

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Call to arms

Developers vs. Typhoon Haiyan

Can you save lives in the Philippines from your living room this weekend? I think you can. And as both a Filipino and a member of the European tech community, I'm asking you to at least try.

The most powerful typhoon ever to hit land is ravaging the Philippines as we speak. Thousands have been displaced and thousands more will find themselves homeless, hungry, sick and severely injured. Traditionally, when we call out for help, we look to NGOs for food, medicine or money. This time, we're looking to developers for their time.

The Office of the President of the Philippines has provided a list of tech-based needs to facilitate rescue coordination, crisis communication and relief distribution (see below). The Geeklist Corps of Developers has integrated these challenges into [this space](#) to coordinate humanitarian coding efforts. Everything is ready. All we need is you.

Please help us make this happen.

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ANNEXE

TYPHOON HAIYAN PROBLEMS TECH CAN HELP SOLVE

(Sent by the Office of the President of the Philippines)

Official updates

Right now, aside from monitoring @govph and the TS Yolanda page, there is no one application or website that collates the most important/recent updates from official accounts. It would be helpful to have something to show the latest important updates from official accounts, and maybe even updates from your LGU based on your location.

Class suspensions

Currently, the #walangpasok ("no classes") hashtag is monitored by members of the team and updates to the list of class suspensions are added manually. [Automating this process](#) would be very helpful.

Rescue coordination

This is a big issue with a lot of places that could be streamlined. What was done in the past online for rescue efforts is there were volunteers who manually monitored the hashtag #RescuePH and the latest updates sent on <http://rescueph.com/>, for calls for rescue. Lists manually compiled to an .xls file from both these avenues is sent to us, and we forward them to point persons in the National Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC).

- The lists are compiled manually, and in our experience are not checked for duplicate entries from previous lists, entries with inadequate information, entries with the same information. etc. Maybe a way to help automate cleaning up of data?
- Those monitoring the hashtag also have a hard time because their feeds tend to be flooded with people reminding civilians to use the hashtags and other posts not actually calling for rescue.
- There is currently no way (aside from checking manually) that reports of people who are safe already are marked and filtered out of being added to the lists multiple times. We've run into problems in the past of calls for rescue being retweeted many times even though they have already been reported, and there is also no way for NDRRMC to get back and mark items on the list as resolved.
- Because the list is unfiltered it's given to the National RRMC for notifying of Regional RRMCs, instead of directly to the regional offices, which would be more efficient.
- Is there a way that calls for help could be mapped so that someone out on rescue could see the nearest calls for rescue near them?

Relief coordination

This is more for right after the typhoon passes, but in previous calamities we've run into some specific problems on the coordination of relief efforts.

- One of the biggest problems is there is little to no coordination between private groups (schools, etc) on relief that they have and are providing. For example, one school accepting donations may have many trucks but need more canned goods, and another may have a surplus of canned goods but not enough water. A platform where groups could coordinate on what donations are needed would help. Also it would be helpful to

have one that would allow citizens who want to help to know what exactly is needed, and where.

- The Department of Social Welfare and Development handles the logistics of evacuation centers. Maybe there is a way to let them easily flag what donations they are specifically in need of, so private groups know what help is needed.
- Something that would allow people to find the nearest donation repacking center near them would also help a lot."