

Press release: UK offering assistance to those affected by Sierra Leone mudslides

Britain is working with Sierra Leone to coordinate rescue efforts for victims of “devastating” mudslides and torrential flooding that have killed more than 300 people in and around the capital Freetown.

International Development Secretary Priti Patel said the UK also stands ready to provide further assistance, with many victims trapped in homes buried under tons of mud.

On Monday, the West African nation’s national broadcaster said the death toll had risen above 300, but this does not include those buried alive in their homes and more bodies are expected to be found as floodwaters recede.

The Red Cross estimates 3,000 people have been left homeless by the disaster, with the figure expected to rise, while communications and electricity have also been affected.

Ms Patel said:

I am deeply saddened by the devastating landslides and flooding in Freetown, Sierra Leone which have claimed innocent lives.

My thoughts are with all those affected at this tragic time.

From stopping the Ebola outbreak in its tracks to helping the country rebuild after this deadly disease, the UK continues to stand by the people of Sierra Leone.

We have pre-positioned vital aid supplies and helped prepare the country’s response to disasters.

We are already working with the government of Sierra Leone to coordinate the rescue efforts and are ready to provide further assistance to those in need.

Ends