A high tech generation can click aid to the Philippines, will they?

By **Philadelphia Inquirer, adapted by Newsela staff**

PHILADELPHIA – Typhoon Haiyan is one of the largest tropical storms ever recorded. It hit the Philippines on Nov. 7. Thousands of people died and more than 600,000 lost their homes. The full damage is not yet known. Telephone and Internet service aren't fully back up yet. It's hard to travel on some roads.

And aid has been slow to reach victims in faraway parts of the country.

Could this disaster mark a change in the way aid is given? A chance for young people to give money in their own way? A moment for the millennial generation, those born after 1982, to become leaders?

Digital technology has changed the face of giving, for both aid groups and people who donate money to help out. More people now give digitally through text messaging, Facebook and websites. The quickest way to send $10 is by text message. You can send the World Food Programme $10 by simply texting the word AID to a five-digit number. The word to send money to the Salvation Army is TYPHOON.

## Aid Requests On The Web

The Web is ready to accept people's donations. Google "Philippines" and "aid," and about a dozen aid group websites pop up above and to the right of your search results. You'll see ads from the International Rescue Committee and Doctors Without Borders.

If you've visited Facebook this week, you've seen an ad for "Emergency Relief Donation." It says: "This donation to the American Red Cross will help those affected by the typhoon in the Philippines."

Apple even has created a way to give money through the iTunes store.

That makes it quick and easy to give. "It's about the closest you can come," says Derrick Feldmann, who advises aid groups, "to one-click giving."

That makes it perfect for millennials. They move around a lot and are often on their smart phones and tablets. Digital giving has increased in popularity. The Pew Research Center is a group that surveys people about big things happening in the U.S. Its 2011 survey found that people under 40 were just as likely to give money digitally as over the phone or through the mail.

## Helping Haiti And Japan

Millennials gave money during the Haiti earthquake of 2010. And they gave big again during the Japanese tsunami disaster of 2011 which caused giant waves of water that wrecked many towns. Large numbers responded to the call for aid. It helped that celebrities such as will.i.am, Sean Penn and Shakira asked people to give money. Three-quarters of all the people who gave to Haiti relief were younger than 50, said a Pew survey.

Feldmann says that the Haiti relief worked because the coverage on TV and the Internet showed how bad the disaster was. And millennials were ready to act.

Can the suffering in the Philippines be brought alive like that?

Feldmann says millennials give money based on their feelings. "They see something on TV, the Web, their mobile device, and they decide to text some money," he said.

But they are very sharp, he adds. "They know exactly what digital tools to use, to find out more about the cause and 'where my money is going.'" Then they give money.

## Instant Images Of Disasters

A 2012 survey of millennials asked 6,522 people ages 20 to 35 about their giving patterns. Three-quarters said they had donated to a charitable cause in the last year, and almost two-thirds said they had volunteered. They tended to give $100 or less each time. Older groups give more. But younger people give more quickly.

Millennials say they like to give locally. But, the numbers show that they give to many causes in other countries. Part of this is that YouTube, Facebook and Twitter are global. Human suffering is all over the world, and now it can be brought very close.

Aaron Smith works for the Pew Research Center's Internet Project. He says millennials decide to give based on photos, videos and calls to action on TV — and their network of friends.

"We now experience information within a network, either of people we listen to or of the Web," Smith says. "We expect it to be instant. We expect to see it, not just read about it."

And most of the time, we can.

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