New landslide research could save lives

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Credit: Washington State Dept of Transportation, Flickr

UEA research into the hazard risks of landslides could help save lives thanks to a new digital resource which launches today.

ThinkHazard! is a free open source tool to identify and reduce the impact of natural hazards around the world.

It analyses global, national and local data on hazards such as flooding, drought, earthquakes, landslides and Tsunamis.

The new digital platform has been created by the World Bank in collaboration with an international group of experts.

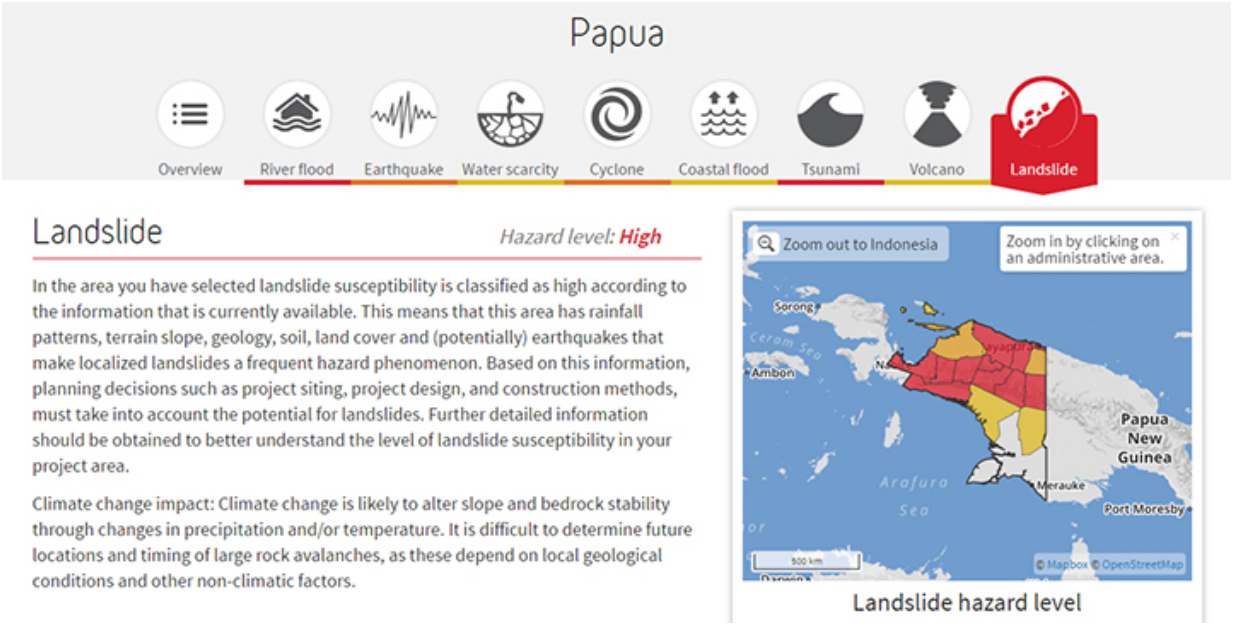
Prof David Petley from UEA's School of Environmental Sciences collaborated closely on the landslides component of the resource.

He said: "ThinkHazard! is intended to provide guidance and advice for natural hazards in poor countries.

"It is a simple tool that enables people to discover the level of hazard in any location around the world.

"It draws on multiple data sources to provide the level of hazard, and is set up to become increasingly comprehensive over time as users contribute new data and information."

Prof Petley's research data on worldwide landslide fatalities was used to benchmark hazard assessment on maps within the tool. He also created advice sections for landslide hazard management.



Landslide hazard level

"On average around 14,000 people are killed by landslides each year – particularly in parts of Central America, South Asia and South-East Asia.

"Assessing the potential disaster risk is critical for development experts, project developers, planners, officials and other decision makers," he said.

"The main aim of this tool is to make understanding of hazard risk more accessible and increase the resilience of projects around the world.

"It also provides vital recommendations and resources to help address those risks.

"ThinkHazard! will be used by agencies around the world and I hope it will have a big impact, possibly even saving lives in future," he added.

Provided by University of East Anglia

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