

## Methodology

- 1.4 I carried out the field visit between 29 November to 10 December 2005, after visiting IWG member headquarters in the US and UK. The headquarters visits provided the organisational background necessary to understand the field programmes, forming the framework for the assessment.
- 1.5 The primary assessment tool was semi-structured interviews with staff in a range of positions across all seven IWG agencies and some key partners in the response. (A complete list of interviews carried out is given in Appendix 2.) To encourage open discussion, interviewees' names and their responses were not correlated.
- 1.6 Interviews were supported by site visits to the Islamabad and Mansehra offices of the agencies, attendance at selected co-ordination meetings, and collection of documentation related to the information flow in the response.

## Constraints

- 1.7 Among the constraints on the assessment, two are particularly relevant here. **Firstly, the number and coverage of interviews was more limited than originally planned.** Although the assessment was approved by the IWG in late November, no interviews had been arranged by the time I arrived in Islamabad. However, the co-operation of agency staff cannot be praised enough, and all those contacted were extremely helpful.
- 1.8 A large proportion of the staff interviewed was international, many of whom had arrived following the earthquake. (This was despite the fact that nearly all the agencies had pre-existing programmes in Pakistan, and that national staff had borne most of the weight of the early response.) This is partly a question of how international staff are treated in such responses; as an international, I was more likely to be directed towards other internationals, even by national staff. It was also partly because key national staff are more likely to be in the deep field and therefore difficult to access; partly because of the tension between existing country programmes and emergency programmes (with international staff playing a larger role in the latter); and partly because national staff have greater concerns about the flexibility of their time than internationals.
- 1.9 **The second constraint was therefore under-representation of national staff in the assessment process.** One of the assessment's assumptions is that international and national staff will have different levels of access to information, different understanding of that information, and different definitions of what information they feel they need to do their work. This assumption unfortunately could not be tested for the reasons described above, but agencies should follow up on this issue internally.