KOITA FOUNDATION

SURVEY | 2026

AI in NGO Programme & Service Delivery

What we are learning across the Koita Foundation Partner network

Survey conducted from August–September 2026 across Koita Foundation NGO partners

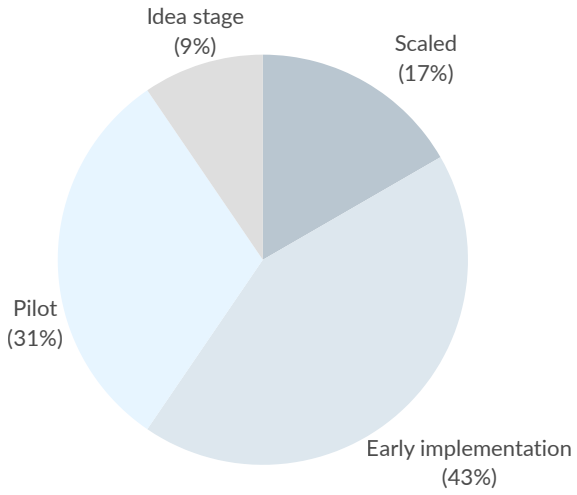
Koita Foundation conducted a comprehensive AI survey of NGOs in August–September 2026. Thirty-six NGOs across education, health, livelihoods and other social sectors shared how they are using or exploring AI. The responses indicate that the sector is moving quickly ***from experimentation towards practical programme use****.*

Looking ahead to 2026–27, this shift is becoming more pronounced. NGOs are moving from standalone AI experiments towards ***embedding AI in existing workflows****, they are moving from collecting data towards* ***using it to drive action****, and they are moving from generic, text-based interactions towards* ***personalised experiences in voice and local languages****. Most importantly, the focus is shifting from proving that AI can work to understanding whether it* ***creates meaningful value*** *for programmes and organisations.*

At the same time, many NGOs that have not yet started their AI journey are exploring how AI can address their needs. This creates an opportunity for NGOs to ***learn from their peers rather than start from scratch****. This note aims to support learning and collaboration across the sector by sharing emerging patterns across the cohort, highlighting what early adopters are learning, and drawing out practical lessons for organisations considering their next steps with AI.*

Survey Snapshot

36	27	8	78%
NGOs responded	already using AI	exploring AI	want peer learning



- Nearly **three in four initiatives** are in early implementation or pilot stage, which shows that most organisations are past the question of whether to try AI and are now testing how it performs in real programme conditions.
- The scaled initiatives show that AI can be embedded across programmes and that others can learn from these examples.
- The idea stage initiatives are a reminder that new use cases keep emerging even as others mature.
- *Note: Figures should be interpreted at the initiative level, as some NGOs reported more than one AI initiative.*

What are the Most Popular AI Use Cases

Use case	NGOs working on the use case
Training / learning *AI helps a learner, teacher, staff member or frontline worker **build knowledge or skills** through **content, practice, feedback or personalised learning**.*	• Adhyayan Quality Education Foundation • Akanksha Foundation • Anudip Foundation • Development Consortium • Educate Girls • Foundation for Mother and Child Health • Haqdarshak • i-Saksham • Kherwadi Social Welfare Association • Madhi Foundation • Magic Bus India Foundation • Saajha • SNEHA • The Apprentice Project • VigyanShaala • Vowels of the People Association
Assistant / co-pilot *AI **supports** someone while they are **doing the job** - answering questions, preparing for a session, recommending next steps or reducing routine work.*	• Adhyayan Quality Education Foundation • Akanksha Foundation • Anudip Foundation • ARMMAN • Avanti Fellows • i-Saksham • Madhi Foundation • RightWalk Foundation • Simple Education Foundation • The Antara Foundation
Assessment / evaluation ***AI helps assess learner/teacher/field worker skills, competencies, programme evidence or quality, often using rubrics, audio, text or exam data.***	• Anudip Foundation • Inqui-Lab Foundation • Katalyst India • Madhi Foundation • Open Links Foundation • The Apprentice Project • Quest Alliance • Vowels of the People Association
Analytics / decision support *AI turns programme, assessment or operational data into **usable insights, flags or recommended actions** for teams.*	• Avanti Fellows • Educate Girls • Foundation for Mother and Child Health • Madhi Foundation • SNEHA • Srijan - Ek Soch • The Antara Foundation
Internal / organisational use *AI supports **internal work** such as research, documentation, proposals, donor reporting, knowledge management, software prototyping or automation.*	• Educate Girls • Ekam Foundation Mumbai • Ummeed Child Development Center

***Note:** An NGO may feature across multiple use cases. Those still in exploratory stage/under development are not listed here. All information is self-reported.*

Voice/Multi-lingual AI Capability

Across many organisations, a consistent theme is emerging: voice and language choices need to be driven upfront by the needs of the user and the workflow, rather than treated as an add-on at the end of product development. Organisations using or exploring multi-lingual voice capabilities include:
Adhyayan Quality Education Foundation, Antarang Foundation, The Apprentice Project, ARMMAN, Foundation for Mother and Child Health, Haqdarshak, i-Saksham, Madhi Foundation, Magic Bus India Foundation, SNEHA, Ummeed Child Development Center

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Emerging AI Themes We Are Seeing

- **AI is moving into the workflow.** The stronger use cases are not generic chatbots; they help a teacher, mentor, frontline worker or programme manager perform a specific task better.
- **Assessment and analytics are becoming more actionable.** Several organisations are moving from collecting data to using AI to generate feedback, identify gaps and recommend the next action.
- **Adoption is becoming the real challenge.** Model capability is only one part of the answer. Trust, user behaviour, language, workflow fit and human oversight often determine whether a solution is actually used.
- **Evidence now matters more than novelty.** As pilots mature, the important question is whether AI improves outcomes, quality, time or cost compared with the existing process.
- **There is a strong case for reuse.** Many NGOs are independently solving similar problems. Reusing architectures, evaluation methods and lessons can reduce cost and shorten the learning cycle.

Key Implications for NGOs Working on AI Solutions

A few practical recommendations from the cohort experience:

- **Start with one clear user problem, not an AI feature.** Define who the user is, what they struggle with today and what should improve.
- **Reuse before building.** Look for an existing tool, architecture or NGO experience that can be adapted. The same patterns are appearing across organisations.
- **Measure from day one.** Capture a baseline and track adoption, quality/outcomes, time saved and cost. A pilot should answer whether the new process is actually better.
- **Keep people in the loop where judgment matters.** For assessment, counselling, clinical or high-stakes decisions, define where human review is mandatory and how errors will be caught.
- **Design for the operating context.** Channel, language, connectivity, staff capability and the surrounding process are as important as the model itself.
- **Plan for life after the pilot.** Before scaling, understand integration, maintenance, model/API costs, data governance and who will own the solution internally.

A Simple Path from Idea to Scale

Explore	Pilot	Early Implementation	Scale
• Is the problem clear? • Is AI needed? • What are other NGOs doing? • What incentive for users?	• Is quality good enough? • What are the learnings? • What to keep? What to let go?	• Does it work reliably in the real workflow? • What does it cost at scale?	• Is there credible evidence of value? • Can the organisation support it?

Responsible and equitable AI at every stage

Is it safe, fair and inclusive? Does it protect people's data? Is a human reviewing high-stakes decisions? Who is accountable?

Where We Go from Here

The survey shows strong demand for peer learning: 78% of respondents asked to learn from AI solutions being used by other NGOs. We encourage you to reach out to other NGOs working in your space and exchange learnings and experiences.

Koita Foundation will:

(a) facilitate peer learning across organisations working on similar use cases to compare approaches, share evidence and learn from what has, and has not, worked

(b) feature your case on our Digital Toolbook for Social Impact (DT4SI) platform once scaled. Please reach out to us when you are ready to share your case

(c) continue supporting NGOs on their digital and AI transformation journeys.

Please reach out to Henna Desai (henna@koitafoundation.org) to learn more or to get involved.

Website | LinkedIn | info@koitafoundation.org

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