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Ideas for managing stakeholders' contact details

Software can be used to build a contacts database, which maps and manages relationships with stakeholders, including targets, allies, opponents, supporters, activists, and others. The scope of a contacts database is vast. However, it can be useful to include the following types of information for each person, group or organisation:

- Contact information, such as phone number, email address, postal address
- Position on the issue, including level of agreement with us, and level of influence to bring about change, whether positive or negative
- Strategies for influencing them
- Correspondence with us, including phone calls and meetings with them or people who work for them
- Membership of influential committees, groups, coalitions, alliances, networks, etc
- Relevant news stories

This information is important because it:

- Enables our advocacy to focus on the most appropriate, influential, and supportive people
- Ensures that information is not lost if a key relationship-holder leaves our organisation
- Helps ensure that our advocacy is coordinated and is not duplicated

One way to build a contacts database is with a computer programme like CiviCRM, which has been specifically designed to map and monitor relationships. Alternatively, a simple contacts database can be created using Microsoft Excel or a similar spreadsheet programme.

However the contacts database is set up, it is vitally important that the information in it is kept up to date and 'clean' in order for it to function effectively.

To read other documents regarding ideas for using the internet and mobile phones in specific parts of the Advocacy Cycle, visit this page on the TILZ website - http://tilz.tearfund.org/advocacycomms