

STRATEGY PAPER

ON

ADVOCACY IN SHOUHARDO II PROGRAM

KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT UNIT
SHOUHARDO II PROGRAM
CARE BANGLADESH

Why an Advocacy Strategy Required for SHOUHARDO II?

Advocacy speaks out for development activities like the advocates raise their voice for their clients at the court. But actions of advocacy group have a broader aspect. Defining in a more specific way advocacy as that process through which we prioritize the welfare of beneficiaries and this is the main intention of advocacy.

Advocacy is a strategy to influence policy makers when they make laws and regulations, distribute resources, and make other decisions that affect peoples' lives. The aims of advocacy are to create policies, reform policies, and ensure policies are implemented. Policy makers are typically government officials or those with formal political power, but they also can be leaders in the private sector whose decisions and behavior affect communities.

Several advocacy strategies can be used to influence the decisions of policy makers, such as discussing problems directly with them, delivering messages through the media, or strengthening the ability of local organizations to advocate. Advocacy is one more option in a wide range of program strategies for reducing poverty, and appropriate when you want to influence policies that are at the source of poverty and discrimination.

The principle objective of our Advocacy approach is to inform individuals and communities about their rights and entitlements, to enable them to participate in decision making, policy making, and implementation. By using advocacy, we are recognizing that root causes of poverty and discrimination stem both from decisions at the household level and from decisions made within community leadership structures, national governments, international organizations, and powerful institutions. This approach can help us to make a greater impact on the lives of disadvantaged sectors of the population.

The Advocacy Strategy will help us guide to:

Identify Issue – what’s your concern, problem or focus?

Set Goals – what’s your objective? What outcomes are acceptable and what alternatives are acceptable to the membership / community?

Research & Get Facts – facts is what makes your argument credible. Avoid anecdotes or hearsay.

Determine your target audiences – with whom are you trying to communicate? Elected officials? Civil servants, media people, public at large, members?

Develop a formal position – develop statements, key messages, brief or scientific paper. Develop tactical action plan – timelines, activities and assignments of responsibilities.

Communicate clearly with your target audience – inform your target audience of your concerns / views. Establish communications and begin developing relationships. Consult your membership – continue to seek input from your membership and involve your membership in the process.

Keep your community informed – inform community members of your progress along the way.

Build coalitions – look to develop relationships with organizations of common interest. Share information (or) join in more formal coalitions / strategic alliances.

Review Campaign – make adjustments where necessary.

Feedback – seek feedback from members, media, public, officials. They can be good indicators of progress, challenges and future successes.

Our Understanding on Advocacy: Definition & Essential Elements

Advocacy is a political but non-partisan process where a set of combined, constant, well organized and well- arranged initiatives and actions are taken to influence those people (they may be politically, economically and socially powerful) and organizations who are directly involved with decision and policy making. This influence process is essential to change the view and attitude of policy makers towards poor and extremely poor people and to make those policies alive that are related to the lives and livelihood of them.

Information and logic are two very much inter-related term used in advocacy. Collected information from mass level, from their raised demands are finally turned into logic. And advocacy works with these logics to bring modification in society. Then this combined logic and information are formed in such way so that it can be accepted by leading people in politics and in society. And finally policies for mass people can be changed and power and strength of marginalized people can be increased.

Issues:

- Reducing poverty
- Gender discrimination
- Human rights
- Rights and justice
- Strengthening the democratic system
- Sustainable development that is depended on demanded situation

Tools/ Materials:

- Lobbying
- Meeting
- Protest of civil society

- Bargaining
- Negotiation
- Practical actions
- Collecting opinion
- Research
- Campaign
- Procession
- Personal communication
- Cultural activities
- Presence of media etc.

One has to have clear and concrete idea about advocacy before starts working on it. In advocacy activities experiences, creativity and experiment are given high priority. Because without these advocacy related skill and knowledge are not achievable.

Collaborative participation (by mass people, media, decision makers and civil society) is another important element in advocacy. Advocacy can help our democratic system to become more powerful.

Advocacy group can invent and apply any techniques (if necessary) to access to people of various level. Awareness is very much important if we really want any transformation in our society. For example, there are many powerful people and belong in a more advantageous position. If s/he cannot take any initiatives for the welfare of vulnerable people then it is only because of the power structure of our society. In this situation advocacy group can play role to change their view by accessing to those people and organizations. For this reason accessibility is another important feature of advocacy.

Important Information Related to Advocacy

Grassroots members can play a key role in advancing an organization's goals by interacting with elected officials directly. Development intends to facilitate grassroots members' participation in advocacy initiatives.

Key to Success

- Effective advocacy relies on membership involvement
- Grassroots communication of concerns has the greatest impact on local influential
- Broad-based communications will be more effective if it supports a central message.
- Using originality serves to break through the clutter.
- A sustained & coordinated approach managed centrally but applied locally is effective.
- Personalized approach to influential's works best. Real people explaining real concerns.
- Feedback to your organization following member letters & visits is critical.

What doesn't Work?

- Contacts that look purely bought and paid for, i.e. professionals paid for, rather than grassroots / volunteer;
- A confrontational style that harasses or insults politicians / public office holders;
- Members who are under/ill informed or are speaking to issues without conviction;
- Providing members with tools that make them look like wound-up robots.

Who are advocates? Those who

- Give logic for supporting any specific group of people

- Help specially poor people to get them their rights
- Challenge those governmental system which are formed but not active
- Become active and concern when laws, budget and policies are not active
- Raise their voice for them who are victims of poverty

Materials/ Sectors of Advocacy

- Rights
- Specific issue
- People's participation
- Raising demand
- Process of influencing
- Targeting policy makers

Process

- Fixing agenda
- Explanation of the issue
- Identification and framing of issues
- SWOT analysis
- Collection and explanation of specific information
- Composition of the design of campaign

Technique:

- Technical planning
- Identify various groups and power of civil society and policy makers
- Unity, group, network formation
- Identify the mediums of communication and build relationship
- Create communication materials
- Make plan for campaign
- Constant evaluation

Work Technique:

- Specify aim and issue
- Concentrate on what others say
- Building relation is one of the main features
- Invent techniques and new ways to create pressures and to bargain
- Explanation and thoughtful risk taking tendency
- Follow important things from what others have already done earlier

Media Advocacy

In the above discussions, name of media is mentioned several times as a useful medium of advocacy. Media is such a term from which we can easily get some idea about its activities. But what we really need to more elaborately is how media works to help advocacy. What is its role to bring the goal and objectives of advocacy in front of people and what method media follows to disseminate the message; and these actions of media are defined as Media Advocacy.

Advocacy is a planned and organized set of actions to effectively influence public policies, societal attitudes in a way that would empower the marginalized.

Media Advocacy is the strategic use of mass media and community advocacy to advance a social and public policy initiative.

Media Advocacy	
Goals	Objectives
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Gain access to the media2. With that access advance specific public policy or social initiatives	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Inform the public about the issues of the poor communities2. Recast these problems as social concerns that affect everyone, not just distant a group3. Encouraging community members and their leaders to find out more about the problems and to get involved in solving those problems4. Promote, provide linkages and build solidarity particularly with civil society movements by creating a platform for the voice to the poor and the excluded and their inclusion in such a platform at all levels

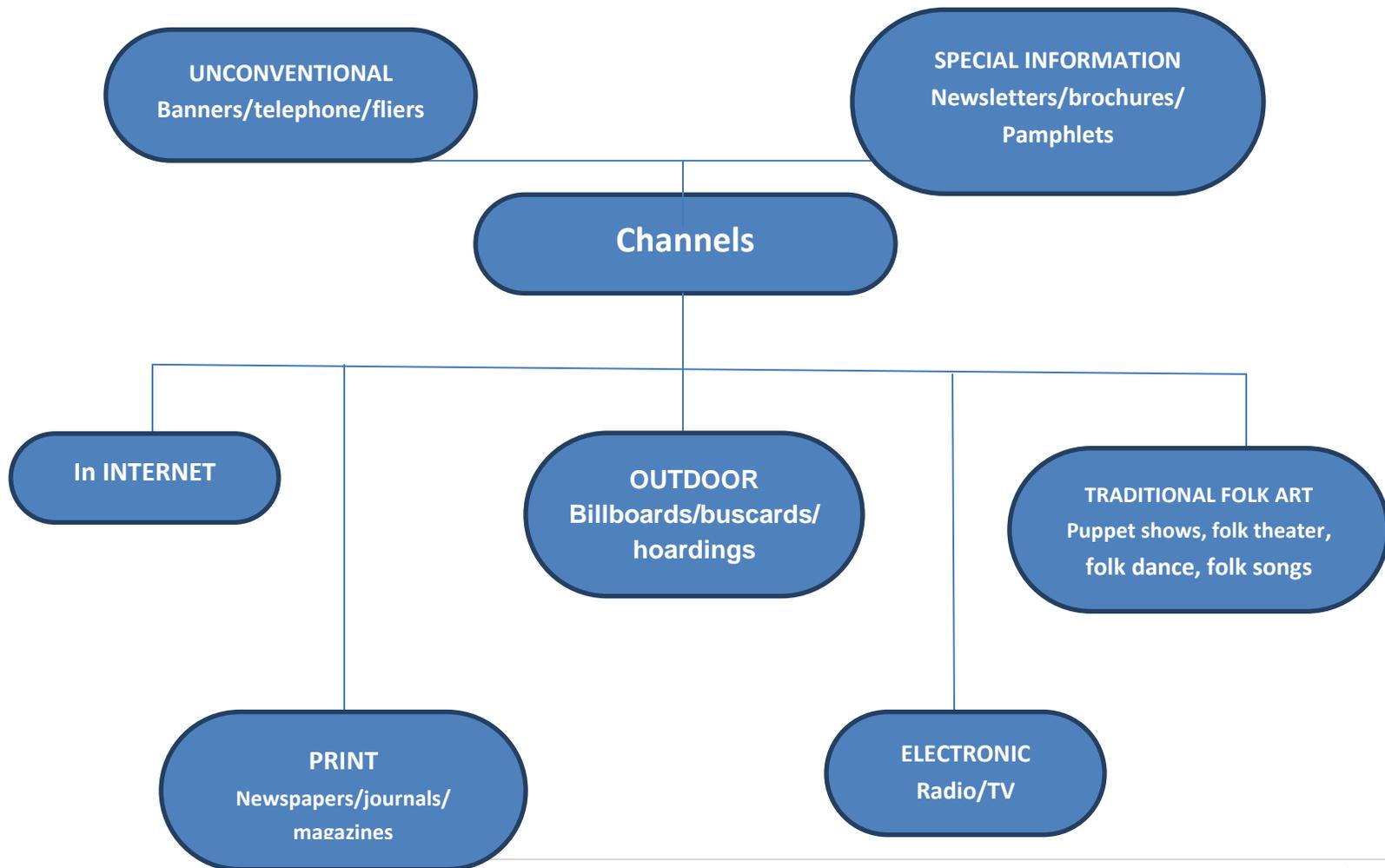
Functions of Mass Media:

- To entertain
- To inform
- To influence
- To educate

To generate media advocacy and to create people awareness on any issue mass media takes the help of entertainment to catch people's attraction. Once the audience gets attracted then they can concentrate on the information that has been disseminated there. Through this way media can influence them on any specific advocacy issue and therefore the mass people have become up to date/educated about the issue.

If it is to be said more easily then the function of mass media is to educate people about any specific advocacy issue with the information that are going to be delivered through entertainment.

Channels of Media Advocacy



Steps for Media Advocacy

- Define goals and objectives
- Target audience
- Research to tailor the message
- Develop the press line
- Appropriate medium to disseminate
- Identify media personnel
- Quality material & correct media tools
- Choosing and training appropriate issue specific spokesperson within the organization
- Coalition building & networking
- Evaluation
- Changing the way key decision-makers and the general public look at community issues or problems
- Creating a reliable, consistent stream of publicity or media focus for CARE-B and SHOUHARDO II issues and activities
- Explaining how these problems could and should be solved
- Motivating community members and policy makers to get involved

Strategies of Media Advocacy

- Building relations and support
- Influencing audiences at various levels by organizing introductory meetings with the media
- Media kits will be developed and will be used as an opportunity to educate the press on the issue
- Linking country campaign issues to regional campaign issues

Measures of Success

Numbers of national level media (print/electronic) journalists are sensitized on the issues of rights and entitlements, influencing public opinion and policy

- Number of articles in news at regional and national level, raised public opinion
- Number of media events organized and coverage
- Number of Round table discussion, seminar, workshops etc organized
- Number of issue based networks of journalists formed
- Client perception scores based on the awareness created/public opinion formed by article/features/stories
- Policies influenced through raised public opinion and systematically policy dialogue

Advocacy: SHOUHARDO II Perspectives

The Need for Advocacy

Emphasizing people-centered Rights based Approach (RBA) to programming; CARE Bangladesh understands that 'projects' alone are not sufficient to overcome long-term poverty. Sustainable change is more likely to be achieved through the development of democratic processes, power decentralization, transparency and accountability within communities, civil society and decision-makers. In this regard, targeted campaign-strategies that capture attention - and generate reaction of different stakeholders to bring about lasting change are of central importance. The aims of SHOUHARDO II advocacy is to promote behavioral and policy change, increase knowledge and capacity, improve coordination between stakeholders and seek justice on behalf of poor and extreme poor people.

Through partnership approach, SHOUHARDO II is committed to facilitate this process by facilitating communities to realize their full potential in leading lives where they would be lead actors. This will be achieved by building linkages between

communities and service providers and create opportunities for poor people to negotiate for improvements in service provision and access. SHOUHARDO II will carry out policy and advocacy campaigns on Food security to ensure easy access of poor and extreme poor to natural resources, in particular *khas* land; and strengthen the national safety net policy in partnership with national and international partners. Governance will be another key area where co-option and participation of community members in local government structures i.e. UP and/or ward sub-committees, School Management Committees, and Parent-Teacher Associations will be more emphasized. Rights of children and women issue helps to enact and implement the legislation on prevention and protection against domestic violence. On the other hand, adaptation to and mitigation of climate change will be contributing towards effective implementation of the National Disaster Policy, Early Warning Systems, and advocating for effective strategies for adapting to climate change.

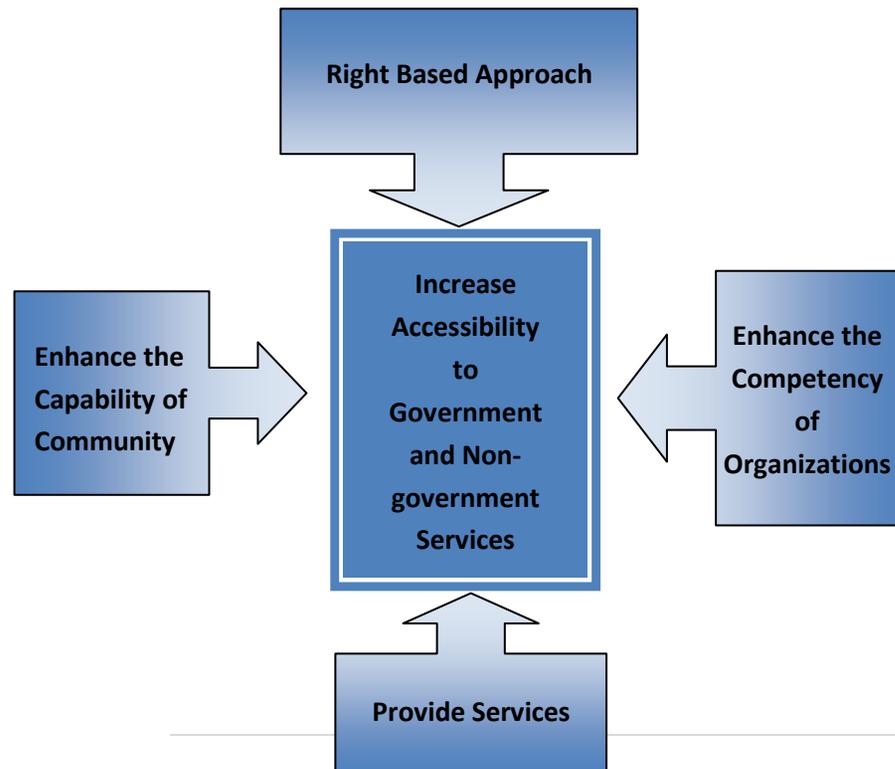
Whole advocacy emphasis is on fully informing individuals and communities about their rights and entitlements, to enable them to participate in decision making, policy making, and implementation. As appropriate, essential action research will be undertaken to inform the advocacy agenda and help engage local, national and international agencies to advance policy debate through collaborative work. SHOUHARDO II advocacy will involve collection, analysis and dissemination of information and using both print and electronic media to influence public policy and amplify the voices of poor and extreme poor. Evidence around impact of policies, or the need for policy change, will be used to influence policy makers and communities.

The Objective s of SHOUHARDO II Advocacy

- Strengthen the constituency and solidarity among groups of PEP
- Expand poor people's constituency to include other non-poor groups and institutions that are willing and able to take a stand with PEP people
- Foster popular demand for the establishment of their rights and entitlements
- Sustain these by lobbying and campaigning for systematic and legal reform

SHOUHARDO II Advocacy Approaches

By adopting a *people centered advocacy approach* SHOUHARDO II acknowledges the critical role the citizen's play in mobilizing themselves in demanding the right that the state ensures equitable social change and distributive justice. It will seek to bridge the gap between micro-level activism and macro-level policy change. The approach is concerned not just with outcomes but also with the process by which outcomes are achieved. It requires that all stakeholders be included. It recognizes that people are actors in their own development, rather than passive recipients of commodities and services. Informing, educating and empowering stakeholders are essential. Participation is central, as both a means and an end, not only to ensure ownership, but also to guarantee continuity.



Ways/Medium of SHOUHARDO II Advocacy

Under the SHOUHARDO II Program, the Advocacy Manager in collaboration with the other Technical Managers of the Strategic Objectives and RTM's (S/he will be the focal point of the region) will adopt the following strategy:

- A. Build capacities of our staff and partners to facilitate and undertake advocacy initiatives, systematically organize advocacy meetings with formal and informal community leaders, elites, people associated with different power structures, civil society, local government and NGO, partners on the purposes, rationale, approaches, key activities of the project to mobilize their support and cooperation for the project implementation.
- B. Systematically organize advocacy meetings with formal and informal community leaders, elites, people associated with different power structures, civil society, local government and NGO, partners on the purposes, rationale, approaches, key activities of the project to mobilize their support and cooperation for the project implementation.
- C. Review national and international policies around issues of entitlements and empowerment and developing effective policy briefs with the objective to provide a comprehensive and persuasive argument justifying the policy recommendations presented and therefore to act as a decision-making tool and a call to action for the targeted audience.
- D. Facilitate Campaigns: Under SHOUHARDO II campaigns we will carry out policy and advocacy campaigns in the following areas:
 - 1. Increase the Accessibility of Extreme Poor People on *Khasland*
 - 2. Prevent Violence against Women and Domestic Violence
 - 3. To Create Poor and Extreme Poor People's (PEP) Partnership in Local Power Structure
 - 4. Necessary Lobbying and Networking to Implement the Active National and international Policies to Confront Climate Change and Adaptation Process

These campaigns will be facilitated and implemented by the communities at multiple levels to create positive change on specific policy and social level.

- E. Building capacities of participating institutions to effectively mobilize and manage resources.
- F. Undertake work towards enhancing accountability of service providers.
- G. Identify the potential stakeholders at national level to build purposeful relationships towards alliance building for dealing with the identified advocacy issues.
- H. Build linkages both formally and informally with organizations, INGOs, NGOs, CBOs, Media, influential persons and other institutions for greater voice in policy, laws related to reproductive rights, violence and family laws, issues around land access and tenure, access of fishing resources, local government reform for empowerment, national disaster policies including climate change risks, etc. to contribute to the overall goal of facilitating lasting change by challenging the forces in society that produce and reinforce poverty and injustice.
- I. Establish network with different forums, Print and Electronic Medias and use them for wider dissemination of the best practices in the program that can influence the policy.

Specific Issues of Advocacy

1. Increase the Accessibility of Extreme Poor People on *Khasland*:

SHOUHARDO II will work with selected committee at local level and with other NGOs to increase the awareness of local government (for example, elected as well as selected people's representatives) and different sectors of Government about the land right and other issues related to it of PEP community especially of landless people. So that distribution of *Khasland*

can be performed between extreme poor and landless people in a proper way and establishing the control of poor people over the power structure can be possible.

2. Prevent Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence:

Violence against adolescent girls and women is a severe violation of human rights. Any kind of violence (direct or indirect) hampers the hidden possibilities of women to enjoy the freedom of leading a fulfilled life, hampers the process of taking part in decision making as well as decision taking. Along with that domestic violence is also given special importance. Especially the poor and marginalized women and girls are the main victim of this situation. Domestic violence affects them most. Particularly the socialization and institutionalization of violence, inactive administration, law system, state and indifference and irresponsible attitude informal or informal or at personal level is responsible for that.

To stop all kind of violence against women SHOUHARDO II Advocacy is able/effortful enough to give an important contribution in changing the view and practices of people, which will empower them through guidance and this, will be possible through knowledge. SHOUHARDO II will activate various permanent and special committees of local government to develop the quality of the services that the poor community especially the poor women are justified to obtain. SHOUHARDO II will establish a linkage among EKATA (Empowerment, Knowledge and transformative Action) group in Union and Upazilla level, UPESC, PTA (parents Teacher Association), SMC (School Management Committee), NNPC. Along with that, it will play an important to strengthen the bondage among the Women groups/ organizations of local and regional level. SHOUHARDO II advocacy will also give effort to take words not only from person and organizations but also from ruling parties and opposition parties of local and national level that, they do not support the criminals and will take necessary initiatives against them, if not they will be bound to take steps against those criminals. Aim of this advocacy is to make civil society, ministry of Women and Children, ministry of Law, ministry of Social welfare, Home ministry, ministry of information Technology and ministry of education active to implement the existing policies taken by government and to work with partner organizations and various networks those follows same policies to take effective steps. This type of

advocacy makes that happen through different kind of programs (for example, seminar, meeting, roundtable meeting, television talk show documentary film etc.)

3. To Create Poor and Extreme Poor People's(PEP) Partnership in Local Power Structure:

Transparency, accountability, participation of the people and ability to take decision, efficiency, rule of law that means, to take effective measures according to the demand of the poor and extremely poor population and to make arrangements for their effective participation in the local power structure. The most important thing for this is to ensure free flow of information to the poor about the people's welfare organizations, working procedures of the legislatures, different principles and practice. Through people's participation in seminars, meetings, debates etc. about responsible and accountable government, at local national and international levels can create opportunities for flow of information. Various social activities should be taken (carried) forward for change in different citizen organization, organization at grass root level and organized population. For this it is necessary to create capability of different citizen and grass root level organizations so that they can identify the main events of particular issues of the system of government and at the same time takes effective measures by identifying the method of influencing them.

4. Necessary Lobbying and Networking to Implement the Active National and international Policies to Confront Climate Change and Adaptation Process:

The effect of climate change results very frequent disasters which leave a wide range outcome- which bring severe misery on the food security and livelihood of agriculture based communities of risky countries. Natural disasters constantly foil the flow of life of a large number of people, especially poor people and the inhabitants of char, *haor* and coastal areas which are already in high risks. If the issue of climate change and disaster risk reduction will not be treated properly and not given proper importance then the flow of development of Bangladesh will never reach to a sustainable position, this issue is very closely related to climate and disaster risk management (CDRM). CARE will give special importance on a combined

advocacy approach to attain disaster management, disaster reduction, disaster preparedness, emergency respond and bring the affected community to its previous condition. And this advocacy will follow the framework which is based on United Nation international strategy for disaster reduction (UNISDR) and Heugo framework for action.

To implement the aim of national disaster management framework of Bangladesh, climate change techniques and action plan SHOUHARDO II is contributing in an evocative way. Government of Bangladesh will conduct necessary advocacy in presenting the effect of disaster risk management and climate change to make technical policies and plan which will help the poor and extreme poor people.

Through SHOUHARDO II already an overall research has been conducted on “challenges and opportunities in implementing Bangladesh government’s disaster related standing order by the local government”. Based on the result of this research, disaster management committee of various levels will be given capacity building trainings according to the standard process taken by government of Bangladesh by using suitable tools and techniques.

Techniques of SHOUHARDO II Advocacy:

- Increasing the competency level of coworkers and partners in implementing the advocacy initiatives
- Developing effective policies based on the review of right and empowerment based on national and international policies
- Give various training to targeted community on increasing capability
- Strengthen the capability of local service providing organizations
- To make the path accessible for reciprocal discussion between various organizations and service providers
- Share ideas at local and national level to compile proper policies and to reform existing policies for implementation.
- Conduct various related research and present those to government and civil society.

- Build formal and informal relation with government of Bangladesh, national and international development organization, community based organization, mass media and other organizations.
- To build network and linkage in local, national and international level to convince the policy making organizations.