Alessandro Hammond

Reaction to video clip of Rachel Levine

The primary benefit of Open Street Maps for humanitarian causes is as a vehicle for building and growing spatial data that can then be used to aid decision makers as they tackle humanitarian causes, which is a major benefit for external organizations. When these nonprofits, such as the Red Cross, enter underserved communities, they are able to leverage this open data to easily integrate with the community, specifically to access local data about where people, resources, and more may be physically located. This also makes their efforts more efficient, as they have this information readily available. In addition, because organizations such as the Red Cross have pre-established efforts to map this data, it is a great way to cultivate community buy-in for larger future projects by including the locals in the initial preparation, making it even more valuable to nonprofit organizations. This data has a wide variety of applications for humanitarian causes, including but not limited to natural disaster and disease relief. Although Rachel mentioned that there was a pandemic preparedness project prior to 2020, I also believe that this open data could be used in order to distribute COVID-19 treatments and vaccines. Similar to how they utilized the maps to place hygiene and handwashing stations in the most impactful areas, humanitarian organizations could use the data to select very specific areas to maximize coronavirus relief efforts. On a smaller scale, I feel that me and my cohort could utilize open data today in order to support small businesses in our local community. By using the data to analyze what areas of downtown Los Angeles were highly trafficked before COVID-19 and now appear more abandoned, we can immediately go out to these areas and support the stores and restaurants that have been impacted the most. This strategy could also be used going forward in any community to support businesses that may be struggling due to gentrification, general population migration, and more.