Limited / BSES Yamuna	New Electricity Connection (Domestic)
Drugs Control	Grant of License to Chemist
Weights & Measures	Grant of Licenses as Manufacturer, as Repairer, as Dealer in Weights & Measures Renewal of Licenses as Repairer, as Dealer , as Manufacturer of Weights & Measures
Labour Department	Registration of Shops and Establishment
Department of Environment	Eco-Club Grant for Schools & Colleges
Delhi Police	Issue of Performance Licenses in Licensed Premise, Title verification for publication of Magazines, Newspapers, Journals etc., Registration of Eating House
Excise Department	Registration Of Luxury Tax & Registration Of Cable Operator
Delhi Pharmacy Council	Fresh Registration & Renewal of Registration
Registrar Office	Appointment of Returning Officer & Returning officer
Delhi Development Authority	Free Hold of Group Housing Flats & DDA flats

Table showing departments and services offered under eSLA

Technology used

The e-SLA software utilizes an SQl server at the front end and a Dot Net framework at the back end. It is hosted on the Delhi State Wide Area Network (DSWAN) at www.delserv.nic.in. It was important to develop the software in a fast track mode so that the smooth implementation of the Delhi RTS could be ensured without any delays. Hence, the software has been designed in such a manner that it successfully utilizes Delhi's already existing I.T infrastructure and software licenses without requiring any major costs and systematic changes.



SLA Summary | Detail Summary | Authority Detail | Other Reports | Graphs — Logout [Monitoring] Change Pwd

Detail Summary Report of various Services as per SLA

Department : All — Trial / Notified / All

Service : All

S.No.	Department	Service	SLA Disposal Days	Applications: Received	Within Time: In Process	Within Time: Disposed: Approved	Within Time: Disposed: Rejected	Within Time: SLA Pending	Delayed as per SLA: SLA Disposed: Approved	Delayed as per SLA: SLA Disposed: Rejected	Delayed as per SLA: SLA Total	SLA Leviable Detail: Penalty Paid to Citizen	SLA Leviable Detail: Penalty Not Claimed by Citizen
1	Revenue, GNCTD	Issuance of Solvency Certificate	21	35	3	14	4	1	6	7	14 [40%]	0	13
		Issuance of SC/ST Certificate Other State	60	905	17	812	76	0	0	0	0	0	0
		Issuance of Domicile Certificate	21	10515	982	7321	1855	0	200	157	357 [3%]	0	357
		Issuance of SC/ST Certificate	60	38529	9575	22772	4723	0	1050	409	1459 [4%]	0	1459
		Issuance of Income Certificate	21	32374	2872	24069	2444	140	2185	663	2988 [9%]	0	2848
		Issuance of OBC Certificate	60	30943	6132	20108	3200	144	954	401	1499 [5%]	0	1355
		Issuance of Nationality Certificate	21	16	1	11	1	0	0	3	3 [19%]	0	3
		Department Total		113317	19582	75107	12303	285	4395	1640	6320 [6%]	0	6035

Figure: Screenshot of a summary report accessible at www.delserv.nic.in

While developing the e-SLA monitoring system the crucial factor was to design software that was able to monitor delays in service delivery. Hence very simple software was designed to capture data regarding those components of service delivery that are able to reflect any sort of delay in service provision. These components include-

- Applicants name
- Applicants address
- Application in-date and
- Application out-date

The reason for capturing only the above basic details is because the software is meant to facilitate monitoring of service delivery and not for recording each departments work flow, which is to be done internally by concerned departments. e-SLA facilitates each department's compliance under the state's RTS Act and therefore it acts as a one-point monitoring platform of various services from several departments.

Information Flow

Every day when departments receive applications for service delivery they upload the application details on their internal/localised software. Every department under the SLA's are given a login ID and password , which they use to transfer relevant data(the above mentioned four components) required for monitoring, from their internal software to the central e SLA

monitoring software hosted at www.delserv.nic.in. Some departments use an automatic scheduler to push data to the central software daily at a fixed time. When the data is pushed to the central software, it is placed in a transit area. A synchronizer, at the central software level takes this data every evening after 11:30 p.m, checks it for repetition and inconsistencies and then places it in a fixed table format. The data from this table is used to generate detail reports about the status of service applications in various departments. An sample of such a report can be viewed below.

Senior officials view summary reports like the above and are able to monitor the timeliness of service delivery in their departments. These reports generated through the e-SLA clearly capture details about the applications that have been processed on time and the ones that are delayed. It also automatically calculates the penalty in case of delay. In this manner, faulty service providers are identified and penalized under the Delhi RTS Act.

Departments whose internal processes have not been computerized are advised and trained to develop a small localized software so that their data can be integrated to the central software for monitoring. If some departments are incapable of building their internal software, there is a provision of recording their applications and delivery through Delhi's Common Service Centers (CSC's) known as Jeevan centers from where the data is pushed to the e-SLA software. In order to facilitate this integration of data, Jeevan windows have also been opened at various departments where assigned computer operators feed application details onto the computer. Thus if a department is not technically competent, it does not necessarily prove to be a hindrance in the operation of the e-SLA.

CITIZEN INTERFACE

The e-SLA monitoring software does not merely ensure tight monitoring of service delivery at the service providers end. It also enables citizen's to track their application status online and saves them the hassle of running to the department concerned. Citizens can access www.e-SLA.delhi.gov.in, type in their application number and see the status of their application.

Capacity building and Awareness Generation

In order to bring various departments on board, high level meetings are held with senior officials to convince them about the need to be a part of the e-SLA system. Many departments have so far shown an administrative will to efficiently monitor their service delivery processes and agreed to notify their services under the RTS Act. Once departments give their consent and show a degree of preparedness, sensitization programmes and technical sessions are conducted to familiarize the concerned department with the e-SLA software , its requirements and its operation. Each department's technical team is explained the complete process of data

integration. The software is very easy to operate and hence departments are easily able to learn the process of data integration. Since many departments are now a part of the monitoring system, other departments are able to replicate it easily as they have many precedents. For any sort of trouble shooting, departments can contact the Department of I.T which provides them with constant assistance. If need be, NIC is contacted to advise and train concerned departments.

In order to sentisitize citizens about their entitlements under the Delhi RTS Act and their ability to track the status of their applications online various publicity mediums were used. Advertisements were posted on the radio, newspapers and magazines and on bus queue shelters.

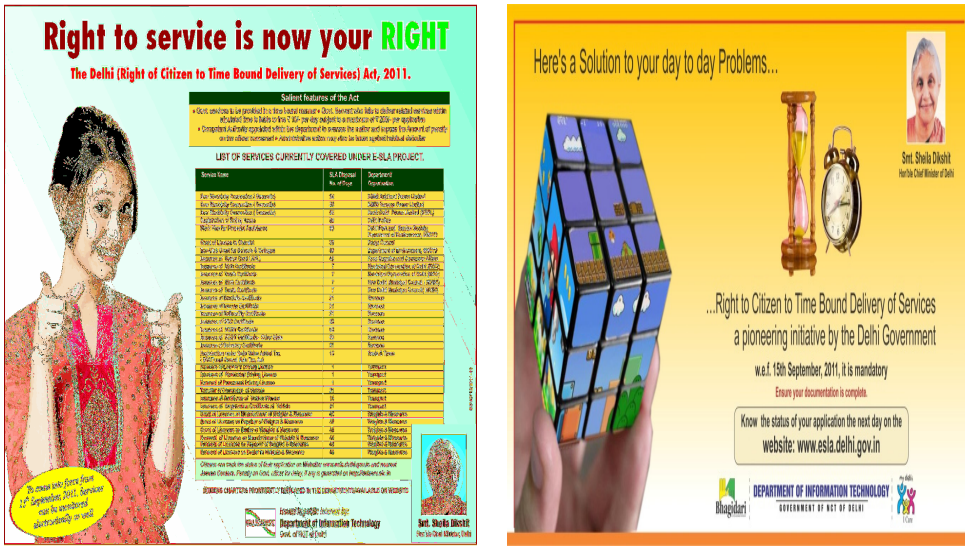


Figure 2: Advertisements to create awareness among citizens, Source: Department of I.T, GNCTD

Financial Resources

The GNCTD has funded the e-SLA monitoring system. Since the system leverages Delhi's existing I.T infrastructure, it did not require any major investment for its technological components. Costs incurred relate mainly to human resources and training.

Impact

On the government

The e-SLA monitoring software has facilitated the development of a centralized platform that defines various departments' responsibilities and encourages efficient and time bound delivery of services. This online monitoring system easily generates various reports and evaluations which is empowering department officials and other higher authorities to keep a check on the functioning of their respective departments and their compliance to a vital public legislation. Most importantly, e-SLA reflects a strong administrative will to better service delivery processes and is driving public service delivery towards becoming responsive to citizens' needs. e-SLA is creating a transparent and accountable government. A central monitoring software makes it possible to compare performances of various departments by making data readily available. It is assisting in process reengineering by making redundancies in service delivery easily identifiable.

On citizens

Through the e-SLA citizens have been empowered to enjoy their right to a timely service. It is an easy to use and access web based application that citizens can use for tracking their application status. By presenting an online interface, the e-SLA software is saving citizens' time which is otherwise spent on visiting concerned departments time and again to check the progress of their application status. Now citizens can simply log in and track their service application to several departments at a single point.

Efficient use of ICT

As the use of ICT tools is increasing it is important that each government department be technically competent and in tune with current technological demands. The e-SLA system is encouraging departments to move towards e-governance and develop their own ICT infrastructure which in the future will become a vital necessity. It is a simple and easy to use and design software, hence can be replicated elsewhere if it is backed by a stong administrative will.

Challenges in Implementation

The roll out of the e-SLA system was not a huge task technologically since the I.T infrastructure required was already in place. However, the challenging part was to bring departments on board and the process of data integration from the localized software to the central software.

The GNCTD leveraged its technical competence to overcome these barriers and developed an efficient service monitoring software.

Enhancements

In the near future e-SLA will monitor around 100 services. Also an SMS gateway has been tested and will soon be integrated into the e-SLA system. Through this gateway citizens will be able to receive updates about their application through an SMS

Conclusion

The e-SLA monitoring system successfully reflects how ICT tools can be leveraged for complementing government processes and ensuring a transparent manner of functioning. This system presents an example of the direction that service delivery should take. With e-governance on the rise , a software on the lines of e-SLA can prove handy for monitoring service delivery and ensuring timely service provision and transparency across the country.

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Appendix A – Interview Questionnaire

Background

1. The Delhi (Right of Citizen to Time Bound Delivery of Services) Act, 2011 guarantees the delivery of services in a time bound manner for which Service Level Agreements (SLA's) have been signed with various departments. Can you elaborate on what these SLA's entail?
2. How many departments were SLA's signed with it? How were these departments convinced about the need for such SLA's?
3. Many Indian states are enacting their respective Right to Service (RTS) legislations but among these states Delhi is the first to develop a complete ICT based monitoring system (e-SLA) to ensure the effective implementation of the Act.
    - Why was the need felt for such a technology based system? How do you think is this ICT system going to be an improvement over existing mechanisms to supervise service delivery?

Program Design

Stakeholders

4. The key stakeholders in the project are National Informatics centre (NIC), Department of I.T, Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (GNCTD) and various departments that have signed the SLA's. What are their roles and responsibilities?
5. Are there any other stakeholders? If yes, please explain their roles and responsibilities.

Salient features

6. As per our research, a pilot was conducted to test the feasibility of e-SLA in monitoring the delivery of services in a time bound manner.
    - What was the duration of this pilot? Which departments and services were covered under the pilot? Can you elaborate on what the pilot phase entailed?
    - What were the findings/conclusions/results derived from the pilot project?
    - When was the pilot up scaled to cover more departments and services?
7. What parameters of service delivery does the e-SLA software monitor?

Information flow

8. Can you explain the usage of the e-SLA monitoring system by a) government departments b) citizens and c) monitoring authorities with the help of an example?

Technology

9. The e-SLA software needs to be integrated with departmental database to monitor details about applications. How was this integration carried out?

10. NIC developed the e-SLA system. What are the main technological components of this system? Can you elaborate on the software used? Are they open source or propriety? Please explain the reason for the choice of either?
11. Who is responsible for technological troubleshooting?

Capacity Building and awareness creation

12. Were officials given any training on the use of the software? If yes, what did the training entail?
13. How have officials responded to the introduction of a transparent ICT led monitoring system? Is there any resistance? If yes, how is it being overcome?
14. What efforts were made to generate awareness among citizens about the Act and their ability to track the status of their applications under the e-SlA?
15. Have you received any feedback from citizens on the e-SLA monitoring system?

Monitoring

16. Who is responsible for monitoring the adequate usage of the software?
17. When the monitoring system shows an underperforming department, who is responsible for taking corrective action?

Financial Model

19. Can you explain the financial model for the project?

Impact

Achievements

20. What are the major achievements of e-SLA What has been its impact on:
    - Government departments
    - Monitoring Authorities
    - Service delivery procedures
    - Citizens

Challenges

21. What are the major challenges faced in the implementation of e-SLA? How are they being overcome?

Enhancements

22. What are the major enhancements planned for the future? How many more departments and services does e-SLA plan to cover?

23. Have any other states showed interest in replicating e-SLA? What do you think are the necessary preconditions for the success of such an initiative?

Data

24. Can you provide us with the following data:

- Number of departments and services that the e-SLA monitors
- Number of applications processed since the roll out of e-SLA
- Any data to show reduction in delays during service delivery
- Pictures