

# How Open Source Can Still Save the World

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Many of the worlds' major problems - economic distress, natural disaster responses, broken health care systems, education crises, and more - are not fundamentally information technology issues. However, in every case mentioned and more, there exist opportunities for Open Source software to uniquely change the way we can address these problems. At times this is about addressing a need for which no sufficient commercial market exists. For others, it is in the way Open Source licenses free the recipient from obligations to the creators, creating a relationship of mutual empowerment rather than one of dependency. For yet others, it is in the way the open collaborative processes that form around Open Source software provide a neutral ground for otherwise competitive parties to find a greatest common set of mutual needs to address together rather than in parallel. Several examples of such software exist today and are gaining traction. Governments, NGOs, and businesses are beginning to recognize the potential and are organizing to meet it. How far can this be taken?