HUMANITARIAN INNOVATION FUND

Early Stage Innovation Final Report

Organisation Name	Urban Refugees
Project Title	SMS Up
Location	Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Reporting Period	17th October 2016 to 16th June 2017 (Whole project)
Total Spent During The Reporting Period (est.)	(Refer full summary attached)

- **SMS Up** aims to enable group chat functionality (like Viber/ WhatsApp) using SMS for the benefit of urban refugee Community Based Organisation (CBO) members using feature hand phones to send and receive time sensitive information within their communities. The project's target population are beneficiaries, defined as CBO members using either a feature hand phone or a smart hand phone without a consistent/uninterrupted internet connection, 18 years of age and above.

    SMS Up forms part of the 6-month Urban Refugee Incubation Program (URIP) that is being piloted in Kuala Lumpur (KL), Malaysia, from April 2016 with 4 full time staff involved. The program aims to strengthen the capacities of urban refugee CBOs.

Why Malaysia?

- Malaysia was chosen as the pilot country for URIP and thus SMS Up because:
1. Urban refugee CBOs are particularly well structured in Malaysia and as URIP aims to strengthen these, Malaysia was identified as an excellent starting point.
2. We received very good applications from CBOs in Malaysia with strong interest to participate in URIP in comparison to applications received from other countries.
3. Security for our staff - we are a young organisation and do not have the capacity to manage high risks security-wise. Malaysia offers a reasonably secure environment to work in.
4. We had a well-established network of local partners including NGOs here to work alongside.
5. For SMS Up specifically, Malaysia was ideal as refugees are considered illegal migrants here (the country did not sign the 1951 convention). This makes the capability to communicate critical for refugees here for their day-to-day protection, for example against the risk of arrest, detention and deportation, and for their survival in an environment without access to health and education.

1. THE JOURNEY

October 2016	Commencement of SMSUp implementation project in Malaysia. Project team formed.
November 2016	Engagement with local urban refugee CBO Afghan Community Centre (ACC) began. ACC Baseline Interviews completed.
December 2016	Engagement with local urban refugee CBO Somali Refugee Centre (SRC) began.
January 2017	Legal advice sought regarding the implementation in Malaysia. Telecommunications partners assessed and MexComm Sdn. Bhd. confirmed as local partner in Malaysia. SRC Baseline Interviews attempted, though they could not completed (refer Summary of Interview Feedback section).
February 2017	Random poll at ACC and SRC completed to determine proportion of CBO population using either a feature phone, a smart phone with inconsistent data, a smart phone with dedicated/uninterrupted data, or no hand phone at all.
March 2017	SRC's change in Leadership team announced. For SMSUp this meant working with a different Leadership team and Member Base to those engaged with thus far. New team highly engaged about SMSUp.
April 2017	Twice-weekly training sessions with CBOs commenced.
May 2017	User experience over MexComm's SMS solution found to be a barrier for uptake, provider changed from MexComm to Nexmo. Uptake improved.
June 2017	As part of handover, 2 different Nexmo accounts were set-up, one for ACC and one for SRC, so that each CBO can administer their own groups and messages independently moving forward. CBO training sessions ended. ACC and SRC Endline Interviews completed.

2. THE RESULTS

a. POLL (BENEFICIARY SIZE)

Poll results

	KL-based refugees 18 years and over surveyed as to type of hand-phone they use…	
	SRC	ACC
Number of people surveyed	68	63
Men	66% (45 of 68)	29% (18 of 63)
Women	34% (23 of 68)	71% (45 of 63)
Proportion using…		
A) Feature phone	22% (15 of 68)	33% (21 of 63)
B) Smart phone without an internet connection or without consistent internet connection (e.g. limited to household Wifi, no Data plan for when outside the home)	54% (37 of 68)	32% (20 of 63)
Sum of above 2 categories – representing potential SMS Up beneficiaries	76% There are approximately 1000* individuals above 18yrs at SRC. <u>Therefore there will approximately be 760 SMSUp beneficiaries at SRC.</u>	65% There are approximately 400* individuals above 18yrs at ACC. <u>Therefore there will approximately be 260 SMSUp beneficiaries at ACC.</u>
C) Smart phone with a consistent/uninterrupted internet connection	22% (15 of 68)	16% (10 of 63)
D) No hand phone	2% (1 of 68)	19% (12 of 63)

*Member information was provided by CBO Leadership Teams

b. SUMMARY OF INTERVIEW FEEDBACK

Notes

1. Two sets of Endline Study interview questions were prepared to interview the following 2 groups:
   - **CBO Leaders** were interviewed - to assess (i) any impact SMSUp has had on communication within Leadership Team, as well as (ii) impact SMSUp has had on communication from Leaders to Membership Base.
   - **SMSUp Users** from **CBO Membership Base** were also interviewed - to assess how SMSUp is used by them and understand their feedback about the application.

2. Baseline Study interview questions (pre-SMSUp intervention) were prepared similarly. They surveyed
   - **CBO Leaders** - to assess communication (i) within Leadership Team, as well as (ii) from Leaders to Members at the time (prior to SMSUp intervention), and
   - **CBO Membership Base** using **feature phones** - to assess their communication challenges

3. We endeavoured to interview the same people pre- and post- intervention for the Baseline and Endline studies respectively, though this was not possible in reality given the fluid nature of CBOs. That is, people attend community classes without firm commitment, and these community classes which are UR's inroads into interacting with CBO members can become disestablished at any point as they are simply run by volunteers, e.g. ACC's Women's English Class which became disestablished mid-way through SMSUp intervention.

   As a result, there are differences in the people interviewed between Baseline and Endline Studies though, given the Law of averages, we believe this will not affect the trends in responses observed.

Endline Study - Interviewees Profile

	ACC	SRC
Interviewees - From CBO Leadership Team	**6**	**5**
Interviewees included in this group having smart phone with a consistent data connection	1	0
Interviewees - SMSUp Users from CBO Membership Base	**4**	**8**
*Interviewees outside criteria included in this Membership Base (i.e. having smart phone with a consistent data connection)	2	3
Total Interviewees	**10**	**13**

*Feedback from Members outside criteria using SMSUp was elicited for further insight, as they preferred SMSUp over existing chat-applications using internet. One individual was a teacher at ACC using SMSUp to communicate to his Men's English Class participants.

	ACC	SRC
Men	10	8
Women	0	5
Age range	28-64	18-62

Baseline Study - Interviewees Profile

	ACC	SRC
Interviewees - From CBO Leadership Team	**8**	
Interviewees - From CBO Membership Base	**11**	
Total Interviewees	**19**	

	ACC	SRC
Men	15	
Women	4	
Age range	26-63	

At the time of Baseline Study, during the initial stages of the project, SMSUp beneficiaries were typically characterized as those using a feature phone, without access to a dedicated smart phone. It wasn't until later that smart phone users without a consistent data connection were also recognised as beneficiaries (i.e. those using Wifi only, or purchasing data add-ons when they had credit only, without a consistent/uninterrupted data connection for their smart phones). Refer Strategic Learning section for more information.

This is the reason why there is a more detailed breakdown in profile of interviewees for Endline Study versus for Baseline Study.

Baseline interviews were unable to be held with SRC. Initially the SRC President at the time advised that they were unaware of feature phone users, or smart phone users without a consistent internet connection. Later when we attended one of their English classes in search to find suitable people to interview ourselves, there were 4 women using feature phones whom we attempted to speak to. However there were difficulties in translation and this appeared to frustrate the women, which was unintended and led to unconstructive interview responses. NOTE: SRC's Leadership Team was re-elected and changed midway through this project. The new Leadership Team was able to connect us to many more SMSUp beneficiaries.

Summary of Feedback

SMSUp use

Joined groups

- From CBO Membership Base, 100% interviewees across ACC and SRC had joined 1 or more key groups within their CBO namely, accnews & acceng at ACC and src & srcnews at SRC.
- 100% of SRC Leaders interviewed had joined 1 or more of SRC's SMSUp groups.
- 67% ACC Leaders interviewed had joined accnews group (acceng group is used only by ACC's Men's English Class participants).

Send messages

- From CBO Membership Base, 67% interviewees across ACC and SRC send SMSUp messages. The remaining reported not having content to share or experiencing phone-handset-related and/or language-related difficulties.
- 100% of SRC Leaders interviewed send SMSUp messages.
- 67% of ACC Leaders interviewed send SMSUp messages.

Pros and Cons

The Positives

- When asked whether SMSUp was working well, 100% of respondents agreed that it did. Responses included:

    o *"It's like a newspaper. It's good - because it works without data and we can ask leaders questions also."*
    - Zomin Ali Hussainy, ACC Member, 64

    [Note: During Baseline interviews, 8 of 9 ACC Members interviewed indicated that there was no direct information from Leaders unless they visited ACC Centre, only word of mouth.]

    o *"Working well and the application is very important for us."*
    - Anas, SRC Member, 18

    o *"SMSUp is direct news. Avoids Chinese-whispers and everyone adding to the story"*
    [Context: The concern expressed by CBOs regarding spread of news by word-of-mouth is that message content gets changed along the way].

    o *"You can be sure everyone got the message"*
    [Context: The concern expressed by CBOs about using Facebook to share key updates is that there is no certainty that people have seen the message as Facebook prioritises posts based on popularity/'Likes' so messages that are not 'Liked' may be listed towards the bottom of notifications, potentially missed by users].

    o *"When there was a food distribution at Masjid at short notice, I was able to go there quickly upon receiving the message.*"
    o *"Sending SMSUp messages is easy."*

- o *"Messaging in Somali language is working well."*
- o *"Nice to read when people send messages in Farsi."*
- o *"Those students without smart phones can access my group message"*
  [Context: From the teacher of ACC's Men's English Class].

The Challenges

- When asked about challenges, responses included:
  - o 44% - No challenges reported
  - o 13% - User's cost to send SMSUp messages namely, MYR 15 cents [Context: The service was intended to be free-for-user though it was not possible to find a Gateway provider offering this in Malaysia. The 15 cents per SMSUp message user cost was unavoidable. Hence for the duration of the project, users were supplemented with 5RM top-up credit once or twice per week upon their attendance at training sessions].
  - o 6% - Technical limitation - character limit to sending messages in Farsi language
  - o 6% - Technical error [Context: Some messages were missed from being distributed during testing phase]
  - o 6% - Language barrier [Context: User could not read messages circulated in English]

    Remaining 25% reported the following:
  - o *"Difficult for me to send messages"*
  - o *"Group names in Farsi would make it easier"*
  - o *"Not enough people subscribed"*
  - o *"Our people will need time to accept change like SMSUp. So uptake will take more time."*

SMSUp Value

- When asked whether the interviewee sees themselves using SMSUp long-term, 100% of respondents said Yes.
  Responses included:

  - o *"Forever! It's so easy to use for me as I don't have WhatsApp. Also I would like to share an SMSUp group with my family and children.*
    - Abdiwali, SRC Member, 37

- Respondents rated their comfort level to use SMSUp at 4.5 out of 5 (Scale: 1 - Not comfortable at all to 5 - Very much comfortable)

- Respondents rated the value of sharing SMSUp chat groups with their fellow community on their hand phone at 4.75 out of 5 (Scale: 1 - Very low value to 5 - Very highly value)

- When asked whether SMSUp chat-groups have increased the interviewee's awareness of CBO news, 88% of respondents replied Yes.
  Responses included:

  - o *"Unintentionally, it has strengthened my connection with ACC"*
    - Ali Mohammad, ACC Member, 51

Examples of SMSUp messages that respondents recollected as being highly valuable included:

- o *"Message about second-hand clothes available at SRC. I then came and picked some up for my daughter."*
  - Hawo, SRC Member, 29

- o *"Yesterday I was leaving the house for [English] class when I received an SMSUp message to say ACC is being painted and class is cancelled. It was so helpful. If I had come - I would have been disappointed."*
  - Ali Riza Moradi, ACC Member, 50

- o *"Warning from Abdiwali regarding Police in SRC's Condominium Garden seen collecting young men."*
- o *"Registration for job seekers at SRC - 30 people attended!"*
- o *"Food distribution update from Mohammad."*
- o *"Hawo's message about her food sale - I went down immediately."*
- o *"News about prayer classes."*

- When asked apart from SMSUp, how else do you currently receive information from the CBO, respondents mentioned:
  - o 47% - Whatsapp/Viber
    Related feedback:

    - *"In the ACC Viber group there is too much unnecessary information shared. Notifications keep me awake at night while I have work next day."*

    - *"ACC's WhatsApp group sometimes feels like it's a waste of people's time to send those messages and my time to read"*
      [Context: Baseline Study indicated that while some CBO Members enjoyed social chatting within chat-groups, others preferred news only. In response, when launching SMSUp, Urban Refugees encouraged that one chat-group be dedicated to sharing key news and updates only, and a different group for all other information sharing including social, as in the example of 'srcnews' and 'src' groups respectively for SRC. ACC preferred to launch just the single 'accnews' SMSUp group. Members interviewed at Endline Study responded positively to receiving just key news through the accnews SMSUp group, in stark contrast to the high level of social activity on ACC's WhatsApp and Viber groups which they found to be irrelevant.]

  - o 33% - Telephone calls

  - o 13% - Facebook
    Related feedback:

    - *"Facebook is inconsistent as sometimes there's no wifi at home."*

  - o 7% - Through visiting CBO Centre

Member communication with Leadership

- When CBO Members were asked whether SMSUp helps to connect and discuss with CBO Leaders 2-way, responses were:
  - 75% - Yes
  - 25% - No

  Responses included:

  - *"Honestly speaking, leaders don't send a lot of messages. They prefer people come in to SRC. When they sometimes take initiative to send messages, crowd always responds to them. But when crowd initiates a message, they never engage in the discussion. Their presence is lacking in the srcnews group also."*
    - Salma, SRC Member, 22

    [Learning: In the implementation of SMSUp, there needed to have been a greater focus on getting buy-in and uptake of the application by both SRC and ACC Leadership teams. That said, other Members have responded positively.]

  - *"Leaders share key info. Once I asked regarding Ramadan dates and leaders replied."*
    - Fuad Omar Piidley, SRC Member, 26

  - *"It enables us a channel to ask leaders questions. Previously we didn't know how to ask."*
  - *"Communication with and from leaders is more"*
  - *"Whenever leaders post news on groups, people will ask questions freely. This is possible with SMSUp."*

Leaders' Feedback and Communication

- CBO Leaders were asked to assess whether SMSUp has benefitted the CBO.
  - 100% of SRC Leaders responded Yes
    Responses included:

    - *"Single mothers and others who are neither tech-savvy nor use Facebook can still receive updates via SMSUp."*
      - Mohammad, SRC Leader, 23

    - *Easy way to reach many people with a direct message. With Facebook, you have a doubt whether your message has been read.*
      - Abdinasir Abdiasis, SRC Leader, 25

  - 50% of ACC Leaders responded Yes. Remaining 50% were uncertain as to its benefit; reasons included that more time was needed for uptake before benefit could be assessed - they believed their community is slow to adopt change.
    Responses included:

    - *"Though I have not joined SMSUp, I hear only positive comments from people as to its benefit. SMSUp benefits ACC because a lot of illiterate people don't always have smart phones or data. Through SMSUp, Farsi messages can be sent to them."*
      - Sharifi, ACC Leader, 48

- *"There is a group of ACC people, the elderly, who use feature phones and no internet. We really value the elderly here. Previously we only reached them through word-of-mouth and the news would be 'half-baked'. Now there is one version of the truth directly from me to them. Even those who cannot read can show their children the message and ask to translate. SMSUp is neat, not too much conversation. The Viber group would be too messy to show a child to translate."*
  - Ali Akbar, ACC Leader, 29

- SMSUp was not adopted by the Leadership teams of ACC or SRC to communicate within themselves. This is because their existing communication channels worked well for them.
  - ACC Leaders use an ACC Leaders Viber group. All but one Leaders used smart phones, albeit with inconsistent internet connection (only one Leader used a smart phone with a consistent data connection). The one leader using a feature phone was a near-daily attendee at ACC Centre through which they were constantly in touch with the others, and they were a bearer of news themselves.
  - SRC Leaders use an SRC Leaders WhatsApp group. 60% of SRC Leaders interviewed used feature phones, and the remaining 40% with smart phones had inconsistent internet access. Despite this, all had access to the WhatsApp group through an iPad or a relative's smart phone at home.
  - Given the cost of MYR 15 cents to send SMSUp messages, there was no incentive for CBO Leaders to move to using SMSUp when their existing channels worked well.

- CBO Leaders were asked what channels are regularly used by the Leadership to communicate messages with Members. The responses were:
  - All SRC Leaders interviewed mentioned SMSUp along with Facebook, WhatsApp, Viber and Phone-calls.
  - Of the 6 ACC Leaders interviewed, 33% mentioned SMSUp. All 6 however mentioned Viber and/or WhatsApp which form their regular channels. That said, ACC did recognize the potential in SMSUp to reach the non-tech-savvy among their Member Base.

    "It was hard to reach the elderly attending English class, now this battle has been solved by SMSUp."
    - Mohammad Zakaria, ACC Leader, 33

  - To introduce SMSUp as an extension to existing communication channels used by CBOs in order to extend the reach of their community has been the focus for Urban Refugees through this rollout (not to change the things that worked well already).

- Leaders admitted to the following as the most common subjects of their SMSUp messages to Members:
  - Vacant house
  - Food distribution
  - Community meetings
  - Class timings
  - UNHCR updates
  - Job opportunities
  - Prayers, events

- o Concert at ACC
- o Advertising job opportunities

- ACC Leaders interviewed at Baseline and Endline were asked to estimate the proportion of the Members they believe they reach by sharing information the way they currently do.
  - o At Baseline, the average response from ACC Leaders estimated the proportion of their reach at 61-80% of their Member Base.
  - o At Endline, this increased to 88%.
  - o The perceived increase in the penetration of information to Members from Baseline to Endline may be attributed to SMSUp intervention.

c. SMSUp MESSAGES DATA

Timeframe	SMSUp began being used by ACC and SRC in April 2017 and the following statistics report uptake/use for 3 months up until June 2017

Total number of users	124

Total number of open groups as at August 2017	26

Number of participants in key groups as at August 2017:	
accnews (ACC's news group)	26
srcnews (SRC's news group)	44
src (SRC's social group)	41

Total number of messages	100%	2106
Messages relating to:		
Social (Greetings or General conversation)	39.0%	821
Food Distribution by SRC/ ACC Committee	0.5%	10
Promoting a Shop, Sale or Business within Community	0.4%	8
Class, Event, Activity or their Timings	6.3%	132
Employment	0.1%	3
Housing	0.2%	4
Security/ Police/ Road-block	0.0%	1
Health/ Doctor	0.1%	2
UNHCR/ Refugee organisation	0.3%	6
Other Information/ News/ Update	0.4%	8
Other Request for Help	0.0%	1
Commands (namely join, create, leave)	46.7%	984
Test messages	6.0%	126

d. CONCLUSIONS

SMSUp project's objectives were to develop the application (1) to enable people in urban refugee CBOs either using feature phones or smart phones without a consistent internet connection - to share information and find support through an SMS-based chat-group consisting of their community. And thus to extend the capability of CBOs to self-organise by helping them connect to the vulnerable group (using feature phones or smart phones without a consistent internet connection) previously underserved in terms of communication.

Further, (2) to ensure successful uptake of the application, (3) complete monitoring and evaluation and also (4) to seek to verify project assumptions around hand phone type used by refugees and their level of internet connectivity.

In regards to the above-mentioned objectives,

1. The application was not only developed in English, but also in Somali for the fuller benefit of SRC.
   For ACC, the application was attempted in Farsi though developing the commands in Farsi was too challenging and unable to do, as explained in the Strategic Learning section. However, messages from the application in response to the user's commands are all in Farsi (e.g. 'You have joined accnews group') and users may share messages in Farsi.
2. The application allows to share information 2-way between members and Leaders and was being used by members to share information 'bottom-up' up to the Leaders also. One such example is by feature-phone user Abdiwali, SRC Member, 37 who reported having used SMSUp to:
   - Warn about Police seen in SRC's Condominium Garden collecting young men, and
   - Request to support Nadira's [an SRC member] cosmetics sale, encouraging people to buy from her rather than outside as she is a single mum, from within their community.
3. It was noticed, particularly when completing Baseline interviews with ACC, that among 19 people interviewed, 6 were unable to read and/or write in Farsi. Such language challenges were more common among feature-phone users, thus making this group some of the most vulnerable people in their communities. SMSUp was successfully being used by ACC and SRC alongside their existing communication channels such as Viber, Whatsapp and Facebook, to reach this vulnerable group and others (through messages in their native language). SMSUp users unable to read reported showing their mobiles to a family member to read the messages aloud.
4. The random Poll completed was instrumental in demonstrating that aside from feature phone users, the proportion of smart phone users without consistent internet was significant, and that this group in totality forms SMSUp beneficiaries.

Key project challenges included:

1. Inability to offer free-to-user SMSUp messaging which will have significantly reduced the barrier to uptake. Top-up credit offered over the course of the project was a work around and not a long-term solution.
2. Increased uptake, commitment and responsibility from CBO leaders will have resulted in improved uptake by members. Low engagement from leaders was particularly the case with ACC, which resulted in a smaller implementation compared to SRC. In the case of SRC, the

issue was minor and leaders were consistently seen encouraging members to attend Urban Refugees' SMSUp trainings.

3. Farsi SMSUp commands will have seen a greater uptake by ACC through easing their user experience. As echoed from some of the feedback at Endline interviews, this is a much desired feature.

4. As seen by the SMSUp message statistics, people readily used the application for social communication. A little more coaching is required to remind people to think of SMSUp in times of adversity (to inform, elicit support etc.) just as in other, normal times.

3. THE STRATEGIC LEARNING

#	Learning	Monitoring method	How we responded
1	It was initially assumed that most refugees in developing countries do not have a smartphone and/or internet access on their hand phone. Contrary to this hypothesis, few ACC and SRC members used feature phones.	At the time of Baseline Study, - Only 20 feature phone users were identified by ACC Leaders. (Out of this 20, only 11 were able to be interviewed) - Similarly at SRC, the President at the time could only identify ~4 feature phone users. (Unfortunately due to language barriers which were unable to be overcome at the time despite translation support, these 4 ladies were unable to be interviewed properly. Endline interviews alone were carried out with SRC.) *At this initial time of the project, we did not explicitly ask ACC Leaders to also introduce us to smart phone users without an internet connection, who also form the target audience of this project.	It was decided that a random poll would be conducted to accurately assess proportion of feature phone users to identify their representation in ACC and SRC.
2	Through the poll it was identified that a majority of smart phone users do not have a consistent internet connection on their phones, i.e. household Wifi was common however very few refugees purchased data plans to enable continued internet connectivity while outside the home. Those without a consistent/uninterrupted internet connection on their hand phone, during downtime without internet, faced similar challenges to feature phone users – i.e. being unable to send/receive groups messages live, as and when they may potentially need help.	The Poll as conducted within both ACC and SRC during February '17 and sought to identify whether the individuals (A) used a feature phone, (B) used a smart phone but without a consistent internet connection, (C) used a smart phone with an internet connection always, or (D) used no hand phone at all. At ACC, individuals were randomly polled at gatherings. At SRC, the poll was done by gathering data at schools as to where the Somali school children's families lived, and data was gathered through door-knocking and asking those families re. their hand phones. UR was encouraged to use a Translator to conduct this poll as UR was advised that random door-knocking by Urban	SMS Up beneficiary size grew as a result of this finding to include those without a consistent internet connection on their hand phone also. 54% of SRC individuals polled and 32% of ACC individuals polled were smart phone users with inconsistent internet connection. 22% of SRC individuals polled and 33% of ACC individuals polled were feature phone users. With approximately 1000 SRC members and 400 ACC members above 18 years of age, SMSUp beneficiaries across these 2 CBOs equals approximately 1020 people.

		Refugee staff could be misinterpreted by the SRC community as being related to UNHCR.	
3	We hypothesized that CBOs often struggle to share information with their community and to self-organize, which impedes them from acting as reliable relays with the humanitarian community. However we learnt that both ACC and SRC currently use Viber and Facebook applications respectively to communicate messages within their community.

We also learnt that while these tools are used by the CBOs, there were some concerns including:
- in the case of ACC, Viber is used for a lot of their community social discussion together with being ACC's main news channel. Those users unable to keep up with the innumerous social discussion messages miss the key bits of news that are folded in between conversations
- in the case of SRC, a key concern expressed about using Facebook to share key updates is that there is no certainty that people have seen the message as Facebook prioritises posts based on popularity/'Likes' so messages that are not 'Liked' may be listed towards the bottom of notifications, potentially missed by users. | We gathered the majority of this information through the baseline interview responses.
Further, with ACC, more such information was drawn from the meeting with leaders where we shared and discussed the findings from the baseline interviews held. | We suggested to CBOs

* given Viber and Facebook are already used and generally working well (barring some concerns), that SMS Up be used as an extension to existing means of communication.
- For example, those smart phone users without data plans may miss out on key information being shared on Viber/Facebook while outside the home. So SMS Up can be used during the day to reach out to this group
- Further, SMS Up can be used always to target the feature phone user group.

* given some users feel overwhelmed by the social conversations inhibiting them from staying on top of key news, that the main news/comms group be renamed from 'acc' or 'src' as initially planned to being called 'news' instead - further, it was suggested to leaders that this specific news group remain free of social conversation to help retain the interest of all users. |
| 4 | While it was easy to create SMSUp app commands (namely join, create, leave) in Somali language which uses English characters, it was far too challenging to do this in Farsi language. For 2 reasons - (1) because Farsi uses a different script and (2) because the language is written right-to-left, opposite to English. | This was identified over the course of development of the app. | This did not inhibit people posting messages in Farsi to group names which used English characters (e.g. 'accnews' group).

So in the case of ACC, while members would much love an app which can be used entirely in Farsi language including commands, they were satisfied |

While Farsi commands were developed, they did not work practically as the order of the message would swap to the right-to-left direction after it is typed, just before it is sent. When the order of commands is changed, SMSUp technology cannot decipher the message to identify it etc.		with receiving messages from ACC leaders in Farsi language though the names of groups remained in English. The Developer contiues to work with UR to fine tune the application to make Farsi commands possible.

4. THE PROPOSAL FORWARD

- Our request:

  This project was originally granted GBP 19,645. At the time of requesting the no-cost-extension, Urban Refugees reduced this budget to GBP 19,585. Referring to the Final Financial Report attached, a total of GBP 18,488 has been spent on the project. We propose that the unspent GBP 1,097 (calculated as 19,585-18,488) be prepaid as messaging credit to the Telecommunications provider Nexmo and to Heroku, where SMSUp application is hosted in the cloud, to sustain SMSUp messaging by ACC and SRC in Malaysia for as long as this credit remains available. We would be very grateful if HIF could authorise this request.

- Based on the successes and learning from this implementation, Urban Refugees aims to widen the scope of SMSUp and extend the application for the use of other urban refugee CBOs globally. To assist with this, we aim to apply for the next stage of grants available through HIF and look forward to our continued partnership.