Facebook Teams Up With Esri on OpenStreetMap-Ready Datasets

|
4 hours ago
Facebook is teaming up with location intelligence provider Esri to release new OpenStreetMap-ready datasets for use in building maps.

The social network's Map With AI set of specialized map editing services and tools will roll out new versions of its RapiD editor and JOSM plugin to work with the new datasets, enabling mappers to quickly add ArcGIS datasets, curated by Esri, to OpenStreetMap—a crowdsourced, highly detailed and editable map of the world.

Esri assembled open data from the ArcGIS user community, processed it for use with OpenStreetMap and published it to ArcGIS Online, enabling Map With AI users to select any of those datasets and zoom into areas they wish to edit. They can then review data and add and save relevant feature to OpenStreetMap as publicly available map data.

Jason Sundram, lead of World.AI for Maps for Facebook, explained in a blog post, "Contributing to OpenStreetMap can be a daunting prospect. Even seasoned geographic information systems analysts take time to learn OSM's tagging and editing conventions, tooling and jargon. Updating a map based on third-party datasets is even more challenging. To do that, a contributor might need to play four different roles: An engineer (to write software or extend JOSM or iD); a lawyer (to ensure compliance with an OSM-compatible license); an

algorithm expert (to create a method for conflating new data with existing features); and an OSM expert (to tag new map features so they're compatible with surrounding ones)."

Sundram said the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar, supported by the World Bank, was one of the first organizations to go through this process.

The RGoZ provided a data layer containing 500,000 buildings in Zanzibar produced by civil servants and students from the State University of Zanzibar through the Zanzibar Mapping Initiative and Open Cities Zanzibar projects.

Zanzibar Commission for Lands executive secretary Iddi Hassan said in the blog post, "The government of Zanzibar is excited to be one of the first to contribute OSM-ready data sets. It will be great to have this high-quality, open data available to all on OpenStreetMap, and we hope to see the development of new geospatial applications that will give Zanzibar the opportunity to better plan for a resilient future."

Facebook engineering director Subbu Subramanian said in a statement, "These authoritative datasets align with Map With AI's goal to help mappers expand the coverage, accuracy and detail of OpenStreetMap. This benefits not only the OSM mapping community, but also the owners of the data, as that data can now be widely available for use by many applications."

Esri ArcGIS content chief technology officer Deane Kensok added, "We have been supporting developers at Facebook to enhance the RapiD editor and JOSM plug-in so that users can access a curated set of high-quality, open data as ArcGIS feature layers, right from the editing environment. The ArcGIS datasets are especially useful because they typically have been hand-edited by GIS professionals and include more fields, such as names and addresses, than the existing AI-generated features."

https://www.adweek.com/digital/facebook-teams-up-with-esri-on-openstreetmap-ready-datasets/