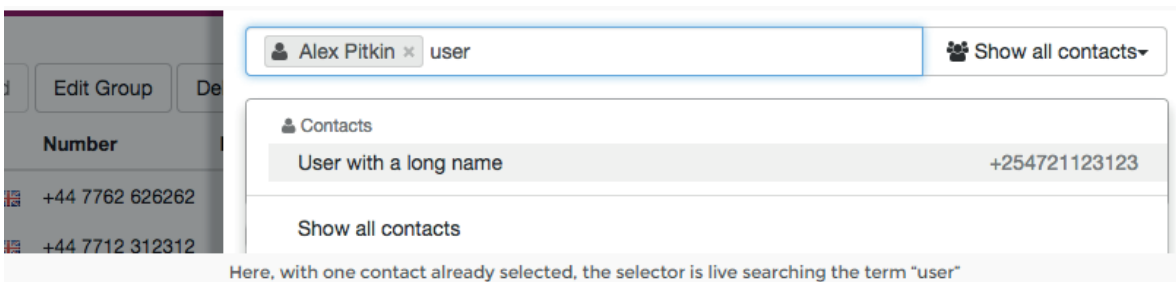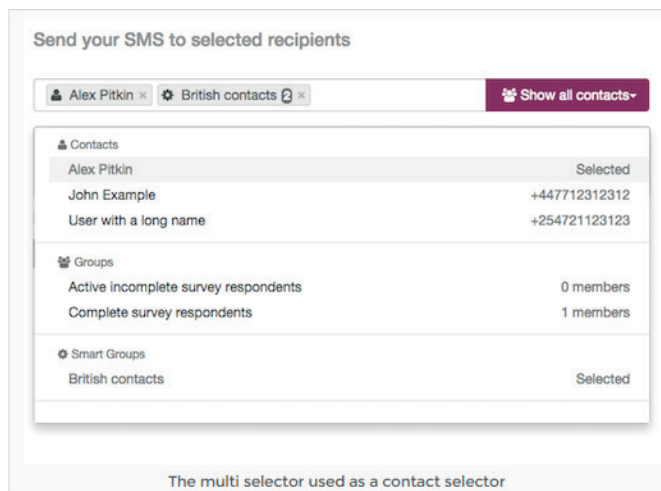# Technology Volunteerism for Social Good
## How we made Frontline easier to use

**FrontlineSMS Overview**

FrontlineSMS is a desktop software created to lower barriers to positive social change using mobile technology. By leveraging basic tools already available to most organizations, including those in 'last--mile' settings — computers and low-cost modems — FrontlineSMS enables instantaneous two-way communication to any mobile handset. It's easy to implement, simple to operate, and best of all, the software is free; you only pay for the messages you send. Using FrontlineSMS with FrontlineSync, you can also track missed calls for the first time.

The Multi Selector is an entirely open source project that has been built flexibly so as not to be only useful in limited areas; we hope it will be picked up and used in many other applications.
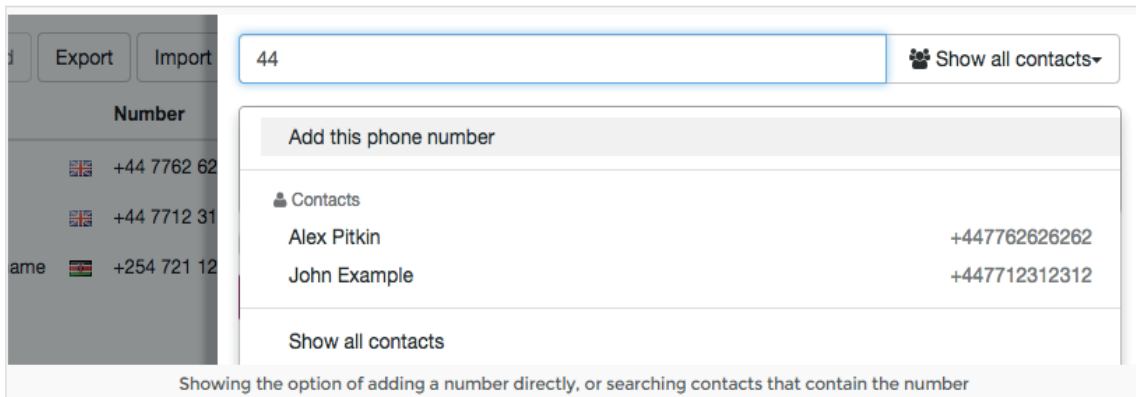
To better understand the significance of this release, consider the story of Pakistani civil society organization Strengthening Participatory Organization (SPO). In 2011, SPO used FrontlineSMS to implement a disaster relief project following monsoon flooding in Sindh, Pakistan's southernmost province. The flooding affected an estimated 5.5 million people who faced lack of clean drinking water, food, healthcare, and shelter, which, in turn, resulted in communicable and non-communicable diseases across the province, destruction of agricultural land and livestock, and a loss of livelihoods.


The multi selector used as a contact selector


Here, with one contact already selected, the selector is live searching the term "user"

SPO used FrontlineSMS to receive feedback from flood victims and to monitor its process of distributing food and shelter. It found that building in-person relationships with its beneficiaries was critical for encouraging uptake of the communications system they implemented. By managing their contacts in groups through FrontlineSMS, SPO could send tailored messages before each of their five partner organizations started the aid distribution process in order to alert the beneficiaries, and could also solicit feedback via SMS following the distribution.

Now, with our newly released Multi Selector tool, this process of selecting contacts and groups from a user's database is much easier and more efficient. Users can easily find contacts, groups or smart groups using whichever combination of mouse or keyboard they prefer. Autocomplete on-the-fly searching provides the users with all contacts matching their input whether it is their Name, Email, Number or even a word buried in the Notes field. Scrolling is also supporting for those times when you can't quite remember that name...

The work on this tool was made possible thanks to a wonderful volunteer contribution by the team at SolDevelo Sp. z o.o, a software development and information outsourcing company based in Gdynia, Poland, with which we got connected through SocialCoding4Good.



Showing the option of adding a number directly, or searching contacts that contain the number

SocialCoding4Good brings together software professionals—individual contributors as well as corporate social responsibility (CSR) teams—to volunteer their technical skills to project partners, like FrontlineSMS, which develop and maintain free and open source software to deliver services to disadvantaged populations around the world.

We worked together with the SolDevelo team to design the Multi Selector tool. The tool allows the efficient search, selection, and presentation of thousands of different object types in a clean, single input on the page. It is a foundation element to our new automation software, and empowers Frontline users to effectively communicate and automate within their projects, such as monitoring and managing disaster relief efforts. We just released the Multi Selector tool as a completely customizable open source library useful for many potential applications.

We very much enjoyed working with SolDevelo on this successful project, and are looking forward to doing more jointly with the growing global community of open source contributors.

*by Alex Pitkin (Chief Technical Officer of the team behind FrontlineSMS)*
*23 December, 2014*

See the demo of the multi selector to see how it works:
http://frontlinesms.github.io/frontlinesms-multiselector/

Do you want more information?
Write us a message

**WWW.SOLDEVELO.COM/CONTACT-US**